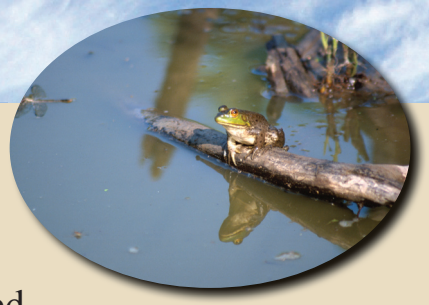

When fully inplemented, NSIP will provide Nation-wide streamflow information and understanding needed by a wide range of users.

See http://water.usgs.gov/nsip/

"Nationwide, the benefits.....greatly exceed the cost of collecting the data through NSIP."

National Hydrologic Warning Council, 2006

For current streamflow conditions
http://water.usgs.gov/waterwatch/

To learn more about USGS surface water and streamgaging activities, visit:

For real-time streamflow data
http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/rt/
For historical streamflow data
http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/sw/
For surface-water information
http://water.usgs.gov/osw/

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General Information Product 70

Cover. Photo courtesy of Werner Horn.

USGS
science for a changing world

The National Streamflow Information Program

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey

National Streamflow Information Program (NSIP)

MISSION

Provide the streamflow information and understanding required to meet local, state, regional, and national needs.

Goals

- Develop and operate a Federally funded stable network of streamgages to meet national needs
- Improve the timeliness, reliability, and convenience of the streamflow information
- Improve understanding of floods and droughts through expanded measurements and analyses
- Complete regional assessments of streamflow information to quantify resource, estimate water availability and identify trends
- Perform and fund research and development activities to advance equipment technology and measurement and analysis techniques

What is streamflow?

Streamflow is the amount of water moving in a stream or river past a given point through time and is typically reported in cubic feet per second, or million gallons per day. You can see the amount of water currently flowing in a river near where you live or elsewhere in the Nation by going to http://water.usgs.gov/nwis/rt.

The USGS currently operates about 7,500 *streamgages* nationwide. Streamgages are the monitoring tools used to track the movement of water in streams and rivers.

How is streamflow measured?

Streamflow information is usually obtained by

- measuring *stage* (water height) continuously,
- measuring streamflow periodically,
- defining a relation between stage and streamflow, and
- using the stage-streamflow relation for a continuous streamflow record.

This information is then available to users in real-time 24 hours a day.

How is streamflow information used?

- Flood planning and warning
- Streamflow forecasting
- Impact on streamflow from
  - Land use
  - Water use
  - Climate
- Design of
  - Bridges, roads, culverts
  - Water treatment plants
  - Navigation
- Water-resource appraisal and allocations
  - Water supply plans
  - Interstate agreements
- Operation of locks and dams
- Power production
- Water-quality evaluations
- Habitat assessments
- Recreation safety and enjoyment

Photo courtesy of
Vom Dart Haus German Shepherds