



ARIZONA FOUNDATION FOR
RESOURCE EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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Reading, Writing...and Rocks Highlight Teachers' West Valley Tour *K-12 Teachers Learn Importance of Arizona's Natural Resources in Educational AFRE Programs*

PHOENIX, Ariz. (Nov. 3, 2004) – It's not rocket science, but rather, the science of rocks and mining that nearly 40 kindergarten through 12th grade teachers and informal educators such as librarians, parks and recreation instructors and scout leaders will be learning about on Saturday, November 13 from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. during a day-long educational tour to a West Valley aggregate mining facility near the Agua Fria River.

The free study tour, "*Arizona Aggregates: Building Foundations for Our Communities*" is hosted by the Arizona Foundation for Resource Education (AFRE), a non-profit organization that promotes understanding about the state's natural resources and related industries while providing teachers educational and professional development experiences to enhance their instructional skills in the classroom.

During the tour, teachers will learn first-hand about Arizona's mining process—specifically the steps involved in taking raw materials such as rock, sand and gravel and transforming those materials for use in an industry that is an important piece of Arizona's economy and history. But how do rock products—or aggregates as they are referred to by industry experts—relate to education?

"Most of us don't think about where the resources come from or the development process behind the things we use everyday; we simply turn on our computers, start our cars, flip on the light switch or the water faucet without thinking about all that's involved to get to that point," said Steve Trussell, community relations director with Arizona Rock Products Association, a partner in the AFRE study tour. "We take teachers on-site and show them how it's all done. When we tour the aggregate mining facility, teachers will have the opportunity to speak to geologist Eric Mears, of Brown and Caldwell, regarding the deposition and economic geology of alluvial deposits, hear from safety engineer and environmental specialist Gregg Monger, of Hanson Aggregates regarding permitting considerations and reclamation efforts

and learn step-by-step the entire process, including the extraction process from expert operations manager Jim Schroeder also of Hanson Aggregates.”

While teachers are touring and learning about Arizona’s natural resources, they’re also gaining valuable teaching tools and methods they can use to develop an engaging course of study once they return to the classroom. Every AFRE study tour and workshop provides specific educational materials that complement the program. Teachers can then use the information and materials to create a performance-based curriculum for their students that specifically addresses the state’s requirements relating to Arizona’s Academic Standards.

AFRE programs are designed so that teachers in any grade level or any subject can incorporate the knowledge and skills they’ve learned into “best practices” for classroom instruction. Educators who participate in AFRE programs also have the opportunity to earn professional development hours or graduate credits through Arizona State University.

“One of the most gratifying moments we have as AFRE program facilitators is when teachers say to us, ‘I had no idea,’ with regard to what they have just learned about the importance of a particular natural resource or related industry and the relevance and connection that it has to their everyday lives,” said AFRE Executive Director Larry McBiles, Ph.D. “We call those the ‘Aha!’ moments, and for the past 10 years, AFRE has been proud to share those kinds of educational experiences with teachers. Our ultimate goal—and challenge—in offering these programs is to re-energize teachers by giving them the support and instructional tools they need so that they in turn can better prepare students for their future as successful life-long learners.”

For more information about the Arizona Foundation for Resource Education and its free professional development programs for teachers, call AFRE at (602) 266-4417, email info@afre.org or visit www.afre.org.

The Arizona Foundation for Resource Education (AFRE) is a non-profit, collaborative network of Arizona natural resource businesses and industries. The Foundation’s purpose is to promote understanding about the state’s natural resources and related industries and their importance to our lives and economy by providing Arizona’s K-12 teachers relevant, real-world educational and professional development opportunities that address Arizona’s Academic Standards. Foundation members include: Arizona Rock Products Association, Arizona Science Center, ASARCO Inc., BHP Copper, N.A.; Bryan Cave LLP, Gallagher and Kennedy, Home Builders Association of Central Arizona, National Energy Foundation, Phelps Dodge Corporation and Salt River Project.

For nearly 50 years, the **Arizona Rock Products Association (ARPA)** has been providing representation for over 53 member companies involved with the production of aggregates, asphaltic concrete, ready mix concrete, asphalt, lime products, and portland cement. Our members, along with over 83 associate members providing related transportation, contracting, and consulting services, make ARPA one of the most influential public and private policy advocates in Arizona today