

Guidelines for Visiting Scientists at Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy

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Introduction

Visiting scientists at Tall Timbers are an essential component of the institution. Scientists from academia and resource management agencies bring diverse views, perspectives and philosophies that add to the day-to-day dynamics among scientists and staff. The interactions between and among visiting researchers and staff scientists at Tall Timbers are a key component for achieving a critical mass in the research program at this small field station.

As Tall Timbers grows, and the research program expands, some basic guidelines need to be outlined and followed so that conflicts are minimized. In all situations, projects conducted by visiting scientists must be compatible with the overall research mission at Tall Timbers.

Some Definitions

There are two main categories of visiting scientists at Tall Timbers: (1) visiting researchers and (2) research associates.

In both cases, visiting researchers and research associates at Tall Timbers must have a staff sponsor. The staff sponsor serves as a liaison between the visiting scientists and the institution.

Visiting Researchers

A visiting researcher is considered anyone who has a research interest that requires resources at Tall Timbers. Such resources may be access to land for study sites, use of facilities for lodging, use of archival or library resources, etc. A visiting researcher can be a faculty member at an academic institution, a graduate student, intern, or basically anyone who has a legitimate interest in conducting original scientific investigations, and the requisite background and qualifications to carry out such a project. Visiting researchers at Tall Timbers may be provided "in kind" support (i.e., space, access, computer access, and

lodging) for relatively short-term periods (i.e., several days or weeks, over one or two field seasons), especially on collaborative projects. Status as a visiting researcher is a function of an agreement, as outlined below, between the researcher and a Tall Timbers staff scientist. Graduate student visiting researchers are encouraged to utilize staff scientist expertise as a member of their graduate committee.

Research Associates

A research associate is a scientist who has a more long-term and formalized relationship with the institution than a visiting researcher. Typically, research associates collaborate with staff scientists for long-term or multifaceted studies. They may operate as principal investigators for research projects. Research associates have the opportunity to solicit grants and contracts and use Tall Timbers for administration and accounting of such monies. Status as a research associate at Tall Timbers requires nomination of a staff scientist, and approval by the Tall Timbers Science and Land Management Committee.

Approval of Research Projects, Facilities and Resource Use

All visiting scientists must obtain an approval form through the Director of Research prior to initiation of any research project or submittal of applications for extramural funding at Tall Timbers. This signed form will accompany all grant proposals for extramural funding. No work will be initiated at Tall Timbers by visiting scientists unless the signed approval form accompanies their proposal or annual plan of work (see below).

Requests to work on Tall Timbers' property and easements must be submitted to the Tall Timbers Science and Land Management Committee through the Director of Research in the form of a brief written outline of the activity. If the preliminary request is acceptable, the visiting researcher will then be asked to submit a **project proposal** with a detailed description of time schedules, exact location of study area(s), manipulations, sampling techniques and marking procedures. This documentation is essential for planning and coordination. *If collection of plant or animal specimens/materials is an expected part of this project, appropriate collecting permits should be submitted along with the proposal.*

Work on a project may begin **after** the Science and Land Management Committee Chair has approved the project proposal. Advance notification of **all** changes or additions in the project must be made in writing to the sponsor for submission to the Committee. No changes or additions may be implemented prior to Committee approval. Any grant proposals and/or contracts concerning the project must be approved by the Science and Land Management Committee **before** submission to the granting agency. The committee requires at least one month for reviewing proposals. Proposals originating from staff should be circulated to all members of the Science and Land Management Committee.

Projects initiated by staff biologists, established projects, and critical land management goals and objectives have priority over new projects. **FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH**

THE GUIDELINES WILL RESULT IN REVOCATION OF RESEARCH PRIVILEGES ON TALL TIMBERS AND ASSOCIATED LANDS.

STUDY SITES

Tall Timbers

Tall Timbers consists of about 4,000 acres of rolling landscape with diverse plant cover, located in northern Leon County, on the northern shore of Lake Iamonia. It is close to the Florida-Georgia boundary and is about midway between Tallahassee, Florida and Thomasville, Georgia, centrally located in the Red Hills physiographic region. The soils are predominantly red soils of the Greenville series, but there are smaller areas of other soil types. Tall Timbers' lands contain a small cypress swamp, small black gum swamps, and an excellent mixture of forest types ranging from open parklike pinelands of several species of pines to a beech-magnolia hammock. The uplands are well drained and have several small valleys or "branches". Its herbaceous cover is rich in species of grasses, forbs, and other similar plant associations. It is particularly rich in legumes. The property also contains Gannet Pond, which is about 70 acres.

Tall Timbers also owns nine small islands scattered across Lake Iamonia. The lake itself, of which Tall Timbers owns about five miles of undulating shoreline, is about 12 square miles in area, naturally eutrophic, and relatively shallow.

Wade Tract

The Wade Tract Preserve is one of only a few intact stands of old-growth longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) forest remaining in the southeastern United States. Tall Timbers holds the tract in a conservation easement and is charged with preserving the natural community and conducting research. The Wade Tract Preserve is located on private property; any activity outside the preserve boundary is considered trespassing. Access by any visitor(s) must be preapproved by a staff sponsor.

The two hundred acre preserve is bordered on three sides by private plantation land and by a hard road on the fourth side; the preserve is bisected by a single-lane, dirt access road. The landowners have given preserve access through their property, this privilege should not be abused. The two halves of the tract are burned on off-set fire schedules. The majority of the prescribed burns occur during the early part of the growing season (April-June); half of the preserve is usually burned each year. Specific management goals and weather dictate the exact timing. Sometimes, additional management activities (i.e. mowing in small areas) are used for special problems. Please note that the possibility of naturally started fires always exists.

Research Restrictions

Potential researchers should be aware that there are a number of restrictions for work on the Wade Tract preserve. In general, research activities are limited to monitoring. No destructive sampling or manipulative experiments are permitted. Marking of plots and study individuals is tightly controlled and must be coordinated with the projects staff sponsor. Projects may be assigned colors and/or tag numbers.

Obvious plot markers must be kept to a minimum, because they may interfere with the scenic value of the preserve. The owners of the preserve are very interested in perpetuating the aesthetic value of their land. Each woody stem over 2 cm DBH is permanently tagged with an individual number. In addition, the preserve is gridded into 100 m x 100 m blocks with obvious posts in each grid corner. Preserve boundaries are well marked with tall, color-coded posts. Plots and individuals can be mapped based on compass bearing and distance from these permanent points.

All researchers are required to present Tall Timbers with records of data from the preserve. These will be kept in the Tall Timbers Archives and after an appropriate time, will be available to interested parties.

Researchers should be aware that the landowners retain the right to hunt on the preserve. During some time periods, access to research plots may be somewhat limited. The project staff sponsor will assist in scheduling.

Annual Plan of Work

All visiting scientists at Tall Timbers will file a detailed plan of work before each field season with both the Director of Research and their staff sponsor. This document should outline the purpose and objectives of the study, the hypotheses being tested, and the field locations(s) where it will be conducted. This plan will be reviewed and subject to approval by all staff scientists and the land manager to assure that there is no conflict between or among proposed and/or existing projects.

After the field season, each visiting scientist must provide a brief (1-2 page), summary report of their activities that contains a listing of all publications generated during the past year, along with archival copies of all data collected during the field season, to the Director of Research and their staff sponsor. Failure to provide this information will result in the visiting researcher not being allowed to return to Tall Timbers to conduct further research until these obligations are met. Guidelines for archiving original research information at Tall Timbers are outlined below.

Timing and Routing of Proposals

A visiting scientist who wishes to use Tall Timbers or properties managed by Tall Timbers as a study site in any proposal for extramural funding must provide their staff sponsor with a copy of this proposal at least 2 weeks prior to the deadline for submittal to the granting agency. The sponsor will circulate the proposal among the staff scientists, the natural resources coordinator, and Director of Research to make sure that there are no space or other research conflicts.

Acknowledgment of Support

When a project is complete and publications are generated, all visiting scientists must provide their staff sponsor with a draft copy of the manuscript(s), information about where it has been submitted, and notify them when it is accepted for publication. Mention of the support and cooperation of Tall Timbers should be made in the acknowledgment section, if the author or co-authors do not use a Tall Timbers address in the by-line of the paper. Visiting scientists are encouraged to collaborate and ascribe co-authorship on published articles to the staff sponsor where appropriate.

Archiving of Data

All visiting scientists must archive copies of original data at the conclusion of each field season. Visiting scientists will work out a system that is mutually agreeable among their staff sponsor, the Computing Systems Manager at Tall Timbers, the Archivist, and the Director of Research. Typically, such a system should include a CD-Rom with a meta data file that includes a complete study area definition, methods in detail, and description of data structure as well as literature cited section so that storage space is minimized.

Use of archived data by other personnel (either Tall Timbers staff or other visiting researchers) will be subject to the written approval of the visiting researcher who collected the data in question.

Visiting researchers will have the option of signing a release that will allow staff scientists at Tall Timbers the option of final decisions concerning access to archived data. In the event of death or some other reason why a visiting researcher might not finish a project, Staff scientists and the Director of Research at Tall Timbers will decide the ultimate disposition of the data.



Project/Study Approval Form

Please attach a copy of your Study Project Proposal

Study Title:

Name _____ Visiting Researcher or Research Associate (*circle one*)

Undergraduate, Graduate Student (MS, PhD) or Professional (*circle one*)

If Graduate student, is a Tall Timbers Scientist on the Graduate Committee? Yes or No

Initiation Date¹: _____ Expected Completion Date: _____

I have read the Guidelines and agree to their stipulations (*signature required*).

Visiting Researcher/Research Associate

Date: _____

Graduate Committee Advisor (if applicable)

Date: _____

This study has been reviewed and approved by:

Nominating Staff Scientist

Date: _____

Natural Resources Coordinator

Date: _____

Director of Research

Date: _____

Chairman, Science Committee

Date: _____

Project Proposal Received:

Date: _____

¹ Must be submitted 30 days prior to initiation date.

CHECKLIST for Visiting Scientists
Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy
5-5-08

_____ Staff Sponsor secured.

_____ Request to work/Approval Form with brief outline of activity submitted to Director of Research for approval.

_____ Submit approved and signed Approval Form (above) with a detailed Project Proposal and Annual Plan of Work to Tall Timbers' Staff Sponsor two (2) weeks prior to submittal deadline to the granting agency.

The detail project proposal should include:

_____ justification,

_____ statement of hypothesis and objectives,

_____ exact location and description of study area(s),

_____ methods to include manipulations,

_____ sampling techniques,

_____ marking procedures,

_____ description of time schedules,

_____ budget (include funding sources), and

_____ other relevant information, which may include:

_____ Institution's Animal Use and Care Committee policy (IACUC), if handling wildlife, from home institution

_____ Federal and/or State Collecting/Banding Permit(s)

_____ Collection Policy and Indemnification and hold harmless license agreement read, signed, and attached.

_____ Tall Timbers Science and Land Management Committee approval granted before submitting to granting agency

_____ Property used for study sites other than Tall Timbers' managed lands-- clear relationship between agency/owner and visiting researcher documented (i.e., grant/contract)

_____ After each field season, provide Tall Timbers' Staff Sponsor and Director of Research:

_____ Brief summary report of activities and findings

_____ Listing of publications generated during previous year and copies of publication(s) provided to the Library

_____ Archival copies of data collected during field season

_____ CD-Rom with meta data file that includes: complete study area definition, methods in detail and description of data structure and literature cited section to minimize storage space.

_____ Archived data release form signed.