

Nonpoint Source Pollution Awareness: Word Search Puzzle

Target Grades: 6-9

To do the word search, first read these paragraphs then find the words listed below.

The United States has made tremendous advances since Congress passed the Clean Water Act in 1972 to clean up the aquatic **environment** by controlling **pollution** from industries and sewage treatment plants. Today, **nonpoint source** pollution remains the nation's largest source of water quality problems.

Sometimes referred to as polluted runoff, nonpoint source pollution occurs when rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation runs over land or through the ground, picks up pollutants, and deposits them into surface waters or introduces them into groundwater.

The most common nonpoint source pollutants are sediments and **nutrients**. Other common nonpoint source pollutants include **pesticides**, salts, oils, and excess **fertilizer**.

The **watershed** approach is the preferred way to restore a stream, river, or lake. It looks beyond the water body itself and examines the entire drainage area, including all the potential sources of pollution that drain into it.

Water **conservation** uses practices and technologies that limit water use in the bathroom, kitchen, laundry room, lawn, driveway, and garden. Conserving water reduces the demand on existing water supplies and limits the amount of water that runs off the land. **Runoff** should also be minimized by using **low impact** development techniques. These techniques work with the natural landscape and native plants to soak up more rainwater so that the soil is better able to absorb water.

Low-impact development solutions include **rain gardens** and green roofs, which treat rainwater as a precious resource. Other ways to control polluted runoff include:

- erosion control techniques such as silt fencing around construction sites,
- next to water bodies, establishing areas of land called **riparian** areas, which include diverse species of plants that can help filter out pollutants, and
- **xeriscape** landscaping, which incorporates native plants that minimize maintenance needs.

Finally, many local groups organize volunteer **monitoring** efforts, which provide information that can help government agencies understand the impacts of nonpoint source pollution and solve problems. Working together, we can all make a difference.

Can You Find These Words or Phrases?

(Circle each one in the Word Search box below)

Conservation

Environment

Erosion

Fertilizer

Low Impact Monitoring

Nonpoint Source

Nutrients

Pesticide

Pollution

Rain Gardens

Riparian

Runoff

Sediment Water

Watershed

Xeriscape

Nonpoint Source Word Search

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