

*Soil and Water
Conservation*

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The call of a loon swimming on a lake on a summer evening has always been a peaceful, enjoyable sound for me to hear. This loon depends on the lake, just like humans, fish and other organisms do. Now imagine this sound becoming extinct, because of humans neglect of water and soil conservation. This could become a reality someday if we do not realize the importance of conservation for our futures.

Before discovering my personal reasons for the importance of water and soil conservation, one must first understand its important role in the world. Water conservation is the use and management of water for the good of all consumers. Water is abundant throughout earth, yet only three percent of all water is freshwater, and less than seven-tenths of freshwater is usable. Much of the usable water is then utilized for irrigation. This means that in about fifteen years about two-thirds of the world's population will be living in some sort of water shortage. Many people in the United States abuse their right to water, taking advantage of it by consuming around one hundred and fifty gallons a day, which is around six times more than people in other countries (Goings). Water is used in nearly every aspect of life. There are multiple domestic, industrial and agricultural uses. Although water is terminable, there are many ways to start better conserving its use (Garreis).

Water conservation is rapidly become a hot topic, yet many people do not realize the concerns involved with soil conservation as well. Soil conservation is defined as the control of soil erosion in order to maintain agriculture productivity. Soil erosion is often the effect of many natural causes, such as water and wind. There are also many human factors which increase the rate of soil erosion such as construction, cultivation and other activities. History dates as far back as five thousand years show areas of soil erosion

produced by humans, which could have been prevented. Some may argue that since it is a natural process, soil erosion is not harmful. The truth is when the top layer of soil is removed, so is the organic matter and nutrients it contains. These help with fertility to produce more crops (Marshall).

There are many reasons water and soil conservation is important to me and my future, starting with the simple fact I would not be living without it! The human body is around sixty five percent water, and soil is essential in producing the food needed for survival. Living in a rural community all my life, I have been blessed with the surroundings of lakes and streams, fields and woods. This has taught me the value of the outdoors which is now very important to me. Water has provided me with many fun experiences such as boating, fishing, knee boarding, canoeing and swimming. Soil has brought me the farmlands and woods important for hunting and camping, as well as walking and biking. Wildlife also depends highly on water and soil and we need wildlife for food as well as for enjoyment of nature. All of these activities have been important in my life and have taught me many lessons. Soil and water conservation is important to my future, because after graduation from college I hope to start a family and live in the country. I want to continue having these experiences as well as my children having the chance to experience them someday and enjoy nature, and without soil and water conservation they may not be able to.