

Great Conservationists

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to:

- articulate their personal conservation values and beliefs
- articulate a connection between fishing and conservation

METHOD: Students will write a reflective one-page paper on a conservation quotation.

MATERIALS: None

SETTING: Outdoors (preferably)

DURATION: One 45-minute period

VOCABULARY: Stewardship

STANDARDS:

Environmental Education: C 8.1, 12.2; D 8.5, 8.7, 12.6; E 8.1, 12.1.

Language Arts: B 8.1, 12.1.

BACKGROUND: Enjoying and appreciating fishing could be a student's first step toward a lifetime of interest and involvement in conserving fisheries, aquatic environments, and other natural resources. **Great Conservationists** encourages students to reflect on the issues in this booklet, on their feelings about the natural world, and on their future involvement with aquatic resources.

OPENING: Have students read through **Great Conservationists**. Ask students to choose a quotation from the booklet or allow them the option of choosing their own conservation quotation without the use of the booklet.

MAIN ACTIVITY: Have students write a one-page response to the quotation they have chosen. This can be done during class time or at home, along with the **Cheap Date** exercise.

CLOSING: Allow students time to discuss their conservation values and beliefs. Have students determine an angler's cost to fish and compare it to other leisure activities. Discuss as a class whether or not students will continue to fish and/or care about the health of our fisheries.

ASSESSMENT QUESTION: Provide two examples of where you have seen stewardship in action.

ANSWERS: Answers will be personal but should reflect the student's understanding of the word "stewardship."

EXTENSIONS:

In Depth: Have students reflect on the life and beliefs of a renowned conservationist in a research paper or poster. Here is a short list to provide to your students, if they need prompting, of complex individuals who made impressive contributions to conservation. Feel free to add to this list.

- Warren Knowles
- Gaylord Nelson
- Margaret Murie
- Robert Bullard
- Frances Hamerstrom
- Jimmy Carter
- Lisa Perez Jackson
- Sigurd Olson
- Hazel Johnson
- Izaak Walton
- Sylvia Earle
- Aldo Leopold
- C.D. "Buzz" Besadny
- Rachel Carson
- Ansel Adams
- Theodore Roosevelt
- John Muir

Service Learning: Have students work with a community group or elementary school to plan a fishing outing for younger children. Ask them to plan an experience that is both safe and enjoyable for the children. Remember, students 16 and over need a fishing license.

• If you have downloaded this booklet, please see the appendix that follows for additional materials.

Notes



Forward Thinking

At the start of Iroquois council meetings council members would invoke this declaration: "In every deliberation we must consider the impact on the seventh generation." When making a decision, a representative spoke for the needs of those who would follow 150 years, or seven generations, from that moment.

How can we learn from this idea?

Great Conservationists

Fishing is an amazing way to enjoy the outdoors, learn about the natural world, spend time with family and friends, explore the state, and catch fabulous food. But maintaining a healthy fishery requires our attention and care. The future of fishing in this state rests in the hands of those who regularly use it. If you think fishing is a valuable and important pastime, it's up to you to make your voice heard and your opinions matter.

Through the ages individuals have made decisions and developed personal ethics that are helpful in guiding our own decisions today. Great thinkers since ancient times have heard a call for stewardship of the earth and all of its inhabitants. Native Americans and leaders of religious movements continue to reflect on the spiritual aspects of water resources and fish and recognize that the health of the water is linked to humankind's existence. Modern leaders from around the world have stepped on the path of environmental activism, bringing awareness of natural resources to a society increasingly unaware of them, yet just as dependent on them.

Through the Eyes of Another

Research the environmental views of an artist, or a scientific, civic, or spiritual leader. What were his or her contributions to the environment? What evidence did you find to support these contributions (art, books, speeches, projects, public service)? What struggles or challenges did he or she encounter in protecting natural resources? Did his or her commitment to the environment erode or strengthen over time? In what way? Explain his or her beliefs about what responsibility people have to protect the environment.

Wise Elders

Each of the following leaders had different viewpoints about why and how we should care

for the earth. As a caretaker of the earth yourself, you can learn from their experiences. Choose one of the quotes below to reflect on in a one-page response. Do you agree or disagree with the quote? Why? If you disagree with the quote, do you know of another quote that better matches your feelings about conservation? If you agree with the quote, what can you do in your own life to support it?

- 1) *"We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."* - Aldo Leopold, Wisconsin ecologist, wildlife biologist, angler, and hunter.
- 2) *"The human race is challenged more than ever before to demonstrate our mastery—not over nature but of ourselves."* - Rachel Carson, marine biologist and nature writer.
- 3) *"We all have to take responsibility for the direction we are going. In our schools we are focusing on numbers and letters but we need, from the earliest times, to get across the concept that we are connected to nature and that we are trying to find a space to sustain ourselves."* - Sylvia Earle, marine biologist, National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence and *Time Magazine's* first Hero for the Planet.
- 4) *"The most important environmental issue is one that is rarely mentioned, and that is the lack of a conservation ethic in our culture."* - Gaylord Nelson, Governor and State Senator of Wisconsin and founder of Earth Day.
- 5) *"The conservation of natural resources is the fundamental problem. Unless we solve that problem, it will avail us little to solve all others."* - Teddy Roosevelt, U.S. President, Nobel Prize winner, conservationist, and rancher.
- 6) *"It's time to be clear about this misconception that environmental issues are incompatible with civil rights issues. The truth is that environmental issues are civil rights issues."* - Lisa Perez Jackson, the first African American and fourth woman to lead the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

The Wealth of Nature

"The economy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment, not the other way around." Gaylord Nelson

Swimming Upstream

You too can be a great conservationist! There are direct and indirect paths to helping protect our natural resources. Some people choose to dedicate their lives to natural resources in careers at conservation organizations like the DNR.

You don't need a career in conservation to be a conservationist. No matter what career you choose, artists, economists, cashiers, mathematicians, and flight attendants, to name a few, can all advocate and volunteer on behalf of our natural resources. There are many ways to stay involved with and learn more about Wisconsin's fish and waters. Here are a few suggestions:

- Take a friend fishing. One of the best ways to gain support for the resource is to introduce others to it.
- If you like trout fishing, or are interested in starting, contact Trout Unlimited to see if they have a chapter near you. You could help with a restoration effort or meet others who want to help trout.
- Start a fishing club at your school or join one in your community.
- Speak up! Write letters to your representatives and senators about your resource concerns and vote as soon as you are eligible.
- Get outside. Being an active observer is the first step to working for the changes you would like to see.



The future of fishing in this state rests in the hands of those who regularly use it.

If you are planning a career in natural resources, check the DNR website for a sampling of jobs in the field. If you see one that looks great, interview someone in that job to find out what skills you should be getting while still in school.

You can also check university websites to see what types of courses they offer for people interested in our natural resources.

It's not always easy to improve our natural resources, but neither is it to swim upstream and plenty of

fish do it every year. Keep your eyes on the water and your mind open. Even if you don't continue fishing, you will continue to live in a world where water resources and aquatic wildlife will play a role in the health and stability of our planet. Don't lose touch with the water in your world!

Cheap Date

Take your date or a pal fishing! After a small annual investment, you can fish 365 days a year with whomever you want. Many Wisconsin communities are situated on or near fishable waters. Pack a picnic, call a friend or two, hop on your bike, and head for the water's edge.

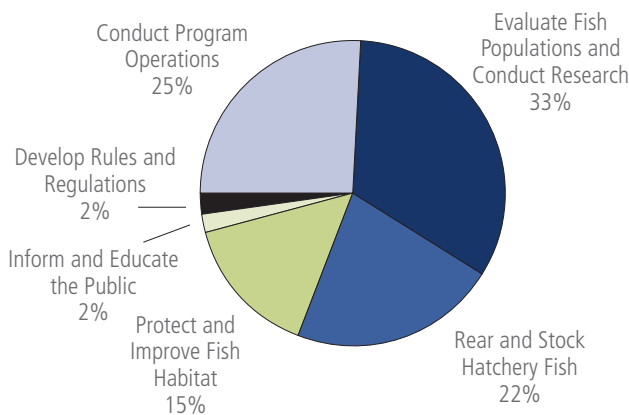
Compare the cost of a day of fishing to other leisure activities.

Consider total costs of participation and how often you can use your investment. Here are some examples:

ACTIVITY	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS	COST	ONE-TIME USE OR OPPORTUNITY	MULTIPLE USES OR OPPORTUNITIES
Fishing	License & Stamps Rod Reel Bait Tackle Other:			
Prom	Ticket Clothes Dinner Flowers Special Transportation Other:			
A night out Several options: movie, food, gasoline. List what you would do.				
A night at home Several options: games, music, snacks. List what you would do.				

Where does your license money go?

Money collected through the Sport Fish Restoration Fund and fish license fees funds the fisheries program at the Department of Natural Resources. Within the fisheries program, the money gets divided into many different projects, illustrated in the pie chart below:



A love of fishing has inspired generations of anglers to pay close attention to natural resources. Invite a friend to join you in enjoying the beauty and excitement that fishing offers. Maybe he or she will become a **great conservationist**.

All that for less than the cost of one night on the town!

Data from 2006 DNR Fishing Report