



Toolkit for Working with Rural Volunteers



The OSM/VISTA Teams
Appalachian Coal Country Team
www.CoalCountryTeam.org
Western Hardrock Watershed Team
www.HardrockTeam.org



TOOLKIT

FOR WORKING WITH

RURAL VOLUNTEERS



The OSM/VISTA Teams
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Appalachian Coal Country Team (ACCT)

PA, OH, MD, WV, VA, KY, TN, AL

Founded in 2002



Western Hardrock Watershed Team (WHWT)

CO and NM

Founded in 2006





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“Volunteers for Rural Watersheds”

Research Project Background

- **3-year research project**
 - Seeks to develop tools and resources to make volunteerism work better for rural community/watershed groups
- **Started in Summer 2008**
- **Funding from EPA’s OWOW** to explore:
 - Who are volunteers and what services do they provide?
 - What are the most effective ways to manage volunteers?
 - Why and where are these strategies successful?
 - How can we get these findings and effective strategies into the hands of as many people as possible?





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25 Volunteer Management Trial Practices

- Skills/needs spreadsheet for board recruitment
- Partnership with ATV groups
- Church partnerships
- Business partnerships
- Mandatory service volunteers
- Community service volunteers
- Student athlete volunteers
- Bi-monthly outreach meetings
- One-hour board meetings
- Volunteer contributions to newsletter
- Development of youth advisory board
- Formation of youth helper organization
- Wild and Scenic Film Festival
- Service learning projects
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
- Providing transportation
- Water monitoring through partnerships
- Water monitoring with individuals
- Volunteer appreciation picnic
- Constructing a rain garden
- Constructing wetlands
- Duck race
- 5k race
- Adopt-a-stream
- Fish fry



Volunteer Monitoring Program





Use other practices to enhance Volunteer Monitoring Program

QUIZ

Identify Volunteer Practices

Not sure where to start? Complete this simple exercise to identify practices that meet your needs.

Does your organization need to:

Recruit new volunteers? *Go to Question 1.*

Manage existing volunteers? *Go to Question 2.*

Organize volunteer-based projects and events? *Go to Question 3.*

1. Does your organization need to recruit new volunteers?

Do you want to recruit volunteers with specific skills or capabilities?

- ☐ #1 Board member recruitment spreadsheet – *page 12*
- ☐ #2 Partnerships with off-road and 4x4 groups – *page 13*
- ☐ #6 Support from community service volunteers – *page 17*
- ☐ #15 Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) – *page 26*

Are you interested in working with volunteers trying to meet mandatory service hour requirements?

- ☐ #5 Support from mandatory service volunteers – *page 16*
- ☐ #6 Support from community service volunteers – *page 17*
- ☐ #7 Support from student athlete volunteers – *page 18*
- ☐ #14 Engaging students in service-learning – *page 25*

Are you looking to develop beneficial partnerships with other local entities?

- ☐ #2 Partnerships with off-road and 4x4 groups – *page 13*
- ☐ #3 Partnerships with church and faith-based groups – *page 14*
- ☐ #4 Partnerships with businesses – *page 15*



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Water monitoring through partnerships



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Plan it!

What will you do to recruit, manage, and retain volunteers?

Use **EVENT-BASED**
Volunteer
Management
Worksheet as a **GUIDE**

WHO?

WHAT?

WHEN?

WHERE?

WHY?

HOW?



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Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)



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HOW DID WE DO?

*Gauging the
Experience*

THINK ABOUT...

Preparation
Volunteer Appreciation
What's Next?
Volunteer Follow-up



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WHAT'S NEXT?

- Working with volunteers for a project/task in office
 - Task-based Volunteer Management
 - Volunteer Position Description
 - Timesheet
- Survey findings to learn more about rural volunteers



We're On The Web!
www.ruralvolunteer.org

Questions? Feedback?

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