



Superior National Forest | Oct 2025

Superior National Forest Research Application

Project Title:

Applicant Name:

Affiliation:

(e.g., school, government agency, company)

Phone:

Email:

Project Start Date:

Project End Date:

(leave blank for annually recurring projects)

Provide a brief project outline including the location, methodology, procedures, and any other information that can help determine potential effects on the environment.

Briefly describe the project objectives, purpose and need, and relationship to other projects, if any.

List the names and affiliations of others assisting with the project, including the contributions expected from them.



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List licenses, permits, and authorizations held by the applicant or contributors that are pertinent to the project (e.g., CDL license, bird banding permit, signed approval letters).

Only respond to the following questions if the project will occur within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Briefly describe why the project must occur within the wilderness and how it addresses management and stewardship of wilderness character.

Provide a preliminary trip plan for working within the wilderness. Include the approximate dates of entry, entrance points, mode of travel, whether it will be a day or overnight trip, and if a permit quota exemption is requested (eligibility is mentioned on page 3).

If wilderness visitors are involved with the project, attach a copy of the approval to do so from the Office of Budget and Management. Instructions for getting approval from OMB to engage the public in research are [here](#).



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Other Important Information

Please submit the completed application to the Superior National Forest Soil Scientist, Dave Morley, at david.morley@usda.gov. Attach the following to that completed application or share them later when finalized. Please be aware that depending upon the nature of the project, not receiving this information in a timely manner could delay the application approval.

- A georeferenced map or spatial dataset with the project area and locations of research sites within it, or at least the GPS locations of the research sites, noting the coordinate system and datum.
- OMB approval letter if the project occurs within the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and wilderness visitors will be involved with the project.

If the project involves ground disturbance, harvest of natural resources, or installing or leaving equipment on National Forest System lands, a Special Use Permit may be required. All equipment should be clearly labelled with the applicant's name, affiliation, and contact information. Damage to equipment left on National Forest System lands will be the responsibility of the applicant.

If the Superior National Forest determines that a Special Use Permit is not needed for a research project, the applicant will only need to resubmit an application for that same project if there are changes to the scope, methodology, or procedures that could affect the environment. If the project area or location of research sites within it changes, the applicant will be asked to submit updated maps, spatial data, or GPS locations. In addition, long term or recurring research within the wilderness will require annually updated wilderness trip plans.

To enter the wilderness during quota season, between May and September, the applicant must reserve a wilderness permit through recreation.gov. A self-issue permit, located at every entry point, will be required outside that season. If the applicant wishes to change their wilderness trip plans at any point, they will be responsible for submitting those updates to the Superior National Forest as soon as possible. The applicant should be aware that last-minute requests may not be filled if the quota is no longer available. Applicants may be eligible for exemption from quota if they are affiliated with a land management agency (e.g., Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service, Environmental Protection Agency, etc.). Wilderness staff on the Superior National Forest will evaluate the request and respond to the applicant as soon as possible. Permit exemptions are only valid for approved entry points and dates, so the applicant may not re-enter the wilderness on a different date using the same permit.

Applications will be accepted up to May 1 for proposed activities planned that calendar year. Researchers are encouraged to submit applications as early as possible in advance of a project start date. Anticipate at least one month for notification, longer if a Special Use Permit is necessary. Along with submitting a final wilderness trip plan, researchers with approved applications should inform the Superior National Forest at least one month prior to entering the wilderness to conduct research.



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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For long term or ongoing projects, a brief progress report is requested at the end of the calendar year. Note that it will be the responsibility of the applicant to inform the Superior National Forest of changes to the project that may cause additional impacts to the environment. A final report including the data gathered is requested at the conclusion of the project. Project reports, data, and any questions related to the research application and review process should be directed to the Forest Soil Scientist, Dave Morley, at david.morley@usda.gov.

Please read and agree to the statement below via your digital signature and date.

I, the applicant, agree to abide by the rules and regulations that apply to users of National Forests and the rules and regulations that apply to users of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Likewise, I, the applicant, agree to notify the Superior National Forest if there are any changes in project scope, locations, procedures, or methodology that may influence how the project could affect the environment.

Applicant Signature: Date:

The following is for internal use only.

No special use authorization is recommended.

Staff Officer Signature and Date:

Special use authorization is not necessary.

Line Officer Signature and Date: