GUIDELINES FOR FIELD METHODS
For research sponsored by Huron Mountain Wildlife Foundation
Revised, 2025

General statement

Huron Mountain Wildlife Foundation (HMWF) requires that field research be designed to minimize impact on research systems. This is particularly so for protected and 'reference-quality' systems within the lands of the Huron Mt. Club. HMWF recognizes that field research necessarily entails some impacts on the research system; this document provides guidance for investigators regarding acceptable scopes and limits.

All research proposals will be reviewed with these standards in mind, and proposals may be denied if likely impacts are considered unacceptable, regardless of scientific merit. Proposals should specifically address any points where these guidelines bear on the proposed work, and include both research design rationale that necessitates 'impacts' and consideration of possible alternate approaches to the research problem.

Questions arising in development of proposals or during execution of field-work should be addressed to the Director of Research at HMWF.

Specific Guidelines

1. ***'Taking' of organisms for research purposes***:

A. Research resulting directly in 'takings' – death, injury, or removal -- of study organisms is permissible only if such taking is judged very unlikely to affect the status and dynamics of populations (this may not apply in the case of non-indigenous species). Proposals must make this case where any takings are proposed.

B. Any proposed takings for documentation, experimental manipulation, genetic studies, etc., even where justified, must be minimized. Where possible, photographic documentation is preferred. When feasible, tissue samples should be taken non-lethally, and experimental organisms should be reintroduced to habitat.

C. Proposals and research plans should be as explicit as possible about numbers of organisms to be taken and locations for takings.

D. Specimens (vouchers, etc.) should be deposited in secure repositories accessible to other researchers, and deposition documented in researcher reports to HMWF and/or archived data-sets.

E. *The same guidelines apply to activities that impose inherent risk to study organisms* (for example, catch-and-release studies, implanting or attaching sensors/transceivers to animals, increment coring of trees). Researchers should make the necessity of such activities clear and provide an assessment of risk involved.

F. Procedural revisions may be required related to these concerns.

2. ***Installation of field marks and apparatus***:

Research projects may require installation of samplers, sensors, or markers that will remain in the field between researcher visits and seasons. Where this is essential

to research aims:

A. *Installations should be as visually unobtrusive as possible* consistent with research requirements. Generally, *keep installations well away from trails, roads, and boat-houses* (> 50 m if possible OR so as to minimize visibility from these areas). If requirements of project make this impossible, consult with Director of Research.

B. *Multi-season installations should include a (small) all-weather notice including project name and primary investigator, mention of sponsorship by the Huron Mt. Wildlife Foundation as sponsor, and a brief descriptive title for research.*

C. Threat of vandalism or tampering is very low, but HMWF may not be held responsible for damage due to these or natural causes.

D. Locations of installed equipment or markers should be indicated in proposals where possible *or reported to Director of Research as soon as possible* after installation (preferably, UTM coordinates as well as descriptive information). Consult Director of Research with any questions concerning placement.

E. Researchers are required to *remove all equipment, installations, or field-marks* by the termination of their study. If relocation of study-sites could be valuable to future researchers, it may be appropriate to leave unobtrusive location markers in place; this possibility should be addressed with the Director of Research.

3. ***Sanitation and risk of contamination or introduction:***

All researchers must take pains to avoid potential introduction of contaminants or non-native organisms to Huron Mountains study systems. Appropriate measures include, but are not limited to:

A. FOR TERRESTRIAL SYSTEMS:
   a. BEFORE beginning work at Huron Mountains, field gear that might transport soil, seeds, micro-organisms, etc. from other areas must be thoroughly cleaned and sterilized
   b. Personal gear – particular boots, packs, etc. – should be similarly treated.
   c. Researchers should clean gear BETWEEN FIELD AREAS within the Huron Mountains to reduce risk of transporting invasive species. Soil that might carry earthworms or seeds of invasive plants is of particular concern

B. FOR AQUATIC SYSTEMS:
   a. All equipment and clothing that will come in contact with waters within the Huron Mt. Club, including sampling equipment, waders, etc., should be thoroughly cleaned and sterilized before arrival. Formula 409 cleaner has been shown to be effective in killing most potential invasive species.
   b. Equipment should be similarly sterilized when moving between lakes or streams within the Huron Mt. Club.
   c. If researchers are using their own watercraft (which must be approved in advance through the Director of Research), boats should also be carefully washed and sterilized both before arrival and between water bodies within the Huron Mountain Club.

4. ***Experimental manipulation*:**

Large-scale, manipulative experimentation is unlikely to be permitted on Huron Mt. Club lands. However, experimental approaches are encouraged if impact is modest/temporary, and likely results of significant value.

A. Proposals must be explicit about any experimental methods that may alter habitat, manipulate populations or ecosystem function, or otherwise alter the study area.

B. Proposals should address the importance of such manipulations in the context of research questions/hypotheses, and of potential alternatives.

C. Researchers will be responsible, upon completion of experiments, for restoring the experimental system, so far as possible, to pre-experiment status.

4. ***Vehicles and watercraft:***

A. *No wheeled vehicles of any kind* are permitted off maintained roads on Huron Mt. Club lands.

B. Researchers may use Club boats on Club lakes where research needs warrant; arrangements should be made in advance through the HMWF Site Manager. Boats from 'off-Club' can be used only with prior permission and disinfection according to Club requirements.

D. NO MOTORIZED WATERCRAFT are permitted on Club waters. In rare instances, where specific research needs warrant, electric trolling motors may be permitted, but only with prior Club approval.

5. ***Incidental and visual impacts*:**

Research should be designed to minimize ‘casual’ impact due to foot or vehicular traffic around field sites. Research on the lands of the Huron Mountain Club should be designed to minimize visual impact. Researchers should be cognizant that HMWF researchers are effectively guests of the Huron Mountain Club, and act accordingly.