

Alabama Water Watch: A Ten-Year Summary of Citizen Monitoring and Action. (A08-deutsch140607-Oral)

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Abstract:

Alabama Water Watch (AWW) is a citizen volunteer water monitoring program that began in 1992. The university-based Program develops training materials for 10 levels of certification, maintains a statewide database according to EPA-approved, quality assurance protocols and provides technical support to monitors and trainers. Cumulatively, 200 citizen groups have tested water at 1,500 sites on 500 waterbodies. The number of active groups has stabilized at about 70 since 1997, however, the number of data records submitted annually has steadily increased. AWW monitors have proven their willingness and ability to collect credible water quality information, and many groups have 5-10 years of multi-site data. AWW data are disseminated in a variety of written, oral and electronic forms, and the information has been used by regulators to develop TMDLs and to list/delist 303 (d) stream segments. A new, relational database with capabilities for online data entry and access has greatly enhanced the use of AWW information, including statistical analyses of trends. Organized citizen groups can use their data to make positive impacts in ways that go beyond what technical information alone can do.

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