

Summary: California's Resources

A Land of Resources

California is rich in natural resources. Air, water, plants, and animals are natural resources. So are salt, coal, and oil. Even sun and wind are natural resources. People depend on natural resources for food, shelter, and clothing.

Each of California's regions has a variety of natural resources. In the desert region, the Colorado River supplies water to Los Angeles and other cities. The desert region also has minerals such as boron, which is used to make glass. Along the coast, workers pump oil and natural gas near Santa Barbara and Long Beach. Farther north, fir and redwood trees are important sources of wood.

In the mountain regions, forests provide wood. Forests also conserve water, helping rainwater sink into the ground. Channels and pipelines later carry this water from the rivers to farms and cities in drier areas. This helps farmers in the Central Valley raise crops during the three growing seasons. The Central Valley is the leading farm region in the United States for fruits, vegetables and nuts.

Using Resources

People use renewable, nonrenewable, and flow resources. Renewable resources can be replaced if they are used wisely. For example, an orange tree can easily grow more oranges. But if you cut down a 5,000-year-old sequoia tree, it will take 5,000 years to grow back.

Nonrenewable resources cannot be replaced in nature. Earth has a limited amount of these resources, such as gold and oil. Flow resources must be used when and where they are available. Wind, water currents, and sunshine are flow resources. Wind powers windmills to create electricity. Steam from the earth is a flow resource that is made from Earth's natural heat.

People depend on natural resources to live. If we waste them or use them unwisely, our resources could run out. We are finding new ways to conserve our resources. For example, solar energy can sometimes replace oil and gas. People can walk, ride bikes or the bus to conserve fuel. Paper, plastic, and other used materials can be recycled.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

natural resource *noun*, anything from nature that people use

renewable resource *noun*, a natural resource that can be replaced after people use it

nonrenewable resource *noun*, a natural resource that exists in limited amounts and cannot easily be replaced

flow resource *noun*, a natural resource that must be used when and where it is available



After You Read

REVIEW Name two California resources and the regions where they are found. Highlight two sentences that name a resource and where each one is found.

REVIEW Name two renewable resources and two nonrenewable resources. Circle the resources, and write in the margin "R" for renewable and "N" for nonrenewable.