

A sample of assigned articles and their unstated environmental connection.

Article theme and title	Content	Unstated environmental connection
Agriculture		
“China’s Appetite for Meat Feeds a Brazilian Soybean Boom” (Barrionuevo 2007)	As consumption of meat grows in China, the country is importing more soybeans to feed its cattle. This increased demand may help Brazilian farmers.	Although soybeans aren’t grown in the rainforest, soybean farms contribute to deforestation by pushing ranchers and slash-and-burn farmers deeper into the forest. This also encourages infrastructure development (e.g., highways), which leads to more deforestation.
“Ethanol Subsidies Besieged” (Krauss 2011)	Congress seeks to stop giving \$6 billion in annual tax credits to the ethanol industry.	Ethanol is a renewable biofuel, but the amount of land, water, fertilizer, and energy required for ethanol production has an impact on the environment.
“Pork Merger Raises Antitrust Flag” (Lindell 2006)	Smithfield, the largest pork company in the United States, is trying to buy the sixth largest pork company, Premium Standard Farms. Antitrust concerns may hinder the deal.	Runoff from industrial pork farms can contaminate local wells and harm stream ecology.
“Scientists Are Making Brazil’s Savannah Bloom” (Rohter 2007)	Brazilian scientists’ research has led to a booming soybean industry in the country’s savannah, an area once considered “useless.”	See “China’s Appetite for Meat Feeds a Brazilian Soybean Boom.”
“Shrimp and Mischief” (<i>The New York Times</i> 2004)	This editorial decries the U.S. government for seeking to impose tariffs on farmed shrimp from Vietnam and China to help the American wild shrimping industry compete. Cheap foreign farmed shrimp means that shrimp, once considered a luxury item, is now available to all.	Many Asian villagers have lost their homes and livelihood due to the destruction of mangrove habitat for shrimp farms. By destroying the mangroves, the farms also harm Asian biodiversity and coral habitat. Shrimp may be cheap for Americans to eat, but the environmental and human consequences of cheap shrimp are plentiful.
Government		
“New Test Asks, What Does ‘American’ Mean?” (Preston 2007)	The government unveiled a new civics test for people seeking to become American citizens. The test included September 11, 2001, and Susan B. Anthony, but	No environmental questions were included in the new civics test. If Americans valued the inclusion of the environment on a civics

	Patrick Henry and Francis Scott Key were cut.	exam, how would that be reflected in society?
Human-animal interactions		
“Bunnies and Elk Overrun Two Towns” (Walton 2007)	In the Canadian Rockies, two towns are being overrun by pet bunnies, released into the wild 20 years ago, and wild elk herds. The bunnies eat gardens and the elk sometimes confront people.	How might the bunnies impact native species? Why has the elk herd gotten so big? Is the larger elk population due to loss of wolves from hunting or is the herd only considered too big because it interferes with everyday life?
“Getting Bear Friendly: Can a New Behavior Modification Technique Protect Humans and Bears From Each Other?” (Hutchinson 2006)	Instead of killing problem grizzly bears in the Canadian Rockies, wildlife officers are trying to use bear modification techniques to discourage human-bear encounters in Canmore, Canada.	Grizzlies lived in the Rockies long before people. Should people be living in this town at all? If people live there, shouldn't they expect consequences? Then again, how would you like to live near a wild animal that could kill you?
“Police Kill a Bear Cornered at Urban New Jersey Home” (Kelley and Smothers 2006)	Police killed a young bear caught roaming suburban New Jersey.	Same theme as above, but about black bears. What is happening to the size of black bear habitat? Is it contracting due to new suburban homes or are there just more black bears than there used to be?
“Vermont: Pete the Moose’s Life Is on the Line Again” (AP 2011) “In Vermont, Making a Stand for Pete the Moose” (Zezima 2009)	In an effort to prevent the spread of chronic wasting disease, all moose and white-tailed deer on an elk game farm must be destroyed. One moose, Pete, considered to be a pet, might be killed. Lawmakers passed a bill to save Pete the Moose, but now some want to repeal it because it gives private farmers the right to own wild moose and deer.	What type of regulations should be enforced to prevent the spread of disease among wild animals? People care about Pete the Moose, a pet, but will the survival of Pete end up harming wild moose and deer?
Human interest		
“Get Set for Big Snow Headin’ to City” (Kennedy and Kavanaugh 2010)	A big storm that will inconvenience many people is heading to town. People are preparing for snow.	Snow clearing methods, like salt spreading, affect water supplies. What type of actions can we take to reduce our impact?

<p>“When All Else Fails, Apply Bamboo” (Rosenblum 2011)</p>	<p>A teacher redecorated his apartment in bamboo and scavenged street items.</p>	<p>Bamboo, when harvested properly, is considered to be a sustainable wood product, but care must be taken to prevent it from becoming invasive.</p> <p>Reusing materials reduces environmental impact.</p>
<p>Infrastructure investment</p>		
<p>“Big Water Project Is Approved by the Senate” (Herszenhorn 2007)</p>	<p>The Senate approved \$23 billion in funds for water resource projects, including funds for flood control projects in hurricane-plagued Louisiana.</p>	<p>Wetland and barrier island restoration are effective flood control strategies. New water projects in Louisiana might even interfere with these types of projects.</p>
<p>“Catskill and Delaware Ultraviolet Light Disinfection Facility” (ENR New York 2009)</p>	<p>For \$1.4 billion, New York City is building the country’s largest water treatment plant.</p>	<p>New York City needs a facility because added roads and reduced forest cover caused by suburban sprawl has led to reduced water quality in the city’s watershed.</p>
<p>“City Council at Crossroads on Asphalt vs. Concrete Streets” (Ingrassia 1994)</p>	<p>Some concrete roads in Plano, Texas, are being paved over in asphalt. Asphalt may be cheaper in the short term, but concrete is a better long-term option.</p>	<p>Light-color concrete contributes less to the urban heat island effect than dark-color asphalt. The production of concrete is a major contributor to greenhouse gases. Both concrete and asphalt contribute to high surface runoff.</p>
<p>“Follow the Red Brick Sidewalk to Concrete” (MacDonald 2006)</p>	<p>Red brick sidewalks near the Public Garden in Boston, Massachusetts, are being replaced by unattractive gray concrete.</p>	<p>Percolation through the small holes found in brick make it a better choice to reduce runoff than concrete or asphalt.</p>
<p>“In Beach Town, Affluent Split Over Effluent” (Morris 2007)</p>	<p>An affluent California town is deciding whether to replace its septic system with a sewer system, preventing surfers from getting ill from bacteria found in waters off the town’s coast.</p>	<p>As written in the article, this issue seems to only affect surfers and homeowners. Ecosystem health isn’t considered.</p>
<p>“In Skyscraper at Ground Zero, Sentiment Trumped Numbers” (Nocera 2010)</p>	<p>Rebuilding at Ground Zero is based more on sentiment than economics. There is no way for the building to financially break even.</p>	<p>The builders reduce costs by importing materials from distant locations like China, increasing their carbon footprint.</p> <p>The Twin Towers killed migratory</p>

		birds. How will the new towers affect birds?
“L.A. Prepares for Worst and Hopes for Best in Freeway Shutdown” (Nagourney 2011)	Interstate 405 will be shut down for 53 hours as part of a \$1 billion highway widening project in Los Angeles, California. The city prepares for a traffic nightmare.	How many more cars are expected to use the highway once it is expanded? How much more fossil fuel will be consumed? Will the highway expansion lead to more sprawling development?
“Orange County, New Home Frontier” (Brenner 2006)	Due to the high cost of housing in the New York City area, many commuters are buying homes in Orange County, New York, 60 miles north of New York City. Commutes are long and expensive.	Orange County is a biodiversity hotspot in New York. How will the influx of new development affect the ecosystem and habitat? How will increasingly longer commutes affect fossil fuel consumption, air quality, and climate?
“Some Business Leaders Worry Panama Canal Expansion Could Threaten Jobs in Valley, Region” (Smith 2011)	Business leaders in southern California are worried that the expansion of the Panama Canal will lead to fewer shipments into the area. Warehouses, distribution centers, shipyards, and freight lines will be affected.	Global shipping has led to a massive increase of invasive species around the world. Will fossil fuel consumption be reduced if goods are shipped directly to the U.S. East Coast?
Mining		
“China Said to Widen Its Embargo of Minerals” (Bradsher 2010)	China reduced exports of rare Earth minerals to Japan, the European Union, and United States. Since 95% of the world’s mineral supply is mined in China, this embargo threatens the economy of items like wind turbines, cell phones, and missiles.	Rare Earth minerals aren’t very rare, but extracting them is a dirty business. China has the market cornered because other countries don’t want the pollutants that often come along with extraction.
“Copper Prices and Incidences of Copper Theft Rise” (Williams 2011)	With rising copper prices, people are stealing copper from power lines and foreclosed homes. The thefts are considered a threat to national security.	The mining required to supply the hundreds of pounds of copper that people use in their homes and cars depletes and pollutes water and air.
“Want to Invest in Gold? You Have Options” (Waggoner 2010)	The value of gold has increased by 400%. There are many options for investing in gold.	Open pit mines can leach harmful chemicals into nearby water systems.
World events		
“Myanmar’s	Thailand is subsidizing	Extraction of these resources in

Resources Provide Leverage” (Fuller 2007)	Myanmar’s repressive regime in exchange for access to natural gas, hydropower, and hardwoods.	Myanmar isn’t only helping the military junta, but it is negatively affecting Myanmar’s environment.
“Piracy Reached Record Level in 2010, Monitors Say” (Goodman 2011)	Piracy exploded off the coast of Somalia in 2010.	Many Somali pirates were formerly fisherman who lost their livelihood when foreign fishing boats overfished their waters.

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