

5287 Otter Lake Road, White Bear Township, MN 55110
Phone: 651-407-5350 • Fax: 651-407-5354
Email: tamarack@co.ramsey.mn.us
www.TamarackNatureCenter.org

INFO FOR GROUP LEADERS

Summer 2016

Help us make your upcoming group visit fun and easy!

COMMUNICATE EARLY & OFTEN: Let us know ahead of time if your group size has changed or the ages within your group have changed. Also, let us know in advance if your group has any special needs.

ARRIVE EARLY & KEEP KIDS ON THE BUSES: Please keep your kids on the buses until a Tamarack staff member greets you and provides further instructions. If you don't see a staff member, send one of your teachers or leaders to the building to let us know you've arrived. If your group is scheduled for a program, it's important to arrive at least 10 minutes early!

KEEP BUSES ON-SITE: We do not have indoor space to shelter large groups. In the event of sudden severe weather, groups will be evacuated on their buses. Buses will also serve as rain shelters for groups. Please keep your buses on-site with the group.

BRING PLENTY OF CHAPERONES: We require a minimum of 1 adult chaperone for every 10 students. Students must be accompanied by an adult chaperone at all times. Adult chaperones are always free, so bring more if you can!

WEAR NAMETAGS: Have your students wear name tags (first names only), so we can address them more personally and make their experience more memorable.

DRESS APPROPRIATELY: Be sure everyone is properly dressed for the conditions — rain, sun, hot, cool, windy, buggy, muddy — you will be outside enjoying the elements. If your group is scheduled for a program, you will be outdoors rain or shine!

WEAR STURDY SHOES: Everyone should wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. Flip-flops and open sandals are NOT recommended, as your group will be outside and active in Tamarack's natural areas.

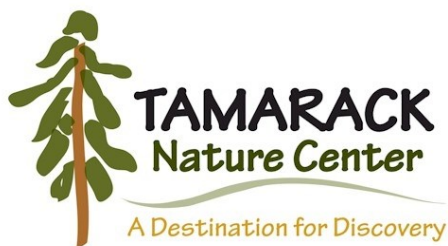
APPLY INSECT REPELLENT & SUNSCREEN: For the comfort and safety of everyone, please apply sunscreen and insect repellent before you arrive at Tamarack. Our staff is not permitted to apply either of these products for our guests.

BATHROOMS: Portable bathrooms are located in Discovery Hollow and the Garden. Groups are encouraged to use these outdoor facilities. Indoor bathrooms may be used only in small groups of 5-10 kids at a time with an adult chaperone.

NATURE CENTER BUILDING: The main building is not designed to accommodate large groups. If you plan to visit the building, please break your group into 5-10 kids at a time and be sure they are accompanied by an adult chaperone. Groups should plan to spend no more than 15 minutes in the building. NOTE: The Nature Center building is NOT a rain shelter for groups. Groups should use their buses as rain shelters if they need them...or just be puddle jumpers and enjoy the rain!

SEVERE WEATHER: If forecasters predict dangerously high heat or severe storms, we will communicate with groups early to discuss possible cancellation. If you are worried about weather, and haven't heard from us, please give us a call so we can discuss the options.

CANCELLATION & CHANGE POLICY: We are required to give our staff 2 weeks notice of their work schedules, so if you decide to cancel your scheduled program or significantly reduce your numbers less than 2 weeks before your visit, we will not be able to provide a refund. Payment will be due. Earlier cancellations or changes may be eligible for a partial refund. If we cancel your visit due to severe weather or for another reason, your payment will be fully refunded.



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CHAPERONE INFORMATION

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Chaperones are the key to our success!

Thank you for the time and energy you're providing as a chaperone or group leader. We make our spaces and activities as active and interactive as possible, which means kids might need your guidance and good example to keep them on-track. Here are some ways you can help make this field trip fun and memorable for everyone in your group.

BE COMFORTABLE & DRESS FOR THE CONDITIONS:

If you show up at Tamarack in high heels or a suit and tie, it might be a long day! Be comfortable and dress for the conditions—rain, sun, heat, cool, wind, bugs, mud—we've got it all here. If your group is scheduled for a program and it rains, you will likely still be outdoors. Also wear sturdy, closed shoes. For your safety, we do NOT recommend flip-flops or open sandals.

REINFORCE NATURE CENTER RULES:

Be a good role model for students by being respectful of people, property, and nature. Have students stay on trails unless instructed to do otherwise. Look, touch, smell, and listen, but refrain from doing anything destructive that will take away from the next visitor's experience. Please do not collect plants or animals unless instructed to do so.

ASSIST WITH SAFETY & SUPERVISION:

Help the group stay together and take headcounts frequently to make sure everyone is accounted for. As needed, remind students of safe, appropriate behavior. Help students be good listeners when instructors or group leaders are talking or trying to get everyone's attention.

ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE & HAVE FUN:

The best chaperones are those who participate! It will be more fun for you (and the kids) if you get your mind and body active and be part of the experience. Use all of your senses, make observations, ask questions, and don't be afraid to get your hands dirty.

ASK QUESTIONS:

If you have a question, chances are someone else does too, so ask it. Also, ask the kids questions that will help them make observations, come to their own conclusions, and ask more questions.

PUT AWAY PHONES:

Please take advantage of this opportunity to "unplug" for a little while, and engage in something fun and meaningful with us. The kids, group leaders, and instructors will greatly appreciate it!



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PLAYING, PICNICKING & HIKING

Summer 2016

DISCOVERY HOLLOW NATURE PLAY AREA & GARDEN: Discovery Hollow is located close to the main Nature Center building. It is about 3 acres in size and includes a simulated bluff area for climbing, a stream for water play, mud and sand play areas, fort-building space, and a flourishing garden.

- Groups larger than 12 students need to make a reservation and request a special use permit to spend time in Discovery Hollow. Fees vary depending on group size. If your group has scheduled a summer program with us, the Discovery Hollow experience is built into your program fee and you will have scheduled time in this space.
- Discovery Hollow is a fun place to get dirty and wet! Have your students wear old clothes or bring a change of clothes if there is concern about this aspect of the field trip.
- When visiting the Garden, please touch, smell, listen, and look, but do not pick anything unless you have permission from a Tamarack staff member.
- Discovery Hollow is open to the public and gets quite busy in the summer. All students must be accompanied by a chaperone. Please actively supervise your groups and be mindful of other visitors who are using the space.

PICNICKING AT TAMARACK: Groups are welcome to bring snacks or lunches for a picnic on the grounds.

- Please let us know in advance if your group plans to picnic at Tamarack.
- We have outdoor, unrefrigerated space for storing group lunches. If you plan to use our storage space, lunches must be placed in a cooler, large box, plastic tub, or garbage bag prior to arrival.
- We do not reserve shelters or outdoor space as group lunch spaces. If pavilions or picnic tables are available, groups are welcome to use them, but most groups just enjoy a shady place under a tree.
- Groups are responsible for their own trash. Please use the designated trash and recycling bins to help keep Tamarack clean.

HIKING AT TAMARACK: Tamarack Nature Center has 320 acres and 6.4 miles of hiking trails through Minnesota forest, wetland, and prairie habitats. Groups are welcome to explore these areas on their own at no cost.

- We do monitor how many groups are on the trails at one time. Please let us know in advance if your group plans to do some self-guided hiking during your visit.
- Trail maps are available inside the Nature Center. Along the trails, you'll find numbered posts that match up with the numbers printed on our trail maps. Use these numbers to help navigate your groups through the trails.
- For the enjoyment of all visitors, we ask that you break your large group into smaller groups when hiking. All students must be accompanied by a chaperone. Actively supervise your groups. Summer is a busy time!
- Please stay on the trails unless your group has special permission to enter other areas.



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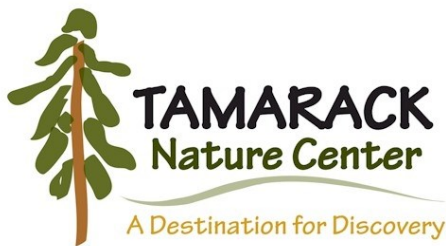
THE NATURE CENTER BUILDING


Summer 2016

The Nature Center Building was originally designed as a small trail-head space for a few visitors at a time, so it does not accommodate large groups very well. At this time, the building houses indoor bathrooms, staff offices, a small exhibit space, meeting spaces and our preschool. The most beautiful and fun part of Tamarack is the outdoors, so we encourage groups to stay outside! If your group would like to visit the Nature Center Building, please follow these rules. We will enforce these rules in order to keep the space safe and accessible to the public and to maintain adequate work space for our staff and volunteers.

- ➔ **5-10 STUDENTS AT A TIME:** Small groups of 5-10 students at a time can enter the building to use the restrooms or view the animal exhibits. Larger groups will be asked to step outside and take turns entering the building in smaller groups.
- ➔ **RESTROOMS:** The restrooms are small and will only accommodate 2-3 people at a time. If possible, groups should use the outdoor restrooms in Discovery Hollow or the Garden.
- ➔ **CHAPERONES REQUIRED:** Students must have an adult chaperone with them at all times.
- ➔ **15-MINUTE LIMIT:** Please plan to spend a maximum of 15 minutes in the building, so other small groups can utilize the space as well.
- ➔ **VIEW ANIMAL EXHIBITS:** We have live animal exhibits (turtle, snake, and salamander) in the Nature Center. Please be respectful of the animals by not disturbing their habitats or tapping on the glass.
- ➔ **ASK QUESTIONS:** If you do not see a staff member outside, feel free to send a leader or chaperone inside the Nature Center Building to ask questions for your group.
- ➔ **TRAIL MAPS AVAILABLE:** Trail maps are available inside the Nature Center. Feel free to send a leader or chaperone inside to pick some up for your group.
- ➔ **NOT A RAIN SHELTER:** The Nature Center Building is NOT a rain shelter for groups. Groups should use their buses as shelters if they need them...or just be puddle jumpers and enjoy the rain!
- ➔ **NOT A STORM SHELTER:** The Nature Center Building is NOT a severe weather shelter for groups. If sudden and severe weather occurs, we will evacuate groups on their buses.

Thank you for your cooperation!



A Facility of

RAMSEY
COUNTY

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DIRECTIONS TO TAMARACK

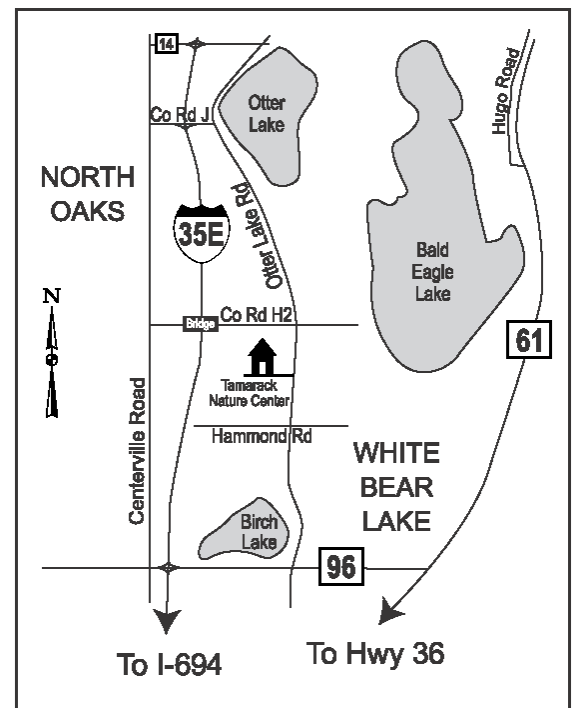
Summer 2016

HWY 96 East (from Shoreview area)

Travel east on Hwy 96 until you get to Otter Lake Road, where there is a stoplight. Go north (left) on Otter Lake Road. Tamarack is on the west (left) side of Otter Lake Road, about 2 miles north of Hwy 96.

35E North (from St Paul area)

Take 35E North to Highway 96. Go east (right) on Hwy 96 until you get to Otter Lake Road, where there is a stoplight. Go north (left) on Otter Lake Road. Tamarack is on the west (left) side of Otter Lake Road, about 2 miles north of Hwy 96.



HWY 61 North (from St Paul area)

Take Hwy 61 North to Highway 96 in White Bear Lake. Go West (left) on Hwy 96 until you get to Otter Lake Road, where there is a stoplight. Go north (right) on Otter Lake Road. Tamarack is on the west (left) side of Otter Lake Road, about 2 miles north of Hwy 96.

35E South (from Forest Lake area)

Take 35E South to Highway 96. Go east (left) on Hwy 96 until you get to Otter Lake Road, where there is a stoplight. Go north (left) on Otter Lake Road. Tamarack is on the west (left) side of Otter Lake Road, about 2 miles north of Hwy 96.

HWY 61 South (from Forest Lake area)

Take Hwy 61 south to Hwy 96 in White Bear Lake. Go West (right) on Hwy 96 until you get to Otter Lake Road, where there is a stoplight. Go north (right) on Otter Lake Road. Tamarack is on the left side of Otter Lake Road, about 2 miles north of Hwy 96.