**Subject area/course**: Science/AP Environmental Science

**Grade level/band**: 11-12

**Task source**: Summit Public Schools

**Sustainability**

**STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **Task context**:

When was the last time you thought about your relationship with the Earth? Over the course of this project we will learn about how humans use resources, and will begin to explore the ways in which we impact ecosystems and the planet. We will consider how our understanding of humans' role in the ecosystem has changed over time (i.e. the industrial revolution, tragedy of the commons, etc.), and will use ourselves as case studies. You will be asked to reflect on your own beliefs and priorities regarding sustainability, resource use, and human impacts on the planet, and to keep your personal experiences and beliefs in mind as we expand to thinking about humanity as a whole.

1. **Final product**:

You will be asked to write or record a description of your "environmental ethics": your beliefs and worldview as they relate to the ecosystem, and how your cultural background and significant experiences have impacted and molded those beliefs. You will need to provide detailed descriptions of both your beliefs and your experiences, and will need to organize your narrative so your ideas flow in a logical sequence. You are encouraged to discuss these issues with a family member, find out what they think, and discuss with them why the two of you agree or disagree. This initial self-reflection will serve as a reminder throughout the project of your beliefs.

We will spend some time learning about strategies of harvesting resources, and use fishing and mining as examples of ways we can do so either sustainably or unsustainably. We will discuss these topics as a class, and think about how our understanding of these practices have changed over time. You will need to think about balancing human needs (and wants) against ecosystems and resource use.

This project will culminate in a class Socratic discussion about sustainability, what it means to different students, and how we, as humans, should be interacting with our planet. Throughout this project, you will be preparing for this discussion, and will need to come ready to actively participate and talk about these issues, but also to ask questions about them. It will be a good idea to make note of any questions you discover along the way, or "Aha!" moments where something clicks or changes for you.

Individually, you will be asked to write a reflection looking back on this project. Have your views changed at all? If so, how? Did the discussion make you look at these issues in a different way? There is no right or wrong answer, but you will need to critically self-assess your views, as well as the conversation the class had.

**Additional Information**

1. **Knowledge and skills you will need to demonstrate on this task:**

* An understanding that people have different priorities when it comes to the environment, and often disagree about how we should interact with our environment.
* "Sustainability" means we have to use resources in a way that allows them to be replenished for future generations, not necessarily that we shouldn't use those resources.

1. **Materials needed:**

* Item A. Tragedy of the Commons Simulation
* Item B. Tragedy of the Commons Reading
* Item C. Tragedy of the Commons Cartoon
* Item D. Environmental Ethics Essay Assignment
* Item E. Ethics Essay Scaffold
* Item F. Environmental Ethics Peer Feedback Checklist
* Item G. Cookie Mining Lab
* Item H. Mining Types Jigsaw
* Item I. Graphic Organizer for Socratic Seminar
* Item J. Environmental Ethics Reflection

1. **Time requirements:**

This task will take approximately 2 weeks to complete. Your teacher will provide details regarding deadlines and due dates.

1. **Scoring:**

Your work will be scored using the Summit Public Schools Sustainability Rubric. You should make sure you are familiar with the language that describes the expectations for proficient performance.