

# NIWOT RIDGE LTER FIELD WORK COVID MITIGATION PLAN

(Version 5/04/22)

- A. **RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH RETURNING TO FIELD WORK AS PART OF NWT LTER:** risks include those associated with COVID, including to individual field personnel, those they work with, and the community as a whole; risks associated with working in remote field conditions, including terrain, wildlife, and weather, risks associated with unacceptable behavior that violates our code of conduct, including demeaning, discriminatory or harassing behavior or exclusion from activities without reasonable accommodations, and the potential for these latter two types of risks being amplified by COVID-related risk mitigation.
- B. **RISK MITIGATION PLAN.** Our plan to manage the risks described above adheres to six key components:
1. **Field sampling will only be done if it can be safely carried out:**
    - a. by individuals that feel comfortable to work as outlined without undue pressure or concern of reprisal,
    - b. and with open and clear avenues for which concerns and requests for accommodations can be brought up in confidence to the group leader, lab PI, and/or LTER co-PIs.
  2. **COVID-related precautions to reduce contact and spread are in place,** including:
    - a. Not attending work if experiencing potential COVID symptoms
    - b. Clean plans if a team member gets sick, including stopping work immediately, return to the MRS, and seek medical help.
  3. **Field safety-related precautions, noting the increased need in precaution and planning, are followed:**
    - a. Field safety guidelines remain in place as detailed in the LTER and MRS guidelines. LTER field safety guidelines are outlined in detail here (<https://nwt.lternet.edu/guidelines-for-researchers>).
    - b. Know the weather forecast and keep an eye on the weather.
    - c. Establish workflows at the start of each day and discuss safety plans.
    - d. Have reliable communication devices (depending on location, this might mean a PLB). Know important points of contact: MRS (303-492-8841, 303-492-8840); Boulder County Emergency Services (Search and Rescue, Fire: 303-441-3646, 303-441-4444); Trauma Center and Hospital: Boulder Community Health (303-415-7000); Urgent Care Clinic: Boulder Medical (303-440-3200)
    - e. Have a full first aid kit (see list in field safety documentation), including COVID-related supplies such as additional gloves, masks, and sanitizer.
  4. **Access to emergency equipment, shelters and transportation are available:**
    - a. Access to Niwot Ridge shelters including the tundra lab are allowed this summer. Please adhere to all current University and County guidelines including mask wearing and social distancing. Please be respectful of others needing to use the tundra lab or other shelters.
  5. **Niwot Code of Conduct remains in place under all circumstances.**
    - a. Don't ignore it! If someone's actions infringe on our ability to provide a safe, welcoming and productive research environment, take appropriate action as outlined in our code of conduct (<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c4f6792ec4eb7c7c4186cc0/t/608c474528abfe1be5470a60/1619806021786/Copy+of+NWT+Code+of+Conduct+and+Community+Engagement+2021.docx.pdf>).
    - b. All return to work research is voluntary. If you or anyone in your group feels uncomfortable with any part of these risk mitigation guidelines or how they are implemented, contact LTER PIs Katie

Suding or Nancy Emery. We will try to accommodate all concerns or circumstances in confidence.

**6. All other University requirements are met, including (but not limited to):**

- a. Approved travel and other unit authorization if required.
- b. MRS permit submitted and process followed.

**C. SPECIFIC RISK GUIDELINES FOR LTER VEHICLE USE**

1. LTER shuttles will run when in concordance with CU, local, state and CDC guidelines.
2. Masks option, please mask if not vaccinated
3. Exposure of other community members in LTER vehicles can be communicated through NWT coordinator ([ltternwt@colorado.edu](mailto:ltternwt@colorado.edu))
4. Drivers must meet CU driver guidelines and be able to adhere to safe driving 4WD practices.
5. Driving a personal vehicle between the Marr Lab and Cable Gate is discouraged, but if necessary, reach out to Scott Taylor and Kris Hess to request permission and coordinate with other users.
6. To request to be part of the approved driver/passenger plan, please contact [ltternwt@colorado.edu](mailto:ltternwt@colorado.edu).

**D. SPECIFIC RISK GUIDELINES FOR LTER WATERCRAFT USE**

1. Only pre-approved members of the LTER limnology team will be allowed to do lake-based work.
2. Personal flotation devices (PFD) must be securely worn by each individual at all times while aboard any watercraft.
3. When possible, boat based surveys will be conducted using a guideline for additional two points of contact on opposing shorelines, in order to increase speed and stability of watercraft operations.
4. If only one person can be in a boat at one time, that person must operate the boat with: (1) a personal anchor from their PFD to the boat that will prevent the researcher from being separated from the boat while on the water; (2) an additional guideline attached from the boat's back carry handle (a load bearing ring) to shore where it is ground-secured and held by a second person on the shore to allow for the emergency retrieval of the solo boat operator.