

Save your local USGS Streamgage

The U.S. Geological Survey operates and maintains the world’s largest streamgage network with over 7,600 active streamgages (the National Streamflow Information Program - NSIP). The streamflow information provided by these gages is used by the USGS and others for the protection of life and property; for management of water resources, for the design of roads, bridges, and dams; for scientific understanding; for evaluation of water quality; and, importantly from our perspective as paddlers, for recreational safety and enjoyment.



The streamgage network depends heavily on partnerships for funding. On average, a gage costs about \$15,500 annually to maintain. In the past, the USGS provided 50:50 funding match with partners such as state and local governments. Recently Federal funding has been reduced and the funding match is closer to a ratio of 30:70 and the recent state and local government budget issues have resulted in a number of streamgages no longer supported.

How do I find out if a streamgage in my area is at risk?

The USGS maintains a list of gages that are at risk at:

http://water.usgs.gov/osw/lost_streamgages.html

What can I do if a streamgage in my area is at risk?

In many cases, the reason the streamgage is at risk is due to a shortfall in funding.

1. First determine who maintains the streamgage. You can find this out by going directly to the USGS streamgage website: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/rt>

USGS Home
Contact USGS
Search USGS

National Water Information System: Web Interface

USGS Water Resources

Data Category: Real-time Geographic Area: United States

News: New Real-Time and Site Web Services! - updated August 26, 2010

USGS 02030500 SLATE RIVER NEAR ARVONIA, VA
PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION

Available data for this site: Time-series: Real-time data

Station operated by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Current shift adjusted stage-discharge rating table. These tab delimited tables are updated daily and can change frequently. If you use these ratings, it is important that you update often so that you have the most current version.
[What is a shift adjusted stage-discharge rating?](#)

Available Parameters	Output format	Days
<input type="checkbox"/> All 2 Available Parameters for this site	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Graph	7
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 00060 Discharge	<input type="radio"/> Graph w/ stats	(1-120)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 00065 Gage height	<input type="radio"/> Graph w/o stats	
	<input type="radio"/> Table	
	<input type="radio"/> Tab-separated	

Summary of all available data for this site

Agency that operates the streamgage

Or Click on 'Summary' and scroll to bottom and look under "Operation" to determine what agency operates the streamgage.

2. Next contact the agency and ask for details on why the streamgage is at risk. If the streamgage is operated by the USGS, visit this site for contact information for your state USGS Water Resource Center <http://water.usgs.gov/osw/contact.html>. If the answer is a shortfall in funding, then you should consider contacting government representatives that oversee the budgets that support streamgages. In many cases this will be the state in which the gage is located. To find out whom you should contact for your area (or the area where the gage is located) visit this website: <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/dbq/officials/>. This website connects you with your US representatives and senators and also your state representatives and state agencies.
3. Write or call your area representative and let them know the importance of the streamgage from a safety, recreational, and economic (tourism) perspective. You should also contact your local Economic Development or Tourism Bureau to help in contacting your government representatives since recreational activities contribute directly to the local economy. Ask them to support a budget item to support the streamgage. This amount would be around \$8,000 to \$11,000 annually. This [letter](#) sent in support of NSIP can help guide you in writing your letter or in your discussions.
4. Finally, consider calling or writing your US Representative and US Senators asking them to support full funding of the NSIP and encourage your paddling friends to do the same. Such letters really do make a difference.

To learn more about the U.S. Geological Survey National Streamflow Information Program visit the following websites:

<http://water.usgs.gov/nsip/status.html>

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2010/3025/>