

ANREP Post-Conference Tour
Denali National Park and Preserve and Southern Alaska Range via the Denali Highway

Tour Leaders: Peter Stortz and Ron Mahoney

Field Trip Travel Dates: Wednesday, June 30, 2010 – Friday, July 2, 2010

Cost: \$375 per person. Includes transportation from Fairbanks; two nights shared lodging outside Denali National Park; Denali Foundation Program; Denali Shuttle Bus Tour; customized Denali NP ANREP program; six meals: Wednesday evening – Friday lunch; snacks and gratuities.



What to bring: Our space is limited for luggage and carry-ons. Seriously, only bring a day pack or small bag you will use for the three days of this trip due to capacity of the vans for storage. Trip planners will provide secure storage for your extra luggage in Fairbanks while on this tour. Bring your binoculars, camera, hiking boots, rain parka, light coat, hat and gloves along with a change of clothes, extra socks and personal items. Know that temperatures can be in the low 40's even in the summer. Anticipate cool rainy weather, and celebrate if it's sunny and warm!

What to Expect: This two night, three-day trip is an economical opportunity to see both Denali National Park – one of the premier visitor destinations of the state along with the far less visited south side of the Alaska Range. The post-conference trip will depart Fairbanks immediately following the close of the conference for the 80 mile trip south. University vans will provide our transportation – not spacious or air conditioned, but a great way to meet fellow ANREP colleagues! Our two night motel accommodations are offered at a greatly reduced rate due to our association with the University of Alaska – Fairbanks. The small 20 room motel offers a very friendly atmosphere with clean rooms and double beds. Due to both our travel limitations and size of the motel, there will be two people per room.

This tour is customized for a small group experience with other natural resource professionals who want a mix of 'seeing country' on an abbreviated visit to interior Alaska along with hearing from a variety of specialists along the way. The 'Great Land' as we call our state is immense. This tour will give you a small but delectable 'taste' of the grandeur. It might not be for everyone especially if you don't like early mornings and late evenings, bumpy unimproved roads, buffet style meals and sack lunches, shared facilities – and significant driving time. But know there will be plenty of opportunity for adventure and viewing both wildlife and scenery, hearing about some behind the scenes operations of Denali National

Park, and traveling the Denali Highway along the south side of the Alaska Range. It's a great value-priced trip!

Denali Foundation staff will introduce us to the Subarctic environment following our buffet dinner at their facility along the Nenana River south of the Park the first evening. This will prepare us for the trip into Denali the following morning. Departing at 7:30 am from the Visitor Center on a Park Service concession tour bus Thursday, we will look for wildlife with other visitors en route to Eielson Visitor Center 66 miles in the heart of the Park. While the landscape will be spectacular rain or shine, serendipity will play its' hand with wildlife viewing. This trip will return to Park Headquarters by 2:30 in the afternoon leaving plenty of time to hike on your own, take in the interpretive program at the working dog kennel, participate in a 2 hour white water rafting trip on the Nenana River, or take one of the flight tours by helicopter or fixed wing aircraft. Our dinner meal will again be hosted by the Denali Foundation staff. Traveling back to our motel in Healy, there will be time to stop off at 'Glitter Gulch' as the locals call the many concession business outside the Park entrance for shopping or refreshments.

Friday will start early and end late even though it was really difficult getting to bed the night before with sunshine past 11:00PM! An early morning start with a continental breakfast at the Motel Nordhaven is required to meet our special Park Service presentation at the Murie Science and Learning Center. We have arranged for a program to address you, a natural resource professional. One of several researchers working in the Park will discuss some of the unique challenges and opportunities associated with Denali. The remainder of the day will be traveling across the south range of the Denali Highway from Cantwell on the west to Paxson on the east. We will enjoy stops along the way with a boxed lunch to view the frequent overlooks of the spectacular southern Alaska Range Mountains. This rugged gravel road connects the Parks and Richardson highways by crossing the high tundra in the heart of the Alaska Range While the road (80% gravel) is not a super highway, with bumps along the way, the scenery rivals that found in the park – without the crowds and tourists. We will stop en route to view wildlife, rivers, mountains and wetlands. Then north from Paxson, farming community of Delta Junction, and finally Fairbanks before 8:00PM providing time for some travelers to depart on the late evening flights to return home.

Itinerary:

WEDNESDAY, June 30, 2010

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 5:30 – 7:00 PM | Depart Fairbanks on the Parks Highway for Healy, (80 miles) |
| 7:00 – 7:15 PM | Check in at motel, Healy, AK (www.motelnordhaven.com) |
| 7:15 – 7:45 PM | Travel to Denali Foundation, |
| 7:45 – 9:45 PM | Dinner and evening program by the Denali Foundation staff, "Introduction to the Suba |
| 10:00 – 10:30 PM | Return to Motel Nordhaven in Healy, AK |





THURSDAY, July 1, 2010

6:15 am Continental Breakfast at Hotel

6:30 am Depart for Denali NP (www.nps.gov/dena/index.htm)

7:30 am – 2:30 PM Denali NP Visitor Center Entrance to Eielson Visitor, Mile 66 Denali Park Road. Access will be on park concession bus with knowledgeable driver. View the 'top five' (Caribou, Dall Sheep, Grizzly Bear, Moose, Wolf) on the approximately 7 hour round trip tour plus the opportunity of seeing Denali itself North America's highest peak at 20,320 feet. A variety of small mammals and some of the 159 species of birds recorded in the Park and some of the 650 species of flowering plants in the area can be observed. Spectacular scenery! Boxed lunch provided by Motel Nordhaven.

2:30 – 5:30 PM Pending weather conditions Thursday afternoon, hike local trails, visit the Denali Visitor Center, Muir Science and Learning Center, take in the demonstration at the dog kennel with the Park Service Interpreters, or for an extra fee raft the Nenana River or take one of the flight tours of the Park.

5:30 – 6:00 PM Travel to Denali Foundation.

6:00 – 7:30 PM Dinner Meal served on the Nenana River, Denali Foundation.

7:30 – 9:00 PM Travel to north to Denali National Park visitor services area, optional shopping.

9:00 – 9:30 PM Travel north to Healy, Motel Nordhaven



Friday, July 2, 2010

- 6:30 am Continental Breakfast, Hotel Nordhaven
- 7:30 am Depart for Denali NP Murie Science and Learning Center (www.murieslc.org/)
- 8:00 – 9:45 am Interpretive Program specially designed for the ANREP group by Park Service staff.
- 10:00 – 10:45 am Denali NP south bound for Cantwell on the Parks Highway (30 miles)
- 10:45 am – 3:00 PM Denali Highway east bound to Paxson. 130 miles total. Stops along the way with boxed lunch to view the frequent overlooks of the spectacular southern Alaska Range Mountains.
- 3:00 – 3:30 PM Break. Paxson Lodge, Mile 185 Richardson Highway.
- 3:30 – 5:00 PM Paxson to Delta Jct (80 miles) on the Richardson Highway
- 5:00 – 5:30 PM Delta Junction Area
- 5:30 – 7:45 PM Delta to Fairbanks (100 miles). To hotel or airport. Dinner on own.

