

Penn State Extension

Master Watershed Stewards Program

Many states throughout the nation offer Master Watershed Steward volunteer programs through their land grant university extension services; these programs train citizen volunteers in the basics of water resource stewardship. Now Penn State Extension, with the help of other local environmental groups, is launching Pennsylvania's own Master Watershed Steward Program.

What is the Penn State Master Watershed Steward Program?

The Penn State Master Watershed Steward program was established to strengthen local capacity for management and protection of watersheds, streams, and rivers, by educating and empowering volunteers across the commonwealth. The program provides interested individuals with extensive training in watershed management. In return for the training, participants dedicate volunteer time to educate the community about watershed stewardship based on university research and recommendations.

Training and volunteer service are coordinated at the county level by extension staff, partners, or trained volunteers. Generally 15-20 people are selected for the each year. Those accepted to the program attend training classes that focus on a broad range of water resource topics, including groundwater, stream ecology, wetlands, invasive plants, water recreation and stormwater management. There is a one-time registration cost to those accepted into the program. This is to cover the cost of the manual, name tag, and cost of the meeting facilities.

What do Penn State Master Watershed Stewards do?

Master Watershed Stewards work with the community to improve the health of our streams and rivers.

Example projects include:

- Organizing educational and informational workshops for the public, students and municipal officials on topics such as rain barrels, wildlife, pollution prevention, stormwater management, and invasive plant control
- Organizing and executing stream clean ups
- Designing and installing demonstration rain gardens
- Monitoring streams for bacteria
- Carrying out stream bank restoration projects

What is required of a Penn State Master Watershed Steward?

To become a Master Watershed Steward, you need a keen interest in the environment, a willingness to learn more and most importantly, a strong desire to make a difference in the community. Whether you are a teacher, an accountant, a construction worker, a homemaker, or retired, **you** can become a Master Watershed Steward!

To become a certified Master Watershed Steward, you must complete a minimum of 40 hours of training and fulfill 50 hours of volunteer service. In subsequent years, you can maintain your Master Watershed Steward status by giving at least 20 additional volunteer hours and attending at least 8 hours of update training annually.

Where is the Master Watershed Steward Program offered?

Currently, Penn State Extension offers or will soon offer the Master Watershed Steward Program in the following counties:

- Berks
- Bucks
- Chester
- Delaware
- Lehigh
- Monroe
- Montgomery
- Northampton
- Philadelphia
- York

How do I become a Penn State Master Watershed Steward?

If you live in the participating counties or would like to establish a program in your county, contact Erin Frederick at 610-391-9840 or elf145@psu.edu

[Do You Really Want To Be a Master Watershed Steward?](#)

Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards are first and foremost, volunteers. The goal of this training program is to expand upon your water and natural resources knowledge with Penn State's research-based information so that you will broaden our conservation outreach into the community.

[Master Watershed Steward Volunteer Application](#)

PDF, 126.9 kB