



WATERSHED 360°

EPISODE 4 | "BALANCING ACT" (3:09)

Nebraska Social Studies and/or Science Standards Addressed

Geography-Location and Place

SS 5.3.1 Explore where (spatial) and why people, places and environments are organized in the United States.

SS 5.3.1.a Use maps and atlases to locate major human and physical features in the United States.

Geography-Regions

SS 5.3.2 Compare the characteristics of places and regions and draw conclusions on their impact on human decisions.

SS 5.3.2.a Identify criteria used to define regions within the United States.

SS 5.3.2.b Identify and classify regions and places within the United States using physical and human features.

SC.5.13 Earth's Systems

SC.5.13.4 Gather and analyze data to communicate understanding of Earth's systems.

SC.5.13.4.A Develop a model using an example to describe ways the geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and/or atmosphere interact.

SC.5.13.4.B Describe and graph the amounts of salt water and fresh water in various reservoirs to provide evidence about the distribution of water on Earth.

SC.5.13.4.C Obtain and combine information about ways individual communities use science ideas to protect the Earth's resources and environment.

Each episode of *Watershed 360°* begins with the same two questions. "Who cares about a watershed? And why?"

Each episode ends with the question, "Do you know your watershed?"

Tell students that they should be able to answer these questions after viewing most or all of the episodes. However, the first two questions have many different answers.

[Watershed_questionsposters.pdf](#)



OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will explain the purposes and methods of managing water.

VOCABULARY

acre: a unit of land that is 43,560 square feet (or roughly the size of a football field without the end zones)

reservoir: natural or man-made lake

<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/glossary/?term=reservoir>

diversion dam - "A diversion dam is designed to divert water from a watercourse such as a waterway or stream into another watercourse, irrigation canal, stream, water-spreading system, or another waterway. The purpose of the practice is to improve the beneficial use of water, or divert damaging flows to another watercourse that is more stable or otherwise more capable of reducing damage. One of the more common uses of this practice is diverting water from a stream or river into a canal used for irrigation purposes."

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs143_026012.pdf

CAPTIONS

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation manages water resources in the west. 0:30 (See more details below.)

U.S.B.R. irrigates more than 10 million acres of farmland. 1:37

U.S.B.R. delivers water to more than 31 million people. 2:05



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GRADES 4-8

LOCATION

Mills, Wyoming (not identified in the video)

- "Reclamation has been involved with the conservation and development of Wyoming's water resources for more than 100 years. The Wyoming Area Office service area includes the states of Wyoming east of the Continental Divide and extends into western Nebraska."
- "Water is supplied to 60 irrigation entities for irrigation of 680,000 acres of land and to 20 cities, municipalities, and companies for municipal and industrial purposes."
- "The Wyoming Area Office manages over 500,000 acres of land for beneficial uses. Other benefits include flood control, fish and wildlife enhancement, and recreation." <https://www.usbr.gov/gp/wyao/index.html>

QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to "manage" water? *(The amount of water available in the West varies so capturing, releasing, and diverting water helps users. Water can be stored in reservoirs or rerouted through dams so it reaches users when and where they need it most.)*
2. How are dams and the reservoirs they create helpful? *(They can prevent flooding when there is too much water or provide water during years when there isn't enough water.)*
3. "Who cares about a watershed? And why?"
Mahonri Williams - There are seven dams on the North Platte River that provide water for irrigation of crops (agriculture), hydropower, industry, recreation, fish and wildlife.

SOURCES

National Geographic Society. "Vocabulary." Vocabulary | National Geographic Society, <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/glossary/>

"Natural Resources Conservation Service." NRCS, www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/national/home/.

Bureau of Reclamation. (OAD). Great Plains Region.
Retrieved from <https://www.usbr.gov/gp/wyao/index.html>

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