

Levels of training

Workshops are designed to help individuals identify pollution problems, take macroinvertebrate samples using the biological monitoring technique and teach monitors how to restore severely degraded streams. The workshop will begin with a discussion that introduces possible stream problem and an explanation of the goals of the training. WV Save Our Streams offers several types and levels of training.

- **Level 1 (Beginning):** Introduces the concepts of biological/physical stream monitoring. At this level groups perform a basic biosurvey which includes an evaluation of the macro-invertebrate communities focusing on abundance and diversity. Three biotic indices are calculated. A physical and habitat assessment is also performed and basic chemistry may be collected but it's not required. Groups participating at this level will receive a certificate, resource materials and basic biological monitoring equipment. These workshops are approximately 6-8 hours in length with both in-class and hands-on demonstrations along a stream or river reach.
- **Level 2 (Intermediate):** This level expands upon the stream assessment protocols by introducing macroinvertebrate counts and more detailed identification, five-six biotic indices are calculated and a more thorough physical and habitat assessment is performed. Basic chemistry such as pH, temperature, DO etc. is also collected. Participants receive resources similar to the above. The level two workshop last one-two days depending upon the requirements of the group. Prerequisites are a level one workshop or some familiarity and experience with biomonitoring methods. Workshops at this level can be completed in one or more days. The field portion of the workshop will last 6 to 8 hours and an informal introduction will take place prior to the field portion of the training.
- **Level 3 (Advanced):** Closely follows US EPA Rapid Bioassessment Protocols for stream assessment. At this level groups collect macroinvertebrates and ID to family-level. Six or more biotic indices are calculated. Ten habitat conditions are evaluated and a thorough physical assessment is performed. Water chemistry such as pH, temperature and conductivity is collected. And additional parameters may be added is there is a need. The resources provided are similar to the above levels, but are often more advanced and somewhat specific based upon the goals of the volunteer group. The level three workshops last two-three days with a variety of demonstrations and exercises both inside and along a stream or river reach. Prerequisites are a level one or level two workshop and experience using WV Save Our Streams or other similar biomonitoring methods. Workshops at this level can be completed in two days.
- **Trainers Certification:** This is a two-day workshop for those interested in becoming official training designees of WV Save Our Streams. The course is offered to those who have been monitoring using the WV Save Our Streams methods for at least one year and is comfortable teaching the methods to others. Previous monitoring experience can be substituted under certain circumstances; however, the trainer must be WV Save Our Streams Certified to the level at which they plan to teach. The program coordinator reserves the right to approve participants based upon level of experience and commitment to the WV Save Our Streams Program.
- **Specialized Training:** Additional specialized training workshops can also be scheduled. These types of trainings are designed to fit more specific needs of a group. Examples include assistance with study designs, sedimentation and channel measurements (i.e. pebble counts and cross sections), watershed surveys and monitoring nutrient impacts through physical characterizations.

Certification as referenced by **Chapter 22 Article 11, Section 13 of the West Virginia Water Pollution Control Act** is available at levels one through three for the WV Save Our Streams stream-monitoring procedures. This certification extends for a period of one-year. Volunteer groups can be re-certified by participating in a quality assurance workshop provided by the coordinator and other designees.