

Master Naturalist program reporting and evaluation guide

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Who should use this guide

Extension staff involved in coordinating or providing programs related to the Master Naturalist program should use the Master Naturalist program reporting and evaluation guide.

How to use the guide

This guide covers how to report and evaluate the Master Naturalist program activities that are tracked on a statewide basis, including core training, other educational programs, and Extension-supported gardens. The guide is organized by activity.

Information on other systems used with the MN program, such as [GivePulse Master Gardener volunteer hours reporting](#) and [Extension volunteer management](#), is available through other sources.

Educational programs

Core training

- *Program for volunteers generally following the Master Naturalist standard curriculum.*
- See [core training reporting and evaluation section below](#)
- Report as MG/MN program type = “core training” on the custom data page
- Report as a single program activity with multiple sessions
- Total participants = number enrolled in whole course ONLY.
 - Do some sessions have “extra” people attending, who are not enrolled in the whole MN core training course and who are not there to help with training? Extra attendees at specific sessions who are there to learn educational content (not as training helpers) should be reported using [guidance for “extra” attendees below](#).

Continuing education

- *Programs designed for continuing education and expected to be reported as continuing education hours.*
- Report as program activity using naming format MN/CE/Program name

- Report as MG/MN program type = “continuing education” on the custom data page

Other education delivered to volunteers

- *Programs or meetings delivered to Master Naturalist volunteers/trainees/interns that have planned educational content but that are not designed to be continuing education or expected to be reported as CE hours.*
- Report as program activity using naming format MN/Program name
- Report as MG/MN program type = “other education for volunteers” on the custom data page

Meetings

- *Meetings, planning sessions, and recognition ceremonies* are generally NOT considered educational programs and should not be entered in PEARS.
- If a meeting includes planned educational content (e.g. an expert speaker), report as “other education delivered to volunteers” (see above).

Volunteer-led educational programs for the public

Volunteer-led educational programs with Extension staff present

- Enter in PEARS if Extension-staff are present and have helped coordinate or facilitate in any way.
- Report as program activity using naming format MN/Program name.
- On Collaborator page, add VOLUNTEER (Master Naturalist) as a collaborator.
- Report as MG/MN program type = “volunteer-led education for public (with staff present)” on the custom data page.

Volunteer-led educational programs with no Extension staff present

- Educational programs led by volunteers with no Extension staff present MAY be entered in PEARS. This is optional but recommended to represent the full educational reach of the local MN program.
- Report as program activity using naming format MN/Program name.
- On Collaborator page, add VOLUNTEER (Master Naturalist) as a collaborator.
- Report as MG/MN program type = “volunteer-led education for public (no staff at event)” on the custom data page.

Extension-supported gardens

Reporting. Report on all gardens that receive some Extension staff or Master Naturalist support during a reporting year. Gardens may be used for demonstration, education, food donation, pollinator support, life skills training, community garden plots, and many other uses. See the [Garden reporting webpage](#) or [Garden reporting guide](#) for information.

Volunteer hours

Volunteer hours reporting is in GivePulse. See [GivePulse Box folder](#) for trainings and tips.

Core training reporting and evaluation

Evaluation—core training

- ***All core training courses should use the standard statewide evaluation.

- Local coordinators should distribute the statewide evaluation via email at the conclusion of the training course, and send a follow up email reminder a week later. Link to statewide core training evaluation: <https://go.illinois.edu/MNEvaluation>
- **Evaluation distribution.** See [sample language and link below](#). If you have a local survey you'd like to use as well, provide participants with that link directly, or consult with Matt Spindler to link a local survey to the main one in Qualtrics.

PEARS reporting—core training

1. Create a single program entry, even if training is held at different locations.
2. Name: Use program activity naming format: **MN core training/your location**.
3. Site: Use the most frequent training location as site in PEARS.
4. Sessions: List all sessions under that program entry
5. Collaborators: Tag yourself and other staff who presented as collaborators
6. Custom data: "Topic" and "Theme" can be marked as "none of the above" or "other." Program is Master Naturalist and MG/MN program type is "core training." "Outcome data collection" = "Qualtrics."
7. Demographics: Report total participants and demographics for your trainees.
8. Reminder: ***ALL CORE TRAINING program organizers should distribute the statewide evaluation at the end of the program.***

Sample evaluation distribution language

Distribution email language

Distribute within three days of final training meeting

Thank you for participating in the Master Naturalist training program. We would like to request your feedback on this training so that we can continue to improve our Master Naturalist program. We aim to hear from 100% of participants. The evaluation should take 5-10 minutes to complete. Link to survey: <https://go.illinois.edu/MNEvaluation>

Reminder email language

Distribute a week after initial request

At the close of Master Naturalist training last week, we asked for your input so that we can continue to improve our Master Naturalist training program. If you have already responded to the evaluation survey, thank you! If you have not yet responded, we respectfully request that you complete the evaluation now. We'd like to hear from all training participants so that we can better understand the strengths and weaknesses of this training. Thank you! Link to survey: <https://go.illinois.edu/MNEvaluation>

Reporting "extra" attendees to core training sessions

Occasionally, a core training session may have additional attendees (there to learn, not to help with the class) other than the core training cohort. We want to count these participants but make sure they are differentiated from the trainees. NOTE: we do NOT count MNs who are there as volunteers to help deliver or support the training session.

If a session has extra attendees besides trainees, enter a separate program activity for the session and list the number of session-only participants using this naming format: **MN core training/Extra/topic**.