

Wisconsin's Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program



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Goals and Coordination

- ❑ Sponsored by UW-Extension and Dept. of Natural Resources
- ❑ Goal: To help preserve and protect Wisconsin's over 15,000 lakes and 86,000 miles of rivers
- ❑ To accomplish
 - First understand how they function
 - Then take note of their status



How the Program Began

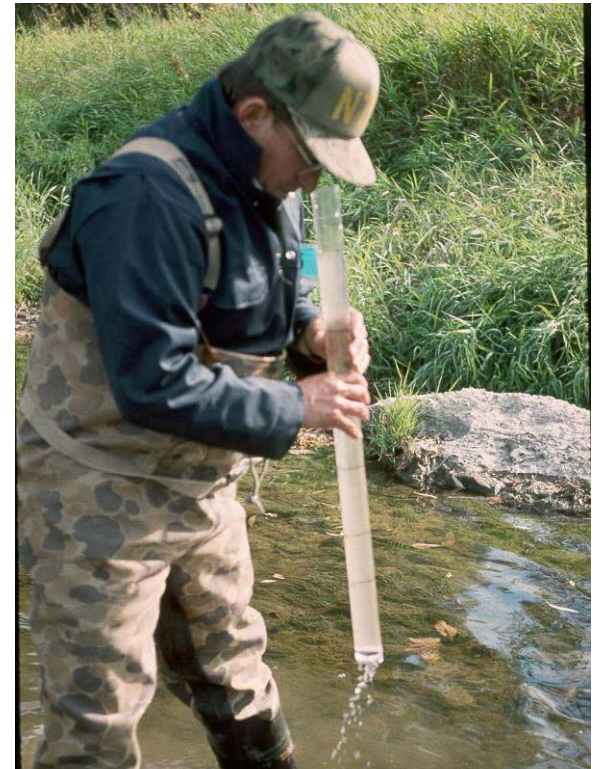
- ❑ Successful lakes program since 1980s. Why not streams?
- ❑ Mid-1990s statewide survey; many groups conducting stream monitoring, but uncoordinated
- ❑ Internet use growing
- ❑ Online data sharing an option – *if* methods unified
- ❑ 1996-7 developed **educational** program with five parameters



Macroinvertebrate collection

Sampling Parameters

- ❑ Easy to measure
- ❑ Well-represented stream health over time
 - Temperature
 - Water clarity
 - Dissolved oxygen
 - Biotic Index (macroinvertebrates)
 - Habitat
 - Stream flow (added in 2002)



Water clarity measurement

Then in 2004...

- WDNR administration said:

“We need help collecting data for
management purposes!

Grow the program!

Start yesterday.”



Multiple Levels

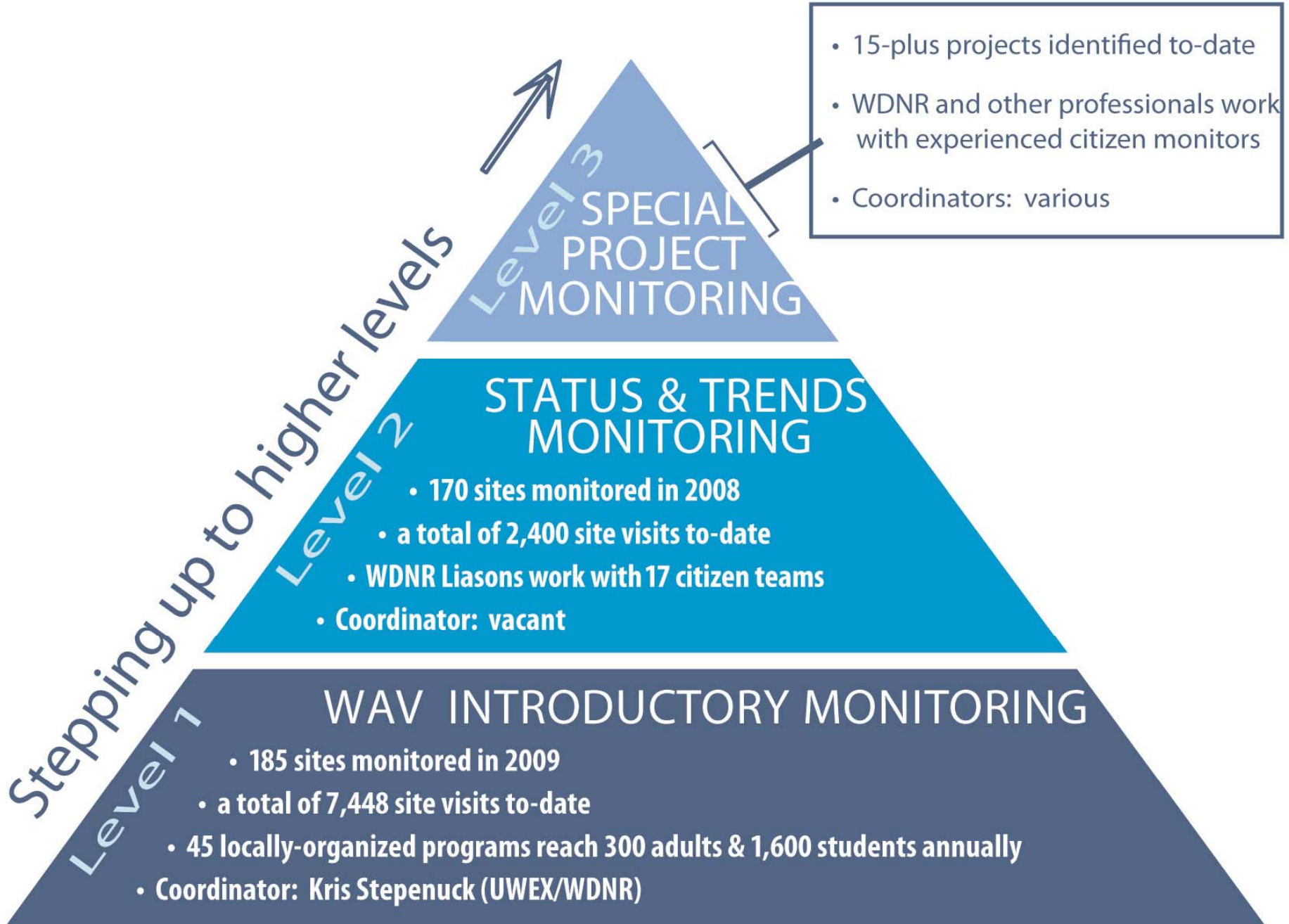
- ❑ Program offers citizens multiple opportunities to be part of learning and monitoring process
- ❑ Three-levels
 - Accommodate varied interests & time availability of citizens
 - Can assess interest with less \$/time commitment (on part of volunteers *and* coordinators) and build from there





Multiple Levels

- Level 1 – original, educational program
 - Introduces citizens to monitoring basics
 - Educates about connection between land & water quality
- Level 2 – Status and trends
 - A more intensive monitoring experience
 - Must follow a specific schedule
 - Utilize DNR methodologies & databases
- Level 3 – Research projects
 - Unique opportunity to address a specific issue



Resources Available for Volunteers

- ❑ Program overview brochures / Job descriptions
- ❑ Local coordinators and trainers
 - These partnerships are essential!
- ❑ Written methods
- ❑ Level 1 DVD refresher training (also online)
- ❑ Equipment lending libraries
- ❑ Online access to submit data and view results



Equipment Costs

- Level 1: ~\$250 per site
 - D-frame net (\$55)
 - Hach dissolved oxygen kit (\$70)
 - Transparency tube (\$52)
- Level 2: ~\$1750 per site
 - Transparency tube (\$52)
 - YSI dissolved oxygen meter (\$925)
 - Thermistors (\$130) (plus software)
 - pH meter (\$320)





Program Website

<http://watermonitoring.uwex.edu/index.html>