

# Volunteer Monitoring Program

*Volunteer monitoring is a fun and effective way to educate local communities about pollution prevention and engage people in water quality protection and restoration efforts.*



Photo credit: Madison Stream Team

Volunteers monitor the water quality of many rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands throughout Montana.

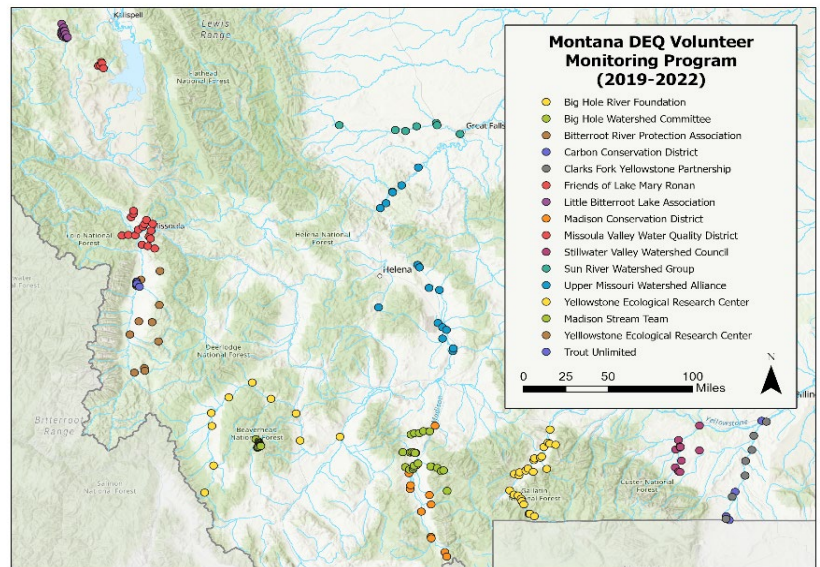
Volunteer monitoring programs are administered by watershed groups, conservation districts, water quality protection districts, non-profit organizations, schools, and other entities.

Volunteers receive training and can collect chemical, physical, or biological parameters to evaluate water quality, aquatic habitat, and streamflow.

Volunteer monitoring groups monitor water quality to:

- Identify water quality conditions.
- Track changes over time.
- Help inform restoration efforts to maintain or improve water quality.

Since 2019, volunteer monitoring efforts have accounted for 20-25% of DEQ's overall water quality monitoring in the state.



## DEQ supports volunteer monitoring by:

- Providing financial support through DEQ's Volunteer Monitoring Lab Analysis Support Program (see back side).
- Offering technical assistance by providing trainings, guidance, resources, and equipment for loan.
- Coordinating and supporting volunteer monitoring opportunities.
- Maintaining partnerships with other entities that support volunteer monitoring.



# Volunteer Monitoring Lab Analysis Support Program

*DEQ provides annual funding to volunteer monitoring programs to assist with laboratory costs.*

Each year, DEQ accepts applications for up to \$5,000 from volunteer monitoring groups seeking financial assistance with laboratory costs for water quality monitoring projects.

This competitive funding opportunity helps offset costs associated with having water quality samples analyzed by an accredited analytical laboratory.

Applicants are required to submit:

- Application
- Sampling and Analysis Plan
- Analytical Budget



photo credit: Madison Stream Team

All data collected through this program is uploaded to DEQ's water quality database and is publicly available.

In 2022, DEQ's Volunteer Monitoring Lab Analysis Support Program provided over \$36,000 to nine volunteer monitoring groups around the state. For more information about 2022 projects, visit the program storymap at: [Deq.mt.gov/Water/Programs/Monitoring](https://deq.mt.gov/Water/Programs/Monitoring)

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## Additional volunteer monitoring resources:



[nmln.info](https://nmln.info)



MSU Extension Water Quality  
[waterquality.montana.edu](https://waterquality.montana.edu)



[flbs.umt.edu/newflbs/outreach/mmw/monitoring-montana-waters](https://flbs.umt.edu/newflbs/outreach/mmw/monitoring-montana-waters)