

5. How to Get Agency Support

What can agencies offer?

Because Minnesotans value waterways so highly, we have many natural resource organizations to protect them. As part of their missions, these agencies support education. Therefore, most are eager to work with you.

They may be able to provide:

- Opportunities to join ongoing service projects
- Technical assistance with projects (e.g. help design erosion-prevention planting)
- On-site supervision of service projects
- Speakers, field trips, and aid by phone or e-mail
- Materials, videos, curricula, posters, public education fliers, and displays
- Models and activities to demonstrate principles of water quality
- Loan or gift of equipment, from shovels to photospectrometers, from seeds to paint
- Maps and data on water quality, native species, soil types, wetlands, area history, etc.
- Training of teachers, volunteers, and students
- Guidance on student research
- Funding, or information about funding sources

How do I find partners?

See list of agencies responsible for water quality in Minnesota. Most have county or regional contacts. Call around to find out which agency works most with schools in your area; it varies. State a particular interest up front, such as wild plants, soils, chemical testing, etc.

See additional agencies/organizations under project descriptions in this book.

Where do we start?

In a first call, introduce yourself and explain how you heard about the agency. Say what ages you work with. Briefly summarize your idea, including what you hope they might help you with. Ask if this fits their programs. If so, propose a meeting. When you meet, be ready to discuss:

- What do you know about the agency?
- What are your goals? What do you expect students will learn from this experience? How will you assess student learning?
- What do you hope to get from the agency?
- What are the agency's goals? What does the agency want students to learn?
- When will project activities take place? (months, days of the week, and times)
- How will students prepare to participate in projects? Who will train them in use of equipment, safety procedures, etc.?
- How will you handle nuts and bolts issues such as transportation, liability, and supervision?
- How often will you and the agency meet/speak by phone? How can the agency reach you? What is your schedule?
- Who are the key stakeholders and decision-makers at your school? How do things happen?

Water Quality Project Partnership Planning

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Action Steps</u>	<u>Who?</u>	<u>Deadline</u>