



# Stewardship 101

StreamWebs Stewardship projects can be as big or small as you want them to be! The goals of a StreamWebs Stewardship project are to engage students in a meaningful watershed experience that is hands-on and community-oriented, is integrated into classroom learning, increases awareness and knowledge of important environmental issues such as invasive species, and leads to actions that improve and/or restore the watershed.

## Step 1: Needs Assessment

This step will help you launch your investigation into developing a project idea. First and foremost, spend a moment brainstorming about the things you find interesting. How would you like to approach the project? What inspires you about the natural world? What types of learning activities are you most drawn to? Writing? Art? Science? Outdoor exploration? Consider the way you best connect to the natural world as you assess the ecological and educational needs for your project.

## Step 2: Identify Community Partners

This is your opportunity to reach out to the wider community to tell others about your project idea and get them excited and involved! This step will help move you into action.

1. Identify and contact professionals and specialists you may want to get involved with your project.
2. Establish the contributions and responsibilities agreed upon by both parties as you enlist community professionals to help you with your project.

## Step 3: Organize and Plan Your Project

Brainstorm a project that most interests you and your students and allows students to explore their local environment through exciting, creative, inquiry-driven investigations. Project ideas include:

- Field Research. Conduct field research to determine the health of a stream or overall health of the watershed. This can include parameters such as chemical water quality testing, macroinvertebrate sampling, plant identification, and instream habitat assessments.
- Stream Restoration Projects. Remove invasive species and/or plant native plants to restore healthy functioning of the riparian zone.
- Photography. Photograph something that interests and inspires you in your local watershed, and share your photos with the community.
- Photo-Point Monitoring. Monitor the progress of a stream restoration site over time, by taking specific photographs at identified priority locations.



- Videography. Create a video that traces the path of the water from the headwaters to the confluence.
- Journalism. Report about a local restoration project or need within the watershed.
- Art. Develop a creative art project, such as a mural, to portray the life of a stream over time, depicting the watershed and each of the components within it or the lifecycle of salmon.
- Mapping. Create a map of the stream pre- and/or post-restoration work, or create a three-dimensional map of the watershed.
- Creative Writing. Share, through creative writing, something that interests and inspires you about your local watershed.

## Step 4: Implement Project

This is where you put your project plan into action. Make sure to plan field days in advance and coordinate with project partners who can support students in the field. Streamwebs.org has a number of resources that can help support the implementation of projects, including curricula, datasheets, and field gear.

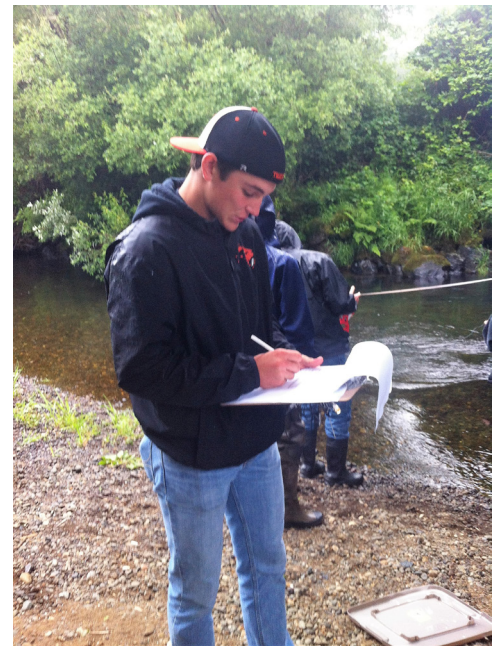
## Step 5: Reflection and Evaluation

This valuable step will help you weave it all together. Each and every student will experience his/her project in unique and special ways. It is important to have students take some time to document their own project perspective and jot down their streamside thoughts and river reflections. Through reflection, they hit the pause button so they can make integrated connections throughout their project. Have students take a moment each day they are in the field to record a journal entry.

## Step 6: Prepare to Share

Your project has produced real results, and celebrating student contributions and encouraging them to demonstrate to others what they have learned is important. This step will help them prepare to tell their Stewardship Project's story to the community. Not only does the community want to hear about the goals, objectives, and outcomes of their project, but it is important for them to compile their project information into a complete and final package that makes sense to them.

Have students compile their data and create the story of their project. It's important to consider multiple ways of telling the story of the Student Stewardship Project; synthesizing and analyzing the data is simply one piece of a compelling story. Have students remember to use all their creative arts, natural history, and technology and community components in their watershed story.



## Step 7: Demonstrate and Celebrate

It is now time to turn it up, showcase the results of your students' hard work, and demonstrate to others what was learned. There are many ways to have students share their knowledge and experience with their peers and the community; here are a couple of ideas:

- Give a school or community presentation about the project
- Upload your project to streamwebs.org
- Find a student watershed summit within your community
- Take part in a city council meeting

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