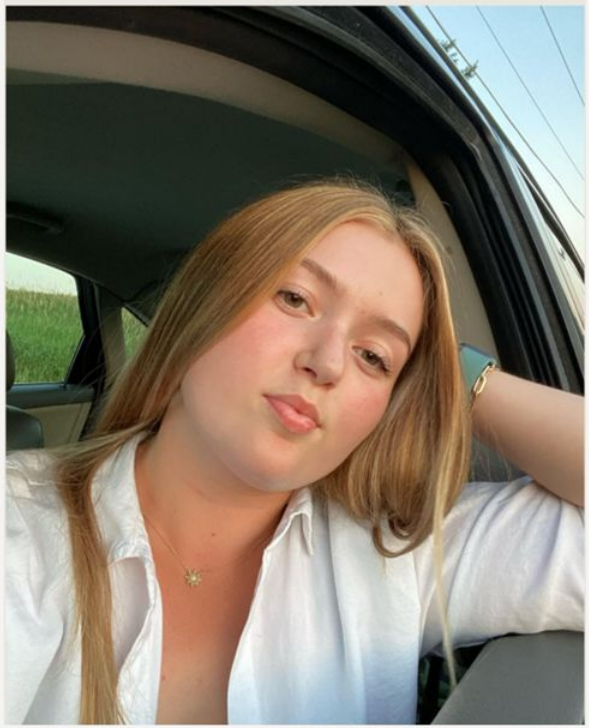
UConn Climate Corps Program

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.

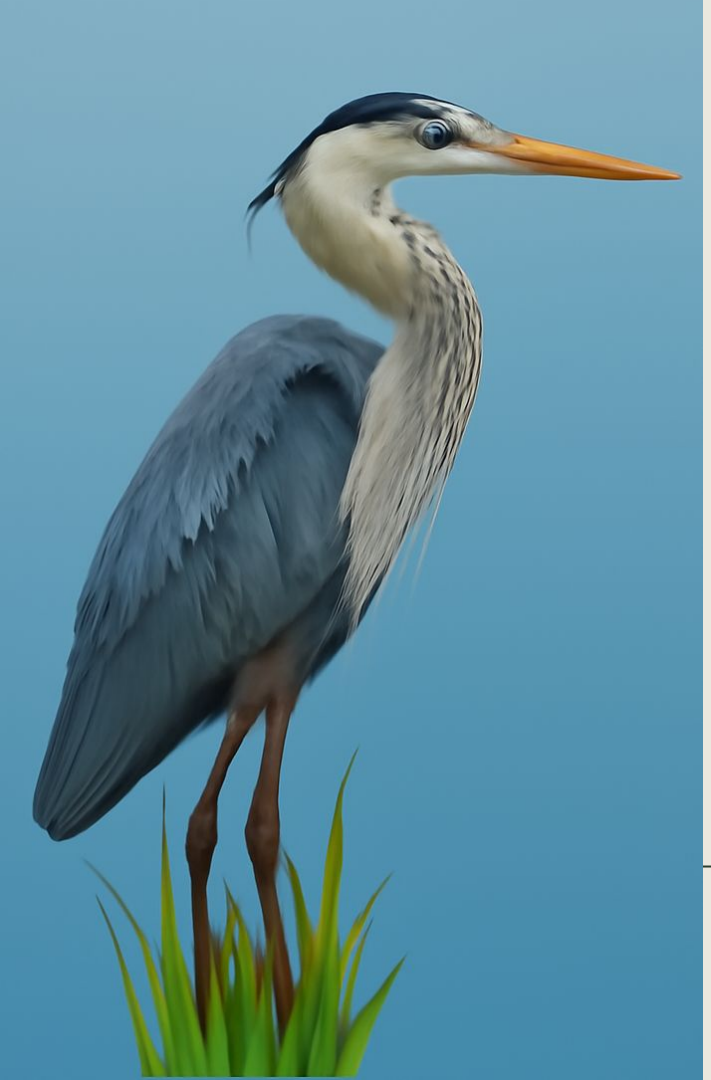
The program includes:
- One-semester lecture course
- One-semester hands-on practicum semester where each student is paired with a local community partner

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 PROJECT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

02 APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

03 DELIVERABLES & OUTCOMES

04 RECOMMENDATIONS & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

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

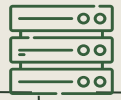
Meet with the AMRW team to define project goals

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

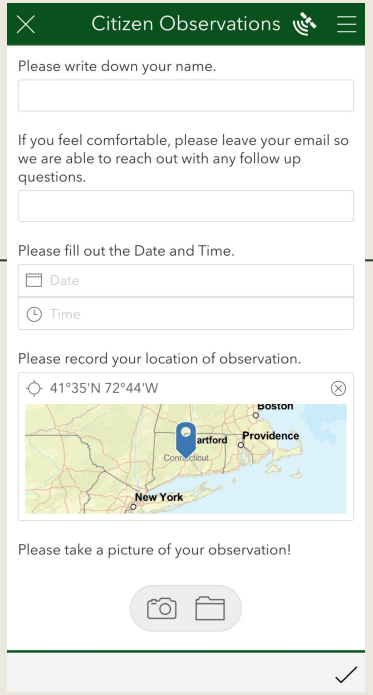
Link Survey123s into Quick Capture and build Quick Capture interface

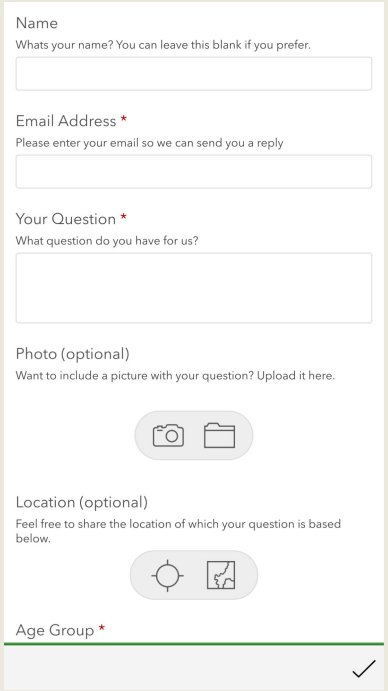
Test the app for usability and performance

Develop supporting documents

03

DELIVERABLES & OUTCOMES





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

Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed

OBSERVATIONS & QUESTIONS

OBSERVATIONS

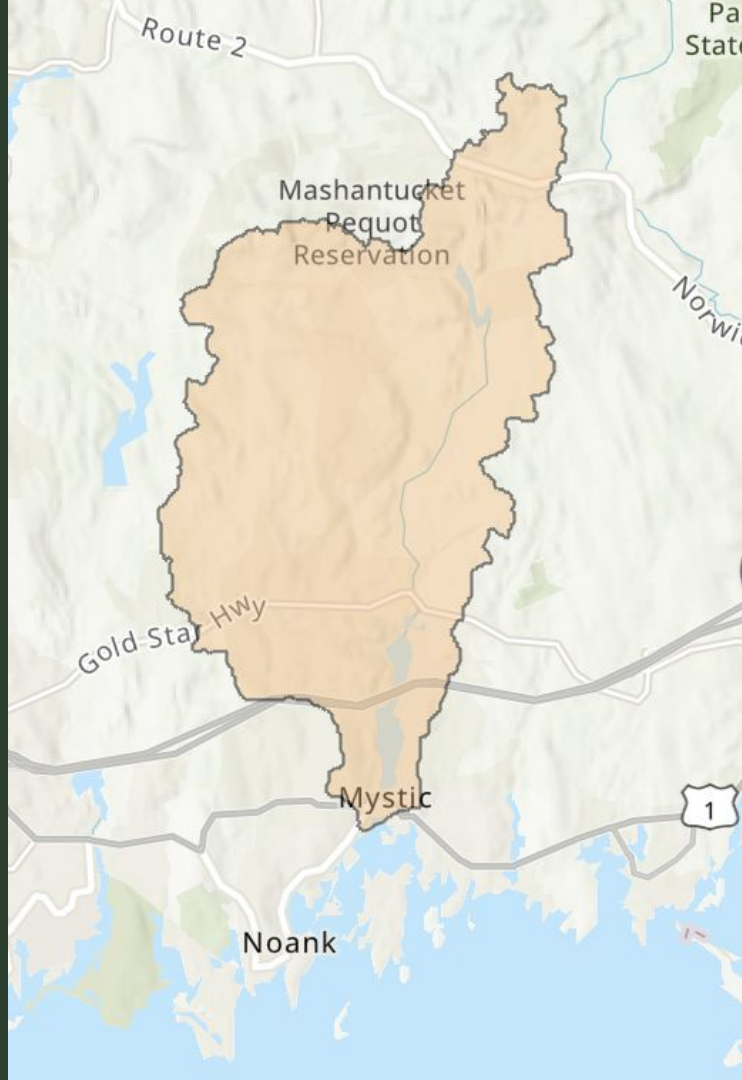
QUESTIONS

FAWN PATH

DEER PATH AGES

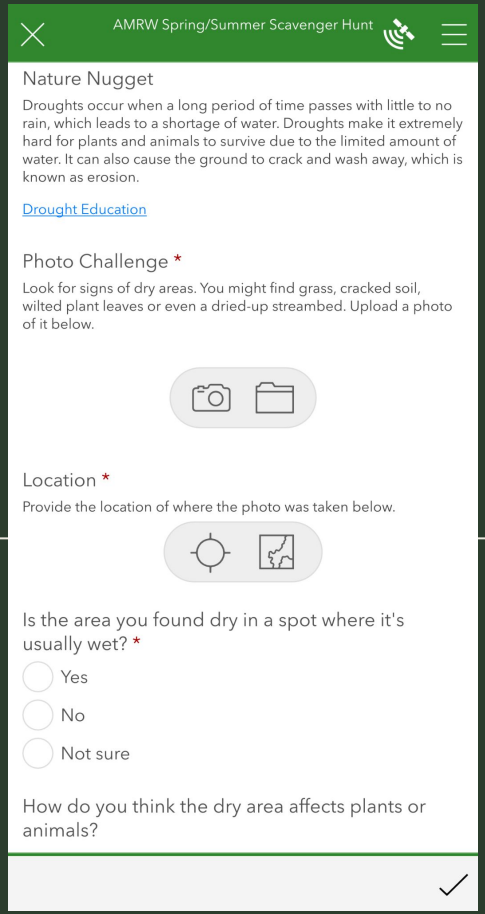
Spring/Summer Scavenger Hunt

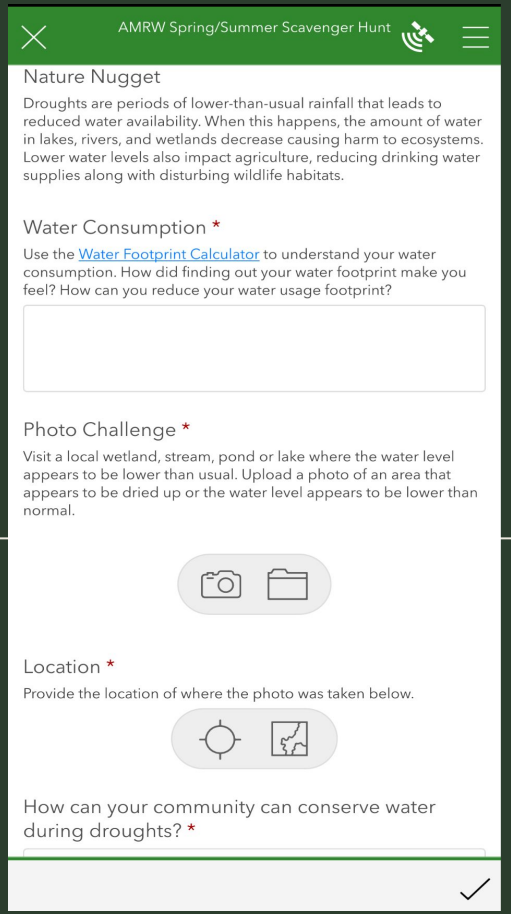
Map for Scavenger Hunt



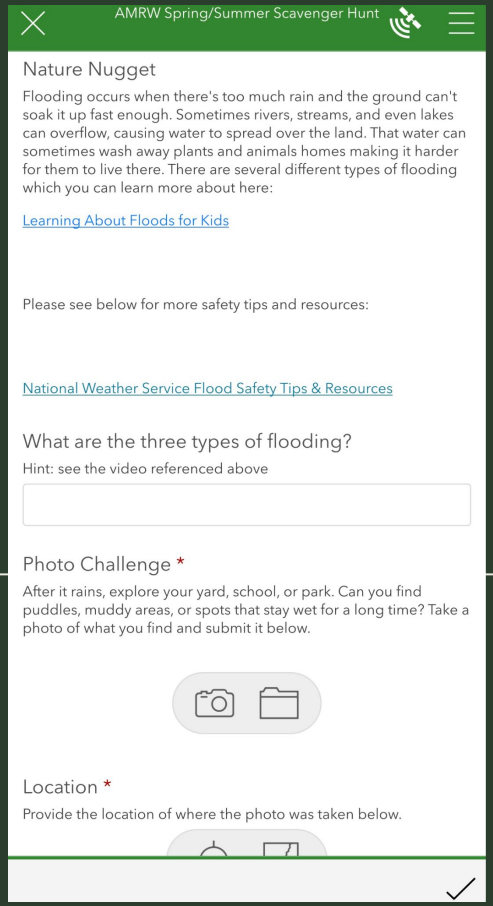
Encourages individuals of all ages to look for signs of drought including:

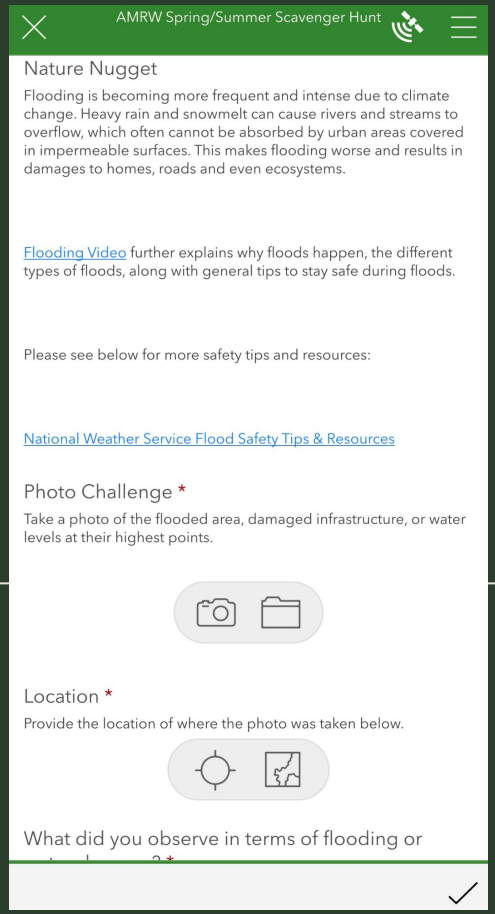
- -wilted plant leaves
- -cracked soil
- -dried-up streambed
- -lower than usual water levels





Water Footprint





-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

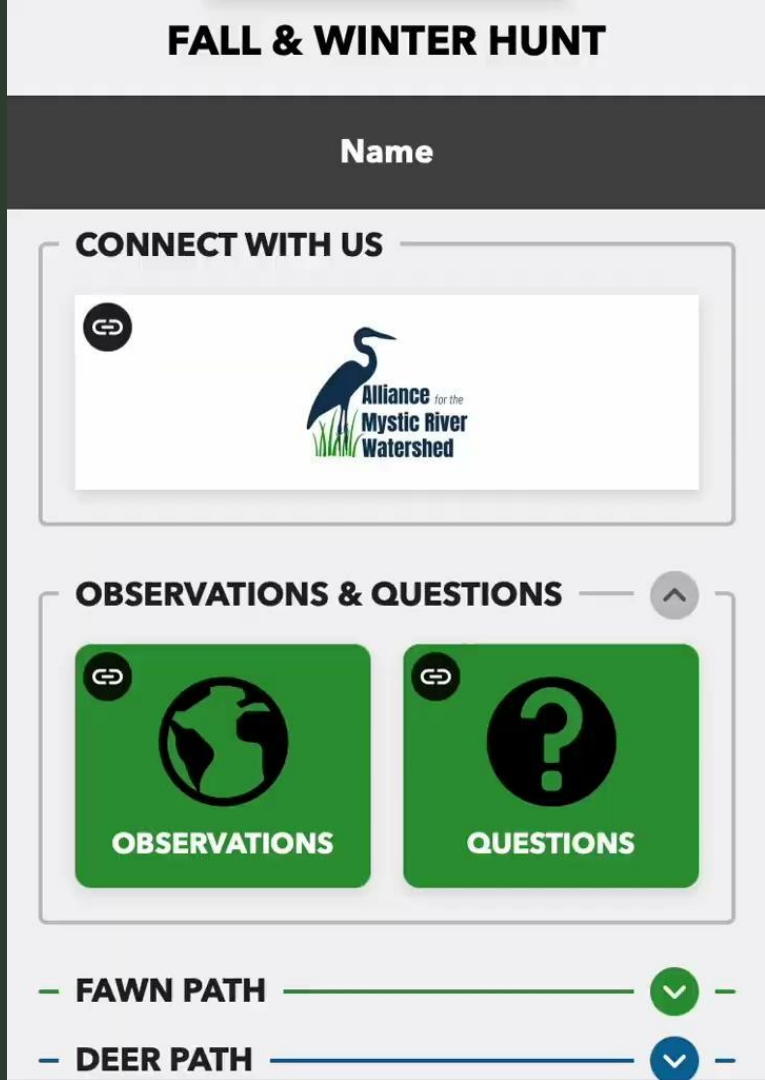
Use this space to describe or explain the photo you submitted above.

Location *

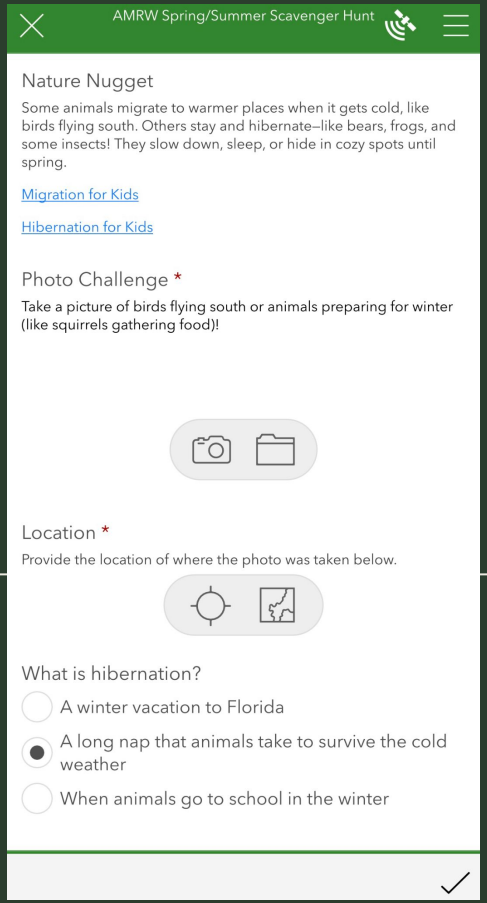
Provide the location of where the photo was taken below.

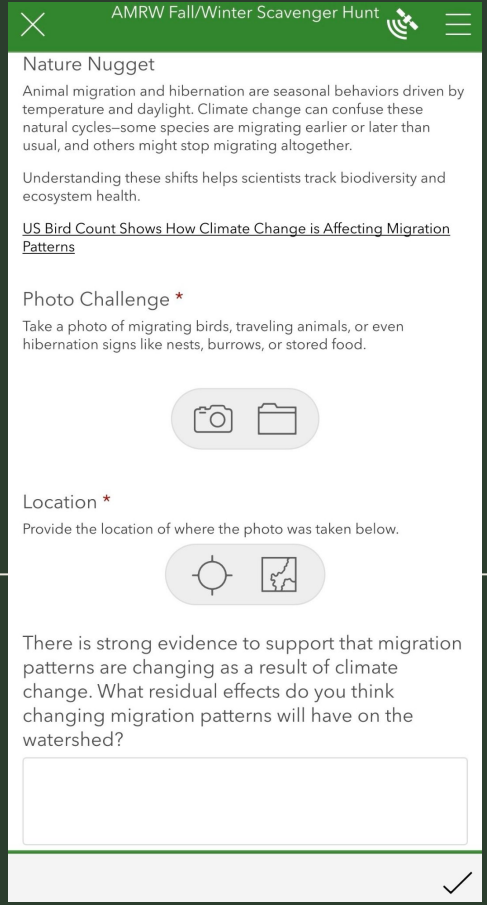
Air Quality Index

Fall/Winter Scavenger Hunt



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





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 Challange *

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.

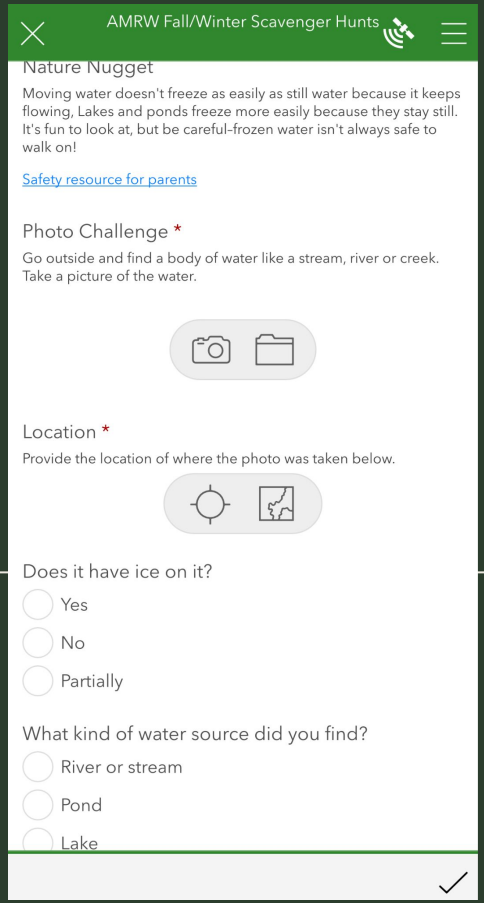
Location *

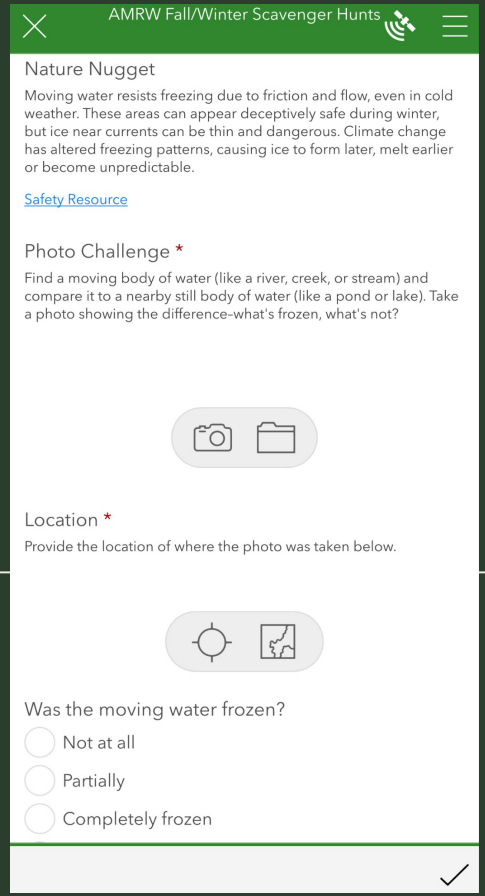
What do you think could help improve or restore the area for wildlife?

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





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.

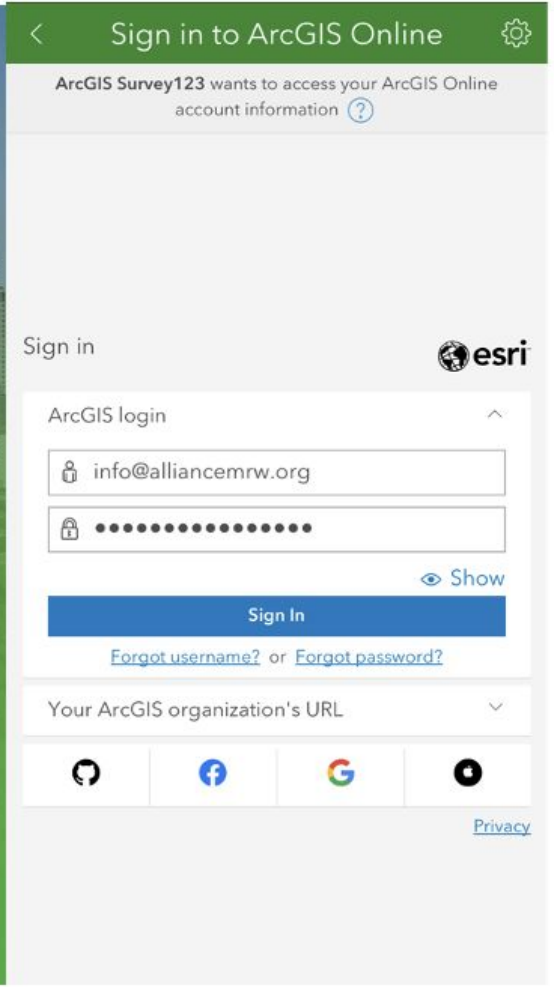
The icons can be seen below:

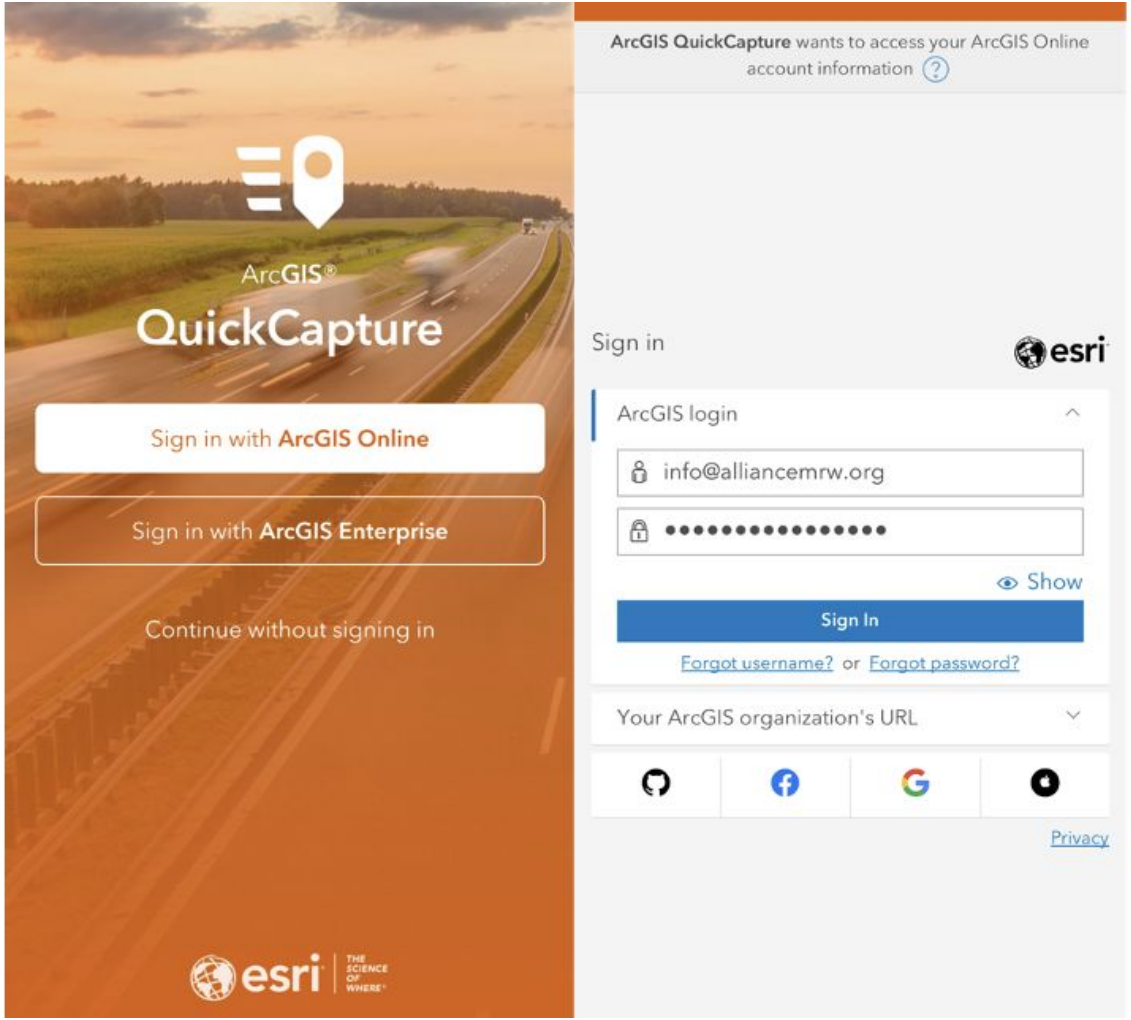
Quick Capture

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.





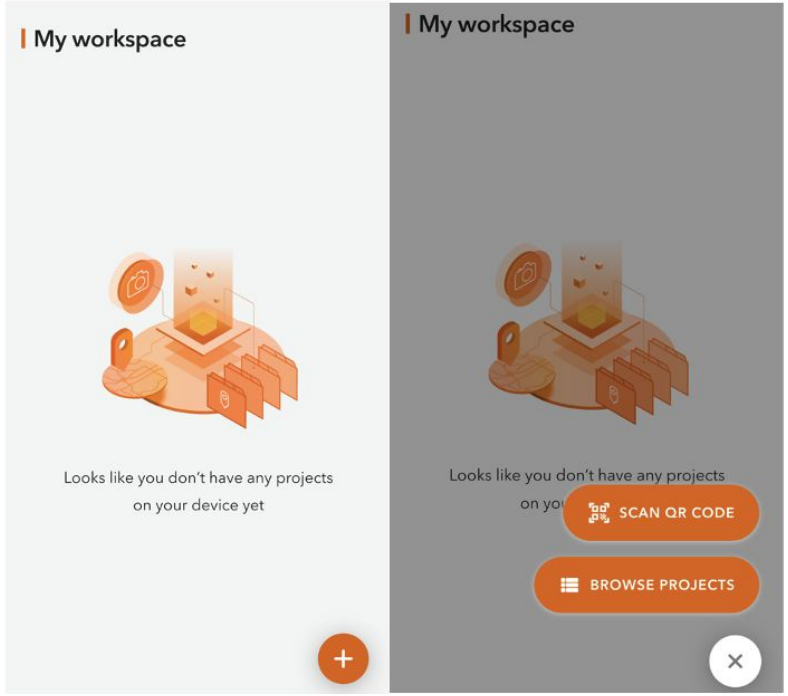
Log into QuickCapture

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
https://arcg.is/1aunSu	https://arcg.is/1XX1P82

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.

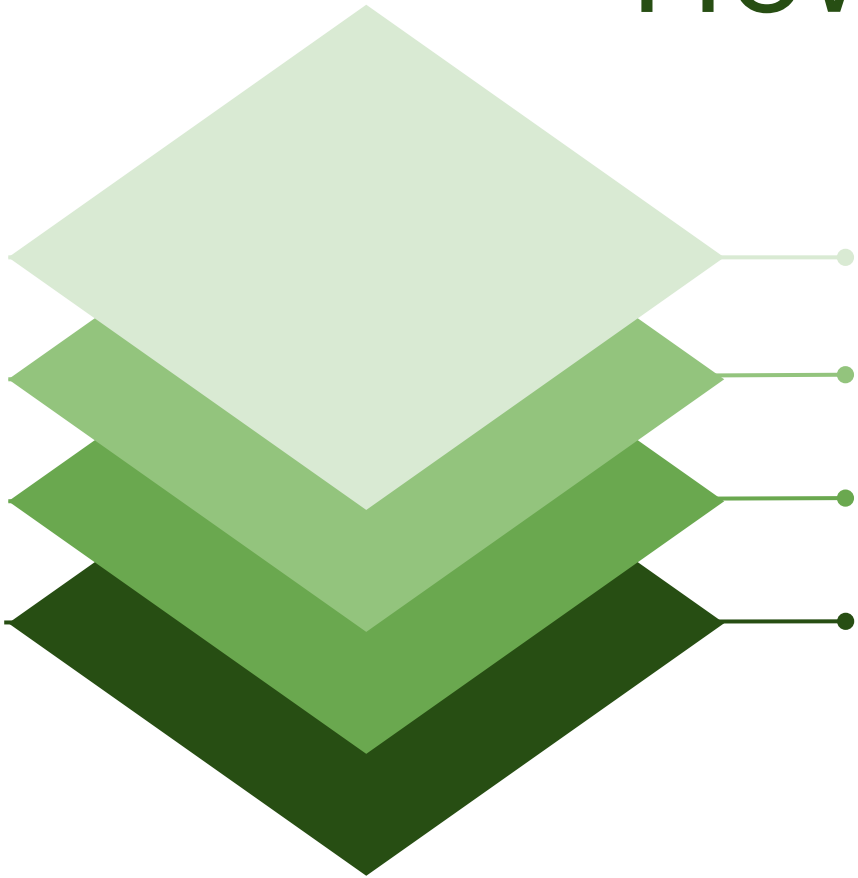
Ways to make it even more fun

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



- **Highlight Local Success Stories**
- **Annual Reporting**
- **Connect to Local Planning Efforts**
- **Invite Local Experts**

Ways to Make it More Fun

Reward Systems

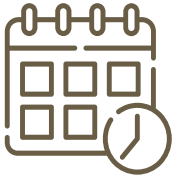
Team Challenges

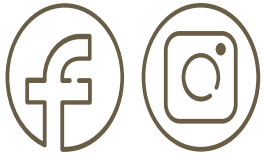
Community Leaderboards

Mystery Missions

Bringing the Community Along

Distribute Scavenger Hunts at Events





Leverage Social Media

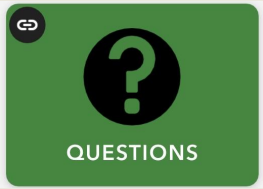
Partner with Schools and Libraries

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=0AAAAAqWjqPSl42akj-zvgEyayZhCOwp8m&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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