

USE THIS ROOTS & SHOOTS COMMUNITY MAPPING TOOL ALONG WITH YOUR CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS TO EXPLORE YOUR COMMUNITY AND:

- Learn the geography and layout of your local area
- Determine areas of need for people, other animals and the environment
- Identify resources that may support efforts to meet community needs
- Form a deeper commitment and resulting **empathy** towards the people, other animals and environment that make up your community

Community mapping practices many types of research including observation, internet and print media searches, as well as interviews with family, friends and community leaders who become **collaborators** with you on your efforts.

 **EDUCATORS:** Learn how to align mapping with different subjects at rootsandshoots.org/lessonplans



TIME REQUIREMENT

2 hours minimum, suggested multi-day/week project



MATERIALS

- Colored pencils, markers, or Crayons
- Regular pencil or pen
- Large sheets of white paper
- Glue or Tape
- Stickers
- Map (printed, purchased or hand drawn)
- Internet
- Google My Maps

My Maps by Google



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1 PART ONE: OBSERVING YOUR COMMUNITY

Take note of what is on the way to school or work when on the bus, in the car, biking, etc. Imagine you are looking at the community from a bird's eye view.

SAMPLE GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Why is it important to learn more about your community?
- What are the roads around your location? Are there any major intersections?
- Notice the cars and people walking outside, imagine where they are going and what they do to have fun, where they work, eat, sleep etc.
- Do you see animals, wild or domestic? Where do they go during the day? get food? play? or go when they are sick?
- Where do you see plants or trees? How do they survive and how did they get there? What makes them important to your community?
- Be introspective! What role do you play in your community? How do the daily actions you take impact the people, other animals and environment around you?

Observations can be recorded in many different ways - photography, artwork, journaling, video production, presentations, the options are endless.

SAMPLE GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How do you feel about your community? Do you feel your community has the resources to meet the needs of both humans and animals? Do you feel that local officials consider the environmental impact of major changes such as new roads, parks, and development?
- What issue have you recently read or heard about that impacts your community? Does this issue primarily impact humans, animals, or the environment? Do you believe the issue will have a positive or negative impact on your community?



2 PART TWO: PREPARING YOUR MAP

Draw, print or purchase a map of your location (OR, skip this step and start your map directly in Google My Maps.) If you are mapping a radius around a zip code or specific location, two to five miles is sufficient. If it is a campus, request a map from the front office. If you are using a purchased map, draw a radius around your community.



OPTIONAL CHALLENGE:

Use a blank sheet of grid paper (or the one included in the end of this guide) and see if you can draw your location from memory. How is your community or campus oriented —to the North, South, East or West?

3 PART THREE: MARKING COMMUNITY ASSETS

See the examples below to identify your community's unique assets. The lists below are just examples of assets, you don't have to map all of them, and you could map others depending on your community. Distinguish the three categories on your map by assigning each a unique identifier (i.e., color, shape, stickers). For example, mark human assets in blue, animal assets in red, and environmental assets in green.

HUMAN ASSETS

- Places for school/work
- Highlight major streets
- Areas of leisure
- Libraries/Community centers
- Places of worship
- Grocery stores, farmer's markets, favorite restaurants
- Hospitals or clinics
- Shelters and food banks
- Fire and police stations

ANIMAL ASSETS

- Animal sightings, species
- Domestic animal use (dog parks, dog friendly trails, etc.)
- Animal shelters
- Animal control facility
- Animal hospitals
- Animal sanctuaries
- Zoos and aquariums



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

- Wild and/or protected spaces
- Bodies of water
- Mountains, beaches, etc.
- Recycling centers, landfill/waste management
- Water facilities
- Power sources (coal, nuclear, wind, solar and geothermal power plants)
- Environmental services (watersheds, reservoirs, wetlands)

4 PART FOUR: REFLECTION

Refer to your map as you reflect on the following suggested questions.

SAMPLE GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Do any of the marked assets above serve more than just the one category? (human, other animal and Environment) Example, a recycling center benefits the environment but also provides a service to humans.
- What are some of the assets above that support the people, other animals, and environmental habitat in your community?
- What things do you like about your community?
 - One quality about your community that makes it a great habitat for people
 - One quality about your community that makes it a great habitat for animals
 - One quality about your community that makes it a great environmental habitat
- What makes you most proud (happy?) to live in your community?
- Is your community meeting the basic needs of people and animals?
- Is your community environmentally sustainable?
- What things could be improved for your community?
 - One quality your community could improve to make it a better habitat for people
 - One quality your community could improve to make it a better habitat for animals
 - One quality your community could improve to make it a better environmental habitat
- What other parts of your community should be included on the map? How are they important to the human, animal, or environmental habitats in your community?
- Reflect on the observations made in Part 1. How did your initial observations influence your map? Are there things that surprised you about your community as you were mapping?



Do this on your map, on a separate sheet of paper, or as a conversation.

GLOSSARY OF COMPASSIONATE SKILLS & TRAITS PRACTICED THROUGH MAPPING



CRITICAL THINKING

Exploring a topic from all angles before making a well-thought-out decision



COLLABORATIVE

Embracing the inspiration and participation of others by accepting new ideas and perspectives



EMPATHETIC

Connecting to feelings outside your own by viewing concepts through the lens of another



INTROSPECTIVE

Examining your beliefs to consider how your actions affect the world around you

See more compassionate leadership traits and mapping activities at rootsandshoots.org.

5 GET STARTED WITH GOOGLE MY MAPS

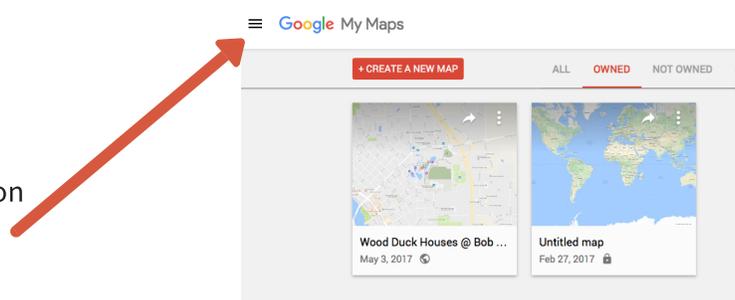
Google My Maps lets you quickly and easily make beautiful maps, and share them with students, teachers and communities. With this tool, you have the ability to:

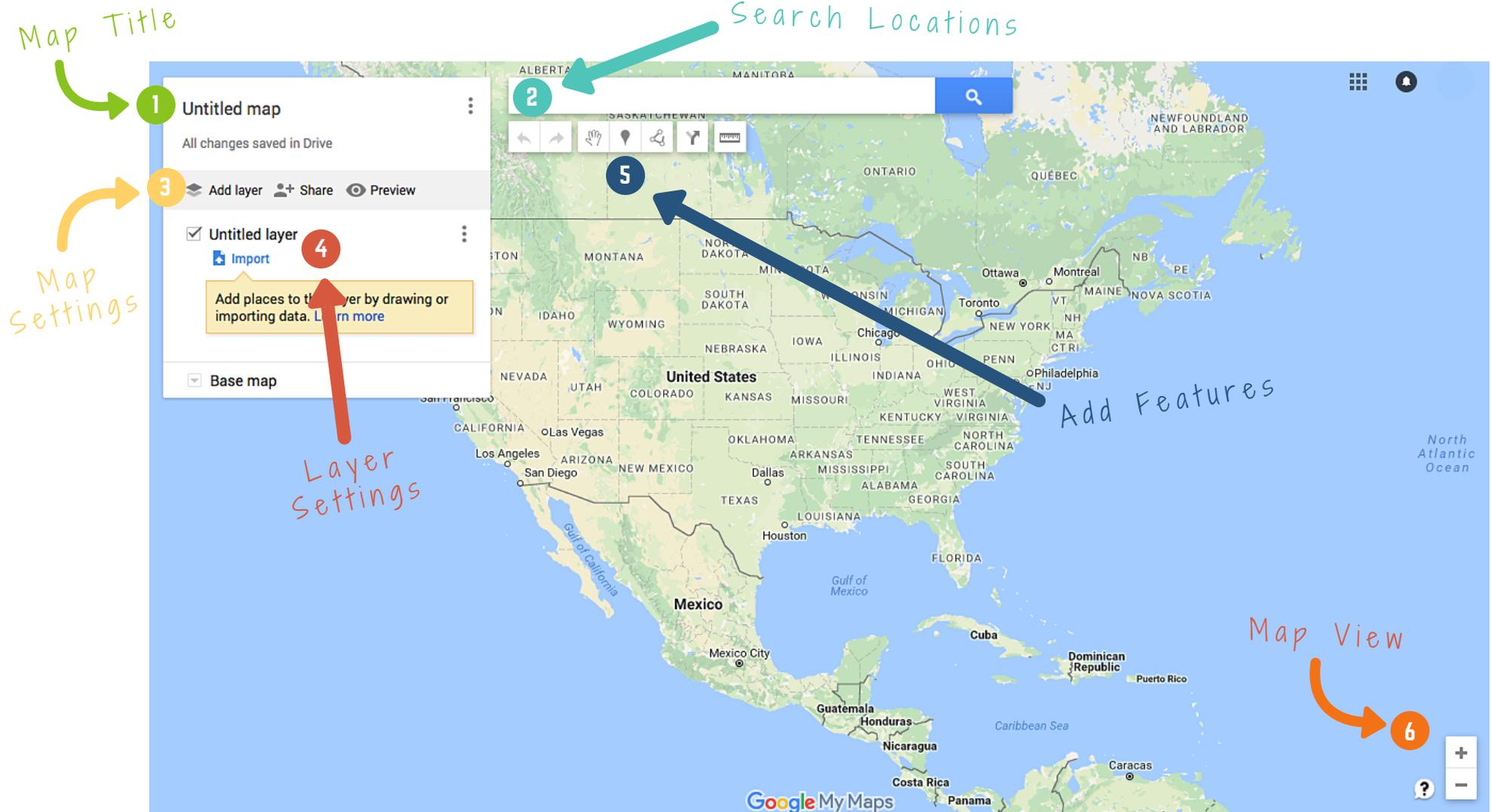
- import data from a spreadsheet, or simply draw and add points of interest, lines and shapes.
- style the points and shapes on your map, and choose from nine base map styles.
- share and collaborate on your map with colleagues or students and embed it on your website and in your Roots & Shoots project profile.

Before you start: In order to use My Maps, your students will need a Google account. In the United States students must be 13 years old to have an account. If outside the US please check your country's age requirements. If your students are younger (or if you don't want to require them to create a Google account for security or privacy reasons), you can create a group dummy Google Account with a shared password that they can all use at the same time.

CREATE A NEW MAP

- Log in to your Google account and navigate to google.com/mymaps.
- In the welcome pop-up, select **CREATE A NEW MAP**. If you don't see the big red button, click on the lines in the top left corner of your screen.



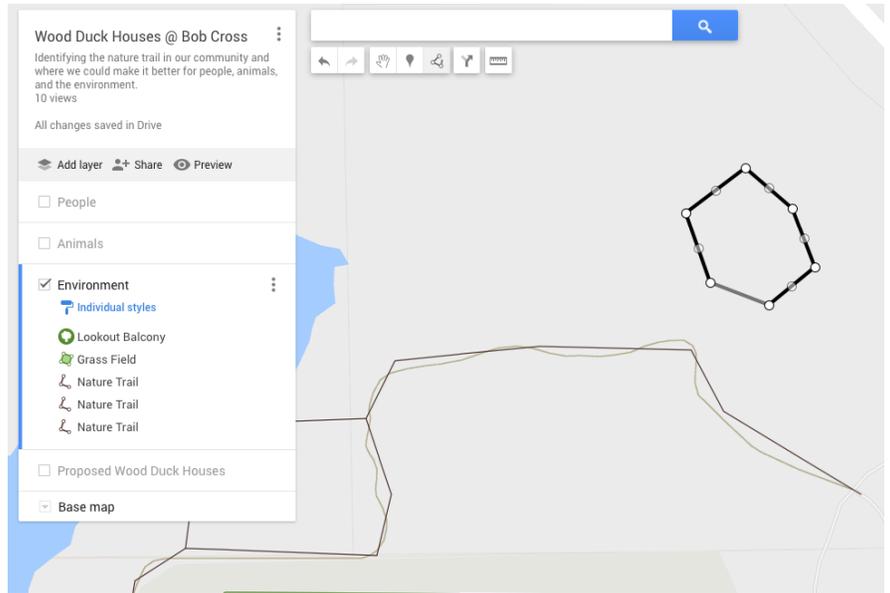


- 1** Click to change the title of your map and add a description of your project.
- 2** Search for a place or address. Your map screen will zoom to that place.
- 3** Click here to add a layer to your map and give it a title.
- 4** View all of your map layers. A "checked" layer means it will show up on your map. You can check and uncheck them as you edit.
- 5** These buttons allow you to add features to your map.
- 6** Use the "+" to zoom in and the "-" to zoom out.

👉 ADDING A SHAPE

You can add a polygon to represent a neighborhood, the grounds of a place, a park, etc. To start drawing a polygon, click on the line tool under the search bar (GUIDE #5). Click on your map to create points along the line and outline your shape. Once you are finished, double click your last point to complete the shape.

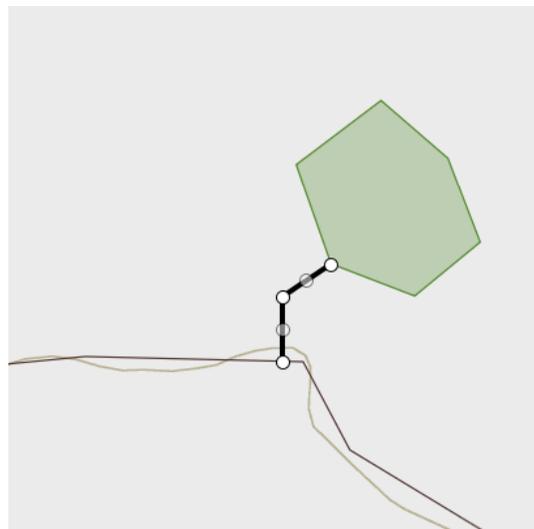
Don't forget to give it a title and description, by clicking on your shape and editing the same way you did with your points.



 **TIP:** Make sure you can see the extent of the area in your map view before starting to draw your polygon.

👉 ADDING A LINE

You can also add a line to represent a path or route. Click on the line tool under the search bar (GUIDE #5) in order to start drawing a line. Click on the map to draw points along the line. Double-click the last point of the line to stop editing.



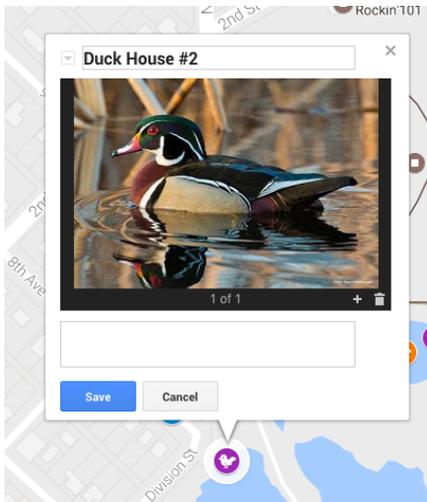
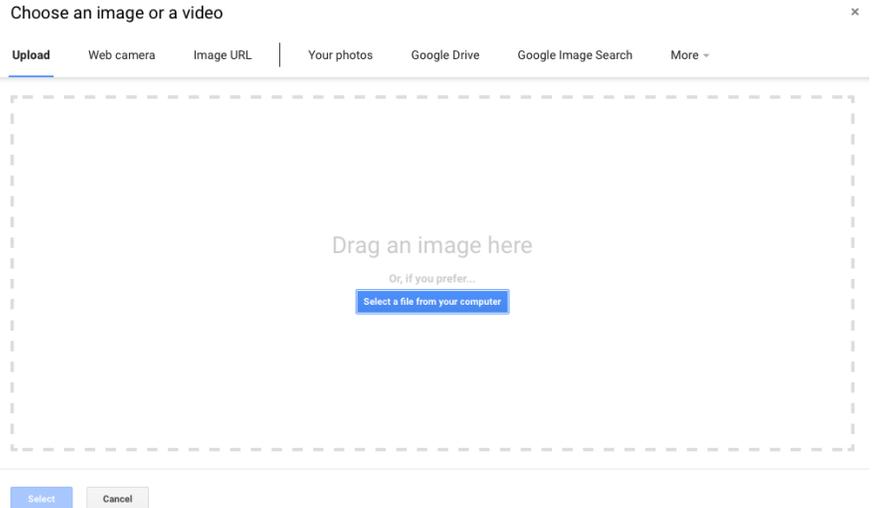
Don't forget to give it a title and description by clicking on your line and editing the same way you did with your points.

 **TIP:** If you need to zoom in or out to more easily draw your line, use the minus button at the bottom lefthand corner of the map. You can also edit your line later if you need to.

8 ADD PHOTOS/VIDEOS TO YOUR FEATURES

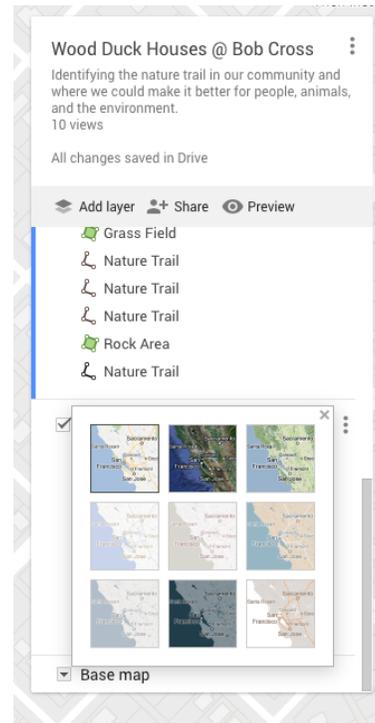
To add photos or videos to your features, click on the feature to open the editing box. This time, click on the camera icon and a new window will appear. Here, Google allows you to choose from many options, including uploading your own photos and searching the web for some ideas.

When you have the photo you want, click on it and hit the blue “select” button. Now when you click on your point, it will look like the one below. Hit “Save” to complete the process.



9 CHOOSE YOUR BASE MAP

In the lefthand panel, locate the “Base map” section and click the downward facing arrow to the left. You will have a choice between nine base maps.



11 START YOUR CAMPAIGN

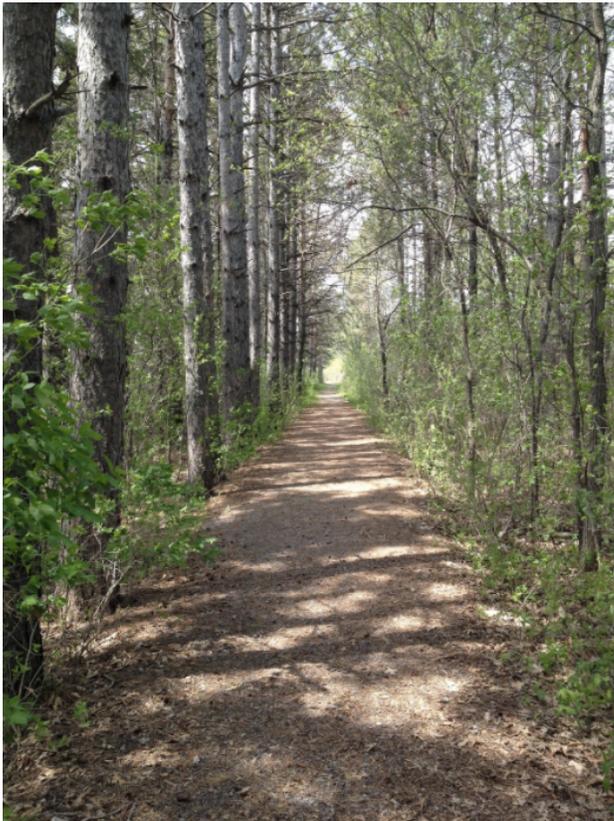
- Plan your project! Visit www.rootsandshoots.org/getstarted to get some project planning tips and enter your project idea.
- Be counted! Update your project report www.rootsandshoots.org/createproject with your campaign outcomes.
- Visit www.rootsandshoots.org/takeaction for some ideas on how you can use your digital community map throughout your Roots & Shoots campaign.
- Celebrate Your Impact! Visit www.rootsandshoots.org/celebrate for some ideas.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: WOOD DUCK HOUSES AT BOB CROSS PARK

A group of elementary students in Sauk Rapids, Minnesota went on a walk through the Bob Cross Nature Preserve. Their assignment was to **observe the wetland birds** that lived on the ponds and count how many of each species they noticed. They saw many Canada geese and Mallard ducks, but they noticed that there weren't as many Wood ducks around as they expected there would be.

They wondered...*why weren't there many wood ducks at the park?* To answer this, they investigated the area using Google My Maps. **They created a community map that highlighted people, animal, and environmental assets at the park** — this would show them different types of habitats and land uses inside and around the park.

The class projected the map onto a whiteboard, where they could all contribute and add things they had observed during their walk. Their completed map illustrated that there were many ponds and other animals living at the park, but the mystery of the missing Wood ducks remained.



Determined to gather more information, **they reached out to a community collaborator.** The local Department of Natural Resources (DNR) discussed with the students where Wood ducks live, what they eat, and their life cycle. They learned that Wood ducks live in wooded swamp areas and prefer to nest in tree cavities or similar structures.

They knew from their map that the park had the habitat Wood ducks like, but how could they attract them? The DNR told them that the ducks probably needed a place to nest and told them about Wood duck boxes. With help again from the DNR, **they used their community map to pick the best locations for the boxes.**

Now, students are in the process of working with the DNR and reaching out to other community collaborators to learn how to design their boxes. They also plan to reach out to other community members for help fundraising and building the boxes. Their campaign will span the school year and the students are eager to see their impact on their community — for people, animals, and the environment.