

## HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# STREAM WALK

**DESCRIPTION:** Groups will get to know a local stream or river by walking along the shorelines. By participating in a stream walk your group will:

1. Become aware of the plants and animals that live near the stream or river.
2. Learn how people use local waterways.
3. Learn how land use practices affect water quality, habitat and streambank stability.
4. Contribute to care and maintenance of the stream or river by reporting erosion and debris problems to the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as well as local jurisdictions so problems can be appropriately addressed.

**BACKGROUND:** Participating in a stream walk is the best way to begin learning about flowing water environments, water quality, sources of pollution, and environmental issues associated with water quality, and aquatic and floodplain habitats.

**TIME:** A Stream Walk will take one afternoon (depending on the length of stream being surveyed). Planning should begin 2-3 months in advance.

**AGE:** The Stream Walk survey information is intended for volunteers junior-high level and above. Volunteers under age 15 should be accompanied by an adult.

**SUPPLIES:** The stream walk worksheet and a sample liability waiver form will be provided to you by the SWCD. You will need permission from property owners if any part of your stream walk is on private property. The SWCD can assist with identification of private property boundaries, property owners and a letter requesting their permission to walk along the stream running through their property. A topographic map, which can be viewed in our office, is also useful and informative when planning a stream walk.

**SAFETY:** Participants will need fully enclosed shoes with a sturdy sole such as tennis shoes or hiking boots (*i.e.* no open toes or heels). Waders or waterproof boots are optional but not necessary. Old clothing that you don't mind getting dirty, stained or torn is a must. A parent or guardian permission slip is required for all participants under age 18.

**For information, supplies, sample waiver forms, and assistance planning your stream walk, contact the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District at (513) 772-7645.**

