

Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center's  
***Wilderness Investigations***  
High School

**Wilderness 101/Lesson 3**

*Wild Places and Designated Wilderness: What's the difference?*

**Goal:** Students will understand the difference between wild spaces and federally designated Wilderness areas.

**Investigation Objectives**

**Audience:** 9-12 grades.

- Students will explain the difference between wild spaces and federally designated Wilderness. (Behavior)
- Students will be given visuals, a Venn Diagram, and a verbal prompt. (Condition)
- Students will be able to discern major differences between federally designated wilderness areas and wild spaces. Students will be able to use a National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) map to make observations and answer questions. (Degree)

**Common Core Standard Connections**

NOTE: See Common Core Standards sections to see listed objectives for this and other lessons/activities.

**Time Requirement** 50 minutes

**Materials/Resources Needed and Pre-Investigation Tasks**

- Wilderness map (teacher background)
- Images from federally designated Wilderness areas and wild spaces
- Assessment sheet and NWPS map (hard copy or online) for each student

**Teacher Background**

Before teaching this lesson, familiarize yourself with the definition of Wilderness. Wilderness is defined as:

“...rare wild places where one can retreat from civilization, reconnect with the Earth, and find healing, meaning, and significance”.

Source: wilderness.net

The following map shows designated wilderness areas that are part of the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). Printed copies of the map may be available from one of the Wilderness management agencies (National Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Fish and Wildlife). You may choose to contact a local state or regional office near you to secure class copies—if they are available.



Teachers may also follow this link to access the map on the internet:  
<http://www.wilderness.net/nwps/static>

For more information about the NWPS and related Wilderness topics go to [www.wilderness.net](http://www.wilderness.net). This website can be valuable to teachers and students as they research Wilderness topics in a broad way (example: history of Wilderness designation) or more focused way (example: information about a specific Wilderness).

## **Step-by-Step Presentation Instructions**

### **Activity # 1: Venn Diagram**

- Students will individually make Venn Diagrams to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between images of wild spaces and images of federally designated wilderness areas.
  - Examples of image comparison:  
**Weminuche Wilderness**

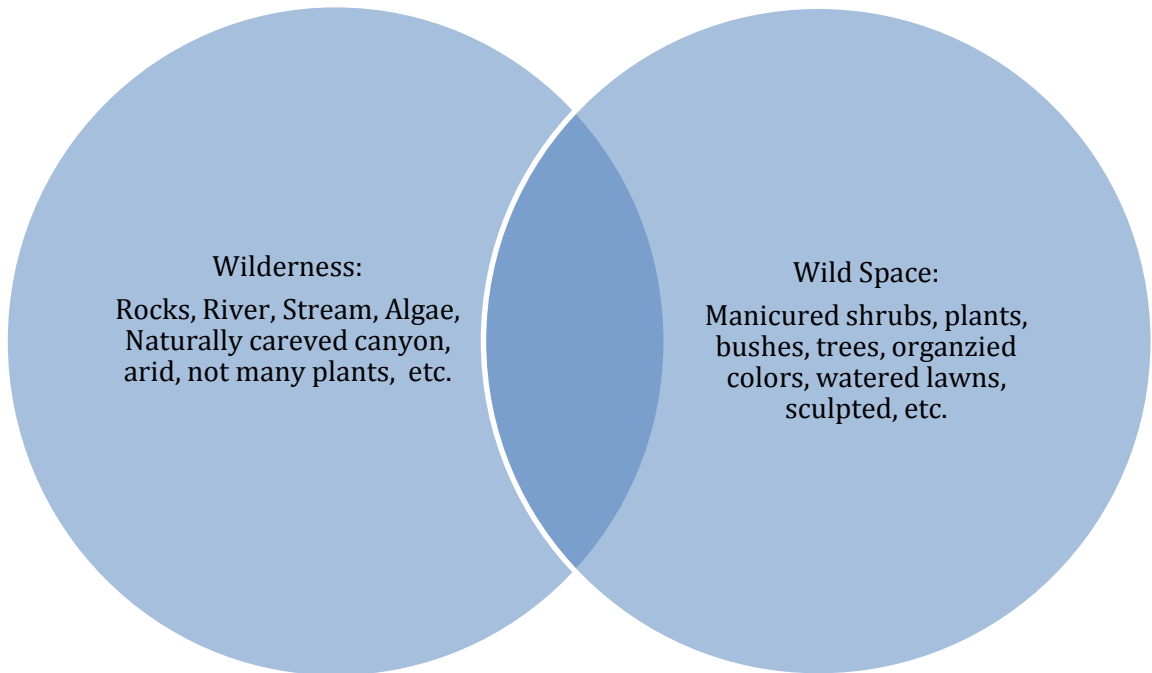


### **Space with WILD characteristics:**



Source: <http://www.usbg.gov/>

**-Example of Venn Diagram:**



- Students will share their Venn Diagrams in groups of three.
- Students will then be given a given a definition of wilderness and as a class will highlight the observable difference between wilderness and wild spaces. In this case, Wilderness is defined as:

“...rare wild places where one can retreat form civilization, reconnect with the Earth, and find healing, meaning, and significance”.

- This is a great time to remind or ask your students: which activities can and cannot occur within Wilderness area. What activities can and cannot occur within wild spaces?

**Activity #2: Assessment**

- Students will then be given a map of the NWPS and questions. Students can make observations and educated guesses to answer the questions to the best of their ability. The objective is for students to connect with the NWPS map and get a general sense of the amount, concentration, and diversity of Wilderness areas in the United States.

Questions:

1. How many wilderness areas are there in the NWPS? Answer: 758
2. What is the total acreage of the NWPS? Answer: 109, 511, 038
3. What's the smallest Wilderness? Answer: Pelican Island Wilderness, northern Florida (5.5 acres)
4. What's the largest Wilderness? Wrangell-Saint Elias Wilderness, Alaska (9, 078, 675 acres)
5. Where is the largest area of contiguous wilderness? Answer: In this context, contiguous means wilderness land that is unbroken by any exempted corridors. In Alaska, the Noatak and Gates of the Arctic Wilderness make up the largest areas of unbroken wilderness. In the lower 48 states, the largest area of unbroken wilderness is found in Idaho's Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness.
6. What states have the most Wilderness? Answer: California, Arizona, Nevada, Alaska, Oregon
7. What states have the most Wilderness acres? Answer: Alaska, California, Arizona, Idaho, Washington
8. Are there any states that don't have any wildernesses? Answer: yes, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Rhode Island don't have any wilderness areas designated.
9. How many wildernesses does the Appalachian National Scenic Trail traverse? Answer: 25 wilderness areas
10. How many wilderness areas does the Continental Divide Trail traverse? Answer: 26 Wilderness areas.

**Evaluation: Example Rubric**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Wilderness Map Quiz	Made exceptional effort to answer questions.	Made some effort to answer questions.	Made little effort to answer questions.	Made no effort to answer questions.
Ven-diagram, class participation, and group work	Provided great examples in ven-diagram and spoke frequently.	Provided some examples in ven-diagram and spoke occasionally.	Provided one example in each section of ven-diagram and spoke rarely.	Did not provide any examples in the Ven-diagram and did not speak during class discussion or group work.
OTHER				

**Grade Scale: 8 total points**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Length	4	3	2	1
Ideas	4	3	2	1
Other				

**Extension Ideas**

Journal Idea:

Looking at the National Wilderness Preservation System map, are there any Wilderness areas that you have visited? If so, what was the experience like? If you have not yet visited a Wilderness area—and you had an opportunity to visit any Wilderness area on the map, to which Wilderness would you go? Who would you bring with you? Or, would you go alone? What activities would you do there? How long would you go there for? What are you interested in seeing in the Wilderness area that you chose to visit?

**Wilderness Investigations**  
**- NWPS Information Assessment -**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Use your map of the NWPS to answer the following questions.

1. How many wilderness areas are there in the NWPS?
2. What is the total acreage of the NWPS?
3. What's the smallest Wilderness?
4. What's the largest Wilderness?
5. Where is the largest area of contiguous wilderness?
6. What five states have the most Wilderness?
7. What five states have the most Wilderness acres?
8. Are there any states that don't have any designated wilderness? List any states without designated wilderness:
9. How many designated wilderness areas does the Appalachian National Scenic Trail traverse?
10. How many wilderness areas does the Continental Divide Trail traverse?

