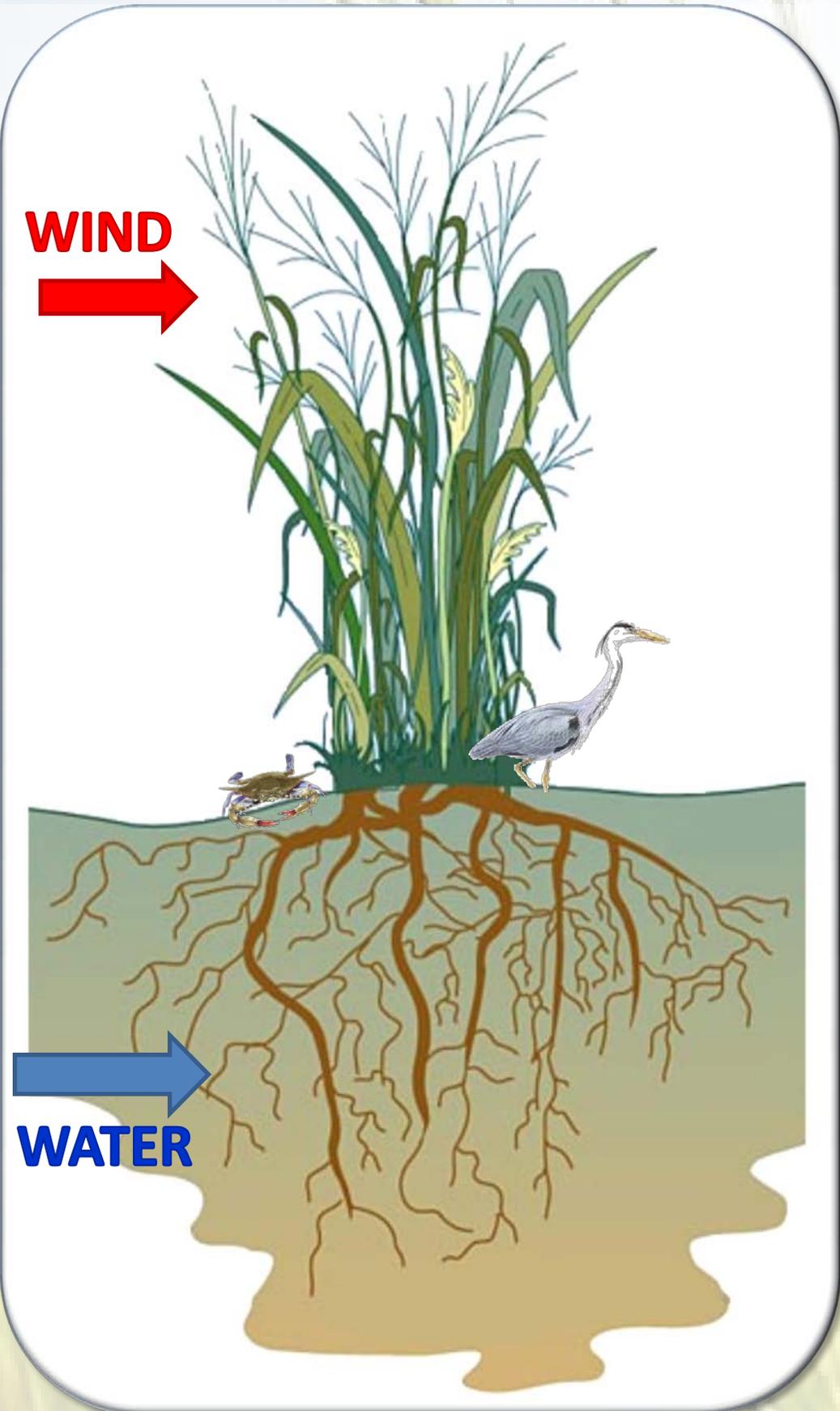


WHY IS SWITCHGRASS IMPORTANT?



Removes carbon dioxide from the air as it grows. Switchgrass "recycles" CO₂ with each year's cycle of growth and use. Each acre of switchgrass can sequester the equivalent of 5 tons of CO₂ each year.

Switchgrass grown for biofuel production produced 540 percent more energy than needed to grow, harvest and process it into cellulosic ethanol, according to estimates from a large on-farm study by researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. *ScienceDaily* (14 Jan 2008)

This perennial adds organic matter—the plants extend nearly as far below ground as above. Switchgrass holds onto the soil to prevent erosion and decreases wind flow and evaporation.

Provides ideal cover for ground-nesting birds and invertebrates

Buffer strips of switchgrass, planted around wetlands, could remove soil particles, pesticides, and fertilizer residues from water before it reaches the Bay.

Pest and disease resistance; can serve as a buffer to existing annual crops -- corn, soybeans, wheat -- by reducing pest invasion can limit the need for chemical applications.

Tolerance of poor soils and wide variations of soil pH ; Low fertility needs and drought and flood tolerance.



These grasses will be planted at NOAA's Oxford Lab's new Living Shoreline during Restoration Day activities in June.

2010 NOAA Restoration Day

For more information or to volunteer, contact: Michele.Winowitch@noaa.gov

<http://restorationday.noaa.gov>

