



Generic Conservation Activities Risk Assessment

Activity Assessed				Assessor	Assessment Date
General Safety for Conservation Activities - Tasks				John Shaw	Reviewed 14/09/23 TS
Hazard Potential for Harm	Risk $P \times S = L$			Precautions To remove hazard, reduce risk level One precaution may tackle several hazards	
Safe use of Manual Tools	2	2	4	- Give relevant tool safety and instruction talk at the start of each session to include: safe carrying, use and storage of tools. - Wear suitable work gloves with cutting tools e.g. loppers, bow saws. Hold the tool in the ungloved hand. Wear a glove on the other hand. - Do not wear gloves with swinging tools e.g. sledgehammer. - Wear safety helmet when using mell / sledgehammer / post driver. - Ensure participants are wearing suitable footwear if using spades or forks. - Ensure tools are kept in good working order, including sharpening if necessary. - Decommission tools unfit for purpose using the 'Do Not Use' or red & white hazard tape provided. Log in maintenance folder. - Consider wearing safety helmet if felling trees over 2m height / 3" diameter. - When available keep guards/covers on tools when not in use. Do not leave tools where they may get lost or cause a trip hazard. - Do not leave tools such as bow saws hung in trees.	
Inclement Weather: Sun/Heat, Wet/Cold, High wind, storm including lightning.	2	1	2	- Be prepared for relevant weather conditions – check forecast. Sun/Heat: Use high factor sun block. Wear a sun hat, drink plenty of fluids. In very high temperatures >28 seek shade as much as possible, increase frequency & duration of breaks adapt tasks to reduce impact of heat. Sessions may need to be cancelled and rearranged if conditions are unsafe for the participants. Wet/Cold: ensure warm, weatherproof clothing is worn. Spare (dry) gloves advisable. Drink warm fluids regularly. - Stout footwear essential. Steel toe-caps preferable. - If ill attired/prepared, the person/s may be prevented from taking part in the activity. - Take extra care on slopes/steps etc if it is wet or icy. High Wind: dynamic risk assessment, be prepared to abort session if wind exceeds Beaufort force 7 = 32-38 mph (Moderate Gale). Do not enter woodland if wind speed exceeds force 8 = 39-46 mph (Fresh Gale). Avoid entering woodland if gusting speed is above 50mph. Storm: In case of lightning /electric storm leave the	



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Cuts & minor Injuries	4	1	4	woodland immediately. - Correct clothing, PPE gloves, safe use of tools, safe felling and handling will all reduce risk but some plants are thorny so minor scratches/splinters possible risk of eye injury. Use of eye protection e.g. goggles when working with thorny plants. - First aid kit on site in the black 'session bag'.
Burns & Scalds	1	2	2	Burns: Warn participants that a fire will be lit/burning. - Ensure appropriate clothing/footwear. - Ensure cold water taken as a first aid measure if there is to be a fire. 2 x 10 litre containers or equivalent to be taken. - Tape off fires that are near paths. - Extra caution when working with U18s e.g. reiterate common sense rules - No running near fires, no plastics to be burnt etc. Scalds: Exercise caution when pouring hot water. Cold water on site. Hot water flasks to be transported / stored safely in appropriate boxes in 'boot' of vehicles.
Manual Handling	1	2	2	See Risk Assessment 3, Fires on Sites for further information - Refer to Manual Handling Guidelines (Risk Assessments 25 and 25A). - Instruct all involved in manual handling techniques. - Plan handling of heavy / awkward items and deliver items as close to site as possible. - Reduce large loads whenever possible including cross cutting into sub 25kg loads. - Where possible use lifting aids or machinery to prevent excessive strain. - Plan felling to minimise lifting required. - Erect warning signs on paths when felling/pruning. - Use a banksman if there are blind spots or for added safety. - When felling trees/shrubs with hand tools the lead ranger should consider the following when deciding whether the wearing of a safety helmet and/or goggles should be enforced: - Is the tree over 3m height and 4" diameter? - Is the tree in a densely packed area? - Are prickly thorny materials and dead wood present? - Teach the use of felling 'gob' cuts for larger trees to ensure a controlled fell. Ash Dieback: Trees impacted by Ash Dieback become brittle and more liable to fall apart. There is also an increased likelihood of a tree failing if hit by a second tree or limb thereof. Safe Working Distance is of increased importance and must be adhered to (a minimum of 2 tree lengths distance from the tree being felled). Therefore when felling, or working in, areas with Ash affected by Dieback all Staff and Volunteers must wear safety helmets. This must be emphasised in the pre-session safety brief.
Falling trees/branches	2	2	4	



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Traffic	2	2	4	(Communicated to Chiltern Rangers staff at Team Meeting 29/5/19) • If working within 5m of a road (without a barrier e.g. hedge), a hi-visibility tabard/jacket should be worn. • Plan unloading and reloading of vehicle so people and materials/tools clear of passing traffic. • If roadside unloading is unavoidable, place cones or tape and signs as necessary. • Erect signs warning of work/hazards preventing access on approaches to site. • Leave vehicle parked in a position where it can leave quickly in case of emergency.
Slips, trips & falls	2	2	4	See Risk Assessment 2 - Vehicle and Trailer Use for more information • Warn participants of any site specific issues at briefing session – cross refer Site Risk Assessment. • Inspect site for new hazards – undertake a Dynamic Risk Assessment. • Keep site and tools tidy. • Recommend use of sturdy boots or wellingtons, with good grip. • Only trained operatives to work at height (ladders). • Always use a litter picker. • Sharps box provided for needles (never handle needles – use litter picker). Ranger to put needle in sharps box, not volunteers. • Any accidental piercing by syringe should be immediately treated at medical practice or A&E. • Wear suitable gloves, wash hands afterwards and especially before eating/drinking. • Inform staff/other volunteers if broken glass/sharps in rubbish bags. • Exercise caution when collecting any sharp/rusty material. • Volunteers must report to a ranger if a weapon or dangerous object is found. Lead ranger will assess situation and decide if contacting an external organisation (e.g. Police) is necessary. . • Do not collect materials or containers with contents not identifiable. Inform Lead Ranger. • Do not collect toxic/hazardous material including asbestos sheeting, waste oil etc. Inform Lead Ranger. • Volunteers should not attempt to move overly heavy items. Manual Handling Guidelines to be followed at all times. • Do not overfill rubbish sacks. • High-visibility clothing must be worn when working on or near the public highway. • Lead Ranger should liaise with litter picking team to ensure their location / intended route is known and they are aware of break / pick-up time and location.
Litter picking	1	2	2	• Risk highest in areas likely to be soiled by rat/cow urine, e.g. urban stream banks / farms where pools of shallow water
Tetanus and Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease / Hardjo)	1	4	4	



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				collect.
				- Wear gloves - rubber if working in / near water. - All participants should have had anti-tetanus injections. - Treat all new cuts immediately with antiseptic and cover. - Avoid water contact with broken skin – cover existing broken skin and advise to not work in the water if possible. - Clean hands before: leaving site, eating, drinking and/or smoking. - Weil's disease starts as a feverish illness with a high temperature and headache. At this stage it can easily be controlled with antibiotics, so contact your GP straight away if you have these symptoms within 3 weeks of working in/near water. - Warn of plants/insects to avoid. - Anaphylactic (epi) pens should be carried by those who need them. - Encourage long sleeves/long trousers to be worn. - Machines only to be used by trained operatives – (LANTRA, NPTC, UK Rural Skills qualifications or awards issued by other training bodies deemed acceptable by Managing and Operations Director) or those in training under supervision by suitably qualified operative. - Maintain safe working distances as directed by the operator. - No smoking / naked flames within 5m of refuelling areas. - Use earplugs if within 10m of machinery for longer than 10 minutes but make available to all volunteers that want to use them. - Drills & Impact Drivers. Caution with drill bits which become hot after use. Hand over hand supervision maybe required for younger users or those with additional needs. Eye protection should be worn. - Any hazardous substances in use or likely to be encountered must be dealt with according to COSHH regulations along with specific PPE requirements. - When working with using chemicals or treated timber, suitable work gloves must be worn, refer to COSHH sheet for PPE required. - Broken skin must be covered and hands must be cleaned before eating, drinking or smoking. - Wear gloves to prevent skin irritation especially when dealing with known irritant species such as, but not limited to: Hogweed, Hemlock, Ragwort and Euphorbia spp etc. - Gloves should generally be worn in case of unknown allergies/reactions. - Wash skin/irrigate eyes with clean cold water if necessary. - Prevent anyone under the influence of drink or drugs from participating in the work session. - If any digging or other ground penetration is involved, check with landowner and see services maps obtained from utilities companies before starting work if necessary, look out for any signs that services are present – telegraph pole,
Stings & bites	1	3	3	
Power tools	1	4	4	
Biohazards and Chemicals including fuel	1	2	2	
Skin Irritation/Dermatitis from Plant Sap	1	2	2	
Alcohol and Drugs	1	3	3	
Underground Services: Electricity/Gas/Water	1	4	4	



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Safeguarding	2	2	4	nearby buildings, utilities warning signs. • Use detectors only with trained operator and recognise that they will not detect alkathene gas pipes without a metal tracer. • All children and vulnerable adults to be accompanied by responsible adult (parent, carer or teacher) in approved ratios. • Older young people to be signed in and out by parent / carer who should provide medical information and emergency contact information. • No child to be out of sight of a responsible adult. • DBS check for individuals to be in place where required. • Lead Ranger and all staff to maintain vigilance where members of the public not participating in the event are using the same public space.
Personal Attack	2	2	4	• Leave no one isolated on site. • Lock personal valuables out of sight. • Mobile phone issued & charged. • Do not travel alone to potential problems e.g. incursion, ASB. • If alone and an incident occurs use non-confrontational behaviour and language. Leave site as soon as it is safe to do so. Call for help – Chiltern Rangers Staff or 999.
P=probability from 1 to 4, S=severity from 1 to 5, L=level from 1 to 20				

29/5/19 Felling Statement Updated

23/03/22 JS added drills & impact drivers

20/10/22 IL added offensive weapons under litter picking

Activity Assessed General Safety for Conservation - Site	Assessor John Shaw	Assessment Date Reviewed 23/09/23 TS
Restrictions • Do not smoke within 5m of refuelling area. • Do not allow work to continue if weather significantly deteriorates, causing the site to become hazardous – very slippery, freezing cold, extreme heat, too windy. • Do not permit participation if people are ill attired, under the influence of drink or drugs or for any other reason at the Lead Ranger's discretion. • Be prepared to stop the session if work becomes too hazardous through such factors as poor grip, difficulty in seeing clearly or declining motivation/concentration due to weather.		
Preventative Measures • At tool talk at the start explain that staff (and some volunteer wardens) are trained first aiders. • Water for washing hands/treating burns & scalds. • Correctly stocked first aid kit must always be on site and in a location near to and known to everyone • Keep the work area and tools safe and tidy where practical. • Park vehicle so quick exit is possible in case of emergency. • Erect hazard warning signs on approaches to site/area. • Advise people on need to wear PPE and appropriate clothing when working outdoors for any length of time. • Ensure mobile phone/s (and LWD) are fully charged and any signal black spots are known at the start of the session • Site and task Risk Assessment cards.		
Personal Protective Equipment Depending on task the following should be worn:		



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- Suitable work gloves
- Safety helmet (complying with EN 397)
- Eye protection (mesh visor complying with EN 1731 or safety glasses to EN 166)
- Hearing protection (complying with EN 352)
- Protective boots with good grip and ankle support (complying with EN 345-1)
- High-visibility clothing when working on or near the public highway.
- Non-snag outer clothing
- Trousers, not short/skirts

Training

- Start the session with a Health and Safety briefing/training that draws from the Risk Assessment/s.
- Leaders to be trained or experienced in leading volunteer conservation projects.
- All staff to have read this Risk Assessment.

Monitoring

- Regularly inspect equipment and check its condition before each use. Decommission log and report any faulty or unsafe equipment and mark appropriately (eg. Wrap in hazard tape).
- Report any unsafe practice, near misses or accidents using appropriate forms. Review in team meeting.
- Monitor the site for hazards, pointing out or marking these as appropriate to warn participants and/or the public.
- Monitor weather conditions.
- Monitor welfare of participants, particularly signs of fatigue.
- Monitor site conditions:
 - Conditions under foot.
 - Ensure work area kept clear as far as is practical.

Information

- The following are to be available on site:
 - This Risk Assessment
 - The appropriate Site Risk Assessment
 - All relevant Task Risk Assessments
 - Privacy Policy
 - Safeguarding for Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures
 - Child Protection Policy.