



CHECKLIST FOR HOW TO GO ABOUT ADOPTING A WETLAND SITE

The steps to follow are given to guide the group leader through the process of inquiring about, applying for, and completing, a typical wetland adoption. Copies of forms referenced are provided thereafter.

- _____ 1. Find out about the program by calling the Aquatic Resources Ed. Center at 302-653-2882 and asking to talk with an Adopt-a-Wetland Program representative and/or by exploring the AAW web page at: www.dnrec.state.de.us/dnrec2000/divisions/fw/adopt-a-wetland.htm
- _____ 2. If desired, ask for an adoption information packet, providing more details on the program, along with this checklist and the associated adoption application forms, to be sent to you. Videos about Delaware wetlands and the Adopt-a-Wetland program are also available for loan.
- _____ 3. Discuss with your group the idea of adopting a wetland and what it would involve. If time permits, show them the video(s) and then discuss. If they are interested and you have a site in mind, communicate that to them. If no sites come to mind, ask the group for their ideas. Use the "Tips on selecting a wetland adoption site" guidesheet to help you with this process.
- _____ 4. Upon deciding on a site to adopt, find out who owns the land and contact them regarding your group's interest in adopting it. If agreeable, arrange with him/her/them to tour the site to see that it is accessible, safe and otherwise appropriate for your group's adoption interests. If all is well, be sure to get the landowner(s) to sign the Landowner Permission form(s).
- _____ 5. Complete all forms provided with your AAW application packet and return it to the AREC. This should include: adoption application (both sides); road and site maps showing wetland location; landowner permission form(s); general release forms (with all group members signatures & addresses); and (if appropriate) copies of parent/student-minor release forms.
- _____ 6. DNREC and Adopt-a-Wetland staff review your application packet to make sure everything is in order. A Program notification letter is sent to the group leader as soon as possible thereafter (allow a couple weeks for turnaround please!). The DelDot sign shop is contacted to make your group's Adopt-a-Wetland sign (again allow some time for this part as well).
- _____ 7a. Call the AREC again to arrange for an AAW representative (typically the county volunteer coordinator) to meet with your group and discuss plans for activities at your adopted site. If you haven't already viewed the above-mentioned videos, this can be done at this time .
- _____ 7b. Alternatively, you may want to consider having a special event or ceremony to commemorate your group's initiation into the program. If so, contact the ARE Center to see if an AAW representative will be available (along with your new sign) to present it at the event. Prepare a signpost (as securely and visibly-located as possible) for the sign to be placed in. Plan other event activities and logistics. Initial site clean-ups are often done at this time. If desired, use the Press Release form provided to help you arrange event media coverage.

- _____ 8. Following this first site visit or event, send in a copy of the Report Form provided, along with any photos, newspaper articles or other materials, to the ARE Center for us to add to your adoption file. While you're at it (at this time or anytime during the course of your adoption), consider submitting an article for our program's "Working for Wetlands" newsletter. Newsletter issues typically go out in spring and fall, with deadlines for submission being Feb. 1 (for the spring issue) and Oct. 1 (for the fall newsletter). Articles can be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to the ARE Center at the addresses provided below.
- _____ 9. Subsequently, you will need to plan for your group to visit your adoption site at least once a season, and submit a copy of the Adopter's Report Form once a year. These forms are typically sent out with the fall newsletter for submission by the end of the calendar year. If possible, group leaders should try to attend the annual workshop (typically held each May at the AREC), where they can obtain a wealth of ideas, info and training pertinent to their adoption efforts. Loan kits and other resources - for assisting adopting groups with various kinds of wetland monitoring activities - are also available upon request through the AREC.
- _____ 10. Carry on your good work and keep in touch! Please use the contact info below to do so:

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR DELAWARE ADOPT-A-WETLAND PROGRAM ASSISTANCE	
To request information on the program or arrange for an AAW representative to talk with or do a group presentation	<i>Marlene Mervine:</i> (302) 653-2882 ext. 109; mhmervine@aol.com <i>Gary Kreamer:</i> (302) 653-2882 ext. 114; gary.kreamer@state.de.us <i>Trina Cale-Rosario:</i> (302) 653-2882 ext. 104; trina.rosario@state.de.us
To send adoption applications, report forms, newsletter pieces or other items relevant to your adoption activities	Aquatic Resources Education Center Attention: Adopt-a-Wetland Program 4876 Hay Point Landing Road Smyrna, DE 19977 (302) 653-3431 (FAX)
To arrange for the loan of monitoring kits, videos and other AAW resource materials and/or to contact a volunteer coordinator in your respective county for arranging a site visit	New Castle County: <i>Trina Cale-Rosario</i> (see box above) <i>Kathy Tidball:</i> 328-2532; kmtidball@aol.com Kent County: <i>Terry Higgins:</i> 492-3354; higginte@dmv.com Sussex County: <i>Marlene Mervine</i> (see box above)