

Ashley Hullinger

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

PROFILE

Ashley Hullinger serves as a Water Program Specialist with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), where she works at local, state, and federal levels to apply scientific data, technical analysis, and programmatic insight to decision-making that advances Chesapeake Bay restoration and supports achievement of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) goals. Since 2024, she has assisted in coordinating collaborative efforts associated with the Conowingo Watershed Implementation Plan, supporting cross-jurisdictional partners in aligning restoration priorities, technical approaches, and program strategies, including as a reviewer and advisor for PENNVEST's Clean Water Procurement Program.

Prior to joining the Department in 2023, Ms. Hullinger served as Program Director of the Water RAPIDS Program (Water Research and Planning Innovations for Dryland Systems) at the University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center. Beginning in 2014, she worked extensively with watershed partnerships, government agencies, and community organizations throughout Arizona to develop stakeholder-driven strategies that balance human water demands with environmental needs. Her work emphasized translating complex hydrologic, policy, and planning information into accessible tools and decision-support resources, particularly for rural watersheds. She specializes in integrating technical expertise with collaborative processes that account for the social, historical, and institutional factors shaping watershed conditions.

Throughout her career, Ms. Hullinger has partnered with a diverse range of organizations, including the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Climate Assessment for the Southwest, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, local governments, utilities, nonprofit organizations, and community coalitions. She is a 2020 Flinn-Brown Fellow and holds a Master of Science in Urban Planning from the University of Arizona, along with undergraduate degrees in History and Geography from the University of Kansas.

Ashley Hullinger

Water Program Specialist
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management

Water policy and watershed restoration specialist with over a decade of experience leading multi-jurisdictional environmental initiatives, science translation, and stakeholder-driven planning. Currently supports Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay restoration strategy through BMP verification oversight, technical review of Chesapeake Bay Program science, and coordination across state, federal, academic, and local partners. Experienced in translating complex environmental data into decision-ready information for leadership, committees, and policymakers. Background spans government, academic research leadership, and regional watershed planning.

EXPERTISE

- Watershed restoration planning
- BMP verification systems and reporting frameworks
- Technical review of environmental science
- Cross-jurisdictional coordination
- Stakeholder facilitation and consensus building
- Science translation for decision-makers
- Geospatial analysis and visualization

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Water Program Specialist

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection – Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management

August 2023 – Current

- Lead development of statewide BMP verification protocols used to track Pennsylvania's progress toward Chesapeake Bay TMDL goals.
- Provide technical interpretation of Chesapeake Bay Program science and research to inform state leadership and interstate partners.
- Direct contracted technical initiatives that improve BMP reporting accuracy, data defensibility, and restoration return-on-investment.
- Support cross-jurisdictional restoration strategy implementation across Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Advise internal leadership and external partners on science-based program design, implementation, and policy alignment.
- Manage annual updates to federally required Quality Assurance Project Plan, ensuring regulatory compliance and technical rigor.

Water RAPIDS Program Director

University of Arizona – Water Resources Research Center (WRRC)

September 2015 – August 2023

- Led applied research and planning initiatives across multi-jurisdictional watersheds to support water management decision-making.
- Built and maintained partnerships with government agencies, Tribal communities, agricultural stakeholders, utilities, and NGOs.
- Designed and facilitated stakeholder engagement processes that informed watershed planning, policy development, and resource allocation.
- Translated complex policy, hydrologic, and water-use datasets into accessible tools for planners, decision-makers, and communities.
- Delivered presentations at conferences, public forums, and government meetings on water policy, planning, and resilience strategies.
- Developed geospatial dashboards and interactive mapping tools to communicate environmental data for planning and outreach.

Graduate Research Assistant

University of Arizona – WRRC

January 2014 – August 2015

- Coordinated stakeholder meetings, workshops, and steering committee sessions for Upper Gila Watershed research initiatives.
- Produced technical reports, outreach materials, and web content for diverse audiences.
- Conducted scenario planning analysis culminating in a comprehensive watershed drivers and uncertainty assessment.
- Developed technical skills in GIS, web platforms, data visualization, and science communication.

Watershed Planning Intern

Pima Association of Governments

June 2014 – January 2015

- Performed GIS analysis and mapping of hydrologic data to support regional watershed monitoring.
- Organized and analyzed environmental datasets including streamflow, groundwater, and water quality.
- Conducted water quality testing, well monitoring, and wet-dry mapping of the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve.
- Prepared figures and technical content for annual reports on protected water resources.
- Presented progress updates to multi-agency coordination groups.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Hullinger et al. (2022-2023) *Arizona Water Factsheets*. University of Arizona WRRC.
- Hullinger et al. (2020) *Getting Down to Facts about Water in the Pinal AMA*. University of Arizona WRRC.
- Hullinger et al. (2018) *Water Handbook for Cobre Valley*. University of Arizona WRRC.
- Brandau et al. (2017) *Guide for Landowners on the Gila River*. University of Arizona WRRC.
- Hullinger et al. (2016) *Conserve2Enhance: Helping Communities Take Action for Water and the Environment*. Solutions Journal.
- Mott Lacroix et al. (2016) *Wet Water and Paper Water in the Upper Gila River Watershed*. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Publication AZ 1708.
- Mott Lacroix et al. (2015) *Using Scenario Planning to Prepare for Uncertainty in Rural Watersheds*. University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Publication AZ 1699.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- Remote Sensing BMP Verification Pilot Project* – R3 NPS 2024 Conference. Silver Springs, Maryland (2024)
- Water Limitations and How They Impact Us* – Arizona Conservation Districts Annual Conference. Phoenix, Arizona (2022)
- Willcox Water in Perspective* – Sulphur Springs Valley Seminars. Willcox, Arizona (2020)
- Planning for Resilient Communities and Water Supplies in Rural Arizona* – Climate 2020 Conference. Flagstaff, Arizona (2019)
- Upper Gila River Water & Community Planning* – WRRC Annual Conference. Phoenix, Arizona (2019)

EDUCATION

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| 2013 – 2015 | M.S., Environmental Planning
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona |
| 2008 – 2011 | B.A., Geography
B.A., History
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas |

HONORS

- 2020 Flinn-Brown Arizona Civic Leadership Academy Fellow*.
Statewide leadership academy focused on public policy, governance, and civic leadership.