



George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Parks,
Recreation & Conservation

Kathleen M. O'Connor
Commissioner

Kelly Turturro
Department of Environmental Conservation
New Paltz, New York
Susan.Booth-Binczik@dec.ny.gov
Cc: rose.trometer@dec.ny.gov

Dear Ms. Turturro,

Permission is granted for DEC Wildlife staff from the New Paltz office to perform small mammal surveys as described in your letter of request and submitted methodology at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation and Mountain Lakes Park before December 31st, 2023.

It is understood that sampling will include scat surveys and the setup of bait stations as described in methods 1-3 in the attached methodology. Pit fall traps or other lethal methods will NOT be carried out in Westchester County Parks. It is understood that two different bait station methodologies, seed traps and bucket camera traps, will be utilized. Seed traps consist of a waterproof container holding seeds which contains runways for small mammals to enter/exit. Runways can be swabbed for eDNA. Bucket camera traps consist of a 7-gallon bucket with 2.5-3 inch diameter hole on either side with a 3-inch diameter clear plastic pipe between them for small mammals and weasels to enter/exit. A camera will be affixed to the lid of the bucket and will capture pictures of animals that enter the tube. The tube itself will be swabbed for eDNA. Bucket camera traps will be baited with seeds and mealworms. Both types of bait stations will be sampled and restocked with bait after two weeks and then resampled and removed after one month.

Sampling of bait stations will include collecting four tablespoons of soil (one from each side of a bait station) which will be stored in a single Falcon tube. Any feces within bait stations will be collected and stored in a single Falcon tube. Runways will be swabbed with filter paper. The filter paper will then be placed in a single Falcon tube. Thus, three Falcon tubes will be collected for each individual bait station. Bucket camera trap sampling will additionally include SD card replacement. More detailed information about bait station construction, deployment, and sampling procedure can be found in the attached methodology.

It is understood that scat and sign surveys will be utilized in sites unsuitable for bait station deployment. Scat and sign surveys will include searching for scat, burrows, nests, runs, chewed vegetation, and food caches. Small mammal scat measuring up to .5 cm in diameter will be collected. Each scat pile will be collected in a separate, sterile Ziploc or Whirl-pak bag. Four tablespoons of soil will be collected from any burrow measuring up to 4 cm in diameter and stored in a Falcon tube. These soil samples will also be collected in runs if scat cannot be found. Additional information on scat and sign surveys can be found in the attached methodology.

It is understood that all samples collected will be stored in a cool, dark container until they are removed from Parks. It is understood that NO animals will be removed from Parks and that NO lethal trapping will occur. Scat, soil, photographs, and eDNA swabs will be the only samples collected and removed from Parks. It is additionally understood that sampling

will occur exclusively during daylight hours and will not interfere with the operations of the County of Westchester. DEC Wildlife staff should be in possession of a copy of this permit at all times when working in Parks.

Park staff should be notified in advance of dates their Park will be visited as well as of specific locations of traps. Taro Ietaka at Mountain Lakes Park and Dan Aitchison at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation can provide specific habitat/wildlife location information as needed. At the conclusion of the study, results from samples collected in Westchester County Parks should be made available to the County of Westchester.

We are in receipt of your Statement of Self Retention which satisfies insurance requirements.

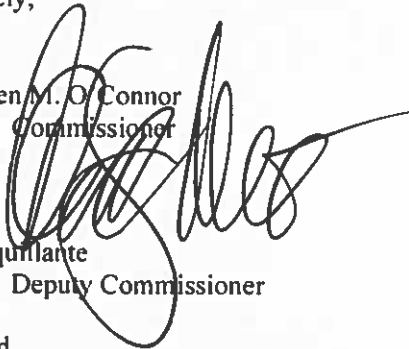
THE UNDERSIGNED IS OVER 21 YEARS OF AGE AND HAS READ THIS FORM AND AGREES TO COMPLY WITH ITS TERMS. HE/SHE AGREES TO BE RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER FOR THE USE AND CARE OF THE FACILITY. HE/SHE, ON BEHALF OF THE ABOVE NAMED ORGANIZATION DOES HEREBY COVENANT AND AGREE TO DEFEND, INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER AGAINST ANY AND ALL LIABILITY, LOSS DAMAGES, CLAIMS, OR ACTIONS (INCLUDING COSTS AND ATTORNEYS FEES) FOR BODILY INJURY AND/OR PROPERTY DAMAGE. TO THE EXTENT PERMISSIBLE BY LAW, ARISING OUT OF OR IN CONNECTION WITH THE ACTUAL OR PROPOSED USE OF THE COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER'S PROPERTY, FACILITIES AND/OR SERVICES BY YOUR ORGANIZATION.

THE UNDERSIGNED HAS READ THIS LETTER AND AGREES TO COMPLY WITH ITS TERMS AND PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INSURANCE.


Kelly Turturro, DEC Regional Director

We are happy to assist you and extend our best wishes for a successful project.

Sincerely,


Kathleen M. O'Connor
Commissioner

23-075

Neil Squillante
Deputy Commissioner

NAS/dd

Cc: Peter Tartaglia, First Deputy Commissioner
Jason Klein, Director of Conservation
Taro Ietaka, Conservation Supervisor
Dan Aitchison, Senior Curator of Wildlife
Jeff Main, Park Superintendent (Ward Pound Ridge Reservation)
Leah Cass, Curator of Natural Resources





Office of General Services

TO: Whom it may Concern

FROM: Leighann Y. Brown
Insurance Services Manager

SUBJECT: *Statement of Self Retention*

The General Liability exposures of the State of New York as well as those of the State Agencies are self retained. Suits for bodily injury and property damage are brought in the NY State Court of Claims, which is supported by a multi-million dollar annual appropriation.

Employees are protected against suits under Public Officers Law Section 17 for actions or alleged actions that occur while they are acting within the scope of their employment.

The OGS Bureau of Risk and Insurance Management office administers the program on behalf of the State of New York. Inquiries should be directed to:

Office of General Services | Bureau of Risk and Insurance Management
32nd Floor, Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12242
(518) 474-0367