

GUIDELINES FOR STUDY PROPOSALS

Thank you for your interest in conducting research at White Sands National Park. These guidelines articulate the requirements for needed to submit a study proposal to the park.

Proposals should include each of the required information items listed below, in enough detail that an educated non-specialist can understand exactly what you plan to do. If you have already prepared a relevant proposal for a funding application, work plan, formal agreement, or similar document, then your original proposal likely will satisfy National Park Service (NPS) proposal requirements.

The primary area where new information may be necessary concerns the ability of the park to assess what, if any, impacts your research may have on park resources. You should compare your original proposal to these guidelines to be certain that you have provided all the required information. If additional information is required, you can provide it to the research permitting coordinator as a supplement to your proposal, as appropriate. If a required topic does not apply to your proposed study, simply list the topic and write “non-applicable.”

The length of your proposal depends primarily on the complexity of the work planned. In some cases, a proposal may consist of 1-2 pages for a study expected to have no significant impact on park resources or visitor experiences. Proposals for lengthy or complex research problems, for extensive collecting, and for work with special status species of sensitive cultural resources are typically longer, more detailed, and well-organized. Incomplete, disorganized, or illegible proposals will be returned for revision.

I. STUDY PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Title

B. Date of proposal

C. Investigators

Provide the name, title, address, telephone number, email address, and institutional affiliation of the principal investigator and all additional investigators listed in the proposal.

D. Table of contents

Recommended for long or complex proposals

E. Abstract

Provide a brief summary description of the proposed project. Include up to five keywords that can be used to quickly identify the proposal subject (i.e. microbiology, geology, ecology).

2. OVERVIEW

Summarize the proposed project by describing the problem or issue being investigated as well as any previous pertinent research.

A. Statement of issue

Describe the issue to be investigated and its importance and relevance to science and to the park. Provide relevant background information that clarifies the need for the project and why it is valuable for the research and/or collecting to be conducted in the park.

B. Literature summary

Summarize relevant literature regarding the issue, problem, or questions to be investigated.

C. Scope of study

Describe the overall geographic and scientific scope of the project.

D. Intended use of results

Describe how the products will be used, including any anticipated commercial use.

3. OBJECTIVES/HYPOTHESES TO BE TESTED

Describe the specific objectives of the proposed project. Where appropriate, the objectives should be stated as specific hypotheses to be tested.

4. METHODS

Describe how the proposed methods and analytical techniques will achieve the study objectives or test the stated hypothesis/question. Provide pertinent literature citations.

A. Description of study area

Clearly describe the study area in terms of park name(s), geographic location(s), and place names. Provide UTM coordinate information (if known prior to the conducting the study) in NAD83 HARN, as appropriate. Indicate whether your work will take place in an area designated or managed as wilderness by the NPS.

B. Procedures

Describe the proposed study design that addresses the stated objectives and hypotheses. Explain the methods and protocols to be employed in the field and laboratory.

C. Collections

Describe the type, size, and quantity of specimens or materials to be collected, sampled, or captured, and your plans to remove them from the collecting site. If you are aware specimens of the proposed types already exist in a repository, explain why additional collecting is necessary. Provide scientific nomenclature where possible. Provide information on all other applicable federal or state permits where required.

D. Analysis

Explain how the data from the study will be analyzed to meet the stated objectives or test the hypotheses. Include any statistical techniques or mathematical models necessary to the understanding of the analysis.

E. Schedule

Provide a schedule that includes start of project, approximate dates or seasons of fieldwork, analysis, reporting, and completion dates.

5. PRODUCTS

A. Publications and reports

Describe the expected publications or reports that will be generated from this study.

B. Collections

Describe the proposed disposition of collected specimens or materials. If you propose that the NPS lend the specimens or samples to a non-NPS institution for long-term storage, identify that institution and give a brief justification for this proposal.

C. Data and other materials

Describe any other products to be generated as part of the project, such as photographs, maps, models, handouts, exhibits, software presentations, raw data, GIS coverages, or videos, and the proposed disposition of these materials. If data are to be collected from the public as part of this study, provide a copy of the data collection instrument (survey, questionnaire, interview, protocol, etc.).

6. LITERATURE CITED

Include full bibliographic citations for all reports and publications referenced in the proposal.

7. QUALIFICATIONS

Provide a background summary or curriculum vitae for the principal investigator and other investigators listed in the proposal. Identify their training and qualifications relevant to the proposed project and their ability to conduct field activities in the environment of the proposed study area. Describe previous research and collecting in NPS areas, including study and permit numbers if available.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AND SPECIAL CONCERNS

Provide information on the following topics where applicable. Attach copies of any supporting documentation that will facilitate processing of your application, such as other required federal and state permits, copies of peer reviews, letters of support and funding commitments, and certifications. Collection of information from the public when federal funds are used may require approval from the office of Management and Budget (OMB). Upon your request, the NPS Social Science Program will advise you on the steps needed to obtain this approval.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION AND SPECIAL CONCERNS CONTINUED

A. Safety

Describe any known potentially hazardous activities, such as, rock climbing, aircraft use, wilderness travel, Wildlife capture, handling or immobilization, use of explosives, etc.

B. Access to study sites

Describe the proposed method and frequency to travel to and within the study site(s). Explain any need to enter restricted areas. Describe duration, location, and number of participants for planned backcountry camping.

C. Use of mechanized and other equipment

Describe any field equipment, markers, or supply caches by types, number, and location. Explain how long they are to be left in the field. If there is a need to use these materials in restricted areas, explain why and describe the alternatives that were considered.

D. Chemical use

Identify chemicals and hazardous material that you propose using within the park. Indicate the purpose, method of application, and amount to be used. Describe plans for storage, transfer, and disposal of these materials and describe steps to remediate accidental releases into the environment. Attach copies of Material Safety Data Sheets.

E. Ground disturbance

Describe the type, location, area, depth, number, and distribution of expected ground disturbing activities, such as soil pits, cores, stakes, or latrines. Describe plans for site restoration of significantly affected areas. Proposals that entail ground disturbance may require an archaeological survey and special clearance prior to approval of the study. You can help reduce the extra time that may be required to process such a proposal by providing UTM coordinate information for each ground disturbance area.

F. Animal welfare

If the study involves vertebrate animals, describe your protocol for any capture, holding, marking, tagging, tissue sampling, or other handling of these animals (including the training and qualifications of personnel relevant to animal handling and care). If your institutional animal welfare committee has reviewed your proposal, please include a photocopy of their recommendations. Describe alternatives considered, and outline procedures to be used to alleviate pain or distress. Include contingency plans to be implemented in the event of accidental injury to or death of the animal.

G. NPS assistance

Describe any NPS assistance needed to complete the proposed study, such as use of equipment or facilities or assistance from staff.

II. REQUIRED PERMITS AND DOCUMENTATION

1. GENERAL PERMITS

A. Research and Collecting Permit

Required for all studies and specimen collecting within NPS areas.

B. Certificate of Insurance

Required for studies and specimen collected within NPS areas. Requirements include written proof of general liability and accidental injury/death insurance covering all individuals participating in field studies (employees and volunteers). For legally self-insured entities, including federal and state agencies, a signed statement by a knowledgeable authority indicating self-insurance and Workers Compensation coverage of employees and volunteers will suffice. Other applicants should provide a photocopy of their current certificate of insurance. Certificates of insurance, which list the insured organization and the limits of coverage, can be obtained from your insurance agency. Approval for certain activities may be denied on the basis of insufficient insurance (\$1 million general liability coverage recommended).

2. PERMITS FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES

A. Archaeological Resources Protection Act Permit (ARPA Form DI-1927)

Required for archaeological or cultural resource studies that propose ground disturbing activities.

B. Assessment of Effect on Cultural Resources (Form 1 0-58)

Required for review of archaeological site location data and site surveys without collection or excavation.

3. PERMITS NEEDED FOR ACCESS TO RESTRICTED LOCATIONS WITHIN THE PARK

A. Aviation Permit

Required for helicopter or airplane flights above or into White Sands National Park. Aircraft use is discouraged when other alternatives are possible.

B. Backcountry Use Permit

Required for all overnight camping.

C. Filming Area Access Permit

Required for access to West Filming area.

4. PERMITS ISSUED OR REQUIRED BY OTHER AGENCIES

A. Bird Banding and Salvage Permit (US Fish and Wildlife Service)

Required for capture, tagging, or marking of live birds and for salvage of dead specimens.

B. Endangered Species Permit

NPS permits for work with endangered species are only valid when attached to a current USFWS permit. If your work will involve endangered species, please provide a photocopy or PDF file of your USFWS permit with your application for an NPS Scientific Research and Collecting permit.

C. Migratory Bird Scientific Collecting Permit (USFWS)

Required for taking of migratory birds, nests, or eggs.

D. Native Plant Collecting Permit (New Mexico Department of Agriculture)

Required for transport of native plants protected under state laws.

E. OMB Survey Approval (Federal Office of Management and Budget)

Required for federally funded public surveys (e.g. visitor surveys).

F. Scientific Collecting Permit (New Mexico Game and Fish Department)

Required to collect and transport fish and wildlife protected under state laws.

5. PERMITS FOR ACTIVITIES ON ADJACENT FEDERAL LANDS

Contact the responsible land management agency directly regarding permits for scientific activities on federal lands outside park boundaries.

Federal Lands that share boundaries with White Sands National Park include:

A. White Sands Missile Range

Website: www.wsmr.army.mil

B. Holloman Air Force Base

Website: www.holloman.af.mil

C. Bureau of Land Management

Website: https://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Las_Cruces_District_Office.html

III. White Sands National Park Specific Conditions

A. Missile Test Closures

The park is adjacent to an active military test range that conducts missile tests on a regular basis. Many of these test impact park operations and restrict access to areas in the park during missile tests. During missile closures, there may be no access to your proposed study location. You must review the missile test schedule in advance and be flexible with your field days. Missile test closures happen on average once a week for several hours per test.

B. Closed and Restricted Access Areas Within the park

1. Safety Corridor Closure for the First Four Miles of Dunes Drive.

This area is currently closed to public entry. Study proposals for this location will not be approved.

2. Co-use area

3. Lake Lucero