



UConn Climate Corps Program



Climate Corps is an academic program at UConn focused on service learning and workforce development related to climate change adaptation at the local, community level.



The program includes:

- One-semester lecture course
- One-semester hands-on practicum semester where each student is paired with a local community partner



For more information, visit <https://climate.uconn.edu/climate-corps/> or email renata.bertotti@uconn.edu and owen.placido@uconn.edu

Introductions



- Sydney
- Junior
- Environmental Science Major with a concentration in sustainable systems



COMMUNITY CLIMATE SCAVENGER HUNTS

ALLIANCE FOR THE MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED
UConn Climate Corps: Sydney Cournoyer

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01

PROJECT SCOPE & OBJECTIVES

MAIN OBJECTIVES & DELIVERABLES

01

INTEGRATION OF DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

The project explores unifying QuickCapture and Survey123 into a streamlined platform to improve data collection and management. This would make community contributions easier to submit and analyze, strengthening the foundation of AMRW's vulnerability assessment.

02

SEASONAL SCAVENGER HUNTS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The creation of two scavenger hunts—one for spring/summer and one for fall/winter—were designed to guide public participation in documenting key environmental observations like flooding, invasive species, wildlife and vegetation changes.

03

IN-APP EXPERT Q&A AND OBSERVATION FEATURES

A button was added to allow participants to submit environmental observations and ask questions directly through the QuickCapture app. These inputs are intended to be answered by experts, encouraging dialogue and educational feedback within the data collection tool itself

04

EXPLORATION OF GAMIFICATION OPTIONS

The project set out to evaluate possibilities for further gamifying QuickCapture and other engagement tools. Suggestions included badges, user rankings, and participation milestones, all outlined in a proposed next steps plan.

WHY THIS PROJECT MATTERS

- Communities within the Mystic River Watershed face a range of environmental, economic and social vulnerabilities
- These vulnerabilities are not currently well documented or understood
- This project aims to:
 - expand data collection through citizen science tools
 - increase public engagement
 - create a more informed and resilient community

02

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY



PROJECT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY



Meet with the
AMRW team to
define project goals



Engage with Fuss
& O'Neill to align
and refine the
project

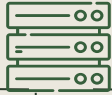


Train on ArcGIS
tools
(QuickCapture &
Survey123)



Design and
outline seasonal
scavenger hunts

PROJECT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY



Create individual
Survey 123's for
scavenger hunts,
Q&As and
observations



Link Survey123s
into Quick Capture
and build Quick
Capture interface



Test the app for
usability and
performance



Develop
supporting
documents

03

DELIVERABLES & OUTCOMES



X
Citizen Observations


Please write down your name.

If you feel comfortable, please leave your email so we are able to reach out with any follow up questions.

Please fill out the Date and Time.

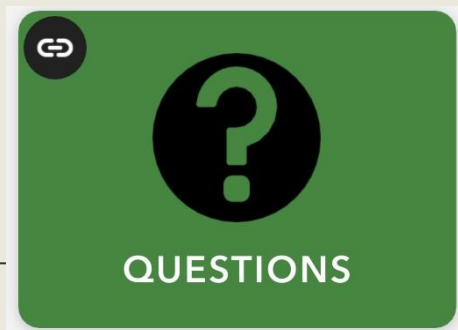
Date
 Time

Please record your location of observation.

41°35'N 72°44'W


Please take a picture of your observation!

✓



Name

Whats your name? You can leave this blank if you prefer.

Email Address *

Please enter your email so we can send you a reply

Your Question *

What question do you have for us?

Photo (optional)

Want to include a picture with your question? Upload it here.

Location (optional)

Feel free to share the location of which your question is based below.

Age Group *

✓

QUESTIONS & OBSERVATIONS

- Buttons in both the Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter scavenger hunts
- Observation button includes:
 - Name
 - Email
 - Date/time
 - Location
 - Photo
 - Categorize the observation
 - Observation description
 - How it made you feel
- Question button includes:
 - Name
 - Email address
 - Question
 - Photo
 - Location
 - Age group
 - Urgency of the question





**Scavenger
Hunts**

Alliance *for the*
**Mystic River
Watershed**

SPRING & SUMMER H...

Name

CONNECT WITH US



OBSERVATIONS & QUESTIONS



OBSERVATIONS



QUESTIONS

— FAWN PATH —

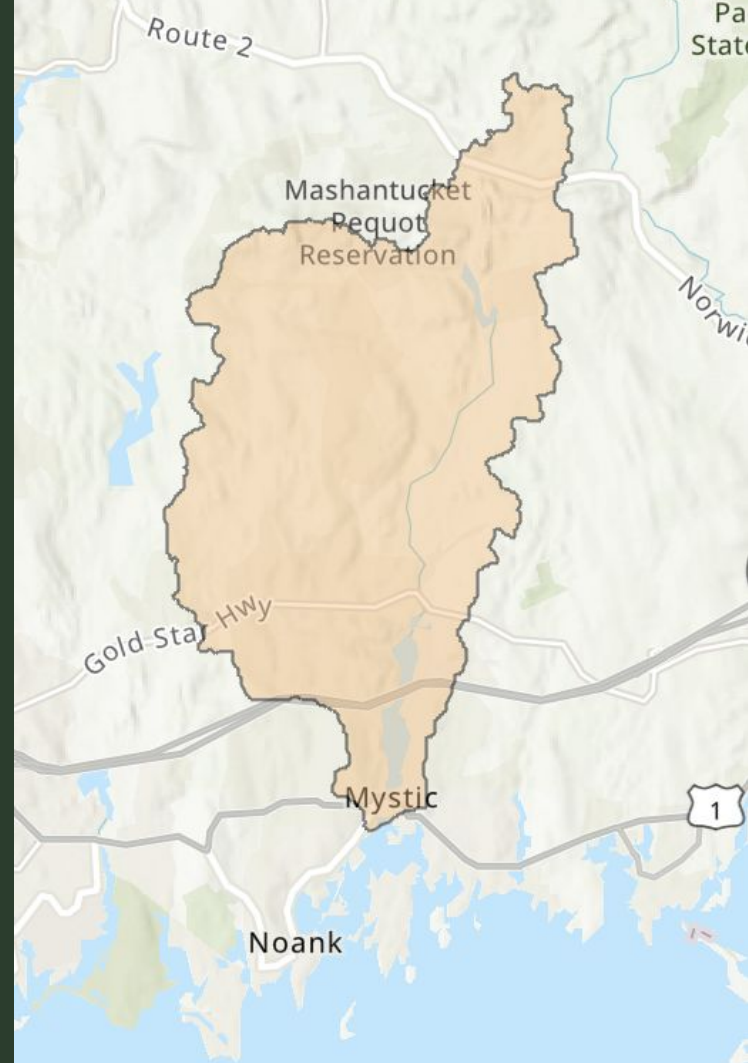


— DEER PATH AGES —



Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt

Map for Scavenger Hunt







Encourages individuals of all ages to look for signs of drought including:

- wilted plant leaves
- cracked soil
- dried-up streambed
- lower than usual water levels

×

AMRW Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt





Nature Nugget

Droughts occur when a long period of time passes with little to no rain, which leads to a shortage of water. Droughts make it extremely hard for plants and animals to survive due to the limited amount of water. It can also cause the ground to crack and wash away, which is known as erosion.

[Drought Education](#)



Photo Challenge *

Look for signs of dry areas. You might find grass, cracked soil, wilted plant leaves or even a dried-up streambed. Upload a photo of it below.



Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.




Is the area you found dry in a spot where it's usually wet? *

☐ Yes

☐ No



☐ Not sure

How do you think the dry area affects plants or animals?



×

AMRW Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt



Nature Nugget



Droughts are periods of lower-than-usual rainfall that leads to reduced water availability. When this happens, the amount of water in lakes, rivers, and wetlands decrease causing harm to ecosystems. Lower water levels also impact agriculture, reducing drinking water supplies along with disturbing wildlife habitats.

Water Consumption *

Use the [Water Footprint Calculator](#) to understand your water consumption. How did finding out your water footprint make you feel? How can you reduce your water usage footprint?



Photo Challenge *

Visit a local wetland, stream, pond or lake where the water level appears to be lower than usual. Upload a photo of an area that appears to be dried up or the water level appears to be lower than normal.




Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.



How can your community conserve water during droughts? *



Water Footprint

×

AMRW Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt

Nature Nugget

Flooding occurs when there's too much rain and the ground can't soak it up fast enough. Sometimes rivers, streams, and even lakes can overflow, causing water to spread over the land. That water can sometimes wash away plants and animals homes making it harder for them to live there. There are several different types of flooding which you can learn more about here:

[Learning About Floods for Kids](#)

Please see below for more safety tips and resources:

[National Weather Service Flood Safety Tips & Resources](#)

What are the three types of flooding?

Hint: see the video referenced above

Photo Challenge *

After it rains, explore your yard, school, or park. Can you find puddles, muddy areas, or spots that stay wet for a long time? Take a photo of what you find and submit it below.

Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.

✓

×

AMRW Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt

Nature Nugget

Flooding is becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change. Heavy rain and snowmelt can cause rivers and streams to overflow, which often cannot be absorbed by urban areas covered in impermeable surfaces. This makes flooding worse and results in damages to homes, roads and even ecosystems.

[Flooding Video](#) further explains why floods happen, the different types of floods, along with general tips to stay safe during floods.

Please see below for more safety tips and resources:

[National Weather Service Flood Safety Tips & Resources](#)

Photo Challenge *

Take a photo of the flooded area, damaged infrastructure, or water levels at their highest points.

Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.

What did you observe in terms of flooding or

✓



- Encourages users to report the first sign of flooding
- Includes flood education and safety tips

National Weather Service Flood Safety Tips & Resources



Encourages photos to document sources of air pollution

- Car traffic
- Factories
- Construction sites
- Open burning

AMRW Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt

Nature Nugget

Pollution can make it hard to breathe, especially for children and older adults. Sometimes, a beautiful sunset or a rising moon looks extra colorful because tiny bits of pollution in the air are changing how the light looks. View the video below for more education on air pollution:

[Air Pollution](#)

Why do you think it's important to keep the air clean? *

☐ So we can breathe better
☐ To protect plants and animals
☐ It helps make the planet healthier
☐ I'm not sure
☐ Other

How can we reduce air pollution?

Photo Challenge *

Take a picture of the sky, or if you find something that might be causing air pollution, like a car or factory, snap a photo of that too!

Location *

✓

AMRW Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt

Check Local Air Quality Index

Please navigate to [Air Now](#) and check the air quality of your location.

- Once you have checked air quality, enter the Air Quality Index (AQI) below
- The AQI is a number between 0 and 500, with lower numbers indicating cleaner air and higher values indicating more pollution
- There is also a color coded chart you can explore to see air quality levels in areas around you

Photo Challenge *

Look around for sources of air pollution. This can include things like car traffic, factories, construction sites or even open burning. Identify the source and take a photo of it.

Photo Explanation

Use this space to describe or explain the photo you submitted above.

Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.

✓

Air Quality Index

Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunt

FALL & WINTER HUNT

Name _____

CONNECT WITH US




OBSERVATIONS & QUESTIONS



OBSERVATIONS



QUESTIONS

— FAWN PATH — 

— DEER PATH — 



Encourages participants to take photos of migrating birds, animals, or sources of hibernation

AMRW Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt

Nature Nugget



Some animals migrate to warmer places when it gets cold, like birds flying south. Others stay and hibernate—like bears, frogs, and some insects! They slow down, sleep, or hide in cozy spots until spring.

[Migration for Kids](#)

[Hibernation for Kids](#)



Photo Challenge *

Take a picture of birds flying south or animals preparing for winter (like squirrels gathering food)!



Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.



What is hibernation?

☐ A winter vacation to Florida

☒ A long nap that animals take to survive the cold weather

☐ When animals go to school in the winter

✓

AMRW Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunt

Nature Nugget



Animal migration and hibernation are seasonal behaviors driven by temperature and daylight. Climate change can confuse these natural cycles—some species are migrating earlier or later than usual, and others might stop migrating altogether.

Understanding these shifts helps scientists track biodiversity and ecosystem health.

[US Bird Count Shows How Climate Change is Affecting Migration Patterns](#)



Photo Challenge *

Take a photo of migrating birds, traveling animals, or even hibernation signs like nests, burrows, or stored food.



Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.





There is strong evidence to support that migration patterns are changing as a result of climate change. What residual effects do you think changing migration patterns will have on the watershed?

✓

×

AMRW Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunts





Nature Nugget

Animals need safe places to live in the winter, like piles of leaves, tall grasses, bushes and trees. These places help them stay warm, find food, and hide from potential danger. When people clean up too much or cut down trees and plants, animals can lose their cozy homes.



Photo Challenge *

Look for a place that would make a great home for animals during the cold months—maybe a big pile of leaves, thick bushes or trees.



Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.



What kind of animal home did you find? *

☐ Leaf Pile


☐ Hollow log

☐ Bushes or shrubs

☐ Rocks or stone piles



☐ Trees

☐ Other



×

AMRW Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunts





Nature Nugget

As we tidy up our yards and public spaces in the fall and winter—blowing away leaves, cutting back shrubs, or removing dead plants—we often don't realize we're also taking away essential winter homes for wildlife. Many insects overwinter in leaf litter, and small mammals and birds rely on shrubs, brush piles, and trees for protection from the cold. These microhabitats are crucial for survival, and their removal can make ecosystems more vulnerable and less resilient. Visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's interactive page on habitat restoration efforts across the U.S.



[Habitat Restoration](#)

Photo Challenge *


Look around your own neighborhood, park, or trail. Are there any areas that could benefit from similar restoration efforts (like adding native plants, reducing pollution, or protecting habitat spaces)? Take a photo.



Location *



What do you think could help improve or restore the area for wildlife?





Encourages younger individuals to look for regions that would make good homes for animals in the cold months.

Encourages older individuals to find areas that need restoration



Encourages individuals to document moving bodies of water and still bodies of water

X
AMRW Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunts

Nature Nugget

Moving water doesn't freeze as easily as still water because it keeps flowing. Lakes and ponds freeze more easily because they stay still. It's fun to look at, but be careful-frozen water isn't always safe to walk on!

[Safety resource for parents](#)

Photo Challenge *

Go outside and find a body of water like a stream, river or creek. Take a picture of the water.

Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.

Does it have ice on it?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Partially

What kind of water source did you find?

☐ River or stream
☐ Pond
☐ Lake

✓

X
AMRW Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunts

Nature Nugget

Moving water resists freezing due to friction and flow, even in cold weather. These areas can appear deceptively safe during winter, but ice near currents can be thin and dangerous. Climate change has altered freezing patterns, causing ice to form later, melt earlier or become unpredictable.

[Safety Resource](#)

Photo Challenge *

Find a moving body of water (like a river, creek, or stream) and compare it to a nearby still body of water (like a pond or lake). Take a photo showing the difference-what's frozen, what's not?

Location *

Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.

Was the moving water frozen?

☐ Not at all
☐ Partially
☐ Completely frozen

✓

Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed

Community Climate Scavenger Hunt:

Let's get Started!

Download the Apps

1. Navigate to your smartphone's App Store (iPhone) or Google Play Store (Android) and download ArcGIS Quick Capture and ArcGIS Survey123.

The icons can be seen below:

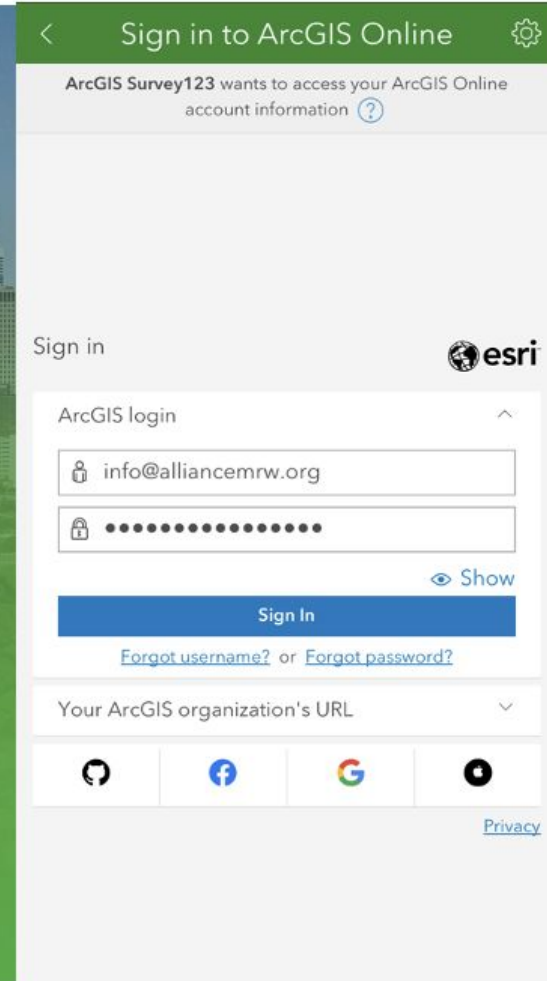


Quick Capture

Survey123


Log into Survey123

1. Open the Survey123 app and select “Sign in with ArcGIS Online” and enter the login information provided
2. Allow the app to use your location. This app works in tandem with Quick Capture and will launch as a result. By allowing the app to use your location, the app will add your location to the map when you submit a scavenger hunt item.





ArcGIS QuickCapture wants to access your ArcGIS Online account information ?

Sign in 





ArcGIS login ^

[Show](#)

[Sign In](#)

[Forgot username?](#) or [Forgot password?](#)

Your ArcGIS organization's URL v

[Privacy](#)

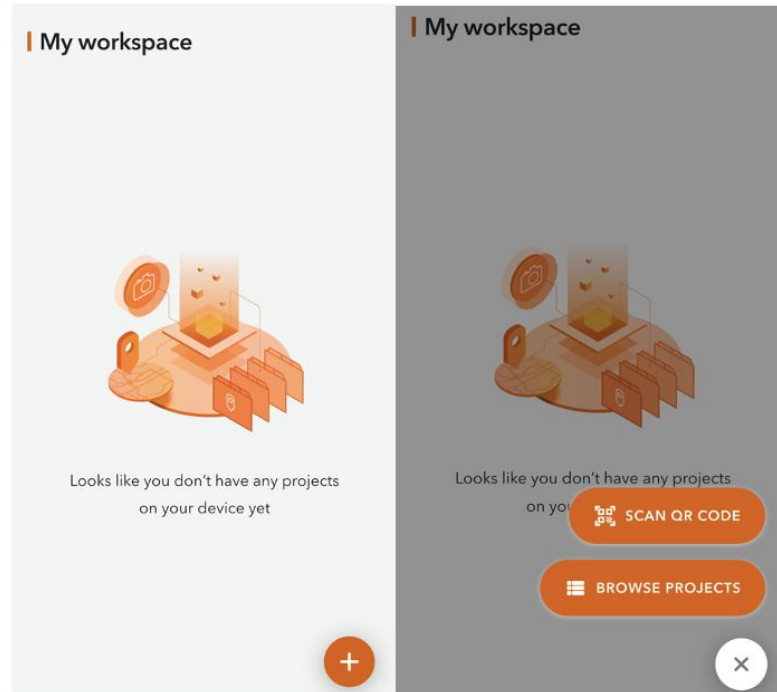
Log into QuickCapture

3. Exit the Survey123 app and open the Quick Capture app. Select “Sign in with ArcGIS Online” again and enter the provided login information

4. Allow the QuickCapture app to use your location. This allows the app to add your location to the map when you submit a scavenger hunt item.

Add the Scavenger Hunt

6. Once you're logged in, keep the quick capture app open. If the projects do not automatically load, press the 'plus' button at the bottom right hand of the screen and select "Scan QR Code".



7. By scanning the QR code the scavenger hunt project will load into Quick Capture. The Spring/Summer & Fall/Winter scavenger hunt QR Codes are listed below:

Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt	Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunt
 <p>A square QR code with a black and white pixelated pattern. A small, semi-transparent text overlay at the bottom center of the code reads "https://arcg.is/1aunSu".</p>	 <p>A square QR code with a black and white pixelated pattern. A small, semi-transparent text overlay at the bottom center of the code reads "https://arcg.is/1XX1P82".</p>

[For Further Instructions Click Here](#)

Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed

Community Climate Scavenger Hunt: Why Your
Observations Matter

Document Summary

- A supporting document to the Community Climate Scavenger Hunts that explains why participating is important
- Provides a brief summary on what the Community Climate Scavenger Hunt is
- Not just a “big picture” explanation of why AMRW is interested in crowdsourcing this data
- Breaks down each individual scavenger hunt task

Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed

Community Climate Scavenger Hunt: Why Your Observations Matter

Project Overview

What is the Community Climate Scavenger Hunt?

The Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed (AMRW) has created the Community Climate Scavenger Hunt, which is a participatory and seasonally based initiative. The Community Climate Scavenger Hunt is designed to enhance community engagement with the environment while crowdsourcing data for the organization's Climate Vulnerability Assessment.

Why Your Observations Matter

- Every photo, note, or observation helps build a clearer picture as to how climate change is affecting the watershed
- Data supports the Alliance's Climate Vulnerability Assessment by identifying trends and areas of concern
- Whether you are experiencing the heat island effect, spotting erosion or local flooding, reporting this can all lead to community-driven climate action



04

RECOMMENDATIONS & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES



Building the Future of the Community Climate Scavenger Hunt



How We Can Keep Growing

Ways to expand topics, strengthen educational components and tie scavenger hunt findings into broader planning and conservation efforts.



Ways to make it even more fun

Gamification ideas that keep participation lively, rewarding, and community-driven.



Bringing the Community Along

Strategies for deeper outreach, education, and inclusivity, ensuring the scavenger hunt becomes a long-term, embedded piece of community culture.

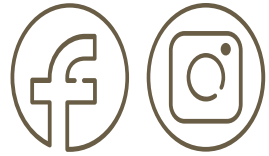
How We Can Keep Growing



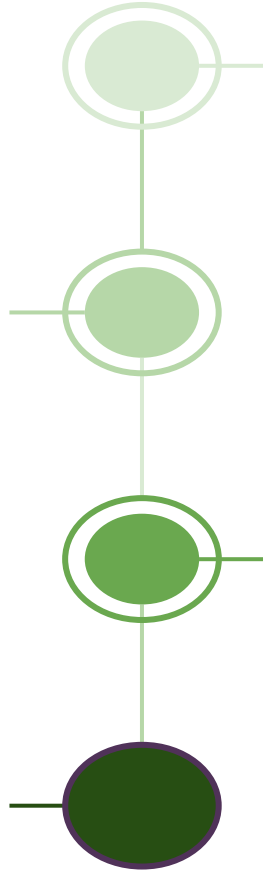
Ways to Make it More Fun



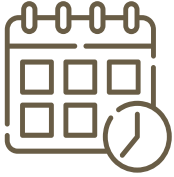
Bringing the Community Along



**Leverage Social
Media**



**Distribute Scavenger
Hunts at Events**



**Partner with Schools
and Libraries**



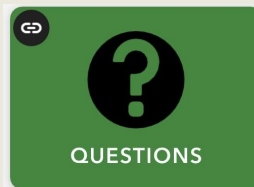
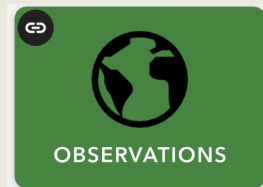
Host Community Events

In Closing...

SEASONAL SCAVENGER
HUNTS FOR COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT



IN-APP EXPERT Q&A AND
OBSERVATION FEATURES



EXPLORATION OF
GAMIFICATION OPTIONS



Building the Future of the Community Climate
Scavenger Hunt



Community Climate Scavenger
Hunt Instructions



Community Climate Scavenger Hunt:
Why Your Observations Matter

THANK YOU!



THANK YOU

“Photos of blue heron, scavenger hunt, NE River, nature scavenger hunt animated” prompt. *Gamma*, 30 April. version, ImagenFast, 16 April. 2025, https://gamma.app/?gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAAQWjqPSl42akj-zvgEvayZhCOwp8m&gclid=Cj0KCQjwlMfABhCWARIsADGXdy8ciYkoUHaBFhbaTVA40wmc1miLgN7m0QayOioZJWbFTYJiuO_AaeMaAsJ1EALw_wcB&utm_campaign=22351699384&utm_content=177342519300&utm_id=tw&utm_medium=search&utm_source=google&utm_term=gamma.

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