MODULE 5  Overview of Watershed Involvement

Module Outline

- Importance of Local Watershed Involvement
- Forming and Sustaining Community Watershed Organizations and Partnerships
- Community Watershed Organization Activities
Importance of Local Watershed Involvement

- Besides becoming a steward, your involvement is what this program is all about!
- YOU can make a difference!

Who Are Stakeholders?

- Watershed residents
- Landowners and managers
- Business and industry representatives
- City/county officials
- Citizen groups
- Community service organizations
- Religious organizations
- Soil and water conservation districts
- Groundwater conservation districts
- River authorities
- Universities, colleges and schools
- Environmental and conservation groups
How Do You Get Involved?

- Form or join a watershed group:
  - Voluntary organization made up of all types of stakeholders who share a common interest in protecting a watershed.
  - Also called watershed partnerships, councils, action groups, coalitions, associations…

Benefits of a Watershed Group

- Increased resources
- Diverse expertise
- Creative/collaborative solutions
- Strength in numbers

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Strength in numbers

Increased resources

Diverse expertise

Creative/collaborative solutions
What Can Watershed Groups Do?

- Help develop and implement TMDLs and WPPs
- Stakeholder survey
- Watershed tours
- Volunteer water quality monitoring
- Stream cleanups
- Educational programs
- Media campaigns

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How Do Watershed Partnerships Actually Start?

- **Stages of Group Development**

  ![Stages of Group Development Diagram](Credit: Texas Watershed Steward Handbook, 2008)

Making Your Watershed Group Successful

- Collective involvement/broad membership
- Common mission
- Organizational structure
- Measurable/attainable goals
- Local knowledge
- Effective communication
- Established ground rules
- Collaborative decision making
- Steady progress
- Shared resources
- Team building
- Mutual respect
Being an Effective Watershed Group Member

- Group members should:
  - Be advocates for the group’s vision, mission, goals and objectives
  - Serve as liaisons between interested community citizens and other group members
  - Actively assist in creating innovative solutions to water quality issues in the watershed
  - Listen to the ideas of other group members and provide constructive feedback
  - Follow the rules of the group, actively participate in group discussions, and be involved in group decision making
  - Be willing to serve on committees and/or work groups when necessary

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### Examples of Local Watershed Group Activities

- Stakeholder survey
- Civic involvement
- Field trips
- Watershed tours
- Canoe/float trips
- Watershed festival

- Volunteer water quality monitoring
- Stream cleanups
- Educational programs and exhibits
- Media campaign

### How to Obtain Funding For Your Watershed Group

- Membership dues
- Grants
- Special event revenue
Why is Your Involvement Important?

- Because it is YOUR watershed.
- Because YOU live in the watershed, use its resources, and therefore influence the health of the watershed.
- Because future generations will need the watershed TOO.

What is the ultimate goal?

...a clean river for all to enjoy