



Environmental Education

The well-being of the Chesapeake Bay watershed will one day rest in the hands of its youngest residents. This program seeks to empower students in Maryland with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions to ensure the health of their local environment and communities. Funding supports PreK through 12th grade environmental literacy programs that use the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) model.

MWEEs are a blend of best practices in education. Students investigate a local environmental issue through a combination of classroom and outdoor learning which culminates in students taking action to address the issue in their school or community.

Pickering Creek Audubon Center

Exploring and Restoring Habitat with Caroline County Public Schools



Students reached: 871

Invasive Species Removed (Sq.
Ft.): 4,060

Native Plants Installed: 2,387

Volunteer Hours: 2,280

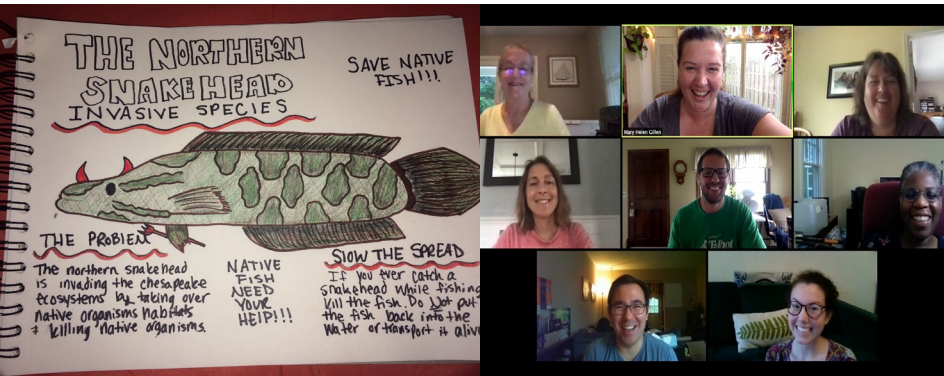
The Exploring and Restoring Habitat program is a MWEE program embedded into the 10th grade Environmental Earth curriculum at Caroline County Public Schools (CCPS). The program takes students through a series of lessons and outdoor field experiences in their community to investigate the impact human activities are having on their local environment and the solutions being implemented in their County. Over the two-year grant period, Pickering Creek Audubon Center (PCAC) educators collaborated with CCPS teachers to design and implement a program that met the teacher's objectives and optimized student learning. PCAC also supported immersive and ongoing professional development for teachers on the MWEE model, using the outdoors for learning, and scientific concepts.



Essential Elements

- **Issue Definition** – How have humans impacted the health of habitats in the Chesapeake Bay watershed?
- **Outdoor Field Experiences** – Students visit Pickering Creek twice. First to investigate the management practices used onsite and again to participate in the implementation of a management practice – the habitat restoration of a freshwater wetland. Students also apply what they learned to assess the health of their local environment. They spend a week surveying the schoolyard and interviewing school staff to evaluate waste, water quality, habitat, and energy.
- **Action Project** – Students go through a democratic decision-making process to select an action project goal, plan, and timeline. Examples of projects include installing native gardens, designing garden maintenance guides for staff, school presentations to improve waste disposal, and a week-long cafeteria competition.
- **Synthesis and Conclusion** – Students take time throughout the program to synthesize what they learned and develop an action plan to address an issue at their school. After implementation, students reflect on the project’s effectiveness and share ideas that can sustain, improve or extend the action of their choice.

“We used to have to convince students that climate change is happening, now we have to convince students that there are things they can do to make a positive difference. The ability for students to get their hands dirty doing something that makes a difference right here at school matters. The program fit well into our curriculum – we worked hard to illustrate that humans have changed the environment, for good and for bad, and now students have a chance to give a little back.” Matt Love, Science Teacher, Colonel Richardson High School



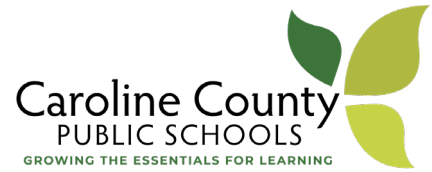
Funding

Award Amount: \$68,400

Match Amount: \$49,406

Total Impact: \$117,806

Project Partners



For more information visit: <https://cbtrust.org/grants/environmental-education/>