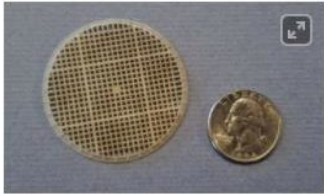




1 The Accidental Spill

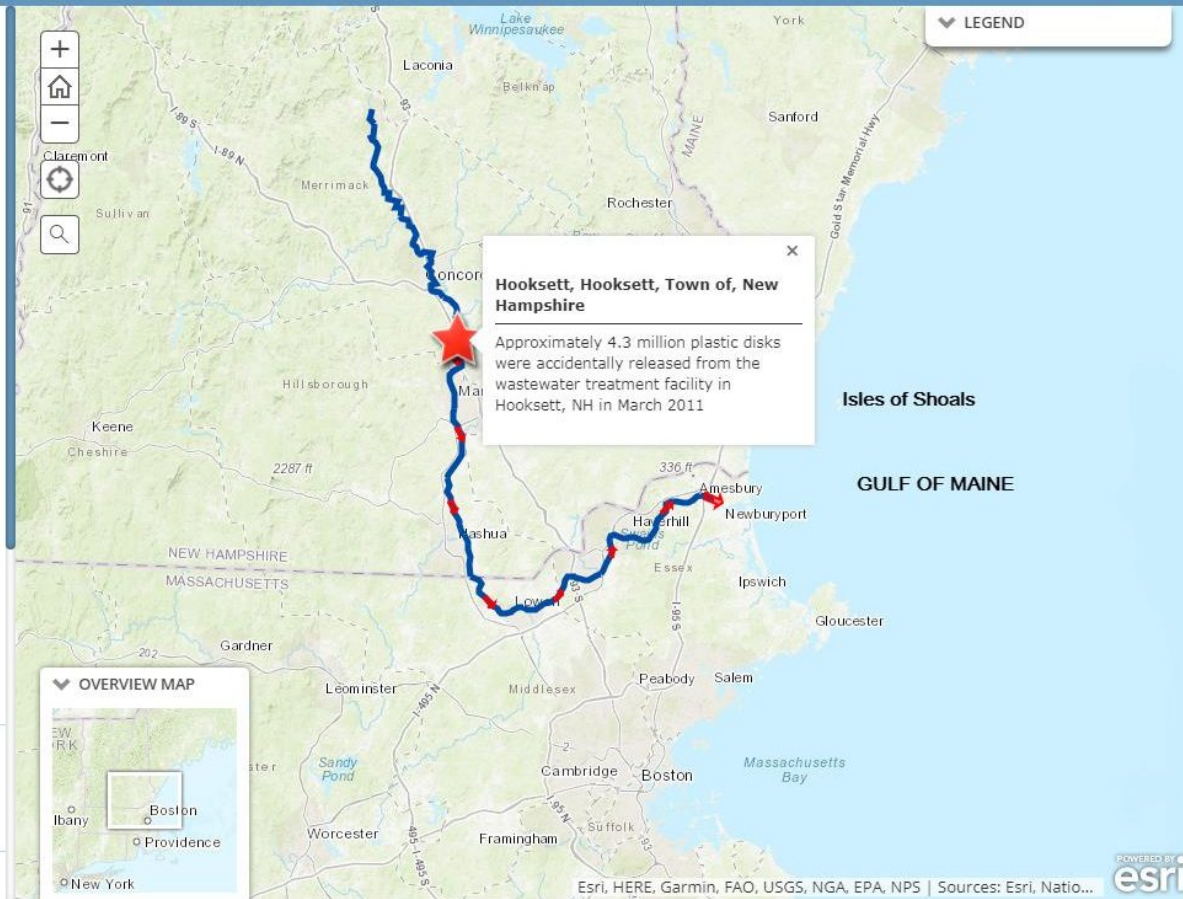
On March 6, 2011, over 4 million plastic disks were accidentally discharged from the wastewater treatment plant in Hooksett, NH. The disks, also known as biofilm chips, were designed to assist with water treatment by providing additional surface area for bacteria to remove excess nutrients from the wastewater.

The white disks are about 2 inches in diameter. They were released into the Merrimack River, which is the thick blue line shown on the map. This river provided a pathway for the disks to reach the Gulf of Maine.

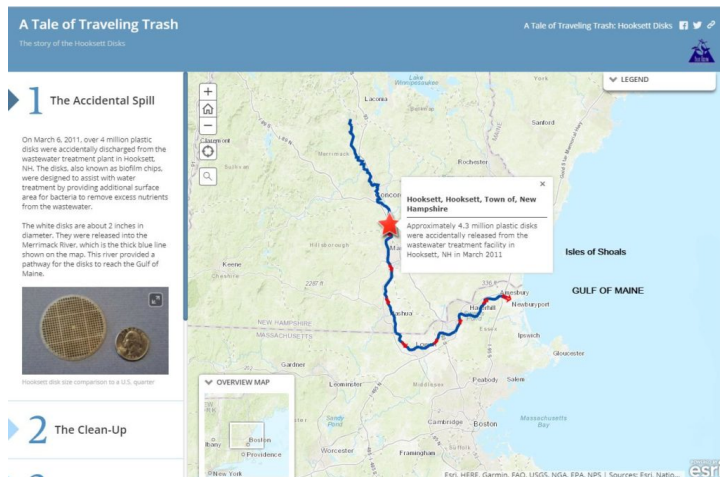


Hooksett disk size comparison to a U.S. quarter

2 The Clean-Up



BIG CYPRESS — High school juniors at Ahfachkee School are taking on a new kind of history project this year - laying out the Seminole story online using a digital mapping platform.



An example of a story map created with ArcGIS.
(Courtesy ArcGIS.com)

The Tribal Historic Preservation Office will lead the project to teach students in Antonio Wright's history class about utilizing geographic information system technology (GIS) to tell digital stories with audio and visual elements. This project will require the 10 students to use the online application ArcGIS and show them how THPO uses similar systems to document Seminole history and artifacts.

Juan Cancel, THPO chief data analyst, said this project aims to make technology a more efficient and simple tool for students and allow them to share their version of the Seminole way of life.

"We want to get to a point where [the students] can understand mapping and storytelling the Tribe's story from their point of view," he said. "They're younger and have a different idea of things ... why not try to map out what that is?"

For THPO Community Engagement Coordinator Quenton Cypress, the new perspective the students have of Seminole history is crucial to preserve the Tribe's future. He explained that having younger generations seriously think about the Tribe's history and document it in new ways allows them to understand the significant contributions the Tribe has made to the community, country and world.

"A lot of times when kids think of what it is to be a Seminole, they don't really know what it is because all they see is the Hard Rock or think we're as big as we are because of the casinos. That's really not the case," he said. "[This project] is a way of humbling ourselves and remembering where we came from and that it's always a fight to progress further. It's great because it helps them remember who we are."



Juan Cancel and Lacey Cofer prepare to teach students about story mapping and prepare them for the semester-long project. (Courtesy Antonio Wright)

Cypress hopes that one student will focus on the cattle industry because it is where the Tribe originally got the funds needed to start its casino industry. He explained it's one of the lesser-known facts of the Tribe and it's an important one to share. Luckily, Wright said that a student did select the topic for his project. Other topics include music, key Native American locations and events, and the role of fashion and how it's changed over time.

While a main reasoning for the project is to teach students about Seminole history, project ideas do not have to necessarily focus on traditional history. Students can concentrate on racism, sports, music or anything in between, so long as they keep the focus on the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

"They like the idea that it's their voice and they have a say in how they're going to tell their version of the story," said Cancel. "They have a chance to tell the world whatever they want the world to know about a certain topic."

Mya Cypress, 16, is focusing her project Seminole Tribe women. She is dividing the topic into fashion, common misconceptions of Native American women and Native women's rights. Cypress said there has not been enough acknowledgement of Native women, especially those of the Seminole Tribe, and she wants to be their voice.

"Right now, we live in a world where being a woman is rightfully celebrated. The story mapping project is giving me a platform where I can celebrate the women in my Tribe, like Betty Mae Jumper, the women who are known for their amazing accomplishments, and the women that I see day-to-day, like the grandmothers, moms and daughters that are continuously working to ensure the future of my Tribe," she said. "There's never a day that goes by where I doubt the resiliency of these women and with this project I hope that I can showcase that as accurately as possible."

Lacey Cofer, THPO geospatial analyst, added that THPO is encouraging students to be creative and maybe even delve into controversial issues.

"We really want them to choose things that mean something to them and that a lot of people might not know a lot about," she said, adding that using this kind of technology provides an atypical, but equally important education. "It's not just teachers teaching the facts; [students] are actually learning the information from people who are using it in real life. I think it gives them a lot of flexibility. It gives them an opportunity to be creative and to learn in a different way besides a textbook."

As part of the project, Cancel, Cofer and other THPO employees will visit with the students weekly to help with projects. These trainings will focus on how to use GIS, as well as finding resources at the museum, building story maps, cartography, writing skills and public speaking. All the trainings are seen as building blocks by the THPO staff, leading up to the students being able to adequately use more advanced technology in their academic and professional careers.

“In this day and age and in the environment that they’re going to be working in when they’re adults, being tech savvy is pretty much a requirement,” said Cofer. “Learning the technological skills and other skills involved - like research and public speaking and writing - are going to prepare them for no matter what path they take after they graduate. People who are introduced to technological advances early on are going to have an advantage.”

Mya Cypress, who hopes to attend Washington State University to study English, agreed with Cofer, explaining that ArcGIS allows her to effectively use her passions for writing and photography and help her share her message with others.

“[Technology like this] creates more opportunities for people like me to want to raise awareness about important things or just simple interests,” she said.

While THPO is handling the program training, Wright is handling classroom logistics.

According to Wright, students will receive participation grades for the project since the topic isn’t a part of state curriculum. Students are expected to complete the bulk of the projects outside of the classroom.

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