**Request for Approval to Fund Mission Essential Travel**

**Center/Office:** ORD/CEMM/ACESD

**Traveler(s):** *Primary:* Jeff Hollister, Stephen Shivers, Sophie Fournier  
*Alternates:* Betty Kreakie, Tara Burke, Don Cobb, Steve Rego, Jonathan Serbst, Anne Kuhn-Hines

**Dates for Travel:** 2021-08-01 to 2021-09-30

**Travel Destination:**

**Describe Purpose of Travel (Field study: identify whether the travelers are participants in a non-EPA study or part of an ORD/EPA planned field study, mandatory training, attend conference, meeting etc.):** These travel events will support ORD/EPA HABs monitoring and research (SSWR 4.3.1). These will consist of 10 or fewer single day sampling trips. Each sampling trip requires 2 staff members. The travelers listed above are broken into primary and alternative staff. The alternates will only be used when two of the primary staff members are unavailable.

**Rationale for Mission Essential Travel**: These sampling efforts are building on past work and are essential to understand the long term nature of HABs. Our research has already suffered a single year loss of data due to COVID. Additional lost sampling time will weaken this HABS dataset and limit our research in a critical ORD priority area. Also, we provide technical support to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and have sampled lakes with reported HAB issues. This travel will allow us to continue this valued support to RIDEM.

**Expected Mode of Transportation (Air, Rail, POV):**  GOV (one person per GOV) or POV for each day trip.

This will all be local travel designation. The GOV will be no cost travel. If a

POV is needed the driver will request mileage. No other travel costs are

expected.

**Brief Description of COVID-19 Safety Precautions:** Each person will self-certify using EPA guidance.

Each person will drive separately. Anyone using a GOV will follow: “Best Practices

for ACESD GOV Use during Covid-19 Pandemic”

Field work – all outdoor activities

We will wear masks when we cannot maintain social distance. We will also follow all Rhode Island guidelines for Covid-19

The sampling teams have met with our SHEM, Gino Begluitti, who has approved

our revised techniques to safely collect and process samples during COVID-19.

Participation will be completely voluntary and subject to their personal discretion.

We will deploy the minimum number of people necessary to safely collect the

data (usually two people). All personnel will commute in separate vehicles. All shared supplies will be handled with gloved hands. Gloves will be disposed of properly. Staff are aware that handwashing is a superior method of prevention; yet, will wear gloves when handwashing is not immediately available. Masks will be worn when 6 feet of separation cannot be maintained, in accordance with guidelines from the states of Rhode Island.

When samples are returned to ACESD laboratories for sample processing in the afternoon, each lab worker will work in separate laboratories so each room will have an occupancy of one. Any shared resources like sample coolers and dirty labware will be kept in the hallway outside the laboratories.

**Source of Funding** ORD  Other  Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signatures**

Center/Office Deputy Director \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chris Robbins Senior Resource Official \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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