

Who Can Help?

Missouri Department of Natural Resources

St. Louis Regional Office - (314) 416-2960

St. Louis Urban Outreach Office - (314) 340-5900

Missouri Department of Conservation

St. Louis Regional Office - (636) 441-4554

Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center -

(314) 301-1500

Missouri Stream Team

1 (800) 781-1989 or www.mostreamteam.org

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service

(636) 922-2833, Ext 3 or (314) 453-9555, Ext 3

Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District

Office of Environmental Compliance

(314) 436-8715

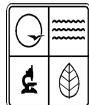
Your Local City or County Government or County Soil & Water Conservation District

East-West Gateway Council of Governments Water Resources Advisory Committee

(314) 421-4220 or (618) 274-2750

www.ewgateway.org

Region VII, US Environmental Protection Agency, through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, has provided partial funding for this project under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.



Missouri Department
of Natural Resources



Clean Water!

Everyone Lives in a Watershed

How Can We Protect and
Manage the Watersheds
Where We Live?

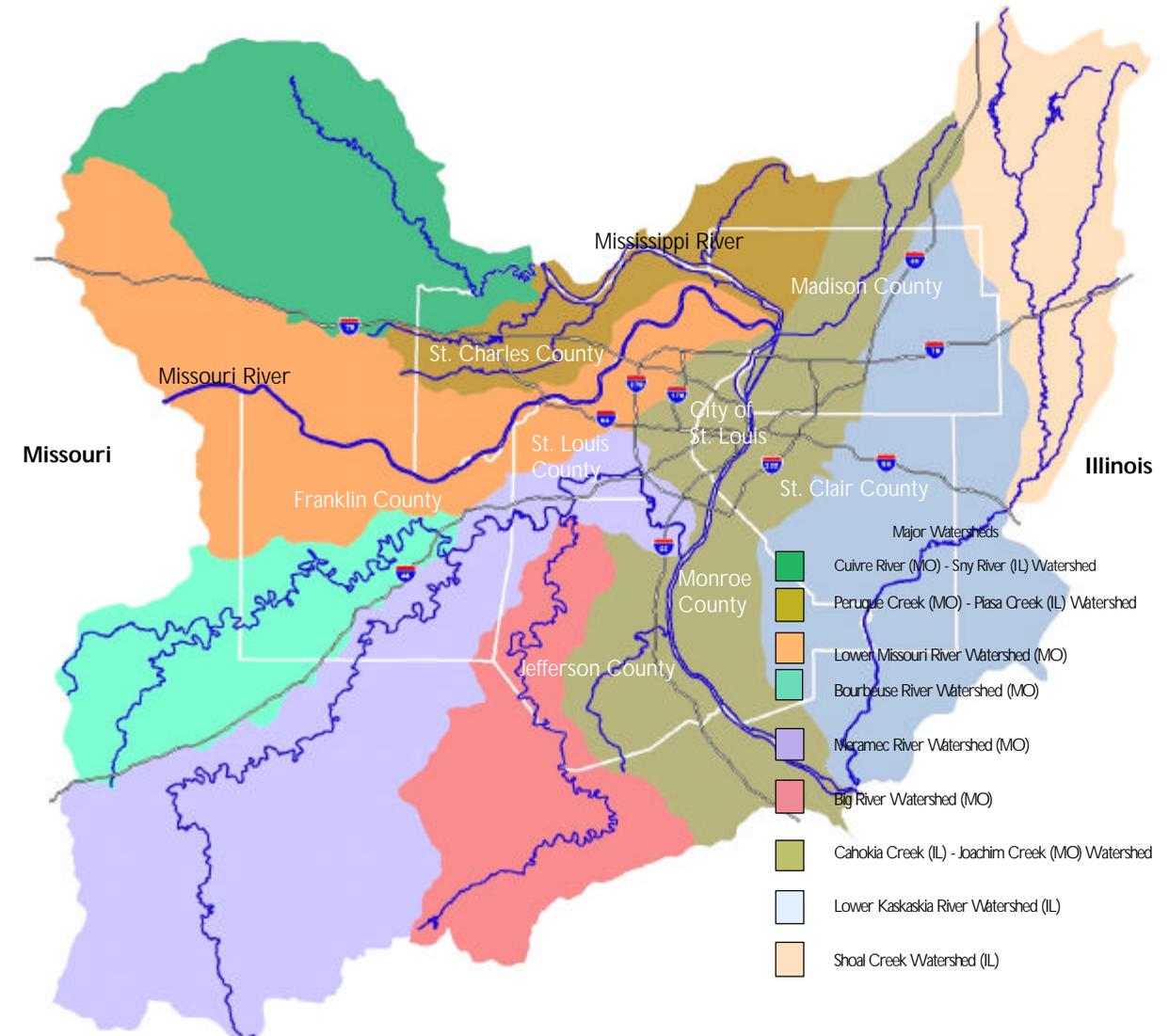


Water Resources
Advisory Committee



EAST-WEST GATEWAY
Council of Governments

Watersheds in the St. Louis Region



There are nine major watersheds in the St. Louis Region. Nested within these watersheds are smaller watersheds, often referred to as subwatersheds. All of these watersheds drain into the Missouri River or the Mississippi River.

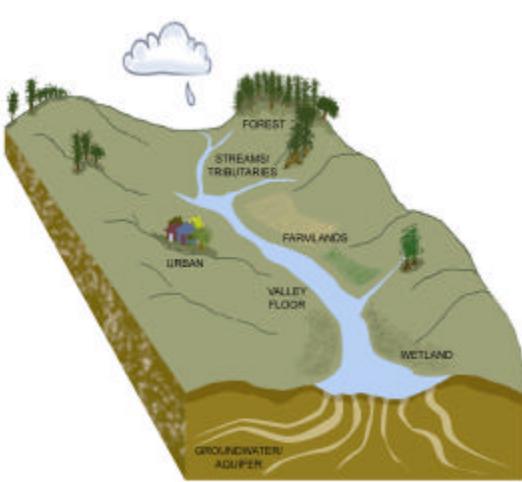
What is a Watershed?

A watershed is an area of land where the runoff from rain and snow will ultimately drain to a particular stream, river, wetland or other body of water.

Watersheds can be as big as the Mississippi River watershed which drains 1,245,000 square miles and 33 states, or as small as the land that drains to a creek in your backyard.

Healthy watersheds provide plentiful drinking water supplies, habitat for fish and wildlife and water for irrigation, industry or recreational activities. Without clean water supplies our society would be radically changed from what it is today.

Standards for a healthy watershed are easily defined by “yes” answers to two important questions. Is the stream or river clean enough for a person to swim? Is the stream or river clean enough for fish to thrive?



Why Care About Watersheds?

Water has been recycled throughout the ages. The quality and quantity of water is always at risk. Activities which disturb the land affect the quality of water in a watershed. Changes in land use which increase pavement and rooftops — called impervious surfaces — increase runoff volume and velocity causing flooding and erosion. Impervious surfaces prevent water from soaking into the ground and replenishing groundwater. In addition, careless household activities can have an impact on water quality.

Nonpoint source pollution is caused by storm-water runoff (or snowmelt) picking up natural and human-made pollutants and bacteria as it flows across streets, parking lots, lawns and agricultural areas. Unchecked nonpoint source pollution degrades our lakes and streams, making it difficult for fish and other aquatic organisms to thrive. Increased runoff can also cause stream channel alteration, ecological damage and damage to roads, bridges and personal property.

Therefore, watershed protection is good business. Preventing adverse impacts is more effective and cost efficient than repairing damage after it occurs.

What is Watershed Management?

Few communities are alone in a watershed. They are affected by activities of neighboring towns or counties — upstream or downstream, uphill or downhill — in a common watershed. A watershed approach brings diverse interests and resources together to solve common problems.

Local officials can do much to protect their water resources by considering the location, extent, drainage and maintenance of impervious surfaces. These issues should be considered at the watershed, community and individual site levels. Natural resource-based planning, low impact site design and the use of best management practices, i.e. conserving natural areas, form an effective three-tiered approach to solving watershed problems.

A watershed approach depends on communication between interrelated natural resource and development issues. Proper watershed management involves all affected groups and crosses jurisdictional boundaries. The process ensures decisions that address all concerns and promotes support from everyone.

What Governments Can Do

New stormwater regulations established under the Clean Water Act promote practices that ensure good watershed stewardship and will help to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Local governments subject to the regulations are required to: provide public education; encourage public involvement; eliminate illegal and polluting discharges into streams; control construction site runoff; promote planning for watershed protection; and prevent pollution from municipal operations.

What You Can Do At Home

- Reduce fertilizer and pesticide use and lawn watering — environmentally friendly yard practices protect water resources.

- Reduce water use in the home — simple leak repairs and other conservation measures save water and money.
- Reduce impervious surfaces on your property where possible.
- Properly dispose of cleaning products, used motor oil, antifreeze and paint (called household hazardous wastes or HHW) and use less toxic alternatives.
- Collect and dispose of trash and pet waste properly.
- Keep litter, pet waste, yard waste and HHW out of the street, storm drains and streams or rivers. Water in a storm drain goes directly to streams and rivers without being treated.
- Practice proper septic tank management. Inspect and empty tank on a regular basis.

And In Your Community

- Be an advocate for your water resources in local planning efforts.
- Participate in Stream Teams, HHW pickup days and other water friendly activities.
- Support community organizations and events that protect water resources.
- Share your environmental knowledge with your neighbors.