

# SPARKS FARM

Research & Visual Study

2017 INTEGRATED MEDIA  
ARTS RESEARCH PROJECT

CLIENT//  
Dr. Matthew Beaky

TIMELINE//  
Spring 2017

EXECUTED BY//  
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FACULTY MENTOR//  
Professor Ryan Gibboney

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# RESEARCH

Sparks Farm

RESEARCH PROCESS

PAST BRAND

DATA

FINDINGS

## RESEARCH PROCESS

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This project was offered to me through the Integrated Media Arts practicum course at Juniata College with Ryan Gibboney. Dr. Beaky, the head of the Steering Committee for Sparks Farm, asked her for a design student to work on visuals for the recently donated property.

What follows is my research process from the beginning of the project starting in January of 2017. Before creating visuals for any project, especially such a recent acquisition, many people on campus aren't familiar with yet, I needed a solid foundation of research to accurately capture the spirit of the place.

I tried to gather both qualitative and quantitative data through a survey and face-to-face conversations ranging from students, to professors, to administrators. This was important to me because

I wanted many of the Juniata community's voices to be heard and represented because, in the end, Sparks Farm is a space for them.

Captured in the next pages are the data, stories, and opinions I collected, including a section on people's motivations for visiting. This can be used by the college to better advertise the space and experience to our community, as well as see what draws people to Sparks, because in the end, a visit to the Farm is truly an experience. All of this tied together to assist me in capturing the spirit of the place visually.



## ORIGINAL BRAND



Sparks Farm is also referred to as No-Dse-Wa-Ope by the Spark's, meaning a locality a group of people have become attached to, in the Osage language of the Susquehannocks. The farm had no previous distinct visual identity other than the use of this tag-line.

Previous to the donation, only a wood sign (in the right corner) welcomed visitors, and the illustration was used for the children's sleepaway camp run during the summer.

After the donation a banner was added by Juniata on the property. There were no other traceable visuals, and no pictures provided by community news sources in their articles other than the Juniata Magazine's article. This left plenty of room for creativity.

## Juniata Receives Bedford-Area Farm Donation from Altoona Educators

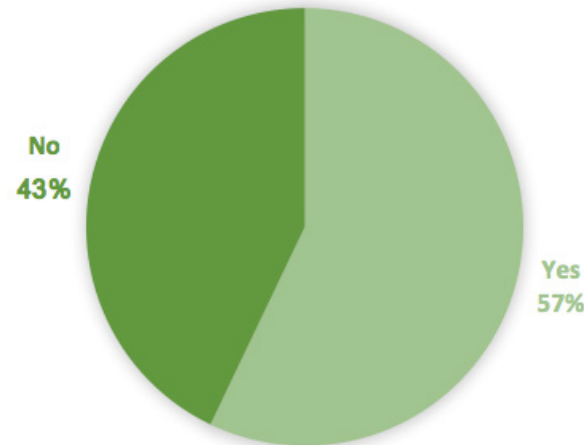
(Posted February 25, 2016)

## SURVEY DATA

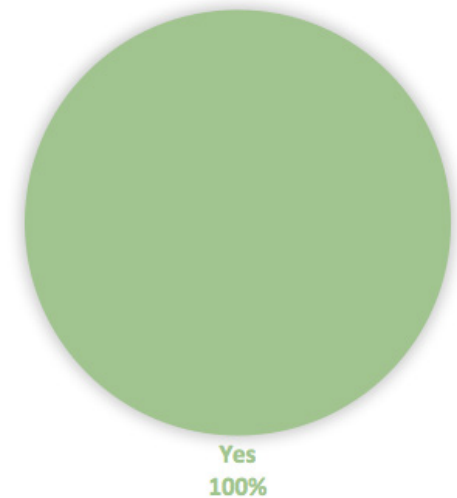
To begin my research, outside of client meetings, I created a survey that would take ten minutes or less to answer and could be easily distributed, as well as accessible to Juniata's population. The survey was then put on the ARCH and emailed to the Steering Committee who were asked to email it to their students, if they were professors who had taken classes to the farm.

This was a self-selecting survey, meaning the people taking it made a conscious decision to so, so the numbers are skewed higher towards the amount of students who have visited, as they recognized the name. Fifty-three responses were recorded, but the survey has been designed so that it can be used again in the future to see how knowledge and use of Sparks Farm has grown and changed.

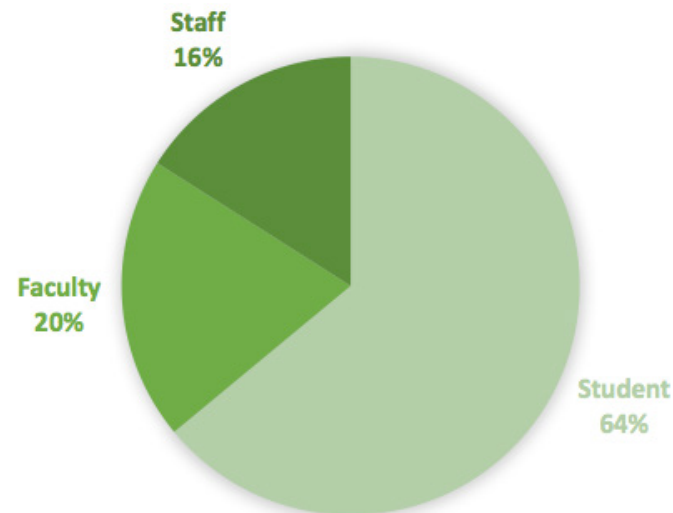
*Have you visited Sparks Farm?*



*Should the name remain Sparks Farm?*



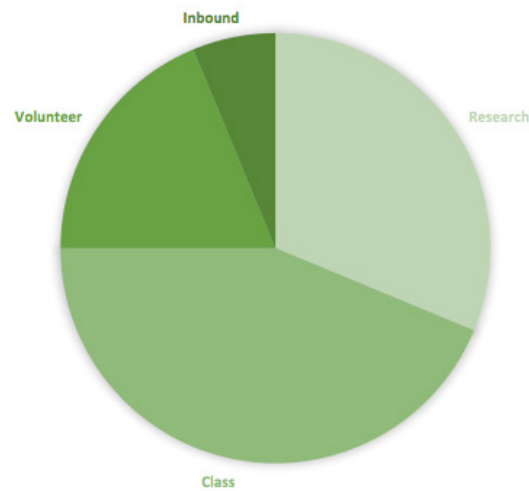
*I am...*



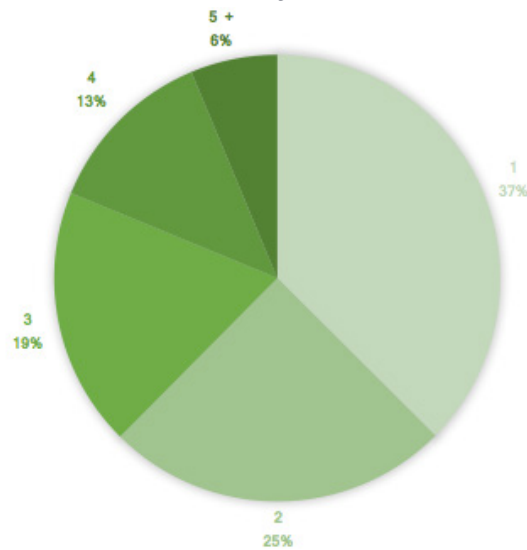
## SURVEY DATA CONT.

### *For students who have visited*

*Reasons for student visits*



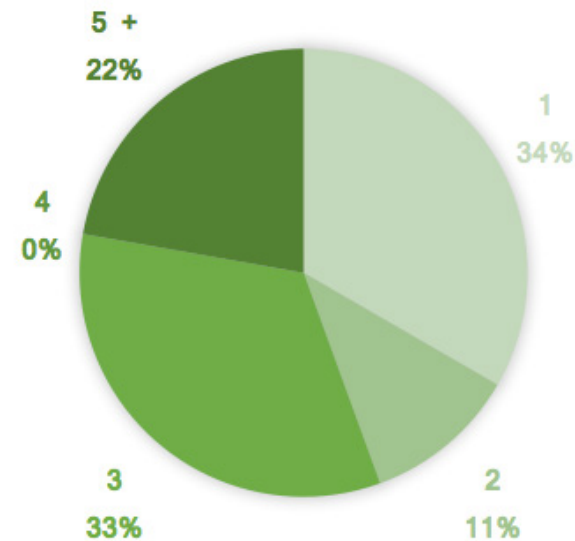
*Number of visits*



### *For faculty who have visited*

Reasons for faculty visitation were harder to qualify as many visited multiple times for many reasons from research, taking a class there, setting up events like the dedication ceremony or Inbound, to attending the ceremony.

*Number of visits*



## SURVEY DATA CONT.

### *For those who haven't visited*

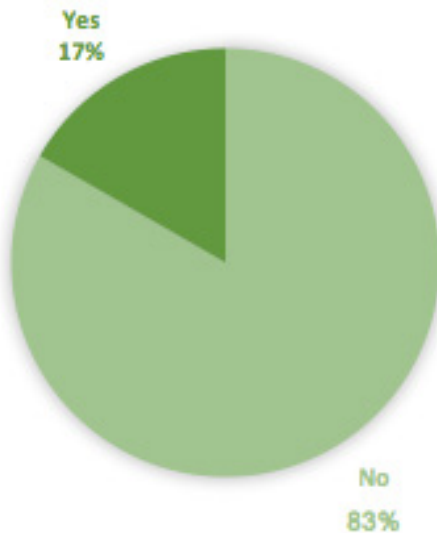
*Do you know what Sparks Farm is?*



*"Didn't even know we had one. Never heard of it. No advertising. No signs. Nothing."*

*"If I wanted to go to the farm (which I'm interested in), I wouldn't have a way to get there, and I wouldn't know what to do once there. So, Juniata should create events and provide transportation for those events."*

*If you don't, have you heard of it?*



*"Tell more students about it. Host events there so students realize it's an area they have access to."*



## SURVEY DATA CONT.

### *The essence of the farm*

When asked why the farm was important to them, the survey responses varied from education, to quiet. Here's a selection of the responses.

*"I think land that Juniata owns off-campus is valuable for student use and exploration."*

*"More natural green space."*

*"It has all the joys of country living. The rustic property is great to enjoy on my own time, while also beneficial for study as an environmental student."*

*"There are lots of opportunities to learn from the land."*

*"I think it's a great resource for the school, but I don't know how it's applicable to me, a non-science student, but I want it to be."*

*"It is a space for beauty, mindfulness and learning about nature and ourselves."*

*"The story behind it is really sad and touching, and I think it is our **moral duty** to use it well."*

*"It provides an opportunity to expose our students to what our area looks like and the historical significance of the farm is tremendous in the learning process."*

Those who have previously visited the Farm were asked to finish the sentence, "**Sparks farm is...**". These were the most frequently occurring words used.

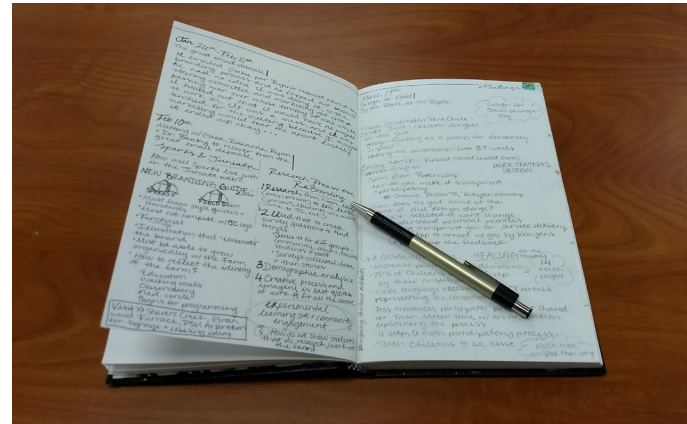


# INTERVIEW DATA

Most of the information I received through interviews of faculty and students gave me a better understanding of how others thought of Sparks based on how they talked about it. The emotion in someones voice can really convey a lot, more so than survey data, so this stage helped me solidify what the most important feelings and traits of the farm were that I needed to visualize. Including the importance of the water, and signage that fits the space.

*“The first thing I think of is the ox-bow of the river.” - Dr. Burns*

*“That’s the beauty of the property. It sits on a peninsula, and all the acre-age is surrounded by water.” - Carolyn Sparks quoted in an Altoona Mirror article*



*“...people will have an opportunity to experience the outdoors and use the land as a **living laboratory**” - Rob Yelnosky quoted in an Altoona Mirror article*

*“When I create an event I plan based on a comprehensive feeling of the space.” -Erin Pascal referring to Sparks needing its own comprehensive mood*

*“Please don’t make it look like Raystown.”*

*“Exactly! I want to appreciate where I am and not be throw off by bright signs that don’t belong.”*

*“They ruin the landscape!”  
- Conversation between students*

*“All of our properties are connected by the river.”  
-Dr. Muth*

## FINDINGS

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The majority of the words and emotions used when talking about Sparks Farm, such a peaceful and beautiful, were elements I wanted to include visually into the logo while still tying it back to the history of the land, because in this case, **the idea of place is key**. The place had to be central to the visuals and the majority of people I spoke to during the research process vehemently petitioned for it. They said they didn't want a polished Juniata sign there because it wouldn't match the story or mood of the land. Many of them also mentioned the oxbow of the river as a key visual identifier of the land. Place is also key to the Sparks family because the land will carry on their legacy since they do not have any living family to inherit the property that has been in the family since 1794.

The new Juniata logo provided inspiration as well through the use of place, including the addition of the river, which I wanted

to carry over into my design for off-campus properties. The branding tag line of Juniata being a "quiet and powerful place" resonated with the Sparks Farm property as well, and works with the "quiet heart" of the property. Thus, I unofficially dubbed it *Quiet Land. Peaceful Heart*.

I wanted to play with the mood of being home - that people who are meant to be here find their way to Juniata, and the same is true for Sparks Farm. It belongs in our community so it found its way here, just like we all found our way to Juniata and then the farm.

These ideas all informed my creative decisions that I display in the next section. I wanted to capture the magic and sense of home that Sparks Farm evokes, and the feeling I get when hearing people talk about it and the donation. The goal is to have a quiet and powerful logo that can convey these feelings visually.

# VISUALS

Sparks Farm

CREATION PROCESS

FINAL LOGO

USAGE

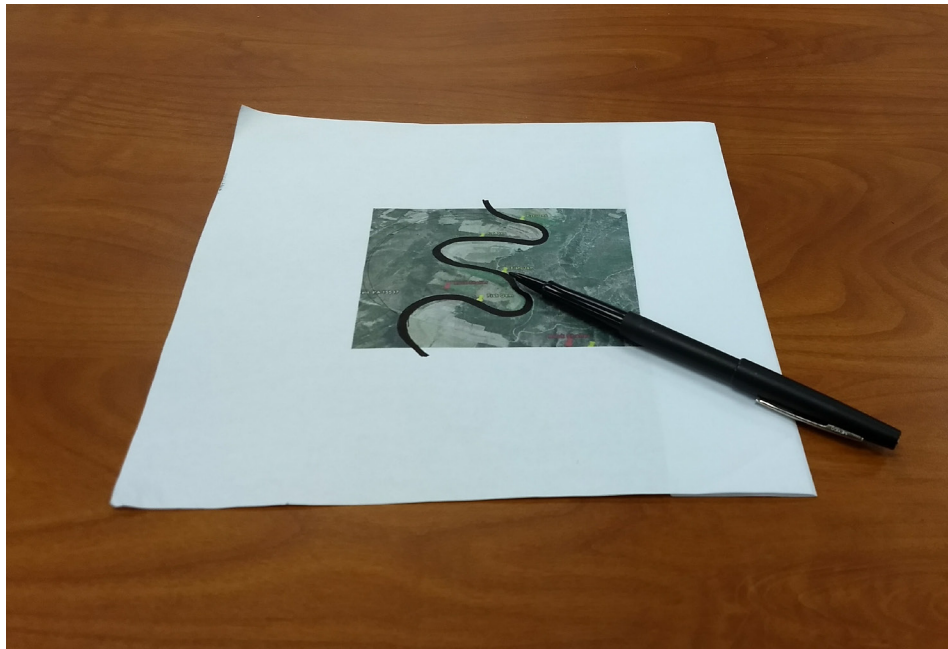
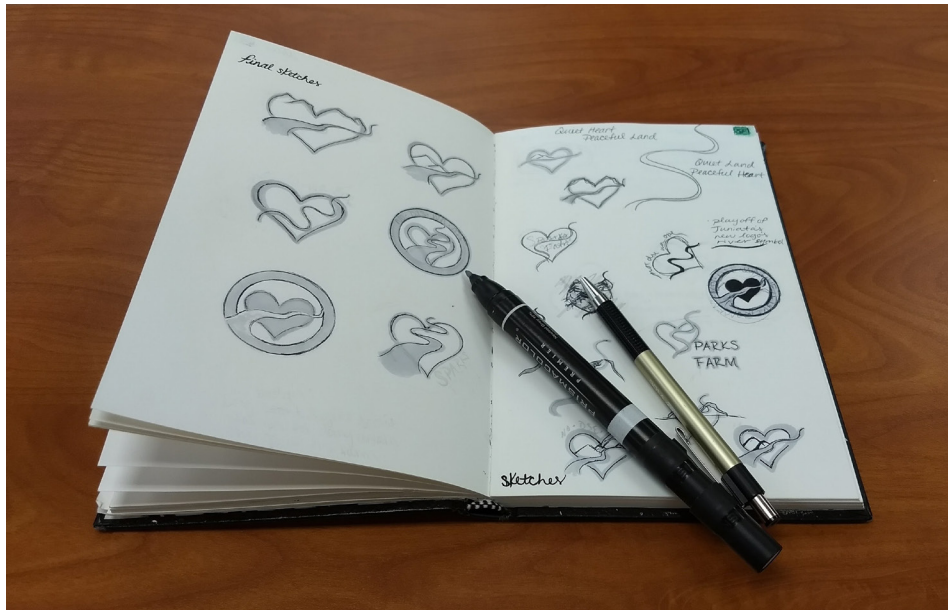
## CREATION PROCESS

- *acquired project*
  - *1st client meeting*
  - *meeting w/ marketing*
  - *survey creation*
  - *interviews*
- *compiling survey data*
  - *visuals?*  
*lots of sketching*
  - *choosing favorites*
  - *digitizing river*
  - *painting*
- *combining + digitizing final logo*
- *iding future outcomes*
- *compiling everything into one document*

After the research process, which took up the majority of my fifteen weeks because there's always more to learn, especially with the information being so diffused, I began the creative process. Every group I was working with had very different ideas of what they wanted, so my final goal was to create a working logo and research that creates a middle ground and can be used to facilitate future discussions and decisions about Sparks Farm.

Displayed in the following section is my work that went into the creative process, as well as explanations of why I chose to make the decisions I did. This work was created in accordance with the research and Juniata's Graphic Identity Standards Guide so that the farm still feels like a part of Juniata College.

## SKETCH PHASE



Below is the image I was inspired by for the logo. It is the sign language for No-Dse-Wa-Ope which means “quiet heart”, and comes from the original camp logo.

The sketch phase included many versions based off of the heart, most of them including the Juniata River and some including the mountains surrounding the farm. I wanted the visual identity to be reminiscent of the place and feel familiar to those viewing it, evoking the feeling of home, so I played with that concept through using landmarks from the space.





## CREATION PHASE

To create the final visual identifier I used black acrylic paint, along with Illustrator to create a vector file that can be used across all mediums - print and web.

I first traced the river's oxbow pattern through the Sparks's land, vectorized it and got rid of the background in Illustrator. Then I put the file into Photoshop and using the perspective warp tool made the river into a landscape view so it looks like it's receding into the distance. Next I painted a heart in acrylic, letting the brush strokes show through for an authentic look that fits with the farm's history and feel.

I combined these two and then image traced them into one final vector logo in a few select colors from the Juniata Graphic Identity Standards.



*Change in direction from  
too polished to rustic*



## FINAL LOGO ELEMENTS

*Quiet Land. Peaceful Heart.*



*The heart represents the “Quiet Heart” that is found on the property.*

*The brush strokes shows authenticity and represents the rustic wooded land and it’s history.*

*The Juniata River flows from the mountains (the peaks of the heart), changed from the traditional horizontal line used in the original sign language.*

*Alternated Colored Logo*



*Reverse Logo*





## LOGO USAGE

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The Sparks logo, in most cases, would be used secondary to the Juniata College logo to not compete with the schools brand. On something like an LAS poster it would be placed in the opposite corner from the Juniata brand.

I suggest though, at the Farm, the logo be the main identifier with “presented by Juniata College” and the college’s visual identifier in conjunction with Sparks’s.

# LOOKING FORWARD

Sparks Farm

TO CONSIDER

SIGNAGE

WAYFINDING

FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

## TO CONSIDER

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### *1. What is the name? What is the hierarchy?*

There seems to be a lot of confusion from everyone involved about what the farm will be called, and it can be confusing for students and limit the engagement we want to foster. There also needs to be a hierarchy for the space. Is it just a farm with multiple activities? Is it a farm that also houses an environmental center and a camp?

### *2. What projects need to be completed for Sparks Farm to be accessible?*

There are certain projects that need to be completed to make the farm a usable space. This is particularly true for visuals that will help market Sparks, but also help Visitors navigate the space.

### *3. How do you encourage student engagement?*

Students at Juniata love to be engaged in the community. It's important to continue that tradition at the Sparks property because it's the heart of the place.

# SIGNAGE



Original entrance sign

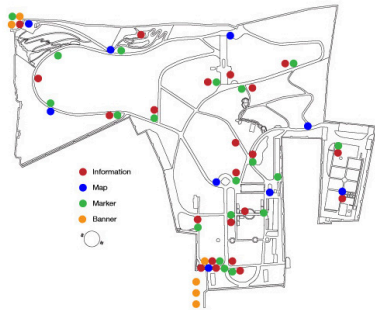


Wood-burnt sign at entrance



# WAYFINDING

## Maps



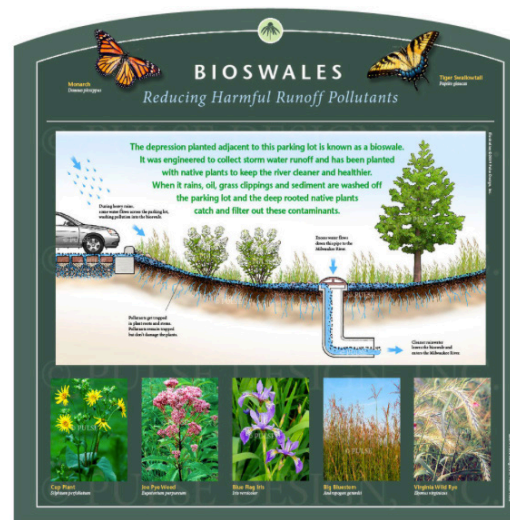
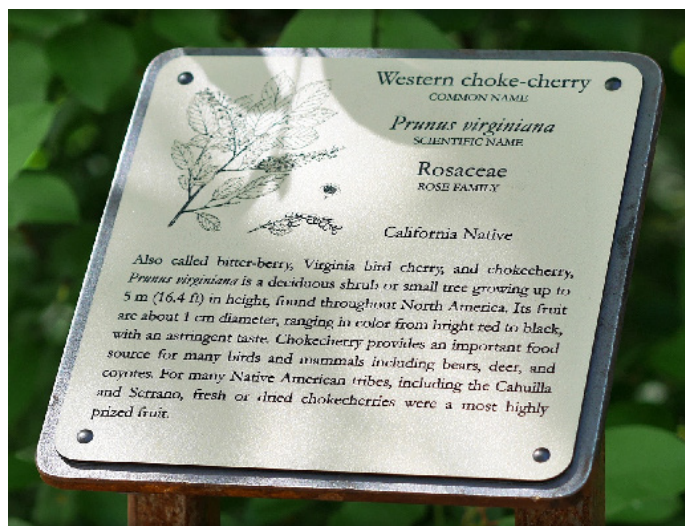
The number one complaint by the public at cultural institutions is not being able to find their way around. This is an easy to resolve problem by creating maps of the land that are portable and others which are permanent. It would also be helpful to create icons relating to different features of the land.





# WAYFINDING

## Informational signs

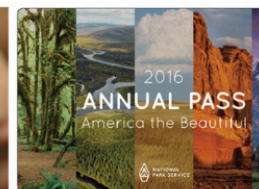
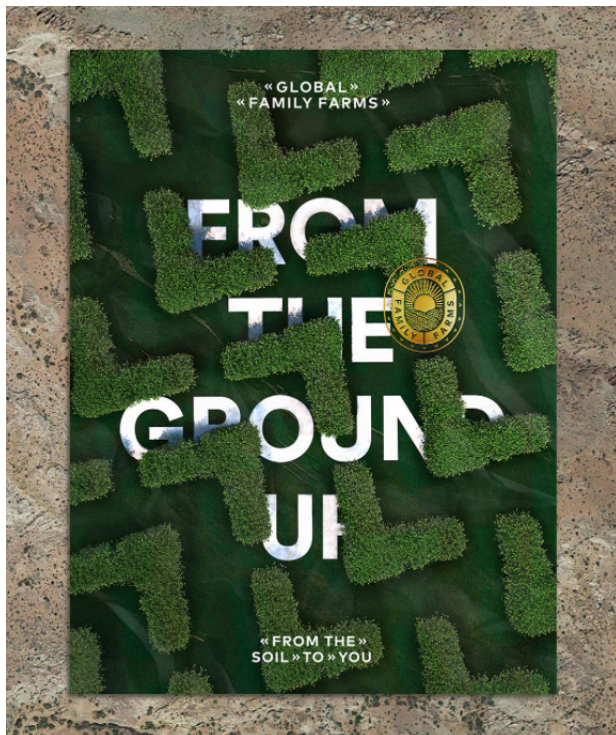


These signs could be used to educate visitors on significant points of the property, from the shale barren to the history of the land. Their creation could be collaborative from environmental science students writing text, museum educators editing it, art students creating illustrations, and design students compiling everything.



# PROMO MATERIALS

*Inspiration visuals for print & web*



# FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

