

Best Education Practices (BEPs) for Water Outreach Professionals
Defining BEPs, Refining New Resources and Recommending Future Actions

POSTER PRESENTATION

Presenter(s): Cynthia Hagley, Minnesota Sea Grant

Title: Duluth Streams (duluthstreams.org)--Making Water Quality, Land Use, And Stormwater Data Come Alive For Decision -Makers

Abstract: The website, DuluthStreams.org provides web-based delivery of automated data using advanced data visualization tools for understanding urban stormwater and water quality issues. Duluth, Minnesota lies adjacent to the pristine waters of Lake Superior. The City has 42 named streams, 14 trout streams, and borders the Duluth-Superior Harbor Area of Concern. Duluth's stormwater infrastructure includes 93 miles of streams and wetlands. Urbanization and rural development are increasing temperature, turbidity/sediment, salinity, organic matter and nutrients in area streams. DuluthStreams established a partnership between the University and local water resource management agencies to enhance public understanding of aquatic ecosystems and their connections to watershed land use by illustrating the nature and consequences of degraded stormwater. Water quality data are fed to the website, www.duluthstreams.org and linked to GIS landuse, current and historical water quality and biological data, and engaging text and photos. Data animations and interpretive text visually engage the public and students via the Internet and local kiosks. Collaboration with the St. Louis River RiverWatch program developed curricula and stream monitoring materials for schools and established uniform protocols for volunteers throughout the region. The Partnership has also adapted NEMO (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials) to the Duluth area and initiated a Regional Stormwater Protection Team, a coalition of new Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer System permittees (MS4s), local universities, and regional agencies, to develop a unified watershed approach for educating the public on nonpoint source pollution issues and protecting the waters of the region.

Target Audience(s): Local decision and policy makers

Educational Purpose: Capacity building

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