



**Baltimore Woods
Nature Center**

Nature in your hands

“Down the River”

Introduction: In this activity, we will be looking at life alongside a river. Pretend that you have won the lottery and bought yourself a plot of land next to a wide, flowing river. You have some neighbors who also just got a piece of land and are looking to develop it. Think about what you would want to build. It could be your dream house, a business, or a nature preserve– be creative!

Each member of your household will get to choose a plot and design their own property.

If you have the space, you can pick and design two properties each if you want!

You can draw out your properties by using sidewalk chalk on the sidewalk or your driveway like shown below with the lines coming from the river representing the lines between two properties:



OR You can use the river with property lines already drawn on the next page.

Plot 1

Plot 2

Plot 3

Plot 4

Plot 5

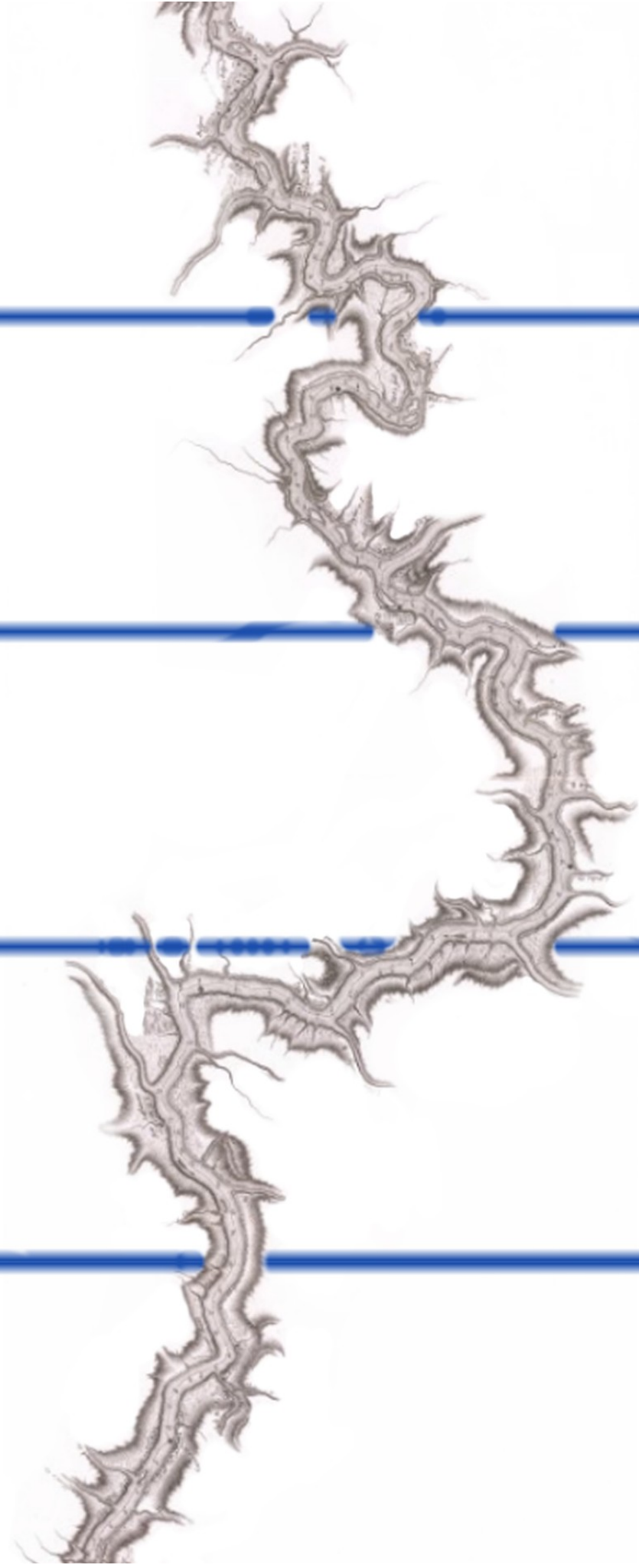
Plot 6

Plot 7

Plot 8

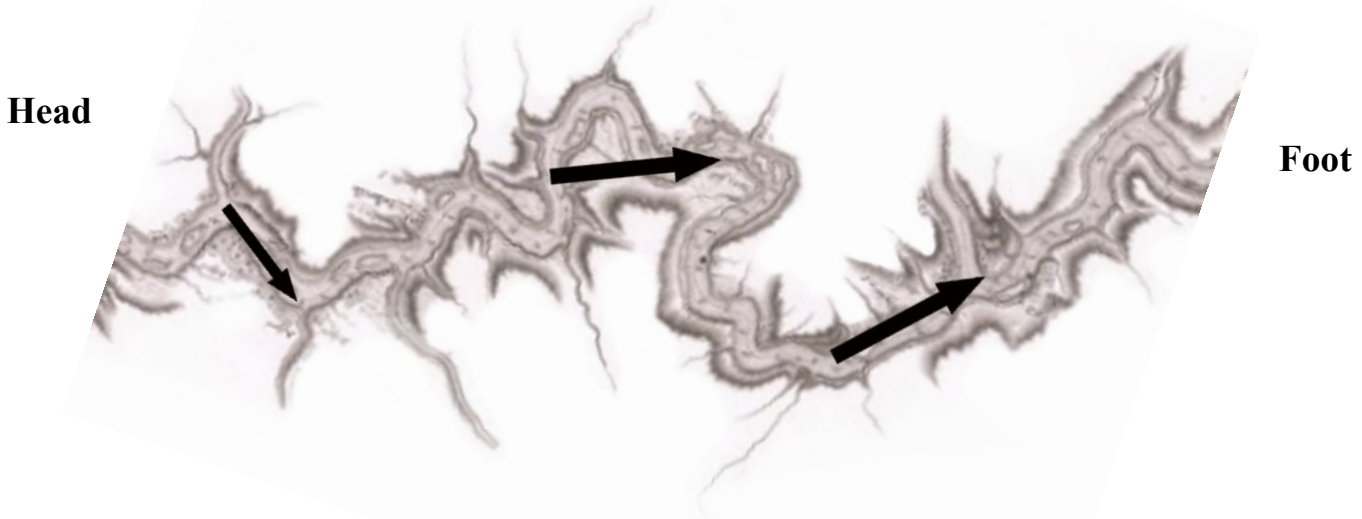
Plot 9

Plot 10



Now that you have drawn your properties, you'll need to decide which way the river is flowing.

Draw some arrows along the river to show its direction. Whose property is at the "head" of the river, where the water is coming from and whose is at the "foot", where the water ends up? This will be important!



Now we will take a closer look at our properties, and we'll need some things to act as markers. This can be any small item: pennies, crayons, berries or anything you have a lot of around the house.

As a group, look at each property starting at the head of the river, moving towards the foot. Think about how much **pollution** each property creates. Is it a farm with lots of animals and manure? Is it a big hotel? Or is it a nature preserve that creates hardly any pollution? Decide as a group how to rate it from one to ten— give the property owner ten items if they make tons of pollution or one if they make hardly any. Do this for all of the properties.



Once they're all done, it's time to start the river flowing! The person at the head of the river on each of its sides should give **half** of their markers to the person downstream from them. Then that person must give **half** of their markers (including the markers they were just given) to the person downstream from them. If you have an odd number, give the number that is a little **more** than half to your downstream neighbor. (If you have five, give three to your neighbor). Once you are all done, think about how much pollution everyone ended up with.

Does this seem fair? Are there ways we could have **reduced** the amount of pollution getting into the river?

Be creative! You don't need to be an expert— we need everyone's new ideas to solve problems like this!

Send your thoughts and river drawings to us at connect@baltimorewoods.org!