

National Park Service Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS)



Instructions for Park Staff

Conceptual Overview:

Park Research Coordinators: The Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS) should be used by park research coordinators to administer all scientific research and collecting permits, including permits processed from applications that are not received in electronic format. Park research coordinators will be able to use the system to perform the following major actions:

- Receive and organize electronic versions of permit application forms, study proposals, and peer-reviews from applicants.
- Post and maintain the type of research the park is most interested in attracting.
- Post and maintain park-specific conditions applicable to every permit issued by the park.
- Post and maintain an information bulletin used to notify investigators of special conditions or events that could impact planned field work (road closures, area closures, safety-related notices, etc.).
- Process and track permits and denied applications (including revoked permits or cancelled applications or permits).
- Manage the park Investigator's Annual Report (IAR) database.
- Search the servicewide IAR database.
- Search the servicewide permit database to confirm currently active permits, previously approved studies conducted at other parks, and the reporting of annual accomplishments (submission of IARs) by investigators indicating that they have conducted previous studies in NPS units.

The section of RPRS that must be used by park research coordinators is only available to users with access to the NPS Intranet. The Intranet is a subset of the full Internet, controlled by the IP address assigned to the computer you are using when working on the Internet. Computers managed by NPS should be set up to include the appropriate IP addresses. If you discover you cannot reach websites on the NPS Intranet, you should contact your local computer support staff for assistance. Please note that you will normally not be able to reach the NPS Intranet from your home computer.

Park research coordinators must complete several blocks of information defined within the “**Park Coordinator Options**” section of RPRS. These blocks will include the Coordinator Profile, Permit Defaults, Park-Specific Conditions, Research Preferences, and Park Information Bulletin. The profile will also enable parks to identify a park-developed website address the public may visit to obtain more information about research activities at the park. Park research coordinators may access these options after logging into RPRS by clicking on the Park Preferences/Coordinator's Profile option.

The Public: The public will be able to access and use a special section of the system accessible on the full Internet. The public will be able to use the system to perform the following major actions:

- Review permit application requirements and procedures.
- Review general conditions applicable to all scientific research and collecting permits issued by NPS regardless of the park.
- Review park-specific conditions applicable to all scientific research and collecting permits issued by an individual park.
- Review park information bulletins containing notices that may impact planned field work.
- Search the type of research parks are most interested in attracting.
- Search the IAR database to review previous research accomplishments before planning a new study.*
- Complete an application form to obtain permission to conduct a study in a specific park, and submit electronic copies of study proposals and existing peer-reviews.
- Look up the name, phone, email, FAX, and mailing address of the research coordinator at a specific park.

* The public **will not** be able to see records in the IAR database that **have not** yet been checked-in by park staff or **have been** flagged by park staff as containing potentially sensitive information.

Requirements:

Park research coordinators must have access to the NPS Intranet in order to process and manage RPRS data. The Intranet is different from the Internet. Please check with your local computer specialist if you are not sure you can access the NPS Intranet or encounter problems when attempting to do so.

Beginning January 16th, 2001, the Intranet address **park research coordinators** must use to access RPRS is:

<https://science.nature.nps.gov/research>

Beginning January 16th, 2001, the Internet address the **public** must use to access RPRS is:

<http://science.nature.nps.gov/research>

Please note the address NPS staff use to reach the system begins with “https” rather than “http”. This is a subtle but extremely important difference between the two addresses. Also note that a separate set of instructions has been distributed to explain the IAR process. The IAR instructions explain the address investigators must use to submit new accomplishment reports and bibliography references (look for the previously released document “iardoc2.doc” dated December 2000).

Login: Instructions for Park Research Coordinators:

After reaching the Research Permit and Reporting System website, click on the option to “Login” as the park research coordinator. The software application will ask for a username and password. Each username is set up to include the park acronym in the format: **RPRS PARK** where the park acronym should be entered instead of “PARK”. A single space should be placed between “RPRS” and the park acronym. The entire username should be entered in upper case. Example username for Acadia: **RPRS ACAD**

It is assumed the person coordinating research activities at the park is also responsible for the administration of the park IAR process. The first time a member of the park research coordination staff logs on to the Research Permit and Reporting System, the software will force a password change. Please make sure staff responsible for managing IAR data and processing scientific research and collecting permits are aware of the correct password for the park. The default password is **FIRSTUSE**. The default password must be entered in upper case and does not include any spaces.

Start-up Procedures:

1. Open the website at <https://science.nature.nps.gov/rsearch> and “log in”. The login procedure will require you to change the password associated with your username the first time you go into the system.
2. Review the main “Instructions” section within the system.
3. Click on the “Park Preferences/Coordinator’s Profile” option to update the park research coordinator profile information. This will enable you to post the appropriate name, address, phone, email address, FAX, etc. of the park research coordinator and other blocks of important information. The public will be able to read the information entered in the profile when they are working with RPRS on the Internet.
4. Update the block labeled Permit Defaults. The values entered will automatically appear on any permits you generate using RPRS.
5. Update the three text blocks associated with park-specific permit conditions, research preferences, and information bulletin. Note that the public will be able to read these blocks and that the purpose of these three blocks is to provide the permit applicant with information about the park as the applicant is working with RPRS on the Internet (you are encouraged to carefully review your spelling and formatting before saving changes in these fields).
6. Check to see if new permit applications are pending your attention. New permit applications should be processed by you as soon as possible to change the status of the application from “New” to “Under review”.

Applications left in the system more than 30 days without being placed under review will generate an automatic email message to the park research coordinator and park superintendent reminding both that the application has apparently received no attention. When a new record is saved in the IAR database pertaining to your park, an email message will automatically be transmitted to the park research coordinator (see step 2 above) explaining that the new record is pending “check-in”.

7. Scroll to the bottom of the main page to check to see if new IARs are pending your attention. New IAR records should be processed to change the status from “Pending Check-In” to “Checked-In” and designated if the record should be accessible to the general public. New annual accomplishment reports, including bibliography references, must be checked-in by the park research coordinator or park IAR coordinator to confirm the report pertains to the correct park and includes a consistent study title and accurate study number and permit number (the study number will not begin to be used on IARs until the calendar year 2001 reporting cycle). The IAR check-in procedure requires you to designate if the record should be accessible to the general public on the Internet or restricted to NPS access only. Reports containing spatially specific information that could jeopardize the security of sensitive resources should be restricted to NPS access only. Be sure to save each record after you edit it.
8. Click on a permit application that you wish to process (i.e. generate a permit or change the status of the application to “Denied” or “Cancelled”). Follow options and prompts displayed to perform the desired tasks.
9. Obtain, store, and maintain both electronic and paper copies of each of the electronic files contained in the RPRS so the park can respond with electronic or paper copies, as appropriate, to requests from researchers who do not have access to the Internet. Note that the park will have to manually insert its name into the header of the permit form if it issues a permit that is not processed from the RPRS.

Special Note About Permit Applications and IARs:

Be aware investigators cannot edit a record after it has been saved in RPRS. They are instructed to contact the appropriate park research coordinator if they want to request a change to an existing application or IAR record (report or bibliography reference). Park staff may respond to such requests only after confirming the author of the record is the person making the request.

Providing Instructions to Researchers:

Please use the document “Research Permit and Reporting System (RPRS) Instructions for Researchers” (RprsSci1.doc 01/10/2001) to guide potential permit applicants to the Internet site.

Technical support:

Contact Tim Goddard, NPS Natural Resource Information Division, for technical assistance with RPRS software. Tim may be reached via email at Tim_Goddard@nps.gov or by phone at 970-225-3543 (Rocky Mountain Time).