

Karner Blue Pond

Adapted from Project WILD
& Saratoga Springs Open Space Project

Karner Blue Pond is an activity investigating land use and its effects on a wetland and a pond. Students will design a community, keeping the health of the pond and wetland at heart.

Objectives-

- J Evaluate the effects of different land uses on wetlands
- J Discuss lifestyle and land use changes that will minimize damaging effects on wetlands
- J Introduce students to the struggles to arrange overlapping interests and uses regarding responsible land management decisions

Estimated Time-

- J 2- 3 hours



Materials-

- J Scissors
- J Masking tape
- J Paste or glue
- J Sets of land use cutouts
- J Karner Blue Pond cutouts
- J Large pieces of paper to attach the cutouts to

Background Discussion-

Human land use affects wildlife habitat in both positive and negative ways. The choices humans make toward land use are a reflection of their priorities and lifestyles. Some people believe that untouched natural areas should be preserved regardless of human needs, while some believe that undeveloped areas merely consist of raw materials for human consumption. Others believe that a balance between economic growth, and a healthy, vigorous natural environment should be found.

Growth is at the core of land use issues. In natural areas, growth is limited by the need for balance of energy between all parts of the natural system. Energy in a natural system is defined by food, water, shelter and space for survival; meaning that natural systems have the ability to be self-regulating. This capacity to self-regulate means that all members of an ecosystem are able to live in harmony and must be equally considered.

Human usage often disturbs the harmony and self-regulation. Water is used for irrigation and removed from its natural path. Wetlands are seen as useless swamps when they are actually nurseries for hundreds of plant and animal species.



