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## Ecoregions of texas worksheet

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Due to its size and geographic location, Texas is unique among states. Covering 266,807 square miles, this land is second only to Alaska in the area. A large area of land will usually have a great deal of variation in climate and landscape, factors affecting housing diversity. The state has impressive topographic diversity, including 91 mountain peaks that are a mile or more high. Our geographical location is a crossroads where eastern habitats meet westerners and southern subtropical habitats meet northern temperate people. Annual rainfall can range from eight inches in the desert of far west Texas to 56 inches per year in the swamps of eastern Texas. Generally, Texas is divided into 10 natural areas or ecoregions: piney woods, Gulf prairie and marshes, post oak savanna, blackland prairie, cross timber, south Texas plain, Edwards plateau, rolling plain, high ground and trans-pecos. Pinewoods are covered with rolling terrain pines and oaks, and rich bottomlands with tall hardwood, featuring the forests of east Texas Pineywoods. The area is part of a very large area of pine-hardwood forest that extends across Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma. Average annual precipitation of 36 to 50 inches is distributed quite evenly throughout the year, and humidity and temperatures are generally high. The soil of this area is generally acidic and mostly yellow for dark brown sand or sandy loam. The height is from 200 to 500 feet above sea level. The Pinewoods area can be described as pine and pine-hardwood forests, with scattered areas of cropland, planted grasslands and native grasslands. There are important industries in the timber and animal production sector. Farms and farmland are relatively small in size compared to the state average. Watch a video on: Pineywoods. The Gulf Prairies and swamp Gulf Coast Prairies and Marsh area is an almost level, slowly less than 150 feet in height plain dry, dissected by streams and rivers flowing into the Gulf of Mexico. The area includes barrier islands along the coast, salt grass marshes around the brackish and estuary, relics scattered along the Talgrass Prairie, Oak Parklands and Oak Mots coast, and tall woodlands in the river bottomlands. Average annual rainfall varies from 30 to 50 inches per year which is distributed quite evenly throughout the year. The growing season is usually more than 300 days, with high humidity and warm temperatures. The soils are acidic sand and sandy lome, with soil occurring mainly from the bottom of the river. Native vegetation consists of talgrass prairie and live oak woodlands. Brush species such as mecafi and acacia are now more common than in the past. Although much of native habitat has been lost to agriculture and urbanization, the area still provides significant habitat for migratory birds and spawn areas And shrimp. Watch a video on: The Bay Prairies and Marsh. Post Oak Savannah Post Oak Savannah area is a transitional area for many plants and animals whose ranges extend northward into great plains or eastward forests. This area, sometimes called cross-timber, was designated by early settlers, who found a belt of oak forest crossing the strip of prairie grassland. Average annual rainfall averages 28 to 40 inches per year. May or June usually brings a peak in monthly rainfall. Upland soils are light color, acidic sandy domat or sand. Bottomland soil can be light brown to dark brown and acidic with texture from sandy dome to clay. The landscape of the region is slowly rolling to the hill and altitude is 300 to 800 feet above sea level. The area can be described as oak savanna, where patches of oak woodland are interspersed with grassland. Cattle ranching is the major agricultural industry in Oak Woods and prairies. Grasses introduced like Bermudagrass are grazing with fodder crops and native grasslands. The Blackland Prairie Blackland Prairie region is named for the deep, fertile black soil that is characteristic of the area. Blackland Prairie Clay once supported the Talgrass Prairie dominated by long-growing grasses such as the large bluestem, little bluestem, Indiangrass and Switchgrass. Due to fertile soil, most of the original prairie has been plowed to produce food and fodder crops. The average annual rainfall varies from 28 to 40 inches. May is the peak rainfall month for the northern end of the region; However, the south-central part has a fairly similar rainfall distribution throughout the year. Usually, the soil is equally black alkaline soil, often called black gumbo, surrounded with some gray acidic sandy loam. The landscape is slowly rolling up to nearly level, and the altitude is from 300 to 800 feet above sea level. Crop production and ranching of cattle are primary agro-industries. Watch a video on: Blackland Prairie Crosstimer named early commuters through North Texas cross timber coined by its repeated crossings of these wood fields that proved to be an obstacle to its journey on the prairies open to the east and west. The area in north and central Texas covers high-density areas of trees and irregular plains and prairies. The soils are sandy mainly for the Iomi. Precipitation can be moderate, but somewhat uncertain, so moisture is often limited during part of the growing season. Also known as osage plains, it is the southern of three Talgrass prairie. It varies from savanna and woodland to the east and south, in small mixed grass prairie to the west. Like the rest of the great plains, fire, topography and drought maintained prairie and established the location of the woodlands. South Texas Plains South Texas Brush The Rio Grande Valley is characterized by thorny bushes and plains of trees and palms and scattered patches of subtropical woodlands. The plains were once covered with open grasslands and scattering of trees, and the valley woodlands were once again wide. Today, primary vegetation consists of thorny brushes such as mecafi, acacia and prickly pears mixed with grassland areas. The average annual rainfall increases from west to east by 20 to 32 inches. Average monthly rainfall is the lowest during winter, and is highest during spring (May or June) and fall (September). Summer temperatures are high, with much higher evaporation rates. The soils of this region are slightly acidic soils and soil people are alkaline. Deep clay supports long brushes, such as mecafi and prickly hackberry, while small, dense brushes are characterized by shallow caliche clay. Although there have been many land changes in the region, the brush country remains rich in wildlife and is a haven for many rare species of plants and animals. It is home to semi-tropical species that occur in Mexico, grassland species that are on the north, and desert species commonly found in trans-pecos. Livestock grazing and crop production are the major agricultural land use. Watch a video on: South Texas Plains. The Edwards Plateau Edwards Plateau region includes an area of central Texas commonly known as the Texas Hill Country. It is a land of many springs, rocky hills, and steep valleys. The area is home to a whole host of rare plants and animals found nowhere else on Earth. Average annual rainfall varies from 15 to 34 inches. May or June and September have the highest rainfall. The soils of the Edwards Plateau are usually shallow with a variety of surface textures. They are underlanes with limestone. Altitudes range from slightly less than 100 feet to more than 3,000 feet above sea level. Many river systems dissect the surface, making a rough and well-drained landscape. The limestone of the Edward Plateau is honey with thousands of caves. Beneath the eastern edge of the plateau lies a hidden world of underground lakes known as Edwards Aquifer. This precious water resource is also home to many curious creatures like blind salamander. Today, the Edwards Plateau is characterized by grasslands, juniper/oak woodlands, and plateau live oak or mekafi savannas. Open meadows and savannas were more common in pre-settlement time than they are today. Ranching is the primary agricultural industry in this sector. Watch a video on: Edwards Plateau. Rolling plains many Texas rivers start in flats gently sweeping rolling hills and rolling plains. These rivers and many of their tributaries are responsible for the rolling character of the country. Rivers have cut valleys that shelter some plants and distinctive animals of rocky mountains. average yearly 20 to 28 inches, with peaks in May and September. A summer dry period with high temperatures and high evaporation rates is typical. The outwash adjacent to the mud streams varies from thick sand to tight soils and shells with roofs. The reaction of the soil is slightly neutral to alkaline. The height varies from 800 to 3,000 feet above sea level. The original prairie grasslands consisted of long and middle grasses such as bluestem and grames. Buffalo grass and other shortgrass have increased under heavy, uncontrolled grazing. Mekafi is a common invader on all soils. Most of the rolling plains today can be described as a mesquite-shortgrass savanna. Stream floodplains are dominated by various hardwood species, and juniper is common on steep slopes along rivers. High plains include steep slopes, rocks and the ascorement brake area of rolling plains in valleys occurring just below the edge of Caprock. The brakes are an ecotone or transition area between the mesquite savannas of the high plains grasslands and rolling plains. Crop and livestock production are the major agricultural industries in the region. Watch a video on: High Plains and Rolling Plains. The high plains include the high plains, the southern ends of the Great Plains of the central United States with rolling plains. The high plain is a relatively high plateau of relatively level, separated by rolling plains by the Caprock Escarpment. The height is from 3,000 to 4,500 feet above sea level. The average annual rainfall is 15 to 22 inches. Rainfall is the lowest in winter and mid-summer and the highest in April or May and September or October. The extended drought has happened here several times in this century. The surface texture of the soil ranges from soil to sand in the southern part of the region at hardland sites in the north. Caliche usually underlines these surface soils at a depth of two to five feet. The native vegetation of the high plains is the shortgrass prairie dominated by buffalo grass. However, historically, a pasture, Mekafi and Yucca have attacked parts of the region. Shinnery oak and sand are common invaders on sage sandy land, and juniper is spread by collapsing on plains in some areas. Immense herd of buffalo and pronghorn antelope once thundered across vast prairies of blue village and buffalo grass. Today, the plains are mostly irrigated crop land and native vegetation includes more mechafi and juniper. Although plenty of shortgrass prairie and huge prairie dog towns have moved, large herds of winter waters still fall into playa lakes (shallow, round depressions that catch rain). Watch a video on: High Plains and Rolling Plains. Trans-Pecos Trans-Pecos is probably the most complex of all regions. It occupies the extreme western part of the state usually for the Pecos River. It is an area of diverse dwellings and Deserts vary from valleys and plateaus to wild mountain slopes. Altitudes range from 2,500 feet to 8,749 feet at Guadalupe Peak. Even mountain ranges vary greatly in the environment provided for plant and animal life. Some are characterized by volcanic rocks, others from limestone. The area is less than 12 inches above most of the average annual rainfall, but varies greatly from year to year and from low to high altitude. July and August usually contain months of more rainfall. Mountain outwash materials have formed the soil of trans-pecos. Surface textures and profile characteristics are diverse. The reaction of the soil is generally alkaline. Due to the variety of soil and height, many vegetative types are present in this area. Major plant communities are creosote-tarbrush desert scrub, desert grassland, yucca and juniper savanna, and mountain forests of Pinon Pine and Oak. Different subregions reflect the diversity of trans-pecos. The Sand Hills area consists of shin oak and mekafi on wind-blown dunes. At the top of the flat, mesas and plateaus are connected to steep walled valleys and dried washes that include the Stockton Plateau. Soil with high salt content and gypsum dunes is typical of the salt basin area. Desert scrub sub-area is an area of low rainfall and rapid drainage. Creosotebush flats are common with Yucca, Lechuguilla and various small leafy plants. The desert grassland area occurs in the central part of the area and is characterized by deep soil with high soil material. Finally, mountain ranges have more rainfall and woody vegetation such as junipers, oaks, pinon pine, ponderosa pine and douglas fir. Ranching is the primary industry in the trans-pecos sector. Watch a video on: Trans-Pecos. Trans-Pecos.

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