

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT STREAM

## Considerations

When identifying a stream or segment of a stream to clean, it's best to consider the size, accessibility, water quality and the impacts made on the stream. As all groups will vary in abilities, the Adopt a Stream program is flexible – *numerous teams may adopt a single stream*. Please consider the following when selecting your stream:

**Size** – Choose a small section – it's best to start small and then expand your effort as the event gains popularity. Larger streams are best left to bigger groups; smaller streams may be better suited for families.

**Connection** – Selecting a stream that is meaningful to your group is essential. Choose a stream that flows through your neighborhood or find a segment of stream that offers opportunity for community engagement.

**Accessibility** – Select a stream that is accessible. It's best to start with streams on public land or held by conservation groups. Typically projects are located near areas where litter collects. In addition, having a central meeting location with toilets, running water and parking can significantly improve the clean up process and overall success. Keeping clean is key to participant success!

**Private Property** – in the event that your stream clean up may happen on private property, the team will need to secure permission to access the stream.

**Survey the Stream** – When considering which stream or segment of stream to adopt, have a couple of team members walk the stream. Look at the litter and conditions to determine the number of volunteers and equipment needed. Consider if the stream be a project your team and expected volunteers can handle over time.

*Note: We encourage anyone entering a stream to do so in pairs and to be prepared for changing conditions.*

**Water Quality / Impact** - You and your team may want to consider your stream goals - does your interest steer you to protect a stream of relatively high quality, or would you rather take a stream in trouble and see what you can do? The lowater website can give you some sense of existing stream conditions, and a good look at the stream can tell you quite a bit as well. If the answer to any of the following questions is “yes,” you're likely looking at a challenged stream: Does the stream contain steep banks or “small cliffs” from erosion? Are many trees falling into the water? Is there “foam” on the water?

More information about quick checks on stream water quality can be found at the lowater website: [www.iowater.net](http://www.iowater.net).





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