

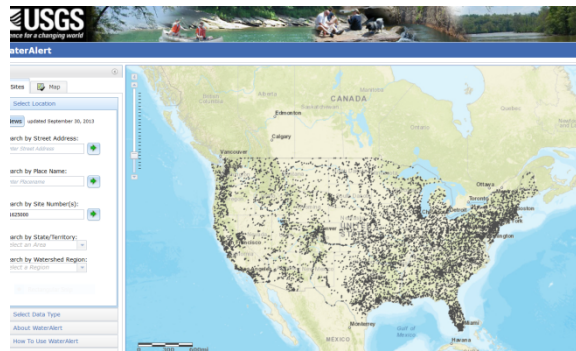
How to Get Real-Time River Level Data

On-line USGS River Gauges

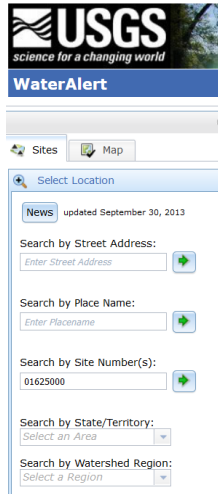
With a little willingness to surf around on the computer, you can get up-to-date information from the gages on Middle River (or most other rivers throughout the US) sent straight to your email inbox. The United States Geologic Service offers an overwhelming wealth of data, and this post will hopefully make it simpler for a beginner to use.

The following steps lead you through how to read on-line or sign up for email alerts when the river meets conditions that you set. For example, after years of careful analysis, you have determined that Big Sharky—who lives in the 3rd pool just downstream of the Franks Mill riffle—will only bite when the water is above “X” feet but no higher than “Y” feet. You can go to the website below and tell it to email you when the river falls within the “Go Catch Big Sharky” range you determined and then you can call in sick to work and start packing your gear!

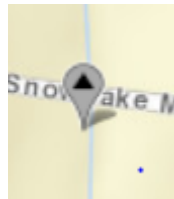
1) Go to <https://maps.waterdata.usgs.gov/mapper/wateralert/>



2) You can zoom in and out of the map at any time. At the left sidebar, you find your area of interest by putting in an exact address, or a city and state near where you want to go. If you already know the site number of the gage you are interested in, or the Watershed Region, you can enter those. We are in the Ohio Region.



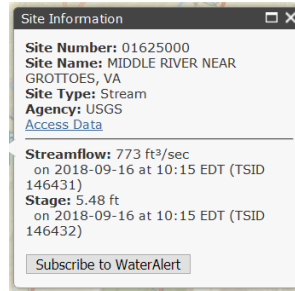
3) You will see a map. The gauges that are available to get data for are gray teardrop icons with black triangles in them.



4) There are two gauges pertinent to Middle River:

1. https://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv/?site_no=01625000
 - a. 01625000 This is the Middle River gauge near Grottoes at Mt. Meridian. This gauge has been around a long time and thus has accumulated water level data over 90 years. This gauge reads the lower Middle River.
2. https://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/uv/?site_no=01622464
 - a. 01622464 This is the Middle River gauge above Route 250 near Churchville. This is a relatively new gage and therefore has not accumulated as robust of a data set. However, this gauge reads the upper Middle River and thus gives information about what will be moving downstream in the near future. Plus it has newer technology, so it also offers info on water temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity.

5) Click on a river gauge. You will see the most recent stream flow (in cubic feet per second) and/or the river stage (in feet). The Churchville gauge only has river stage data.



6) At the bottom of this pop-up window you see the chance to “Subscribe to Weather Alerts.” This is where you sign up for email alerts, if you want them. For each site you choose, you can be notified by your phone or by email, daily or even hourly, by river stage or by stream flow, and you can set the parameters (i.e. greater than, less than, inside or outside the range of...)

Site Info:	
Number:	01627500
Name:	SOUTH RIVER AT HARRISTON, VA
Agency:	USGS
Transaction ID:	dmp3v
Send Notification To:	about this...
<input type="radio"/> My mobile phone	
<input type="radio"/> My email address	
Notification Frequency:	about this...
Hourly	<input type="radio"/>
Daily	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Streamflow Parameter(s):	about this... Recent value:
Discharge, in ft ³ /s	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1250 [peak chart]
Gage height, in ft	<input type="radio"/> 4.56 [peak chart] NWS flood stage = 9.5
Alert Threshold Condition:	about this...
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Greater than (>)	Real-time value is greater than: <input type="text"/> ft ³ /s
<input type="radio"/> Less than (<)	
<input type="radio"/> Outside a range (< or >)	
<input type="radio"/> Inside a range (> and <)	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have read and acknowledge the Provisional Data Statement and Disclaimer .	
<input type="button" value="Submit"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/> <input type="button" value="Cancel"/>	

So that's it!

If in the future you want to change the parameters that trigger an email to you, just go back into “Subscribe to WaterAlert” and put in your new choices and they will replace your old settings, so long as you are using the same email.

It may take some pondering and experimenting to determine the river levels that are actually meaningful to you.

Float trip leader Chris Hull says that for experienced boaters, he thinks of a runnable range on the Grottoes gauge might be between about 1.75- 6.5 feet. For kids or beginner boaters, he tightens that boatable range to somewhere around 2.25 – 5.0 feet. But those are just his subjective preferences. You would have to figure what ranges you are comfortable with by observing the river and letting her teach you what fits your skills and desires.

Good luck!



WaterAlert

Sites Map

Select Location

News updated September 30, 2013

Search by Street Address:

Search by Place Name:

Search by Site Number(s):

Search by State/Territory:

Search by Watershed Region:

Written October, 2018