



Channels

6098
Stream Teams
Strong!

Information for and about **Missouri Stream Teams** • March/April 2020

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2nd Quarter Prizes

- ◆ Digital USB Microscope 4.3
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- ◆ Silent Spring books
- ◆ 12 Nature Cards sets by Gail
Rowley
- ◆ 100ps First Aid Kit
- ◆ Waterproof backpack
- ◆ Coleman Portable Butane
Stove with Carrying Case
- ◆ Youth Prize: Amazon e-gift
card



Please keep sending us
your Activity Reports . . .

You might win NEXT!

It's the Simple Things

By Roxann Parker, Stream Team 5997

Poet Paulo Coelho said, "It's the simple things in life that are the most extraordinary." Imagine doing something extraordinary by simply cleaning litter from our rivers. When I began floating the Black River in my 20s, I didn't give much thought to litter. I sometimes feared my outspoken friend would get us into a fight with drunken floaters over beer cans they left behind. At the end of floats, our canoes were filled with trash from inconsiderate litterbugs.

The Black River empties into the White River which empties into the Mississippi which empties into the Gulf of Mexico. The fact is, all trash can potentially end up in oceans where it becomes a threat to aquatic life. "It's just one plastic straw" ... said seven billion people! Every day, around the world, straws are used a few moments, then tossed away. Plastic straws are the most common items found on shoreline cleanups. In the US alone, 500,000,000 straws are used every *single* day!

Who hasn't seen the cringe-inducing video of a team pulling a plastic straw from the nostril of a sea turtle? That video impacted me so much, I grew more determined to do my part! I volunteered for a St. Francis River cleanup. I had never met the organizer of the event, but he gave me a Stream Team shirt. Every time I wore that shirt, someone said to me, "Thank you for what you do!"



Roxann Parker, "keeping it simple."



The Dem Rapid Crusaders, all smiles after their first successful floating cleanup on the Black River in Reynolds County.

I officially joined Missouri Stream Team last summer with members of the Iron County Democrat Club, forming "Dem Rapid Crusaders." Our first project was a cleanup float on Black River. That same stretch of river I floated all those years ago. Our Team was pleased to find the river fairly clean, collecting just a few bags, mostly plastic water bottles and jello shot containers.

A benefit of belonging to Missouri Stream Team is the strong sense of community it gives you. Efforts to clean local creeks and rivers teach fellow citizens to GIVE as they watch us do our part to rid toxins from our planet. If someone sees you picking up trash, they may think twice about littering. They may even be inspired to pick up litter – adding to the beauty and goodwill in our communities. It is, after all, the simple things that make life extraordinary.



Adding RECYCLING to a small cleanup



By Doug & Zoe Geist, the Dobson Pickers Stream Team 5250

Volunteers have been cleaning streams in Missouri for a really long time and we have a great program supporting the efforts. We send huge amounts of trash to the landfill but wouldn't it be nice if we could send more of it to a recycling center? Our Team has started thinking about ways to reduce trash in the first place, and one of those ways may be recycling at a cleanup.

Recycling at smaller cleanups can have a big impact. While some Teams and larger cleanups may have partners and volunteers capable of taking on this challenge, I want to encourage the coordinators of the smaller cleanups to consider partnering with a recycling program to promote the efforts and recycle some trash.

Last December, we hosted a small cleanup that made a big impact when we added recycling as part of the Black Creek cleanup, headquartered at Home Depot in Arnold. We partnered with MRC-Electronics and Jefferson County Recycles. They parked their trucks and trailers in the parking lot and people could pull up to the trailers to drop off their recyclables. The cleanup volunteers sorted through the trash collected and put plastic bottles, cardboard, aluminum, and steel cans into the recycling trailer. It was most notable how little trash ended up in the dumpster after sorting out recyclables.

We also realized that having community drop-off recycling in conjunction with our cleanup helped promote both activities. The cleanup and recycling was promoted in the Jefferson County Leader newspaper, websites, and social media. Jefferson County Recycles collected 500 pounds and most of it was from the cleanup. MRC-Electronics collected four pallets of electronics material from the community that might have otherwise been discarded into a landfill. A few people that dropped off their personal recycling stopped at the sign-in table to ask what the "Black Creek Cleanup" is.

With just a little more planning it is possible to add recycling to your cleanup project. Invite the recycling coordinator to partner with the cleanup project and ask how they can assist in your efforts. The location where volunteers sign in is a good site for an educational display or place to have recycling bins with the recycling program name and logo. By partnering with and promoting recycling programs, we invest in the future by preventing trash from being thrown in our streams in the first place.



Black Creek Cleanup volunteers sort fiber materials from aluminum, glass, and plastic after the creek cleanup.

Monitoring Minute

MACRO LENSES TO HELP ID YOUR MACROS

By Jenna Stiek, MDC Stream Team Biologist

Have you ever been in the field attempting to ID invertebrates that are so small your hand held magnifying glass is not helping? The small size of the macroinvertebrates makes it hard to see key characteristics that set them apart from each other. Have no fear because technology is here! There are different types of technology available to help view invertebrates in the field or at home. Two options for viewing in the field or at home would be a macro lens for your phone or a portable digital microscope.

A macro lens is a camera lens that is designed for capturing small subjects at close distances. The focus is closer allowing the subject to fill the frame while capturing more detail of your specimens. A macro lens attaches to your smart phone or tablet allowing you to capture specimens while at your stream site collecting water quality data.



A second option for making invertebrate identification easier is the use of a portable digital microscope. A digital microscope is a tool that uses a built-in camera with a magnifying lens instead of eye pieces and the image is displayed on a monitor. This allows for images to be saved and viewed at different times. The images can also be printed off and used as a reference tool in the field.

Both options are great ways to help view the characteristics and details each invertebrate has to distinguish from each other. This allows the monitor to capture a photo to submit to us for ID assistance. Volunteers can also collect specimens and view them later if they do not want to take their equipment to the field.

The water quality monitoring program has purchased a digital microscope to provide high quality images for our volunteers to aid them in their identification at workshops. If you would like more information on the type of macro lens and digital microscope we use, please send an email to Streamteam@mdc.mo.gov and we will gladly provide you with the information.

The Riffle Review

a bi-monthly glimpse of Stream Team activities

Since our last issue of Channels, Stream Team members reported:

- 600 total activities
- 108.7 tons of trash collected
- 6,844 total participants
- 163 water quality monitoring trips
- 17,499 total hours
- 13 habitat improvement

Check out more highlights below . . .

Team 304 Even though he spends his winters in sunny Florida, Bob Steiert returns to Kansas City each year and conducts his water quality monitoring on the Little Blue River, as he has done since 1995. Cheers to 25 years of true dedication and quality data!

Team 1028 The numbers from the 2019 Upper Current River Cleanup are in! The Current River Rascals along with the Scenic Rivers Stream Team Association hosted 47 volunteers who collected 68 bags of trash, 10 tires, a picnic table, and a car bumper among other things, bringing the total to 0.87 tons.

Team 1130 Fed up with the eye sore that could easily be seen from Highway 51 on the St. Francis River in Fisk, the Twin Rivers Stream Team got together and took care of the mess, picking up five bags of trash, two tires, and an air conditioner window unit. Thank you for taking the initiative!

Team 2297 At Riverside Landing on the confluence of Dardenne Creek and the Mississippi River, Ahti Rovainen fished out trash as it passed by the dock, netting three bags of trash and a large sign. "The sign was from Illinois near Quincy," he said. "Apparently it floated down the Mississippi, then up the creek before returning to the creek mouth."

Team 3419 The Kabul Waterdogs traveled to help out at Arnold City Park for the make-up Operation Clean Stream cleanup there, expecting an uneventful, run-of-the-mill cleanup. But, "At the very beginning, a deer ran past us with a coyote chasing it!" said Debbie Miller. "We went to St. Louis to see this!" she added.

Team 4705 Once the flood waters finally subsided last year, the Hannibal 1819 crew hit the Mississippi River and Bear Creek, this time with folks in kayaks to catch the floating debris. Sixty volunteers spent four hours scouring the area, pulling 2.87 tons and 16 tires. A haul like that was worth the wait!

Team 5090 The Panther Creek cleanup in Webster County was a success! Volunteers from all over the state dedicated three chilly December days to help clean up an old residential trash dump filled with broken glass, metal, tires, and other nasty debris, yielding 2,200 pounds of garbage. What an effort!

Team 6051 Clean My Planet Stream Team found a relatively isolated spot along the Mississippi River near the Jefferson Barracks Park Memorial and pulled out what they could find – plastics, Styrofoam, fabrics, cans, bottles, and other clothing – including a kid's Batman shirt – all while enjoying the nice view.



Water Quality
Volunteer

VWQM Intro Workshops

have been scheduled!

Register at www.mostreamteam.org.

Team Snapshots



Volunteers had a ball celebrating the 30-year anniversary of the Stream Team Program and 20-year anniversary of Stream Teams United (Team 728) at the Springfield Cardinals game at Hammond Field.



Plattin Creek Forever Stream Team 5864 made the most of their day, stenciling ten storm drains with the message "No Dumping – Drains to Stream" and cleaning up litter around the Festus wastewater treatment plant, emphasizing the importance of clean water.



Stream Team Assistant Scott Sigman visited Countryside Montessori Day School Team 6028 in Platte County for a presentation about water quality and a leisurely macroinvertebrate count on Second Creek, a fun outdoor lesson!



The Lindbergh High School Creek Crawlers Team 5221 got to get out of the classroom, performing water quality monitoring and picking up trash on Gravois Creek at Whitecliff Park as a culminating project for their AP Environmental Science class. Neat idea!

GIVE ME SHELTER

By Cori Westcott, Stewards of Grand Glaize Stream Team 4707

It was tough to be mad at little Maxine. The three-year-old, whirling dervish, kicked over the pot containing the family's stew. It poured on the cobblestone. The cobblestone was their cook stove, their table, and their bed. The six children, mother, and father lay down on the St. Louis riverfront to sleep with no food. Father had lost his hardware store. Fifteen-year-old Sarah remembers trying to sleep on the cobblestone when her stomach ached of hunger. Shortly after the spilled dinner, the city authorities removed her siblings and farmed them out to various foster families. She got a job as a switchboard operator for the new Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. This was 1920.

As it was in the past, it is now. Folks who need to survive without a permanent shelter will camp near a water source. The volunteers who scout the site ahead of a Clean Stream event are encouraged to scout in pairs. They may encounter encampments. Laura Waldo-Semken, an education assistant for Americorps VISTA and a team member of Missouri River Relief, reminds us to keep our sense of humanity foremost in our hearts when encountering survivors without shelters. There's a myriad of reasons individuals and families can find themselves without a physical home. It doesn't matter for us to know the reason. What is important is that we represent a loving community that practices compassion and respect for all.

Imagine you and your scout partner are on the front yard of someone's home. You wouldn't think of picking up any objects on your neighbor's lawn or driveway. Don't pick up anything at the encampment. Often times, the resident may be collecting recyclables they can turn in for cash. Make note of the site to clearly describe to your event leader. Under no circumstances should volunteers be on sites with suspected homeless camps. And, should the scout feel the encampment is unsafe, the site leader may want to contact the landowner.

And what became of Sarah's family? They reunited, largely supported by Sarah and her older siblings. Sarah was my grandmother.



COALITION CORNER

News from Stream Teams United

Sign-Up, Click, Advocate: CFM's new Legislative Action Center makes Advocacy Easy

By Mary Culler, Stream Teams United Executive Director

The [Conservation Federation of Missouri](#) (CFM) is a founding sponsor of the Missouri Stream Team Program, serving as the voice for Stream Teams across the state. As a partner in statewide conservation efforts, Stream Teams United is an [affiliate member](#) of CFM.

CFM has led conservation advocacy efforts for Missouri since its founding in 1935, which led to the creation of the Missouri Department of Conservation. CFM serves as the Missouri affiliate of the [National Wildlife Federation](#), formed in 1936 through the [leadership of Jay Norwood "Ding" Darling](#).

In late 2019, CFM launched its new Legislative Action Center at www.confedmo.org/lac/#. The new action center uses a different software program than previous years and is extremely user-friendly. You only have to sign up at www.confedmo.org/lac/#/signup/go once and there is no user name or password to remember. **Easy!**

The home page of the Legislative Action Center lists both state and federal bills that CFM has decided are worthy of taking action. For each of these bills, the website provides a summary of the bill and a "Take Action" button that generates a pre-populated letter to send to **your** specific state or federal representatives/senators. You can also customize the letter with your specific thoughts about the topic. Then click to email the message to your representatives/senators, or print a hard copy to mail out. **Easy!**

You can find the phone number of your representatives/senators, along with example talking points about a particular bill. You can also send Tweets or Facebook posts to federal congressional social media accounts. Whether you decide to email, call, Tweet, or Facebook your opinion to your representative or senator, any of these options take just a couple minutes. **It's easy!**

If you receive the Stream Teams United weekly #MOWater News email, you will see that we are [tracking state level legislation](#) for the 2020 legislative session. Each week, we review the status of bills and update our email to include new bills and upcoming public hearings at the state capitol. By staying informed through our weekly Legislative Lookout and the CFM Legislative Action Center, together we offer tools to make advocacy **easy!**

If you have not already, I encourage you to sign up for CFM's Legislative Action Center at www.confedmo.org/lac/# and explore the website to see how **easy** it is for your voice to be heard.

