Restoring the Creek

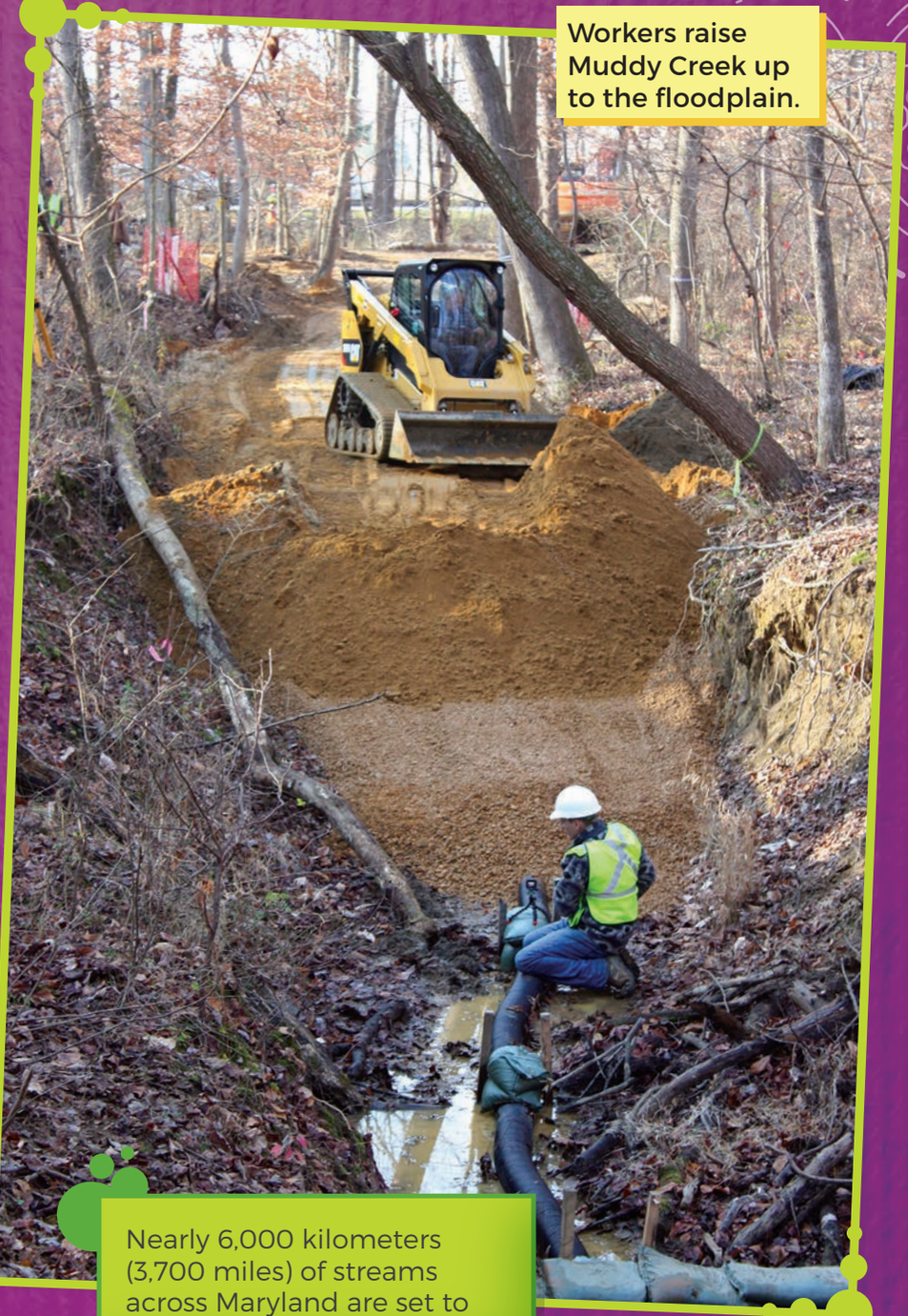
A plan was needed to restore Muddy Creek. What could be done to help the stream? Scientists broke the project into steps. Three important things needed to happen.

First, the creek bed needed to be raised. The creek bed had eroded too much. It was too deep to let water spill over into the floodplain. To restore the creek, the creek bed needed to be closer to the floodplain.

Second, the water in the creek needed to slow down. Slower water would cut down on erosion and damage to the creek in the future.

Third, the floodplain needed to be restored. Many of the water-loving plants that once lived on the banks of Muddy Creek had died. Plants that thrived in dry soil grew in their place. Many animals that lived on the bank had to find other homes. A raised creek bed would restore the area. Plants and animals that had left would be able to return

collecting water samples



Workers raise Muddy Creek up to the floodplain.

Nearly 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) of streams across Maryland are set to be restored by the year 2025.

Going Buggy

Every healthy ecosystem includes a variety of living things. These things need each other to survive and thrive. It is true that there are many insects that can harm plants. But there are other insects that plants need to grow well. To help their crops, farmers can grow certain plants to attract those useful insects. A portion of a healthy organic farm should be set aside to attract these insects.

Helpful insects can be grouped into three main categories. The first category is pollinators. The second is predators. And the third is parasites. Each group has its own place in an organic farm.

Pollinators

Pollinators are essential to plant life. They spread pollen. Pollen helps plants make seeds. In turn, the plants provide food for the insects. They help one another.

One of the most important pollinators is the honeybee. Without bees, much of the plant life on Earth would die out. Bees are really that important!

a bee covered in pollen

A honeybee collects pollen from a flower.

MATHEMATICS

Balance of Nutrients

Plants need nutrients to grow. Organic farmers can test soil to measure the levels of nutrients. Then, they can add just what the crop needs. If there is too little of any nutrient, compost and soil additives can make it right.