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We all know those combinations where two parts conjoined can create something even better. For example, what would peanut butter be without jelly? What would a baseball be without a mitt? What would High School Musical's dreamy Troy Bolton be without Gabriella? Okay, I'm pretty sure that would just make Troy single so maybe that one isn't as bad... But what would water conservation be without correct management? Even though we don't usually think about it, water conservation and management are two different ideas working together to achieve the common goal of saving our world's most important resource: water. Currently, out of all of the water that covers the earth, only 3% is freshwater. And out of that meager 3%, only 1% is actually accessible to humans. The rest is "locked up" in the polar icecaps. Whether the situation is local, national, or global, water conservation and water management work best when they're together.

Locally, the water management issues that we run into usually revolve around our most popular industry - agriculture. South Dakota's agricultural business is indisputably a successful economic resource and one of the state's proudest involvements. I mean I live in a town where there is a literal palace of corn. Now even though South Dakota farms are some of the most efficient and already incorporate techniques like no-till crops, they're not flawless. According to a 2013 report by the National Conference of State Legislatures, all states have a license requirement to obtain legal rights to create irrigation systems. States in the Midwest, though, are extremely liberal in comparison to the rest of the country when it comes to who is able to get a license and the amount of water each licensee can use annually. This seems logical considering the Midwest is primarily dominated by agricultural societies so the increased water usage is called for, but analyst James Madeiros reported in 2012 that this thinking to the extreme can actually be the problem. "Many states share a misconception that they are immune to water

shortages,” but even if South Dakota were fortunate enough to never have to worry about a water shortage, we would have to carry the burden of other states without as much water. Not only that, but if we continue to use the amount of water we do, it becomes a problem for those other states. Since agriculture already uses 75% of the world’s freshwater, we must use water conservation along with water management in order to keep the balance.

Nationally, water management and conservation can save money. Now we’ve all heard of the classic at-home water conservation: things like turning off the faucet when brushing your teeth or taking shorter showers. And we all know that this can save us money on water and utility bills. But according to The Colorado Water Conservation Board, businesses can see these monetary benefit on an even larger scale. Money saved in corporations is used to expand business, and that means more jobs and production put back into individual communities. America’s future economy lies in greener and more efficient technology. Businesses that incorporate conservation will help to conserve water now and be able to reap the economic benefits in the near future.

Globally, conserving and correctly distributing water is a moral obligation. In many of our lives, the most we’ve ever experienced is a dry year where crops suffer. But the lack of water in, say – California, is nothing compared to some countries. The Pacific Institutes reports of nearly 780 million people around the globe that lack access to basic water for drinking or bathing. GlobalIssues.org reports that 2.5 million people die annually from a lack of clean water. That’s almost 7,000 a day. Five people every minute. Now I understand that governments and nations can’t exactly run off morality, but not only is this simply the right thing to do, but the US can see benefits from it as well. The World Resources Institute reports that this is a perfect way to spread our idea of government. Because many of these countries are third-world areas, the

United States can make a big impact. Also, because we are a world power, we can lead the way for water conservation and management efforts. As Barbra Cher said, “an isolated country will get nowhere”. It is our country’s obligation to continue expanding our water management humanitarian efforts.

Together, water management and water conservation can save our money, our environment, and our people. Now that’s a pretty great combination.