

**Considerations for Starting a Water Quality Monitoring
Program in Your Community
Part I: Steps Involved**

WORKING DRAFT, JANUARY 2000

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(Updated October 2003 by Kris Stepenuck, WAV Coordinator)

Introduction

This resource is intended to help citizen groups, or local, county and state agency staff organize a local citizen-based volunteer water quality monitoring program. It is expected that each monitoring group's organizational structure will be determined by the project goals and needs of the volunteers. With that in mind, this guide offers the basics of planning as they related to a typical water quality volunteer monitoring program. It is recommended that each group explore the other materials listed in the reference section for help with specific organizational issues.

Although each monitoring group will have its own "personality," each group must be dedicated to following the monitoring procedures laid out by the Water Action Volunteers program. In order to share data, groups must follow the same methods, use the same equipment and try to maintain uniform procedures in order to keep a high standard for reliable data.

Background

Water Action Volunteers is a statewide program that provides stream and river education programming for Wisconsin citizens. The WAV program has worked hard to ensure that uniform monitoring procedures are available so that consistent data can be gathered and shared. Many groups have been monitoring for a number of years but not all of the groups were following the same procedures or using the same materials. To remedy this, WAV has worked with university and state specialists to establish baseline parameters and procedures. These parameters were derived from the most popular on-going monitoring efforts among volunteers groups. More importantly, the parameters were carefully reviewed to ensure uniform quality control and ease of use.

Getting Started

The amount of time dedicated to this project is entirely up to you; however, it is essential to think long-term when planning a volunteer monitoring program. Sometimes a number of years need to pass before the data show any changes in stream water quality. In addition, someone will need to provide leadership during the program's lifespan. It is strongly suggested that a Steering Committee be formed to share responsibilities. Before you announce to the community your interest in creating a volunteer monitoring program, you must think through of plan for many or all of the steps below.

Below is a list of things that need to be done to make your program successful. Each one of these items is outlined in detail in this booklet.

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Starting a Steering Committee

- ☑ Organizing a steering committee
- ☑ Identifying a steering committee facilitator (meeting follow-up, write minutes, reminder calls)

Before you let people know about your monitoring project, you need to decide who is going to coordinate the project. It can be a committee or one person. Upkeep of your program will need consistency. Having a steering committee makes the project more manageable and helps to prevent burn-out. Committee members can include: friends, neighbors, local, county and state staff, local nature center staff, water treatment staff, representatives of local industry or business, and local youth group leaders. Try to include 3-7 people on this committee. It is a good idea to contact or include the local UWEX Basin Educator in these meeting. The Basin Educator may be able to provide some leadership and resources for your effort. Call 608-262-0020 to get the phone name and number for your local Basin Educator or visit <http://clean-water.uwex.edu> to locate the Basin Educator in your area.

Choosing your Monitoring Group’s “Personality”

Reviewing other materials

There are a variety of existing monitoring programs or models in Wisconsin and across the nation. Each program offers something unique to its audiences. In most cases, these organizations are collecting data about other parameters in addition to the five parameters endorsed by WAV. If your group finds itself considering expanding the scope of the monitoring program, there are a number of other programs which may help to guide the decision and you can find this information in the Reference section (page 17). In general, the Steering Committee will select parameters based on the availability of funds. WAV will not be able to provide guidance for parameters that are not endorsed by the program.

The reference section of this booklet has a list of materials that will help you organize your volunteer monitoring group. Some of these materials do cost some money. So ask the distributor about fees before you order anything.

Getting to Work

- ☑ Discussing program goals and objectives

By this point, you have organized a steering committee, and a committee facilitator has been selected; it is time to figure out what your project is about. A program's goal can be defined in a broad statement and will provide the foundation for your program strategy. The program's objectives give your strategy focus. Because the meanings of goals and objectives can vary, please consider using the following definitions to help you.

Mission Statement: A practical statement about the responsibility that an organization is willing to shoulder to attain its vision.

Goal: A specific, straightforward statement of desired outcomes

Objective: A specific step with measurable outcomes that a group will take to achieve a specific goal

Service Watershed Stewardship: A Learning Guide. Oregon State University Extension.

When it is time for you to establish your goals and objectives, consult the staff from your local Land Conservation Department or Department of Natural Resources office if this person is not on your steering committee. The staff person will be able to help you develop your own goals and objectives, and may be able to tell you what the department's goals and objectives are. You may want to adopt departmental goals as your own to prevent duplication and to make efforts more consistent.

The goals of the overall statewide volunteer monitoring program are:

- Wisconsin citizens will monitor stream and river health
- The program will share data for educational purposes
- The program will provide a network for volunteer groups, individuals, and students to interact
- The program will provide support for civic conservation and environmental groups
- The program will help to increase the linkages between volunteer monitoring efforts and public resource protection programs.

You can also use the statewide WAV goals to form your program goals. For example:

1. Bell Creek watershed volunteers will collect stream and river data
2. Bell Creek watershed volunteers will participate in training programs
3. Bell Creek monitoring data will be used to teach the community about water quality

Creating Objectives:

Creating program objectives will help the group decide how to put your goals into action. Objective use verbs such as: Collect... Promote... Learn...

Examples of objectives could be:

1. Volunteers will collect data for five parameters.
2. Bell Creek Watershed staff will host two training programs on volunteer monitoring.
3. Volunteer-collected data will be published in a newsletter as part of an education campaign.

Goals and objectives are great tools for sharing your intentions and educating your community about your monitoring program. With goals and objectives in place, you should be able to answer questions such as: Why are you establishing a monitoring program in your community? What questions do you want answered? The answers to these questions can be used on news releases, brochures, and promotional pieces.

Getting to Work

- ☑ Deciding on site identification

Monitoring sites should be regulated to the goals and objective of the project. Select sites that fulfill objectives (don't forget to review your goals and objectives!)

The Steering Committee should select sites based on these criteria:

1. Safe access for volunteers
2. Data from monitoring site will be useful
3. Monitoring sites match goals and objectives of your project
4. Sites should be evenly distributed around the watershed
5. Volunteers will be interested in the site

County Land Conservation Department staff may be able to help the Steering Committee select monitoring sites. In order to enter volunteer-collected data into the WAV citizen stream monitoring database, the following information needs to be found **for each monitoring site**:

1. Stream/river name (example: Dell Creek)
2. County (example: Sauk County)
3. Detailed site location description (example: County Hwy. G Bridge)
4. Any existing site ID name or number you used as a reference (example: site #2, A, DC0001)
5. Quarter Quarter Section (QQ), Quarter Section (Q), Survey Section, Survey Township, and Survey Range and Direction at the **mouth** of the river or stream. (example: QQ NW, Q NE, S36, T14, R16E).* You will find that if all of your monitoring sites are on one stream all sites will share this information. The site location description will help to determine the differences between sites.
6. Name of USGS 7.5 minute Quadrangle that information came from (example: Baraboo, Wisc)

Below are examples of what you would submit:

Site #1: Sauk County, Dell Creek @ Cty. Hwy G Bridge, site # 1
QQNW, QNE, S36, T14, R16E
Baraboo, Wisc. Quad

Site #2: Sauk County, Dell Creek @ Mobile Station, site # 2
QQNW, QNE, S36, T14, R16E
Baraboo, Wisc. Quad

* You may be able to 'skip' determining the legal (QQ, Q, TRS) description by first checking with the WAV Coordinator about the name and location of the stream that will be monitored. New technologies are in place at the DNR to help the WAV Coordinator determine waterbody identification codes needed to register sites within the database, thereby often eliminating the need for you to provide this information.

Try to get a map of your region or watershed. Some sources for maps: USGS map libraries/stores; DNR watershed maps, aerial photos, gazetteers.

SIDEBAR

A 1998 discussion among several states' monitoring coordinators addressed monitoring site selection by volunteers. A majority of the coordinators reported that the most successful sites were those that the volunteers selected themselves. The Wisconsin pilot monitoring projects agreed with this finding. However, when site selection is left entirely to volunteers, monitoring sites can become unevenly distributed around the watershed. Volunteer-chosen sites were in a cluster in one sub-watershed, leaving the remaining 80% of the watershed unmonitored. The solution to this uneven distribution is to pre-select key sites and allows the volunteers to select from those sites with the option to collect data from additional sites, too. If there are more volunteers than sites, ask volunteers to share sites. Volunteers can take turns collecting data which promotes more community involvement and provides greater flexibility for the citizen volunteers.

Getting to Work

- ☑ Money issues and fundraising

It is the Steering Committee's responsibility to find funds for the local monitoring project. Funding levels could determine the rate of progress when developing a citizen monitoring program; however, limited funding does not necessarily curtail your ability to have a water quality monitoring program. Not all equipment is expensive. If your financial options are limited, consider the following: 1) Obtain funds for equipment for a few parameters at all monitoring sites with plans to add more equipment when the funds are available; 2) Obtain funds for equipment for the least expensive parameter with no plans to add more equipment in the future.

How Much Does it Cost? Check the reference section for companies that sell equipment. Please contact the company directly for current prices. A number of local program coordinators have found more inexpensive equipment at liquidators (for measuring tapes for instance), and discount stores.

2003 prices

Hach Dissolved Oxygen Kit: \$47

D-frame net for macroinvertebrate collection: \$40-\$67 (model dependent)

Basin/supplies for macroinvertebrate collecting: \$10

Turbidity Tubes: free from UWEX

Armored Thermometer: \$15

Habitat Assessment supplies: \$30

Stream Flow supplies: can utilize equipment from other parameters plus cost of an orange

There are other items that will need to be funded in addition to equipment:

1. Postage for outgoing information
2. Postage for volunteers to send in data sheets
3. Copying
4. Office supplies
5. Phone bill
6. Recognition

Potential funding or support sources:

1. County or state agencies
2. Local businesses
3. Civic groups
4. Grant writing*
5. Schools may cooperate and share equipment
6. Fund raisers
7. Volunteers pay for equipment

*For a listing of grant opportunities visit the Water Action Volunteers website at:

<http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/monitoring/resources/fundingops.htm>

Getting to Work

- ☑ Managing the mailing list
- ☑ Managing equipment

Someone will need to be the keeper of the **master mailing list** that includes all of the volunteers, steering committee, funders, etc. This person will need to keep the list updated for communication with everyone involved with your monitoring project such as thank-you notes, reminders about upcoming events, and reminders about submitting data.

If you provide your mailing list to the WAV Coordinator, your volunteers will be added to the master WAV database and they will receive complimentary copies of the *Volunteer Monitor* newsletter, a national publication funded through EPA with a variety of valuable articles regarding volunteer monitoring. They will also receive updates on what's happening in the WAV program on a statewide basis to help give them connection to others working on similar projects.

Equipment management is a very important job. Your local monitoring project may invest a considerable amount of money into equipment, and you will want to make that investment last as long as possible. Equipment management should be decided by the Steering Committee and one person should be assigned to maintain and track the equipment.

Autumn is a good time to collect equipment. If equipment is returned in the fall, someone can clean, repair, and replace parts before the spring monitoring season. When reissuing equipment, it is a good idea to give each volunteer the same equipment that s/he used in previous years. Past experience has found that some volunteers take better care of their equipment than others. Those who take good care of their equipment should be rewarded by getting that same equipment in the following year.

Equipment should be stored in a dry, cool place for the winter. Check the storage suggestions for all of the chemicals for the Dissolved Oxygen kits. Also check the expiration dates for the Dissolved Oxygen chemicals. Be sure that all nets are dry before storage. Turbidity tubes should be completely dry.

The person who takes on this role will need to do the following:

1. Distribute equipment in the spring
2. Collect equipment in the fall
3. Provide storage space for equipment
4. Clean equipment during the "off season"
5. Fix equipment
6. Recommend equipment to purchase/replace

Another option for equipment is to utilize the resources of a local Watershed Education Resource Center (WERC). WERCs act as lending libraries for water education equipment and curriculums. Many citizen water monitors (for streams as well as lakes

and wetlands) sign out equipment from these centers for little or no charge for the monitoring season. There are 18 WERCs located across the state. A listing of contacts and locations is available on the WAV website at: <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/werclocations.htm>.

SIDEBAR

Since 1996, pilot monitoring groups have been providing useful information about the needs of volunteers. It was very clear to staff that each volunteer would like to keep and care for his/her own equipment during the monitoring season, returning the equipment in the fall and winter. The pilot projects found that generally, citizens were unwilling to drive to a central location to pick up a piece of equipment. This means that the Steering Committee will need to budget for equipment for each volunteer or monitoring site.

Recruiting Volunteers

Recruiting volunteers

The size of the volunteer monitor group is not necessarily indicative of a good program. One of your program goals should be to provide a sound educational experience for volunteers, and to collect good data in the process. Sometimes two or three very dedicated volunteers will collect all of the data you need. Often it's best to begin small and allow a program to grow gradually. This allows you to provide equipment to monitors without too great a financial strain and can also allow time to see how the program is working and to find where it may need to be tweaked for best fit to meet your goals and objectives.

Some local programs have opted to have citizens work in teams to monitor at a single location. This allows volunteers to share in the workload if monitoring intensity is high, and when 'life' happens, limiting time available to put towards volunteer monitoring.

To get the program started, consider turning to other citizens who have expressed interest in this type of program. Other sources for volunteers: high schools, civic groups (such as Lions, Rotary or Kiwanis), neighborhood associations, interest groups (such as Trout Unlimited, Sierra Club, 4-H Clubs, or Scouts, or 'Friends of' groups). Sometimes newspapers articles inviting citizens to get involved are successful.

SIDEBAR

Monitoring programs in other states sometimes ask their volunteers to sign a *Form of Conduct of Agreement*, and/or a liability waiver. It is the choice of the Steering Committee to decide if a conduct or agreement form should be part of the program. The liability form may be something to consider. Volunteers will be in and near water, and all precautions should be taken to ensure the safety of the volunteers and staff. Examples of forms and waivers are in the reference section.

Some local WAV programs work with their local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Agent to become part of that agencies' Earth Team. Volunteers who are members of this team are covered under the NRCS' liability policy for the program. Other local WAV programs provide liability coverage through an insurance policy for their volunteers; while still others have their volunteers maintain coverage on their own or through another group with which they are participating in the monitoring, such as school or Scouts.

Who Will Get Involved and Keep Them Involved?

- Managing recognition/care for volunteers

Promoting and caring for the local program is the most challenging aspect of this project. What works for one group of citizens may not be suitable for another. When comparing two WAV volunteer monitoring pilot groups, it was evident that each had very different personalities. One group enjoyed social gatherings, and the other preferred to meet once a year at the training.

Below are a number of suggestions to show your support for volunteer involvement:

1. Get media coverage
2. Host a kick-off picnic in the spring
3. Host an event to show volunteers their data
4. Send thank you notes for collecting data
5. Give each volunteer a certificate for participating in the program
6. Give each volunteer a small token of thanks

SIDEBAR

It is very important to let the volunteers know that their efforts are valued. A recent survey from the pilot projects indicated that about 67% of the volunteers felt moderately important to the project, where only 28% felt very important to the project. Volunteers need to feel appreciated and these numbers indicate that more needs to be done. Small reinforcements such as phone calls, post cards that acknowledge submitted data, sharing data results and other gestures are strongly recommended. Other ways to support your volunteers:

- publish data in local newspapers or newsletters
- banquets
- awards
- photos in the newspaper
- thank you notes/calls

Teaching your Volunteers

- ☑ Organizing volunteer training

The six common parameters endorsed by the WAV program are: Habitat Assessment, Turbidity, Temperature, Dissolved Oxygen, Stream Flow, and Macroinvertebrate Identification.

WAV has created fact sheets and record forms for each parameter. The purpose of these fact sheets is to augment current monitoring programs, and to provide resources for new monitoring programs. Overall, the goals of these fact sheets is to ensure that all groups understand the basic scientific principles for monitoring these parameters and are collecting data in the same fashion, using similar equipment.

Train-the-Trainer sessions are offered through the WAV program each spring to ensure that everyone across the state who is monitoring with WAV methods is receiving uniform training.

In preparation for a training event, there are a number of considerations to be made by the local coordinator or steering committee. A step-by-step guide has been developed for those who are planning a training session. It is available on the WAV website at: <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/monitoring/resources/plantraining.htm>. The WAV Coordinator is also available to help your group plan and carry out your training session.

To order the fact sheets or recording forms, or to request assistance in planning a training session, please contact the WAV program at 608-264-8948, 608-265-3887 or kris.stepenuck@ces.uwex.edu. Alternately, you can visit the WAV website to order (<http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/order.htm>) or to download and print all fact sheets (<http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/monitoring/factsheet.htm>) and recording forms (<http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/monitoring/datasheet.htm>).

Data Management

- ☑ Attending a training program to enter data

The Water Action Volunteers program created a statewide, web-based volunteer monitoring data management system. To prevent a backlog of information at the state level, a designated member from each local volunteer monitoring group is trained to enter data for their local program. They are trained how to collect data from the volunteers, check data, and enter this data into the online system. This data management system is equipped with security systems to prevent any outside tampering with the data. It is the responsibility of that data manager to do the following:

2. Check incoming data for accuracy
3. Call volunteers if data is difficult to read or accuracy is questionable
4. Contact volunteers if data are not submitted
5. Thank volunteers when data are submitted
6. Enter data on a regular basis
7. Contact the WAV Coordinator if they have questions about data that are submitted or about data entry/editing

The database is available online at: <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/datagate.htm>. Anyone with web access can search the database by county, site or stream name. Information about the programs that contribute to the database and about the data that are included in the database are accessible from this web address as well.

References:

The Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring National Facilitation Project provides a number of resources for growing programs including fact sheets with references to other programs manuals, training materials, and resources.
Website: www.usawaterquality.org/volunteer

Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Training Manual; A Partnership Between Missouri Department of Conservation, Conservation Federation of Missouri, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Pat Conger
MDNR/WPCP
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: (573) 526-3589
Website: www.mostreamteam.org/forms.html

Watershed Stewardship A Learning Guide
Publication Orders
Extension & Station Communications
Oregon State University
422 Kerr Administration
Corvallis, OR 97331-2119
Phone: 1-800-561-6719
Email: puborders@orst.edu
Website:
<http://eesc.orst.edu/agcomwebfile/edmat>
Cost: \$42.00 includes shipping and handling

Field Manual for Water Quality Monitoring
Earth Force
1908 Mount Vernon Ave., 2nd Floor
Alexandria, VA 22301
Phone: 703-299-9400
Fax: 703-299-9485
Email: earthforce@earthforce.org
Website: www.earthforce.org
Cost: \$25.95 plus tax and shipping

River Voices

River Network
520SW 6th Ave., Suite 1130
Portland, OR 97204-1535
Phone: 503-241-3506
Toll Free: 1-800-423-6747
Fax: 503-241-9256
Website: www.rivernetwork.org
Cost: \$40.00 for year subscription

Wisconsin Self-Help Monitoring Manual

Nate Feuerer
Self-Help Lake Monitoring-FH/3
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921
Phone: 1-888-947-3282
Website:
www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/fhp/lakes/selfhelp

Volunteer Stream Monitoring: A Methods Manual. EPA 841-B-97-003, November 1997
Alice Mayo
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Assessment and Watershed Protection Division
(4503F)
401 M Street, SW
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: 202-260-7018
Fax: 202-260-1977
Website:
www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/volunteer/stream
Email: mayio.alice@epa.gov
Cost: no charge

Volunteer Water Monitoring: A Guide for State Managers. EPA 440-4-90-010
Alice Mayo
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Assessment and Watershed Protection Division
(4503F)
401 M Street, SW
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: 202-260-7018
Fax: 202-260-1977
Email: mayio.alice@epa.gov
Cost: no charge

The Volunteer Monitor Newsletter

Susan Vigil
Phone: 415-695-0801
Email: skvigil@yahoo.com
Website: (available for download)
www.epa.gov/owow/volunteer/vm_index.html
Cost: no charge

EQUIPMENT

Visit the WAV website for additional equipment suppliers' contact information at: <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/monitoring/resources/equipment.htm>

Hach Company
World Headquarters
P.O. Box 389
Loveland, CO 80539-0389
Phone: 1-800-227-4224
Fax: 970-669-2932
Email: orders@hach.com
Website: www.hach.com

Save Our Streams Program
Izaak Walton League of America
707 Conservation Lane
Gaithersburg, MD 20878
Phone: (800) BUG-IWLA (284-4952)
Fax: 301-548-0146
Email: sos@iwla.org
Website: www.iwla.org/sos

Forestry Suppliers, Inc.
P.O. Box 8397
Jackson, MS 39284-8397
Sales Department: 1-800-647-5368
Catalog Request: 1-800-360-7788
Fax: 1-800-543-4203
Website: www.forestry-suppliers.com

SAMPLE LIABILITY WAIVER

I the undersigned, being the volunteer involved in the Water Action Volunteers/ __[add your local program name here]__ Stream Monitoring Program (hereinafter referred to as the Program) or being the parent or legal guardian of such a volunteer in the Program, in consideration of my or another's participation in the Program, I hereby, for myself and any volunteer for whom I am a parent or legal guardian release, discharge, hold harmless, and forever acquit the State of Wisconsin, the County, the City, the University of Wisconsin Extension-Cooperative Extension, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Water Action Volunteers Program, __[add local program name here]__, or other local sponsors, and their officers, agents, representatives and employees from any and all actions, causes of action, claims or any liabilities whatsoever, known or unknown now existing or which may arise in the future, on account of or in any way related to or arising out of my participation in the Program. Further, I assume all liability of any non-participants who accompany me.

I understand that I am a volunteer for all purposes, including workers compensation, and am not an employee of the State of Wisconsin, the County, the City, the University of Wisconsin Extension-Cooperative Extension, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Water Action Volunteers Program, __[add local program name here]__, or other local sponsors, and their officers, agents, representatives and employees, and as such they are not responsible for injury or death of myself and any volunteer for whom I am a parent or legal guardian which may occur while acting as a volunteer.

Participant's name (please print):

Participant's signature:

Participant's age:

Signature of participant's parent or legal guardian:

Date:

MASTER WATERSHED STEWARD VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

The title OHIO MASTER WATERSHED STEWARD is to be used only and exclusively in conjunction with activities associated with The Ohio State University Extension Master Watershed Steward Volunteer Program.

I will identify myself as a Master Watershed Steward only when engaged in unpaid public service in an Ohio State University Extension sponsored or approved program.

I will not appear as part of a commercial activity, have association with commercial products, or give implied Ohio State University or Ohio State University Extension endorsement of any product or place of business while serving as a Master Watershed Steward Volunteer.

In such service, I will follow policy dictated by Ohio State University, Ohio State University Extension, and Master Watershed Steward Volunteer Program coordinator.

I have read and understood the Ohio Master Watershed Steward Volunteer Program Policy Statement and agree to give the Ohio State University Extension 30 hours of volunteer service in approved programs in exchange for 30 hours of water quality and watershed management training.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

MASTER WATERSHED STEWARD LIABILITY WAIVER

WAIVER

In consideration of the foregoing, I, myself, my heirs, and executors do hereby release and discharge The Ohio State University, Ohio State University Extension, Master Watershed Steward Program, Indian Lake Watershed Project and all other participating organizations or agencies for all claims, damages, demands, actions, and whatsoever in any manner arising or growing out of my participation in said monitoring program.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

If a volunteer is under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must sign the waiver.

IMPORTANT NOTE-LIABILITY

The Ohio State University, Ohio State University Extension, Master Watershed Steward Program, Indian Lake Watershed Project and all other participating organizations or agencies intends that citizen volunteers participating in this program are not acting on behalf of the Ohio State University, Ohio State University Extension, Master Watershed Steward Program, Indian Lake Watershed Project and all other participating organizations or agencies in any official capacity. As such, it is the intent that citizen volunteers are not authorized to be considered agents, employees, or authorized representatives of The Ohio State University, Ohio State University Extension, Master Watershed Steward Program, Indian Lake watershed Project and other participating organizations or agencies for any purpose, and that citizen volunteers are not entitled to the same benefits enjoyed by employees.

Citizen volunteers must recognize the potential for injury to themselves and their real and personal property, and to other persons and their real and personal property, which may result from citizen volunteer activities conducted under the volunteer Monitoring Program. The Ohio State University, Ohio State University Extension, Master Watershed Steward Program, Indian Lake Watershed Project and other participating organizations or agencies intends that citizen volunteers expressly assume all risks and liability for any injuries to, or caused by, citizen volunteers under this program.

Citizen volunteers will be instructed in proper monitoring techniques. They will also be cautioned that if there is ever any doubt, they should give safety priority over monitoring.

OHIO MASTER WATERSHED STEWARD STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR

This Standards of Behavior is a contractual agreement accepted by volunteers who commit to the Ohio Master Watershed Steward Program. The standards shall guide the volunteer's behavior during their involvement with the Master Watershed Steward Program. Just as it is a privilege for Ohio State University Extension to work with individuals who volunteer their time and talents to the Master Watershed Steward Program, a volunteer's involvement in the program is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right.

The Ohio Master Watershed Steward Program provides unbiased, research-based educational programs accessible to all Ohio residents. The primary purpose of this Standards of Behavior is to ensure the safety and well-being of all Master Watershed Steward participants (i.e., target audiences, professionals and volunteers.)

The Master Watershed Steward volunteer will:

- Uphold volunteerism as an effective way to help meet the water quality needs of Ohio residents.
- Uphold an individual's right to dignity, self-development, and self-direction.
- Accept supervision and support from professional Extension staff while involved in the program.
- Accept the responsibility to represent their individual watershed Master Watershed Steward Coordinator and the Ohio Master Watershed Steward Program with dignity and pride by being positive mentors for those they work with.
- Conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner, with fairness, honesty and integrity.
- Respect, adhere to, and enforce the policies and guidelines established by their individual watershed Master Watershed Steward Coordinator, the Ohio Master Watershed Steward program, and Ohio State University Extension.
- Abide by the OSU Extension Youth Protection Policy; not abuse any program participant by physical or verbal means; and report such abuse, if observed, as outlined in the Youth Protection Policy.
- Not commit a felonious criminal act.
- Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws.
- Perform duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Report immediately any threats to the volunteer's emotional or physical well-being to the Extension professional coordinating the Master Watershed Steward program.
- Accept the responsibility to promote and support the Master Watershed Steward program activities in order to develop effective watershed based programs across the state and nation.
- Conduct water quality monitoring and use sampling equipment in a safe and responsible manner.

I have read and understand the Standards of Behavior outlined above. I understand and agree that any action on my part that contradicts any portion of these standards is grounds for suspension and or termination of my volunteer status with the Ohio Master Watershed Steward program.

Signature of Volunteer

Date

Signature of Extension Professional

Date