



**August 2002**  
**Initial Inquiry Results**



**University of Rhode Island**

**University of Wisconsin**

Who We Questioned

In July 2001, we sent initial emails to 128 people, including State Extension Water Quality Coordinators and volunteer monitoring Program Coordinators. From responses we received, and through follow-up phone calls, we were able to update our list of those associated with Cooperative Extension (CE) volunteer water quality monitoring programs. In late September 2001, we sent a one-page follow-up inquiry to 100 individuals on this list. After three weeks, we resent the same inquiry to 43 non-respondents.

Composition of Responses to One-Page Inquiry

We obtained 70 responses to the one-page inquiry (70% response rate) and contacted three others via phone or email for responses. The breakdown of the responses by main role played in volunteer water quality monitoring is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Respondents' main role in volunteer water quality monitoring**

<b>Primary role in volunteer water quality monitoring programs</b>	<b>Percent responding to one-page inquiry</b>
State Extension Water Quality Coordinator	42
Statewide/Regional Program Coordinator	24
Local Monitoring Program Coordinator	14
Other roles*	20
*roles include State Agriculture and Natural Resource Program leader, Dean/Director of Extension, Educator, Advisor/Trainer for monitoring groups, Extension Agent, and no role in monitoring,	

## Programs

Our results show that there are 27 programs to which CE plays a primary role in coordinating. Twenty-five states/territories have such programs. Five states/territories have two programs and 20 states/territories have one program each (See attached CE Program Listing; note that some states share programs with other states). Several states reported CE being involved with volunteer stream monitoring programs that 'belong' to other agencies. CE plays a variety of roles in these monitoring programs, from initially beginning the program and then turning it over to other agencies, but still providing building space for training sessions (New Jersey), to offering technical advice and consultation (numerous states) (Table 2). In Arkansas, county Extension agents worked to adapt a statewide Stream Team program for youth and won a presidential award for their efforts.

**Table 2. Examples of CE involvement in volunteer water quality monitoring**

<b>State</b>	<b>Other CE connections to monitoring</b>
Alaska	Often a collaborator; provides training assistance, materials/supplies; and advice/consultation
Arkansas	Adapted state monitoring program for youth; provides funding; staff
Connecticut	Residential water quality study utilized volunteer samplers
Florida	Program sponsored by legislature (LAKEWATCH)
Georgia	Often participates in and helps coordinate volunteer monitoring, but they work through the state Adopt-a-stream or lake programs
Kentucky (2)	Often a collaborator; provides staff and training; occasionally provides funding
Massachusetts	Often a collaborator
Michigan	Often a collaborator; provides training, staff, technical support, educational materials, and advice/consultation
Mississippi	Occasionally provides training, staff, technical support, educational materials, advice, and also occasional sponsor/collaborator
Missouri	Assists with or teach state program monitoring trainings
Montana	Advisory role; some training sessions
New Jersey	Provides building space; Initiated program
Oregon	Advises and assists local programs
South Carolina	Advises local lakes programs
Wyoming	Assists with trainings; provides educational materials

### Environments Monitored

We found that the most monitored environments are streams and rivers (85%), followed by lakes, ponds and reservoirs (51%). Wetlands (21%), wells (19%) and beaches (15%) are monitored slightly less than estuary/marine environments (25%).

### Program Objectives

Respondents indicated most often that water quality protection was a major objective of their monitoring program (79%). This was followed closely by public/landowner education (78%), compilation of long-term data profiles (60%), and youth (environmental) education (54%) and identification of pollution problems (53%). Forty-seven percent of respondents reported that prioritizing water bodies for restoration and collecting data for state water quality reports were either major or minor objectives of the their programs. The most common minor program objectives include monitoring in response to requests for monitoring (49%), monitoring for publicity of Cooperative Extension water quality programs (46%) and for university publicity (44%).

Other major objectives that were noted by respondents include encouraging effective use of monitoring resources, engaging local communities in watershed stewardship, and using monitoring as an early warning system for regulatory agencies.

### Cooperative Extension's Associations with Programs

Cooperative Extension was reported to always be a program sponsor for 37% of respondents, and a collaborator by 41% of respondents. CE was reported to always be involved with trainings by 33% of respondents and to always offer advice (29% of respondents), staff (28% of respondents) and educational materials (26% of respondents). Between 25 and 31 percent of respondents reported that CE is often a sponsor or collaborator, provides training, staff, technical support, or educational materials. Sixty percent of respondents reported that CE provides at least some funding for monitoring efforts. CE provides equipment for monitoring according to 67% of respondents.

Other ways in which CE was noted to be involved with volunteer water quality monitoring were through 4-H programs, as grantors, to assist with capacity building trainings and to build partnerships with conservation districts.

## Sponsors

From our email inquiry, we learned that program sponsors (in addition to CE) include Universities, USDA, EPA, Sea Grant, counties, local government and watershed districts. They also include various State Departments (including Natural Resources, Conservation, Water, Wildlife, Game and Fish, Agriculture and Food, Marine Resources, Housing, Forestry, and Environmental Protection), Lakes and Streams Associations, non-profits, and local benefactors.

## Important Considerations Regarding Findings

It is important to note that some of the respondents to our one-page inquiry reported little, if any connection to Cooperative Extension, so data analyses should be considered carefully. This issue should be corrected in the program-level inquiry because it will only be sent to programs that indicated a connection with CE in this inquiry. It is also important to note that in some instances more than one person responded about a single program (e.g., a State Extension Water Quality Coordinator and a Program Coordinator).

### **CONTACTS:**

Linda Green 401-874-2905, [lgreen@uri.edu](mailto:lgreen@uri.edu)  
Arthur Gold 401-874-2903, [agold@uri.edu](mailto:agold@uri.edu)  
Elizabeth Herron 401-874-4552, [emh@uri.edu](mailto:emh@uri.edu)  
Kelly Addy 401-874-7532, [kaddy@uri.edu](mailto:kaddy@uri.edu)

Robin Shepard 608-262-1916, [rlshepar@wisc.edu](mailto:rlshepar@wisc.edu)  
Kris Stepenuck 608-265-3887, [kris.stepenuck@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:kris.stepenuck@ces.uwex.edu)

University of Rhode Island  
Cooperative Extension  
Coastal Institute in Kingston, Rm 105  
1 Greenhouse Road  
Kingston, RI 02881

University of Wisconsin-Extension  
210 Hiram Smith Hall  
1545 Observatory Drive  
Madison WI 53706-1289



*The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).*

*To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*