Harlan County Schools
NTI Days 6-10
Amusement Parks
8th Grade

Introduction:

Any days designated as a Non-Traditional Instruction (NTI) days, students will be required to complete assignments at home for these days. By completing work at home on these days, we will not have to "make-up" these missed days at the end of the school year. These days will count as a full day of instruction for students and teachers.

This folder contains snow packets for these NTI days for your child to complete if school is cancelled. Please keep the folder safe at home. Every NTI day, have your child complete the work for the day that is specified by the County Board. For example, if the board specified that it is NTI day 1, look for the assignment labeled NTI day 1. Your child needs to hand in the work completed during each NTI day; therefore it is important for each student to complete each day's work.

Project:

Students will take on the role of an Amusement Park owner/designer. They will research aspects of a variety of existing parks in order to design their park for the most success.

Standards

Social Studies

SS-08-1.1.3

Students will describe and give examples of the ways the Constitution of the United States is a document that can be changed from time to time through both formal and informal processes (e.g., amendments, court cases, executive actions) to meet the needs of its citizens. DOK 2

SS-06-4.4.2

Students will describe ways in which the physical environment (e.g., natural resources, physical geography, natural disasters) both promotes and limits human activities (e.g., exploration, migration, trade, settlement, development) in the present day. DOK 2

***This is a 6th grade standard that is assessed at the 8th grade level.*

SS-07-5.1.2

Students will explain how history is a series of connected events shaped by multiple cause-and-effect relationships and give examples of these relationships. DOK 3

Math

8.G.B.8

Apply the Pythagorean Theorem to find the distance between two points in a coordinate system.

8.G.C.9

Know the formulas for the volumes of cones, cylinders, and spheres and use them to solve real-world and mathematical problems.

English/Language Arts

8.W.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

8.W.8.1

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Science

08-PS3-1

Construct and interpret graphical displays of data to describe the relationships of kinetic energy to the mass of an object and to the speed of an object.

MS-ETS1-3

Analyze data from tests to determine similarities and differences among several design solutions to identify the best characteristics of each that can be combined into a new solution to better meet the criteria for success.

08-ESS3-3

Apply scientific principles to design a method for monitoring and minimizing a human impact on the environment.

Activities:

Day 6: Researching Amusement Parks

Mandatory Activity

- Choose 2 amusement parks from the following list to compare and contrast using the following criteria: ticket prices, park size, number of attractions, distance from home, and number of visitors per year, and park theme. Create a chart showing this information for the parks you have chosen. *Parks to choose from are Dollywood, King's Island, Epcot Center,*

Choose two of the following:

- Write a letter to your parent arguing your position to visit one of the parks from your chart during summer vacation. Utilize the 3 points in 5 paragraphs model.
- Write a letter to your school's site-based council arguing your position that your class should be permitted to go on a trip to one of the parks from your chart.
- Create tri-fold brochure for one of the parks from your chart.
- Choose one park attraction/ride including its dimensions and build a scale model of that attraction using items from your home. Take a picture of your model and email it to your teacher.

Day 7 Research/Design an Attraction/Ride

Mandatory Activity

Create a Timeline beginning with the 1st Rollercoaster and include 15 significant developments of roller coasters since that time.

Choose two of the following:

- Capture the experience of a thrill ride in a poem, short story, rap/song, skit, or other creative work. These can be submitted in paper format or as a video/audio recording.
- Interview a friend/relative/teacher about their experience on a thrill ride. You can record this interview on audio, video, or with pencil/paper.
- Complete Math Activity "Scatterplots" that is included in your packet.
- Invent an amusement park ride. You can draw or build a model of your ride. Include its name and a detailed description of the ride including ride length, speed, and significant features. Take a picture of your model or turn in your drawing to your homeroom teacher.

- Write a narrative in the 1st person of the entire ride you invented.

Day 8 Amusement Park Business

Mandatory Activity
Complete the Math Activity "Systems of Equations" that is included in your packet.

Choose two of the following:

- Research 3 park occupations. (Ex.—Ride Operator, Parking Attendant, Restaurant Workers, Security, etc.) Write or record a resume/application to convince the park that you should be hired for one of these positions.
- Choose a park occupation and write/record an argument that your occupation is essential to the safety or enjoyment of park visitors.
- Write or record a 30 second commercial advertising one of theme parks you have previously researched to attract visitors to the park.
- Choose an amusement park and create a board game designed around the theme of your park.

Day 9 Consequences of Opening an Amusement Park

Mandatory Activity

- Read "Walt Disney's Environmental Policies." Create your own environmental policy for a new Amusement Park. Your policy must include at least 5 steps to minimize the park's impact on the environment. This can be written as an article or recorded as a video.

Choose 2 of the following:

- Read "The Story Behind Kelo vs. City of New London..." from your packet or at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2015/05/29/the-story-behind-the-kelo-case-how-an-obscure-takings-case-came-to-shock-the-conscience-of-the-nation/ Write an argumentative essay on whether county government should or should not be permitted to take ownership of private property to build an amusement park in Harlan.
- Create a piece of recycled paper. Find instructions for doing this online or use the instructions included in your packet from http://homeguides.sfgate.com/make-recycled-paper-3-easy-steps-79106.html

- Assume the role of a property owner, restaurant owner, worker at a gas station, manager of a hotel, community businessman, teacher, or other member of a community that is building an amusement park. Role play yourself in an interview that shows your support for the economic development the amusement park will bring to your community.
- Use the article, "How Economic Impact of Theme Parks Create Revenue-Generating Thrill Ride for Us" in your packet or at http://blog.theparkcatalog.com/theme-parks-economic-impact-growth/ Create a bar graph or chart that displays the economic impact of amusement parks in Florida.

Day 10 Create Your Own Amusement Park!

Mandatory Assignment

- Reflecting upon all your research on amusement parks, design your own amusement park using the following criteria: ticket prices, park size, number of attractions, distance from home, and number of visitors per year, and park theme. You may choose to display your design in the following forms (but not limited to): a diorama, on poster board, digital display or in narrative form.

Day 6: Dollywood

Dollywood is known for its down-home charm, this world famous 150-acre theme park is as unique as its namesake and owner Dolly Parton. From award-winning shows to educational craft demonstrations and ground-breaking rides and attractions, Dollywood offers something for everyone and every interest, so the whole family can experience the park together. Dollywood also plays host to five seasonal festivals throughout the year ensuring that each visit is a unique bonding experience for families. Hosting over 3 million guests in a typical season—Presidents' Day to the Christmas holidays—Dollywood is the biggest "ticketed" tourist attraction in Tennessee.

In addition to standard amusement park thrill rides, Dollywood features traditional crafts and music of the Smoky Mountains area. The park hosts a number of concerts and musical events each year, including appearances by Parton and her family, as well as other national and local musical acts, and is the site of the Southern Gospel Museum and Hall of Fame.

Ticket Prices

Purchase or Renew Come for the day, several days or all season long! Single-day admission includes any entire day of access to the best rides, shows and attractions in the Smoky Mountains. And, if one day or several days is not enough, consider the purchase of a season pass and do Dollywood again and again and get an entire season of adventure!

One day ticket prices: Regular tickets for ages 12-59 are $62 + tax; Child's ticket for ages 4-11 are 49 + tax; Senior tickets are 57 + tax. Season Tickets are priced at $99 for ages 12-59 and $87 for a Child's ticket.

Variety of Attractions

Dollywood's spectacular Tennessee setting provides the perfect backdrop for a variety of amusement park rides and attractions. Thrilling roller coasters, daring water excursions, family rides and kiddie rides-you'll find them all at Dollywood-along with one-of-a-kind attractions that let you experience our Smoky Mountain way of life. The operation of Dollywood's rides and attractions can be affected by cold temperatures. These attractions include:

Amazing Flying Elephants

Some of Dollywood's biggest memories are created by our little guests, and the Amazing Flying Elephants are just for you! Take a seat aboard one of the "elephant" cars--you can even let mom and dad ride along if you want--and hold on as you soar 'round and 'round and up and down as these "elephants" take you on an amazing adventure. Special Attraction Information: The Amazing Flying Elephants is subject to closures during inclement weather conditions, including lightning.

Barnstormer

Enjoy the same breathtaking moments that daring stunt pilots of the1920s might have experienced as they zoomed over the fields of nearby farms. The Barnstormer features two pendulum arms with seating for 32 riders. Seated back to back, riders travel progressively higher on each swing of the Barnstormer's massive arms, reaching a maximum speed of 45 miles per hour and 230 degrees of rotation. At its peak, the Barnstormer reaches a staggering 81 feet in the air!

Daredevil Falls

Only a real daredevil will venture into an abandoned logging camp for a one-of-a-kind boat expedition. If you're up to the challenge, let our adventurous guides help you navigate your way through some close calls with the bears and the old left-behind lumber machinery. But, just when you catch your breath, your boat careens over a waterfall down a 60-foot drop at a heart-racing 60 mph!

Demolition Derby

Family and friends may cross your path, but this is one time that it's okay to bump them out of your way as you make your way through the skirmish of cluttered bumper cars. Keep an eye out in each direction because the next car could come out of nowhere at any time. It's guaranteed good times for the whole family as you make your way through the chaos!

FireChaser Express®

They say where there's smoke, there's fire. Well, in the Smoky Mountains that's more than just a saying. Fortunately, it seems like with every big blaze, there've always been a few brave souls willing to answer the call – heroes able to tame nature's fury and preserve the Smokies for generations to come! Now comes your turn to celebrate that heroic spirit in a new coaster that's sure to test your mettle, and leave you screaming for more! It's the FireChaser Express – the nation's first dual launch family coaster – blasting riders forward and backward!

Live Entertainment

There is plenty of live entertainment options that include:

Heartsong

In this multi-sensory film experience, Dolly Parton takes you on a breathtaking journey through the Great Smoky Mountains as she shares her story about a place very near and dear to her heart. Don't miss Heartsong®! Performance dates and information are subject to change without notice.

Miss Lillian (Character)

Dollywood's Miss Lillian, proprietress of Miss Lillian's Chicken House, makes the tastiest fried chicken you'll find anywhere, and she serves it up with a rousing song sure to get the entire family singing along. And be on the lookout for a hot roll—Miss Lillian just might toss one your way! Performance dates and information are subject to change without notice.

Wings of America Birds of Prey

Some of Dollywood's most captivating performers don't sing or dance—they soar! Get an up-close look and some fascinating facts as these amazing birds of prey are presented. All birds of prey at Dollywood are under the care of the American Eagle Foundation which is authorized to possess birds for education, exhibition, rehabilitation and breeding under permits from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency.

STORY TIME WITH MISS LILLIAN

Dollywood's Miss Lillian, proprietress of Miss Lillian's Chicken House, makes the tastiest fried chicken you'll find anywhere, and she serves it up with a rousing song sure to get the entire family singing along. And be on the lookout for a hot roll—Miss Lillian just might toss one your way! Performance dates and information are subject to change without notice. Join everyone's favorite Chicken Lady at The Valley Theater as Miss Lillian shares stories from Dolly's Imagination Library. Sponsored by Penguin Group (USA).

*Distance from Harlan County: 138.3 mi – about 3 hrs 6 mins

Day 6: Epcot Center

Epcot is the second of four theme parks built at Walt Disney World in Bay Lake, Florida, near the city of Orlando. It opened as EPCOT Center on October 1, 1982, and spans 300 acres (120 ha), more than twice the size of the Magic Kingdom park. It is dedicated to the celebration of human achievement, namely technological innovation and international culture, and is often referred to as a "permanent World's Fair." In 2014, the park hosted approximately 11.45 million guests, ranking it the third most visited theme park in North America and the sixth most visited theme park in the world.

Tickets Prices

Ticket price for ages 10 + is $97 and for ages 3-9 is $91. Ticket prices for two day pass is 10 + $192 and for ages 3-9 the price is $179.

Variety of Attractions

Calling All Space Cadets! Whether you're returning from Mars or awaiting your favorite astronaut, decompress with an array of space-themed activities including:

Mission: SPACE Race

It's astronauts versus ground control in a race to see who can send their rocket from Mars to Earth first. Up to 56 cadets can play at once. Whose team are you on?

Expedition Mars

You've got 4 minutes to use a joystick and jet-pack button to explore the surface of Mars and find your 4 fellow astronauts. Good luck, cadet!

Space Base

Junior space explorers will be inspired to reach for the stars and crawl into wormholes on this fun interactive playground.

Postcards from Space

Create and e-mail a video postcard—starring you—to anyone in the universe you please.

An Interactive Intergalactic Adventure

Dazzling 3D graphics, in-theater special effects and booming digital sound make you feel like you're really there! Get ready for a bumpy ride as Captain EO and crew crash-land on the surface of an alien planet to present the Supreme Leader of the Dark Side an important gift. Though well intentioned, the gift is not well received, and Captain EO will have to use some

slick moves—and slick tunes, including "We Are Here to Change the World" and "Another Part of Me"—to triumph over the evil forces of darkness.

*Distance from Harlan County: 726 mi – about 11 hrs 24 mins

Day 6: Kings Island

Kings Island is a 364-acre amusement park located 24 miles northeast of Cincinnati in Mason, Ohio. It is owned and operated by Cedar Fair Entertainment Company. The park first opened in 1972 by the Taft Broadcasting Company in an effort to move and expand Coney Island, a popular resort destination along the banks of the Ohio River that was prone to frequent flooding. After more than $275 million in capital investments, the park features over 80 rides, shows and attractions including 14 roller coasters and a 33-acre water park. Opened: Apr 29, 1972Kings Island. Kings Island was the second-most visited seasonal amusement park in the United States behind Cedar Point with an estimated 3.2 million visitors.

Ticket Prices: BUY ONLINE AND SAVE!

Buy your admission tickets online and save $22 off the front gate price of $62 any day the park is open to the public through November 1. Enjoy more than 100 world-class rides and attractions, dazzling shows, and the newly expanded and award-winning Planet Snoopy.

Two Day Ticket: Our most popular ticket option. Enjoy two visits on the 2015 public operating dates of your choice; one day for roller coasters, the other day for Soak City or our fall Halloween events for the price of a one admission ticket at the park. It's up to you when you want to visit!

Variety of Attractions

Thrill Rides.

Year after year, the best thrills the world has to offer are at Kings Island. Year after year, the best thrills keep getting better. Speed junkies can get their fix on Banshee - the longest inverted roller coaster in the world. Challenge The Beast - the longest wooden roller coaster in the world - and Diamondback. There's also The Bat, Drop Tower, Delirium, Flight of Fear, Invertigo, The Racer and Vortex. The thrills never seem to end at Kings Island.

Family Rides.

At Kings Island, there are rides for everyone from the daring to the meek. If speed and adventure aren't for you, the Grand Carousel, peaceful Railroad trip, Dodgem, Boo Blasters on Boo Hill, Scrambler, Monster, White Water Canyon and Zephyr will be perfect. There's also Adventure Express and Backlot Stunt Coaster. Don't miss them.

Planet Snoopy.

Isn't that Snoopy, Charlie Brown, Linus and Lucy shaking hands and taking pictures with all the children? Naturally. In the 15-time, Golden Ticket award-winning Planet Snoopy anything can

happen -- and very often does! Planet Snoopy features an elaborate collection of PEANUTS-themed rides and attractions for every age including four roller coasters, live shows, gift shop and meet-and-greet opportunities with your favorite pals from PEANUTS TV shows and comic strips.

Parents, be advised the rides and attractions in Planet Snoopy close at 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays when Halloween Haunt begins. The rides and attractions in Planet Snoop are closed on Friday nights.

Live Entertainment

The thrills and chills of Kings Island in the fall don't end with the rides and haunted mazes. Our live entertainment is amazing too!

Including:

- Blood Drums: the pulsating power of this rapturous band of misfit drummers will mesmerize and energize you in this percussive blood bath of rhythm and music. It's a punk rock stomp!
- Monster Rock: classic rock explodes on the stage in all-new music revue featuring monster hits by Journey, Foreigner, Bon Jovi, Aerosmith and more!
- Hot Blooded: with Vampires, blood and rock 'n' roll explode on the stage in this seductive after-life revue. Break on through to the other side and get bitten!

Due to the popularity of our live shows, we suggest that you arrive at the show venue early. Seating is limited in all of our locations. All shows are wheelchair accessible.

The World's Largest Animatronic Dinosaur Park (additional ticket cost of $5.00)

Long before coasters, dinosaurs ruled Kings Island. Now they're back and they haven't eaten in a very long time. Come face-to-face with the most animatronic dinosaurs on Earth at the only place big enough to hold them all: Kings Island. See more than fifty-six moving, practically breathing life-sized dinosaurs, including several you can control. Plus, find out what it's like to be a paleontologist at our dig site. From the ferocious Tyrannosaurus rex to the soaring Pteranodon to the largest animatronic dinosaur in the world, Dinosaurs Alive! is the dawn of a new era of thrills. Dinosaurs Alive! - The biggest thing in 65 million years.

*Distance from Harlan County: 263 mi - about 4 hours 18 mins

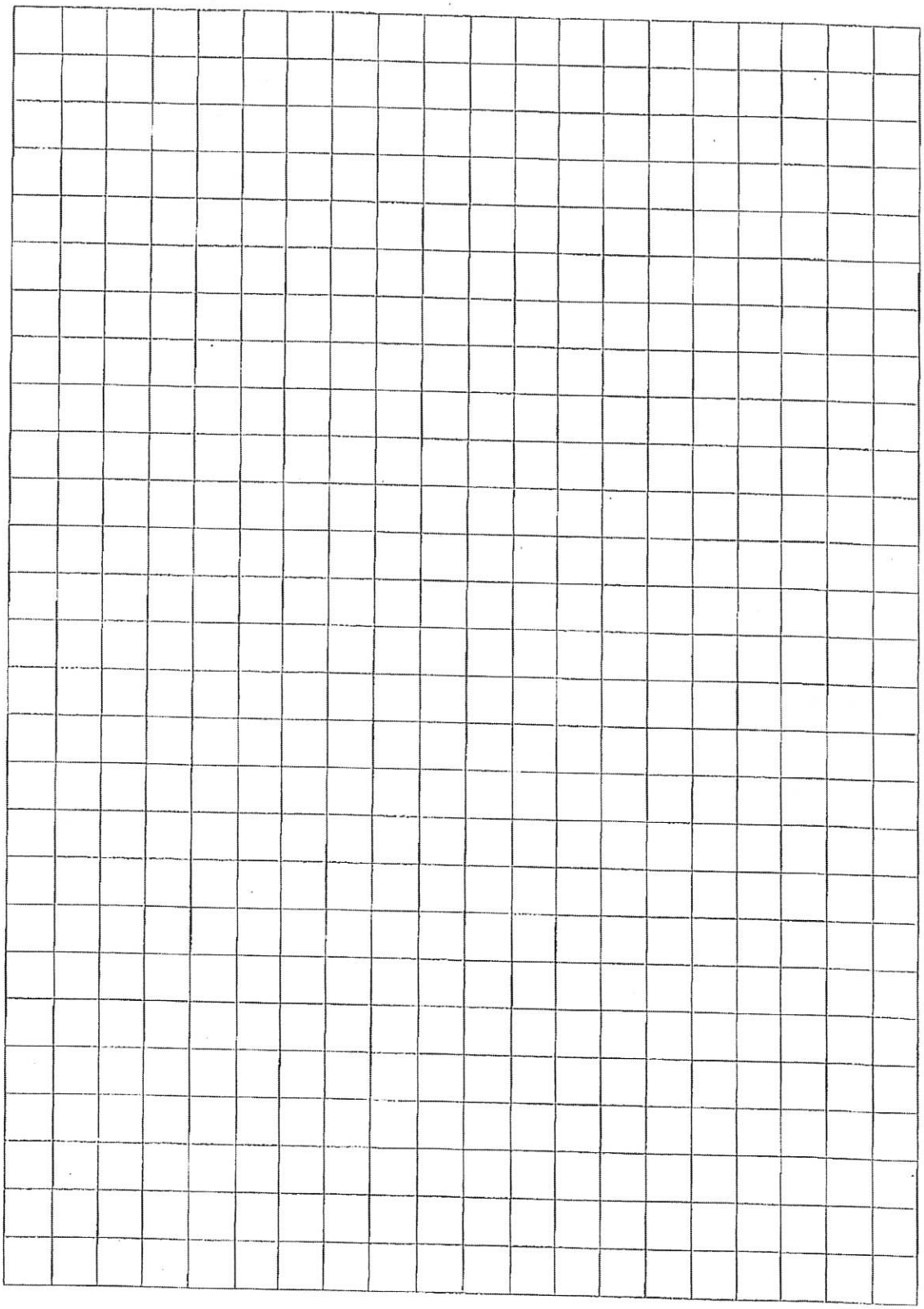
Day 7

Scatter Plot

Ride Time in Minutes	Ride Length in Feet
2.5	14,500
1.5	8,250
4	23,500
3.25	19,000
2.5	16,000
3	36,000
0.5	3,000
4.5	24,250
3	17,000
4	22,000
2.75	16,500
1	5,750

Using the data listed, create and label a scatter plot comparing ride time to ride length. Use the graph paper provided. After you create the scatter plot, construct a line of best fit (list any outliers if any, and disregard any outliers in your line of best fit). Using your line of best fit, write a linear equation. Make a prediction for the length of a ride having a ride time of six minutes using the linear equation that you wrote.

Day 7



Day 8

System of Equations

The Cook family consists of two parents and four children. The Ross family consists of two parents, eight children, and a grandparent. The total ticket cost for the Cook family to enter Epcot Center at Disney World is $550.00. The Ross family spends a total of $1,004.50 for admission tickets at Epcot Center. Set up a system of equations to solve the cost for each adult and each child to enter Epcot Center. You can solve it graphically, using linear combinations, or with substitution.

An 8th grade class is planning a Florida trip, and they want to include a day at Epcot Center. The 8th grade class has 48 enrolled students. For a field trip, a ratio of at least one adult for every 10 students is required. Using your previous calculations, write and solve an equation to calculate the total admission cost for one day at Epcot Center on the 8th grade trip.

Day 9

Walt Disney Environmental Policy

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Walt Disney Company seeks to establish and sustain a positive environmental legacy for Disney and for future generations. In doing so, the company is committed to minimizing its overall impact on the environment while encouraging and activating environmentally responsible behavior on the part of cast members and employees, guests and business associates throughout the world.

Specifically, Disney aims to conserve water, energy and ecosystems; to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; to minimize waste and to inspire public consciousness in support of environmental sustainability. The company seeks to identify, measure and understand the direct and indirect impact of its operations and develop innovative and realistic solutions for mitigating those impacts. It also complies with, and in some cases exceeds environmental laws and regulations.

Finally, the company is committed to communicating regularly its progress in implementing the policies and achieving the targets that it has established.

ENVIRONMENTAL FOCUS AREAS

WATER AND ENERGY CONSERVATION

Improve water and energy efficiencies in existing operations. Invest in new technologies and systems that enhance water and energy conservation. Include water and energy management as an integral part of planning for future projects to reduce the consumption of water and energy.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION

Reduce harmful GHG emissions by identifying the sources and implementing solutions, including source elimination, efficiency improvement, minimizing transportation and other fuels, and increasing the use of clean fuels. Examine the supply chain to achieve

improvement.

WASTE MINIMIZATION

Minimize waste in our operations and business activities. Dispose of waste conscientiously and creatively by making "reduce/reuse/recycle" the standard operating procedure. Incorporate waste reduction into the design of products, programs, and facilities; reducing waste through innovative product development, supply chain management, and end-of-life recycling.

© Disney. All Rights Reserved.

ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION

Promote wildlife and habitat conservation through cooperative efforts with the scientific and academic communities and organizations committed to preserving the earth's biodiversity and ecosystem functions. Effectively plan and manage conservation lands for the preservation of native plant and animal species. Integrate natural resource conservation in future planning, development and operations activities.

INSPIRE ACTION

Engage and inspire employees, guests, viewers, interested parties and business associates to make positive impacts on the environment. Integrate environmental messaging into products, guest experiences and media platforms worldwide.

Day 9

How Do I Make Recycled Paper in 3 Easy Steps?

Recycling paper is a creative project that benefits the environment. You can use a variety of waste paper, from colored tissue to white copy paper, to remix and reinvent without adding harmful emissions to the air or water. Experiment by sprinkling in dried leaves, petals or herbs, and make sheets of different sizes for use in various projects. In three easy steps, you can replenish your supply of stationery and wrapping paper without spending a penny.

1, Tearing your waste paper into small pieces, approximately 1 inch across, and put them in the blender pitcher, filling it loosely to the halfway mark. Add warm water to the top fill mark. Put on the lid, and blend the mixture at low speed to start, and then at medium until all the paper is reduced to pulp. Pour the pulp into a large bowl or tub; repeat the entire process twice. Add warm water to a depth of 3 to 4 inches. Stir the pulp and water together.

2. Set the deckle — a wooden frame with the inside dimension the size you'd like your paper to be — atop the mold, a piece of fine mesh screening. Dip both together into the bowl of pulp, submerging them. Swirl the mold and deckle until the screen surface is covered with pulp. Pull them up out of the bowl, keeping them level. Allow excess water to drain back into the bowl.

3. Remove the deckle, and set it aside. Place a piece of felt over the paper and mold. Placing a palm under the screen and one over the felt, turn the "sandwich" over so the felt is on the bottom, the paper is in the middle and the mold is on top. Set it down on a towel. Press a clean sponge against the screen to absorb as much liquid from the paper as possible. Lift one corner of the mold; the paper should stick to the felt. Carefully peel the screening away, leaving the new sheet of paper on the felt. Let it dry completely. (See References 1)

Things You Will Need

- Paper
- Blender
- Large bowl or tub
- Mold and deckle
- Felt
- Sponge
- Towel

Tip

- If you wish to make writing paper, add 2 tbsp. liquid starch to each blender of pulp. The starch will size the paper so it will not absorb ink.
- If the edge of the paper tears when you remove the mold, repair it by reshaping it with your fingernail while damp.

Day 9

"How Economic Impact of Theme Parks Creates Revenue Generating Thrill Ride For Us"

When people gather in line for the newest monster roller coaster or flock to an amusement park named after the latest superhero, few realize the enormous economic contribution theme parks make to the American economy.

It's encouraging. In this global battle for jobs, theme parks are one of this country's hot growth sectors.

And attendance is growing. In 2014, there were an estimated 300 million visitors to America's theme parks. That's a 4% increase over the prior year

This fervor for theme parks is creating a ton of economic activity. In fact, there are 17, count them, 17 new roller coasters alone that opened in the US this year.

According to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, there are about 400 amusement parks and attractions in the US. The industry employs about 600,000 people year-round.

What's really great is that considering America's huge trade deficit with foreign countries where we spend more with them than they spend with us, theme parks are actually bringing foreign dollars back to US soil.

Just look at the economic impact in one state. Take Florida, which is certainly THE worldwide leader when it comes to theme parks. And theme parks are a major reason why people come here.

The economic impact of theme parks in just one state
In case you lived in a cave this past century, Florida is theme park heaven. Here are the top theme parks in the Sunshine State and the number of annual visitors they attract:
- **Magic Kingdom** – 19.3 million
- **Epcot** -11.5 million
- **Disney's Animal Kingdom** – 10.4 million
- **Disney Hollywood Studios** – 10.3 million
- **Universal Studios** – 8.2 million
- **Islands of Adventure at Universal Studios** – 8.1 million

– **SeaWorld** – 4.7 million
– **Busch Gardens Tamp Bay** – 4.1 million
(Source: TEA/AECOM Theme and Musuem Index).

Now, think of the economic impact this has on the state and the country.

In 2014, according to VisitFlorida.com (one of the state's tourism websites), there were 97.3 million visitors to the state.

Of those, it is estimated that 11.5 million were from overseas, dropping their dollars into our pockets, thank you very much.

From Canada there were about 4.2 million visitors. Brazil follows with 1.7 million, then United Kingdom with 1.6 million. Nearly a million visitors also come from both Venezuela and Argentina each.

The state estimates tourism brings in a whopping $82 billion in spending.

That translates to $4.9 billion in tax revenue, money that otherwise Floridians would have to dish out of their own pockets for expenditures like roads, schools, police, etc. (That's one reason why Florida is one of the few states without a state income tax).

It's difficult to determine the number of foreign tourists who actually visit Florida theme parks. But if you've been to a Disney property or Universal Studios lately, you know they are there. You can see the foreign groups with their brightly colored shirts and tour guides. You can hear them at the outlet malls filling up suitcases with merchandise.

This influx of foreign money into the economy is certainly welcome.

The state Department of Economic Opportunity says that of the 9.1 million workers in Florida, 1.1 million of them hold jobs directly attributed to tourism. That's better than 1 in 10. Again, we would like to thank our friends from overseas.

That's certainly a job-creation engine if there ever was one. Now, some might argue that a tourist-related job is not as lucrative as a job in manufacturing. But in these difficult times, a job is a job. (By the way, the

IAAA found in a recent survey that 28% of Americans said they would be interested in working for a theme park or an amusement company). This economic activity does not just involve people taking tickets at the turnstiles either.

Think of all the construction jobs created building all those new roller coasters and improvements at theme parks. Plus all the hotels and restaurants built to accommodate those visitors.

What about all the construction materials that need to be manufactured?

Then think of all the truck drivers and train engineers employed to deliver those goods.

There are other offshoots – commercial site amenities. When you build or expand a theme park, you need benches, trash receptacles, picnic tables, bollards, restroom equipment and supplies, etc., etc.

How about food and beverages? Think of the enormous amount of food that is required every day to feed all those millions of people. That's a lot of hamburgers, french fries, Cokes and ice cream cones.

Sure. Theme parks are now catching on around the world. They are growing quickly in Asia. But in many cases, it's American's companies such as Disney that are building them.

However, we doubt they will catch up with American theme parks. This is another field where Americans excel. We like to work hard...and we like to have fun. Theme park developers are obviously answering the call for faster roller coasters, bigger interactive rides and more awesome experiences.

Behind all those rides is an economic hot spot that is a supernova of growth for the American economy. Sure, some of these theme parks seem overcrowded. But for all the people they employ, the taxes they generate and the money they draw to this country, we should be grateful, even if we have to stand in line for a few minutes.

Day 9

The Washington Post

NOT NOW ×

Get the Volokh Conspiracy Newsletter

Free daily updates delivered just for you.

The Volokh Conspiracy

The story behind Kelo v. City of New London – how an obscure takings case got to the Supreme Court and shocked the nation

By Ilya Somin May 29

Most of my new book *The Grasping Hand*, focuses on the broader legal and political issues raised by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Kelo v. City of New London*. As explained in the first post in this series, I wrote the book primarily to address these big-picture issues. But the story of how such a momentous case arose from unlikely origins is interesting in its own right.

The case originated with a development project in the Fort Trumbull area of New London, a small city in Connecticut. The neighborhood had fallen on difficult economic times in the 1990s after the closure of a naval research facility. City officials and others hoped to revitalize it. The administration of Republican Governor John Rowland hoped to expand his political base by promoting development in New London; but to avoid having to work directly through the heavily Democratic city government, they helped resuscitate the long-moribund New London Development Corporation, a private nonprofit organization established to aid the city with development planning.

The NLDC produced a development plan that would revitalize Fort Trumbull by building housing, office space, and other facilities that would support a new headquarters that Pfizer, Inc. – a major pharmaceutical firm – had agreed to build nearby. The development plan produced by the NLDC was in large part based on Pfizer's requirements, which NLDC leaders (some of whom had close ties to Pfizer) were eager to meet. Pfizer would not be the new owner of the redeveloped land, but did expect to benefit from it. I believe that NLDC leaders genuinely thought the plan would serve the public interest, as did the city and state officials who supported it. But it is also true, as one of those who worked on the plan put it, that Pfizer was the "10,000 pound gorilla" behind the project.

In order to implement the plan, the NLDC sought to acquire land belonging to some ninety different Fort Trumbull property owners. In 2000, the New London city council authorized the NLDC to use eminent domain to condemn the land of those who refused to sell. Some defenders of the takings emphasize that all but seven of the owners sold "voluntarily." But as New London's counsel Wesley Horton noted in oral argument before the Supreme Court, many did so because there was "always in the background the possibility of being able to condemn... that obviously facilitates a lot of voluntary sales." Moreover, owners who were reluctant to sell were subjected to considerable harassment, such as late night phone calls, dumping of waste on their property, and locking out tenants during cold winter weather.

Seven individuals and families, who between them owned fifteen residential properties, refused to sell despite the pressure. One was Susette Kelo, who wanted to hold on to her "little pink house" near the waterfront. Some of the other families involved had deep roots in the community and did not want to be forced out. Wilhelmina Dery, who was in her eighties, had lived in the same house her whole life, and wished to continue living there during the time left to her. The Cristofaro family were also strongly attached to their property, which they had purchased in the 1970s after their previous home had been condemned as part of an urban renewal project.

Susette Kelo's famous "little pink house" in 2004 (photo by Isaac Reese)

The resisting property owners tried to use the political process to prevent the takings. They managed to attract the support of a wide range of people in the community, including many on the political left who believed that it was wrong to forcibly expel people from their homes in order to promote commercial development. But the Coalition to Save Fort Trumbull organized by the resisters and their allies had little, if any, hope of prevailing against the vastly more powerful forces arrayed against them.

The owners also tried to hire lawyers to fight the taking in court. But the lawyers they approached told them that there was little chance of success, and that – in any event- they could not afford the necessary prolonged legal battle.

The owners would almost certainly have had to capitulate, if not for the intervention of the Institute for Justice, a libertarian public interest firm contacted by one of the members of the Coalition. IJ had long been interested in promoting stronger judicial enforcement of "public use" limitations on takings.

As IJ lawyer Scott Bullock put it, the Fort Trumbull situation was an "ideal public interest case" for the Institute. Legally, the case was a good one because the city did not claim that the property in question was

"blighted" or otherwise causing harm, thereby making it harder to prove that condemnation would genuinely benefit the public. The case also featured sympathetic plaintiffs who were determined to fight for their rights. That made it likely that it would play well in the court of public opinion, and that it would not be settled before it could lead to a precedent-setting decision. IJ hoped to achieve a ruling holding that takings that transfer property from one private individual to another for "economic development" do not serve a genuine "public use" and are therefore unconstitutional.

Thanks to IJ's pro bono legal representation, the case went to trial. In 2002, a Connecticut trial court invalidated the condemnation of 11 of the 15 properties because the city and the NLDC did not have a clear enough plan of what they intended to do with the land. Both sides appealed to the Connecticut Supreme Court, which upheld all fifteen takings in a close 4-3 decision. The majority ruled that almost any public benefit counts as a "public use" under the state and federal constitutions, and that courts must generally defer to government planners. In a dissenting opinion, Justice Peter Zarella argued that "the constitutionality of condemnations undertaken for the purpose of private economic development depends not only on the professed goals of the development plan, but also on the prospect of their achievement." Presciently, he warned that [t]he record contains scant evidence to suggest that the predicted public benefit will be realized with any reasonable certainty" and that it was "impossible to determine whether future development of the area... will even benefit the public at all."

At this point, most legal commentators (myself included) believed that the case was almost certainly over. Few thought that the federal Supreme Court was going to take a public use case. Supreme Court precedent dating back to 1954 held that virtually any possible public benefit counts as a public use, and the Court had unanimously reaffirmed that view in 1984. Most experts thought that the debate over the meaning of "public use" had been definitively settled.

But Scott Bullock and Dana Berliner – the IJ lawyers who represented the property owners – thought the conventional wisdom was wrong. And they were vindicated when the Supreme Court unexpectedly agreed to take the case. At that point, much new national media attention was focused on the New London condemnations.

Property law experts were well aware that longstanding Supreme Court precedent permitted the government to take property for almost any reason. But very few members of the general public knew that. Many ordinary Americans were shocked to learn a city could condemn homes and small businesses in order to promote private development – a reality they were unaware of until the publicity surrounding *Kelo* drove it home to them.

The Supreme Court upheld the takings in a 5-4 ruling. But the resulting controversy created a major political backlash and shattered the seeming consensus in favor of a broad approach to public use.

As for the City of New London, Justice Zarella and other skeptics turned out to be right. The NLDC's flawed development plan fell through, as did a number of later efforts. Richard Palmer, one of the state supreme court justices who voted with the majority, later apologized to Susette Kelo, telling her he "would have voted differently" had he known what would happen.

Today, the condemned land still lies empty, though city officials now plan to build a memorial park honoring the victims of eminent domain, on the former site of Susette Kelo's house.

The former site of Susette Kelo's house – May 2014 (photo by Ilya Somin)

In the meantime, feral cats have been using the property. So far, at least, they have been the main local beneficiaries of the takings.

Feral cat near the former site of the Kelo house – March 2011 (photo by Jackson Kuhl)

NOTE: I should point out that the events in New London leading up to the Supreme Court case are the subject of an excellent earlier book by journalist Jeff Benedict. My book primarily focuses on the broader legal and policy issues raised by the *Kelo* case, which Benedict touched on only briefly. But I also cover the origins of the case in Chapter 1, and post-decision developments in New London in the Conclusion.

Ilya Somin is Professor of Law at George Mason University. His research focuses on constitutional law, property law, and popular political participation. He is the author of "The Grasping Hand: Kelo v. City of New London and the Limits of Eminent Domain" and "Democracy and Political Ignorance: Why Smaller Government Is Smarter."

Your Three. Videos
curated for you.