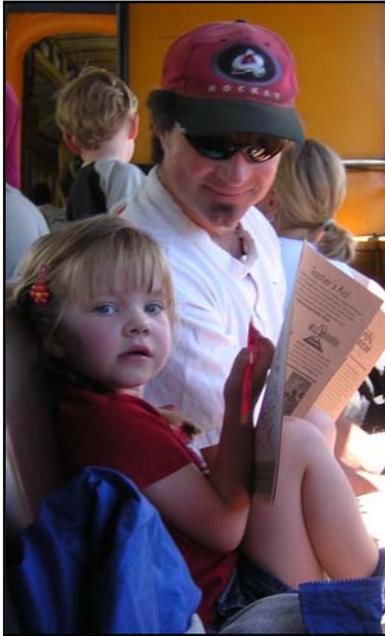


All Aboard for the Mountain Express

Smokey Bear and environmental education have taken a new track in Durango, CO, this summer. The San Juan Public Lands Center partnered with the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad (D&SNGRR) and the San Juan Mountains Association to provide a new educational train slated to run Mondays through Thursdays from June 21 to August 5.



The train, called the “Mountain Express – a Cascade family adventure train,” is a half-day adventure train that gives passengers the opportunity to learn about fire ecology, native plants and wildlife, and Leave No Trace ethics.

Volunteer educators will ride the train, hand out activity books and Smokey goodie bags to kids, and talk with passengers while traveling to Cascade Canyon. At Cascade Canyon the train will stop for an hour, allowing guests to meet with Smokey Bear, participate in guided environmental education activities, look over items at the discovery table or enjoy a self-guided nature trail.

“Guests will enjoy the ‘Discovery Nature Trail’ at Cascade

Canyon, which is deep in the heart of the San Juan National Forest by the banks of the Animas River,” said Pam Ramsey, Reservations Manager for D&SNGRR. “This is truly a remarkable and remote setting for such a creative project.”

Partners involved in this educational project hope it appeals to families with children and also to adults interested in learning more about the local flora and fauna and the San Juan National Forest.



Photos clockwise from upper left: Father and daughter enjoy the train ride to Cascade Canyon; Smokey Bear meets and greets his fans; and a volunteer educator asks children what they heard when they sat quietly for a short time.