

# Learning About Careers: Natural Resources

## Top Things to Know

If you like nature, a career in natural resources might be a good choice.

Here are some important facts:

- Some natural resources professionals work outdoors teaching people about wildlife. Some are scientists or engineers who solve problems in the environment. Others make or install equipment that conserves resources or slows climate change.
- The number of people in the world is growing. So we must be smart about using natural resources. This means many workers are needed for jobs that help the environment.
- Some natural resources workers earn more money than an average worker but need only a small amount of training. Others must have a two-year or four-year college degree.



## What You Can Be

Many kinds of workers are needed in natural resources. Here are some examples:

- **Conservation scientists** help governments, farmers, and others use natural resources in ways that don't harm the environment. They often use handheld computers and other technologies.
- **Environmental engineers** work to solve problems such as pollution, wasteful use of natural resources, and climate change. They must understand engineering and certain sciences.
- **Environmental science and protection technicians** find problems in the environment. They use equipment outdoors to check for pollution. They use microscopes and other equipment indoors to examine samples of air, soil, and water. They write reports on what they find.
- **Park interpreters** work in city, state, and national parks and other natural areas. They help visitors learn about and connect with nature. They present educational programs, hike with groups of people, and take care of animals living in nature centers.
- **Renewable energy equipment technicians** install and take care of systems that change natural resources like sunlight and wind into energy. They work mostly outdoors but sometimes must work in small or high places.

## Where You Can Work

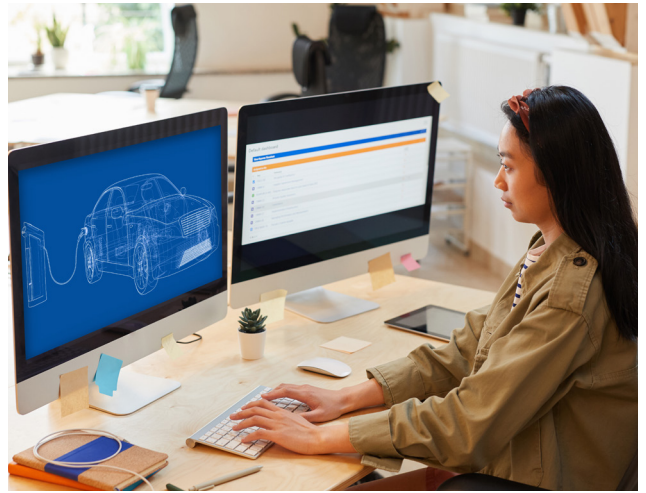
Here are some places near you where people have natural resources jobs:

- **Five Rivers MetroParks** is a system of parks, trails, bodies of water, and other natural spaces. The system helps conserve and protect five kinds of habitats. Its workers include park interpreters, park rangers, and people who take care of wildlife.
- **Norton Engineering LLC** solves problems related to land and resource use. Its environmental engineers help others protect the environment when they change the land or build structures. They know about controlling air and water pollution, keeping waste products contained, and using renewable energy sources.
- **OGW Energy Resources** provides green energy products to homeowners, farmers, and businesses. Green energy products are better for the environment than other kinds of energy products. OGW's technicians install solar panels, wind turbines, and other products and then help make sure they work well.

## A Day in the Life: Solar Engineer

Learn more about a typical day for one kind of natural resources professional:

Kayla is a solar engineer. This is a kind of environmental engineer that concentrates on renewable energies. Her company is designing a car that will be powered partly by the sun. This morning, Kayla's workday began with a team meeting. The team is making a model of the car. The car will run on both solar power and electricity. But they want it to go as far as possible using only solar power. They talked about problems they need to solve. Kayla must figure out how to make the small solar panels on the car work well. Other engineers are solving problems related to the car's other parts, its shape, and its safety. After the meeting, Kayla went back to her desk and used a computer program to show the effects of sunlight on different parts of the car. She needs to decide the best places to put the solar panels. After lunch, she did research on using solar panels to cool the inside of the car. By the end of the day, Kayla had made progress on both problems. Many people doubt that solar cars will ever be used on a large scale. Kayla sees this doubt as a challenge! She likes trying to help the world use energy sources that will be available forever and will not add to pollution, habitat destruction, and climate change.



### Learn More

#### What else do you want to know?

Now that you have read this fact sheet, what are some questions you have about working in natural resources?

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#### What did you learn?

Do research online or talk to someone who works in natural resources to answer your questions. Then write two new things you learned from your research.

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