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Standard Operating Procedure 14: Volunteer Monitoring Program

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Standard Operating Procedure 14: Volunteer Monitoring Program

Volunteer Support of Wetland Monitoring

The wetland biologist manages a group of volunteers that operate under the auspices of the park's volunteer program. The Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CUVA) manages the Volunteers-in-Parks (VIP) program in coordination with the National Park Service. The Conservancy's volunteer office is responsible for overall management and direction of the park's volunteer program and assists with recruitment, training, recognition, and communications. The wetland biologist trains and supervises the volunteers and handles daily correspondence and time reporting to the volunteer office.

Refer to the *Volunteer Supervisor Manual* for specific information regarding the Volunteers-In-Parks Program, including roles and responsibilities of the volunteer office, volunteer staff, advisory committee, volunteer supervisor, and the volunteers, as well as step-by step instructions for working with volunteers. The manual is located on the CUVA sharepoint:

<http://inpmwroxshare.nps.doi.net:10234/CUVA%20Policies/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Each volunteer should have digital (or hard copy if requested) copy of the *Volunteer Manual for Cuyahoga Valley National Park*. A link to the Handbook for Volunteers-in-Parks of CVNP is located on the Conservancy's website:

http://www.cvnps.org/UserFiles/Files/volunteer_handbook_0810.pdf

Serving as a Volunteer Forms

New volunteers must sign a volunteer services agreement form (Attachment 14.1), which provides the volunteer with the same coverage as a federal employee for the purposes of tort claims and injury compensation only. The original is sent to the volunteer office for retention. In addition, volunteers should receive a take-home copy of the position description (Attachment 14.2) and job safety analysis (Attachment 14.3). These forms are updated periodically.

Training

At a minimum, volunteers must attend 1) training specific to the position (office and field) offered by the wetland biologist, 2) first responder training offered through the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley, and 3) radio training offered through the communications center or by the wetland biologist. First responder training covers Citizen CPR (hands-only), first aid, and protection from bloodborne pathogens. Additional optional training / learning opportunities are provided periodically.

Scheduling

After field training, volunteers are ready to decide whether to adopt a wetland (and specific groundwater wells) for the year. Most volunteers select one wetland with 3-5 wells to monitor either weekly or biweekly. Once committed to the program for the season, volunteers are provided with:

1. An access code to the Savacoal House.

2. A combination to unlock the radio cabinet.
3. An invite to view and post monitoring schedules to the CVNP wetland monitoring calendar.
4. A volunteer shirt that can be picked up at the Conservancy's volunteer office.

Time keeping

Cuyahoga Valley National Park transitioned to Volgistics, a VIP time-keeping database, in 2015. The URL for the CUVA database is <https://www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll/?from=223246>. New volunteers should receive a User's Guide, Login Name, and Password from the Volunteer Office to begin using Volgistics immediately. Volunteers are required to fill out certain sections of their profile and continue to log field hours after returning from a monitoring visit.

Use of the Savacoal House

The Savacoal House (5795 Stanford Rd. Peninsula, OH 44264) is the official building used to host volunteers and organize volunteer efforts. All volunteers are provided individualized access codes to the building, providing unrestricted access to support volunteer work. A shelf is reserved for the wetland volunteers where monitoring materials are staged and a mailbox for correspondence is located. The building also has a meeting room, restrooms, picnic tables, computers, a copier, field guides, a refrigerator, and a microwave. All of these items are available and encouraged for volunteer use. Parking is limited in front of the house, so volunteers should be encouraged to use the Boston Visitor Center or the Boston Overflow lot for parking.

Volunteer Wetland Monitoring Procedures

Field Preparation

1. Pick up equipment at Savacoal House.
 - a. hydrolite or hydrobuzzer
 - b. equipment pack
 - c. data form
2. Sign out a radio. All volunteers receive a combination for the radio cabinet at the Savacoal House.
3. Complete Radio Check (Attachment 14.4)
 - a. "731 (pause) 630 LAST NAME (e.g. Bennett)"
 - b. Wait for the communication center to say "630 Bennett"
 - c. Say "Radio check"
 - d. The communication center will respond with "loud and clear at TIME (military form)" unless there is trouble hearing you.
 - e. **Note:** If an unresolvable communication issue is encountered, use another radio or cell phone.
4. Before departing from the Savacoal house, clean boots with a 2% bleach solution spray that covers the entire boot on the outside. This slows the spread of invasive plants and fungus from one wetland to the next.

Field Navigation

1. Drive to first parking location
2. Notify the communications center either by radio (preferred) or by cell phone at parking location before hiking to wells.

- a. "731 (pause) 630 Bennett"
 - b. Wait for the communication center to say "630 Bennett"
 - c. "We're parked at X (i.e., intersection of Riverview and Brookside Roads) checking groundwater wells X (i.e., 1044 and 1108) at X (i.e., Pleasant Valley)."
 - d. The communication center will respond with the time (military form).
 - e. **Note:** The radio may not always transmit clearly at some sites. Volunteers may have to walk in a ways before reattempting.
3. Navigate to groundwater well/s accessed from that parking location.

Measure Water Levels

1. Find arrow on the well pointing north.
2. Measure the height from the top of the well to the ground (outside of the well).
 - a. Hold the tape measure flat against the outside of the well with the hydrolight or hydrobuzzer sensors against the ground surface.
 - b. Hold the tape as vertically level as possible.
 - c. Pull the top of the tape tight enough to get the slack out.
 - d. Measure to the very top of the well just above the north arrow to the nearest millimeter. Record the measurement in meters.
3. Measure the height from the top of the well to the water (inside the well).
 - a. Lower the sensors down the well slowly.
 - b. The sensor will transmit a signal to the LED (light up) or buzzer (sound) when the nails hit the water surface.
 - c. Slightly pull back on the tape until the beeping stops or the light goes away and relower it in millimeter increments until it turns back on. This indicates the depth of water in the well.
 - d. Record the measurement.
4. Before leaving the wetland, try to remove soil and/or seeds that may be attached to clothing and boots. Rinse boots in water to help this process if standing water is nearby.

Check-out

1. Check out after safe return to vehicle
 - a. "731 (pause) 630 Bennett".
 - b. Wait for the communication center to say "630 Bennett".
 - c. "We're leaving XXX (Pleasant Valley)".
 - d. The communication center will respond with the time (i.e., military time).
2. **Note:** If you forget to check out, you may receive follow up calls from the communications center to make sure that you are OK. Please remember to check out even if it is late.
3. Upon completion of the well monitoring, return to the Savacoal House.
 - a. Return well monitoring equipment to the original location. Notify the project manager with equipment concerns.
 - b. Log the time worked in Volgistics.

Attachment 14.1. Volunteer Services Agreement Form

OMB 0596-0080

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AGREEMENT—NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES			
1. ☐ INDIVIDUAL		2. ☐ GROUP	
3. NAME OF AGENCY Cuyahoga Valley National Park		4. AGREEMENT #	
5. NAME OF VOLUNTEER (First, Last)		6. U.S. CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT ☐ Yes ☐ No, list visa type _____	
7. NAME OF GROUP		8. NAME OF GROUP CONTACT (First, Last)	
9. STREET ADDRESS		10. CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	
11. EMAIL ADDRESS	12. PHONE Home: Mobile:	13. AGE ☐ Under 15 ☐ 15 - 18 ☐ 19 - 25 ☐ 26 - 35 ☐ 36 - 54 ☐ 55 and Older	
14. ETHNICITY & RACE (Optional): Please report both ethnicity and race and tell us if you are a veteran or have a disability. Multiracial respondents may select two or more races. This information will inform our understanding of diversity and inclusion among the volunteer force in the natural and cultural resource areas.			
14a. Ethnicity (Select one): ☐ Hispanic or Latino ☐ Not Hispanic or Latino	14b. Race (Select one or more, regardless of ethnicity): ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Asian ☐ Black or African American ☐ White ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		14c. Are you a Veteran? ☐ Yes ☐ No
			14d. Do you have disability? ☐ Yes ☐ No
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION			
15. NAME (Last, First)	16. PHONE Home: Mobile:	17. EMAIL ADDRESS	
18. STREET ADDRESS	19. CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE		
GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL COMPLETES THIS SECTION			
20. AGENCY CONTACT NAME (Last, First) Bingham, Sonia		21. AGENCY CONTACT EMAIL & PHONE Sonia_Bingham@nps.gov (330) 342-0764	
22. REIMBURSEMENTS APPROVED: ☐ Yes ☒ No Type and Rate of Reimbursement:		23. VOLUNTEER POSITION/GROUP PROJECT TITLE: Wetland Monitor	
24. Description of service to be performed. Provide a brief abstract of volunteer or service activity and the location of the volunteer activity, and attach description of service to be performed. Service description should include details such as time and schedule commitment, use of government vehicle, use of personal equipment and/or vehicle, skills required (note certifications if necessary), level of physical activity required, etc. If this is a group agreement, the leader is to provide the group name and attach a complete list of group participants or optional form 301b for each volunteer.			
VOLUNTEER/SERVICE ACTIVITY ABSTRACT Frog Watch: Volunteer will use their personal vehicle drive to a designated Frog Watch station once a month from February through August, shortly after dusk. The volunteer listens to and identifies all frog and toad calls heard and transferred to the Frog Watch USA data portal. Volunteers create their own schedule as long as data is collected once each month following established Frog Watch Protocols. Well Monitoring: Volunteer will hike to 1 or more wetland monitoring wells and take water level measurements with a measuring device and dataform on a regular schedule, determined by the volunteer. Wetland Monitors will be trained in Standard Operating Procedures, including radio communication, use of the Savacoal House, and safety guidelines for roadside parking, working in the field, and for hiking to and from sites. If the volunteer does not consent to being photographed or to the release of their photographic image, it is the responsibility of the volunteer to notify the on-site photographer and remove themselves from photo opportunities.			
25. Check all that apply: ☒ Description of service attached ☐ List of group participants/optional form 301b attached ☒ Job Hazard Analysis ☐ Valid Driver's License Verified (if required)			

Volunteer Service Agreement

OF301a

USDA-USDI-DOC-DOD

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR VOLUNTEER UNDER AGE 18		
26. PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN (First, Last)	27. PHONE Home: Mobile:	28. EMAIL ADDRESS
29. STREET ADDRESS	30. CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE	
31. I affirm that I am the parent/guardian of the above named volunteer. I understand that the agency volunteer program does not provide compensation, except as otherwise provided by law; and that the service will not confer on the volunteer the status of a Federal employee. I have read the attached description of the service that the volunteer will perform. I give my permission for _____ to participate in the specified volunteer activity. (NAME OF YOUTH)		
32. Parent/Guardian Signature		Date
VOLUNTEER & GROUP LEADER AFFIRMATION		
33. I understand that I will not receive any compensation for the above service and that volunteers are NOT considered Federal employees for any purpose other than tort claims and injury compensation. I understand that volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits. I also understand that either the government or I may cancel this agreement at any time by notifying the other party. I understand that my volunteer position may require a reference check, background investigation, and/or a criminal history inquiry in order for me to perform my duties. I understand that all publications, films, slides, videos, artistic or similar endeavors, resulting from my volunteer services as specifically stated in the attached job description, will become the property of the United States, and as such, will be in the public domain and not subject to copyright laws. I understand the health and physical condition requirements for doing the work as described in the job description and at the project location, and certify that the statements I have checked below are true: ☐ I or group leader know of no medical condition or physical limitation that may adversely affect my or members of the group ability to provide this service. If a group see attached OF301b. ☐ I or a member of the group have a medical condition or physical limitation that may adversely affect my ability to provide this service and have informed the Government Representative. If a member of a group see attached OF301b. ☐ I or group member do not consent to being photographed or to the release of my photographic image. If a member of a group see attached OF301b. I do hereby volunteer my services as described above, to assist in authorized activities at <u>Cuyahoga Valley National Park</u> and I agree to follow all applicable safety guidelines. See attached OF301b attached if a member of a group. (NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY)		
34. Signature of Volunteer or Group Leader		Date
The above-named agency agrees, while this arrangement is in effect, to provide such materials, equipment, and facilities that are available and needed to perform the service described above, and to consider you as a Federal employee only for the purposes of tort claims, liability and injury compensation to the extent not covered by your volunteer group, if any.		
35. Signature of Government Representative		Date
TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT		
36. Agreement Terminated Date:		Total Hours Completed:
37. Signature of Government Representative:		
PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT		
According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0596-0080. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. USDA, DOI, DOC and DOD prohibit discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.		
PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT		
Collection and use is covered by Privacy Act System of Records OPM/GOVT-1 and USDA/OP-1, and is consistent with the provisions of 5 USC 552a (Privacy Act of 1974), which authorizes acceptance of the information requested on this form. The data will be used to maintain official records of volunteers of the USDA and USDI for the purposes of tort claims and injury compensation. Furnishing this data is voluntary, however if this form is incomplete, enrollment in the program cannot proceed.		

Attachment 14.2. Position Description for the “Wetland Monitors” Volunteer Group

Cuyahoga Valley National Park Volunteer Program *Building a Community of Park Stewards*



Division: Resource Management

Volunteer Position Title: “Wetland Monitor” Well Monitoring Volunteer

Direct Supervisor(s): Sonia Bingham

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Volunteer will hike to 1 or more water table monitoring wells and take water level measurements with a measuring device and dataform.

RECRUITMENT PERIOD	MONTHS ACTIVE	SHIFTS AVAILABLE	TIME COMMITMENT
February - March each year	March – October	Flexible schedule	0.5 -2 hours for each well, including drive.

☐ Age Minimum: _____

☐ Good volunteer opportunity for families

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a part of the wetland monitoring program at Cuyahoga Valley National Park, water levels are monitored at selected wetlands throughout the park. Water level measurements are taken from water table wells constructed of PVC and well screen. Readings are taken at each site on a regular schedule from March through October. Volunteers are encouraged to adopt 1 or more sites, depending on where they live and the amount of time that they want to commit. The volunteer is not required to commit each week, as long as they propose a reliable schedule so that others (volunteers and employees) can take the missed measurements. There are a number of wetlands throughout the park to choose from. Volunteers will hike off trail to each well location using a map or GPS. They will have ample training and assistance to the site until they are comfortable with the routine.

Measurements include;

1. Distance from top of well (without the cap) while facing North, to the ground along the exterior of the well
2. Distance from top of well to water surface inside the well
3. If water levels are above ground, the distance from the top of the well to the surface on the exterior may be recorded.

Call: (330) 657-2296 • E-mail: volunteer@cvnpsa.org
Fax: (330) 657-2381 • Web: www.cvnpsa.org
Mail: 1403 W. Hines Hill Road, Peninsula, OH 44264
Location: 1571 Boston Mills Road, Peninsula



Cuyahoga Valley
National Park
Association

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Ease of access to the well sites is variable. Measurements should be taken during daylight hours in fair weather conditions. Field work may include exposure to high temperatures during the summer months, rough terrain, soft soil that is difficult to walk through, poison ivy, biting insects and wildlife encounters. Care should be taken to remain hydrated, and the use of personal protective equipment is required to minimize contact with plants and insects. Waterproof hiking boots or muck boots are a requirement for monitoring. Long-sleeves and pants are also encouraged, as well as eye protection (sunglasses). Volunteers are provided with a field bag that contains the necessary dataforms and measuring device. Many sites may require roadside parking, so research signs will be provided to display in volunteer vehicles. Also, the park communication center should be notified when a volunteer is entering and exiting a site.

REQUIRED TRAINING/LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Orientation, "Fundamentals: Becoming Stewards, an Introduction to National Park Service Volunteerism"
- First Responder
- Orientation to Rick Management and Radio Use
- Specific training and workshops provided by Sonia Bingham.

QUALIFICATIONS/SKILLS REQUIRED

Tolerance of field conditions (e.g., heat, cold, mosquitos, walking through wet vegetation), knowledge of CVNP roads or ability to read a map, comfort navigating to sites with a map or GPS, ability to read a measuring tape.

UNIFORM

Yes – volunteer shirt and hat will be provided

EVALUATION PROCESS

Attachment 14.3. Job Safety Analysis for Wetland Monitor Volunteers

JOB SAFETY ANALYSIS Volunteers In Parks Program	JOB TITLE: PAGE <u>1</u> OF <u>1</u> JSA Well Monitoring		DATE: <u> </u> <u> </u> NEW <u> </u> <u>X</u> <u> </u> REVISED January 2015	
	VIP NAME: Various volunteers	SUPERVISOR: Sonia Bingham	ANALYSIS BY: Sonia Bingham	
PARK/DIVISION: CUVA Resource Management	DISTRICT: Parkwide	WORK LOCATION: Parkwide	REVIEWED BY:	APPROVED BY:
REQUIRED AND/OR RECOMMENDED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT: Sturdy waterproof hiking boots or muck boots are required; Long-sleeved shirts, pants sunglasses and light gloves will reduce contact with plants & insects. Insect repellent and sunscreen may be desirable at certain times of the year. Carrying a radio or personal cell phone is required. Water and a first aid kit is also recommended.				
SEQUENCE OF BASIC JOB STEPS	POTENTIAL HAZARDS		RECOMMENDED ACTION OR PROCEDURE	
Drive to/from monitoring sites.	Normal traffic hazards		Exercise caution. Obey all traffic laws. Park well away from road edges	
Roadside parking	Oncoming traffic hazards		Place sign in window stating that vehicle belongs to a CVNP volunteer. Exercise caution. Park well away from road edges Notify communications center when entering / exiting site via radio or cell phone.	
Field conditions	Insect bites and stings		Wear extra PPE or use insect repellent, as desired. Pay attention to insect behavior (i.e. swarming) that may indicate presence of nest & avoid area.	
	Dehydration during summer months		Always carry a full water bottle. Avoid extreme conditions. Contact supervisor or communications center immediately if start to feel adverse.	
Hiking to and from sites	Normal environmental hazards associated with on and off trail hiking: soft ground, uneven surfaces, downed trees, slippery logs and soil, mud, standing water, loose leaves, steep slopes, rocks, and other		Move at speeds reasonable for conditions. Wear sturdy well fitted waterproof boots, preferably knee high muck boots. Pay attention for beaver chews and exercise caution when crossing logs or other obstructions. Avoid	

	natural or man made hazards may be encountered.	hazards by taking alternative routes. Pay attention to stream/river edges that can be loose. Never proceed if it appears to be dangerous. Carry radio/cell phone for emergency use.
	Disorientation	Always carry a map and a phone / radio. Make sure you are comfortable before visiting a site on your own. The route to certain sites can be marked by resource management, to assist with the relocation of remote wells.
Contact with park visitors	Questions and concerns	Direct any questions and / or concerns from other park visitors to the website for more information. http://www.nps.gov/cuva/naturescience/wetlands.htm They may also contact the project manager (330-342-0763 ext. 7).

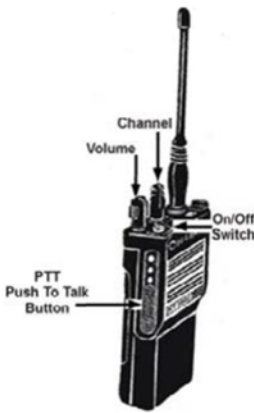
Attachment 14.4. Radio Communication Pocket Guide

National Park Service
 Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio



General Radio Procedure

Communication Center Dispatch: 731
 Volunteer radio number: 630 + Last name
 Seasonal staff radio number: 620 + Last name



- Turn radio on
- Set radio to Channel Two
- Adjust the volume so you can hear radio traffic
- Listen to make sure no one else is talking
- Press the *push to talk* (PTT) button when speaking
- Wait one second before speaking
- After speaking, release PTT button and listen for response
- Use plain English

National Park Service
 Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio



Radio Check-In/Check-Out Script

Say the person's number you are calling (e.g. Communication Center):	7-3-1
State your radio number:	6-3-0 + last name
Communication Center responds:	7-3-1
Volunteer says: "I am parked at <u>(address/intersection)</u> checking groundwater wells <u>(well #/s)</u> at <u>(wetland ID)</u> ."	
Communications Center responds:	15:33 (present time)

Important Numbers

Communication Center (731):	(440) 546-5945 or 1-800-433-1896
Science & Resource Management (600 series)	(330) 342-0764
Wetland Program Manager (603)	(330) 342-0764

IMPORTANT: When calling in on a phone (instead of a radio) always give your **Name** and **Phone Number** so Communication Center or Rangers can contact you, if necessary.