

## Chapter 2: The Importance of Natural Resources

**Learning Domain** - Cognitive

**Level of Learning** – Comprehension

**Time Allocation** – Approximately 35 minutes

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify the common natural resources people use.
- Understand the concepts of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources.
- Identify renewable and nonrenewable natural resources.
- Understand the importance of our natural resources.
- List the uses of natural resources.

### Vocabulary Introduced:

- arable land
- finite
- forest resources
- fossil fuels
- mineral resources
- natural resources
- nongame species
- nonrenewable
- pulpwood
- renewable

### Needed Equipment/Materials:

**Instructor:** PowerPoint presentation equipment

**Student:** paper, pencil

**References:** *Wildlife and Natural Resource Management, Fourth Edition*

## I. Introduction

[Time Allocation: 5 min.]

- A. Natural resources are found in or on the earth and are of use to humans as fuel, food, shelter, or a source of wealth
- B. Some common natural resources are oil, coal, water, mineral resources, arable land, wildlife, and forest resources
- C. Humans learned, over hundreds of years, to use more and more of what nature provided
- D. Today humans are more dependent on a wider variety of natural resources than were our ancestors

Reference: *Wildlife and Natural Resource Management*, pp. 12-13  
Slide(s): 2-2 and 2-3

## II. Natural Resources—Renewable or Nonrenewable

[Time Allocation: 10 min.]

- A. Nonrenewable
  - 1. A nonrenewable resource is one which, once the available supply has been used up, cannot readily be replenished
  - 2. Although we may have an ample supply of these nonrenewable resources for many years to come, they are finite
    - a. Minerals resources
      - i. Iron
      - ii. Copper
      - iii. Lead
      - iv. Uranium
      - v. Aluminum
    - b. Fossil fuels
      - i. Oil
      - ii. Coal
      - iii. Natural gas
- B. Renewable
  - 1. Resources that, with proper management and care, can be utilized indefinitely
    - a. Forests
    - b. Wildlife
    - c. Water
    - d. Soil
  - 2. All renewable natural resources are vulnerable to abuse
    - a. Once a species' population drops below a certain number, it is almost certainly doomed to extinction

- b. An example of this is the passenger pigeon
3. With proper management of wildlife and wildlife habitat, we can enjoy an abundance of wildlife for generations to come

Reference: *Wildlife and Natural Resource Management*, pp. 13-14  
Slide(s): 2-4 and 2-5

### III. The Role of Natural Resources in America's Development

[Time Allocation: 15 min.]

- A. Plentiful natural resources attracted people to North America
  1. People coming from disease-ridden, crowded European cities quickly adapted to their new surroundings
  2. They used the available resources, timber, land, and wildlife for food, shelter, and wealth
  3. Natural resources played a vital role in the development of America
- B. About 90 percent of all the early settlers in America were farmers
  1. There were no commercial fertilizers
  2. In one to three years, their crops took the available resources from the soil
  3. They then had to clear another field
- C. Natural resources were vital to the development of America
  1. Spanish explorers came in the hope of finding great wealth in the form of minerals, such as gold, silver, and precious jewels
    - a. Mineral resources were here, but early settlers did not find or develop them
  2. The tremendous abundance of wildlife in North America was another force in the development of America
    - a. Europeans had a seemingly insatiable appetite for furs and hides
    - b. To meet these demands and their own needs, settlers quickly exhausted coastal game supplies
    - c. They went farther and farther inland
  3. With the discovery of gold in California, the character of settlement in America was changed forever
    - a. Throughout the westward movement, few stayed on in the "Great American Desert"
    - b. This area became known as America's "breadbasket," because of the enormous amount of wheat grown there
  4. The invention of the internal combustion engine in the late 1800s led to the "oil rush" of the early 1900s
    - a. The increasing needs of a growing population fueled the exploration of the oil fields of Texas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana

- b. The search for oil and natural gas continues to this day
- D. We are more dependent on a wider variety of natural resources than early Americans were
  1. Their needs were simple; ours have grown complex with the contributions of technology and science
  2. We are not as dependent on wildlife as our early ancestors were
    - a. Why is it, then, that wildlife is such a valuable natural resource?
      - i. Wildlife has aesthetic value
      - ii. The economic impact of more than 15 million hunters is considerable

Reference: *Wildlife and Natural Resource Management*, pp. 14-16  
Slide(s): 2-6 through 2-9

#### **IV. Summary**

[Time Allocation: 5 min.]

- Human life cannot survive without natural resources
- Water, soil, wildlife, and forest resources are musts for survival
- Without fossil fuels, we could not produce the food needed to support the world's current population
- We must conserve and protect all our natural resources, both renewable and nonrenewable, for future generations

Reference: *Wildlife and Natural Resource Management*, p. 17  
Slide(s): 2-10

#### **V. Assignment** – Read Chapter 3 in *Wildlife and Natural Resource Management*

# **ANSWERS TO REVIEW QUESTIONS**

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

#### **SHORT ANSWER**

1. Oil and coal are examples of fossil fuels.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Answers will vary. A good answer should contain at least some of the following: Natural resources are important because they provide us with items important for survival, such as shelter and nourishment. They also provide us with other less essential items, such as transportation, fuel, recreation, and wealth.
4. Early American farmers practiced slash and burn agriculture for several reasons. Because of the lack of modern fertilizers and poor farming practices, the generally poor soil was depleted of nutrients in one to three years, which necessitated clearing more land for crops. It was also necessary to clear timber to provide housing, fences, and barns.

#### **DISCUSSION**

1. Answers will vary. This is an opportunity to show students the tremendous impact natural resources have on their lives and how our lives are shaped by these natural resources.
2. Students should select one natural resource and imagine life without it.  
Answers will vary.

## **CHAPTER 2**

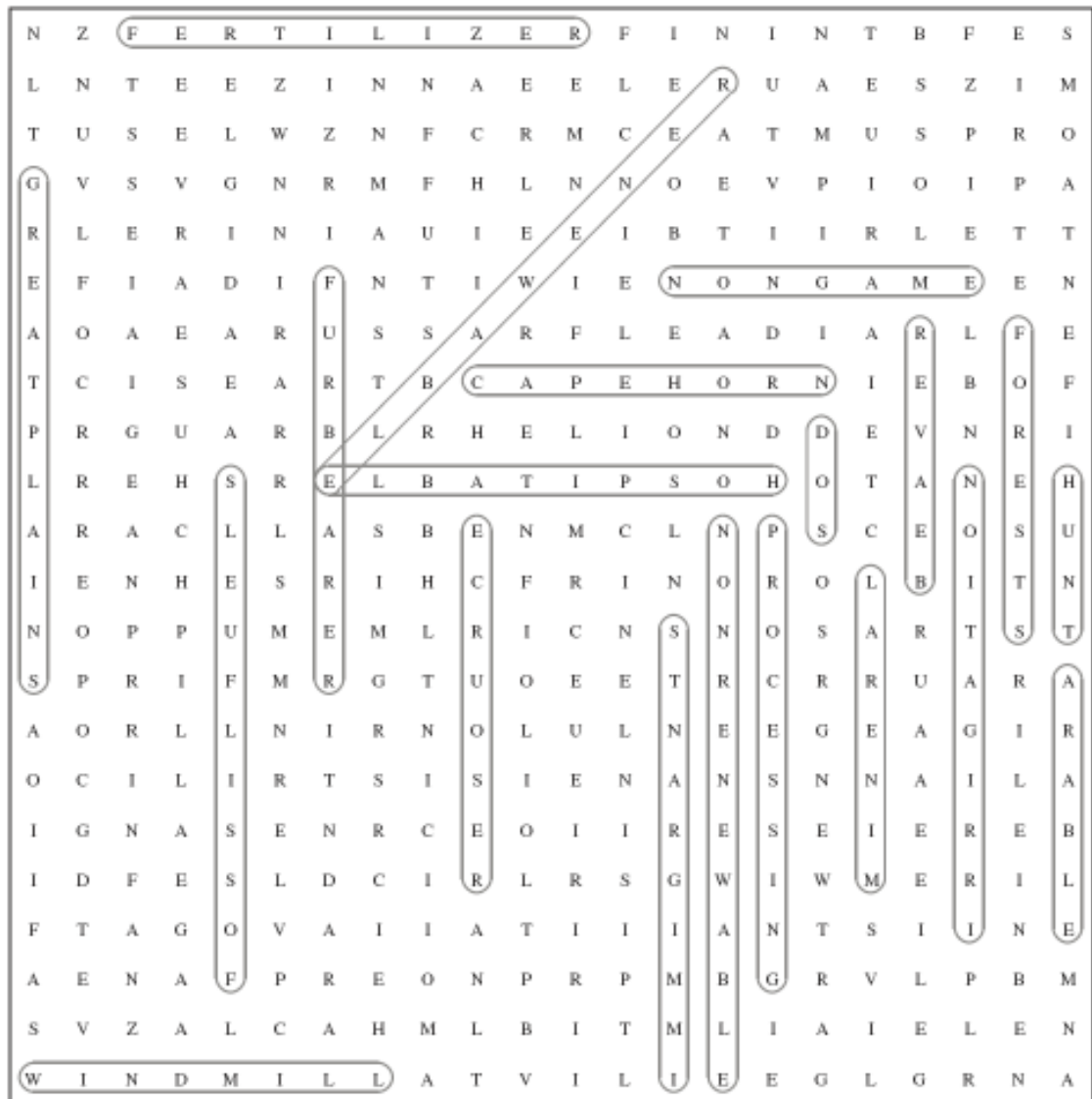
### The Importance of Natural Resources

#### **FILL IN THE BLANK ANSWERS**

1. Items found in or on the earth that are of use to humans as fuel, food, shelter, or wealth
2. renewable, nonrenewable
3. forests, wildlife, water, soil (as examples)
4. mineral resources (such as iron, copper, lead, uranium, aluminum) and fossil fuels (such as oil, coal and natural gas) (as examples)
5. nonrenewable
6. renewable
7. observing wildlife
8. billion
9. natural resources

## WORD FIND ANSWERS

### Part A.



### Part B.

**arable:** land that is suitable for producing crops

**fertilizer:** a material put on or in the soil to improve the quality or quantity of plant growth

**fur-bearer:** an animal with a coat of fur, such as a raccoon, mink, and beaver

**hunt:** to pursue game for the purpose of capturing or killing it for food and sport

**mineral:** an inorganic substance, such as iron, copper, or gold, that occurs naturally in the earth

**processing:** turning something in a raw state, such as wheat, into a finished product, such as bread

**sod:** a layer of earth containing grass and its roots

**beaver:** a member of the rodent family, with soft brown fur and a flat, paddle-shaped tail

**forests:** thick growths of trees and underbrush covering an extensive tract of land

**Great Plains:** large region stretching from Texas to southern Alberta, Canada, and east from the Rocky Mountains for approximately 400 miles

**immigrants:** people who move into a new country or region

**nongame:** species of wild animals that are not regarded as game animals, such as songbirds, raptors, and rodents

**renewable:** capable of being reestablished

**windmill:** a device that utilizes the wind to turn large vanes to provide power for pumping water

**Cape Horn:** southernmost point of South America

**fossil fuels:** fuels that occur naturally in the earth, such as coal, natural gas, and petroleum (oil)

**hospitable:** a climate or region that is not difficult to live in

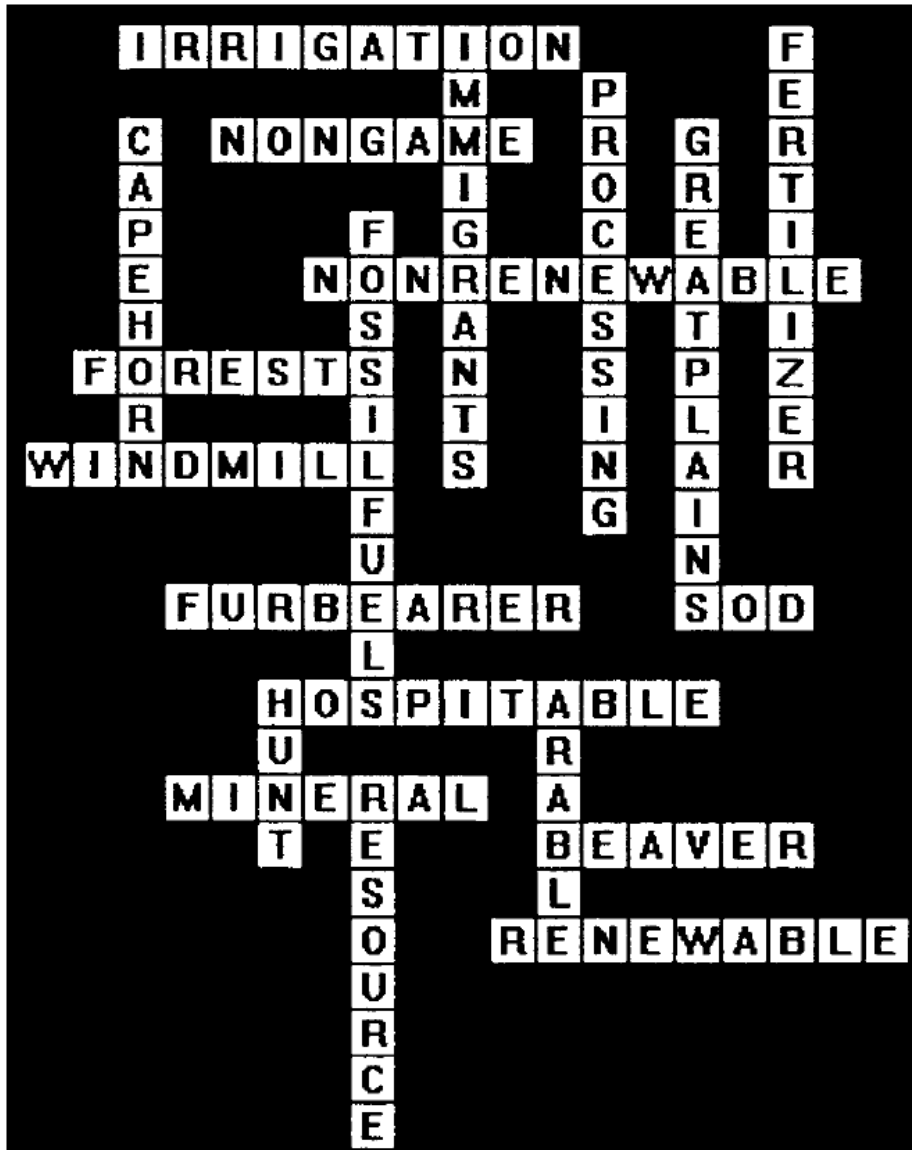
**irrigation:** supplying a crop with water by artificial means, such as by the use of sprinklers, canals, or ditches

**nonrenewable:** not capable of being renewed, reestablished, or rejuvenated

**resource:** an item that produces a benefit to the user. In terms of natural resources, these are items that are found in or on the earth that are of benefit to humans as fuel, food, shelter or as a source of wealth.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS



LEARNING ACTIVITY ANSWERS

*Answers will vary but students should fully describe the uses, existing supply, and importance to everyday life for the natural resource they have selected.*