

Goals and objectives

The mission of WV Save Our Streams is to promote the preservation and restoration of our state's waters by providing an understanding of their ecological integrity. This mission is accomplished by training volunteers how to monitor their local wadeable streams and rivers.

The West Virginia Save Our Streams Program has one major goal - to improve and protect the water quality of the rivers and streams of West Virginia. West Virginia has two primary and equal objectives to accomplish this goal. The first objective is to provide the state of West Virginia with enhanced ability to monitor and protect its surface waters through increased water quality data collection. Currently the state is only able to monitor a small fraction of its surface waters. Without adequate information on these rivers, the state is unable to discern current impacts from nonpoint source pollution or to determine areas, which may improve due to installation of Best Management Practices (BMP's).

The second objective is to improve water quality through educational outreach to West Virginia's citizens. Once citizens are actively involved in stream monitoring and restoration activities, they can begin to initiate projects in their own watersheds to improve stream quality. For example, as a result of mapping land uses in their watershed and conducting regular water quality monitoring using the program biological monitoring technique, participants can spot trouble areas in need of restoration or pristine areas in need of continuing protection. Activities can be implemented to improve water quality, such as using BMP's on farms, installing wooded buffer zones in riparian areas, cleaning up trash and debris through stream cleanups and other projects. Participants are given how-to fact sheets for these activities as well as information on appropriate state documents and regulations.

The program provides a unique mechanism to instruct West Virginia citizens on the need to monitor and restore the state's waterways. It is West Virginia's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Division of Water Resources' goal to implement through the program, with the help of a coordinator, a combined effort of local, state and federal government agencies, local organizations and volunteers to improve water quality and natural habitat by various projects that help protect our water resources.