

RPRS site FAQ

Q: What is the purpose of the RPRS web site?

A: The RPRS web site enables:

anyone to review synopses of the objectives and findings of scientific studies conducted previously in parks.

potential investigators to apply for permission to conduct natural or social science studies within a specific unit of the U.S. National Park System.

potential investigators to review permit application requirements and field work restrictions before applying for permission to conduct a study

investigators granted permission to conduct studies within parks to more easily provide the required annual accomplishment report (Investigator's Annual Report).

anyone to search and review the types of scientific activities park managers are most interested in attracting.

Q: How do I obtain technical assistance in the use of this system?

A: For technical assistance with this system please contact Bill Commins, National Park Service, Natural Resource Information Division via email at Bill_Commins@nps.gov or phone (202) 513-7166 (Eastern Time Zone).

Q: How will the U.S. National Park Service track my permit applications, permits, and project accomplishments?

A: Park research coordinators will assign a unique Study Number to each new scientific study permitted by the park. All permits and annual accomplishment reports related to the study will be linked by the Study Number over the life of the study.

APPLICATION FAQ

Q: What are the application procedures and requirements for a scientific research and collecting permit?

A: [National Park Service application procedures and requirements for scientific research and collecting permits](#)

Q: What are the guidelines to researchers for preparing a study proposal?

A: [Guidelines to researchers for study proposals:](#)

Q: What are the general National Park Service conditions for permitted scientific studies?

A: [National Park Service general conditions for scientific research and collecting permit](#)

Q: Do I need to contact park research coordinators to tell them I have submitted an application in this system?

A: No. When you submit a new application in this system, the RPRS will automatically send an electronic message to the research coordinator at the park you selected. The message will explain that the new application has been submitted to the park and will encourage the research coordinator to begin the review process. If the application remains in the system longer than 15 days without being reviewed, RPRS will automatically send a reminder message to the park research coordinator.

Q: Can I apply to conduct the same study in more than one park?

A: Yes. When you submit a new application into this system, you may use that application as a template to submit additional applications additional parks for a permit for the same study. If you respond "Yes", information from your initial permit application will be used to create a draft application for the additional park you designate. You then will need to adjust information in the draft application as may be appropriate to tailor the information to the circumstances of the new park. In most cases, staff at each individual park separately will analyze the proposed study and independently process the application. Different parks may respond differently to the same submitted project proposal because of differences between parks. Because of differences among parks, different parks within the U.S. National Park System have different resources and other factors that will affect approval of each request to conduct a scientific study, it is the responsibility of the applicant to review the park-specific conditions stipulated by each park before applying for a permit and to honor those conditions, as well as the General Conditions and any project conditions, if permission is granted.

Q: What if I cannot upload my peer reviews and/or study proposal?

A: If you are experiencing difficulties uploading application peer reviews or study proposals, you may still submit your online application. Once your application is submitted, you may send your attachments

via email to the research coordinator of the park you applied to. RPRS provides the contact information for the research coordinator at the following:

- 1) The confirmation page that confirms RPRS receipt of your submitted application also provides a link to the research coordinator's contact information.
- 2) The confirmation email that RPRS automatically sends you after you have submitted an application contains information for contacting the research coordinator for the park to which you applied.
- 3) You can look up the research coordinators contact information by searching the Park option from the "Search" menu on the RPRS home page.

Q: What can I do if a park refuses to issue a permit for my study?

A: You may consult with a Regional Science Advisor on reasons your application for a permit has been denied. The park should be able to tell you how to contact this person.

Q: Can I obtain a permit covering more than one year?

A: Yes. Depending on the study, a park may issue a single permit that remains valid for several years.

PERMIT FAQs

Q: Will I be required to take additional actions after receiving a permit from a park?

A: Yes. In most cases, you will need to sign a hardcopy of the permit in the appropriate signature block. You will then need to mail or FAX the permit to the park research office. Upon receipt of the permit you have signed, managers at the park will sign the permit, store a copy in their files, and return a final copy to you. You do not have a valid permit until you have received this final copy that contains both your and the park's signatures. You are responsible, as principal investigator, to ensure that you, co-investigators, and assistants understand and comply with all the terms and conditions associated with the permit.

In addition, park managers may ask you to "check-in" with staff at a specific office or entrance station prior to initiating field work. You may be asked to document the license number of the vehicle(s) you will be using within the park at that time. Staff at some parks may use this opportunity to provide up-to-date information that may affect your field work activities or the safety of your group (weather warnings, road hazards, hazardous animal warnings, fire hazard warnings, area closures, etc.).

Q: Will I be expected to carry a copy of my permit in the field?

A: Yes. You should carry a copy of the final permit in the field at all times. You should also ensure that co-investigators and study assistants carry a copy of the permit when they are conducting field work associated with your study. You should display this permit to park staff as requested.

IAR FAQs

Q: Should I notify NPS staff that a correction is needed in previously saved Investigator's Annual Report?

A: Yes. Please contact the appropriate park research coordinator and explain the change that is needed. If they fail to act on your request within a reasonable period of time, please communicate the problem to the manager of this system at Bill_Commins@nps.gov.

Q: What subjects/disciplines can an authorizing official choose to characterize your study when issuing a permit?

A: The authorizing official assesses the essence of your study and chooses one entry from the following list of available subjects/disciplines to characterize it:

Air Pollution Effects

Air Quality

Animal Communities / Wildlife

Anthropology / Ethnography

Archeology

Atmosphere / Climate / Weather

Birds / Ornithology

Cave / Karst

Coastal / Marine Systems

Contaminants / Hazardous Materials

Ecology (Aquatic, Marine, Terrestrial)

Exotic / Invasive Animals

Exotic / Invasive Plants

Fire (Behavior, Ecology, Effects)

Fish / Ichthyology

Geo-Sedimentology / Stratigraphy

Geochemistry (inc. Minerals / Petrology)

Geography

Geology / General

Geomorphology / Surface Processes

Geophysics / Seismology

Geostructure / Tectonics

Geothermal / Volcanology

Glaciers

Herpetology (Amphibians / Reptiles)

History - Cultural

History - Natural

Information Systems (Non-Spatial)

Integrated Pest Mgmt.

Inventory Natural Resources

Invertebrates (Insects, Other)

Land Use - Agriculture

Land Use - Mining, oil, gas

Land Use / Forestry

Land Use / Rangeland

Lichens

Mammals

Management (Administration)

Maps / Cartography / GIS

Microbes

Monitor Natural Resources

Mosses / Bryophytes

Night Sky / Light Pollution

Other

Paleontology

Petrology / Mineralogy

Plant Communities (Vegetation)

Protista (Including Algae, Fungi)

Recreation / Aesthetics

Restoration - Cultural

Restoration - Natural

Social Science

Soils

Soundscapes / Natural Quiet

Threatened / Endangered / Rare Species

Toxicology

Vascular Plants

Veterinary Sciences

Viruses/Prions

Visitor Impacts

Water / Hydrology

Water Quality

Water Resources

Watershed Management / Assessment

Wetlands / Floodplains