

The local government of a newly built town has contracted with an electrical company to provide energy to the town. The company generates electricity primarily through the burning of coal and has built a new power plant for the town. A nearby deposit of coal was discovered close to the surface. To access the coal, the company decides to remove the overburden and vegetation over the deposit.

3. Respond to parts A, B, C, D, E, F, and G.

A. **Identify** a type of surface mining the company could use to access the coal.

B. **Describe** an environmental problem associated with surface mining.

C. The town is located downwind of the new coal-burning power plant.

Describe an environmental problem the town could experience as a result of the electricity generation at the coal-burning power plant.

D. The local government is concerned about the environmental consequences of using coal to generate electricity for the town.

Propose a realistic solution the local government could enact that would reduce the negative environmental consequences of using coal to generate electricity.

E. Burning one pound of coal produces an average of 0.88 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity. An average household in the United States uses 1.064×10^4 kWh of electricity each year.

Calculate how many pounds of coal would need to be burned to generate enough electricity to power a town with 11,000 houses for a year. **Show** your work.

F. Researchers are concerned about the impact of noise pollution on songbirds in a forest near the power plant. Since the power plant was installed, bird species richness has declined from 7.5 species per hectare to 6.0 species per hectare.

Calculate the percent change in bird species per hectare since the power plant was installed. **Show** your work.

G. The town has been growing since it was built and had a growth rate of 5.38% in 2022, with a population of 26,250.

Assuming that the growth rate remains constant, **calculate** the year in which the population will reach 52,500. **Show** your work.

STOP

END OF EXAM

2. As conventional sources of crude oil are depleted, unconventional sources such as oil sands (also known as tar sands) are being utilized. Oil sands contain bitumen, which can be processed into a synthetic crude oil. A region of boreal forest in Alberta, Canada, that covers a deposit of oil sands will be cut and removed during the process of bitumen extraction. It is estimated that the deposit contains 73 billion barrels of recoverable bitumen. The rate of extraction from the deposit will be approximately 1 million barrels of bitumen per day.
- (a) **Identify** one ecological benefit, other than providing habitat, that is provided by forests.
 - (b) **Identify** one economic benefit that is provided by forests.
 - (c) **Describe** TWO environmental consequences, other than those related to the loss of boreal forest habitat, that result from the extraction of bitumen or the transportation of synthetic oil to customers.
 - (d) Assuming the above extraction rate, **calculate** how many days will be needed to extract the recoverable volume of bitumen from the oil sands.
 - (e) **Calculate** how many years will be needed to fully extract the recoverable volume of bitumen from the oil sands.
 - (f) Monthly production of synthetic crude oil is 30 million barrels. Producing one barrel of synthetic crude oil uses two barrels of heated freshwater. **Calculate** the number of barrels of freshwater needed each year to supply this demand.

2. An offshore wind farm project using turbines to generate electricity is to be built along the Atlantic coast of the United States. It will be located about 13 km from the coast in water with an average depth of 10 m.
- (a) **Describe** one environmental benefit associated with an offshore wind project.
 - (b) **Identify** and **describe** one potential economic effect of an offshore wind project.
 - (c) **Describe** one additional way, other than wind power, that oceans can provide renewable energy for the generation of electricity.

The project will consist of 200 wind turbines, each with a capacity of 4 megawatts (MW). Each turbine costs \$1.2 million to build. Electrical demand in the area to be served by the project is expected to be 2.0×10^6 MWh per year.

- (d) **Calculate** how much electricity (in MWh) the wind project needs to generate per year in order to provide 80% of the annual electrical demand in the service area. Show all work.
- (e) Customers in the service area pay \$0.20/kWh for electricity. **Calculate** how much revenue will be produced if the wind turbines provide 80% of the annual electrical demand in the service area. Show all work.
- (f) Assuming all turbines are operating, **calculate** how many hours the wind turbines must operate to provide 80% of the annual electrical demand in the service area. Show all work.