

# Teen Green:

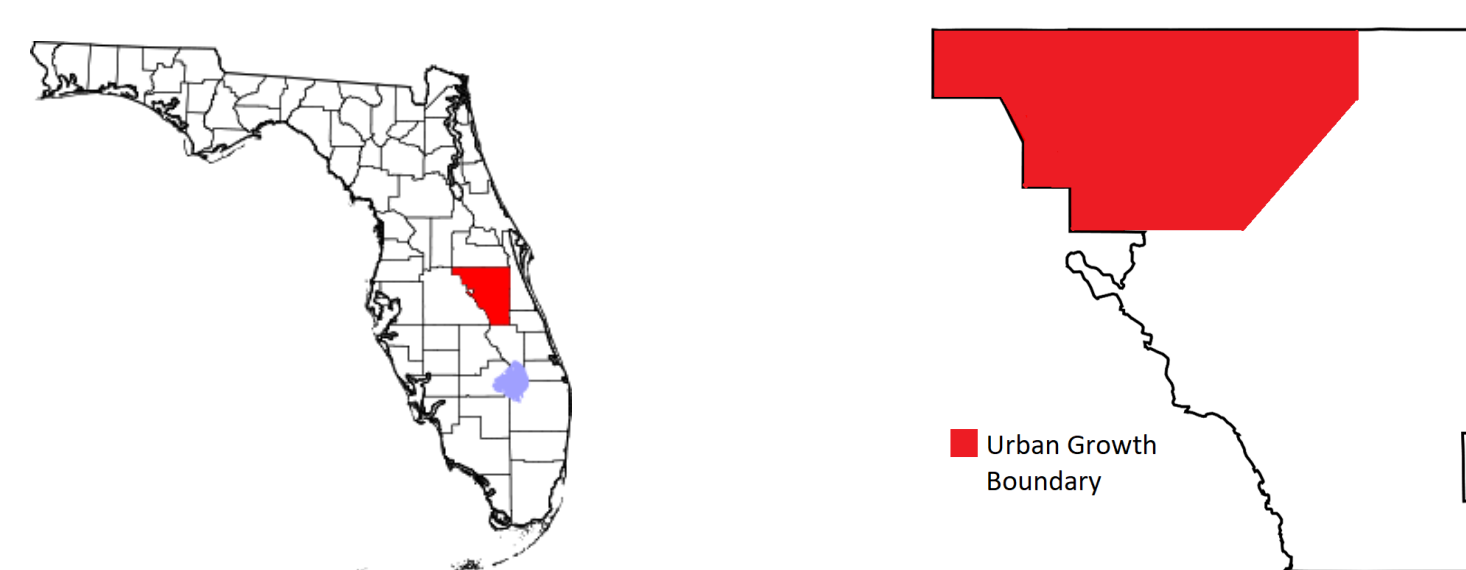
## Connecting Underserved Youth to Careers in Natural Resources



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### Need

- Osceola County, Florida is a diverse and rapidly developing county.
- Youth from urbanized areas of the county are unfamiliar with the area's natural resources or possible environmental career paths.
- Without information or resources, many underserved high school students do not think they can attend college or pursue such careers.



### Objectives

The measurable objectives were to **increase knowledge** in the following topics:

**50%** Soil, water, and plant science principles, sample collection, and analysis.

**50%** Environmental career paths and alternative paths to higher education.



Figure 1. a) Teen Green participants in 2018. b) Soil testing kit. c) Inside a greenhouse at Mid-Florida Research and Education Center. d) Water testing kit used for water quality lab.

### Goal

**The purpose of Teen Green is to introduce underserved high school youth to careers in natural resources. It is a fun and interactive 3-day workshop covering topics in water, soil, and plant sciences.**

### Methods

The 3-day workshop consisted of labs, lectures, games, tours, and activities. Each topic was explored with a variety of educational methods.



#### Water Science:

- Water sample collection and quality analysis (pH, chlorine, ammonia, phosphate, and nitrate)
- Florida's water resources presentation



#### Soil Science:

- Soils 101 lecture
- Soil sample collection
- Analysis for soil texture and pH



#### Plant science:

- Plant cutting demo and DIY project
- Butterfly pea tea demonstration
- Tour of greenhouses and plant science labs



#### Career Education:

- Water resources careers game
- Guest speakers from researchers and students at the University of Florida Mid-Florida Research and Education Center (MREC)
- Connection with the UF MREC Undergraduate Success Coordinator
- Testimonies from non-traditional students

### Results

- 12 teens aged 15-18 attended the 3-day workshop in 2019.
- Based on average pre-/post-test scores, they increased their knowledge by:

**84%** Soil, Water, and Plants      **52%** Environmental Professions

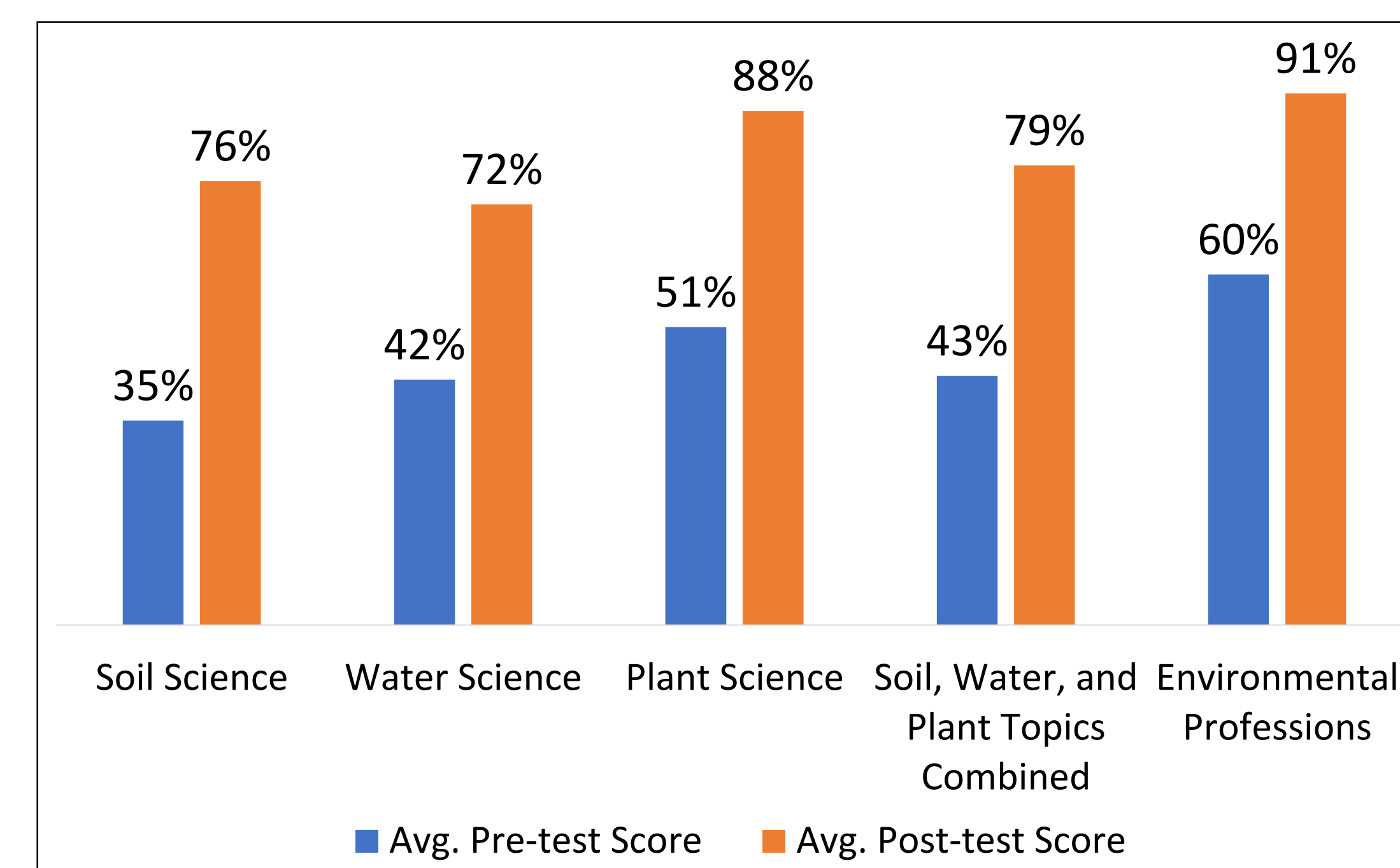
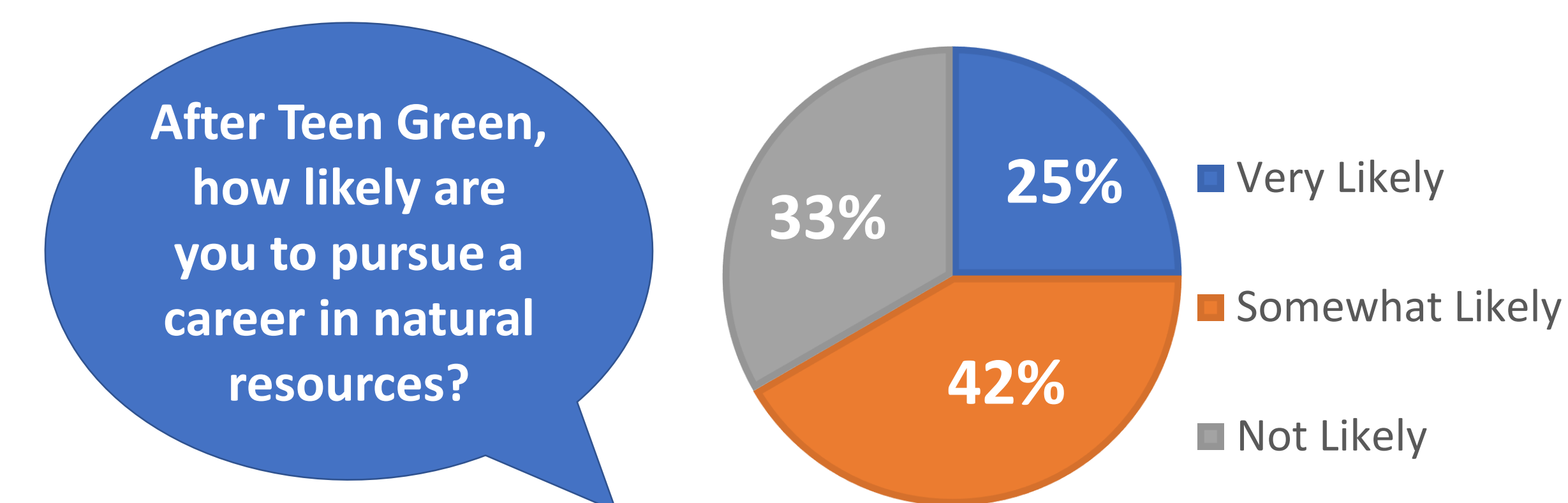


Figure 2. Average pre- and post-test scores by topic (n=12)



### Impacts

- Youth participants are more likely to pursue stable career paths.
- These careers can provide them with economic stability which results in improved well-being.
- As future environmental professionals, the attendees will contribute to positive environmental impacts