

Passage 1: "The Benefits of Wilderness Conservation"

Author: Elizabeth Greenfield

Wilderness conservation is one of the most important ways we can protect the environment and maintain biodiversity. Preserving natural habitats is essential not only for wildlife but also for future generations of humans. In untouched wild spaces, ecosystems function without human interference, allowing plants and animals to thrive. For example, national parks and nature reserves help to protect species from habitat destruction, poaching, and overdevelopment. By setting aside land for conservation, we ensure that nature can evolve naturally, helping to preserve the balance that keeps the planet healthy.

Another crucial benefit of conservation is its ability to fight climate change. Forests and wetlands play a key role in absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, which helps to mitigate the effects of global warming. By protecting these areas from deforestation, we can slow the rate of climate change. Moreover, the preservation of wild places helps humans by providing clean air and water, as well as opportunities for outdoor recreation and mental well-being. Wilderness conservation, therefore, is a vital step toward a sustainable future for both people and the planet.

Passage 2: "The Economic Costs of Wilderness Preservation"

Author: Michael Harris

While the idea of preserving wilderness areas may sound appealing, there are significant economic costs to setting aside large portions of land for conservation. First and foremost, wilderness preservation often leads to the restriction of land use, which limits the ability of communities to develop and grow. In many cases, areas that could otherwise be used for agriculture, housing, or industry are instead protected by conservation laws, which can result in lost opportunities for local economies. For example, towns that are surrounded by protected forests may see fewer job opportunities as logging, mining, and development are restricted.

Moreover, maintaining protected areas requires ongoing funding, which often comes from taxpayer dollars. This money could be better spent on other priorities, such as education or healthcare, rather than on preserving land that cannot be used for economic development. The cost of keeping these areas free from human activity can also lead to conflicts between environmentalists and local residents who depend on the land for their livelihoods. While protecting nature is important, it must be balanced with the needs of the people who live nearby and rely on the land for resources.

Essay Prompt:

Choose one side of the debate about wilderness conservation and defend it in an essay. Use quotes from the passages to support your argument.

You must decide whether you agree with the idea of preserving wilderness areas (Passage 1), or if you believe that the economic costs of conservation outweigh the benefits (Passage 2). In your essay, make

sure to clearly present your opinion and explain why you feel that way. Be sure to include quotes from the passage you chose to support your view.

Sample Essay: "The Importance of Wilderness Conservation"

Nature is one of the most important parts of our world, and preserving it is vital for the well-being of all living things. In the debate about whether to protect wilderness areas, I strongly believe that conservation is essential for the environment and future generations. Elizabeth Greenfield, in her article "The Benefits of Wilderness Conservation," argues that conserving wild spaces helps to preserve ecosystems and fight climate change. These benefits far outweigh the economic costs that come with limiting land development.

First, protecting wilderness areas helps to maintain a healthy environment. Greenfield writes that national parks and reserves are crucial for preventing habitat destruction and protecting wildlife from dangers like poaching. By creating safe spaces for animals and plants to thrive, we ensure that biodiversity remains intact. These wild areas also help to stabilize the environment, preventing soil erosion and maintaining clean air and water. Without conservation efforts, many species would struggle to survive, and the balance of nature would be disrupted.

Some people argue that wilderness preservation is too costly, and that it limits economic growth. In "The Economic Costs of Wilderness Preservation," Michael Harris discusses how conservation laws can restrict land use, preventing agriculture, housing, and industry from developing. While this may be true, I believe the long-term benefits of conservation outweigh these short-term costs. For example, preserving forests and wetlands helps to fight climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide. Greenfield explains that protected areas can reduce the effects of global warming, which is a problem that affects everyone, not just people living near conservation areas.

Additionally, the economic argument against conservation overlooks the many benefits that protected areas bring to communities. Wilderness areas offer opportunities for tourism and recreation, which can boost local economies. People come from all over the world to visit national parks and nature reserves, spending money on hotels, food, and souvenirs. This creates jobs and supports local businesses. Greenfield mentions that preserving wild spaces also helps to maintain clean air and water, which are essential for human health and well-being. These factors should not be ignored when considering the costs of conservation.

In conclusion, while there are some economic concerns about preserving wilderness areas, the benefits to the environment and human health far outweigh the costs. The protection of nature helps maintain biodiversity, fights climate change, and offers economic opportunities through tourism. It is clear that we must continue to prioritize wilderness conservation for the future of our planet.