

Natural Resources FOUNDATION

of Wisconsin

Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin (NRF)

Foundation Guidelines for Events/Field Trips During COVID-19

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major effect on operations at the Foundation. This document aims to inform our ongoing response to the pandemic and to provide up-to-date guidance for those in our organization and the general public who plan, lead, and participate in our events.

Objectives

- Take the threat of COVID-19 seriously, and do our part to help protect public health
- Carry on our important conservation and educational work as much as we safely can at any given time
- Comply fully with all government orders and recommendations
- Enable both leaders and participants in NRF events to be and feel as safe as possible
- Provide a mechanism for adjusting and updating our guidelines as the situation changes
- Clarify the authority and responsibilities of the staff, leadership, and event leaders for decision-making, communicating, and complying with our event guidelines.

NRF-Sponsored Field Trips and Other Events

These guidelines cover all in person public events sponsored by NRF, which may include field trips, social events, and meet-ups. Most Field Trips are led by volunteer leaders, but the NRF organizes the events and maintains liability for them. As such the Foundation has a responsibility to ensure that these events are safe and in compliance with applicable government orders as well as recommendations by public health authorities while the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing.

Current NRF Event Safety Protocol

Until the COVID-19 pandemic is effectively over, NRF will maintain, update, and broadly communicate a 'Current NRF Event Safety Protocol' document. This document will be developed and approved based on both current government orders in effect and authoritative public health recommendations from both Centers for Disease Control and state authorities. The Safety Protocol will be reviewed periodically and updated as conditions, orders, and recommendations change.

The Safety Protocol will incorporate the following elements:

Applicable Jurisdiction

Although uniform guidelines are highly desirable, NRF holds Field Trips statewide within Wisconsin, parts of which may have different current orders and safety recommendations. Applicable orders at the county and municipality level may also take precedence, and event/Field Trip leaders will have responsibility for compliance with these local orders.

Many thanks to The Prairie Enthusiasts for sharing their COVID-19 policy ideas with us.

Event/Field Trip Cancellation or Postponement

Field Trips and events may be cancelled or postponed under the Current Safety Protocol. For example, indoor events might be cancelled or postponed while outdoor events are permitted. Whenever a Field Trip or event is canceled, NRF will alert any registered participants via email—registration fees to be refunded upon request only.

Attendance Limits, Pre-Registration, and Attendance List Requirements

Events may have attendance limits in accordance with current safety policies. If attendance limits are in place, pre-registration will be required for all events. An onsite attendance list with at least the email address and/or phone number of all participants must be returned to NRF after the event. In the case of Field Trips, our usual roster process will be in place.

Social Distancing Rules

Social distancing is the most critical practice for carrying out events safely during the pandemic. NRF will require the following social distancing rules at events, which may be updated as conditions change:

- No one should attend who has a fever or other symptoms, or an active COVID-19 infection.
- All leaders and participants should social distance least 6 feet apart (except for members of the same household).
- All leaders and participants are encouraged to bring and wear a face mask while at the event. This is to protect others and helps everyone feel safe.
- Everyone should wash or sanitize their hands before and after the event.
- Everyone should cough or sneeze away from others and cover their face appropriately.
- Avoid exchanging physical objects (e.g. pens and papers, binoculars, spotting scopes, tools, equipment, etc.). Where this is not possible, objects should be carefully sanitized before and after use.
- Do not share vehicles during an event, except between members of the same households.

Authority, Responsibility and Communications

The Current NRF Event Safety Protocol document will be written and updated by the Field Trip Director and will be approved before release by the Executive Director.

- The Operations Manager will be responsible for reviewing at least monthly current federal and state orders in effect and authoritative public health recommendations from both Centers for Disease Control and state authorities and will recommend updates to the Safety Protocol when conditions change significantly.
- The NRF Field Trip staff and Communications Coordinator will be responsible for communicating the Safety Protocol to the membership, leadership, and event leaders whenever updates are made.
- A copy of the Safety Protocol will always be made available in a prominent location on the NRF website's Field Trip page.
- Field Trip and NRF staff are responsible for overseeing that Field Trips and events are staying within attendance limits.
- Field Trip leaders are responsible for returning Field Trip rosters and enforcing social distancing rules under the Safety Protocol during events, as well as for alerting Field Trip staff so we can properly comply with applicable county or municipal orders.
- NRF staff event coordinators are responsible for ensuring appropriate pre-registration and an accurate listing of all event attendees is kept and returned to the NRF office.

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