

Memorandum of Understanding
with the
Virginia Cooperative Extension 4-H Program
and the
Virginia Save Our Streams Program:
Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League of America

Virginia Cooperative Extension's 4-H youth education program is committed to developing the knowledge, life skills and attitudes that will enhance the growth of young people, and adults working with them, as self-directing, contributing and productive members of society. The Virginia 4-H Program reaches approximately 140,000 youth annually, between the ages of five and nineteen, through more than 140 educational programs, projects and events. It is managed through a network of Extension 4-H Professionals and more than 9000 adult volunteers.

The Virginia Save Our Streams Program (VASOS Program) is a private, nonprofit organization, sponsored by the Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League of America. Its mission is to promote citizen stewardship of community watersheds through education and water quality monitoring programs and promote cooperation between private citizens, citizen groups, government agencies and public organizations.

The Virginia 4-H and VASOS Programs educate youth, and adults working with the youth, about natural resource conservation and sustainability and help instill a strong commitment of personal stewardship. The goals of the memorandum of understanding are to build awareness and understanding of important environmental issues while fostering the commitment to conserve and protect our natural resources.

With this in mind, Virginia 4-H and VASOS Programs agree to work together to educate the youth of today for the future of tomorrow. The objectives of this cooperative agreement are to help youth, and adults working with the youth -

1. To better understand the interdependencies within and between ecosystems,
2. To better understand the importance of clean water and a healthy environment,
3. To participate in "hands-on" learning experiences that teach natural resource conservation, protection and restoration,
4. To develop a strong commitment of personal stewardship for natural resources, and
5. To participate in educational programs which develop their leadership, citizenship and teamwork skills and abilities.

This agreement will work as follows:

1. The VASOS Program will be an affiliate of the VA 4-H Natural Resources and Environmental Education Curriculum Component Committee (NREECCC) with voting status per designated representative.
2. The VA 4-H NREECCC will be an affiliate of the VASOS Program with voting status per designated representative.
3. The VA 4-H NREECCC and VASOS Program will commit mutually agreed resources (personnel time, publications, facilities, etc.) in cooperative NREE programming.
4. The VA 4-H NREECCC and VASOS Program agree to support, promote and recognize relevant cooperative and independent educational programs and activities at all levels.
5. Four-H youth* can use VASOS Program workshops and events for 4-H competitive training and project development purposes with proper 4-H and VASOSP registration. Participating 4-H youth must abide by all rules established by the VASOS Program and register with the Program. The VA 4-H NREECCC will provide supporting educational materials and manage 4-H recognition.
6. Four-H NREECCC and VASOS Program representatives will establish recognition criteria and awards on an annual basis.
7. Youth and adults participating in the VASOS Program will assist in its efforts of public education concerning the health of local watersheds and contribute to its monitoring programs.
8. Youth and adult participants will be encouraged to adopt streams and other waterways for long-term monitoring purposes.
9. The VA 4-H NREECCC and VASOS Programs commit to nurture this agreement and make amendments as mutually agreed.

In the event either party wishes to discontinue the agreement, this document will become null and void thirty days following receipt of written notice by the designated representative of the receiving parties.

*** Youth who are not officially registered in 4-H can qualify for active 4-H membership through participation in these events. To register, they should contact their local Extension 4-H Office.**

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