

Do You Live in a WATERSHED?

You do—we all do!

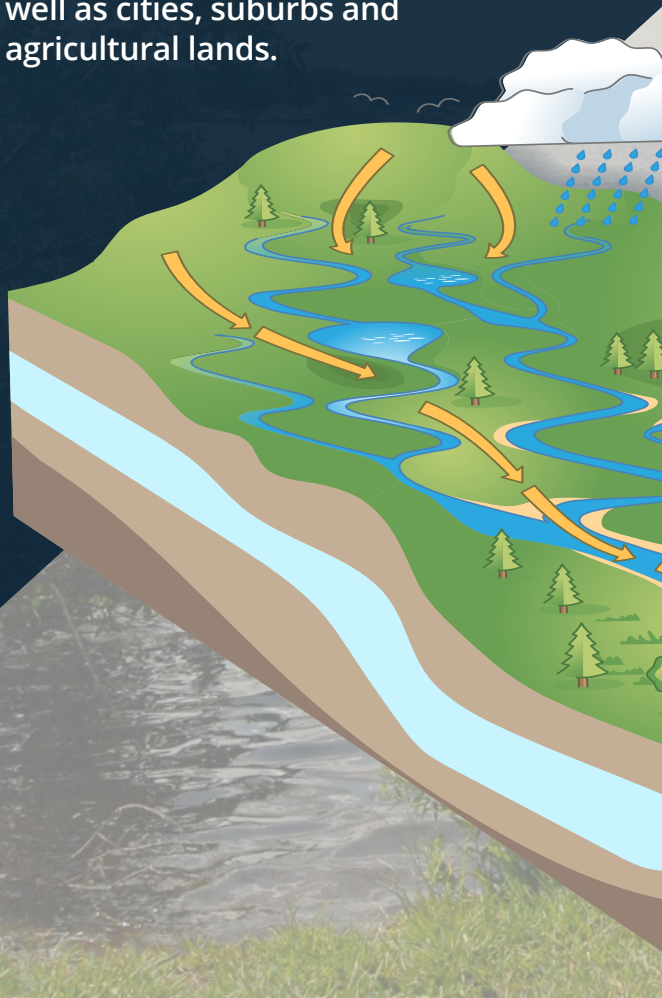
Learn how to protect yours.

Southwest Florida
Water Management District



What is a Watershed?

A watershed is an area of land that water flows across as it moves toward a common body of water, such as a stream, river, lake or coast. It can also be described as a land area from which water drains or “sheds” into a larger body of water. Watersheds can be very large, draining thousands of square miles to a major body of water, or very small, draining a few acres to a small pond. Watersheds may contain open fields, forests and wetlands, as well as cities, suburbs and agricultural lands.



Why Should You Care About Your Watershed?

Rainwater doesn't just disappear—it flows downhill, picking up whatever is on the ground along the way. This runoff carries pollution like fertilizers, oil, litter and pet waste into storm drains and eventually into our waterways.

Everything we do on land can affect the health of our water. The health of your watershed affects water quality, wildlife habitat and recreation. Polluted runoff harms fish, birds and other wildlife. It also affects swimming, fishing and drinking water.



Simple Ways to Protect Your Watershed

By making small changes at home, you can protect your watershed and help keep Florida's water clean and healthy.

- **Use fertilizers properly.** Follow local fertilizer ordinances and never fertilize before heavy rain.
- **Pick up after pets.** Always dispose of pet waste properly.
- **Use pesticides carefully.** Only use them when necessary and follow label directions.
- **Keep your yard Florida-friendly.** Plant native or drought-tolerant plants to reduce the need for water and chemicals.
- **Maintain your septic system.** Regularly inspect and pump it to prevent leaks.
- **Dispose of chemicals properly.** Take paints, oils and other hazardous waste to collection centers.
- **Reduce runoff.** Direct downspouts into gardens or grassy areas, not driveways or streets.
- **Join a cleanup.** Help remove trash from your local waterways.

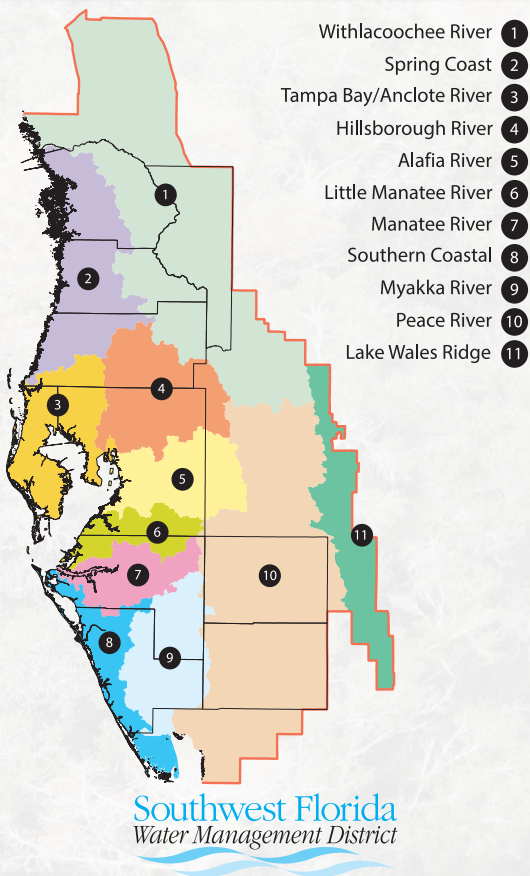


Learn More About Your Watershed

The District works to manage and restore watersheds across west-central Florida. Explore interactive maps, find tips and learn about many major watersheds in the region.

Visit: WaterMatters.org/Watersheds

Major Watersheds of the Southwest Florida Water Management District



WaterMatters.org

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This document complies with WCAG 2.1 AA Standards