

Consent for Research Participation

Study Title: SHARCS: Sampling for Healthy Aquatic Resources with Community Science
Sponsor: NYS Center of Excellence in Healthy Water Solutions
Researcher(s): Jamie Shinn and Aaron Ninokawa, SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry
Researcher Contact Info: Jamie Shinn: 315-565-3022, jeshinn@esf.edu
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You are being invited to take part in a research study conducted by the researchers named above. Below is detailed information for you to consider when determining whether or not to participate. Carefully consider all of this information and ask any questions you may have about it before deciding whether to participate or not.

Key Information for You to Consider

- **Voluntary Consent:** You are being asked to volunteer for a research study. It is your choice whether to participate or not. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled if you choose not to participate or to discontinue participation.
- **Purpose:** The purpose of this research is for residents across Central New York to participate in a coordinated water sampling effort at noon on October 4, coinciding with the beginning of the hydrological water year. The goal is to collect a total of 500 samples in flowing waters in the Central New York region and to capture photographs of the location where the water is sampled. Participants will be provided with a water collection bottle which can be picked up and dropped off from a variety of locations that will be provided upon project enrollment. Participants will also receive a link to a corresponding survey with questions related to your water sample and a place to upload a photo. You are being invited to participate because you are a resident of Central New York and are 18-years old or older. It is expected that approximately 500 individuals will be participating in this research.
- **Procedures and Activities:** You will be asked to pick up a bottle from a designated location, take a sample from flowing water on October 4th at or around noon (or as close as possible to that time), take a photo of the place where you sample, respond to a brief online survey with questions related to the water sample including location with GPS points if possible, and a place to upload your photo, and drop off your sample at the same designated location. The survey is expected to take less than 10 minutes to complete. All activities are completely voluntary, and you may decide to skip any survey questions or participate in the water sampling but not the survey component of the project.
- **Duration:** Your time commitment will be approximately two hours, depending on how far you travel to take your water sample and how far you live from a designated pick up and drop off location.
- **Risks:** Some of the foreseeable risks or discomforts of your participation include the possibility of taking samples in inclement weather. If weather is too poor on Oct 4 to take the sample, you may choose to take it on the closest possible date that it is feasible for you. As with all electronic surveys, there is a small risk of breach of confidentiality of the survey data. Our research team will store this data in password protected online files in secure locations to which only we have access, and all identifying aspects will be removed before presentation or publication, but every electronic survey has some risk for confidentiality breaches.
- **Benefits:** There is no guarantee that participants will receive any direct benefits, but all participants will receive a digital water quality report for the sample.
- **Alternatives:** Participation is voluntary, and the only alternative is to participate only in the water collection but not in the survey, or to not participate in the project at all.

How will my privacy and data confidentiality be protected?

The research team will take all known measures to protect your privacy, including by carefully storing all survey data in a password protected file on the SUNY ESF OneDrive. These will only be accessible to the research team and will be destroyed after 3 years. The survey will prompt you to take a photograph and GPS coordinates. You may opt out of these sections of the survey if you choose. Generalized locations and photographs reported in the survey may be shared as part of conference presentations, peer-reviewed publications, as well as through ArcGIS StoryMaps created by the research team, however all location data will be generalized and no specific locations from private property will be shared publicly. Qualtrics is a Binghamton University (who oversees SUNY ESF human subjects research) approved survey platform and we anticipate that your participation in this survey presents no greater risk than everyday use of the Internet. Despite these precautions, we can never fully guarantee your privacy or the confidentiality of all study information. Individuals and organizations that conduct or monitor this research may be permitted access to inspect the research records, including accessing your private information. These individuals and organizations include: approved study team members, and the Binghamton University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and SUNY ESF.

What happens to the information collected for this research?

Information collected as part of this research will be distributed in peer-reviewed journals, professional presentations, and ArcGIS StoryMaps. Identifiers might be removed from identifiable private information, and, after such removal, the information could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent from you.

What if I want to stop participating in this research?

Taking part in this research study is your decision. Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to take part in this study, but if you do, you can choose not to participate in any study activity or to completely withdraw at any point without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the researcher(s) or Binghamton University, or SUNY ESF.

Who can answer my questions about this research?

If you have questions, concerns, or have experienced a research related injury, contact the research team at:

- Jamie Shinn, jeshinn@esf.edu, 565-315-3022

Binghamton University's IRB is overseeing this research. The IRB is a group of people who perform independent reviews of research studies to ensure the rights and welfare of participants are protected. If you have questions about your rights or wish to speak with someone other than the research team, you may contact:

- The Binghamton University IRB / hsrrc@binghamton.edu / (607) 777 - 3818

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I have had the opportunity to read and consider the information in this form. I have asked any questions necessary to make a decision about my participation. I understand that I can ask additional questions throughout my participation. I understand that by participating in this project, I am not waiving any legal rights.

By engaging in the research activities, and completing the survey, you are voluntarily participating in this research. However, you have the option to opt out of the research at any time. Your electronic consent will be given when you take the survey and grants the researchers named above permission to record you as described above during the participation in the above-referenced study, you have the option to decline this option. The investigator agrees to not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that stated in the consent form.