



Adopt-A-Wetland

Stewardship...Community...Natural Resources Planning...Preservation





Dear Resident/Group Leader:

There are more than 250 bodies of water in Oakdale, so the city's Adopt-a-Wetland program and program volunteers, like you, play a very important role in protecting these amazing natural resources that support wildlife, vegetation, people, and water quality in the region. The Oakdale Environmental Management Commission's goal is to offer a program that is rewarding, enjoyable, and safe for all of the participants.

Included in this How-to-Kit you'll find program objectives, a description of wetlands, program tasks, safety tips, and other information.

As a group leaders, please provide all members with a copy of the Safety Guidelines. You will also be responsible for sharing the information from the education session with all other participants. Additionally, we request that you respond to a short survey after each program activity so we can understand the work that was completed and track progress.

Please contact us with any comments, suggestions or concerns regarding the program or your participation at 651-730-2723.

Thanks again for your interest in becoming a steward of Oakdale's wetlands!

Oakdale Environmental Management Commission

Program Objectives and Summary

We want to work with you to make sure the program is successful, and that means participants need to know what our goals and objectives are for the Adopt-a-Wetland program. To help you understand what we hope to accomplish with the program, we have identified the following objectives:

- **Keep the wetlands clean and free from trash and debris.** One of the easiest ways you can help is to keep the wetlands free of garbage and debris. By keeping them clean, you will help the wetland continue to work properly. The wetlands are not only a part of a sensitive ecosystem, but in some cases are a part of the city's stormwater management system. Keeping the wetlands clean will help city engineers and public works staff keep the wetlands functioning correctly, thereby improving the city infrastructure and natural features.
- **Help monitor and educate neighbors about wetlands.** The wetland buffer areas and edges are important to the vegetation and habitat in the wetlands. Help your neighbors and others understand the importance of keep these areas in their natural state. Let the City know if there are encroachments or if neighbors are mowing inside the buffer areas. As a participant you can anonymously report an encroachment, or talk to your neighbors directly.
- **Monitor and remove invasive species.** The presence of invasive species such as buckthorn and purple loosestrife negatively impacts the ecological quality of a wetland. As a participant in the program, the city will educate participants about what is invasive and how to remove and dispose of it safely.
- **Educate Residents and Citizens:** It is important for members of the community to understand the value in wetlands and how they contribute to the city's infrastructure and natural resources. We will make efforts to educate the public through increased signage, the city's newsletter and other opportunities. If you can help us out by talking to your neighbors about what you are doing in the Adopt-a-Wetland program and what they can do to help, even if they don't formally volunteer, we can at least increase awareness about the important role our wetlands play in our community.

What is a wetland?

Although ponds and lakes are obviously wetlands, that only touches the surface. Stormwater pond areas, dry wetlands and drainage areas are also wetlands. A wetland is defined in the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Plan as,

“A wetland is an ecosystem that depends on constant or recurrent, shall inundation or saturation at or near the soil surface. The minimum essential characteristics of a wetland are recurrent, sustained inundation or saturation at or near the surface and the presence of physical, chemical, and biological features reflective of such inundation or saturation (Natural Research Council, 1995).”

Attached to this information is a map that shows the wetlands in the community and their ranking. Wetlands are classified according to their quality and how they function. In simple terms, the higher the quality of the wetland the higher the classification and the more we want to protect it. The wetlands in the city are classified in the following terms:

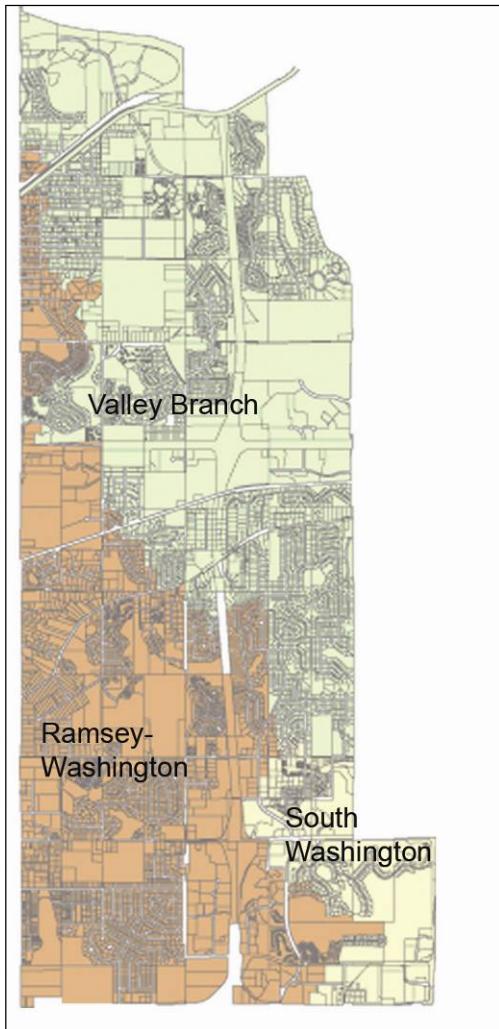


Every wetland in the city has value, regardless if the quality is lower than some of the other wetland complexes in the community because they all help clean and manage surface waters. As a participant in the Adopt-A-Wetland program you will be helping the city maintain, and in some cases, improve the wetlands in the community, which will ultimately help improve water quality in the city and also preserve important natural resources.

The following images show the appearance of a wetland and some vegetative qualities of a wetland. Healthy wetlands include vegetative diversity and have extensive habitat.



A wetland can have a wet or dry appearance. Typically a wetland is delineated based on the vegetation and habitat in an area, the drainage and water collection areas, and whether or not an area is naturally depressed. The images below show the diversity, one with standing water and the other relatively dry.



In the attached wetland classification map, the wetlands in the community that have been adopted are also identified. However, as a part of this program, if you would like to participate on a wetland that is already adopted, contact the city and they can connect you with the group leader for that wetland.

As demonstrated by the map, the City has three watershed districts in the community. If you are interested in more programs and information related to your wetland, the Watershed District is a good place to start. They have cost-share programs and are interested in improving wetlands in our community. Please contact the City if you would like more information about the watershed district, their contact information and their programs.

Program Expectations and Program Commitment

It is important to us that you know what you are getting into when you sign up to Adopt-a-Wetland. In an effort to be transparent, we have identified the following expectations and level of commitment we would ask of you as a participant. We hope to be able to have quantitative and measurable results and participation as a result of the program. That way we can keep you informed about progress and the impact of your participation. In an effort to organize the program in a systematic and clear way we have identified the following activities for the program. The group leader and participants will be responsible for the following:

I. Initial Education Session

The City will host an education session a couple times a year to introduce the program to you and to outline the goals, objectives and tasks. We would like the group leader, at a minimum, to attend the education session. The session only needs to be attended once, and is meant to provide the necessary information to participate successfully in the program. The session will include:

- Introduction to the program
- Basic information about wetlands
- Rules and guidelines for the program
- Training on how to identify invasive species and how to remove them correctly
- Question and answer period

II. Yearly Participation in the Buckthorn Removal Days

We would like you to participate in the yearly Buckthorn Removal Days, focusing on clearing your wetland from invasive species. Besides buckthorn, you may also remove other invasive species, including amur maple and honeysuckle, from your wetland and leave them on the curb in separate piles for pick up. During the education session city staff will provide training as how to identify invasive species and complete this activity.

III. Active Monitoring of Your Wetland

Hopefully your neighbors will respect the wetland and your wetlands will stay free of encroachments, play equipment and pet waste. However, if you see your neighbors or others encroaching in the wetlands please let us know. Part of keeping the wetlands healthy and functioning correctly involves keeping the vegetation healthy and staying out of buffer areas. If you are uncomfortable talking to your neighbors about this issue, simply call the city and we will follow up with them.

IV. Yearly Communication and Reporting

Following each scheduled activity we will send out a short emailed survey. Please complete the survey, as this is an important part of the program because it will help us monitor our successes and identify areas where we may need improvement. The survey will be very short and easy to complete and will provide you the opportunity to comment and make suggestions about the program.

ADOPT-A-WETLAND PROGRAM

TASK AGREEMENT

Volunteer

Group Name

Address

Phone

Email*

** Please include an email because this is how we will be collecting progress and tracking success with the program.*

As a participant and volunteer we ask that you participate in the following activities. Please sign your initials acknowledging the activities you will be responsible for as a participant. Only the group leader needs to sign this Task Agreement.

Information and Education Session
(Only Need to attend once)

This information session will introduce participants to the program and explain the objectives and monitoring information that the City would like to collect as a part of the program. It will also include a training session for how to identify and remove invasive species from a wetland.

The above listed group/individual agrees to perform the following services and coordinate its activities with The City of Oakdale:

Remove Invasive Species – Buckthorn Removal
Days Monitor Wetland for Encroachments

For Office Use

Date Received:

ADOPT-A-WETLAND AGREEMENT

The City of Oakdale, acting by and through its Community Development Department and _____ ("Group/Individual") agree to the terms set forth in this Agreement which governs the services the Group/Individual will perform at _____ ("Water Body").

Recital

The City desires to provide interested persons with an opportunity for community involvement through voluntary participation in a water body maintenance program.

Agreement

1. The Group will provide the services designated on the "Task Agreement" attached to this packet. Group/Individual volunteers shall perform all services provided under this agreement on an uncompensated basis. The Group/Individual will not perform any activity that the City has not previously approved and will not subcontract or hire others to perform services hereunder. The City may perform or cause others to perform the activities listed on the Task Agreement at its discretion. The parties may agree to revise the Task Agreement.
2. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, the Group/Individual will furnish, at its own expense, all tools, materials, supplies, labor and services and other accessories in connection with this Agreement and will ensure that these items will be removed from the wetland at the end of each day.
3. The Group/Individual will use only non-motorized hand tools to perform its services under this Agreement and will take all reasonable precautions to protect its participating members and the public against injury and to protect against damage to property.
4. The Group/Individual shall abide by the "Safety Guidelines" accompanying this Agreement. The Group Representative/Individual who signs this Agreement, or his or her designee, shall ensure that each person to perform services under this Agreement will read and abide by the Safety Guidelines.
5. The Group/Individual will not discriminate against any person desiring to perform services under this Agreement due to the person's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, disability, age, gender, affectional preference, marital status or status with regard to public assistance.
6. All members of the Group and any other persons who may perform any activities covered under this Agreement shall not be considered employees of the City. Accordingly, the City is not responsible or liable for any injury or any other claims, expenses, or losses sustained by such persons while engaged in any of the activities covered under this Agreement.
7. Either party may terminate this Agreement at any time upon written notice to the other party.

City of Oakdale

Date

Group Leader

Date

ADOPT-A-WETLAND PROGRAM SAFETY GUIDELINES

Each participant in the Adopt-A-Wetland Program must review these Safety Guidelines before performing services at the adopted site and abide by them while performing services on the adopted site.

1. Work only during daylight hours and in appropriate weather.
2. Wear protective clothing including work gloves, sturdy shoes and long sleeved shirts and pants to prevent injury from sharp objects, insect stings, sunburn and poison ivy. Light colored clothing is most visible.
3. Do not overexert yourself. Take breaks and drink plenty of water on warm days.
4. Be aware of your surroundings to ensure your safety and the safety of others. Be especially careful if you are using tools.
5. Do not wear headsets or engage in horseplay or other conduct that would divert your attention from your work or impair your ability to perceive hazards from traffic or other dangerous situations.
6. Provide adequate supervision for participants under the age of 18.
7. Avoid areas where hazardous conditions exist such as: roads, parking lots, bridges, construction sites and areas where mowing, tree trimming or pest control is in progress. Report hazardous situations immediately to the Program Contact Person.
8. If you are picking up litter, use caution in handling collected items. Do not crush collected items; broken or jagged objects could cause injury. Do not try to pick up heavy, large or hazardous materials. Notify the Program Contact Person for pickup of these materials.
9. If you are working in or adjacent to water, use appropriate safety considerations such wearing personal flotation devices (PFDs); having basic lifesaving equipment such as a pole and throw rope available; and a cell phone to call if help is needed.

City Contact

1584 Hadley Avenue North
Oakdale, MN 55128
Phone: (651) 730-2723