

# Amigos de Bolsa Chica

## Saving the Bolsa Chica Wetlands

### Educator's Guide



Since 1976 the Amigos de Bolsa Chica have been committed to protecting our local wetlands and serving our community - this includes our students and educators. The short video *Saving the Bolsa Chica Wetlands* documents the fight the Amigos took up in order to see that commitment through; this educator's guide will aide in helping you engage your students with the video and get them to think critically about the process of preservation and how they can be a part of that process.

Click here to view the *Saving the Bolsa Chica Wetlands* documentary:

<https://youtu.be/ITVasxvE8nM>

The follow pages include a grading rubric, short answer questions that chronologically follow the video, open-answer questions that get students thinking critically about the scientific process as well as the human side of preservation efforts, and an essay question that prompts them to see the pros and cons of development and conservation, as well as articulate their thoughts on the subject.

This guide is aimed at Grades 8-12, but can be modified to meet the needs of younger grade levels.

If you have questions or comments, please email [FLOW@amigosdebolsachica.org](mailto:FLOW@amigosdebolsachica.org). We would love your feedback!

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## Grading Rubric

### Short Answer Questions (Answers):

In 1964 “the LA basin was \_\_\_\_\_” and the city of “Huntington Beach was \_\_\_\_\_”.  
**(overpopulated; blossoming)**

What industry lasted for over 100 years, establishing Huntington Beach?  
**(Oil fields/oil drilling)**

Before it became known as Bolsa Chica State Beach, what was the sandbar between Bolsa Chica wetlands and the ocean nicknamed?  
**(Tin can beach)**

Members of what two activist groups eventually came together with the community and formed Amigos de Bolsa Chica?  
**(League of Women Voters & American Association of University Women)**

ADBC started in a living room - in what year?  
**(1976)**

In 1970 what company had plans to develop a marina and housing development in the Bolsa Chica wetlands?  
**(Signal Landmark)**

“The Bolsa Chica has been in its \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.”  
**(natural state, thousands of years)**

The Coastal Act of 1976 prohibited what?  
**(the development of wetlands)**

Amigos de Bolsa Chica sued \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for permitting the development of the wetlands.  
**(Signal Landmark & CA state)**

What percentage of California wetlands have already been developed?  
**(90%)**

At the order of the City Council, Signal Landmark had to come back with proof that the \_\_\_\_\_ would be \_\_\_\_\_.  
**(ocean entrance; least destructive to environment)**

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On the other hand, the Amigos had to use science to prove what?  
**(why entrance to marina would be harmful)**

“ \_\_\_\_\_ was not enough.”  
**(passion)**

Wetlands are the beginning of the \_\_\_\_\_ in the ocean, a stop on the \_\_\_\_\_ for birds, a \_\_\_\_\_ for fish, and home for \_\_\_\_\_ species.  
**(food chain; migration flyway; nursery ground; endangered)**

“Humans are at the top of the food chain, and therefore we need to \_\_\_\_\_.”  
**(care for rest of it)**

In what year did Signal Landmark settle the case and withdraw all plans for development, selling the land to the State?  
**(1989)**

In 1997, the State of California purchased \_\_\_\_\_ more acres of land dedicated for the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, bringing the total acreage to \_\_\_\_\_ acres, the largest preserved wetland in the state.  
**(880; 1200)**

In order to be restored, Bolsa Chica needed a tidal inlet connecting it to the Pacific Ocean; what year did the current tidal inlet open?  
**(2006)**

For the first time in \_\_\_\_\_ years, ocean water entered into wetlands.  
**(107)**

Once the restoration project was completed, marine life exploded:  
\_\_\_\_\_ % of commercial fish spend time in wetlands at some point in their lives  
\_\_\_\_\_ species of birds call Bolsa Chica home throughout the year  
**(40; 200)**

When it comes to wildlife and environmental conservation there is always more work to be done; “Bolsa Chica is never saved, it \_\_\_\_\_.”  
**(continually needs saving)**

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**Open Answer Questions:**

	1	2	3
<b>Student Answer</b>	Does not answer question; provides zero evidence; question is left blank	Only retells the story told in the video; provides minimal evidence that relates to the answer given	Clearly answers question asked and proves student understood the video; provides good evidence that relates to the answer given

1. Why was it so important to the Amigos de Bolsa Chica to save the wetlands from development?
2. What was the purpose of the paid political advertisement funded by Signal Landmark?
3. Why was passion “not enough” to convince the State of California and the Huntington Beach City Council? Why was scientific proof necessary for the Amigos to win their lawsuit?
4. Why is maintenance and continued protection important for wild spaces like Bolsa Chica?

**Writing Prompt:**

	1	2	3
<b>Argument</b>	Unclear or lacking an argument for either side	Basic argument sentence, doesn't fully state their response	Clear argument sentence introducing key elements
<b>Evidence</b>	Minimal or irrelevant use of evidence	Minimally uses evidence to support argument	Uses evidence as solid support for argument
<b>Explanation</b>	No explanation	Minimal explanation	Complete explanation

It is estimated that more than 90% of the total historical wetlands in California have been lost to development. Imagine you learned a certain company (Waterfront, Inc.) has purchased a certain coastal wetland area (Lovely Bay) near where you live. In addition to the environmental services

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provided by all coastal wetlands, such as serving as a nursery for fish and other marine animals, filtering pollutants from rainwater runoff, and protecting the coastline from sea level rise, the Lovely Bay also serves as feeding and nesting grounds to a number of migratory birds and endangered species. Waterfront, Inc. is planning on draining the Lovely Bay wetland to convert it into a residential development. The company claims that this project will give a much needed boost to the local economy and create hundreds of jobs. **Write a letter to your state Representative, explaining why you support or oppose this project.** Make sure to support your position with a complete set of arguments that explain how approving or stopping this project will affect nature, the economy, and the well-being of current and future generations, locally, regionally, and globally (aim for 1,500-2,000 words).

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Follow along with the *Saving the Bolsa Chica Wetlands* documentary. Complete the following worksheet by filling in the blanks or answering the questions.

#### Short Answer Questions:

In 1964 “the LA basin was \_\_\_\_\_” and the city of “Huntington Beach was \_\_\_\_\_”.

What industry lasted for over 100 years, establishing Huntington Beach?

Before it became known as Bolsa Chica State Beach, what was the sandbar between Bolsa Chica wetlands and the ocean nicknamed?

Members of what two activist groups eventually came together with the community and formed Amigos de Bolsa Chica?

The Amigos de Bolsa Chica started in a living room - in what year?

In 1970 what company had plans to develop a marina and housing development in the Bolsa Chica wetlands?

“The Bolsa Chica has been in its \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.”

The Coastal Act of 1976 prohibited what?

Amigos de Bolsa Chica sued \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for permitting the development of the wetlands.

What percentage of California wetlands have already been developed?

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At the order of the City Council, Signal Landmark had to come back with proof that the \_\_\_\_\_ would be \_\_\_\_\_.

On the other hand, the Amigos had to use science to prove what?

“ \_\_\_\_\_ was not enough.”

Wetlands are the beginning of the \_\_\_\_\_ in the ocean, a stop on the \_\_\_\_\_ for birds, a \_\_\_\_\_ for fish, and home for \_\_\_\_\_ species.

“Humans are at the top of the food chain, and therefore we need to \_\_\_\_\_.”

In what year did Signal Landmark settle the case and withdraw all plans for development, selling the land to the State?

In 1997, the State of California purchased \_\_\_\_\_ more acres of land dedicated for the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, bringing the total acreage to \_\_\_\_\_ acres, the largest preserved wetland in the state.

In order to be restored, Bolsa Chica needed a tidal inlet connecting it to the Pacific Ocean; what year did the current tidal inlet open?

For the first time in \_\_\_\_\_ years, ocean water entered into wetlands.

Once the restoration project was completed, marine life exploded:

\_\_\_\_\_ % of commercial fish spend time in wetlands at some point in their lives  
\_\_\_\_\_ species of birds call Bolsa Chica home throughout the year

When it comes to wildlife and environmental conservation there is always more work to be done; “Bolsa Chica is never saved, it \_\_\_\_\_.”

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#### Open Answer Questions:

5. Why was it so important to the Amigos de Bolsa Chica to save the wetlands from development?
6. What was the purpose of the paid political advertisement funded by Signal Landmark?
7. Why was passion “not enough” to convince the State of California and the Huntington Beach City Council? Why was scientific proof necessary for the Amigos to win their lawsuit?
8. Why is maintenance and continued protection important for wild spaces like Bolsa Chica?

#### Writing Prompt:

It is estimated that more than 90% of the total historical wetlands in California have been lost to development. Imagine you learned a certain company (Waterfront, Inc.) has purchased a certain coastal wetland area (Lovely Bay) near where you live. In addition to the environmental services provided by all coastal wetlands, such as serving as a nursery for fish and other marine animals, filtering pollutants from rainwater runoff, and protecting the coastline from sea level rise, the Lovely Bay also serves as feeding and nesting grounds to a number of migratory birds and endangered species. Waterfront, Inc. is planning on draining the Lovely Bay wetland to convert it into a residential development. The company claims that this project will give a much needed boost to the local economy and create hundreds of jobs. **Write a letter to your state Representative, explaining why you support or oppose this project.** Make sure to support your position with a complete set of arguments that explain how approving or stopping this project will affect nature, the economy, and the well-being of current and future generations, locally, regionally, and globally (aim for 1,500-2,000 words).