



CONTACT: Dominick Miller
millerd44@michigan.gov
Mackinac State Historic Parks
Phone: (231) 436-4100
www.mackinacparks.com

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Education Outreach Programs to Begin for 2019-2020 Season

MACKINAW CITY, MICH. — Just because the Mackinac State Historic Parks' historic sites are closed for the season, it doesn't mean that the rich history of the Mackinac area isn't still available. The historical interpreters will just come to you.

Two distinctly different programs are presented each fall, winter and spring: Historic Mackinac on Tour, an overview of Michigan's fur trading history through the lens of Mackinac; and Water, Woods and Wildlife, a natural history program.

“While our museums and historic sites are closed for the winter, our interpreters go to schools across the entire state to engage students with Mackinac's many rich stories,” said Craig Wilson, curator of history for Mackinac State Historic Parks. “Students experience the Great Lakes watershed, the fur trade, and the relationships between indigenous people and Euro-Americans. One classroom at a time, students learn the cultural and natural history of Michigan that makes our state great.”

Historic Mackinac on Tour began visiting schools in 1988. Two historical interpreters, dressed as 18th century residents of Michilimackinac, bring Michigan's early history and fur trading economy to life. Through props, hands-on activities, and guided discussions, they let students explore the complex relationships between Anishnaabek trappers, French-Canadian voyagers, and British merchants which helped shape our state.

Water, Woods and Wildlife has been presented since 1993. Students learn about the natural history of Michigan, including the Straits of Mackinac and its location in the Great Lakes watershed, the variety of wildlife found in northern Michigan, and the habitat required for the survival of that wildlife.

The outreach programs are presented throughout Michigan. Water, Woods, and Wildlife is available only in November to schools within a 75-mile radius. Historic Mackinac on Tour is available throughout the entire state, with program requirements varying by location.

Mackinac State Historic Parks' education outreach programs are made possible, in part, by the generosity of Mackinac Associates, the friends group to MSHP.

More information about our education programs can be found online at mackinacparks.com/more-info/educational-outreach/, by email at outreach@mackinacparks.com, or by calling 231-436-4100.

Mackinac State Historic Parks, a family of living history museums and parks in northern Michigan's Straits of Mackinac, is an agency within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Its sites—which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums—include Fort Mackinac, Biddle House, Historic Downtown Mackinac, The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island, and Colonial Michilimackinac, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park, and Michilimackinac State Park in Mackinaw City. Mackinac State Historic Parks is governed by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, established in 1895 to protect, preserve and present the parks' rich historic and natural resources for the education and recreation of future generations. Visitor information is available at (231) 436-4100 or online at www.mackinacparks.com.

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