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Activities

Anatomy of a Landslide

Name: _____ Date: _____

A landslide can strike without warning and bury a neighborhood. Areas where terrain is steep and the weather is rainy are most at risk. In this Planet Diary activity, you'll explore the "anatomy" at one high-risk area.

Directions

- Begin with a look at La Conchita, California. Read the paragraph and look closely at the topographic map (Figure 2). Notice how close together the contour lines are in the blue and yellow area circled on the map. Answer Workspace questions 1 and 2.
- La Conchita was slammed by a landslide in 1995. Read the introduction, then scroll to Figures 3a and 3b. Click the pictures to enlarge them and read the descriptions. Then answer questions 3 and 4.
- Another landslide struck La Conchita in 2005. This one killed ten people. Read the introduction and scroll to Figure 9. Click the photo to enlarge it. Look at this close-up view. Answer question 5.
- What does the future hold for La Conchita? Read this conclusion, then answer the last question.
- Other parts of the country are at risk to landslides too. Check out this USGS collection of landslide photos. Are there any in your state?

Workspace

1. What information on the map suggests the landslide danger is high in the La Conchita region?

2. Form a hypothesis about why the landslide danger is high in La Conchita.

3. What do the colors (blue, yellow, and red) on the enlarged view of Figure 3b show?

4. Form a hypothesis about why heavy rainfall increases the landslide danger.

5. Describe what the pictures of the 2005 La Conchita landslide show.

6. What are the chances La Conchita will experience more landslides in the future? Why?

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