



January 5, 2012

Dear Researchers:

For the 27th consecutive year, the Hamilton County Park District has budget funds available in the Stewardship Department for funding of contractual research projects conducted in its parks. The Park District operates a regional park system in southwestern Ohio with 21 parks totaling more than 16,000 acres containing diverse natural habitats.

We extend an invitation to you and/or your graduate students to submit written proposals by the deadline of **January 30, 2012**. Application guidelines and a prioritized list of preferred research projects are enclosed.

If you have any specific questions prior to submitting your written proposals, please call me at (513) 728-3551, (extension 275) or Bob Mason, Stewardship Manager (extension 226).

Decisions involving the funding of proposals for 2012 will be made as soon as possible after review.

Yours truly,

HAMILTON COUNTY PARK DISTRICT

James Mundy

JAMES MUNDY
Stewardship Assistant

HAMILTON COUNTY PARK DISTRICT STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT

2012 CONTRACTUAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES

It is strongly suggested that qualified researchers submit proposals that are included on this list of current research needs. Proposals addressing these needs will be given highest priority by the Park District's Review Committee. If you are interested in submitting a written proposal for one of the projects on the priority list, call James Mundy, Stewardship Manager Assistant (extension 275), or Bob Mason, Stewardship Manager (extension 226), at (513) 728-3551 for more details before proceeding. Quality project proposals focusing on research topics not included on the priority list will also be accepted and considered for funding.

1. Floristic Quality Assessment Index (FQAI) of 100 acre Newberry Wildlife Sanctuary

Apply pre-determined FQAI sampling (see staff for detail) for rapid assessment of floristic quality at Newberry Wildlife Sanctuary. Sampling must be done in spring, summer and late summer periods in previously mapped habitat units. End goal for this project will be to provide a sampling method that can be applied in all 12,000 acres of natural area in the Park District. Stewardship staff will assist by providing GIS cover shapefiles, assistance in geo-referencing the sample plots, and collecting plant data. This would include the creation of a guide detailing step by step procedures, and QA/QC for maintaining consistency in future FQAI surveys. Candidates must utilize GPS with 3-5 meter accuracy, and submit final data in GIS shapefile format.

2. Fish Population Sampling

Electro-fishing survey of Campbell Lakes. Total surface acreage of 62 acres in 4 gravel pit lakes. Enumerate species, record total length to the nearest millimeter, weight to the nearest gram, DELT anomaly rate, and collect scales for aging on game species. Turn raw data and scales over to Hamilton County Park District staff for analysis. The successful proposal will describe measures to be taken to avoid transport of aquatic nuisance species to this site.

Data to be submitted in Microsoft Excel or Access format.

3. Vascular Plant (Herbaceous and Woody) Inventories in Cover Mapping units already established by Park District Personnel

List should be compiled by habitat type, abundance, bloom date, family, scientific name and common name for each habitat unit. Ohio endangered, threatened, potentially threatened, rare or special interest species should be noted on GPS unit. Separate lists of problem exotic species and locations should also be mapped. Recommendations for future management should be provided following the Taxonomy of Gleason & Cronquist. Candidates must utilize GPS with 3-5 meter accuracy, and submit final data in GIS shapefile format.

4. **Remote Sensing to Assess Invasive Bush Honeysuckle Stocking Density in Hamilton County Park District**

Use remote sensing techniques/satellite imagery/GIS to assess invasive bush honeysuckle stocking density in Hamilton County Park District. Project includes acquisition of digital images of sufficient resolution, and GIS analysis to provide a cover map of this invasive shrub. Final product due to the Park District will include digital images and files compatible with ArcGIS software.

HAMILTON COUNTY PARK DISTRICT STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT

2012 CONTRACTUAL RESEARCH APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Project Proposals Must Include:

1. Title and clear statement of purpose.
2. Complete description of the research project with an explanation of study design and analytical methods to be utilized.
3. Agreement to meet mid-term report deadline of August 1, 2012 and a final report deadline of November 15, 2012, including a copy on a CD of the final report.
4. Explanation of the specific benefits to the Hamilton County Park District. This should be as detailed as possible.
5. Maximum two-page profile of all individuals performing the work.
6. Complete breakdown of budget costs, including any overhead. Please make the budget figures as specific and detailed as possible. Overhead for indirect costs is not to exceed 5%.
7. Reimbursement for travel not to exceed 55.5¢ per mile as of 12/7/12.
8. Students are required to submit an authorized statement from their faculty advisor.
9. All researchers must abide by Park District research guidelines.
10. All research project proposals must be submitted to the Hamilton County Park District by the deadline of: **4:30 p.m. - January 30, 2012**
11. Any required ODNR animal and plant collecting permits are the responsibility of the research applicant.

Hamilton County Park District NATURAL AREAS RESEARCH GUIDELINES



The Hamilton County Park District invites qualified researchers in the natural sciences to pursue various research projects in its parks and nature preserves. The philosophy of the Park District is that preserved natural areas should be used as outdoor laboratories for scientific study of flora and fauna. However, because conservation of natural resources is the highest priority of the Hamilton County Park District and since the Park District acts as a resource steward for citizens of Hamilton County, the following guidelines have been established:

1. Proposals for all research projects must be submitted in writing to the Stewardship Manager prior to the beginning of the actual work. The proposal must include the researcher's institution, supervisor's name, purpose, methods, funding source, location, expected time frame, and a signed copy of these guidelines. All proposals will be reviewed by the Park District's Research Committee. They will submit their recommendations for approval or disapproval to the Director if specimen collection is requested.
2. Preferred areas of research include species inventories, population studies and habitat evaluation work. Results of such studies are of benefit to the Park District's natural areas and land management programs. Other types of studies may also be approved.
3. An executive summary or copy of the research results in digital form must be received by the Stewardship Manager within six months after the project's completion. If the project requires more than six months to complete, bi-annual reports are required. Any publication of results must also be reported to the Park District. Failure to file reports on time will result in denial of future research privileges. Please note that all final reports must be submitted in a PC digital format or as a PDF either on a CD or by email. A hard copy may also be sent. If not a PDF, text should be in Microsoft Word, Rich Text form, or WordPerfect. Spreadsheet data should be in Excel format and graphics should be in jpg or tif format. Mapping data should be in Arcview Shape files or AutoCAD 14.
4. Projects unlikely to receive approval include those requiring habitat damage or removal of specimens from the Parks. Park By-Laws must be followed during the study. Photographic documentation should take the place of voucher specimens whenever possible.
5. Written permission of the Park District is required to remove herbaceous plants from the parks. Any plants removed from the Parks must be stored in a recognized and accessible herbarium location. Herbarium specimens of species currently endangered or threatened within Ohio cannot be collected.

6. Written permission of the Director is required to mark and trap wildlife. Marking and trapping must be done humanely and by methods commonly accepted by the scientific community. Snap-trapping of animals is not permitted.
7. Researchers must abide by all State laws, including permit regulations, and have current permits where so required. Copies of permits must be submitted to the Stewardship Manager prior to beginning of work.
8. Proposals will be evaluated based upon their consistency with Park District goals and management. Denial of a proposal does not mean it is not scientifically valid, nor that the researcher is not qualified; only that the research can not be allowed because it is not appropriate in a Park District situation. We encourage the researcher to apply to do other projects, provided that the denial was not based upon an infraction of #3 above.
9. The Park District reserves the right to withdraw research permission if, once it has begun, the research is found to be detrimental to the Park District.
10. A signed letter from the Stewardship Manager giving approval to conduct research must be carried by the researcher as proof for Park Rangers to determine if the person has necessary approval.
11. If collecting of plant or animal specimens or live trapping is part of the proposal, a signed letter of approval from the Park Director must also be carried. The researcher must sign a copy of these rules as an indication that he/she understands them and will comply with them.

I, the undersigned, have read the foregoing and accept the conditions set there in this.

Signature

Date

Research Collecting Guidelines

In an effort to facilitate the research process and to support the Parks District's mission "to preserve and protect," these guidelines were developed to help researchers in the field decide when collecting a species is appropriate and when it is not. It is widely accepted across the world to collect voucher specimens for identification purposes and to deposit them in a collection for later verification and study. This process is not always necessary for proper identification and therefore the process may need to change with the times. The question we must ask ourselves is "when collecting a specimen for scientific purposes poses a threat to a population, should we still collect it?" The Hamilton County Park District needs to consider our parks and preserves as the only existing oasis left. Species that are not considered rare to other places in the state or country might be rare to our area and we need to treat them as such. For this reason it is our responsibility to produce a comprehensive collection policy for all research conducted on Hamilton County Park District Property.

The following is a list of proposed guidelines that are designed to stir discussion among our research committee and help facilitate a list that can be adopted by all.

1. When dealing with rare or uncommon species photo documentation is the preferred method for identification purposes on Hamilton County Park District property.
2. Rare or even uncommon species as voucher specimens on HCPD property shall not be collected unless there are three separate, distinct and healthy populations which contain at least 50 individuals at each location or one population with over 200 individuals. It is the responsibility of the researcher to submit in writing to the Land Manager or other authorized person for permission to collect a voucher specimen for scientific purposes. The letter must also explain why a photo will not be sufficient and where the specimen will be stored. (a letter submitted does not imply permission is granted)
3. Voucher specimens for common species can be taken for identification purposes as long as the species population is widespread throughout the Park District and a photo alone is not sufficient for proper identification.
4. The collection of any exotic or invasive species can be collected and or removed by any researcher without written permission. A policy of non-release of these species should also be required unless release and recapture is part of a mark/recapture population survey.
5. Animal trapping for research purposes must be done humanley. Traps must be set in the late evening and checked the following morning to reduce stress and or death brought on by excessive heat or dehydration. Animals removed from the site, must be returned to the area of capture. Description must also include how vertebrate would be restored (released) into the original habitat – this can only be done if the vertebrate is physically capable of surviving (suffering no ill effects of its capture whether physical or chemical) and the release is permitted by not only the HCPD Land Managers, but by the State and Federal authorities. (i.e. Ohio

Department of Natural Resources / Division of Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

1. Any researcher expecting to capture any vertebrates must have not only permission from HCPD, but is responsible for obtaining the proper scientific collecting permits from the state and federal agencies. (Ohio Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). The researcher must have all permits prior to any trapping, capture or collection.
2. All research proposals must detail the capture and restraint methods, and caging specifications for all vertebrates to be used.
3. A detailed description of any chemical anesthesia, chemical agent testing, and any mode (either chemical or physical) of euthanasia. These methods must meet the current guidelines set by the animal care and use standards of the American Veterinary Medical Association.