

IMPORTANT

ESSENTIAL READING BEFORE CARRYING OUT A Mud Spotter SURVEY.

SITE ACCESS

Mud Spotter surveys should only be conducted on land that is either publicly accessible or where permission has been sought from the land owner.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All surveyors must carry out a full risk assessment specific to working beside water BEFORE starting a new survey; and ensure that they follow Health and Safety guidelines appropriate to themselves and in line with their host organisation's requirements.

Although the Mud Spotter survey is designed to be undertaken by one surveyor from the bank top undertaking lone survey activities may not be recommended by your host organisation. However, if there are occasions where you are undertaking the survey alone, you will need to ensure that you comply with your host organisation's Lone Working Regulations.

Please remember these foundation safety principles when undertaking Mud Spotter surveys:

1. Whilst taking part in a Mud Spotter survey you have the responsibility of ensuring that you are considering your own health and safety and the safety of others.
2. It is advisable to carry a mobile phone as it may be useful in an emergency.
3. When visiting a site take care to park sensibly, preferably off-road, and wear bright coloured clothing to ensure you are seen by traffic.
4. Under 18s can take part in Mud Spotter surveying but only if they are accompanied by a responsible adult.
5. Always carry out an appropriate risk assessment BEFORE undertaking a Mud Spotter survey
6. If working alone, always follow appropriate 'lone working' procedures including the completion of any required paperwork or notifications in accordance with the host organisation's requirements.
7. The entire Mud Spotter survey can be completed from the bank top so you should not enter the river.
8. Although Mud Spotter surveys are conducted during or immediately after wet weather, they should NEVER be carried out during periods of very high river water levels. Surveys should be delayed until the water is contained well within the bankfull channel and thus does not present a danger for bank-top surveying.
9. Rivers often respond rapidly to rainfall. It is important to check the local weather conditions BEFORE commencing and to monitor changes to ensure that the survey is carried out safely.
10. Appropriate clothing MUST be worn at all times when surveying rivers. Strong boots or waders are ideal, and provide protection from nettles, brambles etc also thick clothing or waterproofs are recommended.
11. A ranging pole is a helpful tool when surveying channels. It can be used as additional support and as a probe for safety as well as providing assistance in assessing channel dimensions without entering the river.
12. Take special care when entering areas with livestock, especially cattle, rams and horses. If livestock

The Environment Agency's Health and Safety Guidance and also Lone Worker Code of Practice (Appendices 1 and 2 in the RHS 2003 manual) provide some useful advice in

relation to Health and safety issues. This can be downloaded from <http://www.riverhabitatsurvey.org/manual/rhs-manuals/>

WATERBOURNE DISEASES

Mud Spotter surveys do not require you to enter the water. However, you should be aware that working near water is a potential source of disease including leptospirosis or Weil's disease, hepatitis A and tetanus and that the best preventative measures are:

- Be aware of these diseases and take precautions based on this knowledge.
- Ensure hepatitis A and tetanus jabs are up to date.
- Ensure that any cuts on hands are covered with waterproof plasters
- Carefully clean and cover cuts or grazes acquired during field survey work.
- Wear protective clothing such as gloves.
- Avoid ingestion of water or splashing water into your eyes.
- Ensure that hands are washed after contact with water especially before eating, drinking or smoking. Use alcohol gel if water not available.
- If you have accidentally entered the water, wash thoroughly and as soon as possible.
- If feeling unwell after taking part in the survey, seek medical attention and notify them of the activities you have undertaken.

Lyme's disease is a bacterial disease transmitted by animal ticks associated with rank vegetation, which can lead to severe symptoms if left untreated. For further information see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>

Tetanus is a serious but rare condition caused by bacteria getting into even a minor wound. For more information visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/tetanus/>

Weil's disease (leptospirosis) is an uncommon bacterial infection spread by animals, but the risk is increased if you regularly come into contact with rivers. For more information visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/leptospirosis/>

BIOSECURITY

You must ensure that you take appropriate measures to reduce the risk of spreading diseases, parasites and invasive non-native species. The protection of water courses is a priority consideration and should ensure no lasting adverse effects to the biological, physical or chemical condition of the river or stream being surveyed. In particular, the spread of aquatic disease or non-native invasive species (NNIS) must be avoided by following '**Check, Clean, Dry**' practices when arriving and leaving all survey sites and you must apply the biosecurity advice provided by the following campaigns:

NNSS Be Plantwise - <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/beplantwise/index.cfm>

Check, Clean, Dry - <http://www.nonnativespecies.org/checkcleandry/index.cfm>

OPEN ACCESS DATA

By adding photos and data to the Modular River Survey / Mud Spotter database, all surveyors will thereby give their permission and agreement for their uploaded data to be shared.

DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE

All survey data will be quality assured before being approved for publication on the modular river survey website. However, we strongly encourage host organisations (e.g. catchment groups) to form 'teams' in which a small number of trained personnel can quality assure surveys collected within their hub/area as well as training and supporting the surveyors within their team. A workspace can be assigned to a team for this purpose (contact help@cartographer.io).