

Information About the **WHSTEP ROV**
Woods Hole Science and Technology Education Partnership
Registry of Outreach Volunteers

Why have a web-based registry?

- The purpose of the **ROV** is to facilitate connections between local teachers (and students) and community members who have scientific knowledge they want to share in order to educate.
- The **ROV** is meant to facilitate the many outreach activities that **WHSTEP** already coordinates. There are several ways of connecting scientists and teachers/students in our community that already work well. The **ROV** does not replace the role of WHSTEP school and institution liaisons, it facilitates their job.
- The **ROV** is designed to:
 - 1) let newcomers to the local scientific community quickly express their interest in getting involved,
 - 2) provide registrants with new ideas about how they can contribute in the local schools,
 - 3) give teachers new ideas about scientific concepts, applications, and data that they can use in their teaching, and
 - 4) remain current and flexible.

How do volunteers and teachers access the registry?

- The entry page for the **WHSTEP ROV** is <http://www.who.edu/ccod/rov.html>

Who can register as a volunteer?

- The **ROV** is open to registration from all staff, students and retirees from the local institutions, which include [MBL](#), [NMFS](#), [SEA](#), [USGS](#), [WBNERR](#), [WHOI](#) and [WHRC](#).
- Anyone can register, but all registrants will be viewed by an administrator before they appear on the searchable list of volunteers. Only information volunteered by the registrant is provided through the **ROV**.
- If you are not already involved in the local schools, or if you want to do more, then we encourage you to register as a volunteer so that teachers can easily find you. If you are already involved in outreach activities that fulfill your need to connect with teachers and students, do not feel that you need to add your name to the registry.

How do teachers learn about volunteers and contact them?

- The **ROV** is advertised to teachers in the towns served by **WHSTEP**: Falmouth, Mashpee and Bourne.

- Registrants can choose to be contacted directly by email or phone, or indirectly through a **WHSTEP** liaison.

- A link on the ROV home page allows anyone to view or search the list of volunteers and their selected outreach activities. Anyone, anywhere can search the registry. However, registrants are stating their willingness only to do specific outreach activities in the Falmouth, Bourne and Mashpee schools. If contacted by someone outside this area, the volunteer can choose either to interact with that teacher or decline and forward the request for help to a **WHSTEP** liaison (whstep-info@whoi.edu) or to NE-COSEE (<http://www.cosee-ne.net/>).

What can registrants volunteer to do?

- The list of outreach services for which registrants can currently volunteer:

Provide one-on-one mentoring to a student

Provide one-on-one mentoring to a teacher

Help design and deliver a teacher in-service program

Make an in-class science presentation/lead a classroom activity

Visit a classroom to talk about careers in a science area

Provide a teacher with data for a science or applied math exercise

Work with a teacher on education grant proposal preparation

Host a group visit to a lab or other facility

Accompany a local class field trip to act as a science resource

Help judge a local school science fair

- A minimal amount of information is requested of the volunteer when registering for each activity. Registering to make an in-class science presentation requires that the volunteer look at the Massachusetts Department of Education [Science and Technology curriculum frameworks](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/scitech/2001/) (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/scitech/2001/>) in order to identify how the planned presentation fits the required curriculum.

- Some outreach activities require that the volunteer fill out and return a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) form beforehand. This is pursuant to a 2002 state law requiring all schools, public and private, to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees, volunteers, school transportation providers, and others who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. The Falmouth and Bourne public school CORI forms can be downloaded from the ROV website. CORI forms and information for other local schools will be added as they become available.

How will the registry be kept current?

- At any time, registrants can edit, augment, delete or disable their registration, specific volunteer activities, and contact information.
- Registrants will be asked to review their list of volunteer activities once a year. Registrations that are not reviewed within a stated period of time in early summer each year will be deleted from the registry.
- In late August of each year, local teachers will be reminded that the registry is available and that volunteers' entries have recently been updated.

How did the ROV fare in its first year?

The registry opened to registrants in June 2004, and has been advertised to teachers since September 2004. As of July 2005, there were 77 registrants in the ROV. The breakdown of registrants by affiliation at that time was:

Marine Biological Laboratory	10
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution	41
NOAA Northeast Fisheries Science Center	7
Woods Hole Research Center	4
Sea Education Association	2
U. S. Geological Survey (Woods Hole)	6
Other	7

During the ROV's pilot year, we had 477 hits to the search entry page. During the first four months, hits averaged 63 per month. That number decreased during the remaining months to an average of 26 hits per month.

During the 2004-2005 school year, at least 6 classroom visits and 4 teacher workshops were coordinated through the registry. Several local high school students were referred to the ROV and they found volunteer mentors for their science projects, some of which were completed at the scientists' home institutions. Many new local science fair judges were recruited through the registry.

The ROV has been featured in local newspaper articles and at New England Centers for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (NE-COSEE) outreach workshops. It has also become a model for similar database efforts by NE-COSEE and the Reading (MA) Public School System.

WHSTEP welcomes feedback on the *ROV* from anyone. Please send comments and questions to Liese Siemann, WHSTEP Administrator, at lsiemann@adelphia.net, or Pat Harcourt (Pat.Harcourt@state.ma.us).

The *ROV* was designed by Karen Bice (kbice@who.edu) with help from local educators Liese Siemann, Pat Harcourt, Pat Perry and Sandra Locke. Database and web page programming was done by Adam Shepherd of the Computer and Information Services group, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

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