

# NOTES



## SCORES

### HIGH LEVEL FLOODING PREDICTION FOR PHILADELPHIA

NUMBER OF STEPS	YEAR	SEA LEVEL RISE (FT) NO. OF HAND HOLDS
25	2020	1
50	2030	2
75	2040	2
100	2050	3
125	2060	4
150	2070	5
175	2080	5
200	2090	6
225	2100	8
250	2110	9
275	2120	10
300	2130	11
325	2140	12
350	2150	14
375	2160	15
400	2170	17
425	2180	19
450	2190	20
475	2200	22

SOURCE: NOAA Technical Report NOS CO-OPS 083 (2017)

**EMBODIED SCIENTIST PARKOUR** is a training for interspecies communication and deepened relationships with the in-between landscapes of the Schuylkill River. Use these movement scores to entangle your body with wild urban plants, vibrate with the multispecies highway, and develop new forms of intimacy with the river's edge - all with the aim of expanding our notion of how we can collect and co-generate embodied scientific data.

Share your embodied data: **#embodiedscientist**

Developed by the Environmental Performance Agency with support from the Penn Program in Environmental Humanities.



## WARM-UP GROUNDING

Go together to a patch of lawn. Take your shoes off. Stand still in the group for a while. Connect the skin of your feet with texture of the lawn. Sink in.

Slowly start to stomp into the ground. Listen to the others stomping as you stomp until you find an end in silence. Put your shoes back on and walk back to the path. Look back.

*What might grow in these fresh traces or marks of human disturbance?*

2

## STATION SCORE 2 CATCH AND RELEASE

Part 1: Stand at the edge of the skate park along the elevated wooden railing facing the water. Bring one hand's palm in front of your face with fingers outstretched. Shorten your focus to trace the lines in your palm with your gaze. Then loosen your focus to look through your fingers into the distance. Create bridges between your palm lines and the trees on the far shore. Shift your focus back and forth following these lines for a few breaths.

Part 2: Release tension in your palm and slowly compress your hand into a soft fist. Relax your arm and torso until you are slumped like a soft ball. Then quickly throw your hand forward with force, reaching into the distance. Find untouched land. Find an epiphyte. Find \_\_\_\_\_. Catch and release it. Repeat until you feel a connection between your hand's lines and the landscape. Return to stillness and notice what you've released back to the environment.

*What could you catch and release in the material flows of the waste transfer station behind you?*

1

## STATION SCORE 1 QUEER HUMMING

Stand facing the river. Observe the river. Activate your body's molecules by humming. Gently move your torso in a figure eight movement and continue humming. Reverse the figure eight loop anytime. Allow pauses.

As your brain and vision vibrate with humming and motion, observe the distance between things change. The riverbed starts to float to the surface. Particles spread. Water colors change. Plants swell, reach and dance through the tidal landscape. Do this longer than you think you want to. Maybe 4 minutes?

Find an endpoint. Go to the river's edge and touch the water. Let your hand give love to the river.

*Can you find another being that shares your vibration?*

3

## STATION SCORE 3 CLIMBING OUT OF SEA LEVEL RISE

1. Now that you've stepped hundreds of years into the future, sea levels have risen as you've walked. Using the chart below, calculate how many hand holds you would need to climb on the fence to get above sea level.
2. Once you've estimated how many hand holds you'll need, take two minutes to find and observe a vine that already climbed the fence. Sense its climbing quality. Consider speed, shape, time, weight.
3. Then squat low, look up at the tower above you, and "climb" the fence with your hands. Echo the qualities of the vine as you pull yourself out of the sea, counting a foot of sea level rise per hand hold.

*What might you need to climb in your life to shift your perception?*

## WALKING SCORE TO STATION 2

# VISUALIZE THE BODY OF THE RIVER BEING

As you walk draw a mental map of the Schuylkill River. Begin with the water you just touched. How wide and deep do you imagine that riverbed to stretch? Follow the snaking shape of the river from mouth to spring, to its many tributaries. One body connected over the span of 2,000 square miles. Feel the dimension of this one moving, changing body.

*How much life does this one body sustain?*

*What qualities does your own body share with the body of the river?*

## WALKING SCORE TO STATION 1

# OPEN UP THE FIELD TO UNSEEN RHIZOMES

Stand facing Northeast. Move your head in different directions.

Look Up. Down. Sideways. Across. Back. Any Direction. As you walk count silently, and turn your head randomly but decisively every 3 counts. Walk in the direction your head is facing. Repeat, turn, and follow this pattern until you arrive at Station 1. Allow yourself to deviate from the designated park path. Be open to constantly reorganizing the body.

*Did you notice the webs of connection with others in the field as you walked on lawn, sidewalk, factory grounds and Lenape farmland?*

## WALKING SCORE TO STATION 4

# SOCIALITY WALK

This is for the whole group. Hold hands while you walk. Let a wind impulse move you to another "social body" like a plant, stone, mud etc. Make contact with this new social body and hold it for a moment. Breath. Change configurations. Continue to move forward in sociality, always looking together for a new body to hold on to.

*What does it mean to be in solidarity with non-human people?*

## WALKING SCORE TO STATION 3

# MEASURING FERAL BORDERS

As you move to the next station, begin to measure the diverse feral borders along the way. Look for places where textures meet, and move along them: take exaggerated steps by allowing your foot to hover and trace the border until your leg is extended and then plant it firmly on the ground. Feel the border below you like a balance beam. You balance among plants who've rooted here for millenia, plants who were embedded here by human hands, plants who migrated here from another continent.

Imagine each step you take among them represents the progression of one year into the future. **Count each step.** How many years into the future have you stepped?

*What if your measurement was not years into the future, but feet of sea level rise?*

4

STATION SCORE 4

## A FISH OUT OF PLEASURE

Walk to the end of the fishing pier. Lie face down on the pier, parallel to the river, head facing Northeast, upstream. Lie side by side, just touching the other members of your group. Wiggle your pelvis side to side in response to the water below. As a group, reacting to the touch each other's bodies, slowly rotate by 1/4 turn, so you are perpendicular to the water's flow. Focus on your breath, pulling air into your lungs like water over gills.

Next, lift both arms and legs together off the surface, arching your back. In low oxygen water fish breath at the surface to find more air. Exhale and release your arms and legs. Continue repeating the three gestures: wiggle, rotate, lift limbs but knit them together in any order. Work with pleasure. Ultimately you all have to go on.

*How do you measure distress in a fish? How does the fish measure distress of the river?*

6

STATION SCORE 6

## PLANTS HUMAN DUET

Go high or low.

**To go high**, raise one foot and step up on the first bar of the railing. Grasp the top of the railing firmly and pull your second foot up. Lean your legs/knees/thighs into the top bar of the railing. *Can you release your hands and balance?*

**To go low**, grip the top rail with your hands, then let your knees go slack and slump and fold your body into a squatting position. Hang from your arms/shoulders and sway, looking between the bars of the railing. *Who do you see in front of you? What group of plants draws you in?*

*What parts of the plants' bodies do you sense? How do stem/trunk/leaves/bark/seeds/skin speak to your human body? Be still, sensing each other, face to face for an extended time, about 3 minutes.*

In stillness, read each other. Then dance together. Dance as long you both have the desire. Find an ending together.

Looking back: *Who made the first move from stillness to action? Was it a shared choice?*

5

STATION SCORE 5

## SPIRALING HIGHWAY SOUNDS

Let your gaze move across the lawn at your feet. Let your eyes settle on a plant you feel might be accumulating toxins in its tissue. Let your hand reach down to to that plant, then begin to spiral your body around that plant using your hand and arm as a center anchor. Go from standing to sitting to lying down. Then reverse this motion and spiral back up. Repeat three times. Pause at any point during the spiraling action and listen to the sound around you: cup your hands and wrap them around your ears like a megaphone to amplify the sound.

Collect data: *What do you hear? Listen for the voices of industrial ghosts of the past.*

*Can you hear the vibrating technology of future toxins in the Pennovation buildings behind you?*

7

STATION SCORE 7

## NEW SOUNDTRACK FOR THE RIVER

This last score is done as a group.

Reflect on the land you traveled through. You received on your parkour journey a lot of sensorial data. You moved through human disturbance-shaped land, through planned and unplanned design. Let your tongue speak for you. Lean over the cement wall, open your mouth and let your tongue hang out, dangling towards the river. Let your tongue roll, curve, bend and try to communicate a soundtrack for the river. Thinking of utterance. Resist the urge to say a clear word. Change pitch. Get louder over time to make sure your soundtrack vibration reaches the river's flow. Listen to the others and create a soundtrack together. After a while find an ending. Then as a group create one to three non-verbal gestures that represent your soundtrack to the river. As a group share the non-verbal gestures in repetition. Stop when you all think the message was received by the river and the river answered you back.

*"What new language(s) do we need to live in a more interconnected, reciprocal relationship with the world?"*

## WALKING SCORE TO STATION 6

# HUNTING WILD BIOGRAPHY

During this walk to the next parkour station find one “plant” that you and/or someone else considers “wild”. Observe it very closely: Look at its shape and form. Its social life is not like those of us who move around and meet others. It is rooted in one place but it can grow into new environments and social fields during its life cycle. Its form shows its biography. As you continue the walk, create a small biography in your head for the plant.

*Can intimate relationships with plant beings help us navigate climate chaos?*

## COOL DOWN

Move to a quiet place with your group. Share your insights verbally with each other. Share your data globally by using the hashtag **#embodiedscientist**. Commit to a day and time to repeat the practice and invite a new friend to join the experience.

**THANKS FOR BEING PART OF SEARCHING  
FOR OTHER RELATIONSHIPS.**

**THE EPA**

## WALKING SCORE TO STATION 5

# BREATHING WITH PLANTS

Consider your biological function as a “breather”. Plants cannot exist without CO<sub>2</sub>. We cannot exist without “photosynthesizers” who produce O<sub>2</sub>. As you walk, breathe through this interdependent relationship: Choose a few plants along the way to gift and dedicate your breath to. Choose a few plants to receive your breath. Which plants are you drawn to give to and which do you enjoy to receive from?

*Contemplate the abundant growth of vegetation as a balancing act to support the breath of a growing human population.*

## WALKING SCORE TO STATION 7

# WALKING BACKWARDS INTO THE FUTURE

Turn around and complete this last stretch of the route by walking backwards. Move slowly and use your horizontal and vertical peripheral vision to guide you. Shift your focus to observe the path you just walked from a new perspective. (Optional: have one group member watch for safety, rotate roles).

*Reflect on the path you are coming from – how can it inform where you are going?*