



What motivates you to  
volunteer?

# AGENDA

**1:00 Welcome and Introductions**

**1:15 Volunteer Management and Support - Setting the Stage (*Kris Stepenuck*)**

**1:35 Identifying Target Audiences and Best Education Practices (*Kate Reilly*)**

**2:40 Effectively Communicating with Volunteers - Case Study of Oklahoma Blue Thumb's Leadership Summits (*Cheryl Cheadle*)**

**3:00 Tailoring A Program to Meet Audience Needs and Interests - Case Study of Georgia's Adopt-a-Wetland Program Curriculum Guide (*Angela Bliss*)**

**4:20 Supporting Volunteers With Multimedia - Case Study of Wisconsin's Water Action Volunteers Volunteer Stream Monitoring DVD set (*Kris Stepenuck*)**

**5:00 Adjourn**

# Volunteer Management Considerations

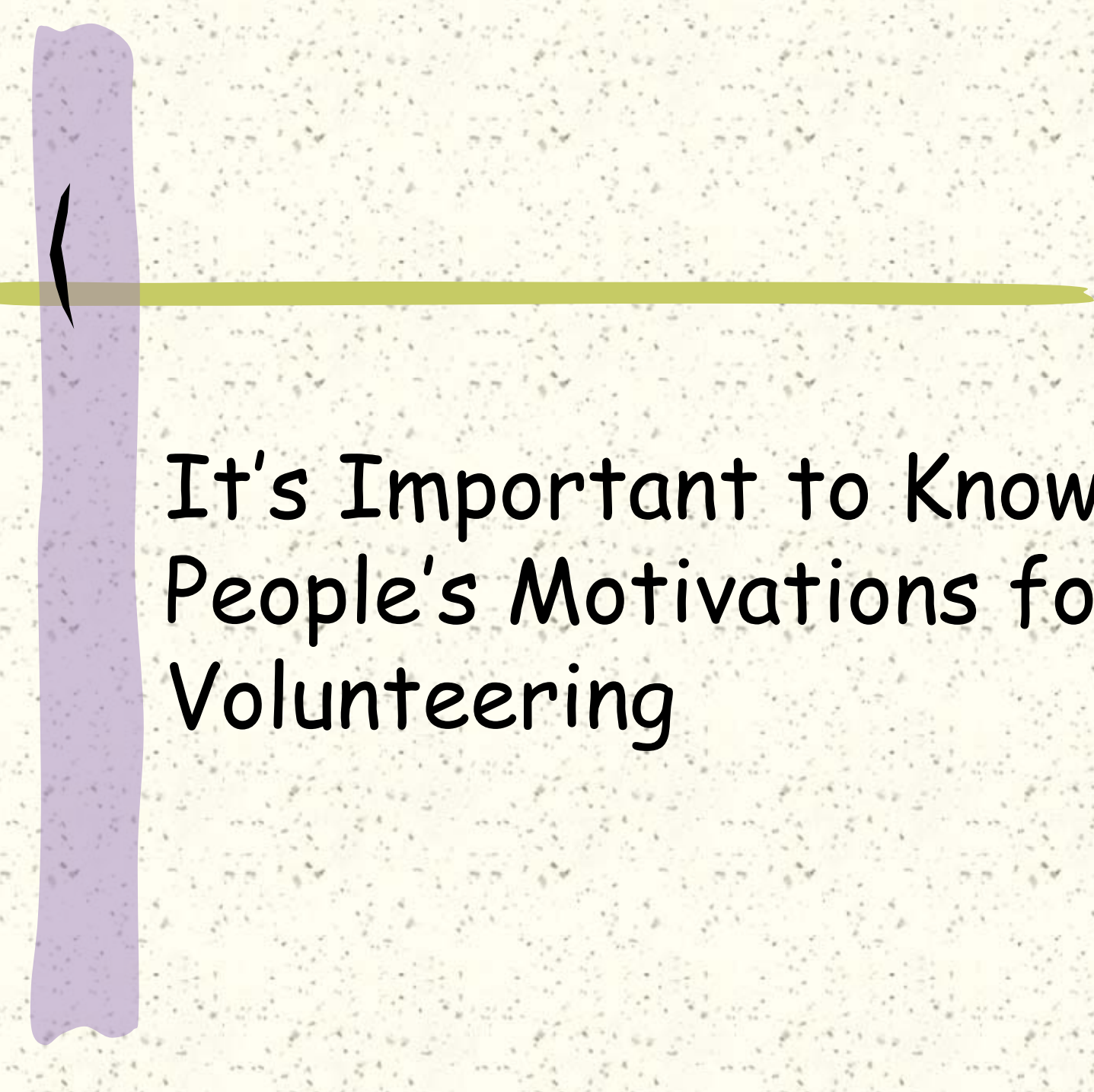


The 5 R's



# Volunteer Management

- # It's more than just training a few folks to:
  - Collect water samples
  - Answer phones
  - Pull weeds
  - Paint walls
  - Etc.
- # 44% of adults volunteer (63% of those do so on a regular basis)
- # Volunteer an average of 3.6 hours/wk
- # Estimated annual contribution: \$239 billion



It's Important to Know  
People's Motivations for  
Volunteering

# What motivates you to volunteer?

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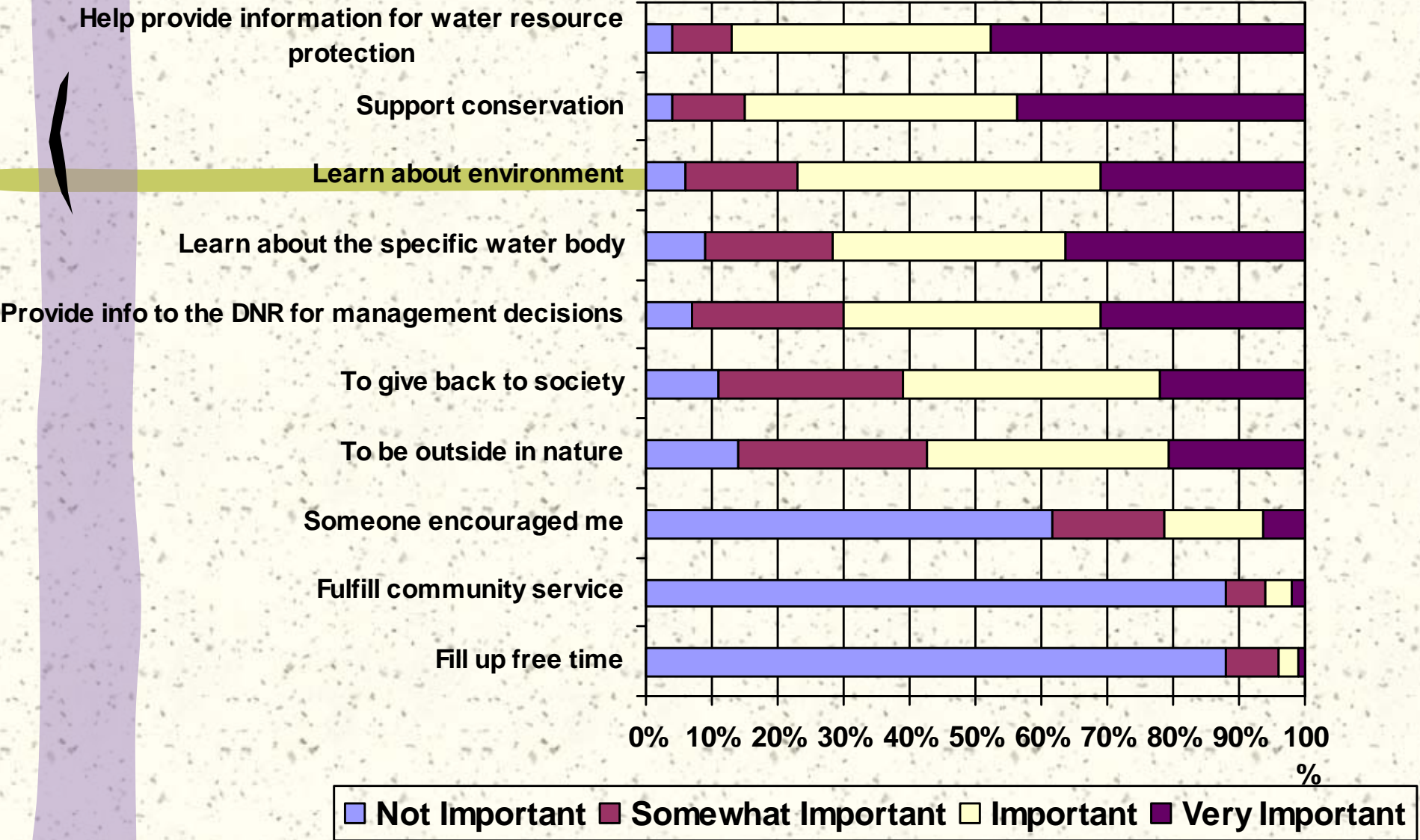
- # Group needs help
- # I support that group's mission

# Motivations for Volunteering to Conduct Stream Monitoring

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- # 2006 survey of Water Action Volunteers Program
- # WI statewide stream monitoring program
- # 334 respondents to survey (of 564)

## 6a. Importance of Reasons to Train and Possibly Monitor



# Know Your Volunteers and Their Needs...

- # But also know what your program needs

# The 5 R's of Volunteer Management

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- # Rights
- # Responsibilities
- # Recruitment
- # Retention
- # Recognition

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Volunteer Rights

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- # Orientation and training
- # Clear, appropriate assignments
- # Fulfilling work
- # Informed involvement with agency supervision and support
- # Recognition of contribution
- # Respect as a volunteer
- # Time put to best use
- # Safe, healthy working conditions

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Program Rights

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- # Expect support for the program and its personnel
- # Screen volunteers
- # Request references
- # Require volunteers to attend trainings
- # Expect volunteers to be responsible
- # Reassign volunteers if needed
- # Receive notice of leaving

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Volunteer Responsibilities

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- # Understand their role as a volunteer
- # Be honest about their goals, skills, limitations and motivations
- # Fulfill their commitment
- # Cooperate with staff
- # Be flexible and open-minded
- # Stay informed
- # Ask for help

# Rights and Responsibilities

## Program Responsibilities

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- # Provide a written job description
- # Interview for the best placement
- # Provide appropriate training
- # Provide supervision
- # Communicate, communicate, communicate
- # Include volunteers as team-mates
- # Inform of special benefits
- # Consider for leadership
- # Conduct an exit interview

# Volunteer Job Description

## Maskerchugg River Project

**Project Title:** Development of a Citizen Watershed Monitoring and Public Education Program for the Maskerchugg River

**Job Title:** Maskerchugg Watershed Volunteer Monitor

**Reports to:** Linda T. Green, Director, URI Watershed Watch  
Elizabeth Herron, Clean Lakes Coordinator, URI Watershed Watch

**Purpose** Assess condition of the Maskerchugg River watershed and current water quality conditions.

### **Volunteer responsibilities may include some of the following:**

- Collecting water samples
- Measuring stream flow
- Conducting shoreline and river habitat assessments
- Performing watershed surveys
- Report to project director or local coordinator

### **Volunteer qualifications:**

- *No science background is needed!*
- Ability to walk along river banks or side walks
- Enjoyment of the outdoors
- Concern for the community and its environment

### **Training provided by URI Watershed Watch:**

- Sessions on measuring stream flow, shoreline and river habitat assessment
- Training to perform watershed or “windshield” surveys
- Protocols for collecting water samples

# Recruitment Process

- # Informal: Spreading the word about your program and accepting volunteers as they come forward.
- # Formal: Marketing your program and screening volunteers as they 'apply'.

"Well-run volunteer programs recruit automatically. Build a better program and the volunteers will beat a path to your door." 101 Ways to Recruit Volunteers, S. McCurley and S. Vineyard, Heritage Arts Publishing Co., 1986

# Finding Volunteers

- # Newspapers or newsletters
- # Community organizations
- # Shoreline residents
- # Sporting organizations
- # Brochures
- # Fairs, festivals and other community events
- # Word of mouth
- # TV/ Radio
- # Internet





Keeping Volunteers Once  
They're Recruited...

# Retention - Why Volunteers Leave?

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Attrition beyond the program's control:

- # Moved away
- # Health problems
- # No longer had time due to life changes



# Retention - Why Volunteers Leave?

Attrition within the program's control

- # Lack of meaningful and frequent feedback
  - Delay in reporting
  - Data tables that don't mean much to the volunteer



# Retention - Why Volunteers Leave?

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Attrition within the program's control

## # Poor or no screening

- Volunteer's goals or expectations inconsistent with the program
  - Expecting their data to result in a specific action by an agency
  - Believing a single sample / would provide all the information needed to assess conditions
  - Wanting to test for 'pollution' - not understanding the value of long-term data
- Not recognizing the level of commitment required

# Retention - Why Volunteers Leave?

Attrition within the program's control

- # Lost interest
  - No new challenges
  - Nothing new to learn
- # No change in water quality conditions



# Retention - Action Plan

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## # Maintain good feedback

- Meetings / open houses
  - Give volunteers a sense of connection to group
  - Offers opportunities for staff to address volunteers' questions and concerns firsthand
- Quick turnaround between data collection and feedback
- Produce meaningful reports - not just data tables
- Use a variety of feedback types

# Retention - Action Plan

## # Effective screening

- Enroll volunteers selectively, with long-term commitment as a primary criterion
- Develop an initial interview that will
  - Emphasize the benefits of long-term data
  - Caution volunteers not to expect data alone to solve any particular problem
  - Warn volunteers about possible delays in receiving feedback
  - Identify and 'weed out' potential volunteers with goals different from the program

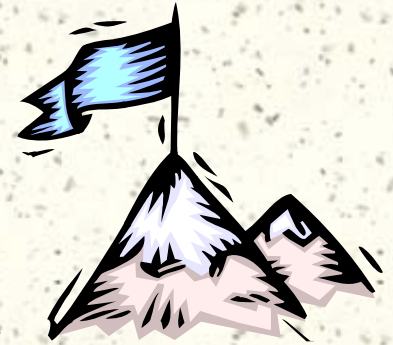
# Retention - Action Plan

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## # Add new challenges

- Offer veteran volunteers training in monitoring additional parameters
- Have experienced volunteers assist with training
- Involve all volunteers in program efforts such as recruiting and fundraising

# Recognition

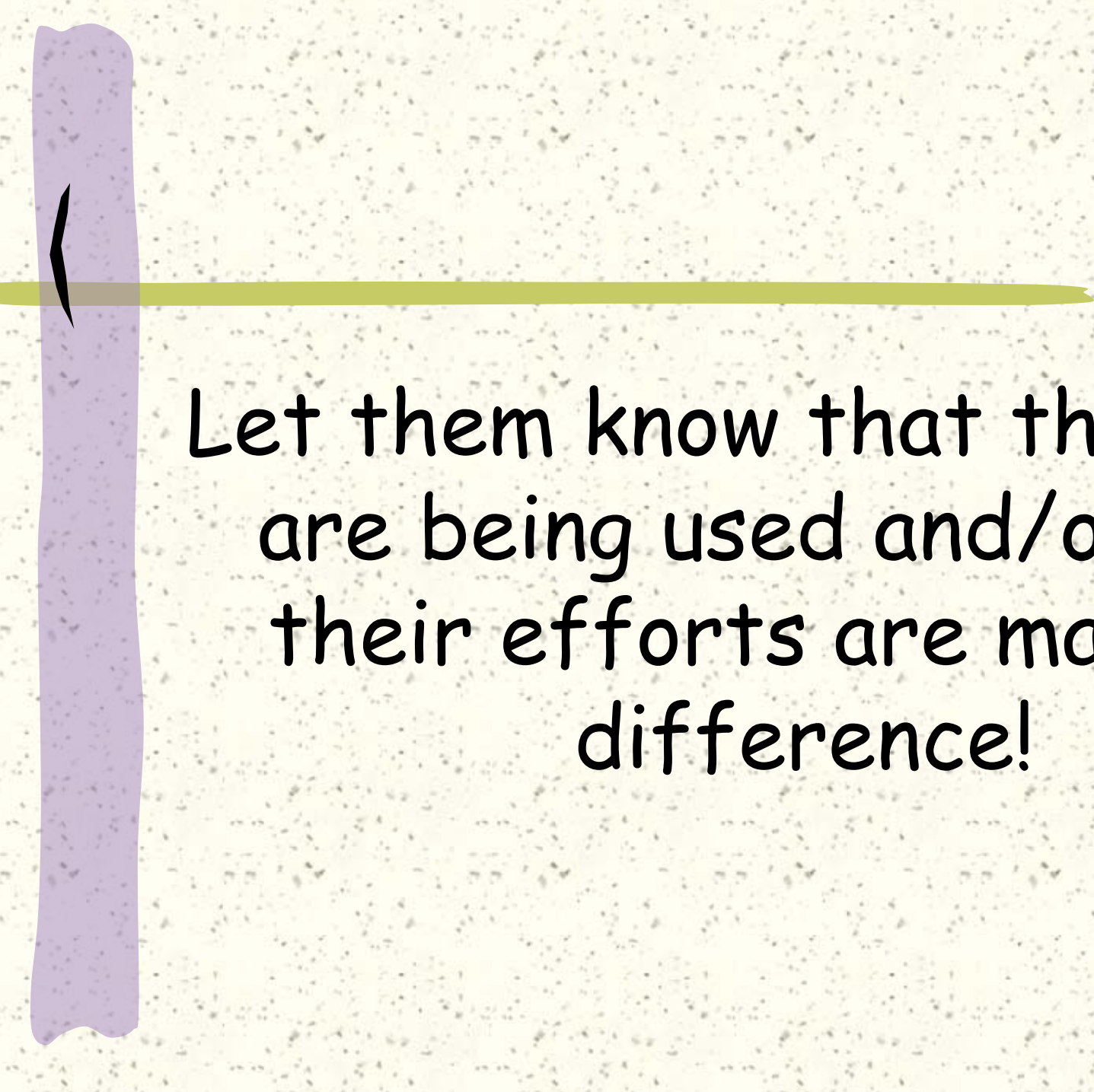


"The most effective recognition is to help volunteers understand why they're a necessary part of the organization. Ask them for input in planning and for feedback on the program"

Susan Handley, Public Involvement and Education  
Coordinator, USEPA Region 10

# Common ways to say thank-you

- # Picnics, BBQ's, etc.
- # Certificates
- # Hats, t-shirts or buttons
- # Enrichment classes
- # Leadership lunches
- # Thank-you letters
- # Volunteer profiles in newsletters
- # Annual conferences
- # Rafting trips
- # One-on-one support
- # Conference scholarship funds



Let them know that their data  
are being used and/or that  
their efforts are making a  
difference!

# Today's Workshop

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## # Understanding Target Audiences

### # Case Studies:

- Georgia Adopt-a-Wetland
- Oklahoma Blue Thumb
- Wisconsin Water Action Volunteers