

## Implementing MRRP: Volunteer Coordination



Public participation is an integral aspect of MRRP and one of the goals for success. Public participation provides a means to assist with program tasks and another level of education and advocacy. Volunteers can be recruited to assist with just about any MRRP activity such as building outdoor recycling bins, checking outdoor bins, cleaning line, conducting educational presentations, manning festival booths, acting on an advisory board, and participating in cleanup events. Businesses can be recruited to house an indoor bin, sponsor an outdoor bin, or advertise the program. Some of the MRRP tasks require a very short commitment (2 hours total) and others a little longer (1 hour a month for a year). All volunteers should be treated with respect and assured that the service they provide is needed and much appreciated.

### MRRP Volunteer Jobs

Volunteer jobs should be identified and defined prior to recruiting for volunteers. Consider how much time the volunteer will have to commit, how much training they may need to do the job, and what tools they will need. Volunteers should be given a “toolkit” of materials that they need to do their job and be trained about potential hazards. A brief outline of possible MRRP jobs is provided in the table below.

Volunteer Job	Time Commitment	Tools	Training
Task Force Member	2 hours/month	No	No
Bin Construction	1 hour/bin	PVC parts, glue, stickers	Yes
Bin checker	1-2 hours/month for 1 year	Plastic container, hooked stick, gloves, garbage bags, line cutters, disinfectant, clipboard, forms	Yes
Cleanup Event Diver	4 hours	Dive bags, garbage bags, gloves, wire cutters, line clippers, 1 <sup>st</sup> aid kit	Yes
Cleanup Volunteer	4 hours	Garbage bags, line clippers, gloves, 1 <sup>st</sup> aid kit	Yes
Educator/Speaker	1-2 hours/event	Display board, educational materials	Yes

## **Volunteer Recruitment**

Volunteering involves persons from all types of cultures and with all types of needs. Recruitment efforts should encourage the participation of all members of the community by planning for diverse volunteers. Preparing for recruitment involves setting goals for the number of volunteers needed, establishing recruitment timelines, and determining and assigning volunteer duties. Consider the following questions when searching for the appropriate volunteer for the job:

- What skills and commitment is needed?
- Who could do the job?
- What does the volunteer need?
- How can they be reached?
- What should the recruitment message be?

Different recruitment methods should be employed to a diverse volunteer audience and to recruit for different jobs. Recruitment methods may include:

- Sign-up sheets at festivals and events
- Distributing targeted flyers
- Sign-up sheets at group presentations
- Advertising in newspaper/radio
- Mailings to previous volunteers and contacts
- Telephone & personal contact with known community members

Recruitment messages can be tailored specifically for the type of volunteer needed. Short-term volunteers can be encouraged to participate with messages like, “see how much difference you can do in a morning/afternoon”. While businesses can be recruited by declaring they are “part of the solution”. Providing statistics of line collected and line debris removed from the environment gives volunteers a better understanding of how much they are accomplishing and encourages their long-term commitment.

## **Volunteer Management**

To better keep up with volunteers and volunteer duties, it may be necessary to organize a volunteer file cabinet with pertinent information. Depending on the extent of your volunteer program, a volunteer file may be created that includes some or all of the following materials to identify the volunteer, coordinate activities, and cover liability.

- ❖ Application form – Include general volunteer contact information, an emergency contact name, skills, how they heard about the program, and interests. May be needed for long-term volunteers.

- ❖ Volunteer contract – Agreement to conduct specific duties for a finite amount of time. Useful for bin-checking volunteers to ensure they agree to and understand the task.
- ❖ Orientation/Training – A short description of duties that is attached to the contract - may include a person to person training session.
- ❖ Waiver of Liability – A form that releases the organization from liability for injury. It is best to consult your Risk Management Department for volunteer liability issues.

## **Volunteer Retention**

The term retention refers to the number of volunteers who successfully complete their commitment, including those who renew and continue serving the organization. In MRRP, it is important to retain the volunteers who have committed long-term to checking bins and recycling line as well as to encourage the return of those involved in underwater and shoreline cleanup activities. The key to volunteer retention is to continually communicate with volunteers and to recognize and appreciate their efforts. Different types of volunteers appreciate being recognized differently. Some like public recognition, while others don't.

- ❖ Volunteers can be recognized publicly by inviting them to a recognition luncheon with their peers, providing them a gift at their office, listing them on web-site, including them in newspaper coverage, or sending their boss a note on their behalf.
- ❖ Volunteers can be recognized privately by sending them a personal thank you note, having a private “thank you” lunch, or sending them a Certificate of Appreciation signed by the Board Chairperson.

MRRP T-shirts, stickers, and posters are good “thank you” gifts for participating volunteers. Other incentive gifts include small bags to store line until it can be properly disposed of and floating key chains. Food and drinks should be provided to volunteers at cleanup events and volunteer organization names and photos should be sent in with press releases.

The willingness of volunteers to return year after year minimizes the need to do additional recruiting. By including effective retention strategies into the volunteer program, you can be assured a good volunteer turnout.

## Monofilament Recycling Bin Commitment Guidelines

The purpose of this document is to outline the responsibilities undertaken with an agreement to empty Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program (MRRP) outdoor recycling bins, and to verify this agreement. Voluntary agreement to empty a recycling bin is an integral part of MRRP's recycling efforts and is a commitment deeply appreciated by MRRP and supporting agencies.

The intent of the following information is to clarify the steps involved in this commitment so both the volunteer and MRRP understand what is expected of each other. To accommodate this goal the bin checking and emptying process has been broken down into the following five steps.

### **Step One:**

The volunteer goes to their committed location and gives the bin a general visual inspection.

- Check to see if the stickers are worn or faded and in need of replacement
- Make sure that the bin is still fastened securely
- Ensure that the sign (when applicable) is still present and in good condition
- Inspect for general cleanliness and good condition of the recycling bin

If any problems are noted in this step the volunteer should call their MRRP contact and notify them of the poor conditions. MRRP will ensure any reported problems are rectified.

### **Step Two:**

The volunteer should bring a trash bag or a reused plastic shopping bag to collect line from the bin. By placing their bag under the cap at the bin's base and unscrewing the cap, monofilament line can be removed from the bin so that it falls directly into the bag. The volunteer should then replace the cap. If there is a problem with the cap sticking so that it cannot be opened, please contact MRRP.

### **Step Three:**

In many cases there may be discarded items other than fishing line in the bin. Volunteers are welcome to recycle any aluminum cans or plastic bottles at their home recycling facilities.

- Any trash will need to be sorted out and placed in a garbage can.
- In addition to trash mixed in with the line, any leaders, hooks, weights, lures and other fishing paraphernalia will need to be cut out of the monofilament.

Some of the line itself may be badly degraded and either encrusted with organisms from a long period underwater, or in poor condition from long exposure to sunlight. Unless this damaged line can be reasonably cleaned, perhaps at home with a garden hose and then dried, spoiled line also needs to be discarded in the garbage, as it cannot be recycled. In our experience, cleaning line is more easily accomplished indoors, perhaps in a garage, shed, or on a sheltered patio at home. Working with monofilament line in the windy outdoors can become a losing battle.

- Cut discarded line into small lengths -- less than 12". This will ensure that the line does not entangle scavenging animals that might interact with it in a landfill.
- A general rule of thumb is; "*When in doubt throw it out.*" The Berkeley Pure Fishing Company that recycles our monofilament is very particular about having only clean line end up at their recycling facility.

To cut hooks and leaders out of the monofilament, and to cut damaged monofilament into small pieces, MRRP recommends using:

- A pair of fingernail or toenail clippers is the ideal tool; very safe and very strong
- A safe cutting tool such as a presto letter opener (a small sharp blade protected by a plastic casing about the size of a business card); very inexpensive
- A plastic guarded seatbelt cutter

Call MRRP for more information on these products or for other suggestions.

#### Step Four:

The remaining clean and cleared line may now be taken to a local tackle shop that provides an indoor Berkeley recycling receptacle. For names of these tackle shops please see the attached list. If the volunteer is unable to get to a tackle shop to drop off their line, please contact MRRP and other arrangements will be made.

#### Step Five:

The final phase in emptying a MRRP recycling bin is to record the amount of line that was emptied with each visit, and the frequency of visits on the attached 'Data Form.' One data form should be used for each bin, and each data form can be used for five visits. In other words, the volunteer should jot down how often they empty each bin and if the bin was one quarter full, one half full, three quarters full, or completely full each time they empty line.

- Please try to base estimates on line that is well compressed into the cylinder portion of the bin.

Estimates and rates of emptying should be reported periodically to the appropriate MRRP contact, either mailed in or sent by E-mail.

**Additional Responsibilities:**

If at any time during their commitment to bin emptying the volunteer finds the condition of the bin or its contents to be beyond the scope of their management, they are encouraged to contact MRRP and report the problem. Examples of problems that might be beyond a volunteer's responsibilities include bins that have been marred by graffiti, bins that have come unattached from their supporting posts, or contents that are dangerous. MRRP or the appropriate facility manager will handle anything beyond the realm of the responsibilities listed in the five steps above, but notification is essential.

The frequency with which individual bins will need checking and emptying will vary depending on the season and location. A visual inspection should be conducted about once a month in case of vandalism or the effects of severe weather. The rate of bin emptying described in steps two through five will need to be determined during the monthly visual checks. At some locations a bin may need monthly emptying, while at another a few months may pass before a substantial amount of line accumulates.

If you have read, understood, and agree to the responsibilities outlined in the five steps to empty a recycling bin, please sign and date this agreement in the space provided below.

I agree to check, empty, and deliver recyclable fishing line to a tackle shop for the Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program's outdoor recycling bin(s) at the following location(s):

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I will check, empty and deliver recyclable fishing line for at least one year from today's date. If I wish to end this commitment I will notify MRRP so that a new volunteer can be found to continue maintaining the outdoor recycling bin(s) at the site(s) listed above.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## MRRP Recycling Bin Data Form

Please make copies of this data form as needed. One Data Form per location please.

MRRP thanks you for your time and effort in returning this form to us at:

**Monofilament Recovery and Recycling Program**  
**2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Bldg A, Suite 207**  
**Viera, FL 32940**

Or by E-mail to: leesa.souto@countygovt.brevard.fl.us

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Phone # or E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Bin Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Example:**

	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
	11/7/00				
1) How full is the MRRP Recycling Bin? Please base estimates on tightly packed line <b>Check one:</b>					
Less than 1/4 Full					
1/4 Full					
1/2 Full	x				
3/4 Full					
Full					
2) Roughly how much trash is in the bin? One piece = one item of trash (i.e. one soda can or one cigarette package) <b>Check one:</b>					
Less than 5 pieces	x				
5 - 10 pieces					
Over 10 pieces					
3) Are there problems with the recycling bin? (Please report problems to MRRP)					
Yes					
No	x				

4) If you answered 'yes' above, please briefly note the nature of the problem on the back of this form.  
This information is for our records.

