

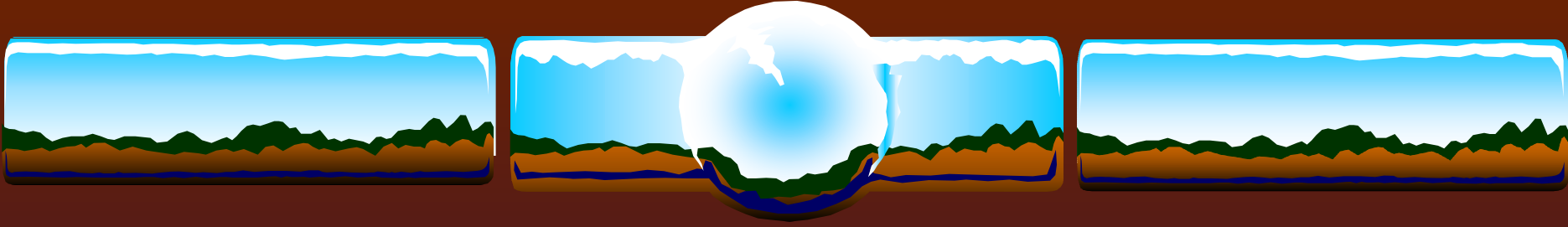
Educating the Public About Wetlands

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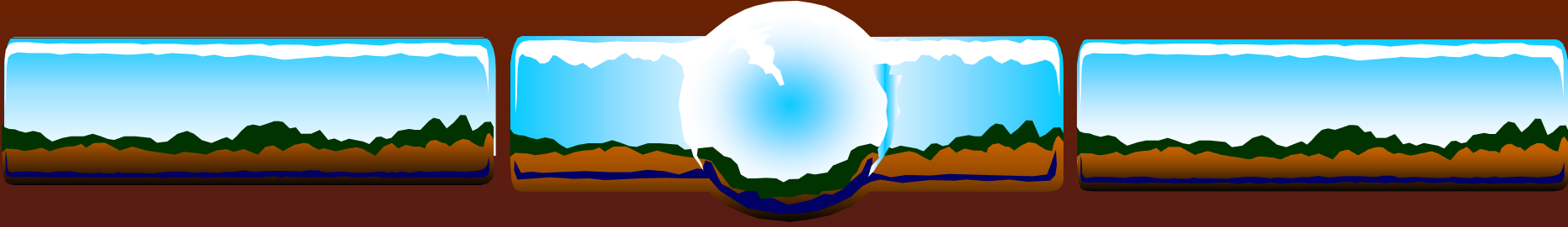
Pennington, NJ



Wetlands and Quality of Life Survey Results (2001)

Wetlands improve..water quality by
filtering out pollutants. True, False or
Don't Know?

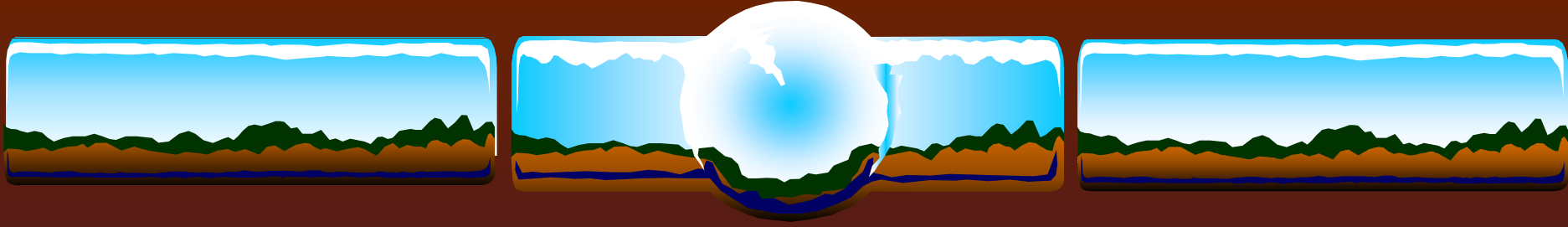
43% of citizens answered “don't
know”



Wetlands and Quality of Life Survey Results (2001)

Are certain kinds of wetlands more protected under NJ regulations than other kinds of wetlands?

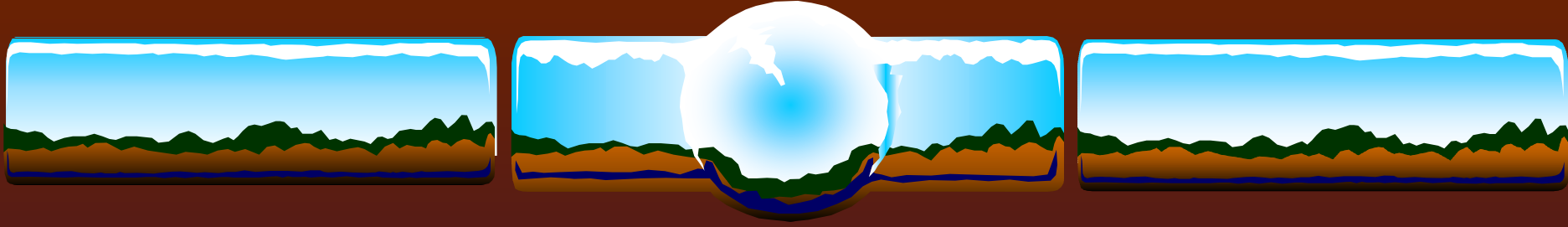
49% of the citizen population, as well as
49% of municipal officials answered
“don’t know”



Wetlands and Quality of Life Survey Results (2001)

Do you support or oppose local efforts to
preserve open space?

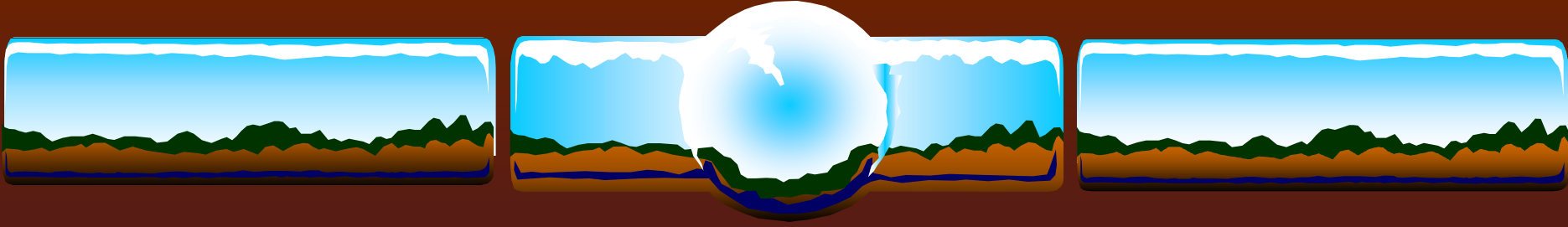
93% of citizens and 99% of officials
support these efforts



Wetlands and Quality of Life Survey Results (2001)

We asked people about who they believe has a “high” level of knowledge of wetlands.

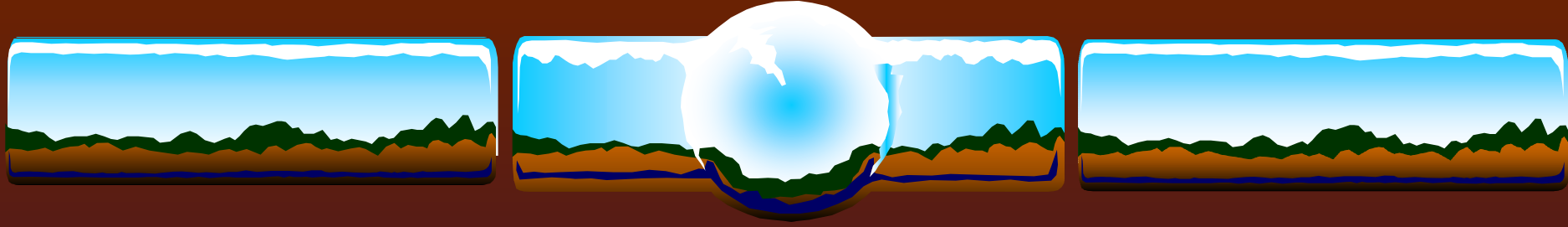
University experts	78.7%
NJDEP	73%
EPA	65.7%



Wetlands and Quality of Life Survey Results (2001)

How much these individuals could be trusted
to make decisions about developing or
preserving wetlands

Self	65%
University Experts	47%
Local Environmental Organizations	35%

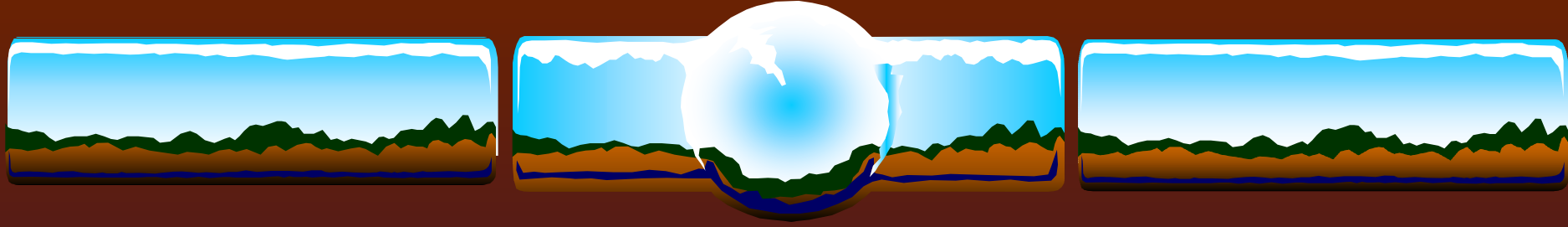


From “A Survey of Chesapeake Bay Watershed Residents:
Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs Toward Chesapeake Bay
Watershed Water Quality Issues”

-Julie McClafferty, Conservation Management Institute, VPI

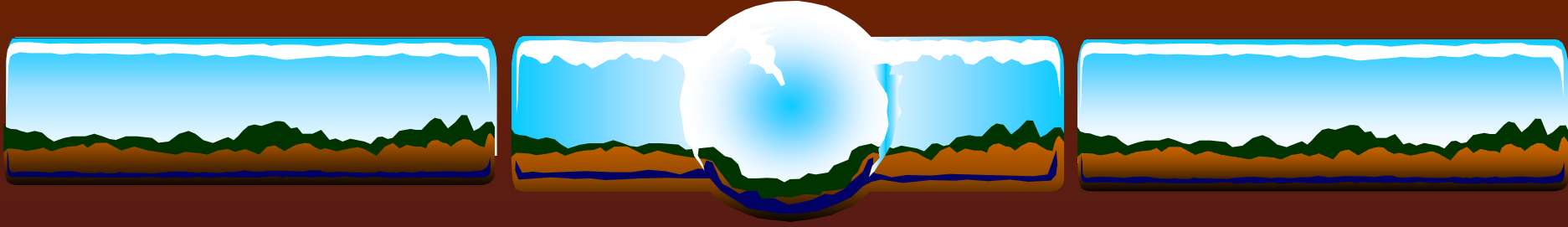
87% of residents felt that one person’s actions
can make a difference in improving water
quality.

53% of those residents felt that their *own
personal actions* adversely affected water
quality



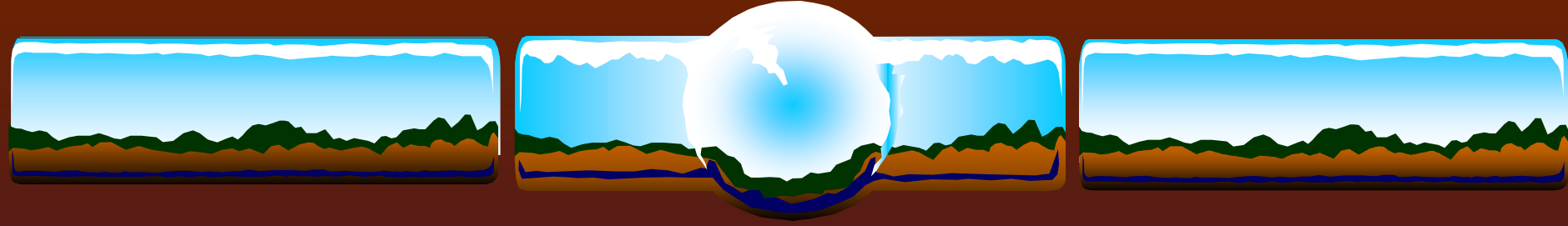
Citizen Education

- ❖ Barefoot Map/Wetlands Walk
- ❖ Exploring a Pond
- ❖ WatershedFest
- ❖ Interactive GIS website
- ❖ Wetlands Primer



Municipal Official Education

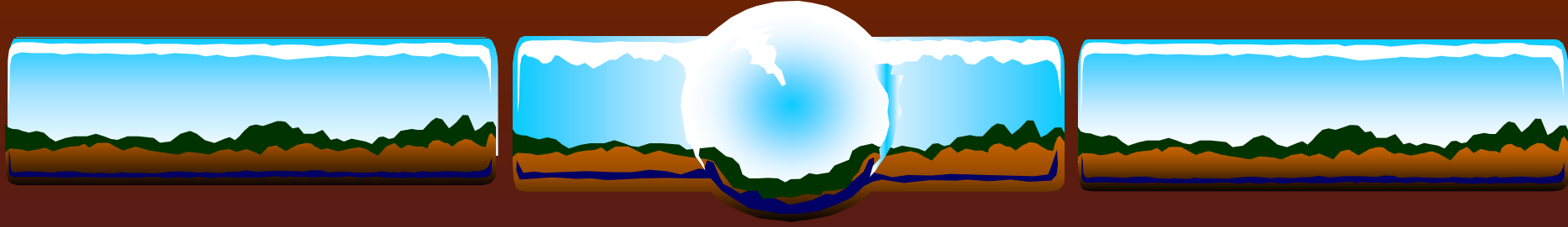
- ❖ Natural Lands Network Meeting & Hike
- ❖ Citizen's Guide to Wetlands and the New Jersey Wetland Rules



Tips for Creating Your Program

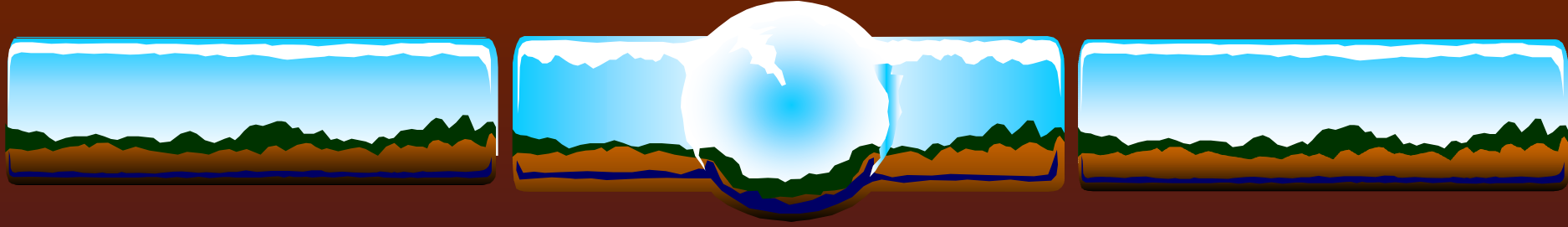
(aka: The Social-Scientific Theory)

1. Assess your community's needs
2. Develop a plan that meets those needs
3. Put the plan to work
4. Evaluate your success



Assess your community's needs

- ❖ Is your community urban, suburban or rural?
- ❖ How are wetlands regulated in your state?
- ❖ What are the issues/pressures that your community is faced with (development, existing pollution, political climate etc.)?
- ❖ What are your assets (expert knowledge, money, undisturbed areas)?
- ❖ What approach will your community be receptive to (marketing strategy)?



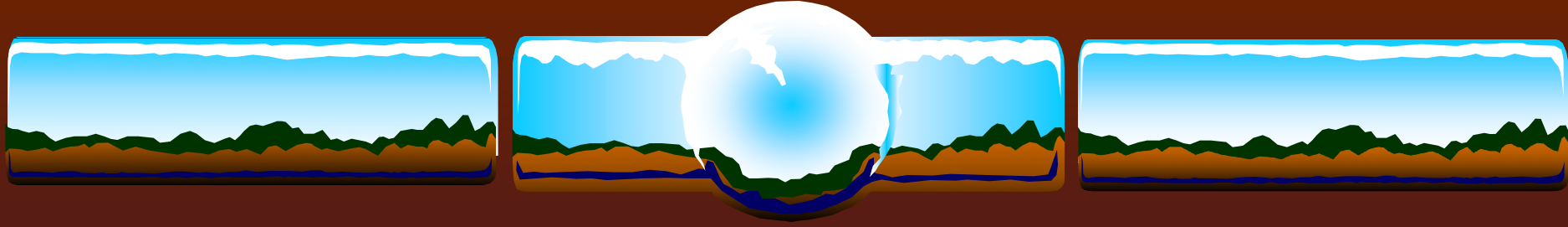
Develop a Plan

Traditional Thought:

Awareness > Knowledge > Action

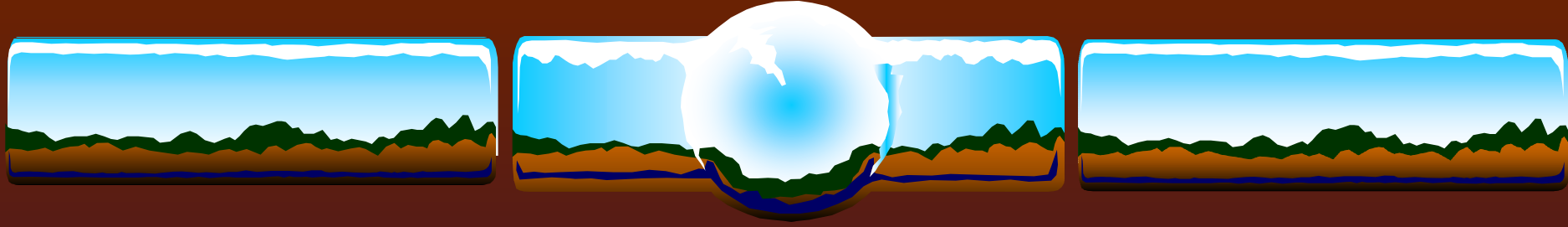
Start with Action!

People remember 90% of what they do and 10% of what they read. Get them out there!



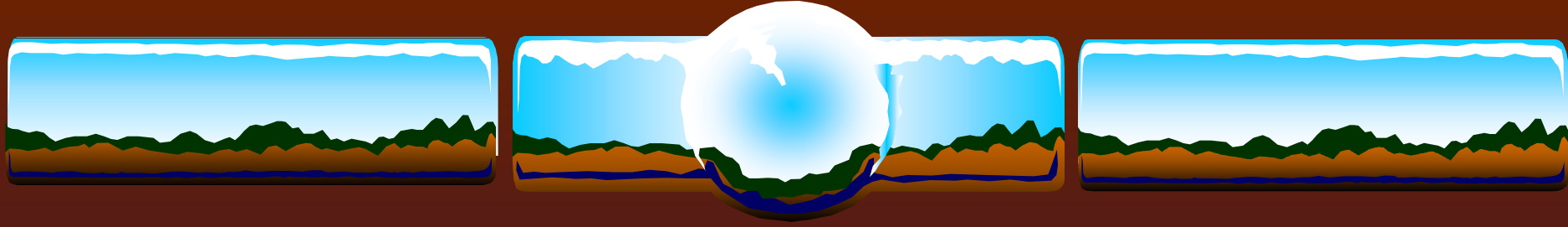
Ideas for Action

- ❖ create a hands-on map of the area
- ❖ tour the area by canoe
- ❖ identify the bird calls you hear
- ❖ nature journalling
- ❖ macroinvertebrate testing



Put the Plan to Work

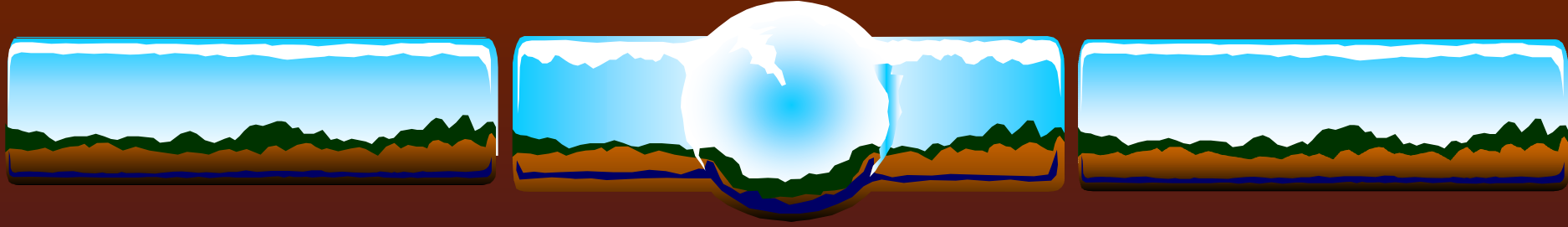
Implement all the wonderful and
creative ideas you came up with



Evaluate

Take a step back and look at what you've done. Hopefully you'll be smiling!

If not, evaluate what works and what doesn't. Re-strategize and give it another shot.



Suggested Reading

Fostering Sustainable Behavior

by Doug McKenzie-Mohr, PhD

Environmental Psychologist

An Educator's Guide to Program Development in Natural Resources

by Neil Maine

Environmental Educator