

Quality Assurance Project Plan
A Proposal to Continue and Grow Community Partnerships for Monitoring the Sheboygan
River AOC 2015 (Grant ID: CAP_5_2015)

Prepared by:
Camille Bruhn
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Sarah Dezwart Date: 7/5/15
Sarah Dezwart, Director of Education, Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills &
Education

David R. Kuckuk Date: 9-18-15
David Kuckuk, Naturalist Contractor, Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills &
Education

Donalea Dinsmore Date: 5/15/15 *
Donalea Dinsmore, Great Lakes Funding and Quality Assurance Coordinator, WDNR

Camille Bruhn Date: 8/21/15
Camille Bruhn, Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator, WDNR

Jennifer Conner Date: 10/9/15
Jennifer Conner, Project Officer, USEPA

Signature process delayed completion of
project documentation. The date indicated
is when I notified the project manager
that documentation was approved.

Received DA-track
notification on 10/9/15

Quality Assurance Project Plan
A Proposal to Continue and Grow Community Partnerships for Monitoring the Sheboygan
River AOC 2015 (Grant ID: CAP_5_2015)

Prepared by:
Camille Bruhn
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

S. DeZwart Date: 7/5/15
Sarah DeZwart, Director of Education, Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills &
Education

David R. Kuckuk Date: 9-18-15
David Kuckuk, Naturalist Contractor, Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills &
Education

Donalea Dinsmore Date: 5/15/15 *
Donalea Dinsmore, Great Lakes Funding and Quality Assurance Coordinator, WDNR

Camille Bruhn Date: 8/21/15
Camille Bruhn, Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator, WDNR

_____ Date: _____
Jennifer Conner, Project Officer, USEPA

Signature process delayed completion of
project documentation. The date indicated
is when I notified the project manager
that documentation was approved.

Sheboygan River AOC
Citizen Monitoring QAPP 2015

Written by Debbie Beyer, UW-Extension Natural Resources Educator

This document provides information on the protocols that will be followed for 2015 programs to build citizen support and promote citizen-based monitoring helpful in supporting agencies' work to measure ecological response to clean-up and habitat restoration efforts in the Sheboygan River Area of Concern, in preparation for BUI removal. The following citizen-based monitoring programs will be used:

Mussel Monitoring Program of Wisconsin: www.wiatri.net/inventory/mussels

Wisconsin Acoustic Bat Monitoring: www.wiatri.net/inventory/bats

Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey: www.wiatri.net/inventory/Frogtoadsurvey

Bird Nest Box Monitoring via Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW): www.braw.org

Birding Observations Submitted to eBird: www.ebird.org

In addition, volunteers will be recruited to help with invasive plant control.

Funding: Funding for these efforts has been secured via a small grant through the WDNR Citizen-Based Monitoring Program (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015), a WDNR Office of Great Lakes Monitoring Grant and a WDNR Office of Great Lakes Capacity-Building Grant (both April 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015). Additional support in the way of project development, grant seeking and publicity (see accompanying *Sheboygan River Explorer* newsletter with program announcements) is provided by UW-Extension's Natural Resources Education Program, funded through a GLRI grant (ending June 30, 2015).

Volunteer Training: Volunteers will be introduced to citizen-based monitoring protocols through experiential programs led by local education partners Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills and Education and private contractor David Kuckuk. The education partners are trained and experienced in the protocols and will lead volunteers through the process of each survey method. Volunteers will accompany the contractors out in the field, while following the various survey protocols. The protocols used are protocols developed by the WDNR or others with the intent of volunteers being able to lead themselves, so programs led through this effort are expected to strengthen the volunteer experience and result in a greater rate of individual follow-through than if there were no coordinated, mentored approach. Data collected during the outings will be submitted by contractors or volunteers as per survey protocols. Program participants will be encouraged to continue and expand upon their monitoring experience on their own within the AOC (as well as throughout Wisconsin).

Volunteers will be recruited via various community announcements and in most cases will need to register with Camp Y-Koda in advance to participate in the survey outing.

Weather: If the education partners/leaders decide that weather and/or river conditions do not meet survey protocol or are deemed to be unsafe for volunteer and staff work on the designated program dates, attempts will be made to re-schedule if possible. An exception is the land-based “Warbler Wednesday” bird walks, since there are so many walks scheduled throughout the season and volunteers are encouraged to also go birding on their own time – rain dates will not be scheduled.

Water Safety: Sheboygan County YMCA Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills and Education is exceptionally equipped to partner on programs that require canoe or kayak outfitting, because at least one staff person who is lifeguard-certified accompanies every trip, and staff are equipped with 2-way radios. Camp staff are experienced with taking groups out regularly on the water in canoes and kayaks.

General Outdoor Safety: As part of a large, outdoor, experiential-learning based organization for adults and youth, Sheboygan County YMCA Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills and Education abides by its organization’s established safety protocols. Safety for participants and staff is a top priority in all programming.

Data Validity: All of the monitoring activities used are designed specifically for citizen volunteers. Experienced program leaders will be accompanying the volunteers during the scheduled activities.

Data submission and sharing: Each survey protocol being used is part of an inventory effort broader than the Sheboygan River AOC and is equipped with a data submission process specific to each individual program. Data will be submitted via protocol. Data will be copied and sent to the Sheboygan River AOC coordinator directly in the cases where there are data sheets that are easy to share. In other cases, data is submitted to the sponsoring program to be analyzed or mapped, and then the AOC Coordinator can obtain the results from the program contact person or via a website.

Mussel Monitoring Program of Wisconsin: Three canoe outings will be offered during the season, July 17, August 21 and September 11 to orient volunteers to mussel monitoring techniques and to collect data from appropriate wadable sections of the Sheboygan River AOC between the Kohler Village Park and Kiwanis Park in Sheboygan. The survey protocol will be reviewed with volunteers at the beginning of each outing and each volunteer will be provided their own copy of the “Mussel Training Manual, July 2010” and the “Mussel Brochure 2013”. Volunteers will search for mussels as a group and data (data forms, shells, photos) will be submitted by Camp Y-Koda staff as per the protocol, to Wisconsin DNR Lisie Kitchel.

The training manual and brochure were obtained from WDNR’s mussel monitoring coordinator Lisie Kitchel and are included as PDFs. Additional mussel identification and distribution information can be found at the website www.wiatri.net/inventory/mussels.

Data sharing: At the end of the season, the AOC Coordinator should request mussel survey results from Lisie Kitchel, WDNR, as she will analyze the data submitted and identify species.

Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Bat Project: Three night-time canoe outings will be offered and led by Camp Y-Koda during the season, June 24, July 8 and August 12, to orient volunteers to acoustic bat monitoring techniques. River sections to be monitored will depend on river flow conditions and canoeing experience of volunteers. The survey protocol and equipment operation will be introduced at

the beginning of each outing and each volunteer will also receive their own copy of the Wisconsin Citizen-Based Monitoring Bat Project Manual. The group will canoe the river together, gathering data as they go.

An acoustic bat detector purchased for Sheboygan River use, is stored at the Plymouth WDNR office with the Sheboygan River AOC coordinator.

The [training manual](#) and [Sheboygan1 WDNR bat survey map](#) were obtained from WDNR's bat monitoring coordinators Paul (John) White and Andrew Badji and are included as PDFs. Additional Wisconsin Bat information is found on the website www.wiatri.net/inventory/bats.

Data sharing: Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator should request survey results from Paul (John) White and/or Andrew Badji, WDNR at the end of the season after they have done the analysis and mapping of results.

Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey (WFTS): During the past two years, an eastern Sheboygan County WFTS route was developed by UW-Extension, with advice from WDNR's WFTS coordinator Andrew Badji, to include locations along the Sheboygan River AOC. A volunteer crew, led by UW-Extension, ran the route in 2014. Contractor David Kuckuk was a member of the crew in 2014 and will host two 1.5-hour WFTS training sessions March 14 and March 28, 2015 to attract additional volunteers. The trainings will use the WFTS website as the basis, providing the background for the survey and using the species videos and call quizzes to train volunteers. Volunteers participating in the training may choose to join the "Frog'n Fridays Crew" which will meet on a specified date within each of the three WFTS survey windows April – July. If weather conditions are not appropriate for surveying on the chosen date, the crew is on standby for the next night of good weather. Data will be submitted to the WDNR WFTS coordinator, Andrew Badji, by David Kuckuk.

The [WFTS Manual](#), [WFTS Route Description 1700-010](#), and [WFTS Data Form](#) are included as PDFs. All of this information and more is included on the wonderful website www.wiatri.net/inventory.Frogtoadsurvey where the Sheboygan River route is mapped out. It is Route #603.

Data sharing: David Kuckuk will also send the completed data sheets to the AOC Coordinator when they are submitted to Andrew Badji at the end of the season. Also, the Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator should request survey results after the end of the season from Andrew Badji, WDNR, to obtain statewide perspectives and context.

Bird Nest Box Monitoring via BRAW: David Kuckuk has been involved in BRAW bluebird trail monitoring and maintenance in Sheboygan for decades. He will host a 2-hour training session for volunteers March 28, 2015, using the BRAW protocol and training materials. Interested volunteers will then be asked to sign-up to be crew members, design a monitoring schedule, and divide nest box monitoring and maintenance responsibility up between them. They will exchange contact information so that they can contact each other easily and ensure consistent and thorough coverage of monitoring throughout the season, as per the BRAW protocol.

The [BRAW weekly data form](#), [BRAW annual summary form](#), and [BRAW Information Packet](#) are included as PDF documents, but can also be accessed via the website www.braw.org, along with much more information.

Data sharing: At the end of the season, volunteers will submit survey information to BRAW and send a copy to the Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator.

Birding Observations Submitted to eBird: eBird is a web-based platform developed by Cornell University for professional and amateur birders to submit their bird observations to a global database. Sixteen birding outings, 13 on land and 3 by canoe, are scheduled from March – September along the Sheboygan River in 2015. Focus for the outings will center on habitat restoration sites, but may also include other sites identified by the WDNR as “eBird hotspots” within the AOC. Outings will be led by skilled amateur birders from the Sheboygan County Audubon Society, or contractor David Kuckuk. Both entities already actively submit data to eBird. Observations by the group will be recorded on a Wisconsin Bird Checklist, and then submitted to eBird via the www.ebird.org website.

All information regarding birding for data collection and submission to eBird is available on the eBird website, www.ebird.org.

Data sharing: The Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator, or anyone, can access Sheboygan River bird data and summaries at any time by logging into www.ebird.org.

Invasive Plant Control: During invasive plant assessment and mapping for the Sheboygan River AOC, extensive locations of invasive plants were identified in the Rapid Ecological Assessment for the Sheboygan River Area of Concern. Invasive plant control is continuing to be a major effort to protect the investments made in the restored habitat sites. To help protect the University Wetland habitat restoration site, UW-Extension initiated in 2013 the use of volunteers to begin to control invasive plants. The area of focus is the land between University Drive and the Sheboygan River, just upriver from and adjacent to the University Wetland project site. Species targeted include: garlic mustard, dame’s rocket, common and glossy buckthorn, bush honeysuckle and teasel. Following are the methods used for each species:

Garlic mustard: As soon as weather allows in spring and up until the time of blossoming, 1st year and 2nd year plants are hand-pulled with the intent of pulling all that are visible. Pulled plants are bagged and landfill disposed.

Dame’s rocket: When this plant is readily identifiable in spring - blossoming or almost blossoming, it is hand-pulled, bagged and disposed of in a landfill. The intent is that all plants visible are pulled each year.

Common and glossy buckthorn and honeysuckle: The shrubs 1 inch and greater stem diameter are cut a few inches above ground level and a mixture of 20% Garlon/80% Bark Oil Blue is brushed on the cut stem by a staff member. Adult female buckthorn shrubs are the priority and are identified by the presence of berries or blossoms. Male stems 1 inch or larger are second priority. Stems smaller than 1 inch are last priority and are hand-pulled, if time allows. Honeysuckle is not as prevalent on the site as buckthorn, but is treated accordingly when encountered.

Common Teasel: In mid-summer when second-year teasel plants are up and identifiable before blossoming, they are hand-cut, bagged and landfilled. The intent is to cut all second-year plants that are visible, before they blossom.

Volunteer training will be accomplished at the beginning of each crew outing. The contractor will train the volunteers on identification of the plant species being targeted for that day and the control techniques to be used. The contractor will work alongside the volunteers.

One volunteer evening is scheduled every two weeks April – August.

Data sharing: The Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator will be invited to tour the site whenever they desire, but especially at the end of the season to see the results of the work.

Quality Assurance Project Plan
A Proposal to Continue and Grow Community Partnerships for Monitoring the Sheboygan River AOC 2015 (Grant ID: CAP_5_2015)

Prepared by:
Camille Bruhn
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

_____ Date: _____
Sarah Dezwarte, Director of Education, Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills & Education

_____ Date: _____
David Kuckuk, Naturalist Contractor, Camp Y-Koda Outdoor Skills & Education

_____ Date: _____
Donalea Dinsmore, Great Lakes Funding and Quality Assurance Coordinator, WDNR

_____ Date: _____
Camille Bruhn, Sheboygan River AOC Coordinator, WDNR

_____ Date: _____
Jennifer Conner, Project Officer, USEPA