

ENVIRONMENT

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council seeking volunteers for spring stream monitoring

Petoskey News-Review The Petoskey News-Review

Published 4:08 a.m. ET April 5, 2024 | Updated 4:08 a.m. ET April 5, 2024

PETOSKEY — The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council will start this year's Volunteer Stream Monitoring (VSM) program with a training session on Saturday, April 27.

The training will take place from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Watershed Council's downtown Petoskey office. Lunch will be provided before participants begin the immersive field training session along the Bear River.

According to the Watershed Council, the VSM program offers an unparalleled opportunity for individuals to become citizen scientists, actively contributing to the health and preservation of local waterways.

Volunteers will receive training on collecting macroinvertebrates and identification and sorting techniques. The data collected will help assess the ecological health of streams and rivers within the community.

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“I enjoy Volunteer Stream Monitoring because it is citizen science in action,” said Christopher Knickerbocker, the Watershed Council's 2023 Volunteer of the Year. “We get together as a team and get to catch and identify aquatic life. We can demonstrate if a stream is healthy or in need of help based on trends of what macroinvertebrates are present or missing. The information we collect is important and I feel like I am doing something worthwhile when I volunteer with Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council.”

Volunteers from the Cheboygan area are especially needed to join the Little Black River or Elliot Creek teams.

To register for the VSM spring training session, visit watershedcouncil.org or contact Water Resources Specialist Anna Watson at (231) 489-7274 or awatson@watershedcouncil.org.

Attendance at a training session is mandatory for individuals wishing to join a VSM team.