

Bay Backpack

School Grounds for Learning

Review

About The School Grounds for Learning Project

The School Grounds for Learning Project is an initiative funded by the NOAA-BWET grant program and supported by a partnership between the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Maryland Association for Environmental Education with the invaluable support of national and regional partner organizations and topical experts. This exciting project will provide professional development opportunities and comprehensive online resources featuring detailed information and instructions to enable students, teachers, administrators & school facilities personnel to effectively plan, utilize and sustain a vast variety of environmental projects on school grounds including:

- Projects to provide habitat for wildlife
- Projects to improve water quality
- Projects to support a healthy school environment
- Projects to reduce environmental impact & cost
- Projects to encourage outdoor learning, play & discovery

Learn more about the School Grounds for Learning Project: (Each of the below links to a corresponding anchor lower on this page)

- [Who is developing School Grounds for Learning Project resources?](#)
- [Who is the target audience for School Grounds for Learning resources?](#)
- [What is the timeline for all of the online resources to be available?](#)
- [Why do we need the School Grounds for Learning Project?](#)
- [School Grounds for Learning Project Overview: downloadable pdf](#)

Who is developing School Grounds for Learning Project resources?

To ensure the content is useful and applicable to a wide audience, contributors include: national & regional partner organizations representing a variety of interests including education, conservation & restoration; outdoor environmental education centers working with school grounds projects; school facilities management & personnel; teachers & administrators who have developed sustainable projects on their school grounds and have integrated their use into instruction; agency & non-governmental organizations developing best practices for the enhancement of school grounds to improve water quality, increase habitat value, support innovative agriculture programs and more; landscape architects with expertise in innovative design of school grounds; and topical experts in a variety of fields.

Who is the target audience for the School Grounds for Learning Project resources?

With the support of the above-mentioned partners and contributors, these resources are being thoughtfully developed to provide targeted information for use by students, teachers, administrators and school facilities personnel interested in effectively designing, enhancing, utilizing and sustaining environmental projects on their school grounds.

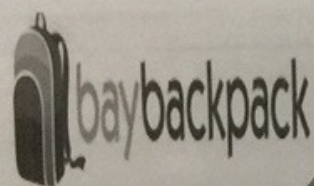
What is the timeline for all of the online resources to be available?

Initiated in 2014, the School Grounds for Learning Project is a three-year effort. A comprehensive new online [environmental literacy section](#) was added in January 2015, featuring information on national, regional and local environmental literacy initiatives, including the Maryland environmental literacy standards & graduation requirement and efforts to support implementation. Project sections are currently under development. Sections will be reviewed by stakeholders and contributors, and added gradually beginning in 2015 on the NOAA Bay Backpack and MAEOE web sites. Resources will be monitored and updated accordingly to ensure that the content is current and correct. For more information please contact Laura Collard at director@maeoe.org.

School Grounds for Learning

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- [Wildlife Habitat Projects \(nesting boxes, snags, etc.\)](#)

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2a Planning

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5 Forest Buffers

- 5a Planning Tips
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Implementation:

- [Tips for Establishing a Successful Buffer](#) (links to 5b)
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Project Maintenance (Short-Term & Long-Term):

- [Tips for Effective Buffer Maintenance](#) (links to Healthy Forest Mgt 4a)
- [Project Maintenance Basics](#) (links to 2e)

Using Your Project:

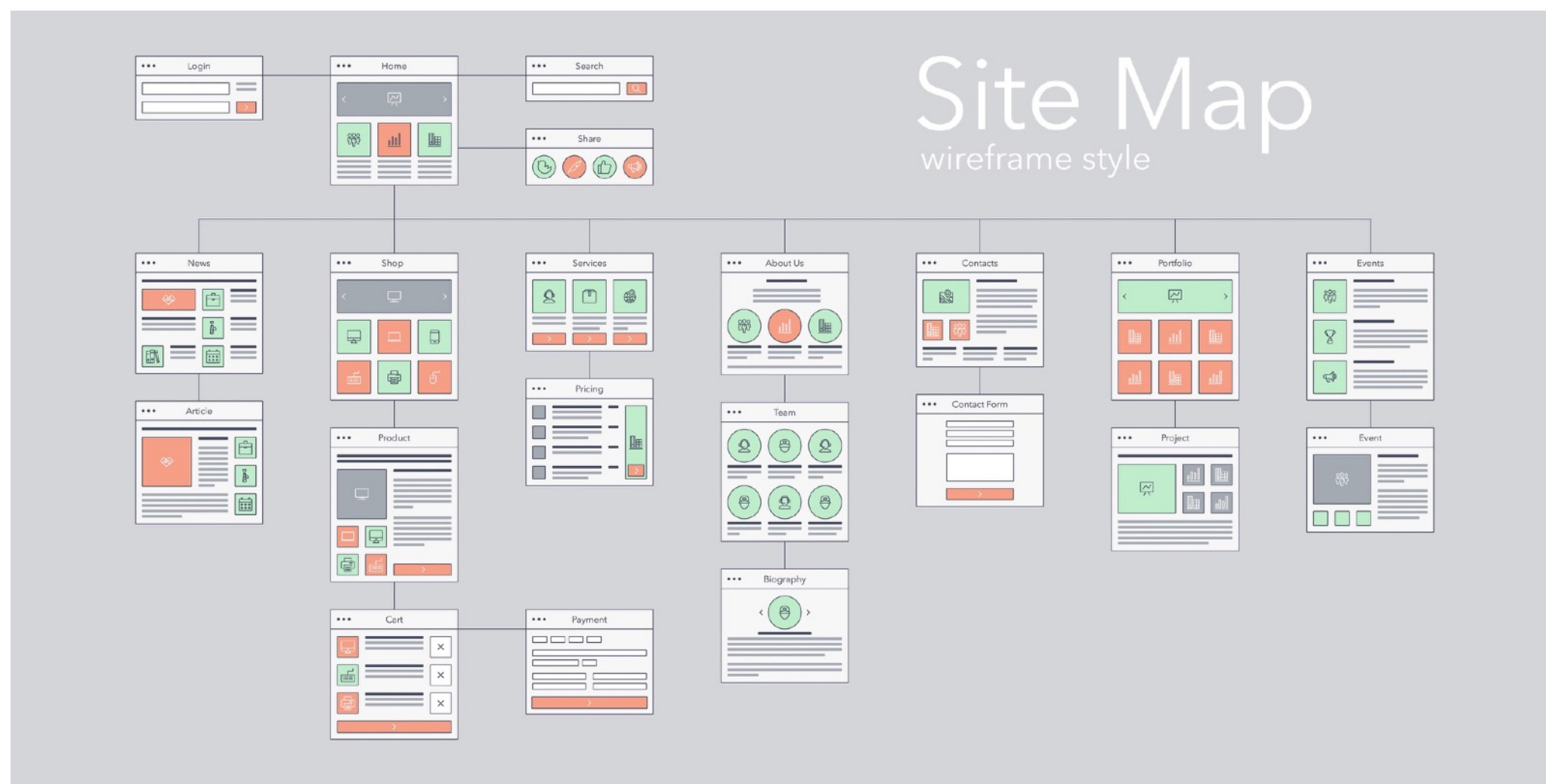
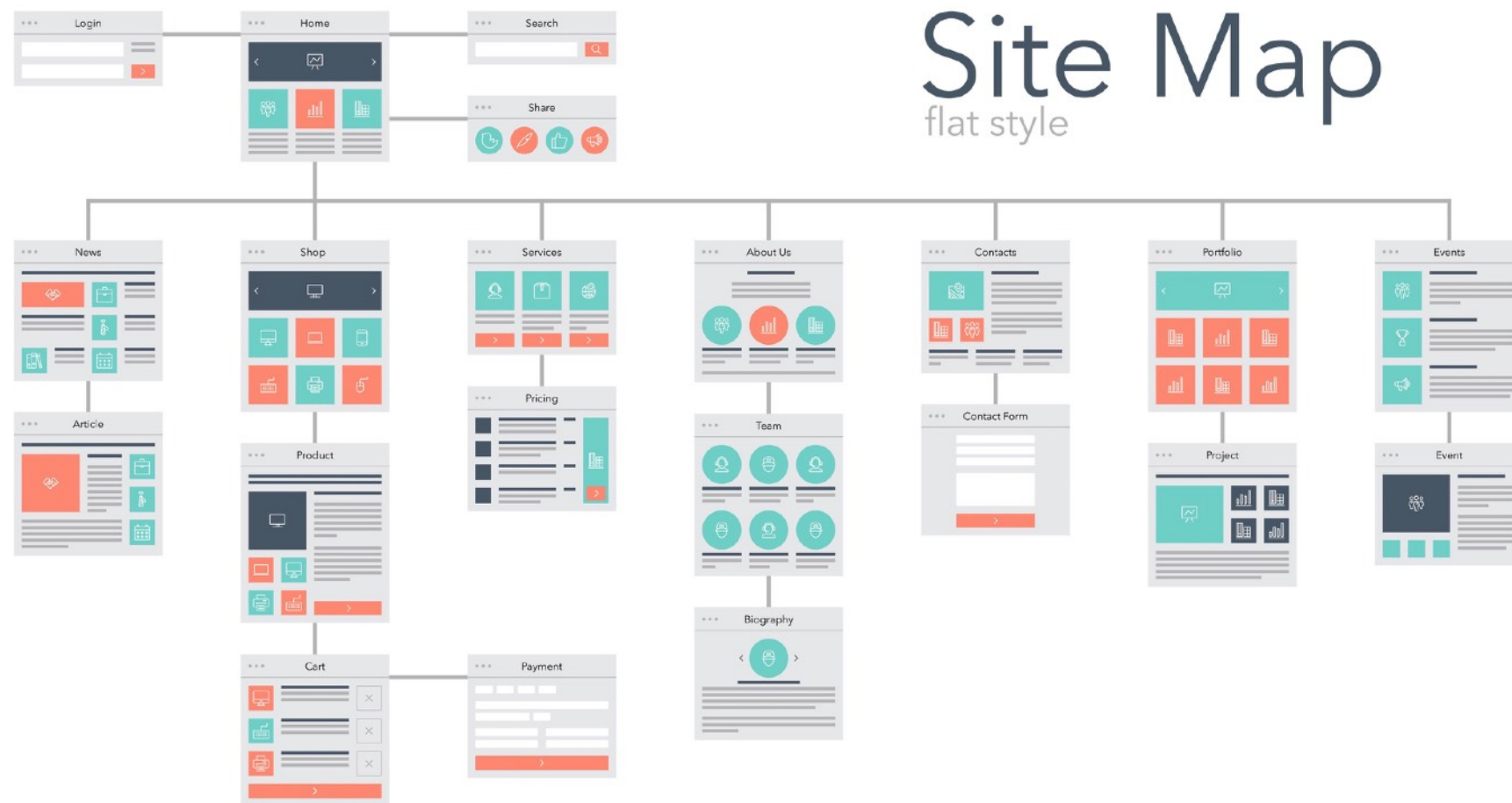
- [Using Your Project Overview](#) (links to 2f)

Sharing Your Project (links to 2g)

Resource & Training Center:

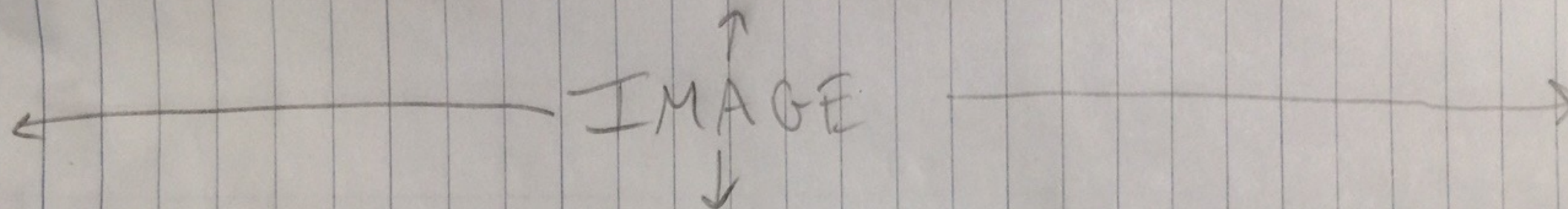
- [Tree & Woodland Project Resources](#)
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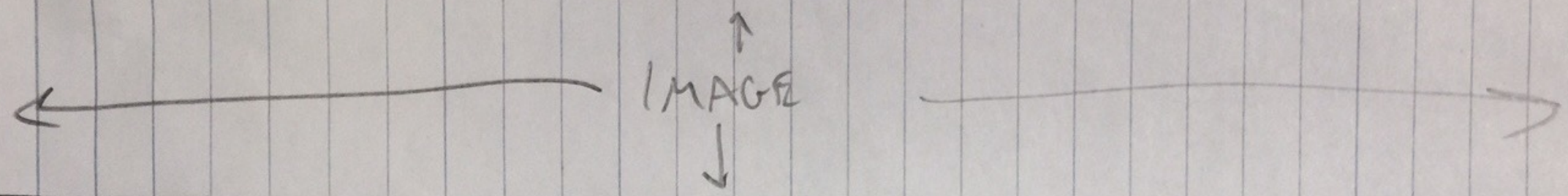
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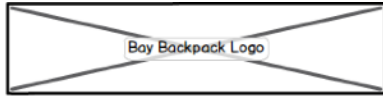
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on project page

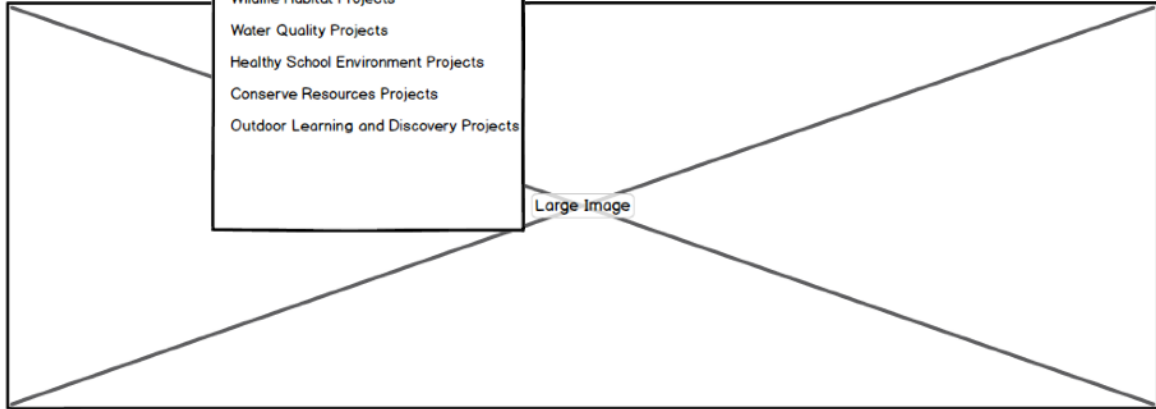
Starter projects

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Low Fidelity Prototype



- Wildlife Habitat Projects
- Water Quality Projects
- Healthy School Environment Projects
- Conserve Resources Projects
- Outdoor Learning and Discovery Projects



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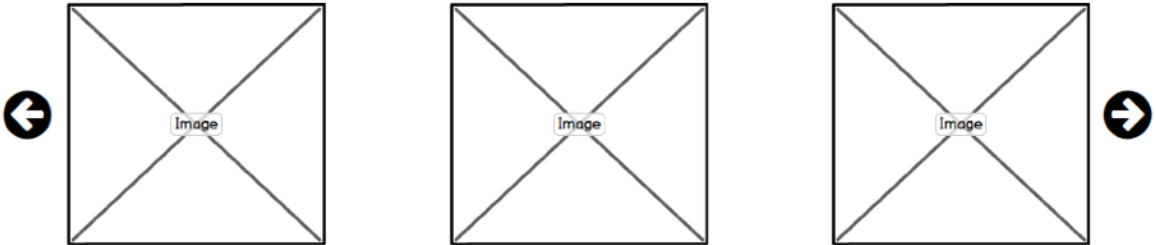
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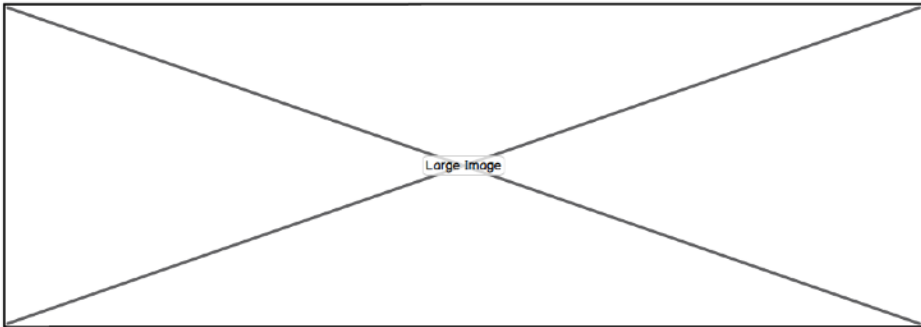
Blog Three Title

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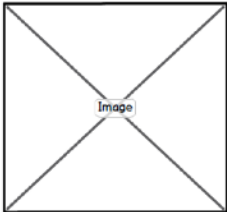


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Wildlife Habitat Projects

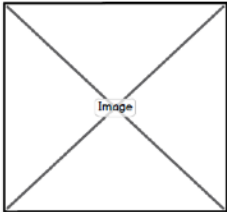
Wildlife habitat projects are a great way to teach students about the importance of protecting the environment. These projects can be done in the classroom or in the field, and they can be tailored to the interests and abilities of the students. Wildlife habitat projects can help students learn about the different types of habitats, the animals that live in them, and the threats to their survival. They can also help students develop a sense of responsibility for the environment and a commitment to protecting it.

Wildlife habitat projects can be done in a variety of ways. Some projects involve creating artificial habitats, such as birdhouses or insect hotels. Other projects involve restoring natural habitats, such as planting native plants or creating a pond. Wildlife habitat projects can be done by individuals, groups, or the whole class.



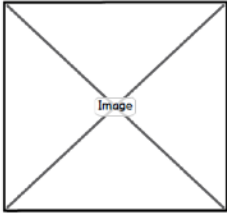
Woodlands

Woodlands are a type of habitat that is home to many different animals. They are also a very important part of the environment. Woodlands provide a home for many different types of trees, shrubs, and plants. They also provide a home for many different types of animals, including birds, insects, and mammals.



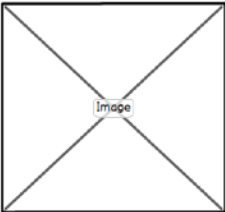
Meadows

Meadows are a type of habitat that is home to many different animals. They are also a very important part of the environment. Meadows provide a home for many different types of plants, including grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs. They also provide a home for many different types of animals, including birds, insects, and mammals.



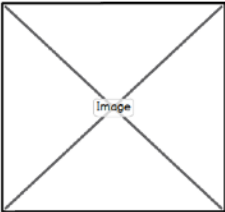
Wildlife Habitat Projects

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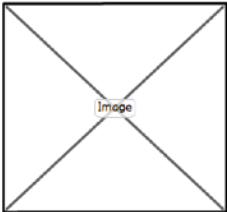
Wetlands

Wetlands are a type of habitat that is home to many different animals. They are also a very important part of the environment. Wetlands provide a home for many different types of plants, including grasses, sedges, and shrubs. They also provide a home for many different types of animals, including birds, insects, and mammals.



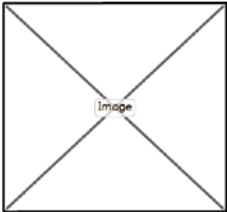
Streams

Streams are a type of habitat that is home to many different animals. They are also a very important part of the environment. Streams provide a home for many different types of plants, including grasses, sedges, and shrubs. They also provide a home for many different types of animals, including birds, insects, and mammals.



Native Plants and Invasive Species

Native plants and invasive species are two types of plants that are found in the same habitat. Native plants are plants that have been in the area for a long time. Invasive species are plants that have been introduced to the area from somewhere else. Invasive species can be a problem because they can outcompete native plants and change the habitat.



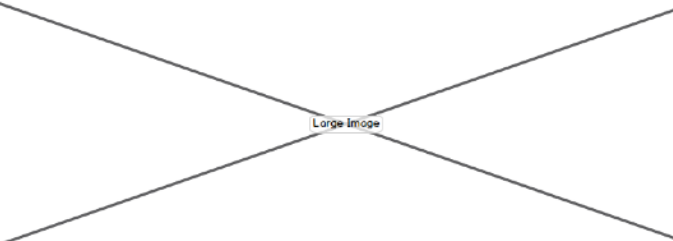
Grow-Out Stations

Grow-out stations are a type of habitat that is used to grow plants. They are usually made of wood or plastic and are filled with soil. Grow-out stations are used to grow plants that are going to be planted in the field. Grow-out stations can be used to grow a variety of different types of plants, including native plants and invasive species.

ABOUT

The School Grounds for Learning Project is a new initiative funded by the NOAA-BWET grant program and supported by a partnership between the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and MAEOE, in cooperation with the Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

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Project Importance

Environmental Literacy

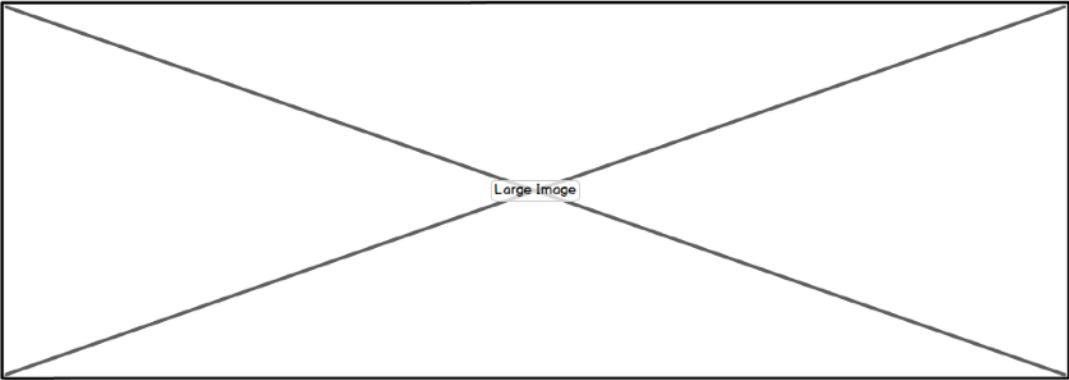
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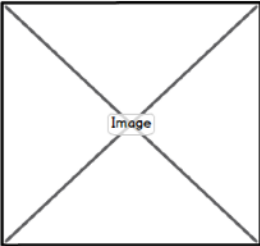
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Woodlands Projects

Woodlands are a vital part of our environment, providing a home for many different species of plants and animals. They also play a crucial role in the carbon cycle, helping to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. By creating and maintaining woodlands, we can help to improve the health of our environment and the lives of the people who live in them.

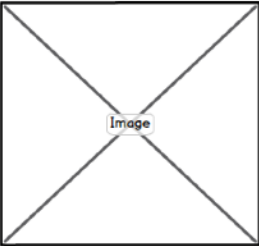
There are many different ways to create and maintain woodlands, and the best approach will depend on the specific circumstances of your project. However, some general principles that can help to guide you include:

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Sharing Your Project



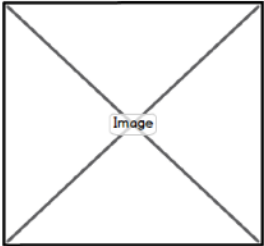
Woodland Starter Projects

Woodland Starter Projects are designed to help you get started with creating a woodland in your schoolyard. They include a variety of activities that are suitable for children of all ages, and they are designed to be completed over a period of several weeks.



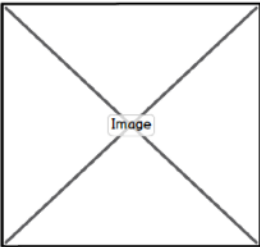
Woodland Enhancement Projects

Woodland Enhancement Projects are designed to help you improve the health and biodiversity of an existing woodland. They include a variety of activities that are suitable for children of all ages, and they are designed to be completed over a period of several weeks.



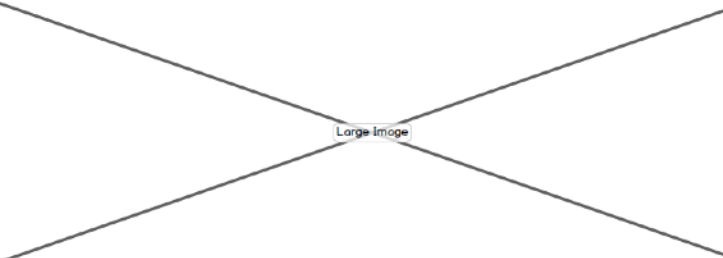
Forest Buffers

Forest Buffers are designed to help you create a buffer zone between a woodland and a nearby road or building. This can help to reduce the impact of noise and pollution on the woodland, and it can also help to improve the health and biodiversity of the area.

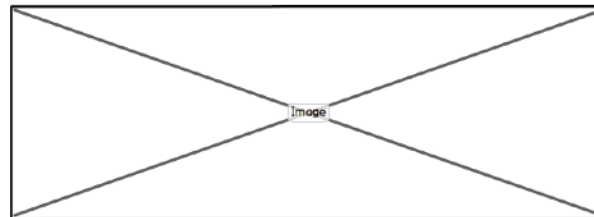
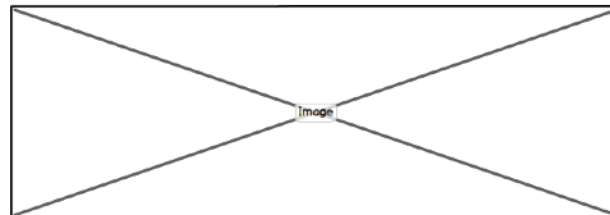
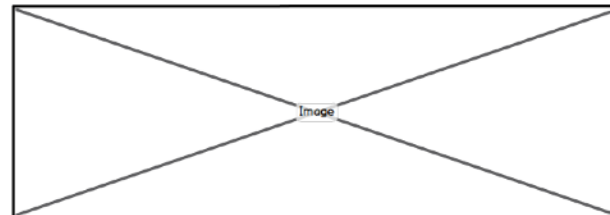


Permaculture

Permaculture is a design approach that aims to create sustainable, self-sufficient systems that mimic the patterns and processes of nature. It can be used to design a wide range of systems, from small-scale gardens to large-scale agricultural systems.



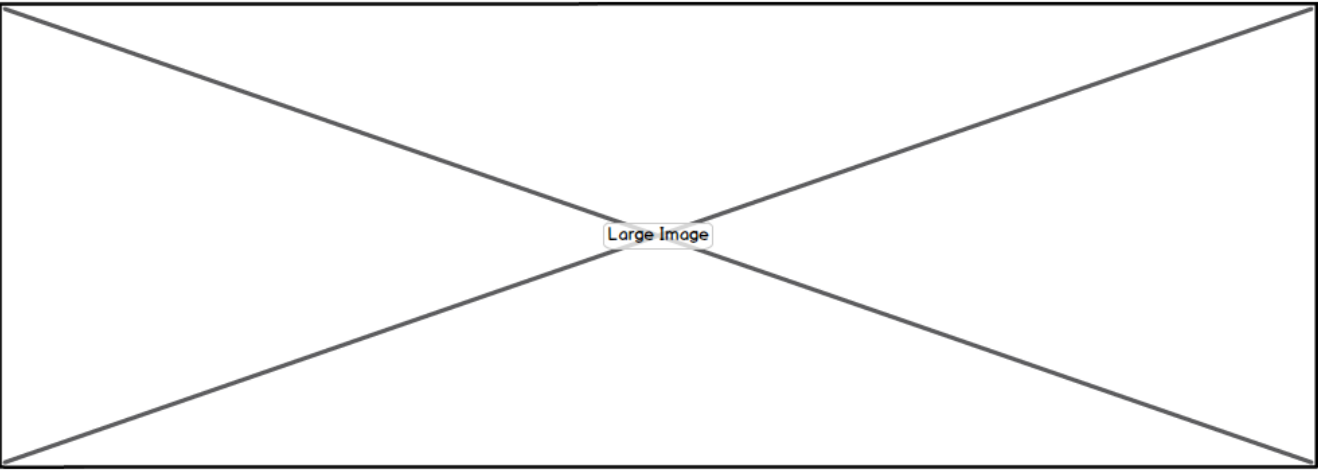
Woodland Starter Projects

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Tree and Shrub Planting

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Before You Start

[i-Tree Analysis Tools for Assessing & Managing Community Forests](#)
[Forests for the Bay Landserver Property Mapping Tool](#)

Design

[Choosing, Sourcing & Determining Numbers](#)

Implementation

[Site Preparation & Planting Instructions](#)

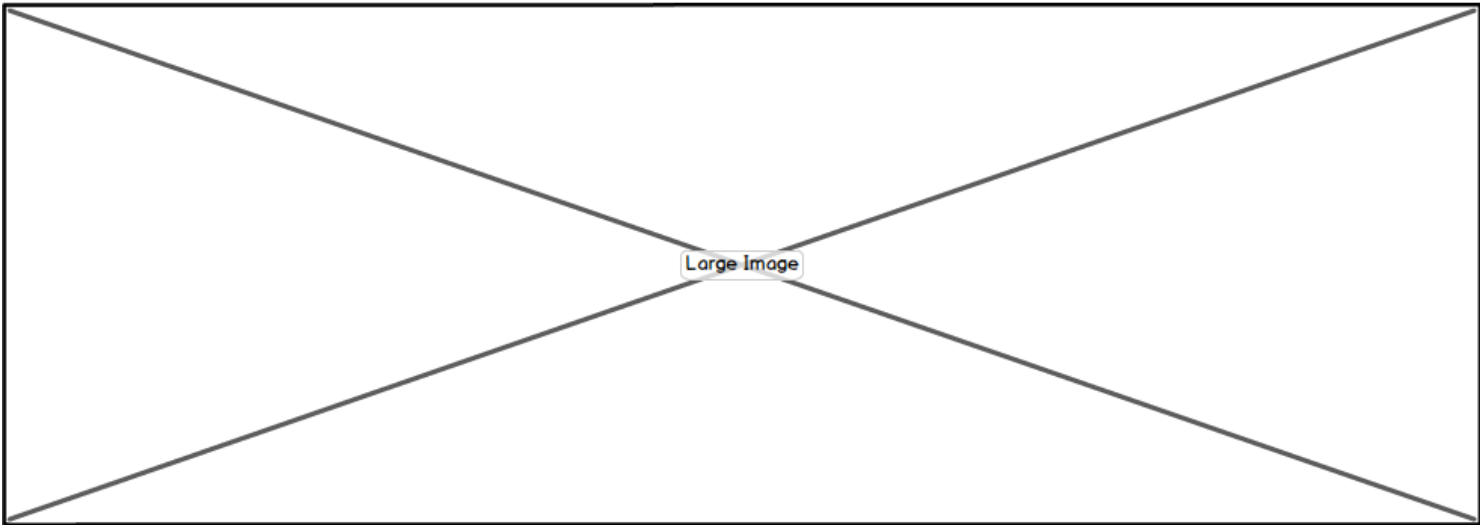
Site Management: Short and Long Term

[Tree and Shrub Maintenance Tips](#)

Additional Resources

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Project Planning Basics

Project planning is the first step in creating a successful schoolyard project. It involves identifying the goals of the project, determining the resources needed, and developing a timeline for completion. This process is essential for ensuring that the project is well-organized and that all stakeholders are on the same page. The planning phase also allows for the identification of potential challenges and the development of strategies to address them. By taking the time to plan thoroughly, you can increase the likelihood of a successful outcome for your schoolyard project.

Project planning is a critical component of any schoolyard project. It allows you to define the scope of the project, set realistic goals, and allocate resources effectively. This step is often overlooked, but it is essential for the long-term success of the project. By involving students and staff in the planning process, you can build a sense of ownership and commitment to the project. Additionally, planning helps to identify potential obstacles and develop contingency plans to address them. This proactive approach can save time and resources in the long run.

Establish Your Team

Establishing a team is the first step in planning your project. It is important to involve students and staff in the process, as they will be the ones implementing the project. Consider the skills and interests of the team members, and assign roles accordingly. A diverse team with a mix of skills and interests will be more effective in planning and executing the project.

Brainstorm Schoolyard Ideas

Brainstorming ideas is a fun and creative way to generate concepts for your schoolyard project. Encourage all team members to share their thoughts, no matter how small or silly. Some ideas might include creating a garden, installing a water feature, or building a habitat for local wildlife. The goal is to come up with as many ideas as possible, and then narrow them down to the most feasible and interesting options.

Survey the School Community

Surveying the school community is an important step in planning your project. It allows you to gather input from students, staff, and parents, and to identify the needs and interests of the community. This information can be used to inform your planning and to ensure that the project meets the needs of the school community. Consider using surveys, focus groups, or public meetings to gather input.

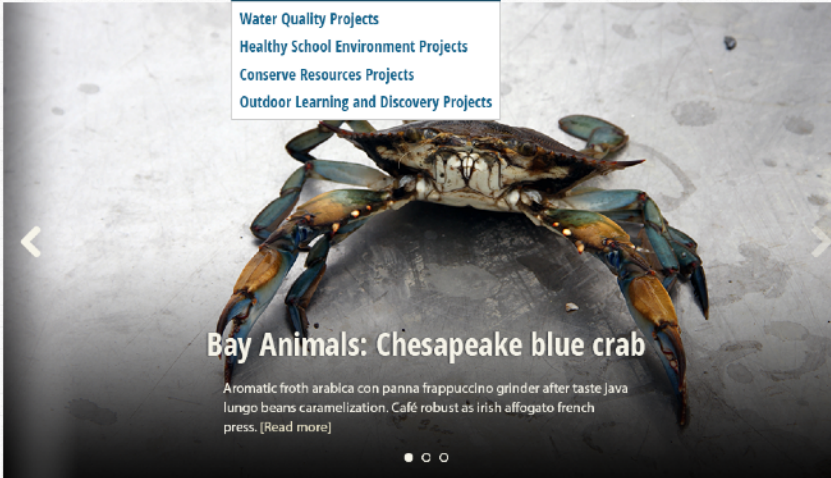
Brainstorm Schoolyard Possibilities

Brainstorming possibilities is a key step in the planning process. It involves thinking about the different ways in which the schoolyard could be improved or transformed. Consider the needs of the school community, the available resources, and the potential for creating a sustainable and functional space. Encourage all team members to contribute their ideas, and then evaluate them based on their feasibility and potential impact.

[Next: School Grounds Site Assessment >>](#)

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Mockup Desktop



Bay Animals: Chesapeake blue crab

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Recent Blog Posts

President Celebrates STEM at the 3rd White House Science Fair

June 02, 2014 by Julie Walker

President Obama celebrated students achievements in STEM by hosting the third annual White House Science Fair on May 27 2014. 30 states were represented in the group of 100 hundred students. From designing new apps, to solar panels, to making football helmets more concussion proof projects encompassing a wide range of STEM fields. This year the fair had a special focus on encouraging girls to pursue a career in science

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Come Celebrate Maryland's Green Schools at MAEOE Green Schools Youth Summit!

June 02, 2014 by Julie Walker

The Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) will honor the 133 schools that have successfully fulfilled the requirements of the Maryland Green Schools Program at the MAEOE Green Schools Youth Summit on May 30, 2014 at beautiful Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis. The Youth Summit presents students and teachers with an opportunity to be recognized for their leadership in enacting significant change in their communities, while the Summit's interactive sessions provide a platform for them to build upon the skills and knowledge that they have already acquired during the Maryland Green Schools certification process.

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Inspiring Future Green Leaders

June 02, 2014 by Julie Walker

If you are high school teacher (and maybe even if not) now is the time of year that student will be reaching out for guidance on the future. With questions ranging from colleges, tech schools, majors, careers, and life in general. Many times it is difficult and stressful to pick just one interest to pursue. But that's where your sage wisdom comes in handy. Many careers today require a multitude on interest, especially careers involving the environment.

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Resources

FieldScope: Explore this interactive mapping system.

Green School Program: Ways to make your school

No Child Left Inside: Learn about this exciting program.

CBIBS Curriculum: Use real-time data to teach the Bay.

United States Global Change Research Program

National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)



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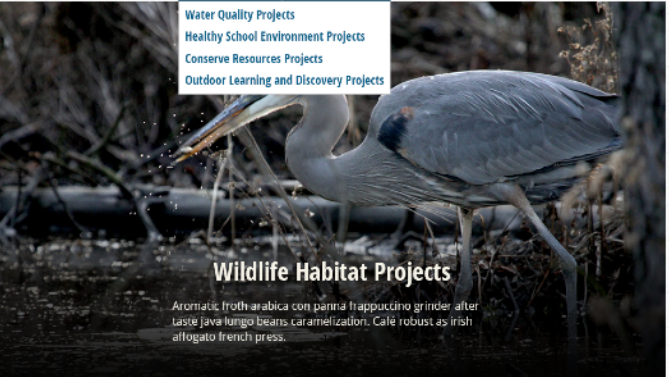
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Wildlife Habitat Projects

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Wildlife Habitat Projects

The Chesapeake Bay is a diverse and productive ecosystem that supports more than 2,000 species of plants and animals both on land and in the water. Bay animals can be some of the most charismatic organisms in the Bay and include a variety of fish, shellfish, birds, and mammals. Each species plays an important role in the Bay food web and relies on a healthy Bay ecosystem to survive. A healthy ecosystem is one with a balanced food web — not too much production or consumption of any one of the producers or consumers. For example menhaden must have enough plankton available to sustain themselves. Striped bass and bluefish, part of a higher trophic level, rely on menhaden and bay anchovies as their primary food source.

An ecosystem must be enormously productive to support substantial populations of species at the highest trophic levels. For example, for every pound of commercial fish taken from the Bay, almost 8,000 pounds of underlying producers and consumers had to be produced.

Like any other system, the Bay ecosystem is composed of interrelated parts that interact with each other to form a whole. All of the plants and animals the bay ecosystem depend on each other in some way. Every living thing needs a healthy ecosystem to survive. Human activities affect the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem by adding pollution, using resources and changing the character of the land. However, we can make better choices in our everyday lives to lessen our footprint on the Bay ecosystem's health.

About

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Projects



Woodlands

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Wetlands

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Native Plants and Invasive Species

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Meadows

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Streams

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Grow-Out Stations

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Wildlife Habitat

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Schoolyard Projects

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Project Importance

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Environmental Literacy

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Resource Development

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Target Audience

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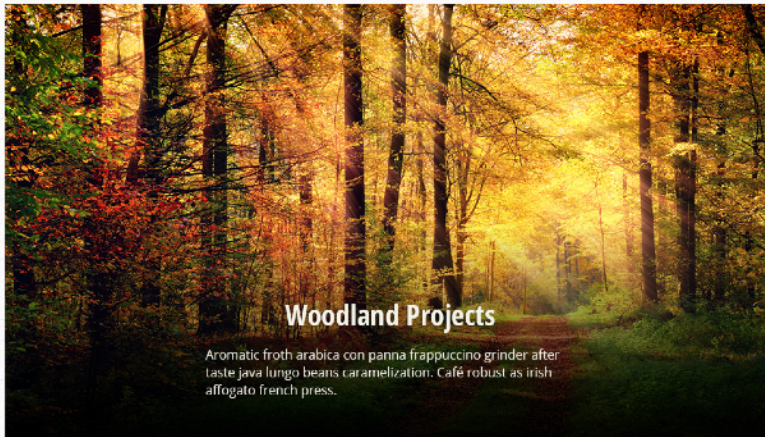
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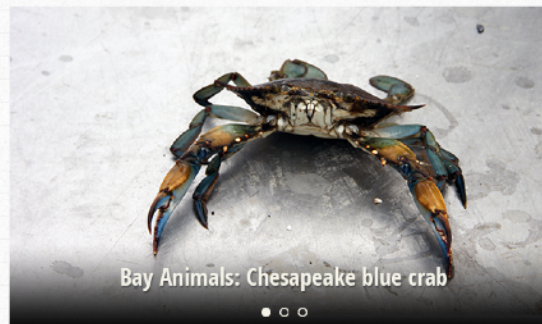


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June 02, 2014 by Julie Walker

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The Chesapeake Bay is a diverse and productive ecosystem that supports more than 3,200 species of plants and animals both on land and in the water. Bay animals can be parts of the food chain, depending on the Bay and include a variety of fish, shellfish, birds, and mammals. Each species plays an important role in the Bay food web and helps in sustaining the ecosystem in nature. A healthy ecosystem is one with a balanced food web — not too much production or consumption of any one of the producers or consumers. For example, man-made structures have enough plankton available to sustain themselves. Tired bass and bluefish, part of a higher trophic level, rely on man-made and bay animals as their primary food source.

An ecosystem must be extremely productive to support substantial populations of species at the highest trophic levels. For example, for every pound of commercial fish taken from the Bay, almost 1,000 pounds of smaller fish eaters and consumers had to be produced.

Like any other system, the Bay ecosystem is composed of interconnected parts that interact with each other to form a whole. All of the plants and animals in the bay ecosystem depend on each other in some way. Every single thing needs a healthy ecosystem to survive. Human activities affect the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem by adding pollution, using resources and changing the character of the land. However, we can make better decisions to manage how to sustain our Bay and its health.

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- Review mockup
- Provide feedback
- Make changes
- Team meeting
- Begin work