

Neilson Spearhead Center and Preserve Covid-19 Preparedness Plan, Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society

The Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society (MHAS) is committed to offering programs and facilities that are safe for participants, members, visitors, instructors, service providers, researchers, volunteers and caretakers. We have developed the following Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 through participation in our programs and use of our facilities and that requires the full cooperation of everyone involved.

Our Preparedness Plan follows Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines related to COVID-19 and addresses:

- Screening and policies for participants exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19
- Hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Protocols for social distancing
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Communications that will be provided to participants, user groups, instructors, staff, and volunteers

SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR PARTICIPANTS AND USERS FOR SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

All participants in onsite programs, activities, and users of the Neilson Spearhead Center and Preserve (NSC) trails and buildings (including youth and adult participants, contracted instructors and service providers, visitors, trail users, researchers, and volunteers) are expected to conduct a self-assessment before entering NSC property or participating in a group program; in the case of minors, adult guardians must assess minors for symptoms. If any of the following symptoms are present, participants should stay home and not attend the program and/or enter the property and facilities:

- Fever or Chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Congestion or runny nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Exposure or potential exposure to COVID-19

Anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 is asked not to enter NSC property or facilities or continue participation in onsite programs or activities. Potential exposure is defined as, "A household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19." The timeframe for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic.

Return to NSC Property and Onsite Programming

Persons who have had COVID-19 and were treated and/or directed to isolate at home may enter NSC property and/or return to NSC onsite programs under the following conditions:

- At least 3 days have passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND
- Improvement of respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), AND
- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared
- Individual has received a negative test result

Fee Policy

Should a program participant or facility user need to cancel due to COVID-19 symptoms or exposure, a pro-rated or full refund will be considered for program and facility rental fees.

HYGIENE AND RESPIRATORY ETIQUETTE

Handwashing

Participants and NSC users are asked to thoroughly wash their hands immediately prior to leaving home. Sanitized outdoor or indoor washing facilities are not available on site; participants are asked to provide their own supply of sanitizer. Hand sanitizer is recommended for use upon arrival and departure from the facility and during the program/rental as needed.

Respiratory Etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

All participants are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing and to avoid touching their face, in particular their mouth, nose, and eyes, with their hands. They should sanitize their hands immediately afterward and take tissues and any other garbage with them when they leave. No receptacles will be available for participants or users onsite. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated on communications to participants and users.

Masks

The CDC recommends wearing a cloth mask to cover the mouth and nose in public places where it is hard to stay 6 feet away from others. Use of masks will be required for all activities at NSC if participants are not from the same household or otherwise approved in a group's Covid Preparedness Plan (see below). NSC trails are generally single-track. Trail users should have masks with them and wear them when approaching others if they are not able to step off the trail and maintain appropriate distancing. Remember, wearing a cloth mask can help stop your germs from infecting others. Masks do not replace social distancing or mean that people who are sick should be in public places.

PROTOCOLS FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING

All onsite programs, activities, visitors, and users of NSC will comply with CDC and MDH guidelines for social distancing, as well as MHAS protocols listed below. In addition, groups* seeking use of NSC for a non-MHAS organized event will be required to submit their own Covid Preparedness Plan to MHAS for review 2 weeks ahead of their scheduled event. MHAS reserves the right to cancel any agreed to use of NSC if it feels the risk of Covid-19 transmission is not acceptable.

** MHAS standing policy has been if you plan to take a group of 6 or more to NSC, please contact us for permission and make a reservation. This allows us to avoid any conflicts with any other scheduled activities or groups. Typically, we have requested groups have one adult per 15 minors. For more information please call George-Ann Maxson at 218-586-3414.*

Specific MHAS protocols

- Group sizes will be limited based on MDH guidelines, and must include all participants, instructors, and volunteers. Currently, unless special approval is granted by MHAS, no more than 25 people will be allowed and social distancing must be able to be maintained with any planned activities.
- If a participant needs additional support to participate in the program, the group size will be adjusted to allow for the support staff. Please express this need upon registration so MHAS can plan accordingly.
- All members of different households are to maintain 6' of social distancing at all times.
- Trail users (if not in the same household group) should maintain 6ft distance on the trails at all times and step off the trail to allow people to pass and maintain that distance when encountered

- Participants are to refrain from making contact with each other; no close-contact activities, no high-fives, personal equipment (sports bags, mats, water bottles, etc.) should be spaced out during breaks, etc.
- All programs and activities will take place outdoors and must accommodate adequate spacing for participants.
- No congregating is allowed, and congestion in the parking lot should be minimized as much as possible. Programs and activities will be scheduled with transition times between sessions, but cooperation of participants is required.
- Participants are asked to arrive no earlier than 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time and to leave immediately following the program or rental.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Program/Activity Supplies and Equipment

Sharing of program or activity supplies or equipment in the course of each program/activity will be minimized to the extent possible. Participants are welcome and encouraged to bring their own equipment when possible; participant equipment (yoga mats, binoculars, craft supplies, etc) should be clearly labeled prior to attending.

The following cleaning and disinfection procedures will be implemented:

- Program equipment will be disinfected by MHAS when compiling sets for MHAS program use.
- Program/activity equipment will be cleaned at the end of each program session prior to being returned to equipment bags by the instructor or volunteer as applicable.
- Participants should touch only the equipment assigned to them during the program/activity.
- Staff may have additional equipment to handle and participants should avoid touching this equipment with their hands.
- If there is equipment that must be shared during the course of a program, it will be disinfected between use by participants of different households.

Facilities

Outdoor public spaces, buildings, and equipment (canoes, paddles, etc) at NSC are not routinely cleaned or sanitized. These items are used at the risk of each user.

An outhouse is available at NSC for visitor use. Cleaning is typically done several times a week. Use is at the risk of the user.

Indoor spaces will not be available for all programs and users unless approved in advance by MHAS.

MHAS will clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces such as doorknobs, chairs, and tabletops between facility rentals or other scheduled group events (wooded picnic tables and outdoor benches cannot be effectively disinfected and should only be used at your own risk). As public spaces, there is potential for them to be contaminated in the time between when they are cleaned by MHAS and the scheduled events, so users are encouraged to clean high-touch surfaces prior to, during, and after use. Facility users are required to follow the applicable cleaning procedures contained within the rental/use application.

Facility renters will be required to provide MHAS a Covid Preparedness Plan and sign an addendum agreeing to comply with Executive Orders of Governor Walz (attached to this plan).

SCREENING AND POLICIES FOR NSC RESIDENT CARETAKERS AND PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR FOR SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

Given their residency on NSC property and/or services provided as part of the MHAS Caretakers Agreement or Maintenance Contract, the caretakers and maintenance contractor, will:

1. Follow all the policies and procedures listed above.
2. Seek medical advice; and if appropriate, testing if they experience any Covid 19 related symptoms described previously, or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive.
3. If they test positive for Covid-19 they will notify MHAS to determine appropriate steps to minimize potential risks to NSC visitors, users, program participants, volunteers, etc. This may include sanitizing all buildings, areas, and equipment they have had contact with, closing NSC to visitors for an appropriate quarantine period, or other necessary actions.

SPEARHEAD LAKE ACCESS USERS

The Spearhead Lake boat access maintained by MHAS on NSC property is not cleaned or sanitized. This site is used at solely at the risk of each user.

COMMUNICATION OF COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

MHAS will distribute this plan directly to all program participants, instructors, volunteers, researchers and facility renters, as well as posting the information to our MHAS website and NSC information kiosk. Information about program responsibilities will also be posted at program sites as a reminder.

Additional training will occur for volunteer and contracted instructors as needed to successfully implement the MHAS Preparedness Plan.

RESOURCES REFERENCED

[State of Minnesota Executive Order 20-74](#)

[Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Recreation, Facilities and Public Guidelines](#)

[Minnesota Stay Safe Plan](#)

[Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Parks and Recreation Facilities](#)

ADDENDUM: NSC Facility Use Agreement

Applicant acknowledges and agrees that they are responsible for complying with all Executive Orders of Governor Walz regarding COVID-19 including but not limited to capacity requirements & social distancing. In addition applicant will comply with CDC recommendations regarding COVID-19 and social gatherings. MHAS is exempt from any liability regarding COVID-19 and will not be providing health inspections as part of the rental agreement. I acknowledge receipt of MHAS's COVID-19 addendum and agree to comply with the same:

Applicant's Signature

Date