WeShore: Connecting homeowners, contractors and nature through living shorelines

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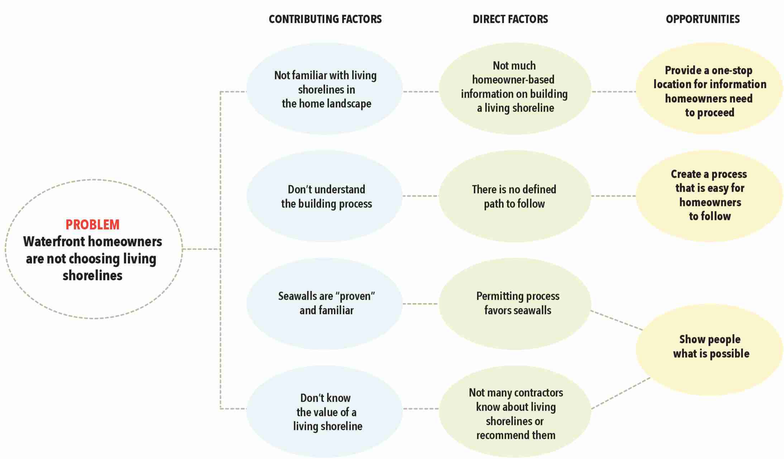
INTRODUCTION

Living shorelines have benefits for people and nature, but waterfront homeowners often lack information about how to proceed and may default to shoreline hardening, especially when confronted with contractors who may not recommend living shorelines as an option.

Shoreline hardening

- 14% of shoreline in continental US hardened (approx. 12,500 miles)
- 66% of hardening occurs on southern Atlantic/Gulf Coasts
- At present rate, 1/3 of all US coastlines will be hardened by 2100 (NOAA)

Homeowner barriers = *WeShore* opportunities

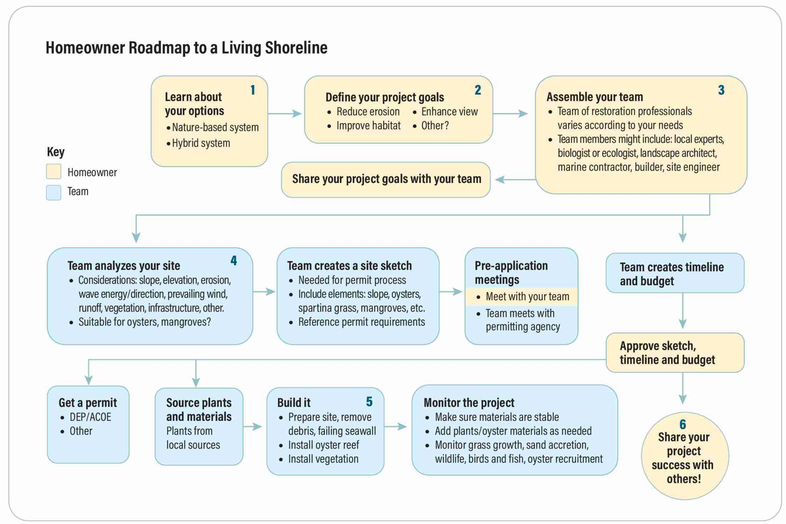


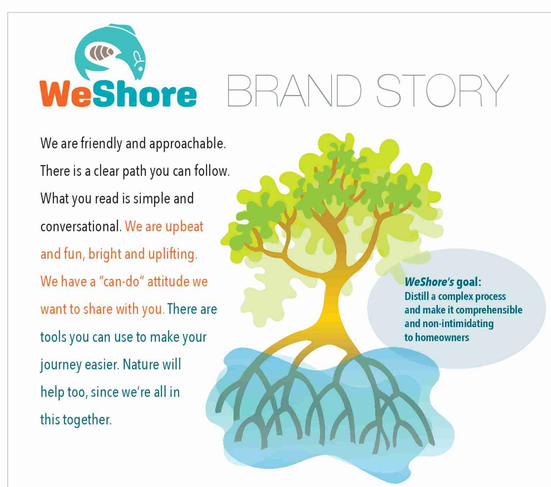
METHODS

- Materials currently available to homeowners were reviewed
- Restoration professionals were interviewed to discover needs/pain points
- Informal telephone interviews were conducted with waterfront homeowners
- in Martin and St. Lucie Counties (Florida)
- Interview results were compiled to discover commonalities/needs
- A visual map of findings was generated to guide the design process
- Co-design was used to bring people with different life experiences and ideas together as active participants in the design process.
- Co-design feedback was integrated into the design of the prototype
- Further online user testing is ongoing to iterate the prototype

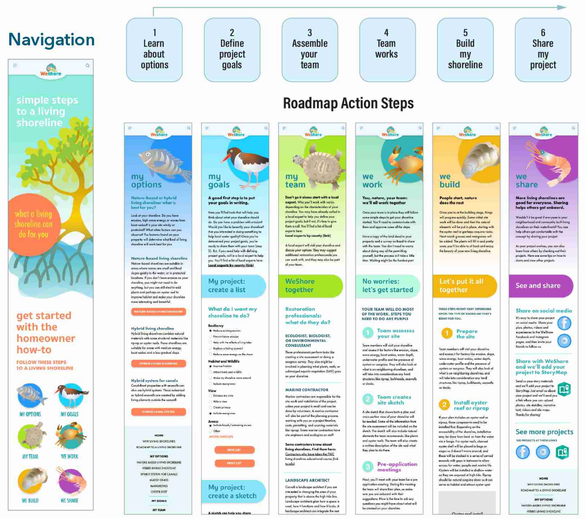
RESULTS

- Restoration professionals indicated the need for a "roadmap" (living shoreline process map) homeowners could follow
- Homeowners also indicated they needed a process to follow
- Both online and print outcomes were desired
- Homeowners suggested less text, more graphics and desired "ABC's to make the process simple to understand"
- Brand guidelines were generated based on feedback to make information conversational, jargon-free, friendly, inclusive and uplifting





Navigation



User testing

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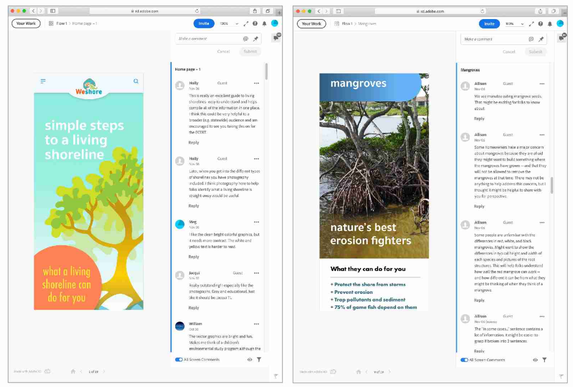

CONCLUSIONS (based on user testing)

- A mobile-first website is a good initial resource but users would also view the site on tablets and other devices
- Site should be less text-heavy and more image driven
- Color of text should be altered to increase readability
- The site should show more examples of living shorelines in a homeowner context (photos and diagrams)

For further information:

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