



# Urban Watershed Mentors

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# Why Urban Watershed Mentors?

- A growing group of volunteers, landowners and students were asking for opportunities to learn about conservation and help out on projects
- District staff and its partners were meeting capacity issues within conservation programs





# Program Purpose

- Create a growing network of educated and experienced volunteer leaders to increase capacity to carry out conservation work in our District and beyond...





# Program Overview

- Mentees work in teams with an experienced professional and/or “graduated mentor” to create a priority conservation plan.



# Program Logistics

- Three months of training include field and classroom components.
- “Homework” is reviewed as a group.





# Implementation after “graduation”!



# Mentor Commitment

- Pay \$35 or scholarship
- Three months of training for a total of 21 hours
- An additional 15 hours developing the plan
- After “graduating” from training assist with implementation and encouraged to help mentor a new team (4+ hours)





# Training Details

- Plan Topics Covered:
  - Native Plant Restoration
  - Invasive Species Management
  - Stormwater Management
  - Wildlife Habitat Enhancement
- Additionally Covered:
  - Conservation Plan Basics
  - Watershed & Stream Process
  - Site Assessment & Monitoring
  - Volunteer Management
  - Grant Writing
- All materials and full agenda:

<http://www.wmswcd.org/content.cfm/What-We-Do/Urban-Programs#Mentors>





# In the field experience & group work



# Keeping the network growing & engaged

- Email List
- Progress Reports
- Job List
- Website Posts
- Facebook & Twitter
- Events: Mentor Summit





# Lessons Learned

- Clear expectations for landowners, mentors & mentees
- Pair experienced with unexperienced
- Avoid acronyms and define technical language



## More Lessons Learned...

- Length & time of training crucial
- Make ample time for check-ins & discussion
- Make more time for field & exercises (videos)
- Transitioning to a mentor is difficult for most
- Long term engagement challenges







# Thank you!

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