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DATE

NAME
ADDRESS
ADDRESS

Dear NAME:

I am a geographer and faculty member in the Geosciences Department at Oregon State University. Along with my graduate research assistant, Robyn Paulekas, I am inviting you to participate in an important research project being conducted by Oregon State University on behalf of the National Riparian Service Team (NRST).

This study is focused on understanding the experiences of past participants involved in site-specific riparian assistance offered by the interagency NRST as part of their Creeks and Communities Strategy. Specifically, we are hoping to get your feedback on the delivery, quality, value and usefulness of the products, information, and services provided by the NRST as part of this assistance. The results will help in the planning and design of future assistance efforts, as well as to identify and inform opportunities for strengthening and improving the Creeks and Communities Strategy as a whole.

If you agree to participate in this study, I (or Robyn) will ask you a series of questions regarding your satisfaction with NRST site-specific riparian assistance and your thoughts on how this effort has influenced participants, organizations, groups, communities and riparian resources in your area. Your interview may be conducted in person or by telephone, at your residence or another location that you choose. If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last for approximately one hour.

If the interview is conducted over the telephone, I will send you a consent form prior to the interview. You will need to review it, discuss any questions or concerns with me over email or on the telephone, sign it, and send a hard copy back to me before the interview takes place. If the interview takes place in-person, you will be able to review and sign the consent form on-site.

There are no risks or discomforts associated with the procedures described in this study aside from the potential for a breach in confidentiality, nor are there direct benefits. However, we hope that the information gathered from this study will contribute to improved NRST program offerings.

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. If the results of this project are published, your identity will not be made public. To help protect your confidentiality, we will comply with the following standard protocol:

- We will ensure that the interviews are conducted in a secure location, i.e., wherever you feel most protected and comfortable. If conducting the interviews at your residence is not an option we will discuss with you where the most secure and convenient interview location would be.
- We will remove all names and identifying features from all interview data. We will substitute numbers for names of interviewees.
- We will keep code lists and data files in separate secure locations in the Geosciences Department at OSU. We will keep one copy of the code list on a password-protected computer in Dr. Gosnell's office and another hard copy in a locked file cabinet in the main office of the Geosciences Department. We will protect all computer passwords and lock keys.
- Upon completion of the study, the NRST will receive a summary report of study findings. This information will be presented in an aggregate form and your identity will not be made public. The NRST may also request copies of portions of the written interview transcripts minus any identifiers. If any information relating to this study is published, your identity will not be made public.

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. You are free to skip any interview questions you prefer not to answer. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, the researchers may keep information collected about you and this information may be included in study reports.

I (or Robyn) will call you during the next week or so to ask if you are willing to participate in the study and answer any questions you may have. In the meantime, you may contact me at 541-737-1222 or gosnellh@geo.oregonstate.edu if you wish. Thank you for your time and consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

Hannah Gosnell
Assistant Professor