



Animal Acquisition, Disposition, Loan and Visitation Policy

Purpose: To define MetroParks standards and methods for the acquisition, disposition, loan, and visitation of MetroParks Farm & Program Animals located on current and future MetroParks properties.

Overview

The responsible management of living animal populations necessitates that some animals included in MetroParks collection be acquired and that others be removed at certain times.

For the purposes of this policy an animal is defined as a vertebrate which includes fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. Animals covered by this policy are those acquired by MetroParks of Butler County for the purposes of interpretive educational programming. Animals living in the river, creeks, natural and man-made lakes, woodlands, (in the wild) and all current and future greenspace preserved and protected by the park system are not covered by this policy. Acquisition of animals can occur through, donation, purchase, capture or rescue.

Disposition occurs when an animal leaves the collection for any reason. Reasons vary but will include population management, behavioral incompatibility, sexual maturation, animal health concerns, or death, as well as periodic cost versus benefit analysis.

The Acquisition, Disposition, Loan and Visitation Policy is intended to:

- Ensure that the welfare of individual interpretive animals acquired, whether farm animals used for educational/agricultural programming or native species of animals shall meet the then current parameters for conservation and local habitat programming needs and support the overall educational component of MetroParks Mission Statement. Additionally, animals acquired shall be acquired in a manner that remains in compliance with any Federal or State ODNR (Ohio Department of Natural Resources) requirements relative to the collection and permitting of the animals; and
- Ensure that animals are not transferred to individuals or organizations that lack the appropriate expertise or facilities to care for them upon disposition; and
- Ensure that all parameters for the loan of an animal are clearly defined for both MetroParks and the animal's owner; and

- Ensure the humane treatment of all animals under the care of MetroParks of Butler County. Humane care is defined as the compassionate, considerate and sympathetic care to all, but not limited to, suffering animals in a way that causes the least pain; and
- Ensure the safety of all individuals, staff, park customer/owners and visitors, who come in contact with the animals under the care of MetroParks of Butler County.

In General:

- Animals shall be introduced to, or removed from the collection, with a recommendation from the knowledgeable and trained MetroParks staff member responsible for day to day care and health maintenance of the animals. Forms attached to this policy are used to obtain approvals from appropriate levels of management as defined herein before requiring the final approval of the Executive Director or his/or her designee; and
- Any animal brought to into the possession or care of MetroParks by acquisition (defined as donated to, purchased, captured, or rescued by MetroParks) shall, to the best of the owner's and MetroParks' knowledge, be in good health; and
- Any animal brought to into the possession or care of MetroParks by loan (defined as borrowed or granted the temporary use of and cared for by MetroParks staff) shall, to the best of the owner's and MetroParks' knowledge, be in good health; and
- Any animal brought to into the possession or care of MetroParks by visitation (defined as being cared for by its owner while on MetroParks property) shall, to the best of the owner's and MetroParks' knowledge, be in good health; and
- Live animals shall be disposed of or acquired from animal suppliers having the qualifications and facilities to care for the animals and/or humanely dispose of them; and
- Deceased small animals shall be composted at Chrisholm MetroPark, located in Madison Township, Butler County, Ohio, compliant with the then current applicable state rules and regulations governing such activities, in a location not obvious to the public, or the then currently designated MetroPark property deemed appropriate for such activity by MetroParks Executive Director or his/her designee. This method reduces the risk of site contamination, protects visitor and staff health, saves money, is easy to master and is a universal technique in the farming community; and
- While larger animals, such are sheep, goats and donkeys, could also be composted, any animal of similar size shall be removed by a contractor that specializes in the removal of large animal carcasses. MetroParks will not attempt large animal composting in-house due to the length of time needed to fully compost and due to the material costs to facilitate composting; and

- Additionally, animals leaving the collection for reasons of population management, behavioral incompatibility, sexual maturation, animal health or human health concerns, or death may be collected by the donor if requested at the time of donation and as indicated and agreed in the additional information section regarding the donation found on MetroParks then current Donation Record form when the animal is donated.



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SECTION 1: Acquisition

Prior to acquisition, it is imperative that the necessary resources are available to support and provide the care and management of the animal(s), so that the physical, social and programming needs of both the animal and MetroParks are met.

Reasons for acquisition (defined as donated or purchased):

- Increase the number of existing animals; and
- Replace existing animals that have either died or been removed for other reasons as herein defined; and
- Specific programming needs such as “baby animals on the farm” or seasonal events.

Considerations:

- Does the acquisition of the animals maintain the parameters of the number of animals kept in MetroParks care defined in SECTION 7 of this policy; and
- Does MetroParks have a programming purpose for the animals that enhances park customer/owner experience and/or increases visitation; and
- Does MetroParks have the space for the animals; and
- Does MetroParks have the financial, staff or other resources to care for the animals?

Approval Process

- MetroParks Senior Manager of Park Connections or his/her designee recommend the addition of animals to deliver interpretive programming with the number of animals not to exceed the total number of animals as defined in SECTION 7 of this policy. This process is facilitated by the utilization of the Request for Acquisition or Disposition of an Animal form found on page 9 in this policy and obtaining the appropriate approvals and signatures.

SECTION 2: Disposition

Prior to disposition of any MetroParks interpretive animal, thought shall be given to the methods by which the disposition occurs either by disposal or relocation.

Reasons for disposition (defined as disposal or relocation):

- No space available due to addition of other animals; to maintain the parameters of the number of animals kept in MetroParks care defined in SECTION 7 of this policy; and
- Poor health of the animal; and
- Danger to itself, other animals, staff, volunteers or public, including but not limited to sexually mature poultry; and

- No longer enhances experience of educational programming.

Considerations

- A medical history, normal diet and a management/husbandry summary shall precede and accompany an animal disposition recommendation.

Approval Process

- MetroParks Senior Manager of Park Connections or his/her designee may recommend the disposition of animals for the reasons listed herein. This process is facilitated by the utilization of the Request for Acquisition or Disposition of an Animal form found on page 9 in this policy and obtaining the appropriate approvals and signatures.

SECTION 3: Rotation Cycle

When a new animal is acquired, it may be necessary to dispose of another for space and care considerations. The following factors will be used by the Senior Manager of Park Connections or his/her designee to recommend which animals shall join or leave the collection:

- Overall health and ease to maintain with minimal medical issues; and
- Positive interactions with other animals and humans; and
- When all else is constant, age of the animal.

SECTION 4: Managing Unhealthy Animals

Care logs shall be kept and monitored by MetroParks Park Connections and Farm staff assigned to animal care by the Senior Manager of Park Connections or his/her designee at any given time for all animals (either farm or native species) owned by MetroParks.

- When behavior or logs indicate concerns about the health of an animal, the animal shall be quarantined to protect the other animals; and
- Care for health concerns that are limited in scope, simple in nature and do not require professional medical training, shall be administered by trained MetroParks staff; and
- When animal health concerns are more advanced, MetroParks shall, in the most cost-effective manner, seek guidance from a qualified veterinarian. Guidance sought may include:
 - verbal or written instructions via a phone call; and
 - veterinary exams either via transport to a clinic or a visit to a MetroParks site by a qualified veterinarian; and

- Approved veterinary treatment costs shall not exceed the replacement value (defined as the amount that MetroParks would have to pay to replace the animal at the then current price according to its worth) of the animal, as verified by obtaining an estimation of cost for the replacement animal.

SECTION 5: Visiting Animals

Visiting is defined as:

- Animals not owned by MetroParks of Butler County; and
- Animals brought to property owned by MetroParks with their owners for a specific program or event; and
- Animals shall be in direct contact and care by their personal owners for a defined period of time.

All owners of visiting animals to MetroParks for a program or event must have completed the following steps:

- Owners shall receive an invitation from MetroParks Farm or Park Connections designee, as assigned by Senior Manager of Park Connections to attend a specific program or event; and
- Owners shall complete the Request for Special Permit or Waiver of the MetroParks Rules or Regulation regulating the presence of the visiting animal and returned to management for review and further processing, which clearly states an arrival and departure date; and
- Owner (applicant) shall sign the draft permit and return it to MetroParks Executive Assistant for review, approval and signature by MetroParks Executive Director or his/her designee; and
- Owner (permittee) shall be in receipt of the final permit prior to bringing personal animals to MetroParks properties; and
- Owners shall complete the visitation form and returned it to management for review and further processing; and
- Owners shall receive final visitation form.

SECTION 6: Animals on Loan

Loan is defined as:

- Animals not owned by MetroParks of Butler County; and
- Animals cared by farm staff while they are onsite; and

- Animals on our site for a specified period of time.

All owners of animals on loan to MetroParks must have completed the following steps:

- Owners shall receive an invitation from MetroParks staff to attend a specific program or event; and
- Owners shall complete the Request for Special Permission or Waiver of a MetroParks Rules or Regulation and returned to management for review and further processing, which clearly states an arrival and departure date; and
- Owners (permittee) shall sign the draft permit and return it to MetroParks Executive Assistant for review and signature by MetroParks Executive Director; and
- Owners (permittee) shall be in receipt of the final Permit prior to bringing personal animals to MetroParks properties; and
- Owners shall complete the loan form and returned it to management for review and further processing; and
- Owners shall have received final loan form.

SECTION 7: Total Number of Animals in MetroParks Care

The number of animals in MetroParks care, either on loan or owned by MetroParks, will fluctuate based on programming needs and care resources available. The total number of each type of interpretive programming animal owned and/or on loan within MetroParks care at any given time will not exceed the following numbers without prior approval from the Executive Director or his/her designee. These animals will be boarded at the then current MetroPark location which provides the most appropriate accommodations to shelter and care for the animals as designated by the Executive Director or his/her designee.

Interpretive Farm Animals

- Farm animals used for interpretive purposes that are currently owned, or planned to be owned, or on loan, and located at Chrisholm Historic Farmstead shall not exceed the totals on the Charts A & B respectively (charts A & B found below.) Should other locations and/or resources become available to accommodate a larger number of animals, either at Chrisholm Historic Farmstead or other MetroParks owned or operated locations, additions of these types animals defined in this policy shall require the approval of the Executive Director or his/her designee prior to their addition.

CHART A

Interpretive Farm Animals Owned by MetroParks	Total not to Exceed
Donkey	2
Sheep	3
Goats	3
Rabbits	3
Chickens	15
Turkey	1

CHART B

Interpretive Farm Animals on Loan to MetroParks	Total not to Exceed	Loan Period not to Exceed
Donkey	1	One Week
Sheep	2	One Week
Goats	2	One Week
Rabbits	2	One Month
Chickens	5	One Month
Turkey	1	One Month
Horse	1	One Week

Interpretive Native Species (Animals)

- Native species (animals) used for interpretive purposes that are currently owned, or planned to be owned, or on loan, and located at Forest Run MetroPark shall not exceed the totals on the Charts C & D respectively (charts C & D found below.) Should other locations and/or resources become available to accommodate a larger number of animals, either at Forest Run MetroPark or other MetroParks’ owned or operated locations, additions of these types animals defined in this policy shall require the approval of the Executive Director or his/her designee prior to their addition.

CHART C

Interpretive Native Species (Animals) Owned by MetroParks	Total not to Exceed
Reptiles	4
Amphibians	4

CHART D

Interpretive Native Species (Animals) on Loan to MetroParks	Total not to Exceed	Loan Period not to Exceed
Reptiles	2	One Month
Amphibians	2	One Month



Animal Loan or Visitation Application Form

Please Type or Print

NOTE: PERMIT MAY REQUIRE 30 OR MORE DAYS TO PROCESS

- Visiting Animal
- Animal Loan

Name of animal's owner: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email address: _____ Fax: _____

Description of animal and supplies on loan to MetroParks of Butler County: _____

Describe the overall health of the animal _____

Has the animal ever exhibited aggressive tendencies? If so, please describe. _____

For the purpose of enhancing educational experiences at _____

(park location)

Use reverse side for photos and attach additional pages of information if necessary.

The above animal and items will be accommodated and maintained as per request from owner to the best of MetroParks of Butler County's ability from _____ to _____. At which time, the owner is to take custody of their animal and items and remove them from MetroParks of Butler County property.

MetroParks will provide a safe environment to all animals on loan and visiting animals. A high level of daily animal care will be provided by MetroParks during a defined loan period as defined in the special permit issued by the MetroParks the terms of which the owner of the animal has agreed to. The owner agrees that he/she assumes all risk of injury or illness to the animals while they are on MetroParks property. Any vet care or medical issues that arise beyond daily wellness and animal husbandry

For MBC Administrative Staff Use Only — Route Form as Shown Below.

	Date	Approved by staff member
1. Farm or Park Connections Designee	_____	_____
2. Sr. Manager PC	_____	_____
3. Supervisor C & PC	_____	_____
4. Executive Director	_____	_____

This is not the special permit required. If approved, the special permit will be issued by the Executive Director's office. This form may be attached to a Special Permit as an addendum.



Request for Acquisition or Disposition of an Animal

Please Type or Print

Add an animal

NOTE: REQUEST May REQUIRE 30 OR MORE DAYS TO PROCESS

Remove an animal

Animal description:

Reason:

Name of Park:

Method:

Cost: _____

Donations will require a MetroParks Donation Form to accompany the Request to Add

Farm or Park Connections Designee _____ Date _____

Sr. Manager of PC _____ Date _____

Supervisor of Community and PC _____ Date _____

Executive Director _____ Date _____