

H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest Overdue Party Search Procedure

Purpose: The primary purpose of this procedure is to encourage a safe, prepared, well thought-out, effective search for an overdue researcher.

HJA has a Check-Out / Check-In Procedure for all field-going individuals. This document details the process to follow in the advent of an Overdue Party. This procedure is intended to empower researchers to initiate, conduct, and complete a safe search for an overdue researcher. While HJA staff will facilitate the Check-Out / Check-In system, the primary responsibility for implementation resides with researchers.

BEFORE ENTERING THE FIELD:

The researcher must select a "Check-In Buddy" who will be the person responsible for initiating a search if the researcher does not make contact before the return time displayed on the Check-Out Board. The "Check-In Buddy" must be willing to initiate and complete a search for the overdue researcher. Needless to say, the Check-In Buddy must be informed of their role, seriously understand their responsibilities, and explicitly accept them.

The role of HJA staff is to facilitate this system, not to serve as the default "Check-in Buddy".

Duties of the Researcher:

Be prepared, realistic, and safe.

Find a responsible Check-In Buddy who will be on site at the time you expect to return, and during the subsequent four hours.

Give the Check-In Buddy the maps and complete directions necessary to travel to your research sites and your complete vehicle description.

Inform the Check-In Buddy of each days work plan including specific work location(s), crew size, and your realistic ETR (estimated time of return).

It is the researchers responsibility to radio Andrews Forest during working hours to update your return time as soon as you understand you will not return by your initial ETR. Remember that by not communicating a schedule change you are having a direct negative impact on the lives of others.

Duties of Check-In Buddy:

Understand your responsibilities and be physically and mentally prepared to execute them.

Have a map or detailed directions to the research sites.

Know the description of the researcher vehicle including make, color, and license plate number.

Know the daily ETR, work area, and crew size of the researcher.

At ETR plus one hour, attempt radio contact. If radio attempt is unsuccessful begin search procedure (detailed below). At the conclusion of the Search inform all involved persons of the conclusion.

Duties of Radio Sitter:

Keep live radio with you to hear calls from Overdue Party or Search Party.

Every 1/2 hour attempt to radio the Overdue Party.

Answer radio calls to Andrews Forest and maintain contact with Search Party.

Make notes on the progress, location, and communications from the Search Party.

If the Search Party completes the search of all research sites without locating the Overdue Party the Radio Sitter calls 911 to report an overdue researcher.

Duties of Search Partner:

Bring proper clothes and shoes, water, and food to sustain yourself for 4-10 hours in various conditions, and be ready to fully assist in the search.

During travel to the research sites help the Check-In Buddy watch the road for unusual skids or roadside disturbance that may indicate an accident.

Make the radio calls from the search locations so the Driver can concentrate on driving.

SEARCH PROCEEDURE:

At ETR plus one hour, after an unsuccessful attempt to radio the Overdue Party, the Check-In Buddy initiates the Search.

1) Recruit two volunteers:

A **Radio Sitter** who will keep a live radio with them and attempt radio contact with the Overdue Party every ½ hour. Provide them with copy of research site map or directions.

A **Search Partner** to accompany the Check-In Buddy when traveling to the research locations.

2) Call HJA staff to inform them that you are beginning a Overdue Party Search.

Mark Schulze 822-6336 office or 822-6330 home

Kathy Keable 822-6303 office or 822-3970 home or 844-9108 cell

3) Inspect vehicle (gas, tires, clean windshield) and load with Search Pack and Search Water, Radio with extra battery, Search Partner, maps or directions, and your own food, water, proper clothes and shoes sufficient for 4-10 hours in various conditions.

4) Proceed to research locations. Drive cautiously, expecting to meet the Overdue Party. Watch roadsides for unusual skids or roadside disturbance that might indicate an accident.

5) At each research stop radio back to Andrews Forest Radio Sitter to see if the Overdue Party has returned. This also checks to see if the Search Party is currently in functional radio contact.

6) At the last location radio to the Radio Sitter to phone 911 to report a lost researcher.

Possible Situations:

If a significant accident or injuries are encountered radio the Radio Sitter so that they may call 911 to request emergency services and guide them to the location of the Search Party.

If the empty research vehicle is located, and if you know the location of the research area, you can walk in to see if you can locate the Overdue Party. Inform the Radio Sitter of new information and of Search Party decisions. If you cannot locate the Overdue Party, sound the Search Party vehicle horn in three 2-second blasts and listen for any reply. Repeat this once per minute for five minutes. If the Overdue Party cannot be located instruct the Radio Sitter to contact 911 and guide them to the location of the Search Party.

Conclusion:

If at any time contact is made with the Overdue Party the search must be completely terminated.

The Search Party must be contacted to be told the Overdue Party is found.

The HJA staff member who was notified should be called to let them know the Overdue Party is found.

If 911 has been called they must be contacted to let them know the Overdue Party has been found.