



Public Meeting Scenario

Name of Special Interest Group _____

Name of Group Members _____

Instructions

Read the passage below. Answer the questions on the second page, in complete sentences, from the viewpoint of your special interest group.

The city of Martinsburg, West Virginia, would like to build a new **flood control dam** on the Potomac River. A flood control dam is a man-made barrier built to retain water so that it does not flood an area. While controlling flooding is good because it protects people's property, dams can have negative impacts on the environment. Fish and other **aquatic** life cannot travel upstream of a dam, and the land behind a dam becomes flooded, destroying wildlife habitat. At the same time, the new lake that is created by the newly-flooded area can offer many recreational opportunities to people.

The proposed location of the flood control dam contains 100 existing homes, which would have to be demolished to build the dam. Currently, habitat for a variety of birds, wildlife, and fish exists in the area that would be flooded, as does a bike path along the river, which would have to be relocated once the lake is created.

Because the dam could have many impacts on the local environment and the community, before it can be built, the city must hold a public meeting to gather comments from scientists, local businesses, concerned citizens, and other interested parties.



Public Meeting Scenario (cont)

Guiding Questions

1. How would your special interest group describe the activities (as related to the Potomac River watershed) in which it engages? _____

2. In terms of your group's special interest or activity, why is the Potomac River important to you? _____

3. What impacts—both positive and negative—does your special interest activity have on the Potomac River, its tributaries, and/or the surrounding landscape? _____

4. How would the dam affect what your special interest group does? _____

5. Does your special interest group support or oppose building a dam? _____
