

3. The Rocky Mountains, the headwaters for the Colorado River, have experienced a severe drought for many of the past twenty years. States and cities downstream that depend on the river water have had to find solutions to the reduced water flow.

One city located downstream from the Rocky Mountains is Las Vegas, Nevada. In Las Vegas, one solution to reduce the amount of water used for irrigation is to remove landscaping and lawns that use grasses not native to the local area and replace them with desert-tolerant landscaping.

- (a) **Identify** a typical type of plant that would be used in desert-tolerant landscaping.
- (b) **Justify** the removal of landscaping and lawns that use grasses not native to the local area by describing an additional advantage, other than reducing the amount of water needed for irrigation.

Warmer seasonal temperatures in the Rocky Mountains have led to earlier mountain snowmelt and an increased risk of forest fires as soil and vegetation dry out.

- (c) **Describe** how a prescribed burn would reduce the severity and spread of forest fires.
- (d) **Describe** a disadvantage of a prescribed burn in a forested ecosystem.

Lake Powell is a large reservoir on the Colorado River. Lake Powell is formed by a dam with a hydroelectric power plant. At full capacity or full pool, Lake Powell contains 25.16 million acre-feet (maf) of water. Currently, Lake Powell is at 36% full capacity.

- (e) **Calculate** the number of million acre-feet (maf) of water currently in Lake Powell. **Show** your work.

In 2021, after years of drought, Lake Powell held 7.9 million acre-feet (maf) of water. One million acre-feet is equivalent to  $3.26 \times 10^{11}$  gallons.

- (f) The watershed of the Upper Colorado River contributes an average of 9.60 maf of water to Lake Powell annually. The melted mountain snow found in the watershed contributes 50% of the average river flow into Lake Powell. In 2021, the river flow was 36% of the annual average. Assuming that all resources to that flow contributed the same proportions as in prior years, **calculate** the amount of water (in million acre-feet) that was contributed by the melted mountain snow in 2021. **Show** your work.
- (g) The average household in the United States consumes  $5.0 \times 10^4$  gallons of water in a year. **Calculate** the number of households that could be supported for one year by the average flow of 9.60 maf of water into Lake Powell. **Show** your work.

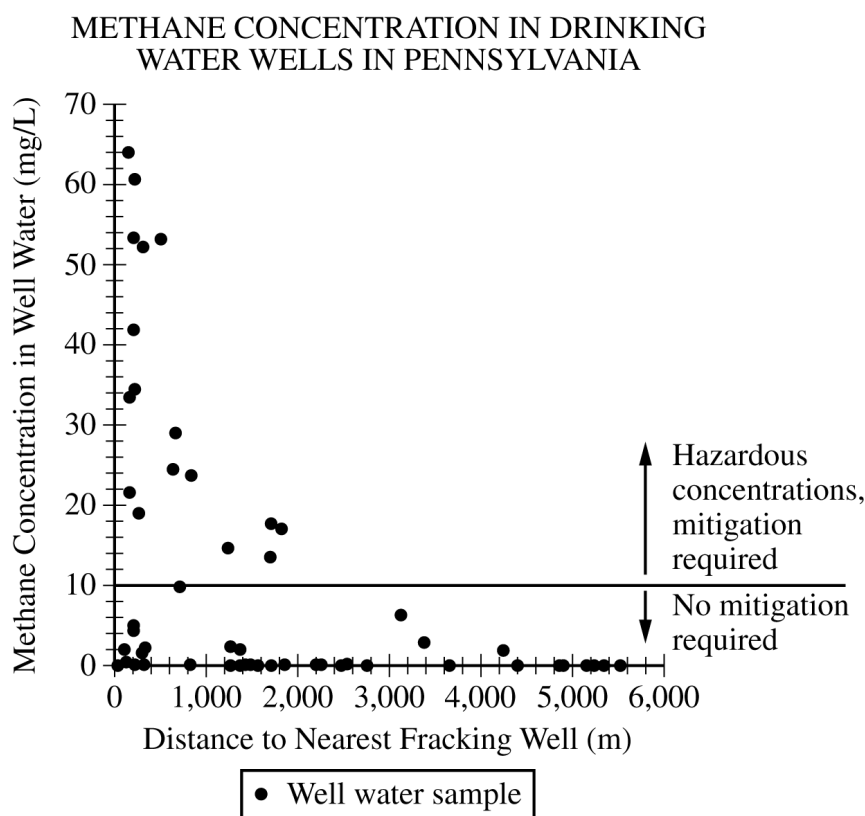
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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

2. Developments in advanced hydraulic fracturing (fracking) technologies have allowed the total oil and gas production in the United States to increase rapidly.



- (a) The graph shows the methane concentration in drinking water from home wells and the distance to the nearest fracking well in Pennsylvania.
- Based on the data in the graph, **identify** the highest methane concentration found in well water in Pennsylvania.
  - Based on the data in the graph, **describe** the relationship between the concentration of methane in well water and the distance to a fracking well.
  - Based on the data in the graph, **identify** the minimum safe distance that a new water well should be located from an existing fracking well.
  - Explain** how fracking fluid is used to access oil and natural gas in sedimentary rock, such as shale, during the fracking process.
  - Identify** one negative geologic effect in an area where hydraulic fracturing (fracking) occurs.
- (b) The volume of water used for oil and gas extraction is 28 times greater than it was fifteen years ago. Much of the water used for oil and gas extraction comes from groundwater sources in arid or semiarid regions. This increased use of water for fracking may mean that less water is available for local use.
- The use of groundwater for fracking is an example of individuals using a shared resource for their own self-interest. **Identify** the environmental concept illustrated by this example of overuse of a shared resource.
  - Describe** one environmental problem that may result from increased use of groundwater for fracking in arid or semiarid regions.
  - Describe** how overuse of coastal groundwater supplies can result in water that is unsuitable for human consumption.

- (c) In addition to water quality issues caused by fossil fuel extraction, air quality can also be negatively affected by combustion of oil and natural gas.
- (i) **Make a claim** for a realistic governmental action to improve air quality by reducing consumption of oil.
  - (ii) **Justify** the action proposed in part (c)(i) by stating a potential environmental advantage of that action, other than slowing global climate change.

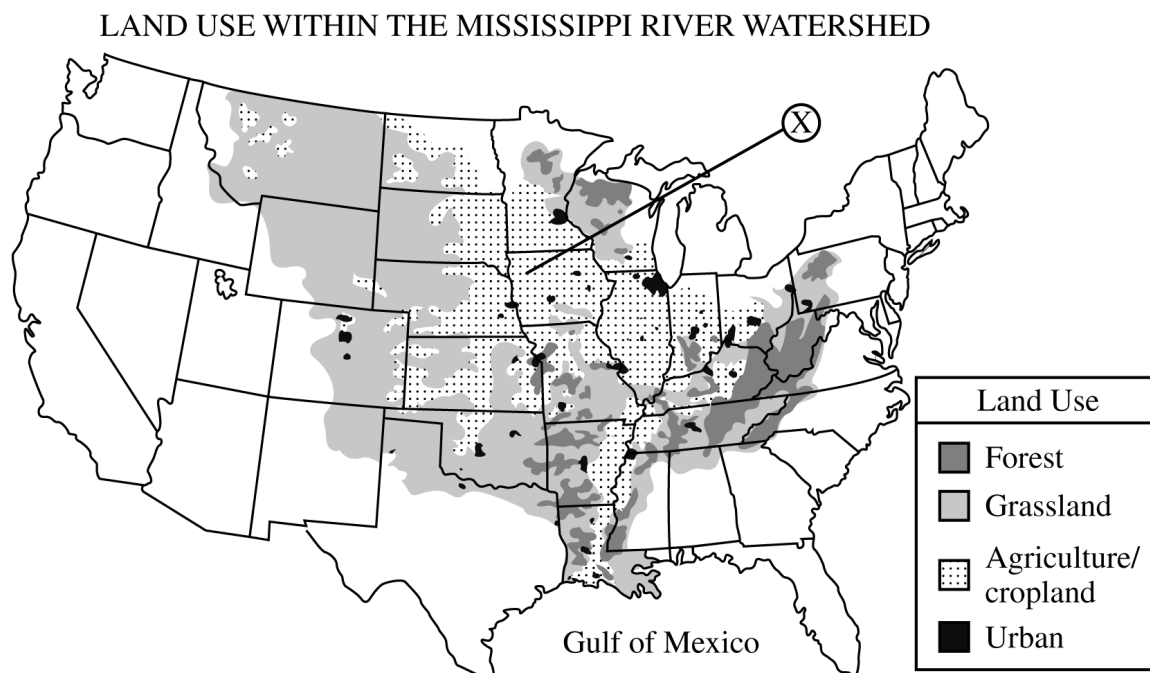
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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE****SECTION II****Time—1 hour and 10 minutes****3 Questions**

**Directions:** Answer all three questions, which are weighted equally; the suggested time is about 22 minutes for answering each question. Write all your answers in the Free Response booklet. Where calculations are required, clearly show how you arrived at your answer. Where explanation or discussion is required, support your answers with relevant information and/or specific examples. You may plan your answers in this orange booklet, but no credit will be given for anything written in this booklet. **You will only earn credit for what you write in the separate Free Response booklet.**

1. The dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico occurs every summer when winter snow melts and spring rain flows into the Mississippi River. Recent studies have shown that both the total area covered by algae and the depth of the algal mass in the dead zone are increasing.



- (a) Various land use practices can have different effects on the waters that surround a dead zone.
- (i) **Identify** the land use that covers the least amount of area in the Mississippi River watershed, based on the diagram.
  - (ii) **Describe** one way that the land use practice at location X in the diagram could contribute to the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.
  - (iii) **Describe** one way that urban areas in the Mississippi River watershed could contribute to the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

- (b) The dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico has both economic and environmental effects for coastal communities.
- (i) **Describe** how a dead zone affects marine organisms living in the Gulf of Mexico.
  - (ii) **Describe** one economic effect on communities along the Gulf of Mexico that can result from the presence of the dead zone.
  - (iii) **Describe** one factor that causes the area of the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico to increase in the summer months.
- (c) Researchers want to examine the effect of riparian vegetation buffers on water quality in streams in agricultural areas. Researchers will measure the water nutrient concentrations over the course of one year. The study sites are located 100 meters downstream from areas either with or without riparian vegetation buffers.
- (i) **Identify** a testable hypothesis for the study.
  - (ii) **Describe** a control that the researchers could use in the study.
  - (iii) **Identify** one water quality test, other than measuring nitrates or phosphates, that the researchers could use to evaluate how riparian vegetation buffers affect water quality.
  - (iv) During the investigation, researchers discovered that some of the land next to one of the streams with a riparian vegetation buffer is going to be converted from cornfields into a large-scale concentrated animal feeding operation. **Explain** one way that this change in land use could alter the results of the study.

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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

3. North Carolina is one of the fastest-growing states by population in the United States, with most growth concentrated in major cities like Charlotte. Increased population leads to increased demands for resources such as power and water.

The majority of electrical energy in North Carolina is produced during the combustion of coal.

- (a) **Identify** one negative human health effect linked to the exposure to pollutants resulting from the combustion of coal.
- (b) Coal ash, the powdery, solid substance that remains after coal combustion, presents a variety of potential environmental issues. Disposal of toxic coal ash is a growing concern in the state. Coal ash can be mixed with water and disposed of in large, unlined pits or as dry ash in landfills.
- (i) **Describe** an environmental problem associated with coal ash waste disposal.
- (ii) A proposed solution is to dispose of North Carolina's coal ash in clay-lined pits. **Justify** this solution by providing one advantage of using clay soil.
- (c) The population of Charlotte, North Carolina, has grown over the last few decades. The table shows the increase in the population size of Charlotte from 2013 to 2019.

**Population of Charlotte, North Carolina, 2013–2019**

| Year | Population |
|------|------------|
| 2013 | 757,278    |
| 2014 | 774,807    |
| 2015 | 792,137    |
| 2016 | 808,834    |
| 2017 | 826,060    |
| 2018 | 841,611    |
| 2019 | 857,425    |

- (i) **Calculate** the percent change in Charlotte's population from 2013 to 2019. **Show** your work.
- (ii) Based on Charlotte's 2019 growth rate of 1.88%, **calculate** the year when the population of Charlotte will double, assuming the growth rate stays the same. **Show** your work.
- (iii) The average Charlotte resident uses 90 gallons of water per day. **Calculate** the gallons of water used by the population of Charlotte in the year 2018. **Show** your work.
- (d) Drought periods are becoming more frequent in North Carolina, causing water resources to become more scarce. **Describe** one realistic action that citizens could take to reduce domestic outdoor water use.

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**Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.**

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

3. Haiti shares a border with the Dominican Republic on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.
- (a) The border between the two countries can be seen using satellite images because of the severe deforestation in Haiti.
    - (i) **Provide** one reason why deforestation commonly occurs in a less developed country such as Haiti.
    - (ii) **Describe** one realistic strategy to reduce deforestation in a less developed country.
  - (b) Deforestation can affect water quality. **Identify** one change that can occur in the water quality of streams within a watershed that has been deforested. **Explain** how deforestation can lead to this change.
  - (c) **Identify** TWO environmental benefits, other than those related to water quality, of maintaining forest ecosystems.

The table below contains demographic data for Haiti in 1995 and 2015.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FOR HAITI

| Measure                                       | 1995 | 2015 |
|-----------------------------------------------|------|------|
| Fertility rate (number of children per woman) | 5.2  | 2.7  |
| Life expectancy (years)                       | 55   | 64   |
| Infant mortality (deaths per 1,000)           | 85   | 48   |

- (d) **Identify** and **discuss** one factor in a less developed country that could contribute significantly to a change in life expectancy, similar to what occurred in Haiti from 1995 to 2015.
- (e) **Identify** and **discuss** one economic or cultural factor in a less developed country that could contribute significantly to a change in the fertility rate, similar to what occurred in Haiti from 1995 to 2015.



4. Dams are built by humans for various purposes including hydroelectric power generation and control of downstream flooding.
- (a) **Explain** how electricity is generated at a hydroelectric dam.
  - (b) **Identify** TWO economic benefits, other than hydroelectric power generation and control of downstream flooding, associated with dams.
  - (c) **Describe** one ecological benefit of seasonal flooding of the floodplain of a free-flowing river.
  - (d) Some dams have been removed from rivers.
    - (i) **Explain** how removal of a dam can benefit fish populations.
    - (ii) **Describe** one negative environmental consequence of removing a dam from a river (other than effects on fish populations).
  - (e) Dams are also built by beavers, a keystone species in some North American ecosystems.
    - (i) **Define** keystone species.
    - (ii) **Describe** how dams built by beavers can make beavers a keystone species in some ecosystems.

**STOP**

**END OF EXAM**

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE****SECTION II****Time—90 minutes****4 Questions**

**Directions:** Answer all four questions, which are weighted equally; the suggested time is about 22 minutes for answering each question. Write all your answers on the pages following the questions in this book. Where calculations are required, clearly show how you arrived at your answer. Where explanation or discussion is required, support your answers with relevant information and/or specific examples.

1. Read the article below and answer the questions that follow.

**The Floridian Daily****May 21, 2013**

The small community located on the edge of the magnificent wetlands of Florida's Everglades was the site of a press conference today where Governor Gayle Moss announced that the restoration of the Everglades is successfully underway. She noted that the Everglades ecosystem has suffered threats to its water quality, water quantity, and habitats in recent decades. Moss noted that intensive urban and agricultural development in adjacent areas has diverted substantial amounts of

freshwater resources and impaired water quality. Governor Moss then emphasized that the preservation and enhancement of the Everglades, key goals of the restoration program, are absolutely essential for the continued environmental and economic health of the state. She closed the press conference by saying, "The Everglades is a gem not only for Florida but for the entire world. Each of us has the responsibility to do our part to preserve this magnificent resource."

- (a) **Describe** how TWO human activities, other than those that result in anthropogenic climate change, have resulted in a decrease in the amount of freshwater flowing into the Everglades ecosystem.
- (b) In addition to water quantity problems, the Everglades is faced with a variety of water quality issues. For example, phosphorus concentrations in the Everglades have increased since the 1960s.
- (i) **Describe** how one specific human activity contributes to increased phosphorus levels in the Everglades.
  - (ii) **Explain** one way in which an increase in phosphorus levels can adversely affect the Everglades ecosystem.
  - (iii) **Describe** one step that could be taken to reduce phosphorus inputs from the activity you identified in part (i).
- (c) Climate change could have a variety of impacts on water quantity, water quality, and habitat. For EACH of these three factors, **identify and describe** one specific example of an impact on the Everglades likely to result from climate change.
- (d) The article states that Governor Moss believes that the "preservation and enhancement of the Everglades, key goals of the restoration program, are absolutely essential for the continued environmental and economic health of the state."
- (i) **Describe** one way that restoring water quantity and water quality in the Everglades is expected to improve the structure and function of the ecosystem.
  - (ii) **Describe** one way that restoring the Everglades is expected to provide economic benefits to Florida.