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5th grade

Soil and Water Conservation

Pollution: it's everywhere. It's in cities, oceans, schools, and homes. But what can we do to stop it? Recently, my class went on a field trip to the state park. As we were walking up trails and on the sandy beach, I frequently noticed trash and damaged trees and plants. There wasn't much sand on the shore in some places where there was erosion. After seeing this, I thought of some simple ways we could possibly help stop some of the pollution in our parks. My ideas were to redirect trails to prevent further damage by hikers, building sand dunes to slow erosion, and placing trash and recycling bins along hiking trails.

One of my Ideas was to redirect hiking trails and remove anything that could be damaged by hikers. Doing this would help many things. It would help the animals because hikers wouldn't be destroying animal and plant habitats. The website *cpw.state.co.us* states that, "The best way to minimize negative effects of hike/bike trails is to route trails away from high-Value wildlife..." This means that routing the trails away from plant and animal habitats would be a great idea so that animals and plants wouldn't get damaged.

Another one of my ideas was to place sand dunes near the beaches where the ocean meets the shore to slowly stop erosion. This would also help in a positive way. Our beaches and dunes constantly need to be rebuilt due to the affects from storms and high tides. The website *DNRA.Delaware.gov* states, "A natural Barrier to destructive forces of wind and waves, sand dunes, are our first line of defense against storms, and beach erosion." Sand dunes are our best and most effective line of defense against erosion, but they must be restored often.

The last idea I had was to place trash and recycling bins along walking trails. This would affect many things. It would affect wildlife because now they wouldn't be eating the trash. It would help the plants because now they would have more space to grow. It would help the water because now all the trash wouldn't flow to our oceans and streams, and it would help the soil because now the soil would not consume the trash as the trash broke down over hundreds and thousands of years. The website *PitchCare.com* states that, "Recycle on the Go is about making recycling a natural part of an everyday life, no matter where people are." Recycling in public places is becoming an everyday thing and it would help if people stopped littering.

Redirecting trails to prevent disturbing habitats, placing sand dunes near beaches, and putting recycling bins along trails will all contribute to slowly stop littering and help to decrease erosion. So before you throw your trash on the floor think to yourself, if we were all to just throw our trash in a recycling bin, stay on marked trails to STOP damaging animal and plant habitats, and stop contributing to erosion, we might have a chance to live in a pollution free zone. Although placing sand dunes and redirecting trails are great ideas, I think that placing recycling bins along trails would be the most affective, I think this because it will encourage people to recycle, especially if there is a bin right in front of them. If it doesn't encourage you, I know it will encourage me.