

# Volunteering in the Age of COVID-19

During this uncertain time, Stream Team volunteers may be asking themselves whether it is safe to continue their usual Stream Team activities such as litter pickup, water quality monitoring, tree planting, or storm drain stenciling to fulfill their goals of clean, healthy streams.

At this time, community-based events that involve large numbers of people, multiple stream sites, or common meeting areas for signing in, having meals, etc., are not recommended for the foreseeable future. Most organizations who traditionally hold larger events have cancelled them indefinitely or rescheduled for a later date to be evaluated as that time approaches.

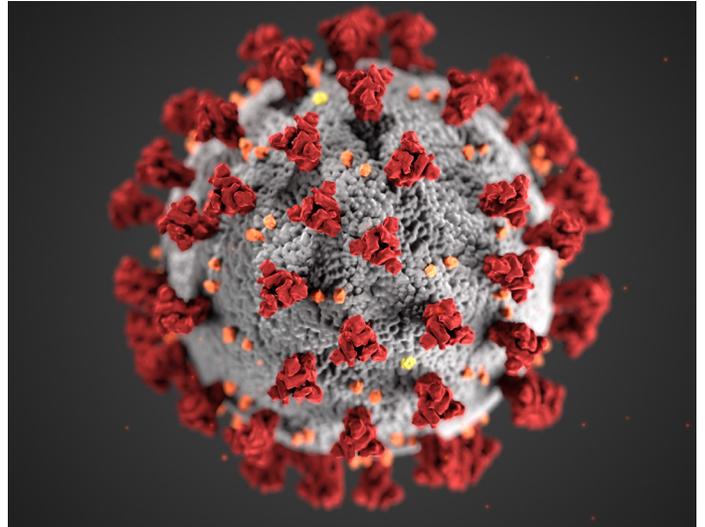
However, it is still possible to get outdoors, enjoy nature, and perform some Stream Team activities while protecting yourself and others from possible spread of disease.

**It is important to remember that the following practices are the most effective methods for preventing the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus:**

- Volunteering in small groups of less than 10 people, with a member of your household, or alone (preferably as few as possible needed to complete the task)
- Social distancing of six feet or more from non-household members
- Frequent handwashing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before, during (if possible), and after your activity



Stream Team 2504, Clear Creek, Boone County



- Applying sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) fully to hands and rubbing until completely dry
- Cover nose and mouth with a cloth mask especially if unable to maintain a six-foot distance from others

**DO NOT volunteer if you meet any of the following criteria:**

- You feel sick, have a temperature of higher than 98.6 degrees F, or have had COVID-19 related symptoms in the last 14 days (dry cough, fever, shortness of breath, chills, headache, sore throat, loss of taste and smell, or any combination thereof)
- You are caring for a loved one, live with an individual that is high-risk for infection, or have been near someone who is infected with COVID-19
- You have traveled to a foreign country or recently been on a cruise
- Do not have proper personal protective equipment (PPE) available to you
- Encounter large numbers of people in the area you wish to perform your activity

**If you DO choose to volunteer, please take the following considerations beforehand:**

- Check for updates from your local health department to be sure you are complying with the

most current recommendations for preventing the spread of COVID-19

- If monitoring, clean and sanitize monitoring equipment; include hand sanitizer, rubber gloves, and disinfectant wipes in your monitoring kit. If possible, wipe all equipment, including kick net handles, with disinfectant wipes
- Have a plan for your entire outing. This includes parking, meals/snacks/drinks, etc. Avoid busy parking lots at parks and conservation areas and do not carpool with others not from your household
- Have in place proper PPE items at all times
- If volunteering alone, be sure someone knows where you are and when you plan to be at your stream/field site and return home
- Do not share litter bags, gloves, monitoring equipment, or handle the same items without proper sanitizing between handlers
- If items must be shared, establish a sanitizing station where one person at a time can leave and sanitize items prior to another person picking it up



Stream Team 5208, Binder Lake, Cole County

#### Helpful links for more information:

- Center for Disease Control COVID-19 Guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services COVID-19 Outbreak: <https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/>
- Guidelines for Volunteers and Volunteer Organizations During COVID-19 Outbreak in Iowa: <https://volunteeriowa.org/covid-19-volunteer-guidelines>
- Supporting Volunteer Efforts During Coronavirus: [https://www.energizeinc.com/hot-topics/2020/march\\_0](https://www.energizeinc.com/hot-topics/2020/march_0)



Small group of Teams paddling Cedar Creek while practicing social distancing, Boone/Callaway counties



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