

# Virginia Save Our Streams Habitat Assessment

## Acknowledgments

*This presentation is based upon the publication of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Rapid Bioassessment Protocols for Use in Wadeable Streams and Rivers (Second Edition, July 1999).*

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## Habitat Concepts

- In the truest sense, “habitat” incorporates all aspects of physical and chemical constituents along with the biotic interactions of the subwatershed.
- In these protocols, the definition of “habitat” is narrowed to the quality of the instream conditions and riparian habitat at the monitoring site.

## Implementation Guidelines

- Walk the entire site before beginning the assessment program.
- The assessment reach is 100 meters (m), starting at your sampling riffle and working upstream.
- Channel width is the space available to hold water and indicating frequent water movement (look for indicators). It is *not* wetted area nor bankfull (Rosgen).
- Consider the stream bank to be the relatively steep surface that connects the available stream channel to the floodplain.
- Habitat assessment is to be performed once each year at your regular monitoring site.
- When in doubt – ask if stream conditions are truly available and suitable for habitat.

***Remember – it may be easier to eliminate category choices (for example if the stream definitely isn't poor or optimal, concentrate on determining whether it fits into the suboptimal category or the marginal category.)***

## Equipment Checklist

- Data sheets, clipboard, pencil
- Metric measuring tape (100 meters)
- Metric (metal) measuring tape (5 meters)
- Volumetric measuring device or system
- Topographic map
- Engineering scale or ruler

Site or Reach ID:		Stream Name:
Latitude:		Longitude:
Watershed:		
Date:	Time:	Investigators:
Weather last 72 hours		
Description of Site Location		
Description of 100 meter assessed		
Predominant Surrounding Land Use		
Average Stream Width:	Average Stream Depth:	
Stream Velocity (measured or defined as slow, moderate, or fast):		
Other Notes:		

Site or Reach ID used to identify the site you are scoring. If this habitat assessment is completed at a regularly monitored site, please use that site identification.

Description of site location – please provide directions to the site so that someone else might be able to find it!

Description of 100 meter assessed – note the downstream point of the assessed section (should be the riffle that is biomonitored) and any changes to the length of the assessed section of stream.





















