

South Carolina Adopt-a-Stream

AS A GREEN STEP SCHOOL PROJECT

ABOUT SC AAS

South Carolina Adopt-a-Stream (SC AAS) is a statewide volunteer water quality monitoring program that empowers community members to protect and improve water quality through education and certified volunteer monitoring. Anyone can attend a free workshop to become certified in four different protocols: freshwater stream, tidal saltwater, macroinvertebrate, and lake monitoring. Volunteers enter data into a free, publicly accessible database. Data helps establish baseline site conditions, increases community awareness and engagement, and sparks investigation with local partners when pollution threats emerge. SC AAS is a program of the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services operated in conjunction with the Environmental Education Association of South Carolina and in partnership with many public and private supporters.

CRITERIA

Participation in the SC Adopt-a-Stream program can qualify as a Green Step Schools project if the following conditions are met:

LEARN

K-12 students **LEARN** about watersheds, water quality, and ways to protect and improve water quality from a qualified adult (teacher, mentor, or community expert).

DO

K-12 students **DO** by working with a certified SC AAS volunteer* to select an SC AAS monitoring site; collect and analyze water quality samples according to the SC AAS protocol **at least four times** during the school year if following the freshwater, saltwater, or lake protocols or **twice** during the school year if following the macroinvertebrate protocol; and record their data in the SC AAS Database.

***NOTE:** Sampling **MUST** be conducted with, or by, a certified SC AAS volunteer. This certified SC AAS volunteer could be a teacher, parent, mentor, community member, or, in the case of high school participants, the students themselves. Adults or high school students who are interested in becoming certified volunteers should visit www.scadoptastream.org for instructions.

TEACH

K-12 students **TEACH** others about watersheds, water quality, and ways to protect and improve water quality by sharing their SC AAS story. Examples of appropriate "teach others" activities include student presentations, open house events where students teach parents and community members, videos, announcements on their school's morning show, bulletin boards, and more. If a water quality issue is identified through their SC AAS monitoring efforts, students may educate the community about the issue and potential solutions.

While we also encourage students to participate in one-off water quality monitoring experiences as a wonderful way to LEARN more about watersheds and water quality, stand-alone "one-and-done" water quality sampling experiences do not fulfil the "DO" requirement of a Green Step Schools project, as they do not demonstrate the long-term monitoring commitment needed to establish baseline water quality data and identify excursions from that baseline. One-off sampling events, including sampling via the SC AAS protocol, could be coupled with other "DO" projects such as Adopt-a-Waterway litter cleanups, erosion control, riparian area enhancement, and runoff reduction through rain barrels or rain gardens to meet the requirement that projects have a positive environmental impact. Exceptions to these criteria will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

QUESTIONS?

For more information, please contact the SC AAS Program Coordinators at scaas@des.sc.gov.

SC AAS Website

www.scadoptastream.org



GSS Website

www.eeasc.org/Green-Step-Schools

