



Habitat

Activity 1-14

Coastal Wetlands Need YOU!

Adapted from BTNEP/LSU AgCenter: *Coastal Land Loss and Restoration*

Focus/Overview

Students will use their knowledge of causes and effects of wetlands loss and problems to brainstorm ways in which they can contribute to solving and abating the problems associated with coastal land loss and habitat destruction. Students will then create a Citizen Action Brochure outlining an opportunity for citizens to help save and restore Louisiana’s wetlands.

Learning Objectives

The learner will...

- identify ways they can help reduce coastal erosion and habitat destruction.
- design a public education brochure explaining how Louisiana residents can contribute to the solutions of coastal land loss.

Louisiana Grade Level Expectations (Science)

2: GLE-48	Describe a variety of activities related to preserving the environment (SE-E-A3).
3: GLE-58	Describe how humans have had negative and positive effects on organisms and their environments (SE-E-A3) (SE-E-A5).
5: GLE-50	Describe the consequences of several types of human activities on local ecosystems (e.g., polluting streams, regulating hunting, introducing nonnative species) (SE-M-A4).
7: GLE-39	Analyze the consequences of human activities on ecosystems (SE-M-A4).
HS Biol: GLE 27	Analyze positive and negative effects of human actions on ecosystems (LS-H-D4) (SE-H-A7).

BTNEP Connection

Habitat

Grade Level

2, 3, 5, 7, HS Biol

Duration

2 days

Subject Area

science

Setting

classroom

Vocabulary

metaphor, wetland function

Original Source

“Coastal Wetlands Need YOU!” in BTNEP/LSU AgCenter: *Coastal Land Loss and Restoration*, Activity 7.



www.btnep.org

Materials List

Information on topics such as the Christmas Tree Project, vegetative shoreline protection options, using native plants for landscaping and migratory birds, school-based plant nurseries (Coastal Roots Project).

Background Information

When faced with the enormous scale of coastal land loss in south Louisiana, it’s easy to feel insignificant as an individual, feeling that solving the problem is the job of the scientists and engineers. Each resident of the coastal zone, however, can contribute to the problem-solving process. Some activities with which young people can get involved include recycling Christmas trees, beach sweeps, storm drain marking, removing invasive species, planting native species that help bird populations and planting native vegetation in the marsh. The more students can learn and be involved in the coastal restoration process, the more valuable their skills will be when they become adults. There are many professional opportunities for young people in the restoration field and it’s never too soon to start thinking about the future!

Advance Preparation

1. Locate newspaper articles on volunteer opportunities to help save and restore the Louisiana wetlands or visit <http://www.btnep.org> and click on Volunteers.



Procedure

1. We have a serious coastal land loss and habitat loss problem here in Louisiana. Scientists and engineers are working diligently to find new ways to mitigate and correct these problems. Do you think it is possible for you and I to help solve some of the coastal land loss problems? What are some ways that citizens can help? Write the list on the board or on newsprint. This list will become a master list of topics to research further. You could make it into a handout or have the students write the list in their notebooks or journals. On the list there should be the Christmas tree recycling projects, wetlands vegetation planting projects, ways landowners can preserve wetlands, measure homeowners whose property is on waterways can take to reduce wake erosion of banks, ways homeowners can preserve sand dunes on the barrier islands, storm drain marking, etc. The students will probably add many more to these.
2. We need to understand each of the ways citizens can help with coastal land loss problems in more detail. For instance, we need to find out exactly what someone needs to do to participate in Christmas tree projects. There is more to this project than just putting your tree out on the curb. What can we do in our community to contribute?
3. We will try to learn as much as we can about these topics and then make brochures (or write newspaper articles) that can be used to help educate the public about how they can join the effort to save our coast. Include facts and figures that will convince people that it is worth their time to get involved. Students conduct research using information collected from parish and state coastal management programs, the newspaper, BTNEP, the Internet, etc.

Blackline Master

1. **Louisiana Wetlands Need YOU! Citizen Action Brochure**

Assessment

- Prepare a rubric for student brochures.

Extension

Language Arts:

Have students write a letter to the Governor, the State Legislature, Congress, or the President stating reasons for national support of wetland conservation issues. Include support of why some people consider Louisiana's wetland loss a national crisis.

BTNEP Resources:

Portrait of an Estuary, publication by LSU AG and BTNEP

Websites:

United States Geological Survey National Wetlands Research Center - LA Coast website, **Louisiana Coastal Wetland Functions and Values**, accessed July 27, 2004, at <http://www.lacoast.gov/reports/rtc/1997/4.htm>

Bill Sipple, US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water - Watershed Academy Website, **Wetland Functions & Values**, accessed July 27, 2004, at <http://www.epa.gov/watertrain/wetlands/text.html>

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, **Background Papers on Wetland Function and Values**. Accessed July 27, 2004, at http://www.ramsar.org/values_sediment_e.htm

Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, **Louisiana Coastal Facts**, accessed July 26, 2004, at <http://www.savelawetlands.org/site/webfactsheet.pdf>

CD

Louisiana Wetland Functions and Values CD developed by LSU AgCenter's Extension Service in conjunction with the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wetlands Center and the LA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) [contact DNR (800/ 267-4019) or order at <http://www.lacoast.gov>].

References:

United States Geological Survey National Wetlands Research Center, **LA Coast website**, accessed July 27, 2004, at <http://www.lacoast.gov>

Kesselheim, A.S., Slattery, B. E., Higgins, S., Schilling, M. R. 1995. **WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands: An Educator's Guide**, Environmental Concern Publisher.



Vegetative planting by volunteers on Wisner Property, at Fourchon, LA

Student Name _____

Louisiana Wetlands Need YOU! Citizen Action Brochure

You are a member of the BTNEP Citizen Volunteer Action Committee. Your committee has decided to create a Citizen Action Brochure to encourage citizens to take action to help save and restore the wetlands. Your committee decides that each brochure should (1) explain a particular volunteer opportunity, (2) why this work is needed, and (3)

how this work will help the Louisiana wetlands. Below are steps you need to take in your brochure development.

Step 1. Answer two important questions.

1. Who is your target audience? (students, adults, families, businesses, general public, etc.)

2. What volunteer citizen action do you plan to highlight?

Why is this volunteer citizen action necessary? _____

How will this volunteer citizen action help the Louisiana wetlands? _____

3. What is the main message you want your brochure to deliver? _____

Step 2. Create a rough draft of the writing that will go into your brochure. *Is it clear what you want you want people to do and why they should get involved?*

Step 3. Get a classmate to proofread your draft. Besides spelling and grammar questions, this person should answer the following questions for you:

Proofreader: Explain in a sentence or two what it is that the author wants people to be involved in and why citizens should be involved in this effort.

Proofer's signature _____

Citizen Action Brochure (page 2)

- Step 4. Collect pictures to illustrate your brochure.
- Step 5. Design an attractive heading for your brochure.
- Step 6. Decide on a layout for your brochure.
- Step 7. Put text, graphics and headings into desired layout of the brochure.
- Step 8. Print copies of your brochure.
- Step 9. Design a distribution plan for your brochure. Who will you send this brochure to? How will you get it to your target audience?
