

Island History

- Alpena's last Indian chief, Sah-gon-ah-ka-to, who died in 1869 at the age of 93, is believed to have lived on the island.



- In the 1940's the Alpena Sportsmen's Club began conservation by planting trees, building trails and stairs and fishing platforms. The club imported Canada geese and swans. They dedicated the Island to memorialize veterans.



- In 1985 the City of Alpena bought the Island and agreed to preserve it as a natural area for environmental education and quiet recreation.



For more information:

- large map and explanatory field guides located at the top of the hill in Duck Park



- Wildlife Sanctuary Info Scan QR Code



- visit the website: thunderbayrivercenter.org
- visit us on Facebook

- River Center Info Scan QR Code



- group events, register with:

The Planning and Development Director
City of Alpena
208 N. First Ave.
Alpena MI 49707
989-354-1770

The 443 acres of the Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary are maintained by the volunteer Wildlife Sanctuary Board appointed by the Alpena City Council.

Cover-Art for this brochure by Chris Wozniak



Welcome to Island Park

It's a place of quiet waters, waving reeds, shaded shores and water lilies... a goose nesting on a muskrat house, mallard ducklings crowding close to mama, a deer watching from behind tag alders, the slap of a beaver's tail.

O.B. Eustis, local naturalist

Where is the Wildlife Sanctuary?



Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary is a unique 443-acre natural area within the Alpena city limits. Although wetlands and oxbows were historical features of the river, the Alpena Wildlife Sanctuary's present form occurred when

the Ninth Avenue Dam was built in 1863 and the old lowland areas were flooded. Today's sanctuary is home to many species of plants, fish and other animals that have adapted to the evolving ecosystem.

The sanctuary offers its visitors a wonder-filled place to explore the natural world on foot or on water. Each season reveals a different aspect of the resident flora and fauna, and presents an array of quiet scenes for contemplation or space for active exploration, depending on a visitor's interests.



Map of Alpena showing location of Wildlife Sanctuary



Island Park is a 17 acre island, a natural jewel within Alpena's Wildlife Sanctuary on the Thunder Bay River.

A unique covered bridge connects Island Park and Duck Park, a large grassy picnic area at the corner of US 23 and Long Rapids Road.



Island park is a fragile sand dune, covered lightly with soil and plants which has:

- diverse habitats (see map)
- a variety of native plants and animals
- nearly a mile of trails to explore
- a handicapped-accessible paved path allowing wheel chairs, mobility chairs, or strollers to reach the O.B. Eustis Lookout
- fishing and observation docks

You are invited to take pictures, walk, fish, look at the views or rest on a bench. The Sanctuary is a place for quiet recreation, environmental education and a place to observe nature.



A canoe/kayak launch with seasonal rentals offers you another way to experience the Sanctuary.

User Guidelines:

- Respect all plants and animals; it is their home.
- Stay on the designated trails to prevent erosion.
- Remember the Island is fragile.
- Leash and clean up after your dog.

