

HOW TO BECOME AN OSM/VISTA WATERSHED SPONSOR

The partnership between OSM and VISTA contains two basic tenants: VISTA fights poverty and builds capacity. OSM fights Acid Mine Drainage in the watersheds of coal country. Both agencies seek small watersheds where the individual OSM/VISTA can make a real difference. Be certain that



OSM/VISTAs are not substitute staff: most often they are the only staff in the watershed. Qualifying watershed groups must be a non-profit organization or be sponsored by a local non-profit such as a Resource and Conservation District, larger watershed group, civic organization, etc.

Because the total number of positions is limited, these are competitive positions that will require the sponsoring watershed organization to demonstrate its capacity for effective supervision and support of the OSM/VISTA, adherence to the Core Goals for OSM/VISTAs and clear community support. The commitment of an OSM/VISTA position is for three years and OSM has committed to providing \$5000 of administrative support in the first year, presuming adequate annual budget appropriations. Interested groups must complete a rigorous application form that documents the poverty of their watershed, the support of local agencies and a work plan that reflects the OSM Core Goals for

OSM/VISTAs.



There is a small cost share requirement for all OSM/VISTAs. Because each VISTA position is assigned to the OSM/VISTA

Team by each state office, this match may vary slightly from state to state. For most states in coal country , WV, OH, MD, VA, TN, KY, AL, OK, IO, IL, IN, the match is usually \$3000 the first year, \$4,000 the second, \$4500 the third. In Pennsylvania the annual match is slightly higher. Payment is made directly to the non-profit sponsor of the OSM/VISTA Team, the National Institute for Chemical Studies. Each watershed will receive an invoice when their OSM/VISTA begins their term of service.

Watersheds that are just starting their development may wish to first consider applying for an OSM Summer Watershed Intern, a fully-funded position that provides 12 weeks of full-time work by a college junior or senior. For more information see www.osmre.gov, click on Abandoned Mine Lands, Interns.

All contact for OSM/VISTA Watershed Sponsors is handled through Dr. T. Allan Comp, OSM/VISTA Coordinator. Email address is tcomp@osmre.gov Telephone is 202-208-2836. Sponsor Application Forms and VISTA information can be obtained by going to www.americorps.org/vista.index.html.

To learn more about the OSM/VISTA program contact:
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