

Saturday, September 30

Afternoon Field Trips

Pre-registration is required

Carpooling is encouraged

All field trips leave from Alpena Community College parking lot, unless stated in the description

Fossil Dig at Rockport State Recreation Area

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Group size – 30

Distance – 20 minutes north of Alpena

Fee: \$0

Tour an abandoned limestone quarry where historic mining exposes the 360 million year old ancient Devonian Sea. Explore the geology of this unique recreation area and even collect a few fossils along the way. Corals and crinoids, stromatolites and sponges, brachiopods and gastropods, trilobites and even some of the most ancient fishes reflect examples of living organisms that once thrived in these shallow ocean seas and now preserved in northeast Michigan rock formations. Along the shores of Lake Huron, Rockport boasts a historic deep draft port connected with quarry operations that supported the building of the Mackinac Bridge along with boating access for the valued recreational and commercial fisheries of northern Lake Huron. Learn also how students have partnered with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Eastern Michigan University to protect an important bat hibernaculum intertwined with this now abandoned limestone quarry. **Wear shoes appropriate for uneven, rugged trails.**

Place-Based Stewardship Education at Alcona Community School

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Group size – 25

Distance 40 minutes south of Alpena

Fee: \$0

Place-based education shines at Alcona Community Schools where students, from elementary to high school, are engaged as learners and leaders in local agricultural and environmental stewardship projects. Field trip leaders will showcase a variety of student stewardship projects from elementary to middle/high school, share how strategic school-community partnerships bring this work to life, and explore how you might bring this type of work back to your school or community. Alongside Alcona teachers and administrators, you'll tour the school campus featuring an expansive schoolyard forest where students lead wildlife studies, habitat improvement projects, and trail development work. Students also focus on sustainability in a growing effort to supplement their local schoolyard food system through projects like pollinator habitats, food gardens, orchards, aquaponics, poultry and more. A Sugar Shack facility for maple syrup production showcases a 'sweet' coming together of local environmental studies and agricultural food ways. Beyond the school campus you will also learn about student projects expanding out into the community through a diversity of other place-based education efforts that engage youth, through their learning, in environmental stewardship projects that make a difference in their community. The state MiSTEM Playbook project has supported Alcona elementary and middle school projects showcasing exemplary 3P (place-based, project-based, problem-based) learning in practice. Alcona Community Schools is also a pioneering leader among the Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative, a regional place-based education network and partnership. These collective projects reflect strategies and investment toward growing a community-connected learning culture across the Alcona Community School district.

Explore Negwegon State Park by bike

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Group size – 20

Distance – 40 minutes south of Alpena

Fee: \$0

Nestled along the shores of Lake Huron, Negwegon State Park is rich in diverse coastal habitats, rare species, and cultural connections throughout human history including early European, Native Americans, and even prehistoric peoples. Grab your bike for this tour where you will pedal your way through time to experience how people have connected with this place - past, present, and future - while immersing yourself in the scenic beauty and natural features of Negwegon State Park. Our tour by bike will partner with Great Lakes, Great Responsibility to conduct a brief beach clean-up along the uniquely northern Michigan limestone cobble beaches of South Point, experiencing place-based stewardship education in practice. Beach clean-ups are just one example of how the Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative engages and supports local schools, educators, and youth in partnering with DNR Parks and Friends of Negwegon State Park to accomplish park conservation and management goals. State Recreation Pass required for entry. **Bring your own bike.**

Historical Tour of Alpena

1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

Group size – 25

Distance – walking distance from Alpena Community College

Fee: \$0

Embark on a historical tour of downtown Alpena, immersing yourself in its captivating riverfront and architecture. Begin along the scenic banks of the Thunder Bay River, where Alpena's early settlers arrived by boat. Stroll along the riverfront promenade, taking in the views and learning about Alpena's role as a bustling shipping port in the past. Learn about the historic buildings lining the streets, showcasing a range of architectural styles, from Queen Anne to Italianate. This historical tour of downtown Alpena promises to transport you back in time, revealing the city's industrial and architectural splendor and its deep connection to its waterfront roots. **Wear comfortable walking shoes and dress for the weather.**