

Virginia Adopt-A-Stream Program

General Conditions

1. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) encourages local businesses, civic organizations, watershed groups, academic institutions, and scout groups to adopt local streams, rivers, and lakes for the purpose of managing litter along stream banks, shorelines, and waterways.
2. Typically, a team of two people can cover one mile of a lightly littered stream channel in about one or two hours. DCR suggests groups adopt no less than a quarter-mile of a stream or river. *Remember the number of volunteers needed for the cleanup will depend on the length of stream or river adopted.*
3. Adopting organizations will be awarded an Adopt-A-Stream sign, which will include the organization's name, to place at a location of their choice. (See #11)
4. Each group must include a participating adult of 18 years or older. Individuals under 18 years can participate in a stream cleanup if supervised by an adult. DCR recommends one adult per 6 youth.
5. Adopting groups agree to collect litter on both sides of the stream at least once a year. DCR recommends that groups conduct two cleanups per year - one cleanup in the late spring or early summer and one in the fall. Traditionally, the amount of litter is greatest during these times because of spring runoff and the beginning and end of the water recreation season. **Please return "Cleanup Event Notification Form" two weeks prior to waterway cleanup event.**
6. Participants must adopt a stream for a period of two years. After two years, the adopting organization may renew their designation and agreement, modify their designation (*choose a different stream*), or terminate the agreement.
7. The Designated Representative for the adopting group must conduct at least one safety meeting per year to review DCR-supplied safety information. No one may participate in a cleanup unless he or she has attended a safety meeting in the last 12 months. The Designated Representative may conduct the safety meeting immediately before a cleanup; however, this meeting must be held in a safe, appropriate area. At the safety meeting, the group leader should review the program's Safety Guidelines with all volunteers.
8. The Designated Representative is responsible for notifying DCR if any of the adopting group's participants has a condition that might require special safety precaution or provisions covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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9. Adopting group members shall not trespass on private property. Permission from the property owner before entering private property must be secured.

10. DCR will provide Virginia Adopt-A-Stream Program recognition signs for each adopting organization. The adopting organization will be responsible for posting and maintaining the sign. Again, permission must be secured before posting the sign.

11. The adopting group is responsible for the pickup and disposal of all collected litter.

12. DCR encourages participants to separate and recycle materials to maximum extent possible.

13. Within two weeks of the project date, the Designated Representative for the adopting group must send copies of the sign-in sheets, all completed and signed safety liability release forms, and the stream cleanup data form to the Adopt-A-Stream Program Coordinator at

Prince William Soil & Water Conservation District

13061 Fitzwater Dr.

Nokesville, VA 20181

Phone: (703) 594-3621

Fax: (703) 594-2998

Email: kellyjimenez@pwsacd.org

14. DCR encourages adopting groups to coordinate cleanups with other community events such as Stewardship Virginia.

15. DCR reserves the right to deny an adoption request or cancel the adoption agreement of any group.



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Safety Guidelines

1. Before an adopting group applies to adopt a stream, or before any program activities are initiated, the group's Designated Representative should survey the stream on the days and during the hours the group intends to perform cleanups to determine if stream conditions are safe and appropriate for the ages and abilities of the group's members. If, at any time, the adopting group feels the adopted section of stream has become unsafe for litter pickups, the group's Designated Representative should call the local DCR Watershed Office and the Virginia Adopt-A-Stream Program contact will work with the group to identify a safer stream section or a different stream.
2. The Designated Representative for the adopting group must conduct at least one safety meeting per year to review DCR-supplied safety information. No one may participate in a cleanup unless they have attended a safety meeting within the last 12 months. The Designated Representative may conduct the safety meeting immediately before a

cleanup; however, this meeting must be held in a safe, appropriate area. At the safety meeting, a member of the group or the site clean up captain should review these following safety guidelines with all volunteers:

3. Individuals under 18 years may participate in a stream cleanup only if supervised by an adult. Adopting groups must provide at least one adult supervisor for every six children under 18 years old.
4. Adopting groups should avoid working on steep slopes or in confined river stretches with limited ingress/egress.
5. Adopting groups shall not work on Class One rapids or greater.
6. Adopting groups, using boats for cleanup events, must abide by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) Boating Regulations. For a copy of the Boating Regulations contact VDGIF at (804) 367-1125 (press 10 to get an agent).
7. Cleanup participants must wear a bright orange safety vest (*or, if appropriate a life-jacket*) at all times. Participants must also wear gloves.
8. Always work in groups of two or greater.
9. Cleanup participants must not drink water from any stream. Refreshments should be provided by the Designated Representative and/or project organizer or participants may bring their own.
10. Cleanups must be scheduled during daylight hours and during fair weather. Remember to schedule a “rain-date” ahead of time.
11. Cleanup participants are encouraged to take breaks and drink fluids to avoid overexertion.

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12. Do not pick up materials that appear to be hazardous or unsafe. Contact the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality at 1-800-592-5482 to report the materials.
13. Applicants to whom a Virginia Adopt-A-Stream Program Designation and Agreement are issued shall at all times indemnify and save harmless the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and all Commonwealth employees, agents and officers, from responsibility, damage, or liability arising from the exercise of the privileges granted under designated programs. **All volunteers shall sign a liability release form prior to participating in any cleanup activities.** Liability forms must include the following language: *Adopt-A-Stream Program volunteers shall at all times indemnify and save harmless the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and all Commonwealth employees, agents and officers, from responsibility, damage, or liability arising from the exercise of the privileges granted under designated programs.*
14. Adopting groups shall provide volunteers with emergency phone numbers, as well as a means to contact the appropriate authority in case of an emergency (*a cell phone or the location of the nearest pay phone*), and first aid kits.