

Step by Step Volunteer Program Management with the Land and Water Partnership Shared Volunteer Program (keeping in mind that this project is work in progress and may change to better suit the needs of your organizations)

Step 1: Land and Water Partnership Volunteer Program Manager (VPM) will meet with internal volunteer coordinators and any other board members, staff, or volunteers who will be working on the volunteer program to discuss how volunteers are currently being used and what elements they would like to build on.

Step 2: The organization will determine the volunteer projects that they will focus on for the year, possibly just selecting one or two projects to get started.

Step 3: VPM will provide the group with basic volunteer position descriptions, which the internal volunteer coordinator can adapt to meet their organization's requirements. This process will help the group define specifically what the volunteers' roles will be.

Step 4: Internal volunteer coordinator will assess their current volunteer pool to get an idea of who is involved in projects, who might be interested in doing more, and who are no longer able to or interested in volunteering.

- There are several ways to do this: send a letter to your current volunteers (See sample letter *Steward Info Update Form Fall 2006 DRAFT*), have your board committees reach out to the volunteers they work with, or if you have membership forms that allow people to check off an interest in volunteering, call or email these people.

Step 5: Plan your projects

- Look at your time commitment – Is it reasonable? Can the job be split up to make it more manageable?
- Keep your volunteers' schedules in mind when setting project dates – weekends are the best time to get families and working adults
- Try to make it fun – provide refreshments if possible, encourage volunteers to bring their friends
- Link to *Cleanup Projects* for more planning materials

Step 6: Give volunteer project details to the LWP Volunteer Program Manager to be entered into the e-newsletter, the LWP site, and the Volunteer Center of RI site.

Step 7: Publicize your projects – the more advanced notice you have, the more likely you are to get volunteers

- LWP Volunteer Program Manager – will publicize through the centralized recruitment process, including the e-newsletter, LWP website, VCRI network, and other general recruitment opportunities
- Internally – let your membership and current/former volunteers know about the new volunteer program, invite them to join the LWP e-newsletter, reach out to your contacts in the local community (schools, scouting groups, garden clubs, etc)

Step 8: VPM and Internal Volunteer Coordinator will keep in touch via phone or email to make sure that volunteers who inquire to one or the other about the projects are welcomed and given the necessary information and directions.

Step 9: Provide training for your volunteers, whether individually on-the-job or as a group training. Make sure that volunteers know who to contact with additional questions throughout their service.

Step 10: Plan for recognition of your volunteers – thank you letters, mentions in your newsletter, special recognition at your Annual Meeting, holiday cards, etc.

Step 11: Keep in touch with your volunteers – make sure they are comfortable with their position, ask for their feedback, invite them to your meetings and events, keep an eye out for volunteers who are doing a good job and might be able to take on a leadership role. Fostering this relationship with your volunteers is the best way to keep them with you and save yourself the time it takes to recruit new volunteers for each project.