

**Stream Team  
Photo Point Monitoring  
Activity Report**

Stream Team number: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitter name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, state, zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity date: \_\_\_\_\_

Stream name: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity county: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of volunteers involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours spent on project: \_\_\_\_\_

Measurement : (number of photos taken) \_\_\_\_\_

**Location description:** Please provide a detailed location for your activity. (Example: 100 yds. upstream from Hwy. 63 bridge.) Include township, range, and section if possible. A good resource for map details can be found at [www.topozone.com](http://www.topozone.com).  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Project description:** Please include as much information as you can about your activity. Include facts about the project not covered above. (Example: "Took photos before, during, and after streambank stabilization project.")  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: MISSOURI STREAM TEAM  
PO BOX 180  
JEFFERSON CITY MO 65102-0180

# Report Your Accomplishments

Your time spent doing Photo Point activities can be submitted with your other Stream Team activities. Use the Activity Report included or send us records via our website at [www.mostreamteam.org](http://www.mostreamteam.org). Feel free to share copies of your photos with us, particularly if you'd like our help in diagnosing the changes at your stream site.



Missouri Stream Team  
is sponsored by  
Missouri Department of Conservation,  
Missouri Department of Natural Resources,  
and Conservation Federation of Missouri

10/03 STR267

# Stream Team Photo Point Monitoring

BEFORE

Stream Team 1062 (1999)



*Streambank erosion was severe at McCoy Creek prior to the bank stabilization project started by Stream Team 1062 (City of Wentzville Water Reclamation Center).*

Taking photographs is one of the most basic monitoring techniques. As the old adage goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words." While photographs cannot tell the entire story about a situation, project, or practice, much information can be gathered from photographs taken at the same point over a number of years.

Photo Point Monitoring is not meant to replace water quality monitoring or other stream monitoring techniques. It is simply another way to provide supplemental information about what is happening at your site.

Photographs often reveal changes that measurements miss. Photos are an easy way to help others become aware of differences brought on by the effects of good or bad land management practices within a watershed. They can serve as a record of how much a stream has improved or declined since monitoring or improvement projects began.

# How do I get started?

Before you start taking pictures, take time to determine **WHAT** you want to monitor, **WHY** you want to monitor it, and **HOW** you plan to monitor it.

## What to monitor?

The sky is the limit on options of what to monitor and can include items that are easy or those that are more complex. They may include the general appearance of the stream, changes in riparian vegetation, streambank stability, changes in floodplain use, visible changes in water quality, presence or absence of trash, changes in streambed materials, stream crossings and bridges, or any other situation that may be affecting your adopted stream.

## Why monitor?

After you decide what you want to monitor, the next question is "Why?" This can be a difficult question to answer. Here are a few questions to ask yourself:

- ◆ Are you trying to describe or document current conditions to compare them to upcoming years?
- ◆ Are you identifying existing or potential problem locations?
- ◆ Are you documenting the application of management practices?
- ◆ Are you measuring the results of management practices?

## How to monitor?

In deciding how, it is important to select a site that will provide the best visual view of what you want to monitor, not only now, but in the future. Some planning must be done to ensure that the site selected will provide a good vantage point for the life of the project.

The use of landmarks is extremely important on both ends of the photo. A spot should be chosen from which to shoot the photos, and this spot should be used each time. To guarantee the same spot is used, use a landmark or set a "benchmark" that will not be disturbed. When selecting the monitoring site to be photographed, select a landmark that will probably not change during the life of the project, and use it as a focal point of your photo, such as a tree, a rock, a hill, or a fence post. This will help viewers to orient from one picture to the next.

If your Photo Point project requires a landscape view, place your landmark in the center of the series and shoot several photos to the left of the landmark,

overlapping each photo until you reach the end of your site. Then return to the landmark and repeat the process to the right.

Scale is important to document in your photos. For height reference, you can include a stake of a known height (4, 5, or 6 feet tall) painted white or orange, one-foot segments can be marked in black. For width, you can use a bright colored rope, again marking one-foot segments. For small objects, use a coin or a pencil in your photo.

Although the photos are the most important information, a written description is also valuable. Don't forget to include changes in the site since the last photos were taken. You can also include measurements that were taken at the time of the photo. Always label photos with the date, stream name, county, and site description.

If possible, it is also helpful to use the same camera, at the same time of day, and with similar weather/light conditions. Changes in these factors can have a profound impact, sometimes making almost identical situations look substantially different.

## Your photos may be used to educate others!

Many times we use photos sent to us by Stream Teamers for our newsletter, *Channels*; on our website; or during educational presentations. If you send us a copy of your photos, we may be able to use them to educate others so they, too, can learn from your work.

DURING



The eroding bank on McCoy Creek near Wentzville was armored with rock to decrease erosion and stabilize the area.

Stream Team 1062 (1999)

AFTER



Three years later, rock riprap, no-plow zones, and willow plantings on McCoy Creek have proven streambank erosion can be reversed. Thanks, Team 1062, for the Photo Point records of your streambank stabilization project.

Stream Team 1062 (2002)