

## **FRWA Curriculum Guide**

### **Week VI - Middle School**

# **Water Protection and Conservation**

## Water Protection and Conservation Background Information

*“Children of a culture born in a water-rich environment, we have never really learned how important water is to us. We understand it, but we do not respect it.” – William Ashworth, Nor Any Drop to Drink, 1982*

The average person needs two and a half quarts of water a day to maintain good health. In the United States, the average person uses 120 to 150 gallons of water for cooking, washing, flushing and watering. When water is readily available, people do not think about conserving water. Water wasting habits are difficult to change, but the average household can save up to 50,000 to 100,000 gallons a year.

Along with conservation practices, protection of this vital resource is essential. Stream monitoring and testing are ways that students and volunteers can help maintain the quality of the water. Educating others as community service, decreasing negative impacts on water quality and a commitment to insuring that water is clean are all ways to insure that water quality is preserved.

### Food Facts:

- It takes **6 gallons** of water to make **one order of french fries**.
- More than **2,600 gallons** of water are needed to produce **one serving of steak**.
- The average American consumes **1,500 lbs. of food** annually. It takes **1.5 million gallons** to produce food for just one person!
- Approximately **6,800 gallons of water** are used to feed a **family of four** for one day.
- **100 gallons** of water are needed to grow **one watermelon**.

### Environmental Facts:

- Only 7 % of the country’s landscape is considered riparian, or alongside water— only **2 % of which still supports riparian vegetation**.
- Of the 1200 species listed as threatened or endangered, **50% are dependant on wetland habitats**.
- Freshwater species are disappearing **5 times faster** than land animals.
- **53,000 cubic miles** of water pass through Earth’s lakes and streams.
- If all of the water in the world were to fit in a gallon jug, the available freshwater would equal only **1 teaspoon**.

### Human Facts:

- **1.2 billion** of the world’s people do not have access to clean water.
- The United States consumes water at **twice the rate** of other industrialized countries.
- **6.8 billion gallons** of water are flushed down American toilets each day.
- **80 %** of freshwater used in the United States goes to irrigating crops and creating hydroelectric power.
- To survive, the average person needs **2 quarts** of water a day.
- An average person will drink about 16,000 gallons of water in their lifetime.