

## **How Humans Affect Ecosystems: A Call to Action**

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### **Synopsis**

This unit was designed to incorporate fifth grade earth science standards with present day concerns about the impact humans have on the environment. In the past, when I have presented information about the different ways that humans have an effect on their environment, most students started asking questions like, “Why do people keep doing harmful things to the environment when they know it is bad?” and “What can I do to help when I am only ten?” Through this unit, my hope was to inform my students about the components of different ecosystems, introduce them to the many different impacts humans have on the earth (both positive and negative), and then empower them to research more about an area that interests them and ultimately present what they have learned to others as a way to “call to action” those around them to make a difference. The unit provides a lot of resources on current topics such as determining a family’s carbon or water footprint that might not otherwise be found in the science textbook. It also provides flexibility in students’ research and product design to appeal to a boarder range of student abilities and grade levels.