

Internal and External User Guidelines

Ecology and Natural Resource Teaching Area

Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management

Contact Rider Combs (rider.combs@ag.tamu.edu) with questions.

The Ecology and Natural Resource Teaching Area (ENRTA) is a biological field station located on ~600 acres of Texas A&M University property, southwest of Easterwood Airport. The ENRTA is managed by the Department of Rangeland, Wildlife, and Fisheries Management (RWFEM). The mission of ENRTA is to provide teaching, research and outreach opportunities for the Texas A&M community and the citizens of the greater Bryan/College Station area. To that end, the property is used by professors from many departments, as well as partners external to Texas A&M University. RWFEM prides itself on the ability to maintain the ENRTA as an educational property that can be utilized by a wide variety of stakeholders.

- The primary area of ENRTA is available for use upon request for teaching, research and outreach. The secondary area is available on a case-by-case basis. If a specific purpose presents itself for this area, please contact the property manager to discuss.

To ensure all have adequate access to the property, please follow the below rules. Contact ENRTA property manager (rider.combs@ag.tamu.edu) with questions.

1. Contact the property manager at least 2 weeks in advance of necessary access to ENRTA property or facility use. The appropriate forms will be provided to schedule use of property.
2. Access will be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis. Access may be denied if use conflicts with other activities. Failure to comply with these rules can result in temporary or permanent termination or access.
3. Depending on location of activity, users will park in a designated area assigned by property manager and walk throughout the property. If someone requires special assistance, contact the property manager to discuss accommodations.
4. Porta potties are available for use near the Teaching Pavilion.
5. Coordinate with property manager for combination lock details if access is required.
6. Speed limit on property is 15 mph. Be mindful of other visitors and heavy equipment while traveling throughout the property.
7. Driving off road is prohibited at all times! This is done to preserve sensitive species, habitat and research on property.
8. Take particular care when on property not to destroy or disturb teaching or research activities.
9. Disturbance of landscape, soil and vegetation should be kept to a minimum to ensure no negative impacts to ENRTA. Some disturbance is necessary for teaching or research purposes (ex. sampling of soil, water, plants; removal of branches for trail camera placement) but please keep those actions to a minimum. Any large-scale alteration should be coordinated with the property manager.
10. Users are required to remove all equipment and materials on property upon completion of use. This includes but is not limited to flagging, fencing, stakes, trash, etc. The ENRTA manager will provide a garbage can at the teaching pavilion for trash disposal.
11. Smoking on the ENRTA is strictly forbidden.

TEACHING AND EXTERNAL USE

1. On-site instructors should park at a designated parking lot assigned by property manager. Coordinate with property manager if you need special access to bring in equipment that is heavy to carry.
2. Driving trails and off road is prohibited to ensure your activity does not negatively impact any existing activities or research on property.

RESEARCH

1. All research requests at ENRTA must include a research proposal submitted at least 2 weeks before the anticipated start date of the project. Before research may commence, the proposal must be reviewed and approved by the property manager. All student research requests, for both undergraduate and graduate students, must include a long-form research proposal (see below) that has been approved by a faculty member with principal investigator (PI) status at Texas A&M University. Research requests led by faculty may include either a long- form or short-form proposal depending on the scope of the work. Large-scale and long-term projects require a long-form research proposal, pilot projects (short-term, small-scale) only require a short- form proposal.
2. Research proposal guidelines are as follows:
 - Long-form research proposals must include:
 - 1) title, 2) summary/abstract, 3) introduction, including statements of key objectives and hypotheses to be tested, 4) methods, including the proposed project dates, 5) statement of expected impacts to ENRTA, including a map of the area to be used, 6) documentation of approvals (i.e., Animal Use Protocol, Institutional Review Board) for projects involving animal or human subjects, 7) contact information for student and PI, and 8) signature of PI, attesting to their approval of the proposal.
 - Short-form research proposal (small scope, pilot projects only) should include:
 - 1) brief statement of objectives, 2) methods, 3) contact information, and 4) statement on impact to ENRTA, including information on the locations to be used.
3. Once approved, researchers must provide property manager with:
 - 1) specific location of research activities, 2) list of materials placed, 3) approximate visit date/times and 4) timeline for research.
4. All researchers must sign a ENRTA liability form.
5. Speed limit on the main roads is 15 mph. Vehicle travel on trails is granted on a case by case basis.
6. During wet weather and soft ground, ATV/UTVs is limited to all-weather roads/trails. Coordinate with property manager prior to using non-all-weather roads/trails during wet periods.
7. Following completion of research equipment must be removed from property.
8. Research findings must be provided to ENRTA property manager to help further inform on property management.
9. Acknowledgement of ENRTA and TAMU Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management is required on any presentations and publications that use data collected from ENRTA.