LESSON PLAN:
DESIGNING A CEMETERY SECTION

High school (9-12)

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will discuss the impacts of human activity on watersheds and biodiversity, through the lens of landscape management and design at Arlington National Cemetery. Students will have the opportunity to plan a new section of the cemetery using a menu of options related to plantings, stormwater management, parking lots and walkways, fertilizer and pesticide. As they make their choices, students will be asked to consider the needs of the environment, the interests of cemetery visitors, and a budget, reflecting real-world challenges faced by Arlington National Cemetery administration.

Resources include a PowerPoint, student packet, student worksheets, reflection sheet and grading rubric.

Estimated time: 2 class periods (90-120 minutes) with some homework

STANDARDS

Content standards vary by state. This lesson can be used to teach the following state standards and similar wording may be found in your state standards.

AP Environmental Science Learning Objectives:

- STB-1.B: Describe methods for mitigating problems related to urban runoff.
- STB-3.B: Describe the impacts of human activities on aquatic ecosystems.
- STB-3.F: Explain the environmental effects of excessive use of fertilizers and detergents on aquatic ecosystems.
- EIN-4.C: Explain how human activities affect biodiversity and strategies to combat the problem.

Virginia Environmental Science Course Content and Process Guidelines:

The student will investigate and understand the human impact on our environment. Key content includes

- Population ecology, carrying capacity, human population dynamics, impacts of population growth advantages and disadvantages of balancing short term interests with long term welfare of society;
- **individual activities and decisions can have an impact on the environment;**
- **people impact their environment through the use of natural resources to include how agriculture, forestry, ranching, mining, urbanization, transportation, and fishing impact the land, water, air, and organisms; and**

- the allocation of state and federal lands.

The student will investigate and understand civic responsibility and environmental policies. Key content includes

- consumer choices in Virginia impacts jobs, resources, pollution, and waste here and around the world;
- **political, legal, social, and economic decisions may affect global and local ecosystems;**
- the impact of media on public opinion and public policy;
- individuals and interest groups influence public policy;
- **cost-benefit analysis and trade-offs in conservation policy;** and
- compare methods used to protect the environment by local, state, national, and international governments and organizations

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Students will design a section of Arlington National Cemetery using a provided collection of options that demonstrates balance in the needs of the environment and interests of visitors.
- Students will write a short reflection critiquing and justifying their choices and the impact they would have on the environment.

RESOURCES NEEDED

- PowerPoint
- Student packet (1 per student)
- "My Section Design" worksheet (1 per student)
- Graph paper worksheet (1 per student)
- "Designing a Cemetery Section Reflection" sheet (1 per student)

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Introduction: 5-10 minutes

- Prime students with a quick discussion: The United States has rules and regulations in place to protect the environment, and when companies or organizations develop new pieces of land they have to abide by those rules. Based on other concepts we've discussed in class, what are some things you would have to consider when developing land? *Responses will vary, but encourage students to consider impacts on the watershed, biodiversity and climate change.*

Class Lecture: 10-15 minutes

- Slide 2: Environmental Concerns at ANC
    - Looking at this satellite map of Arlington National Cemetery and pictures of its grounds, what do you think might be some environmental concerns there? *Responses will vary*
        - Introduce Arlington National Cemetery with the following information, as necessary:
            - Operated by the U.S. Army since 1864

- Located along the Potomac River in northern Virginia
- Over 600 acres and about 400,000 graves of American military service members and their families
- More than 3 million people visit each year

- Slide 3: Operating within Many Requirements
  - Arlington National Cemetery holds a special place in American society, but it is still required to abide by a number of regulations from a variety of entities.
    - Environmental: ANC must abide by applicable environmental protection laws, and the Army even promotes a Sustainable Design and Development Policy, which is meant to balance current needs with the ability for future generations to continue enjoying environmental resources.
    - Historic preservation: As a historic site, ANC is required to preserve historic features
    - Level III Accredited Arboretum: The Morton Arboretum of Lisle, Illinois, accredits arboreta around the world through the ArbNet accreditation program. In 2015, ANC achieved the second of four levels of accreditation by meeting several professional criteria. In 2018, ANC advanced to Level III by demonstrating that it maintains a collection of 500 species of woody plants, presents substantial educational programming, collaborates with other arboreta, and participates in tree science and conservation.
  - In addition to the many regulations, administration at Arlington National Cemetery must consider their mission to honor America's military dead as well as the interests and needs of visitors.
- Slide 4: Horticulture at ANC
  - The Horticulture team at ANC has the job of balancing all these different requirements while they plan, manage, and maintain the landscape at the cemetery. Some ways they are doing this right now:
    - Designing conservation-oriented landscapes that serve an ecological function and are aesthetically pleasing.
    - Creating gardens that thrive without continuous irrigation. Native plants often take center stage in these types of landscapes. Non-invasive, non-natives can fill that niche as well.
    - Selecting trees not only for their aesthetic and wildlife qualities, but also for their disease resistance. This is especially important with dogwood, cherry and crabapple trees, all of which are particularly vulnerable to both diseases and insects.
    - Incorporating rain gardens to reduce nutrient and sediment run-off.
    - Striving for diversity in all plantings — a key factor in sustainable landscapes.

Activity: 10 minutes + homework

- Slide 5: Developing a Cemetery Section

- ANC recently acquired two pieces of land that they are developing into additional cemetery space. In the real world, an entire team would spend years analyzing the land and putting together plans for development, like you can see on the slide. Today, though, you are going to get to put together a plan for a new section all by yourself, just in a class period.

- Slide 6: Instructions
  - Using the Development Options packet, you are going to design a new section of Arlington National Cemetery. Just like in the real world, each option you choose is going to have an impact on the environment and the visitor experience, and it's going to cost money and take up space in the cemetery. You're going to design your section on the piece of graph paper and keep track of your budget, points, and other details on the worksheet. You need to spend between $25,000-$100,000 on your design.
  - Let's look at the options:
    - Plantings: Each planting has a short description of the plant as well as information on whether it is native or nonnative to northern Virginia, the kinds of wildlife it attracts, the seasons it looks best in, and how much water it requires. Each also comes with a price and takes up a certain number of squares on your graph paper.
    - Stormwater Management Systems: You can choose to install stormwater management systems in your section to decrease runoff. Each type will give you a certain number of environment points and visitor points, and also comes with a price and takes up a certain number of squares on your graph paper.
    - Parking Lots: You can choose to build parking lots in your section to make it easier for guests to visit. The type of material you choose for your parking lot will have different effects on the environment and visitor experience, though. Each type will give you a certain number of environment points and visitor points, and also comes with a price and takes up a certain number of squares on your graph paper.
    - Walking Paths: You can choose to build walking paths in your section to make it easier for guests to visit. The type of material you choose for your paths will have different effects on the environment and visitor experience, though. Each type will give you a certain number of environment points and visitor points, and also comes with a price and takes up a certain number of squares on your graph paper.
    - Fertilizer and Pesticide: You can choose to use fertilizer and/or pesticide to decrease the cost of your plantings, but you should consider what you may need to do to make sure they don't negatively impact the watershed…
    - Street Sweeping: You can choose to pay for street sweeping, which reduces the amount of pollutants in stormwater runoff, and adds 10 environment points to each of your parking lots or walking paths.
  - After everyone has completed their designs, we're going to talk about your choices and some additional considerations that could affect your points. Some things to think about:
    - This is a cemetery – does my design leave plenty of space for graves?
    - Is it better to have a variety of plants or all the same? Should they all be native?

- How do your plantings look year-round?
- Is there a balance between things that are good for the watershed and things that are bad for the watershed?
- What do you like to see when visiting a cemetery or park? Would YOU want to visit this section you have designed?

Post-Activity: 20 minutes

- Slide 7: Your Section Designs
  - Survey the class for information such as:
    - Who had the highest environmental score?
    - Who had the highest visitor score?
    - Whose design was most expensive? Least expensive?
    - Whose plantings required the most water? The least amount of water?
    - What was the most popular planting? Why?
- Slide 8: If Your Design Has…
  - You were tasked with trying to keep track of and balance many different factors. In the real world, those factors are constantly shifting and the information you need to make choices is not always packaged nicely for you. So here are some additional considerations:
    - Arlington National Cemetery is, first and foremost, a cemetery, so it is important that there is plenty of space for graves. Subtract your total number of squares used from 2,000 (the number of squares on the graph paper). If your design has more than 1,500 empty squares, give yourself 20 more visitor points. If your design has fewer than 1,000 squares, subtract 20 visitor points.
    - The grounds of Arlington National Cemetery receive little irrigation, so plants must be able to survive on their own in hot summers with little water. If your water total was less than 60, give yourself 20 more environment and 10 visitor points. If your water total was more than 80, you lose 20 environment and 10 visitor points.
    - Horticulturists at ANC strive for a diversity in planting. If you have more than 10 types of different plantings, give yourself 20 more environment points. If you have fewer than 5 types of different plantings, you lose 20 environment points.
    - ANC horticulturists also try to choose a mix of plantings that will look good year-round. If you have at least five plantings in each season, give yourself 10 more visitor points.
    - Native plants are well-adapted to thrive in the area and support native wildlife populations. If you have at least 10 native plantings, give yourself 10 more environment points.
    - It is important that plants at ANC support local wildlife populations. For each insect-, bird-, or mammal-friendly planting, give yourself 1 more environment point.

        - Fertilizer and pesticides can help plants grow faster and make maintenance cheaper, but if the chemicals in them are not filtered out of runoff they can be harmful to the watershed. This is why stormwater management systems are important, especially if you use fertilizer and/or pesticide. Look at your total number of spaces used for stormwater management.
            - If you used organic fertilizer and the number is less than 50, you lose 30 environment points.
            - If you used chemical fertilizer and the number is less than 80, you lose 30 environment points.
            - If you used pesticide and the number is less than 60, you lose 30 environment points.
            - If you used pesticide and organic fertilizer and the number is less than 110, or if you used pesticide and chemical fertilizer and the number is less than 140, you lose 60 environment points.
    - Ask the class if anyone's points drastically changed and lead a discussion about the experience of making these various development choices.

Reflection Activity: 20-30 minutes

- Have students complete the "Designing a Cemetery Section Reflection," a 300-500 word essay describing:
    - Which factors were most important to you while you made your section design choices,
    - The impact your choices could have on biodiversity in the local area, and
    - The impact your choices could have on aquatic ecosystems.
- If applicable, provide students a vocabulary list of words you would like them to incorporate into their essays.

EXTENSIONS ACTIVITIES

- Share pictures of your students' section designs with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Tag Arlington National Cemetery using @ArlingtonNatl and hashtags #ANCEducation and #ANCEnvironment.
- Take a look at the environmental assessment prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers for Arlington National Cemetery's Southern Expansion project. Notice the types of impacts considered and solutions proposed. The document is available to the public here: https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Portals/0/Docs/Public-Notices/Final-EA-ANC-Southern-Expansion.pdf
- Check out other Arlington National Cemetery public notices and environmental reports here: https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/About/Policies-and-Public-Notices/Public-Notices

PLANNING A VISIT TO ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY?

You can prepare to notice and appreciate the horticulture and conservation efforts at Arlington National Cemetery by checking out the Memorial Arboretum web page: https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore-the-Cemetery/Memorial-Arboretum-and-Horticulture/Welcome

There is also a horticulture-specific walking tour available on the ANC Education website: https://education.arlingtoncemetery.mil/

My Section Design

Use this worksheet to keep track of the development options you chose

Organic Fertilizer: (Yes) or No
Decrease plantings price by 10%

Chemical Fertilizer: Yes or (No)
Decrease planting price by 20%

Pesticide: Yes or (No)
Decrease plantings price by 20%

Street sweeping: (Yes) or No
Add $1,000 to your total price and 10 environment points to each parking lot or walking path

Stormwater Management Systems

Total number of spaces used: 20 + 40 + 32 = 62

Rain Gardens: (1) 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Total price: 5000
Total environment points: 50
Total visitor points: 20

Bioswales: 1 (2) 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Total price: 4000
Total environment points: 100
Total visitor points: 20

Stormwater Filtration Devices: (1) 2 3 4 5
Total price: 8000
Total environment points: 200
Total visitor points: 0

Parking Lots

Total number of spaces used: 98

Gravel: 1 2 3 4 5
Street-sweeping: Yes or No
Total price:
Total environment points:
Total visitor points:

Asphalt concrete: (1) 2 3 4 5
Street-sweeping: (Yes) or No
Total price: 20,000
Total environment points: 25+10
Total visitor points: 150

Permeable pavement: 1 2 3 4 5
Street-sweeping: Yes or No
Total price:
Total environment points:
Total visitor points:

Walking Paths

Total number of spaces used: 40

Gravel: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Street-sweeping: Yes or No
Total price:
Total environment points:
Total visitor points:

Concrete: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Street-sweeping: Yes or No
Total price:
Total environment points:
Total visitor points:

Permeable pavement: 1 2 3 (4) 5 6 7 8 9
Street-sweeping: (Yes) or No
Total price: 12,000
Total environment points: 80 + 40 = 120
Total visitor points: 160

Total environment points: 50+100+200+35+120 = 505 + 20 (Native) + 10 + 20 + 12 + 10 = **577**

Total visitor points: 20+20+150+160 = 350 + 20 + 10 + 10 (Water) = **410** (Wildlife)

Total price: (1040 − 104) + 1000 (Street sweeping) + 5000 + 4000 + 8000 + 20,000 + 12,000 = **50,936**
(squares, water, seasons)

Total number of spaces used: 114 + 62 + 98 + 40 = **314**
(Plantings, fertilizer)

My Section Design

Use this worksheet to keep track of the development options you chose

Plantings

Total native plantings: 1+5+2+2+4+1+1=16
Total nonnative plantings: 2+6=8
Total bug-friendly plantings: 1+5+6+2+4+1+1=20
Total bird-friendly plantings: 1+2+5+2+1+1=12
Total mammal-friendly plantings: 2+5+2+1=10

Total spring plantings: 1+2+5+6+2+2+4+1+1=24
Total summer plantings: 1+2+5+6+2+2+4+1+1=24
Total fall plantings: 1+2+5+6+2+1+1=18
Total winter plantings: 1+2+6=9
Total water used: 2+8+15+6+2+8+8+3+3=55

American Holly: (1) 2 3 4 5
Total water: 2
Total price: 80
Total # spaces: 9

Douglas-fir: 1 (2) 3 4 5
Total water: 8
Total price: 140
Total # spaces: 32

Flowering Dogwood: 1 2 3 4 (5)
Total water: 15
Total price: 250
Total # spaces: 20

Kwanzan Cherry: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Moss Phlox: 1 (2) 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Total water: 2
Total price: 20
Total # spaces: 2

Smooth Hydrangea: 1 2 3 (4) 5
Total water: 8
Total price: 160
Total # spaces: 16

White Oak: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Basswood: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Dwarf Fothergilla: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Gro-low Sumac: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Leyland Cypress: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Red Maple: 1 (2) 3 4 5
Total water: 8
Total price: 200
Total # spaces: 18

Tulip Poplar: (1) 2 3 4 5
Total water: 3
Total price: 110
Total # spaces: 9

Yoshino Cherry: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Common Boxwood: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Eastern Redbud: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Japanese Red Maple: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Liriope: 1 2 3 4 5 (6) 7 8 9
Total water: 6
Total price: 60
Total # spaces: 6

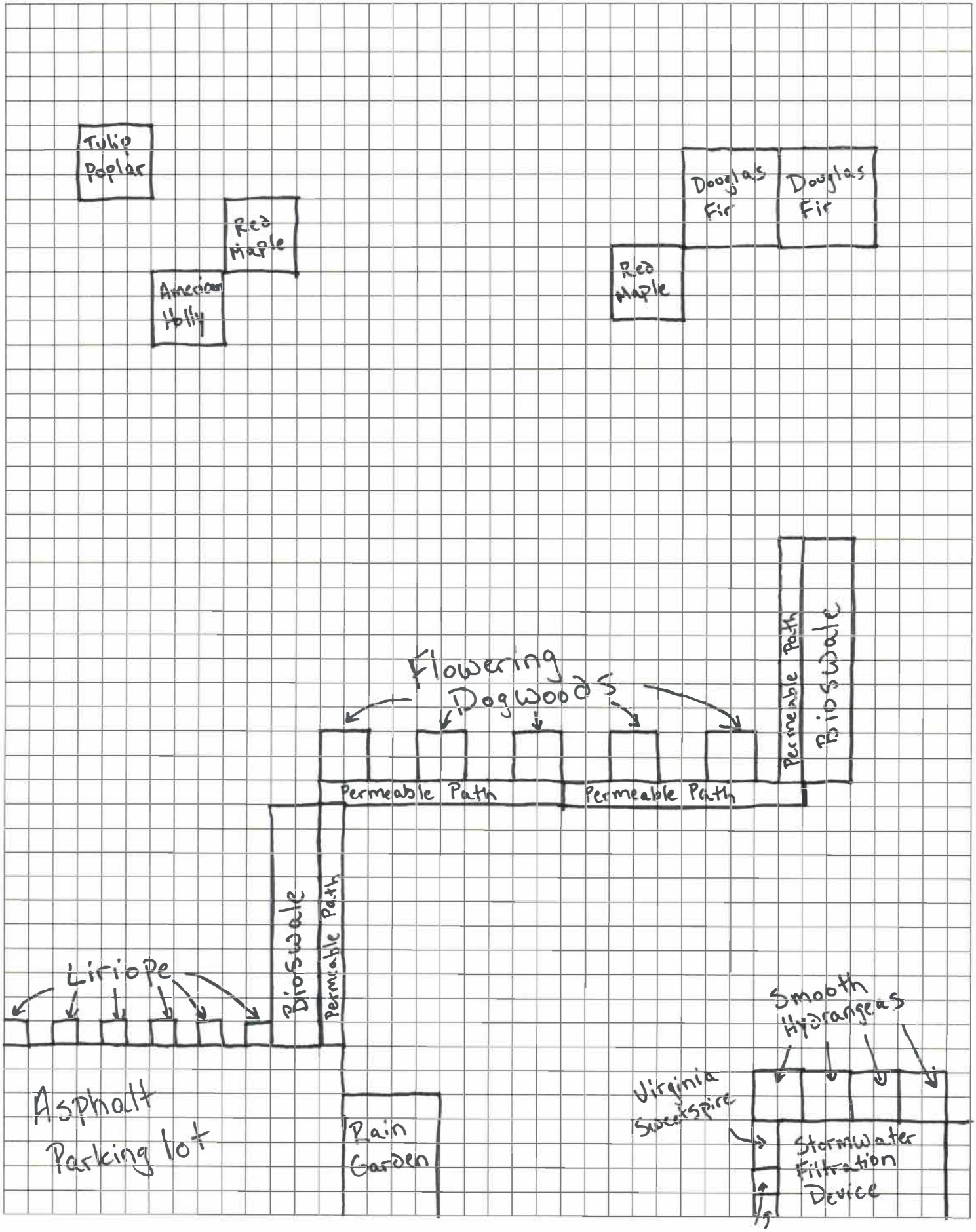
River Birch: 1 2 3 4 5
Total water:
Total price:
Total # spaces:

Virginia Sweetspire: (1) 2 3 4 5
Total water: 3
Total price: 20
Total # spaces: 2

Total Plantings Price:
80+140+250+60+20+200+160+110+20
$1040

Total Plantings Space:
9+32+20+6+2+18+16+9+2=114

Name:



MY SECTION DESIGN

CEMETERY SECTION DESIGN RUBRIC

Use this rubric to assess student achievement of expectations.

Criteria	1	2	3	4	Feedback
Student drew and labeled their section design.					
Student recorded their design choices and tracked their points earned.					
Student made choices that reflect they considered multiple competing factors – biodiversity, sustainability, the interests of visitors, and budget.					
Student appropriately described the impact their choices could have on biodiversity.					
Student appropriately described the impact their choices could have on aquatic ecosystems.					
	Total:				

1 = criteria not met; 2 = criteria partially met; 3 = criteria met; 4 = exceeds expectations

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IMAGES

Slide 1: Elizabeth Fraser, Spring at ANC 2021, March 29, 2021, Arlington National Cemetery. https://flic.kr/p/2kQ9ioV

Slide 2: Elizabeth Fraser, Aerial Photography of Arlington National Cemetery, April 18, 2018, Arlington National Cemetery, https://flic.kr/p/24ihiof

Slide 2: Elizabeth Fraser, Memorial Day Weekend 2020, May 23, 2020, Arlington National Cemetery, https://flic.kr/p/2j5hCSu

Slide 2: Elizabeth Fraser, Section 62, April 27, 2020, Arlington National Cemetery, https://flic.kr/p/2iVfm4K

Slide 2: Google Earth Pro 9.139.0.0 (October 8, 2020), Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA. 38*52'48"N 77*03'03"W, Eye alt 600m. Accessed June 28, 2021. http://www.google.com/earth/index.html

Slide 4: Elizabeth Fraser, Fall foliage in Section 21, October 28, 2020, Arlington National Cemetery, https://flic.kr/p/2k14of7

Slide 4: Elizabeth Fraser, Rain gardens at ANC, July 29, 2019, Arlington National Cemetery, https://flic.kr/p/2gNky6X

Slide 4: Elizabeth Fraser, Spring 2020, April 8, 2020, Arlington National Cemetery, https://flic.kr/p/2iNZ1P7

Slide 4: Elizabeth Fraser, Winter Horticulture Highlights, March 2, 2021, Arlington National Cemetery, https://flic.kr/p/2kGt326

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