Last Frontier of Florida

Topic: The Last Frontier of Florida

Grade level: adaptable for all grades

Concept: Habitats of a prairie
          Human-Environment Interaction

Background Information: As more and more of the natural Florida is being developed, the wild Florida is in danger of becoming extinct. The habitats of the area are on the verge of disappearing causing the make-up of the state to change and be lost forever for us and the future generation. In 1963 land-buying programs began, but it wasn’t until Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever that more money was put into buying and managing lands the preserve the natural Florida. The programs protect wildlife, but also allow for protection of the water supply and offers outdoor recreation in these areas.

Materials:
- newspaper article from Internet,
- excerpts from A Land Remembered (Student Edition Vol. I) by Patrick Smith,
- computer, internet connection,
- 8 ½ x 11 white paper
- crayons, pencils, colored pencils
- SFWD website: Kissimmee Prairie and other websites
- Chart paper, markers

Time: 1-2 weeks

Objectives/Goals: Students will:
1. describe the habitats of the Kissimmee Prairie
2. describe pros and cons of developing the prairies
3. draw and label a map of the Kissimmee Prairie area
4. create a project on the habitats of the Kissimmee Prairie area
5. use pictures to describe habitats of the Kissimmee Prairie area

Procedures:

Initiating Activity: Ask students what a prairie is. Ask them if there is a prairie in the state, what kind of habitat could be found there.

Strategies:
1. Locate the Kissimmee prairie on a map of Florida. Discuss the absolute and relative location of it.
2. Read the articles on the Kissimmee Prairie. Read excerpts from the book, *A Land Remembered* (Student Edition, Volume 1, page 51-52) which describe the prairie. Discuss and list characteristics of the prairie as described in the excerpts. Discuss how the prairie was in the past and is now. List the changes to the prairie.

3. List on chart paper the characteristics of the different types of prairies within the Kissimmee Prairie.

4. Search the web for sites, such as the South Florida Water Management District, on the Kissimmee Prairie. Find pictures of the habitats and animals which inhabit this area. Have students write a report on one of the animals in this area.

5. Write an acrostic poem about the characteristics of the habitats of the Kissimmee Prairie.

6. Draw a map of the Kissimmee Prairie showing its location in relationship to Orlando and other populated areas.

**Culminating Activity:**
Have students create a multi-media presentation on the Kissimmee Prairie bringing in pictures, maps, and information from their research. Include sections on the history of the prairies in Florida, student writings, and poetry. Present to class.

**Evaluation:**
1. Observation
2. Writings: animal report, poetry
3. Map
4. Multi-media presentations

**National Standards:**
Standard 1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report geographic information.
Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.
Standard 8: The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on Earth’s surface.
Standard 14: How human actions modify the physical environment.
Standard 15: How physical systems affect human systems.
Standard 17: How to apply geography to interpret the past.
Standard 18: How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

**Sunshine State Standards:**
L.A.A.1.3: uses the reading process effectively.
L.A.A.2.3.5: locates, organizes, and interprets written information for a variety of purposes, including classroom research, collaborative decision making, and performing a school or real-world task.
L.A.B.1.3.1: organizes information before writing according to the type and purpose of writing.
L.A.B.1.3.2: drafts and revises writing.
L.A.B.1.3.3: produces final documents that have been edited.
L.A.B.2.3: writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.
L.A.C.1.3: uses listening strategies effectively.
L.A.C.2.3: uses viewing strategies effectively.
L.A.C.3.5: uses speaking strategies effectively.
S.C.D.2.3: understands the need for protection of the natural systems on Earth.
S.C.D.2.3.2: knows the positive and negative consequences of human action on the Earth’s systems.
S.S.B.1.1.1: determines the absolute and relative location of people, places, and things.
S.S.B.2.1.1: identifies some physical and human characteristics of places.
S.S.B.2.3: understands the interactions of people and the physical environment.
S.S.B.2.3.9: understands how the interaction between physical and human systems affects current conditions on Earth.

Web Sites:
http://areas.wildernet.com/pages/area.cfm?areaID=FLSPKS&CU_ID=1
http://www.geocities.com/capecanaveral/1020/prairie.html
http://www.floridastateparks.org/kissimmeeprairie/
http://home.att.net/~theboonies/Kissimmee_Prairie/
http://www.sptimes.com/News/082700/Travel/Florida_s_last_fronti.shtml