

Project WildLIVE – Adopt A Wildlife Area Project Educator Resource Sheet

Post-video Activity suggestion:

Encourage your students to reflect on, talk about, research, or write about habitat management and how it is important. Depending on the age and desired level of involvement of your students, assign a research project, writing, or lead an open discussion with these suggested topics: (there are no right / wrong answers, just be respectful to everyone's opinion and cultural beliefs / practices)

- What are the ethics behind managing habitat?
- Who 'owns' the land and who can determine what it will look like?
- Do humans have a right to alter the landscape, and if so, under what circumstances?
- How do circumstances or human responsibilities change when there are invasive species present?
- How have humans altered the natural landscape throughout history? (ex: indigenous peoples of North America purposely burning an area of land to aid its growth)
- How do animals manage the landscape on their own? How do *keystone species* play a role in this? (ex: beavers create a whole new ecosystem for other species to thrive in, and bison graze over grasslands to keep the plant community in check)
- Is it better to manage an ecosystem for maximum biodiversity (protecting many species) or just focusing on a few select species? How do the select species get to be determined?

For a more hands-on activity, have your students create and carry out an actual plan to better the ecosystems / habitat in their own backyard, neighborhood, or community! A few examples could include: picking up trash from a local park, removing invasive species from the students property (with the permission and assistance of students' parents) or school property, planting native plant species, creating birdhouses or beehouses, and more! This is a great opportunity for students to create a service-learning project and feel empowered to make a difference in their community.

How your students can get involved at home:

Besides the hands-on involvement suggested above, encourage students and their families to explore this websites to learn more about habitat management in Wisconsin and how they can personally help to improve and manage the habitat in their own lands / neighborhoods:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat>. They can also participate in citizen science as individuals or as a school group: <http://wiatri.net/cbm/>

Why is habitat management important?

Habitat management is important for the conservation of species, especially endangered species, because it gives them a suitable place for their population to live and thrive. This is



especially important when human-introduced invasive species have taken over a landscape or human presence and development has pushed native flora and fauna out of an area into a less-suitable habitat. Altering a habitat to fit the needs of a particular species in need can save one or many species from extinction, and it can also help the functionality and beneficial ecosystem services of ecosystems.

Resources for further learning:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat>

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/yourland.html>

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/plans.html>

