



Rapid Bioassessment of Stream Health

Duncan L. Hughes, James Gore, Michele P. Brossett, John R. Olson

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Tasked by the Clean Water Act to restore and maintain the integrity of their waters, state and local governments must develop systems for assessing the health of the streams within their borders. They quickly find that one size does not fit all when it comes to sampling. **Rapid Bioassessment of Stream Health** examines the sampling techniques, laboratory methods, and data analysis necessary to create a protocol for analyzing the health of streams, using rapid bioassessment techniques.

The editors explore how to determine reference streams in each ecoregion and subcoregion with specific indices of health. They provide field methods for monitoring and sampling invertebrates and laboratory methods for subsampling. The work focuses on the application of the EPA's Rapid Bioassessment Protocol (RBP) but suggests various techniques that can be used to improve sampling protocols and quality control, where necessary. It also includes general listings of health classifications, appendices of more than 300 streams that have been sampled, and a GIS method for designating the reference condition for purposes of comparison in each ecological unit.

Although the EPA's RBP Manual is considered to be the standard of information on the types of metrics that can be used, this book explores, from a state regulatory standpoint, the practical development of such a system to begin compliance with critical sections of the Clean Water Act. A compendium of information about prioritizing those streams and small rivers requiring analysis, this book contains guidelines on the assessment of streams in a particular ecoregion and sampling streams that are at least impaired as points of comparison. It supplies guidance for the production of other rapid bioassessment tools customized to various ecoregions and subcoregions.

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