

## Human Use Chapter Teacher Sheet



### Activity #1: Should We Build On the Estuary?

#### Objectives:

To take a position on whether or not to build housing on the land close to the estuary, and develop a newspaper or TV ad arguing their position.

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#### Time:

This activity can be started in class, and completed as a project.

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#### Background:

One of the main issues facing our communities regarding National and State Park lands is whether to build on them or allow them to remain as natural as possible. Often, both sides of this issue have compelling reasons in support of the argument, and the issue frequently becomes one that is used by political candidates during election season.

In this activity, students will work in groups of 4 to develop an advertisement for a political candidate in support of one side of this issue - should we build low-cost housing on part of the land presently occupied by the Tijuana Estuary? Each group will decide which side they want to support - either for or against building the housing - and write an ad that will be run in a local paper, or that will be viewed on local TV, to support their argument.

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#### Materials:

Provide students with standard writing materials - pencils, paper, pens, etc. If materials are available, students could also take pictures to use in their ads, or make a video of their ad.

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**Procedure:**

- 1) Ask students to form groups of 4. Each group should decide which political candidate they will support. Be sure both sides of the issue are well-represented. If necessary, you can assign which candidate each group will support.
- 2) Read the scenario as a class
- 3) Tell students they are going to write an advertisement for the political candidate they are "representing". They can write a newspaper advertisement, a PowerPoint presentation that could be run on local TV, or a video that could be run on local TV. Their advertisement should be visually appealing, professional, and well-written.
- 4) If possible, you could have other classes in the school view the advertisements and vote on which one presented the issue in the most compelling way.

## **Scenario:**

Victoria Matthews and Felipe Jones are both running for a seat on the City Council. There are a total of five seats on the City Council, but only one vacancy. Both Victoria and Felipe would like to win this seat because they want to influence the way the City Council will vote on a land use issue facing the Tijuana Estuary.

At the present time, there are over 100 acres on the inland part of the Estuary that are not being used. A developer wants to build low-cost housing on the 100 acres. This low-cost housing is badly needed by the city because so many people in the city can't afford to buy their own home. The developer has agreed to sell the homes they build at a cost that will be affordable to most people in the city, and to only sell the homes to those people who qualify for the low prices - in other words, to people who have low income. Victoria Matthews wants to provide low-cost housing to residents of the city, and feels this development would be the best use of this land. She wants the city to approve using the 100 acres for this housing.

Felipe Jones also wants to provide low-cost housing to residents of the city, but he doesn't think it is a good idea to build on this 100 acres. He thinks a different piece of land would be better to build the housing on. He is afraid that building on this piece of land will damage the ecology of the estuary. He is also afraid that the increased automobile traffic from the residents of the housing will further damage the estuary. He says that there are other pieces of land to build on in the city, and this land should be left alone to provide a home for all the organisms that live there, and to be enjoyed by all the residents of the city.

Of the other four persons currently on the city council, two of them support the developer and two of them do not support the developer. If Victoria is elected, there will be enough votes to approve the developer's plans and the housing will be built. If Felipe is elected, there will be enough votes to turn down the developer's plans and the estuary will remain as it is.

The candidates have turned to newspaper and television advertising to get their ideas across to the people of the city, and to try to convince people to vote for them. Your task is to develop an advertisement for your candidate. This ad can be either a newspaper ad or a television ad. If it is a television ad, it should be either a PowerPoint presentation or a video. Whichever type of ad your team decides to develop, it should be colorful, eye-catching, professional, and convey your candidate's message to the people of the city.

