



Youth Visions and Voices of the Outdoors

South Dakota State Parks Art Contest

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the South Dakota Parks & Wildlife Foundation

For 40 years, the South Dakota Parks & Wildlife Foundation has helped ensure that South Dakota state parks remain places where families and friends can make lasting memories — camping under the stars, hiking scenic trails, telling stories around a campfire, and spending time together outdoors.

To help us celebrate SDPWF's 40th anniversary, students are invited to create an original work of art that illustrates a memorable experience they've had in a South Dakota state park (or one they hope to have someday). Artwork could depict natural and beautiful landscapes, a special family memory or scene, wildlife in their natural habitat, or all the above.

Submission Requirements

- The participant must be a resident of and a student in the state of South Dakota.
- Eligible Grades: **9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th** or, if home schooled, at the age associated with high school grades as submitted to the SD Department of Education.
- The artwork must be the student's original work and only **one entry per student** may be submitted.
- Each submission should include one completed entry form with all necessary signatures, artwork title, and an artist statement.
- By entering this contest, the student gives the South Dakota Parks & Wildlife Foundation unrestricted rights and permissions for use of the artwork.

Accepted Art Mediums

- Watercolor, oil, or acrylic painting
- Drawing (pencil, charcoal, ink, colored pencil, pastels)
- Photography
- Digital
- Mixed media

Artwork Format

- Artwork should be of a size that allows the student to transport it to the award ceremony and showcase (if not mailed for entry)
- The participant's name should not be visible on the artwork to ensure anonymous judging.
- Each entry must include a title.
- Students must include a brief artist statement (1-2 sentences) describing the park memory or experience depicted and why it is meaningful.

Why This Contest Matters

This contest celebrates making memories in South Dakota state parks and invites students to capture the important role state parks play in family traditions, outdoor recreation, and lifelong experiences through art that honors the past while inspiring the next generation of park visitors.

Finalists

One (1) Overall Winner and Nine (9) finalists will be chosen.

Finalist Awards

Each finalist will receive:

- An Annual South Dakota State Park Pass, allowing their family to enjoy all South Dakota State Parks for the remainder of the park season
- A VIP invitation to the Youth Visions & Voices of the Outdoors Showcase at the Journey Museum in Rapid City, where finalists will be recognized May 8, 2026
- One-night lodging at a Ramkota Companies Hotel in Rapid City on May 8, 2026
- A \$50 gas card

Overall Winner Award

In addition to the finalist awards, the Overall Winner will receive:

- An outdoor gear package from Scheels to help create even more park memories
- A \$100 Go Outdoors South Dakota gift card

Teacher Recognition

School teachers who submit student entries will receive an Annual South Dakota State Park Pass.

How to Submit Entries

Teachers can submit entries by:

By scanning/photographing artwork and submitting with entry forms as a PDF and emailing to: assistance@parkswildlifefoundation.org (**preferred method**)

OR

Mailing to:

SD Parks & Wildlife Foundation | 19619 Trout Loop | Spearfish, SD 57783

SDPWF will confirm receipt via email to the teacher. If you do not receive email confirmation, please contact us at the above email address or by calling 605-773-4503.

Important Dates

- Entries postmarked OR emailed no later than **Friday, March 17, 2026**
- Finalists announced **Friday, April 17, 2026** through communication to teachers
- Award ceremony and **art showcase** the evening of **Friday, May 8, 2026** at the Rapid City Journey Museum

FAQ's

How will submissions be judged?

Submissions will be judged by community leaders throughout the state. Finalists will be chosen based on originality, how closely the artwork aligns with the prompt, submission requirements, and the theme of the contest.

What if a finalist cannot attend the award ceremony due to financial constraints or prior commitments?

Teachers, if a financial need exists please contact us so that we may assist in providing additional support for the student's family. If finalists are unable to attend due to prior commitments, we ask that photos of the artwork be sent so that we may display and recognize the student during the award ceremony.

Are teachers, family, and friends welcome at the award ceremony?

Certainly! We welcome all who can come to celebrate our finalists.

Other Questions?

Reach out to us at assistance@parkswildlifefoundation.org or 605-773-4503.



Art Contest Entry Form

Please include this completed form with each art piece. Type or print clearly & fill-in completely.

Student Name: _____ **Teacher Name:** _____

Teacher Email Address: _____ **Teacher Phone:** _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

Title of artwork: _____

Artist Statement:

ALL SIGNATURES ARE REQUIRED.

Originality Certification

I hereby certify that the artwork is original to me and that it is not copied from any other person's work.

Student Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date

**Questions, comments, and concerns may be directed to Elena Dagit at 605-773-4503 or
assistance@parkswildlifefoundation.org**

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OR Mailing to: SD Parks & Wildlife Foundation | 19619 Trout Loop | Spearfish, SD 57783

**Submissions must be postmarked or emailed no later than Tuesday, March 17, 2026.
Winners will be notified by April 17, 2026**