

GUIDELINES

**Gitchee Gumee Conference Center
U S Environmental Protection Agency
Mid-Continent Ecology Division
6201 Congdon Boulevard
Duluth, Minnesota 55804**

Note

Please note that the conference facility is not available for use on weekends or holidays. These Guidelines are for your information only. All requests for facility reservations must go to Karis Boerner (218-529-5035).

Introduction

The Mid-Continent Ecology Division is a component of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory. The mission of the Division is to provide scientific information for use in predicting and assessing the effects of the pollutants and other stressors to our Nation's freshwater resources. The Division accomplishes its mission in partnership with its sister Divisions of the national laboratory, with other EPA research laboratories and centers, and with EPA Program and Regional Offices. Partners also include states, tribes, other federal and international agencies, and research organizations in the private and non-governmental sectors.

Use of Division facilities must be consistent with our mission. The Gitchee Gumee Conference Facility has a function of providing space for sharing and disseminating scientific information. As a federal research organization, EPA is pleased to share its facilities in fulfilling this function.

This document serves as a guide for using the Gitchee Gumee Conference Facility; appropriate uses, priority of users, the request process, and expectations of users.

Priority of Users

In the situation of competing requests, the following priority order will determine use:

First Priority:	Division staff
Second Priority:	Environmental Protection Agency, outside the Division
Third Priority:	Other Federal agencies
Fourth Priority:	State, Tribal, Local Agencies
Fifth Priority:	Non-profit, Non-governmental organizations

Acceptable Meeting Purposes:

Overall, the emphasis for use of the Conference Facility will be to promote/disseminate environmental and ecological science.

The conference, symposium, seminar, or meeting (hereinafter collectively referred to as the meeting) might be sponsored solely by EPA or by an outside organization or jointly by EPA *and* an outside organization.

If the meeting is sponsored by an outside organization, the purpose should focus on one or more of the following areas:

- discuss, evaluate, or plan non-EPA or public/private initiatives on improvement of the environment
- share information on environmental or scientific issues
- support or stimulate public awareness of environmental science
- enhance management of non-EPA environmental programs
- hold discussions by states and tribal associations of delegated environmental programs

The outside organization will provide the EPA with a summary of the purpose of the meeting, a proposed agenda and suggested speakers prior to approval by the EPA of the use of the facility. EPA assistance will be typically in-kind (unless previous arrangements are made for EPA sponsorship) and limited to use of the facility and some help in setting up and cleaning up.

Fees for registration or participation to the meeting may be charged by the organizers to participants, but only fees to cover logistic costs, such as individual lunches or other refreshments, keynote speaker support, AV equipment rental, etc. EPA encourages open meetings where participants may choose not to partake in refreshments in lieu of the entry fee.

Not Permitted:

Meetings for private for-profit corporations or organizations, political or religious organizations, and other private individuals and organizations, and meetings that are not oriented toward science or environmental issues, are not permitted. The facility may not be used for fund-raising events. Use of alcoholic beverages is not permitted on EPA grounds. Further, Federal law states that anyone using the facility shall abide by the following:

1. Not misrepresent his/her identity to the public
2. Not distribute any item for which the prior approval of the building manager or his/her representative has not been obtained
3. Not leave leaflets or other material unattended at any place on the property
4. Not conduct any activities in a misleading or fraudulent manner
5. Not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability or national origin, in conducting the permitted activities

How to Request Use of the Conference Facility:

- 1) EPA Staff: may reserve any available room(s) on a first come, first serve basis through an online reservation process. Time/use conflicts are to be resolved by staff who will notify the lobby staff that can make changes in the online calendar.
- 2) Outside Organizations: may request reservations by first contacting Karis Boerner, Acting Associate Director for Program Operations (ADPO) (by phone at 218-529-5035 or by email at boerner.karis@epa.gov). They will then be provided with an application for a free use permit in which they will be asked pertinent information. The ADPO will review their application and determine whether or not space is available and, if so, whether or not the organization can hold their meeting at MED.

Group Size Limitations:

The maximum number of people that the Gitchee Gumees Conference Center can hold is 250. The Division has a limited number of tables and may not be able to supply large numbers for the meeting. Current parking facilities will accommodate 30-40 vehicles during normal business hours (7 AM - 6 PM, Monday-Friday). After hours (after 6PM weeknights) parking is available for up to 150 vehicles. **If a large meeting is scheduled during normal business hours, other transportation such as shuttle buses will need to be arranged by the requesting organization.**

Space Set-up:

For EPA-Sponsored Meetings:

For an EPA-or jointly sponsored meeting, requesters will be directed to fill out a form indicating the arrangement of the room(s) needed for the meeting. The form will be provided to the MED Facility Manager **at least one week** prior to the event. Through the use of the maintenance contractor, the Facility Manager will ensure that the proper set-up takes place.

For meetings Not Sponsored by EPA:

For a non-EPA meeting, the reservation request will indicate the number of chairs and tables and podiums necessary for the meeting. This information will be provided to the Facility Manager who will ensure that the correct number of chairs, etc., will be out and available. The organizer will be expected to come to the conference center prior to the meeting to set up chairs and tables in the desired arrangement.

Meeting sponsors will be responsible for returning the furniture to the original positions.

In either case, the Facility Manager will ensure that the chairs and tables are returned to the proper storage areas after the meeting.

Audio-visual equipment (computer/slide projector, overhead projector, microphone, speakers, pointing devices, etc) must be provided by the sponsoring organization.

EPA has wireless connectivity using a DSL connection. Instructions for connecting are available at the front desk, however no live IT support is provided.

While this policy is clear on what the EPA can provide in terms of a non-EPA meeting, there may be special circumstances/accommodations that come to light just before an event takes place. If the meeting sponsor has any requests for anything outside of what they indicated in the reservation request form, they must make those requests no later than 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Requests must be made by phone or fax to Karis Boerner and must include a contact name and phone number. Again, requests for use of government equipment or access to secure systems or areas will be denied.

Security:

All visitors will be required to check in at the front desk. Visitors from other EPA offices may use their identification badges. All other visitors will need to obtain a temporary visitor badge when they check in, only if they are using the Conference Center during normal business hours. Non-EPA visitors will not be required to obtain a badge for meetings after 6 p on weekdays.

Meetings, regardless of sponsorship, during normal business hours will not require extra security measures except to remind visitors at the outset that their use of the facility is limited to the conference center unless they are accompanied by an EPA employee.

For a meeting that takes place after normal business hours, the EPA-contracted security service will maintain normal guard presence. The guard will ensure access through the front doors for up to one hour after the meeting begins. After that time, the front doors will be locked and the center/lobby to the rest of the facility will be locked. This will be the case for any meetings that is sponsored by an outside organization or jointly sponsored with EPA. EPA-only meetings will not require the closing and locking of the aforementioned doors, but such is advised if no further access beyond the conference center is needed. Signs will mark restricted areas.

Clean-Up:

For meetings that are solely or jointly sponsored by EPA, EPA-contracted custodial services will perform normal trash collection, sweeping, and any cleaning of the conference center that is necessary at the end of a meeting. It is expected, however, the meeting participants will be responsible in putting trash in appropriate containers and maintaining the facility in as clean a condition as they found it at the beginning of the event.

If the meeting is sponsored by an outside organization, trash bags and baskets will be provided to the sponsors and they will be instructed to ensure that all trash and garbage is collected in the bags prior to their departure from the building. The bags will be collected and disposed of by the EPA-contracted custodial service that will also perform any other cleaning of the center that is necessary.

Recycling barrels for aluminum and plastic and office paper will be provided in each room of the conference center and be clearly marked. Participants at all meetings are strongly encouraged to dispose of recyclable refuse in the proper containers.

Damage:

If an outside organization causes any significant damage (more than \$100) to the facility or to equipment therein, they will be held financially liable and billed by the government for the cost of repair or replacement.

Advance Notification of Meetings:

The Division will accept reservations of available meeting space for a solely or jointly EPA-sponsored meeting at any time. Reservations/requests made by outside organization can be accepted no more than 60 days in advance of the meeting in order to reduce conflicts with eleventh-hour EPA-priority needs. Flexibility must be maintained in order to accommodate EPA-sponsored events that might arise. However, organizations that need to secure a meeting space more than 60 days in advance may ask for special consideration. The Associate Director for Program Operations will determine whether or not to accept a longer-term reservation after careful consideration and review of known or potential upcoming events.