

# Teacher Packet

## Welcome

Welcome to Watershed Watch. We are so happy that your class is going to work with us to observe and protect the water quality in the Boise River. Watershed Watch started in 2008. The first iterations of the program were used to engage people from the Treasure Valley in water quality testing. Participants were encouraged to volunteer at different sites across the Boise River Watershed and worked alongside local scientist to take measurements. These measurements were recorded and archived. This practice of utilizing citizen volunteers is called citizen science. In the current version of Watershed Watch, your students are becoming the citizen scientists who will help us take water quality measurements at sites in the Boise River Watershed. Our goal is to work with teachers, students, and scientists to increase water science literacy and create a community that recognizes the value of water in the Treasure Valley.

## Your Role

In the past, Watershed Watch has been a program for public volunteers. 2021 is the first time we are utilizing school groups instead of public volunteers. We made this change because we believe that an experiential water science event will help foster empathy and understanding for water resources in your students. As teachers, you may be wondering what your role in all of this is.

Rest assured that participation in this program does not require vast experience in water quality or even in science. We will provide the pre-event resources that you need to engage your class and learn about water science alongside them. At your site, you will have at least two professional scientists to help your class go through the water quality testing process. They will be trained on the protocols and on how to manage your class during the event. We will be asking teachers to help monitor the safety and the process for our biological testing, but you will not have to be a professional in the identification of organisms, only work with your students for their safety and discover alongside them.

## Important Dates

September 8, 2021 4:00 PM – 4:45 PM: Watershed Watch virtual meeting for teachers

- You will be asked to join our virtual meeting for teachers. During this meeting, we will be going over safety parameters, goals, and logistics, introduce you to a few optional classroom activities, and answer your questions.

September 23, 2021 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM: Watershed Watch

- The event timing may vary depending on your location. Your specific time can be found in the attached teacher packet.

### **Safety**

Our goal is to make this event as safe as possible. Since students are going to be interacting with the Boise River, it is important to have some clear safety guidelines. Here are some tips for your class's guidelines during Watershed Watch:

- Make sure that students understand where they can and cannot walk in the Boise River. When looking at the river, you will see areas with high flow that are obvious, but sometimes there are areas with strong, fast flows that don't seem obvious. Students should never be in water that is above their knee and should stay within the boundaries set by the Watershed Watch leaders at your site.
- Have a first aid kit available.
- Students should be properly dressed for the event. Proper dress looks like:
  - o Clothes that can get wet (asking students to bring a change of clothes for after the event is a good idea).
  - o Shoes that can get wet. We do not have enough boots for the number of participants in Watershed Watch this year. Make sure that students are prepared to walk in the water. Students may wear water shoes, sandals with straps around the ankle (not flip flops or slip-on sandals), old tennis shoes or waterproof boots.
  - o Monitor the weather so that you are prepared for potential rain, excessive heat, etc.
- Bring reusable water bottles so that students stay hydrated.

### **Contact Info**

If you have questions or comments, feel free to contact us.

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