ECONOMICS 151: economic and human geography

ASSIGNMENT 9

Answers to this assignment are due back by Wednesday, April 20. Please feel free to work together on the assignment, in groups of not more than three.

1. Short Essay

Answer one of the following. Some web searching will probably be needed, but it is essential that your answers be in your own words, and that you carefully cite all the sources of information that you use. Note: “Critically evaluate” means that you should evaluate with some degree of skepticism, but it is not the same as “criticize”, which has a more negative connotation. A one-page answer is enough.

   a. Fire

   Traditionally, the Forest Service has worked hard to prevent and extinguish forest fires. More recently it has changed its policy somewhat, allowing some fires to burn, and even initiating controlled burning. Discuss the pros and cons of a policy of actively suppressing forest fires. A good answer will need to consider both the ecological and economic effects.

   b. Buy Locally?

   It is sometimes argued that one should buy locally-grown food – be a locavore! – mainly because it requires less energy (to transport). Critically evaluate this argument.

   c. Fairtrade Coffee

   Many cafeterias sell Fairtrade coffee. What is Fairtrade coffee? What are the goals of the Fairtrade movement? Critically evaluate the impact of purchases of Fairtrade goods – i.e. if one buys Fairtrade goods, does this contribute to the stated goals of the movement?

2. Mastering Geography’

Do the Mastering Geography exercises associated with this assignment. [This is an interesting one!]