# WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §22-15A-3a

**§22-15A-3a. Creation of Adopt-A-Stream Program required.**

(a) The Adopt-A-Highway Program was established in the late 1980s to improve the quality of the state's environment by encouraging public involvement in the elimination of highway litter. That program is cosponsored by the Division of Highways and the Department of Environmental Protection, Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan. Its objective is to save taxpayer money by increasing public awareness and to serve as an educational tool by focusing on the consequences of littering. The program offers volunteers the opportunity to take charge of their own environment by making a positive effort to create a cleaner, more aesthetic place in which to live.

In West Virginia there are currently 25,000 volunteers who regularly pick up litter on 4,000 miles of highway. They have been responsible for removing more than 40 million pounds of litter since the program began.

(b) As with the Adopt-A-Highway Program, individuals, families, churches, businesses, schools, civic organizations, government agencies, scouting groups, fraternities, and communities may participate in an Adopt-A-Stream Program, which the department shall create and implement. Participants 17 years of age or younger must be accompanied by an adult. Any stream or river within the state of West Virginia is eligible for adoption, with the exception of streams or rivers determined to be unsafe by the department. Adopted streams or river sections must be at least one mile long. Applications for adoptions will be reviewed and approved or denied at the department's discretion. The Litter Control Fund, or other sources of funding deemed appropriate by the secretary, may be used to support the Adopt-A-Stream Program.

(c) Adoptions are for a period of three years, during which time at least one cleanup is required per year. Collected litter will be placed at designated locations approved by the department. The department may coordinate with volunteers, local authorities, and state agencies for removal and disposal of collected litter. Garbage bags, safety training, and gloves are to be furnished by the program.

(d) Adopted streams or rivers may be identified by a sign at a location along the adopted section bearing the Adopt-A-Stream logo and the name of the adopter after the first cleanup has been completed. Volunteers who complete one required litter pickup within the first year of the three-year contract period shall be awarded a certificate of accomplishment signed by the secretary.

(e) Any stream obstruction or other cause for concern observed by volunteers may be reported to the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Natural Resources, the State Conservation Committee, or the appropriate local county emergency manager.

WV Legislature

(f) The secretary may propose rules for legislative approval in accordance with the provisions of §29A-3-1 *et seq*. of this code.

WV Legislature