



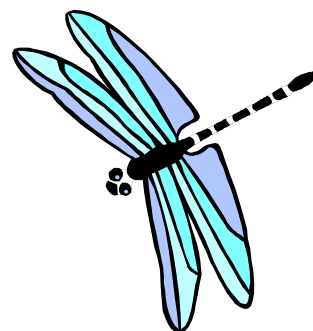
# Fact Sheet

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania • Department of Environmental Protection

## TOP TEN TIPS FOR WATERSHED ORGANIZATIONS

Watershed organizations can be very effective in developing and carrying out local solutions to existing water quality and quantity problems and in helping to prevent future problems. Doing this can also be a daunting task! Here is some advice, gathered from various successful watershed groups, to help you in your efforts:

1. **Build and maintain relationships.** Many people share your watershed and they often have different points of view. Your efforts will be more successful if you involve other groups, individuals and agencies early, identify interests you share and work toward a shared vision. This isn't easy, but it's worth it. (See the next page for ideas on building your watershed group.)
2. **Set clear goals that are easy to explain.** It will be easier to get support – financial support and volunteers – if people understand what you are trying to do and how it relates to them.
3. **Make sure everyone involved knows the basics.** Many people did not learn much about watersheds in school and information about your specific watershed may not be widely available.
4. **Develop a watershed plan.** The plan should describe current conditions in your watershed, what goals you want to reach and how you will get there. Outline your budget needs. This provides your group with a “map” to follow and can also be used in seeking financial support.
5. **Demonstrate results early.** Pick a project that fits into your overall plan - then do it. A successful project, even a small one, will get people excited, interested and feeling that they can accomplish something. It also shows potential financial supporters that you have the ability to get things done.
6. **Give project participants good publicity.** This is especially good when a local business has allowed its employees to participate on work time. Public recognition is a great “thank you.” Use local newspapers and organizations' newsletters.
7. **Look for diverse funding sources.** Because many funding sources are designed for specific types of activities, you probably will have to piece them together in order to meet your overall watershed goals. Also, many government grants require local matching funds or in-kind services. Private foundations are often more flexible, but may favor groups that can attract several funding sources. Make sure you are aware of the administrative requirements for any grant you pursue and the time schedule for receiving the funds by contacting the potential funder.
8. **Look for other types of support.** Businesses and local governments may be able to provide services or materials more readily than cash. Try to make it easy for them to say “yes” by looking at your request from their perspective. Local colleges and universities may be able to help with inventories and surveys.
9. **Enlist the support of your local government officials.** Someone in your group may already have a working relationship with your local officials and be willing to make calls or visits. Various state and federal agencies may also be able to help.
10. **Above all, be creative.** Groups can come up with surprising and innovative ways to get materials, services, volunteer workers, money and more when they put their minds to it.



# Building Your Watershed Group

Everyone lives in a watershed and, in turn, watersheds support the activities of many different people. If you are starting or expanding a watershed organization, you may want to think about who shares your watershed and its resources. These people will have various levels of interest in the watershed and projects related to it. Some will be interested in active involvement in a watershed association, such as helping on projects or committees, or taking a leadership role. Others will be less intensely involved but still interested in learning about the watershed, contributing to discussions on watershed issues and occasionally helping with projects. Some will take no active role.

Each watershed has a different mix of people, issues and interests, so the following list gives only examples of people and organizations who might be interested in participating at some level. You can probably think of others in your area.

- major landowners in the watershed (private, corporate and public)
- drinking water suppliers
- water users
- businesses and industries in the watershed
- farmers and farm organizations
- citizen monitoring groups
- environmental, conservation and sporting groups (Audubon Society, Trout Unlimited, Sierra Club, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Izaak Walton League, Greenways Association, etc.)
- League of Women Voters
- canoeing, hiking or bicycling clubs
- land conservancies
- heritage groups, historical societies
- service organizations, community or youth groups
- AmeriCorps
- schools, colleges and universities
- chambers of commerce, tourism councils
- local consulting firms or environmental professionals
- local government officials (township, borough, city, planning commission, highway department)
- Environmental Advisory Councils
- sewer & water authorities
- park and recreation boards
- county conservation districts
- county government officials (planners, commissioners)
- regional planning commissions (e.g., Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Southwestern PA Planning Commission)
- Penn State Cooperative Extension
- US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- regional Resource Conservation and Development councils
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
- US Geological Survey
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- National Park Service
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- River Basin Commission
- DEP regional office or district mining office
- DEP Bureau of Watershed Conservation
- Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Rivers Conservation
- Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, state park and forest managers
- Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

For more information, contact the Bureau of Watershed Conservation, Division of Watershed Support at (717) 787-5259.

This fact sheet and related environmental information are available electronically via Internet. For more information, visit us through the Pennsylvania homepage at [www.state.pa.us](http://www.state.pa.us) or visit DEP directly at [www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us) (choose Subjects/Water Management/Watershed Conservation).