



NATURE STUDIES PROGRAM for Alaska's Schools

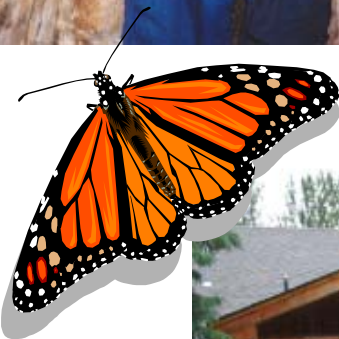
Teacher's Brochure

The Eagle River Nature Center is run by a private, non-profit environmental education organization founded in 1995. It is located at the edge of the greater Anchorage area and provides access to Chugach State Park's half million acres of wilderness. It offers your students a spectacular opportunity to explore a glacier-fed river valley and a spring-fed salmon-stream and beaver pond. All our classes are taught by professional naturalists, who can tailor the program to compliment your classroom science lessons with a memorable outdoor learning experience.



The Nature Center charges a per student fee instead of a flat hourly rate, in order to better serve the needs of school classes of different sizes. The charge is **\$5/student** for a naturalist-guided half-day program, with a **minimum of \$50**. We start with an indoor orientation and science presentation, followed by a guided walk, plus time for lunch and/or exploration of exhibits at the Nature Center. You can choose from 15 different science programs. Allow about 3 hours for your visit.

You can also bring your class on a self-guided visit for \$1/student. We have a 30' **Classroom Yurt** that can be rented by school groups for \$25/hour (\$50 half-day, \$100 full day) for purposes of teaching, team-building or day camps.



“What is the extinction of a condor to a child who has never seen a wren?”

*- Naturalist
Robert M. Pyle*



Year-round learning

During the **winter**, we conduct field trips emphasizing snow studies, winter survival and animal tracking.

During **spring and summer**, popular field trips focus on plants, birds or insects. Reserve early, as April and May fill up.

During the **autumn or fall**, we conduct field trips observing the spawning stage of the salmon cycle, identifying trees, geology, and soils.

OUTREACH: We bring our programs to your classroom!

All science programs can be brought to the classroom, especially during the winter. Some are in the form of slide shows, others, are hands-on. The charge is \$50 for a 50-minute classroom presentation and \$40 for subsequent presentations at the same location. In addition, there is a mileage charge for destinations outside of Eagle River.

LEARNING ON THE TRAILS

Beaver Habitat Viewing along Rodak Loop

For a general introduction to the area, we recommend this trail for most of our programs. Our naturalist can cover most science topics on this $\frac{3}{4}$ mile walk along the **Rodak Loop**, with its viewing decks overlooking a beaver pond where salmon spawn every year. Allow 1-2 hours of outdoor time.

River Walk via Albert Loop

If you have more time (and students are in 4th grade or older), you may want to consider a 3-mile loop along the **Albert Loop**, covering forests, wetlands and riparian habitats. Allow 2-3 hours. Note that Albert Loop is usually closed from August to October due to bear activity.

Geology Walk with River Access at North Fork

If you have less time but still want access to the river, especially for a *Geology of a Glacier Valley* field trip, we recommend the North Fork Access of the Eagle River, whose parking lot is located at Mile 7.4 of the Eagle River Road ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile walk to the river). Allow 2 hours. Please note: There is no indoor shelter at this location.

Iditarod Trail to Echo Bend

This trail is a popular destination for *self-guided field trips*. Allow 4-6 hours round trip.



Salmon Viewing Deck along the Rodak Nature Trail.



Eagle River Nature Center 32750 Eagle River Road Eagle River, Alaska 99577
Phone: 907-694-2108 (general information) Fax: 907-694-2119 www.ernc.org
School appointments only, phone: 907-694-9255 or email: naturalist@ernc.org

SCIENCE PROGRAM TOPICS TO CHOOSE FROM



ANIMAL STUDIES

Alaska Animals
Skulls and Teeth
Animal Tracking
Variations on a Bird
Salmon Life Cycle
Insects and Spiders



PLANT and ECOSYSTEM STUDIES

Identifying Trees
Wildflowers and Edible Plants
Berries, Seeds and Cones
Wetlands
Ecosystems of Alaska



PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Geology of a Glacier Valley
Soil Studies
Snow Studies
Winter Survival

(also available as full day program with use of classroom yurt)



RATES

Naturalist-guided Program
(half-day): *\$5/student with a minimum of \$50 per group*

There is no additional charge for chaperones or parking. We start with an indoor orientation and science presentation, followed by a guided walk, plus time for lunch and/or exploration of exhibits at the Nature Center. Allow about 3 hours for your visit.

Self-guided Hike: *\$1/student*

There is no additional charge for chaperones or parking. *Reservations are required for groups over 10.* Note that the Nature Center may be closed during your visit, but latrines are available in the parking lot. You may also rent the Classroom Yurt, a separate indoor area for lunch, teaching or daycamps for \$25/hour (\$50 half-day, \$100 full-day).

Outreach program: *\$50/ class period*

The first 50-minute classroom presentation is \$50; all subsequent presentations at the same location are \$40. In addition, there is a mileage charge for destinations outside of Eagle River, based on current IRS rates.

Payment is due at the beginning of the program by cash, check or credit card (a receipt will be issued). All checks should be made payable to the Eagle River Nature Center.

Grade Level Recommendations

(Based on Anchorage School District Science Curriculum)

- Pre-school and Kindergarten:** Rodak Trail with program on animals.
1st - 2nd grades: Rodak Trail with program on animals, life cycles, or soils.
3rd grade: Rodak Trail with program on plant identification or snow studies.
4th grade: Rodak Trail or River Walk for Geology, Skulls & Teeth.
5th grade: Rodak or Albert Loop Trail with program on Winter Survival.
6th-8th grades: Rodak or Albert Loop Trail with programs on Geology, Plant

ATTENTION TEACHERS & GROUP LEADERS:

We require that teachers and chaperones accompany students during the length of the program and provide student guidance in case of behavioral problems. A **minimum of 1 adult per 10 students** is required. We reserve the authority to dismiss an unruly student.

We expect teachers to be responsible for students with special needs (allergies, etc.) and be able to respond to their needs or any injuries.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Visit www.ernc.org for additional information and parent guide.



How do we get there?

From Anchorage: Glenn Highway North until the exit Eagle River Loop/Hiland Rd. From the exit, allow 25 minutes to drive to the Nature Center. Stay on Eagle River Loop until it intersects Eagle River Road, where you take a right at the Walmart store. Drive 10 miles until Eagle River Road dead-ends at the Nature Center.

How many students/ chaperones can I bring?

Programs can be scheduled for one class per naturalist, with up to 30 students. We require that you provide at least one adult chaperone for every ten students. Our facility can handle up to 2 classes or 60 students. Larger groups need to make special arrangements (stagger groups, etc).

How do I prepare students?

Weather can change quickly: stress the importance of bringing gear for rain and cold weather (including snow pants, hats and mittens in winter). Suggest sturdy walking shoes; shorts and sandals are not recommended. Bring water bottles and snack/lunch. The gift area (not open when center is closed to the public) has some limited food items for sale, as well as hot water and a microwave oven. Our website (www.ernc.org) has a link available for teachers to send home to student's parents to help prepare your field trip students and chaperones.

Can we have lunch and other activities?

Uncovered picnic tables are available for lunch outside the Nature Center. We only allow eating inside the building when it's cold or raining: space is limited, and students will need to sit on the floor.

Can I cancel if weather/roads are bad?

All of our programs are designed to be out-of-doors rain, snow, or shine. Please let students know ahead of time that they will be outdoors and should wear sturdy walking shoes and have proper clothing for the time of year. Keep in mind that the weather can differ at the Nature Center from where you are coming from. Cancellations made 72 hours or less from the time of your scheduled appointment will be subject to a \$25 cancellation fee per class. There will be no cancellation charge if a program is rescheduled due to hazardous driving conditions.

Is it accessible for persons with physical limitations?

The Nature Center, viewing decks, and Rodak Nature Trail are accessible for persons in wheelchairs. Other trails surrounding the Center are not accessible. Please let us know if you plan to bring students with special needs, such as wheelchairs or crutches, so that we may accommodate them as best we can.

What are your hours of operation?

Classes can be held even when the Nature Center is closed to the public. Visit www.ernc.org for seasonal hours of operation.

All groups must make a reservation. Why?

We want to ensure that your visit is enjoyable and productive. If you arrive without reservations, there may not be enough facilities to accommodate everyone (picnic tables, restrooms, etc). Reservations allow us to minimize human impact on our natural resources.

Call Ute at 907-694-9255 or email: naturalist@ernc.org Anchorage School District teachers fax Communities Resources Request Form to 742-4137.

Special thanks to our other sponsors who make these programs possible and help keep student tuition fees low:

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