

ERNC Naturalist Guided Chaperone Guide

Teachers, use this handy form to make sure your fantastic chaperones are all on the same page!

Every person is welcome at the Eagle River Nature Center. We believe that every person regardless of ability can and should have an informative and positive experience.

naturalist@ernc.org 907-694-2108

Dear Chaperone,

Thank you so much for being a part of this field trip! We are going to the Eagle River Nature Center on _____. We are leaving school at _____ and returning at _____. We need to leave ERNC by _____. We couldn't go on adventures like this without your help. You set the example for behavior and preparation, and ERNC staff are excited for you to share your knowledge, as well!

Preparations

Your enthusiasm and preparations help to set the tone for the trip before you even arrive! Please be sure to wear shoes appropriate for spending time outside as well as to dress in layers. We plan trips to be outside regardless of conditions. We will be outside longer than the typical recess period, so, when it is below freezing, snow boots, hats, and gloves are a must! Dogs are not allowed on naturalist-guided programs. If students are eating lunch at the Nature center, don't forget to pack one for yourself!

Directions

From Anchorage, Travel north on the Glenn Highway until the Eagle River Loop/Hiland exit. Stay on Eagle River Loop until it intersects with Eagle River Road (by Walmart). Turn right on to Eagle River Road. Drive 10 miles on Eagle River Road until the road dead ends at Nature Center. Be aware of speed limit changes as you approach the Nature Center.

From the Mat- Su Valley, Travel south on the Glenn Highway. Exit at South Eagle River. Turn right at the very first light. Follow Eagle River Road for 12 miles until you reach the parking lot and log cabin visitor center at the end of the road. Be aware of speed limit changes as you approach the nature center.

What do expect during your Naturalist-guided visit

- Naturalist guided programs begin inside the Nature center. After settling in, students typically have a 20-30 minute orientation and introduction to the day's topic. Students will then have an opportunity to put clothing on, use restrooms and prepare for a short hike with frequent stops. Sometimes, the Classroom Yurt is used. As time allows at the end, students will have time to explore the nature center. **Come prepared to be outdoors regardless of weather. There is no bad weather, only bad clothing.**
- Trails are not paved. Standard programs involve hiking $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. A variety of mobility aides have been successful on our trails.
- Rustic Latrines are located in the parking lot and near the Educational Yurt. The only running water available, including flush toilets, are inside the main Nature Center building.
- Parking fees are included as part of your *Naturalist Guided* trip.
- The Nature Center Store is not available during field trips.
- If arrangements are made, *Naturalist-guided* groups may eat at the picnic tables outside of the nature center immediately before/after the scheduled program. Naturalist guided groups may eat indoors October-April, **but only if arrangements have been made ahead of time.**

On the Trail

Naturalists are leading and facilitating learning, however teachers and chaperones are charged with student's safety and ensuring respectful behavior. Expectations of students are to: Stay behind line leader, move to one side for other groups, listen when naturalist is talking, act with self-preservation, leave any hiking or walking sticks behind, don't pick berries, flowers or fungi and don't pet strange dogs.

Please don't hesitate to contact Eagle River Nature Center staff if you have further questions and refer to the Frequently Asked Questions page.

Thank you again for helping to make this trip successful!