

Wilderness Investigation 2: Wilderness for the American People of Present and Future Generations

Wilderness for Everyone



Image of the Okefenokee Wilderness

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Investigation Summary:

Wilderness Investigation #2 explores the idea of common land for the American public. Students will learn about the values and responsibilities related to public lands. The class will participate in a service learning project at a wild place and reflect upon their experience.

Note to Parents:

The Wilderness Investigations note for the parents provides parents with a brief overview of what students are studying about wilderness. The letter also gives suggestions for discussion topics and activities. This letter may be tailored for teachers' specific needs.

Wilderness in the Classroom:

Students will learn about common places, also called public lands. They will identify common places in their school and the responsibilities associated with being a member of the school community. Students will compare common places at their school with public wild places.

Wilderness Hero Study with discussion and extension ideas:

Students will learn about Mardy Murie and why she is a wilderness hero. Students may decide to extend the activity by participating in personal heroic acts during the school day.

Wilderness Outside of the Classroom:

Students will research and develop a service learning project for wild place in their community. Students will learn how to use tools or do a specific task and then participate in the service learning activity. Later they will reflect upon their experience of giving back to the wild place.

Wilderness Profile Study with discussion and extension ideas:

The Okefenokee Wilderness in Florida is a unique ecosystem teeming with life. Students will compare the topography of the Okefenokee Wilderness with the Bob Marshall Wilderness. The class may also create a soundscape of the swamp at dawn.

Wilderness Show and Tell:

Teachers and students may share their observations, investigations, and ideas about wilderness with others. Each Wilderness Investigation is an opportunity to share the value of America's wilderness and the Wilderness Act with others.

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Note to Parents

Dear Parents and Guardians,

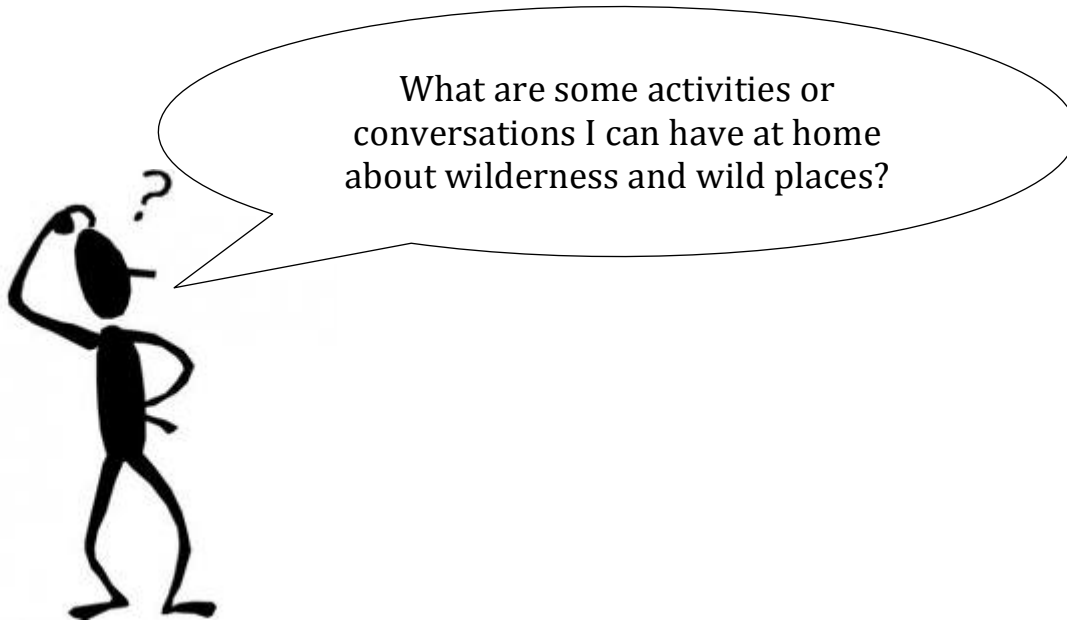
Your child is continuing a series of wilderness investigations. There are five total investigations. The current investigation is in **bold** print.

1. What is Wilderness?
 - Students will explore the characteristics of wilderness and learn about the Wilderness Act of 1964. What do we expect to find in wilderness?
- 2. Wilderness for All American People of Present and Future Generations**
 - Students will study the concept of public lands and public spaces. Who can visit wilderness?
3. Outstanding Opportunities
 - Students will evaluate what people can do in wilderness. What can you do in wilderness?
4. Preservation of Wilderness Character
 - Students will examine the idea of wilderness character and how it applies to different wild places. Why is wilderness character important to protect?
5. Our Wilderness Heritage
 - Students will learn about America's history of protecting and valuing wilderness. How can we get involved in preserving our wild places?

At the beginning of each investigation you will receive a letter about what your child is learning. The letter will provide you with ideas and information about how you can extend learning into your family, and inform you about school activities related to the investigations. Thank you for supporting Wilderness Investigations.

Sincerely,
The Creators of Wilderness Investigations

Wilderness Investigation #2: Out-of-School Extensions



Here are some ideas for at-home discussions and activities.

Discussion Ideas:

- Are there any common (shared) spaces near our home? Which ones are wild?
- Can you tell me about the service learning project your class participated in at a wild place? What did you do? Why did you do it?

Activity Idea #1: Go visit a common space.

Find a common space in your community. It could be a park, a library, a museum, or a city hall building. Look for different activities you can do in different places, such as read a book, take pictures, or play on a jungle gym.

Activity Idea #2: Get involved in a service learning project.

Check out events in your community and get involved. You might help out at a food bank, remove invasive weeds, or read books to elderly people.

Activity Idea #3: Nature photography.

Go on a walk and take pictures of wild features, such as flowers, bird nests and ant hills. Learn how your child sees the world through their photos.

Wilderness in the Classroom

Overview: As a class, students will examine the idea of a common space and the responsibilities of the public to protect and preserve it. Students will compare and contrast a local common space at their school and a public land.

Teacher Goals: Teachers will...

Talk about common space and public responsibilities.
Lead a compare and contrast discussion.
Present main ideas about the Wilderness Act.

Learning Targets

I can articulate my own ideas.
I can make comparisons.
I can paraphrase main ideas of the Wilderness Act.
I can record my ideas.

Standards Applied

Social Science Geography NSS-G.K-12.2	Understand the physical and human characteristics of places.
Common Core 4th Grade Reading Standards	<p>Comprehension and Collaboration 1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 4 topics, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (d) Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understandings in light of the discussion.</p> <p>Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.</p>

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- **My Wild Places Journal** for each student

Teacher Background Information:

The Wilderness Act of 1964 was created to protect and preserve wild places for present and future generations. Wilderness is for all American citizens, even if they never visit a wilderness. As American citizens we are all co-owners of wilderness, and therefore share responsibility to protect it for future Americans.

Schools, whether public or private, are common spaces to the students and staff that are part of the learning community. Students often have classroom or school-wide responsibilities to help keep their school safe and efficient. Just as student jobs help the

classroom run smoothly and can foster a sense of duty and community, public lands also need the respect and participation of citizens.

Teaching Sequence:

1. Discuss

As a class, make a list of places around the school or community that are shared. Examples of answers may be a cafeteria, a playground, a hallway, a drinking fountain. Students can add places within the city or community. Record student answers on a large piece of paper, whiteboard, etc.

Where are some places around our school that are shared or used by all of us?

2. Introduce

Discuss that all of the listed items are part of the school *common areas*, which means that they belong to everyone in the school.

Community → people of a **common** place or idea

3. Ask and Discuss

Members of a community have varying degrees of responsibility for common places. Ask your students about their responsibilities for places around your school and the consequences for not upholding their jobs and duties.

*Q: If I owned the cafeteria, who would be responsible for keeping it clean and safe?
A: I would be responsible.*

*Q: Who does own the cafeteria? Who is responsible for keeping it clean and safe?
A: The school owns the cafeteria. Everyone in the school is responsible.*

*Q: Who is able to use the cafeteria?
A: Anyone in the school can use it.*

*Q: Imagine a day when nobody cleaned up after lunch.
What would it be like? What would you do?
A: (Answers may vary. Example: the tables would be dirty)*

Q: Who will get to use the cafeteria next year?

A: Whoever is in the new classes that year.

Q: Are there things you do around the classroom or school that help keep the school safe, clean, and enjoyable for others?

A: (Answers may vary.)

Q: What are some things that people can do to help keep wild places wild?

A: (Brainstorm a list. Example: pick up trash, stay on trails)

Q: What are some common wild places in our community?

A: (Answers may vary.)(Ex. Parks, vacant lots, wildlife preserves)

4. Present

How does the concept of the commons apply to wilderness? Introduce the idea that the Congress passed the Wilderness Act for all American people.

Big and Bold Ideas in the Wilderness Act:

- When Congress passed the Wilderness Act in 1964, they secured protected wild lands for people living today and future generations.
- Americans have certain rights and responsibilities for our shared wilderness areas.
 - **Right:** As a US citizen I am a co-owner of designated wilderness.
 - **Responsibility:** I will stay on trails in fragile areas to protect the wilderness and keep it wild.
 - **Privilege:** I can enjoy the wilderness and enjoy wilderness experiences.

In their **My Wild Places Journals** on journal page 7, students can write down their personal definitions of what it means to protect the common places in their community and why it is important.

Adaptations:

- Organize a service learning project for a common area around your school or in your community.
- Encourage students to make signs for common areas in the school telling other students about the benefits of shared spaces.
- Examine any unmet needs in the classroom. Design a plan for students to take responsibility for the need to help the learning environment to be a positive safe place for students.
- Create a poster about what it means to be a citizen of the school community and display it for other classes to see.

Resources:

- Copy of the Wilderness Act in the Appendix.
- Copy of the Wilderness Map.
- Recommended reading for teachers:
 - Sobel, D. (2005). *Place-based education: connecting classrooms & communities*. Great Barrington, MA: Orion Society.
- "Education World: U.S. Education Standards / National Standards." *Education World: The Educator's Best Friend*. Education World, Inc, n.d. Web. 30 May 2012. <<http://www.educationworld.com/standards/national/index.shtml>>.

Wilderness Hero Study #2: Margaret (Mardy) Murie

Use the wilderness hero concept map for your study of Mardy Murie. Students may record their thoughts on journal page 19 in their **My Wild Places Journals**.

Discussion:

1. Review the list of qualities that describe a hero created in Wilderness Hero Study #1.

What do heroes do? What kinds of actions are considered heroic?

2. Who was Mardy Murie? Why is she a wilderness hero?

Extension Activity 1: Wilderness Hero Puppet Presentation

Give a group of two or three students the Mardy Murie Wilderness Hero concept map. Ask them to study the map, create simple puppets and develop a short skit to teach the class about Mardy Murie. Puppets can be made out of paper, paper plates, socks, or just a hand. Students can play the following roles: Mardy Murie, interviewer, Olaus Murie (Mardy's husband), or one of Mardy's children. Students may do further research about Mardy Murie before presenting their interview to the class.

Extension Activity 2: Helpful Heroes

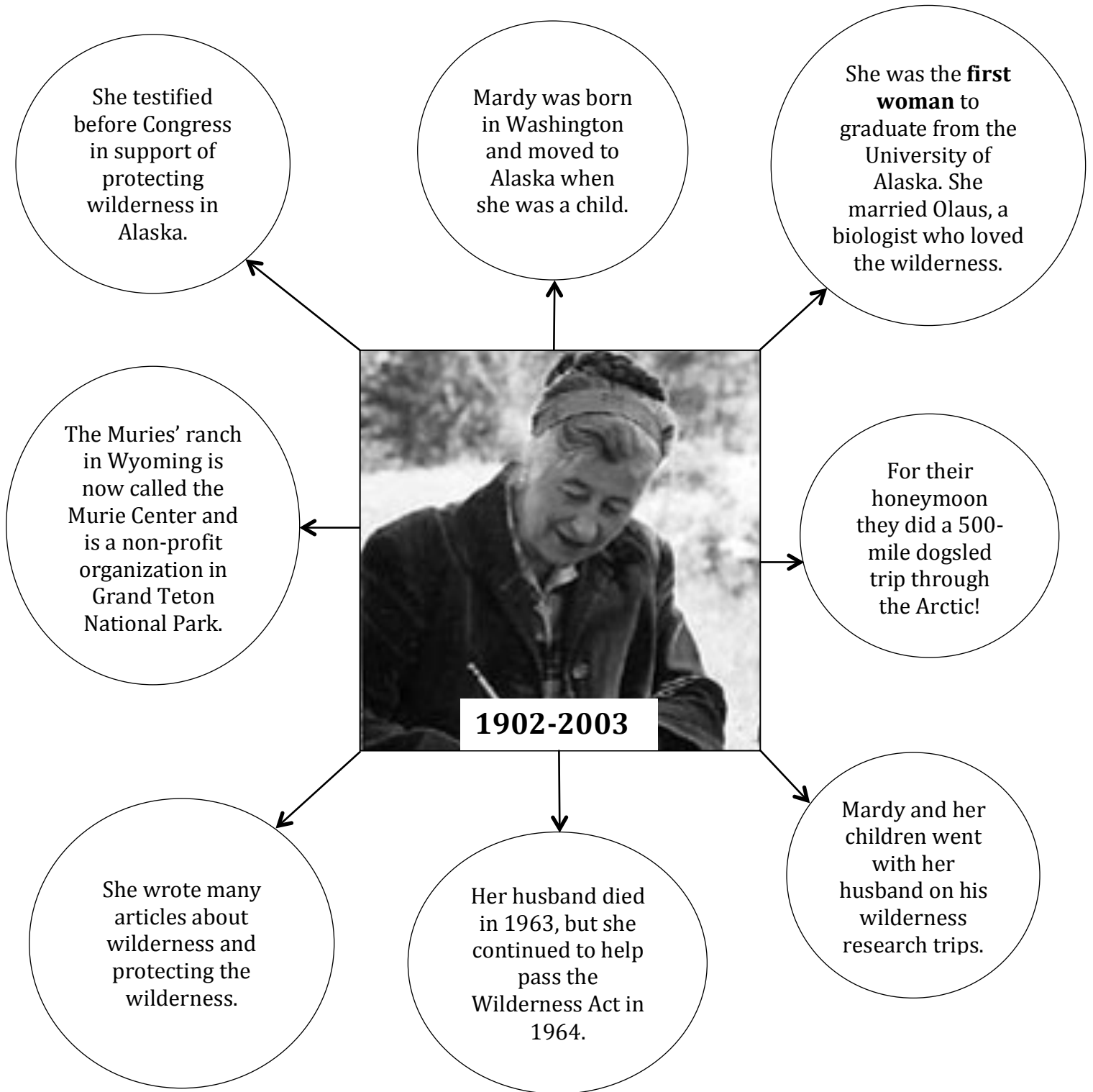
After studying about the qualities of a hero, students may identify possible heroic acts they could do at school. Create an action plan to do at least one heroic act each week (or day).

Suggested heroic actions: stand up to a bully, help someone clean up after lunch, help explain an idea to another student.

Extension Activity 3: (Wilderness) Hero Bulletin Board

Create a bulletin or display about what it means to be a hero. Include information about Arthur Carhart and Mardy Murie. You might also want to include heroes that your class has identified in your community, at school, or at home.

Wilderness Hero Profile #2: Margaret (Mardy) Murie



Wilderness Outside of the Classroom

Overview: Students will visit a local common and/or wild place. They will participate in a service learning project.

Teacher Goals: Teachers will...

Take students to a local wild place.
Design a service learning project.
Lead a discussion about the service learning project.

Learning Targets

I can set a goal.
I can follow directions for a physical activity.
I can tell why service learning helps my community.
I can reflect on my actions and contributions.

Standards Applied

Common Core 4th Grade Language Standards	Conventions of Standard English 1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
Physical Education: Understanding Challenge NPH.K-12.7	Understand that physical activity provides opportunities for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.
National Environmental Education 4th Grade Guidelines	<p>Strand 2.4 Environment and Society A: Identify ways in which human actions change the environment.</p> <p>Strand 2.4 Environment and Society B: Identify and describe places in their region that they or others think are important.</p> <p>Strand 4 Personal and Civic Responsibility B: Learners understand the basic rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Identify examples of the responsibilities of citizenship. Discuss rights and responsibilities in the context of local environmental issues.</p> <p>Strand 4 Personal and Civic Responsibility D: Learners understand they have responsibility for the effects of their actions. Identify and describe some of the effects that they and the groups they belong to have on the environment and on humans and other living beings.</p>

Estimated Time: 1½ hours to a half day

Materials:

- Materials needed for a service learning project
- **My Wild Places Journal** for each student
- Writing tools
- Camera (optional)

Teacher Background Information:**Setting up an appropriate service learning project:**

Many students enjoy hands-on experiences. Participating in service learning teaches students about ownership of their actions, accomplishment for their achievements, encourages them to be physically active, and is an opportunity for learning. You may choose to design your own activity or contact a local group or department to help find a project that is appropriate and meaningful for your students.

Consider the following when developing a service learning project:

- *Is the project appropriate for my students?*
- *Are the activity and location safe for my students?*
- *How long will the activity take to complete?*
- *What materials are needed for the activity?*
- *Do we have the permission necessary for the activity?*
- *Will we require additional adults and how many?*
- *What learning opportunities are possible from this proposed project?*

Ideas for service learning projects: work on a beautification project (trash pickup), create and put up informational signs in the area about local flora/fauna/history, develop a map of the space for visitors, produce a short trail guide/field guide, develop a school-wide recycling program, in partnerships students may present to other grades/classes about wilderness, perform a class/school trash audit, help with a Citizen Science research project. (Search for local events with public agencies or look for national projects, such as Project Feeder Watch through Cornell University.)

Teaching Sequence for the Service Learning Project:**1. Prepare in the classroom**

Get students ready for the project by telling them the *who, what, where, why,* and *how* of the project. Show them a map of where they are going. Allow them to touch and practice with tools that may be used during the activity. Discuss what students can learn during the activity.

2. Discuss at the project site

Review safety and emergency rules. Orient students to the area by pointing out landmarks, restrooms, meeting areas, etc.

3. Activity

Prior to beginning the activity, orient students to the work project and set a group goal or individual goals for the amount of work to be accomplished. Do the activity. If possible, take photos during the activity to use during the *Wilderness Show and Tell* and to show the physical progress of the project. Take a break during the activity to talk about what students are doing, student reactions, and possible modifications to the project (if needed).

4. Discussion and Closing Activity

Ask the students their impression of the day's activities. Complete with activity by having the students share their positive moments and accomplishments from the activity.

5. Personal Reflection

Students may write about their experiences participating in the service learning project in their **My Wild Places Journals** on journal page 8.

6. Post-Service Learning Discussion:

The class discussion about the service learning project could take place at the project site or in the classroom. It is recommended that the discussion take place on the same day as the project to maximize effective reflection.

What did you find that makes this place wild? Did you find anything surprising during your investigation? Did you find any evidence of wildlife? Is this place a wilderness?

What problem did we address today? What do you think the next step might be to help our community?

What is your take-away moment or big idea from today's activity that you can share with someone at home tonight?

Adaptations:

- If it is not possible to travel to a wild place, this experience could take place on school grounds. Consider what type of project would be a meaningful contribution to your school community.
- After the project, students or adults may write a short article for the school or local newspaper publication about the work they accomplished.
- Students may present their service learning experience by creating a short video or slideshow for a class blog or website. They may also speak to other classes about their contributions to the community.

Teacher Notes:

- Dependent on the length and location of your trip to a wild place, you will need to adequately prepare yourself and your students for a successful experience. Students may need lunches, water, first aid kit, proper clothing, and sun protection.

- If you will be outside in wet weather, it may be helpful to provide each student with a large resealable bag to protect their journals.
- If equipment is available, students may also elect to gather information by taking photos or video with a digital camera.
- Consider how students with disabilities can meaningfully participate in the service learning project.

Teacher Resources:

- RMC Research Corporation. K-12 Service-Learning Project Planning Toolkit. Scotts Valley, CA: National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2006/2009.
www.servicelearning.org/library/resource/8542
- Project Bud Burst <http://neoninc.org/budburst/>
- Journey North <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/>

Wilderness Profile Study #2: Okefenokee Wilderness

Use the wilderness profile concept map for your study of the Okefenokee Wilderness. Students may record their thoughts on journal page 22 in their **My Wild Places Journals**.

Discussion:

1. Can you find the Okefenokee on the Wilderness Map?
2. Topography is the shape of the surface of the earth. The topography of some wild places includes hills, valleys, mountains, and cliffs. The topography of other places includes flat plains and no mountains. How do you think the topography of the Okefenokee Wilderness is different from the topography of the Bob Marshall Wilderness (studied in Wilderness Profile Study #1)?
3. The word *climate* refers to the long-term weather patterns in an area. What do you imagine the climate might be like in the Okefenokee Wilderness?

Extension Activity #1: Topography comparison

Use Google Earth to investigate the topography of the Okefenokee Wilderness. Compare what you find with the topography of the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Can you find both similarities and differences?

Extension Activity #2: Land of the Trembling Earth

The Okefenokee Wilderness is sometimes called *Land of the Trembling Earth*. Students may use a variety of resources to find out the meaning behind this unique name. Brainstorm names that might be a good fit for the land of your school community.

Suggested resources:

- <http://www.fws.gov/okefenokee/>
- <http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=NWPS&sec=wildView&WID=426>

Extension Activity #3: Create a wilderness soundscape

The Okefenokee Wilderness is full of wildlife. Research what types of wildlife you might expect to find on a visit to the wilderness around dawn. Using an audio recorder, create a soundscape of what you might hear in the swamp just as the sun is coming up. Each student may play a different part. Consider what types of sounds might come from non-living features of the landscape, such as moving water. Several websites have downloadable swamp sounds that can be incorporated into the soundscape.

Wilderness Profile #2: Okefenokee Wilderness

Landscape: a giant bog made up of wet-prairie, cypress forest, islands, and lakes

Designated as wilderness by Congress in 1974.

Named after a version of the Seminole Indian term meaning "land of trembling earth" because the soggy ground moves when walked on.

Native People's Historic Presence: Seminole



Camping Shelter/ Okefenokee Wilderness (from wilderness.net; image 555)

Location: Georgia

Major Rivers: Suwannee River and St. Mary's River

Wildlife: black bear, heron, egret, alligators, mallard ducks, greater sandhill cranes, osprey, tree swallows, Florida sandhill cranes, red-cockaded woodpeckers, Florida softshell turtles, chorus frogs, green tree frogs, wood storks, wood mouth perch, white ibis, and nighthawks

Natural Cycle: rainwater replenishes the swamp and fire burns the area in drought years

Wilderness Show & Tell

Teacher Information:

At the end of each investigation work with the students to create a display or presentation about their learning, skills acquired, and experiences. It may be useful to take photos of students during the Wilderness Outside of the Classroom portion of the investigation. Use this space as a planning template.

Big Ideas from Wilderness Investigation 2:**Presentation or Display Ideas:****Student Involvement Component:****Location and Date of Event:****Logistics of Event:** (refreshments, seating)