

Waterways Stewardship Project

The organization's core environmental education program is the Waterways Stewardship Project. This program provides in-class, in-field, and computer based environmental education designed to foster students' appreciation for the natural world, from the tiniest "bug" that lives in the bottom of their neighborhood stream to the larger ecosystem supported by the watershed in which they live. Recognizing the need to establish a human connection with the natural world, the program provides students with the very tangible and personal experience of discovering "hidden" aquatic life while conducting in-field observations and experiments, the results of which can be used to form a hypothesis in a real life science project directly related to the community in which they live. This experience, coupled with the knowledge gained during their in-class sessions, promotes a sense of stewardship for the environment and an appreciation of the ways that human behavior can positively or negatively impact natural systems.

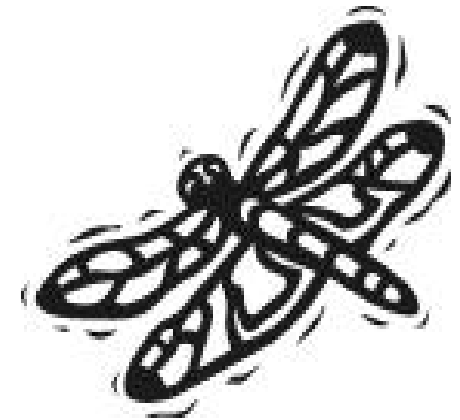
The South Branch Watershed Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of natural resources in the 276 square mile watershed of the South Branch of the Raritan River. The watershed's geographic area begins in the New Jersey Highlands and consists of parts of Morris, Hunterdon and Somerset Counties. It includes all or part of twenty-five different municipalities.



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South Branch Watershed Association

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The In-Class Program

Offered for Grades 3 - 8

The in-class program is provided at your school and consists of three half-hour lessons. (1 1/2 hours total).

Watersheds (1/2/hour)

Students learn what a watershed is, its functions, and why they are important through a demonstration and slide show.

Groundwater (1/2 hour)

Students learn what groundwater is, how it moves through the earth, ways it can become polluted, and it's importance through the hands-on use of a Groundwater Model.

Macroinvertebrates (1/2 hour)

Students learn what macroinvertebrates are, why they are important, and how they can be used to determine water quality through a slide show. Identification of macroinvertebrates is introduced using a dichotomous key and preserved specimens.

Pricing

\$65 for up to 30 students
(1 educator provided)

Call for exact pricing based on your number and size of classes.

The In-Field Program

Offered for Grades 3 - 8

The in-field program is provided at a stream site near your school and consists of two lessons. (2 1/2 hours total).

Site Survey

Students make observations and take notes on the habitat and land uses both in and surrounding the stream site. Air and water temperature and stream width, depth, and velocity are measured and recorded.

Macroinvertebrate Collection

Students learn how to collect macroinvertebrates using a large kick net. Identification of the collected macroinvertebrates is done using a dichotomous key and the water quality at that stream site is calculated.

Pricing

\$80 for up to 15 students
(1 educator provided)

\$160 for up to 30 students
(2 educators provided)

Call for exact pricing based on your number and size of classes.

A Virtual River Experience

A Virtual River Experience is the computer-based component of the Waterways Stewardship Project. Previously known as the Explorer Project, A Virtual River Experience is currently being updated and revised. It consists of a web-based interactive map and database that teachers can use to help their students understand and explore land uses within the watershed and how changes in land use can affect water quality and the health of the river ecosystem. Teachers will have password access so their students can add the field data they collected at their site this year to the database. They can then compare their data to the data collected by other schools throughout the watershed.

As of now, the interactive map is online, but a few finishing touches still need to be made. The database is in the works with an expected completion date sometime during winter 2006. At that point, it will be ready for teachers to begin entering their data. We plan to offer some form of teacher training and instruction for participating teachers once the site is complete and ready for action. Visit www.sbwa.org to check out the site!

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