

Vision Award



The National Water Quality Monitoring Council's Vision Award recognizes a monitoring council or group that has demonstrated extraordinary vision and cooperation in the field of water quality monitoring on a local or regional level to enhance the management and protection of aquatic resources.

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream 2016 Vision Award Recipient

For 23 years, the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream (AAS) program has demonstrated extraordinary dedication and commitment to educating and training the citizens of Georgia in protecting water quality.

Georgia AAS is a volunteer citizen science program that encourages individuals and communities to monitor and improve sections of streams, wetlands, lakes or estuaries. Volunteers monitor chemical, bacterial, and biological conditions throughout the state. Achievements in 2015 included over 480 quality assured / quality controlled workshops certifying thousands of water quality monitoring volunteers and over 5,500 water quality testing events at more than 650 sites.

In recognition of extraordinary vision, collaboration, and leadership in water quality monitoring and environmental protection, the National Water Quality Monitoring Council is pleased to present the 2016 Vision Award to:

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream
Program Manager: Harold Harbert
Georgia Environmental Protection Division

From left to right, the Georgia AAS staff of Seirisse Baker, Chelsea Hopkins, and Harold Harbert work with many local partners and thousands of volunteers to monitor and/or improve sections of streams, wetlands, lakes or estuaries.



Starting in 2008, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream launched its innovative, user-friendly and publicly-accessible online database (www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org/db). The online database revolutionized the program; within two years the number of monitoring events per year doubled and have been increasing rapidly ever since; active monitoring sites have grown from less than 200 sites in 2007 to over 650 sites in 2015!

AAS continues to grow partnerships with over 70 government, nonprofit, university and local coordinators serving as leaders that implement the program in their communities. In the late 2000s, AAS strengthened its involvement with EPA's 319(h) grant program by developing monitoring training programs for grant awardees. Some of these programs collected regulatory level data for state 305(b) reports. Since 1999, AAS has partnered with Alabama Water Watch through a Memorandum of Agreement allowing volunteers certified in either program to work with and submit data to both programs. Citizens from other bordering states such as South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida have come to Georgia to be certified as trainers, taking the program back into their states, conducting workshops to certify new volunteers and using the AAS database to house their volunteers' data and certifications. AAS is a leader in volunteer water quality monitoring and continues to strengthen its program to protect Georgia's waterways.

Congratulations to the leadership, staff and dedicated volunteers of Georgia Adopt-A-Stream!