

# DownStream

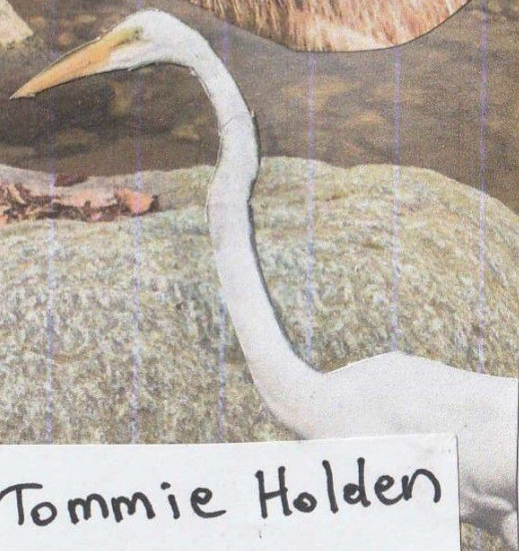
Taking Care of Our Waterways  
and One Another

Walnut Creek Wetlands

Learning Network

Final Project

Marty Rogers & Tommie Holden





## Introduction & Context

We would like to begin with an acknowledgment that we are living on stolen land that was and is still today the territory of the Mánu: Yj̓̓suw̓̓ (Catawba), Skaruhreh/Tuscarora, and Lumbee people.

We would also like to acknowledge we are learning and living in a historically Black neighborhood-Biltmore Hills.

This booklet (or zine) is our final project as part of the Walnut Creek Wetlands Learning Network cohort. We are so thrilled to have been part of this class!

To begin, let's look at some vocabulary so we can all be on the same page...



# Vocabulary

## **Downstream**

The direction water flows in a river or stream

## **Ecosystem**

A group of plants, animals, and their environment that all depend on each other

## **Environmental Justice**

The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of identity and background in the planning of environmental laws, regulations, and policies

## **Environmental Racism**

The disproportionate burden of environmental hazards (pollution, toxic waste, and more) placed on communities of color and people in low-income areas

## **Green Infrastructure**

Using nature or nature-like systems to help manage water, like rain gardens or green roofs

## **PCBs (Polychlorinated biphenyls)**

A group of 209 man-made chemicals that are toxic and accumulate in the environment

## **Pollutant**

Any substance that is harmful to the environment

## **Runoff**

Rainwater that doesn't soak into the ground and flows over streets, roofs, or land, picking up pollutants as it flows

## **Watershed**

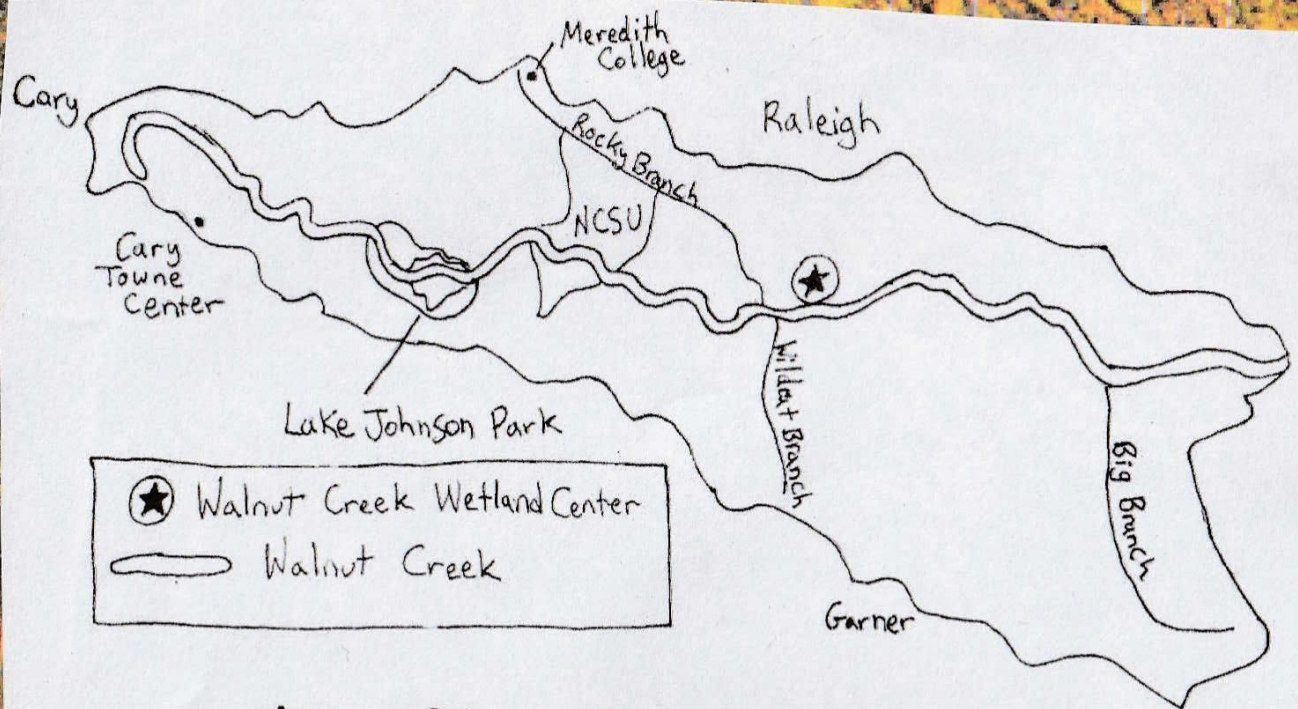
Land that sends water to the same river, lake, or ocean

## **Wetlands**

Areas where the soil is saturated with water, either permanently or seasonally, supporting plant and animal life



## Where We're Located



A map of the Walnut Creek Watershed

A **river basin** is the land around a river that contains many smaller watersheds. Most of Raleigh is located in the **Neuse River Basin**.

A **watershed** is the land that sends water into streams, rivers, etc. The Walnut Creek Wetlands Center is nestled in the **Walnut Creek Watershed** (imagine that!)



# Environmental Damage We Face

The Walnut Creek Watershed faces both historical and current impairments.

## Litter (Individual & Industrial)

- Trash that is not properly disposed of ends up in our waterways through storm drains that lead to streams and rivers

## Pollution & Runoff

- Fertilizers, oils, chemicals, etc. drain directly into our waterways :(

## Construction Debris and PCBs

- PCBs have been banned in the U.S. since 1979, but they are long-lasting and are currently affecting 100% of the watershed due to renovations and historical dumping

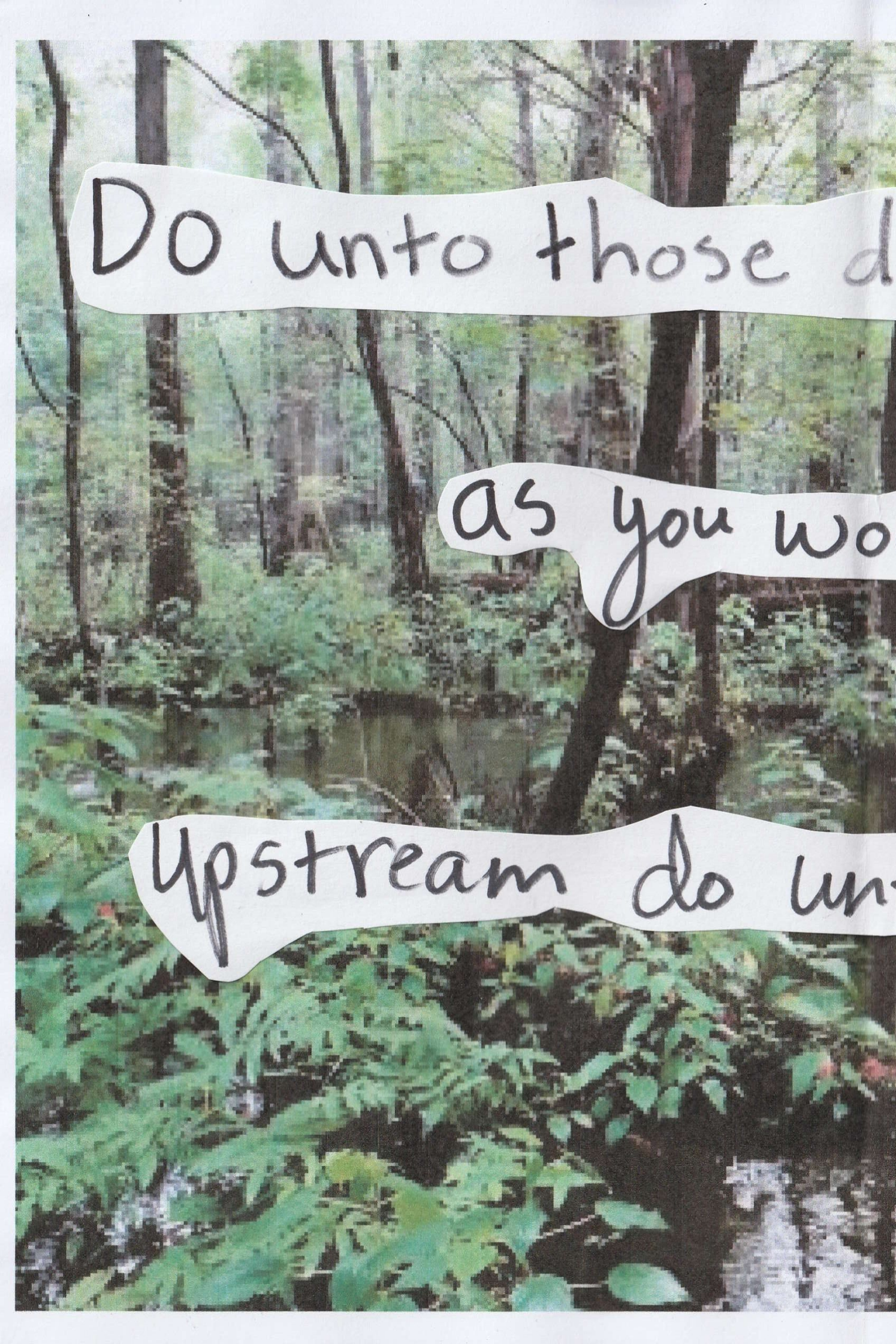
## Erosion

- Trees and other plants hold the soil on the banks of rivers together so areas without them face increased sediment runoff
- More concrete = more runoff = erosion

## Climate Catastrophe (Global Warming)

- Less wetlands = more heat



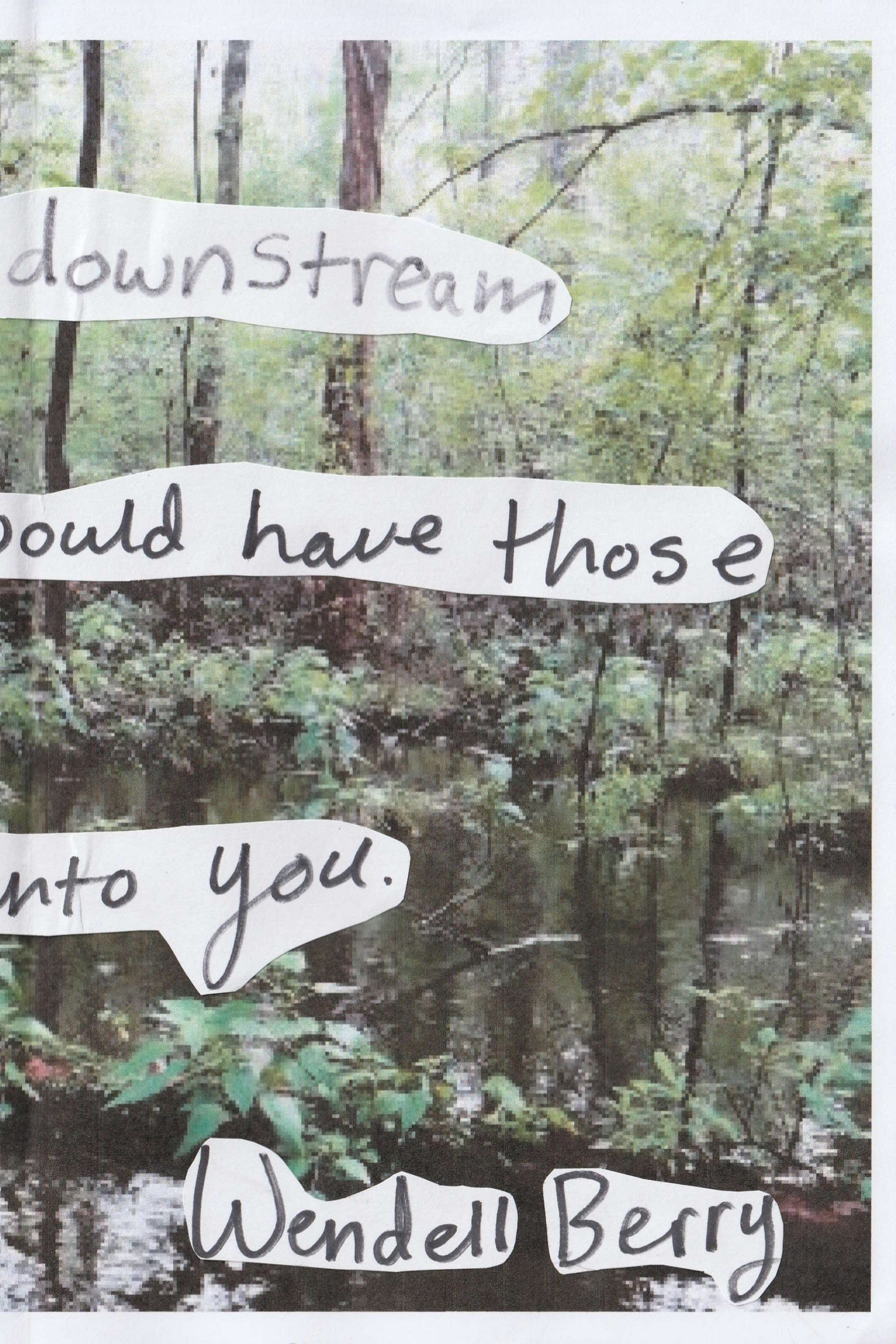
A photograph of a forest stream with handwritten text overlays. The stream flows through a dense forest with tall, thin trees and lush green foliage. The water is clear, reflecting the surrounding greenery. The text is written on white, torn-edge paper strips placed over the image.

Do unto those d

as you wo

Upstream do un



A photograph of a forest stream with handwritten text overlays. The stream flows through a dense forest with tall, thin trees and lush green foliage. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding greenery. Three pieces of white paper with handwritten text are placed over the image. The text reads: "downstream", "could have those", and "into you." followed by the signature "Wendell Berry".

downstream

could have those

into you.

Wendell Berry





## What We Can Do

### Healthy Habits

To be totally honest, we are up against a lot. There is so much to fix and at times it makes sense to feel hopeless. **However, we are so powerful!** More powerful than any polluting corporation or crooked politician. Here are some ways we can devote ourselves to the environment and one another.

#### Take a Look at Your Gardening Habits

- The Roundup that you use doesn't only kill "weeds" it kills bees and harms the critters that eat the bees
- Switch to natural methods of fertilizing and weed culling

#### Reduce, Reuse, Try Not to Consume!

- Use what you've got until it breaks, fix it when it breaks, and use it again and again until it can't be fixed no more

#### Pick up Litter

- Keep a bag on you when you go for a stroll or a drive, pick as you go!





# What We Can Do

## Education and Outreach

- Join a learning community!
- Challenge myths and misinformation

## Advocacy & Legal Action!

- Cast your vote for parties and people who center environmental care
- Show up to planning sessions, Q&As, town halls, etc. put on by the city
- Protest! Disrupt! Civil disobedience!

## Participate!

- The Big Sweep litter pick up
- Sign up for classes offered through the City of Raleigh and environmental groups

## Support the Walnut Creek Wetland Center and other city parks and institutions!

- Spend time in our protected nature spaces
- Take advantage of what the city offers and provide positive feedback!



The background of the entire page is a collage of autumn leaves in shades of orange, yellow, and brown, scattered over a dark blue and black background that resembles water ripples or a textured surface.

## Resources

We are lucky, blessed, privileged to have access to so many resources to help us engage with our environment! Here are just a few...

### **Partners for Environmental Justice**

[pejraleighnc.org](http://pejraleighnc.org)

### **NC Water Resources Research Institute**

[wrrri.ncsu.edu](http://wrrri.ncsu.edu)

### **How's My Waterway by the EPA**

[mywaterway.epa.gov](http://mywaterway.epa.gov)

### **City of Raleigh Rainwater Rewards**

You may qualify for a rain garden or cistern on your property!

### **NC Environmental Justice Network**

[ncejn.org](http://ncejn.org)

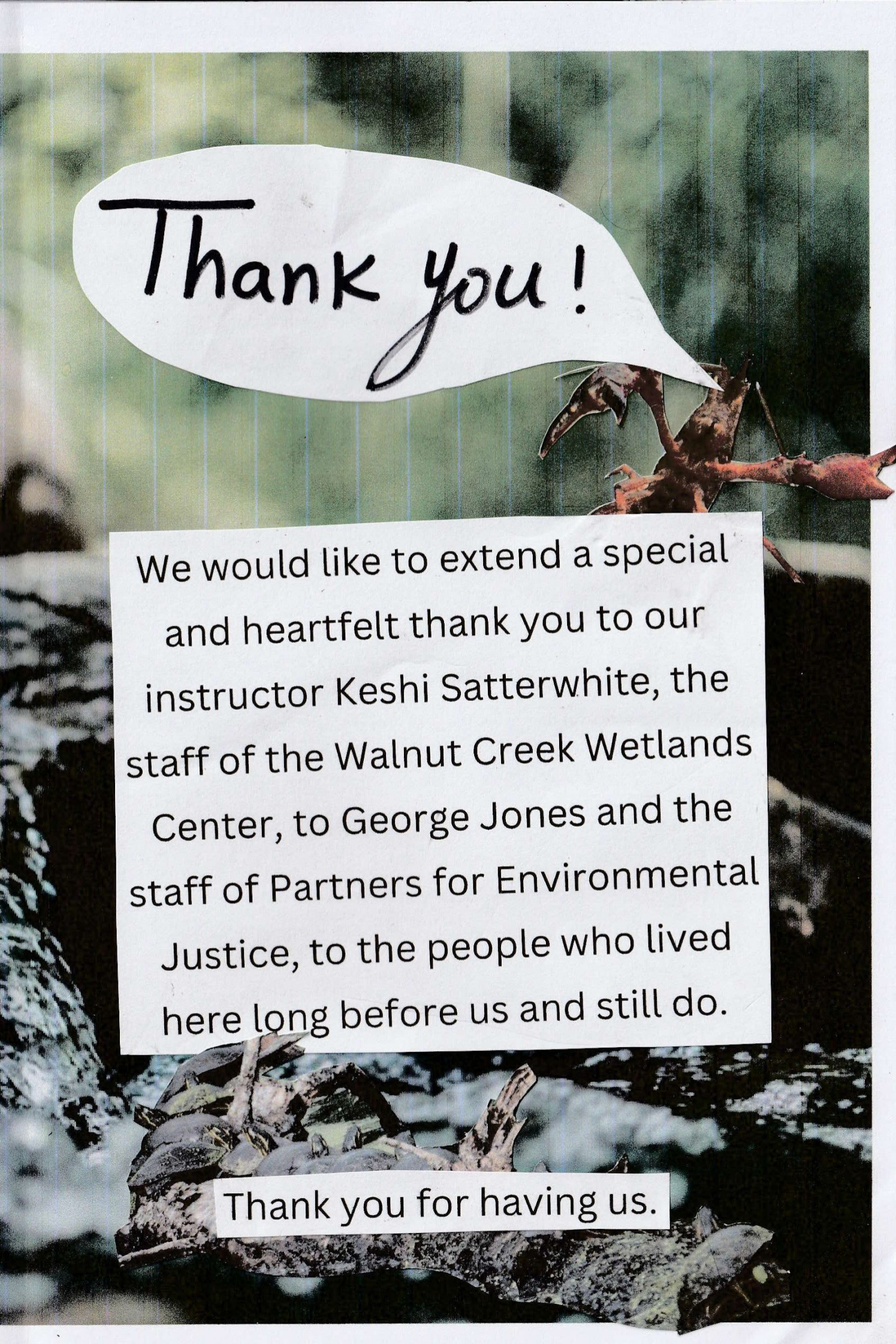
### **Environmental Education Certification**

[eenorthcarolina.org/certification](http://eenorthcarolina.org/certification)

### **City of Raleigh Classes & Activities**

[raleighnc.gov/services/parks-programs](http://raleighnc.gov/services/parks-programs)





Thank you!

We would like to extend a special and heartfelt thank you to our instructor Keshi Satterwhite, the staff of the Walnut Creek Wetlands Center, to George Jones and the staff of Partners for Environmental Justice, to the people who lived here long before us and still do.

Thank you for having us.



# WETLANDS WORD SEARCH

WATERSHED  
DOWNSTREAM  
WALNUTCREEK  
EPA

PRESERVATION  
EROSION  
PEJ  
ECOSYSTEM

PCB  
RUNOFF  
GREENSPACE  
LITTER

WETLANDS  
COMMUNITY  
POLLUTANT  
JUSTICE

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K	O	E	C	O	S	Y	S	T	E	M	F	M	H
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Thanks  
For Reading!

