



WHAT IS THE GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT?

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (GSMIT) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that operates a residential environmental learning center within Great Smoky Mountains National Park under an agreement with the National Park Service. Since 1969, thousands of people each year have visited GSMIT and immersed themselves in the beauty of the Smokies. Children and adults come to live and learn with the mountains and streams as their classroom. They leave with a feeling of ownership and responsibility for the protection of wild places like the Smokies, but also of those natural places within their home communities.

MISSION

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont provides in-depth experiences through educational programs designed to nurture appreciation of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, celebrate diversity, and foster stewardship. *Connecting people and nature* summarizes our mission, which we accomplish through providing hands-on learning experiences with the National Park, focusing on developing in people a greater sense of place, a deepened appreciation and awe for the diversity of life and people, and an ethic of stewardship that follows them home.

- ❖ School groups - Provides residential education experiences to 5,572 students from 94 schools located in 12 states
- ❖ Citizen science – Gives students hands-on experience with real research projects. Volunteers logged roughly 500 hours assisting with 21 concurrent projects
- ❖ Summer camps - Host 166 summer campers from 16 states and Ireland
- ❖ Adult programs - Almost 500 adults from 27 states and Canada were educated at GSMIT
- ❖ Native Landscape Certification Program - Draws attention to the detrimental effects of invasive exotic plants in the park and surrounding region, while promoting the use of native plants in landscaping
- ❖ Environmental assessment for redesign of site and facilities will be completed at the end of 2007
- ❖ Budget \$1+ million, with 78% from user fees and sales, 22% donations and grants
- ❖ Endowment funds equal \$869,982, allowing GSMIT to award almost \$33,000 in financial aid to over 300 students from 45 schools
- ❖ Employ 17 full-time and 5 part-time employees plus 14 seasonal staff
- ❖ Greet almost 11,000 visitors in GSMIT's Welcome Center and reached 1,700+ through outreach programs
- ❖ Maintain full service dining hall and dormitory with 125 maximum capacity for both

VISION

Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont's vision is to become a world-class environmental learning center that is a model of sustainable design, practice and instruction. Current partners who assist us include the National Park Service, Friends of the Smokies, Great Smoky Mountains Association and Discover Life in America.