⬥EPA Volunteer Monitoring on the Nonpoint Source Electronic Bulletin Board System

What is the Nonpoint Source Bulletin Board System? EPA's Nonpoint Source Electronic Bulletin Board System (NPS BBS) is a free service that provides federal, state, and local agencies, private organizations, businesses, and concerned individuals with timely, relevant NPS information, a forum for open discussion, and the ability to exchange computer text and program files.

The Volunteer Monitoring Specific Issue Group (VolMon SIG) is one component of the NPS BBS. This forum was developed to encourage the free flow of ideas among those engaged in volunteer monitoring activities nationwide. The VolMon SIG is maintained by EPA's Assessment and Watershed Protection Division, Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds.
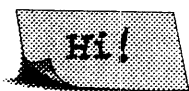
Features of the VolMon SIG

NEWSFLASH

A continually updated Newsflash provides late-breaking information on activities in the field of volunteer monitoring.
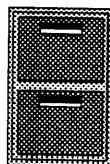
MESSAGES

Volunteer monitors, program coordinators, agency staff, educators, and anyone else with an interest in volunteer monitoring can ask questions, leave comments, or exchange messages with other users of the SIG. Get to know your colleagues around the country!

DOCUMENTS DATABASE

The Documents Database contains information on documents, newsletters, manuals, and other material on volunteer monitoring topics. Subjects include citizen action programs, environmental education, monitoring methods, and pollution control approaches. The complete citation is provided along with an abstract and, if available, a contact source and cost. Over 600 manuals, videos, pamphlets, etc. are listed.

PUBLIC FILE AREA

Users can exchange files, computer text, articles, non-copyrighted software, and data using the upload and download feature of file area 3.

THE VOLUNTEER MONITOR

File area 2 contains *The Volunteer Monitor*, a national newsletter of volunteer water quality monitoring.

Once accessed, file area 2 lists each available article by file name, title, author, and issue. Users can download article files to their own computers.

VOLMON NEWS

VOLMON News provides news about activities in the field of volunteer monitoring, including such topics as Alabama's Statewide Volunteer Monitoring Network, Massachusetts' Water Watch Partnership survey, and a Maine restoration project that stretches its 319 grant with volunteers.
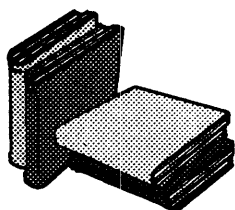
VM CALENDAR

This calendar of events describes upcoming conferences and meetings of interest to the volunteer monitoring community.

What Else Is on the BBS?

The NPS BBS currently contains many features and SIGs (specific issue groups) covering a wide variety of topics. These features include:

MAIN BOARD Welcomes you to the BBS, displaying the main menu. Contains NPS News-Notes Database and Education Materials Database. Contains general NPS information. Also contains computer programs that can be downloaded.

TMDL SIG Exchange of information among those engaged in water resources management on a watershed/basin scale.

FISH CONSUMPTION SIG Communication on health risks from eating contaminated fish. Contains the Fish Consumption Bans and Advisories Database.

WATERBODY SYSTEM SUPPORT SIG User support for the EPA Waterbody System.

COASTAL NPS SIG Exchange of information and open communication on the Section 6217 Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program, administered by EPA and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES A forum for discussion of agricultural nonpoint source pollution issues.
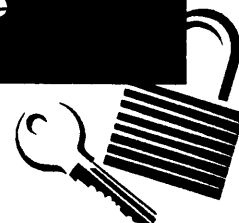
WATERSHED RESTORATION SIG Exchange of ideas and tools for watershed restoration. Contains the Watershed Registry Database.

Check out some of the basic commands on the NPS BBS.

R to read messages

E to enter messages for others

B to see bulletins

F to see file libraries

J to join SIGs

D to download files

U to upload files

OPEN to open doors to databases

S to answer script questionnaires

C to comment to system operator

H for help

How Do I Access the NPS BBS?

To access the NPS BBS, you will need:

• A PC or terminal
• Telecommunications software (such as CrossTalk or ProComm)
• A modem (1200, 2400, or 9600 baud)
• A phone line that can accommodate modem communications.

The NPS BBS phone number is (301) 589-0205, and the telecommunication parameters are no parity, 8 bits, and 1 stop-bit (N-8-1).

Additional information on the NPS BBS can be obtained from the EPA Office of Water, NPS Information Exchange (4503F), 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460; FAX (202) 260-1517.

Access Through Internet

The NPS BBS can be accessed from the Internet by typing TELNET FEDWORLD.GOV. Once on FedWorld, turn ANSII graphics off and go through the Gateway to NPS-BBS, or command D 79. The IP address for FedWorld is 192.239.92.201. To increase response and decrease screen garbage, Internet users should turn ANSI graphics off by entering U3A from FedWorld's Main Menu and selecting ANSI option "off."