



IOWA WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM LOCALLY-LED VOLUNTEER WATER MONITORING

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION | WWW.IOWADNR.GOV

Iowa needs locally-led volunteers to help educate, inform and engage Iowans on our state's water quality challenges through Iowa's volunteer water monitoring program.

A new approach

Iowa's locally-led volunteer water monitoring program connects local volunteers and advocates with watershed projects and conservation groups in their area. When efforts like these are locally-led and community-focused, they are generally more sustainable and more meaningful to the residents and their communities.

This approach also puts the data in the hands of those who will use it to inform and guide local water quality priorities and policies. In addition, volunteer water monitoring collects screening level information from lakes, streams and rivers that otherwise may not be sampled or tested. By getting in the stream, local volunteers are often able to detect water related problems, like new erosion near infrastructure, and report it to the appropriate stakeholders.

Building partnerships

Not only do volunteers gain technical and science process skills, they help create and improve local collaboration.

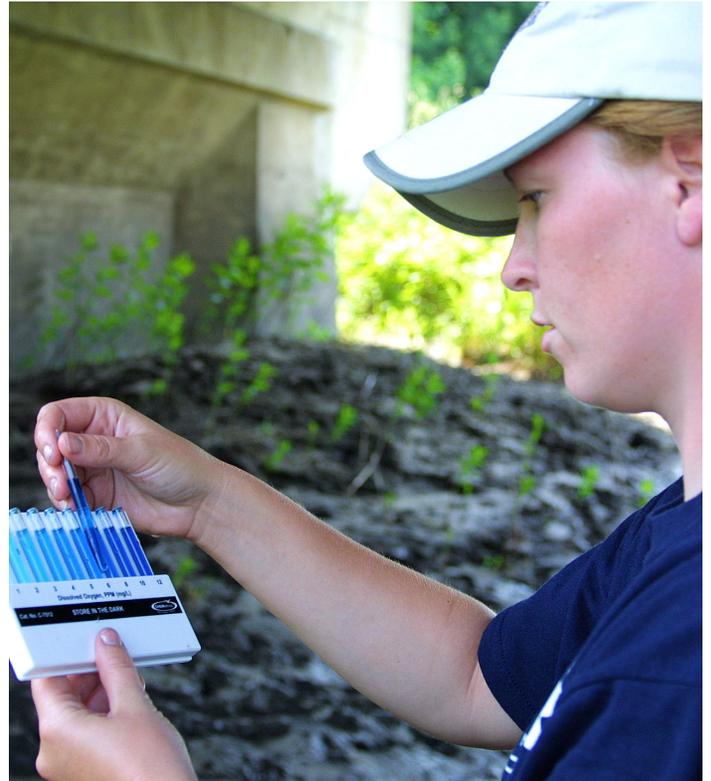
Iowans that participated in similar efforts in the past have found it easier to network with other conservation groups, and to participate in new activities, like clean-up days or joining recreation or conservation groups themselves. In addition, many of these volunteers were further inspired to organize their own clean water events or create local watershed advocacy groups.

Success in action

Across the state, Iowans are making a difference in their local water quality. Staff-led monitoring by Polk County Conservation has added sites and volunteers for a county-wide effort that crosses five watershed management areas and several watershed improvement projects. Volunteers gather twice a year in the Cedar Falls - Waterloo area to sample water quality as part of the Dry Run Creek Watershed Project. In Howard County, volunteers regularly help collect samples for the Silver Creek Watershed Project.

The next step

Start a locally-led monitoring effort in your community with training and technical resources from the Iowa DNR. Find more information at www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Water-Quality/Water-Monitoring/Volunteer-Water-Monitoring.



Partner with your neighbors

- DNR provides training to local citizen leaders, who will then train other volunteers in their communities
- Participants learn how to collect water samples and interpret water quality information
- DNR provides resources for new projects: starter supplies, technical guidance, learning tools and access to additional outdoor volunteer opportunities
- Participation in a locally-led water monitoring program can increase participation in other water quality, watershed and conservation groups

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www.iowadnr.gov/watershed