



Name _____

Date _____

Regions of North America: The Chesapeake Bay

The alarm buzzes. A man rolls out of bed. He pulls on a yellow raincoat and pants. Then he heads for his boat. He carries bait and nets. He is a Chesapeake Bay **waterman**.

Many people live in small towns along the Bay. They make their living from the water. Crab, oysters, and many kinds of fish live in the **brackish** water. But, today, this way of life is **endangered**. Many animals that make their home in this mix of salt and fresh water are disappearing. Crabs are harder to find. They may be smaller than in the past. Some restaurants even bring in crabs from other areas. Oysters are disappearing, too. Often watermen must turn to other jobs to pay their bills. Why is this happening?

To find out, we must look at the Chesapeake Bay **watershed**. A watershed is the land area that drains into a body of water. The Chesapeake Bay has a large watershed. It includes six states and the District of Columbia. What people do in a watershed can help or hurt the water. New building means dirt, called **sediment**, may seep into the water. Shoreline grasses may disappear. This means the young of animals such as blue crabs don't have a place to hide. Sprays, used to kill insects, can run into the Bay. These things hurt the water habitat. The food chain is affected. This changes life for watermen. These workers often must find a different way to make a living.

Along the Chesapeake Bay, there are other jobs. **Tourists** enjoy water sports such as motor boating and sailing. The restaurants and hotels that welcome visitors give jobs to local people. But, the sports can change the environment.

Shipbuilding has a long history in the Bay. Today, many people make their living building and fixing ships. The United States Navy has a huge shipyard at Norfolk, Virginia. Many people work here.

But, for many, the disappearing crabs and oysters means giving up a way of life they love. They know there are other ways to earn money, but it is hard to give up the beauty of a Chesapeake Bay morning in their own fishing boat.

I. Remembering Ideas

Fill in the blank with a word from the article.

1. Water that is a mix of salt and fresh is called _____.
2. Land that drains into a body of water is called a _____.
3. Dirt that runs into water and changes it is called _____.
4. _____ has a long history along the Chesapeake Bay.
5. There is a huge U.S, Naval shipyard at _____.

II. Putting It Together

Answer each question. Use complete sentences.

1. What is causing trouble for watermen?

2. Do you think tourists are good for the Chesapeake Bay? Tell why or why not.

3. How have ships and boats been important on the Bay?
