GUIDELINES FOR FIELD METHODS
For research sponsored by Huron Mountain Wildlife Foundation
Revised, 2022

General statement

The Huron Mountain Wildlife Foundation (HMWF) recognizes that field research entails some impacts on the research system. However, the relative freedom of the research area from direct effects of human manipulation – its 'reference ecosystem' status -- is one of its greatest values as a research site and calls for more rigorous constraints. Additionally, most HMWF research makes use of the lands of the Huron Mt. Club, and must recognize the Club's rules and interests. For these reasons, HMWF-sponsored research should be designed to minimize both functional and visual impacts on the research area, and some experimental research may be inappropriate.

All research proposals will be reviewed with these standards in mind, and may be denied if likely impacts are considered unacceptable, even if scientific merit is high.

The following guidelines should be considered in design and implementation of research. Proposals should specifically address these concerns in terms of 1) the scientific value of the work as proposed, and 2) 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 death or removal of study organisms is permissible only if such mortality is judged very unlikely to affect the status and dynamics of the population (this may not apply in the case of non-indigenous species). It is the researcher's obligation to make this case.

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

C. Proposals and research plans should be explicit about numbers of organisms to be taken and sample areas from which individuals are to be removed.

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. The Director of Research may require procedural revision or further consideration or explanation to address these concerns.

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

HMWF encourages long-term research, and this may require installations of samplers, sensors, or markers that will remain in the field between research visits.

A. *Installations should be as visually unobtrusive as possible* consistent with research requirements. Generally, *keep installations well away from trails, roads, and boat-houses* (> 100 m if possible OR so as to be invisible from these areas). If requirements of project make this impossible, consult with Director of Research.

B. *Any long-term installations should include a (small) all-weather notice including project name and primary investigator, mention of the Huron Mt. Wildlife Foundation as sponsor, and a phrase/title referring to purposes of 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* at the termination of their study (or sooner). 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. ***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 should 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 available 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 vehicles of any kind* are permitted off maintained roads on 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 research needs require, electric trolling motors may be permitted, but only after Club approval as to type of motor and time and location of use.

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

Research should be designed to minimize ‘casual’ impact due to foot or vehicular traffic to, from, and around field sites. Research on the lands of the Huron Mountain Club should be designed to minimize visual impact.