



GREAT LAKES

**WORM WATCH**



## Earthworm and Habitat Studies

### General Habitat Description: Data Sheet

- 1) Check one:  Predominantly a natural habitat  
 Predominantly a human modified habitat

2) Describe the habitat type you are sampling in your own words (100 words).

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3) Describe the type and intensity of human use on your site (100 words).

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4) Describe the surrounding landscape (100 words).

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5) What size is the habitat? \_\_\_\_\_

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6) What is the location of the habitat and sample area?

directions: \_\_\_\_\_

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place on earth: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Earthworm and Habitat Studies

## General Habitat Description: Instructions

- 1) One indication that a particular place might be a predominantly natural habitat is when it contains mostly native plant species and few weedy plant species. If the area has had very little human activity in it, such as logging, cattle grazing or farming, then this might be another indication that it is a predominantly natural habitat.

A predominantly human modified habitat would be one that has fewer native plant species and/or more exotic plant species. Any habitat that has had a lot of human activity in or around it is likely to have been affected by those activities. So, it is likely to be considered a human modified habitat.

- 2) Describe the habitat type you are going to sample in your own words. Include anything that may be unique or unusual about this particular site OR, if it is a very typical example of this habitat type in your area.
- 3) Describe the type and intensity of human use of this site both in the past and currently. These activities may include logging, cattle grazing, hay field or pasture, farm crops or recreational trails, just to name a few. Current land use is easier to describe than the past, but just do your best. Be sure to ask the land owner about historic use when you get permission to do your survey.

Be as specific as possible but if you don't know then say that too. For example, a forest may have been clear cut or heavily logged in the 1930's but has had no recent logging activity, or a forest may have been only selectively logged historically but your not sure when. A prairie, pasture or wood lot may have been grazed by cattle in the 1950's but with not additional human use since then. A pasture or farm field may have been in continuous use since the 1940's, with cattle grazed some time during that period.

- 4) Describe the surrounding landscape, within a mile or two of the habitat you are sampling. Is it located in a largely human dominated landscape or a mostly natural landscape? Is the site surrounded predominately by similar habitat types or by different habitat types? If different, then what are the other habitat types and land uses that surround your study site? Describe your sites proximity to houses, businesses, roads, farm fields, lakes, rivers & creeks, wetlands and fishing activity.
- 5) Give the approximate size (acres or hectares) of the habitat in which are going to sample. For example, the forest you are going to conduct your survey in may be 110 acres large, even though you are only going to sample a very small part of this whole stand.
- 6) Give the location of you habitat and sample area in two different ways. "Directions" should enable someone who does not know the area to get to the habitat and sample area using commonly available road maps. This information can, and usually does, change over the years but will enable people to find the area of interest easily.  
"Place on Earth" is a geographic description of the location of the habitat and sample area. This location does not change over the years (at least by human standards) and by using topographic maps will enable someone to locate the site even if the roads and landmarks change. These types of locations include...

- a) latitude & longitude
- b) legal descriptions – township/range/section/subsection
- c) UTM coordinates

Both the legal description and UTM coordinates can be determined by finding your habitat and sample area on a topographic map. If you have access to a Global Positioning System (GPS) then you can also use this to get the latitude & longitude or UTM.

Be sure to say how you determined your “place on earth” location