

Ripple Effect Water Minute #1 – What is a Watershed?

No matter where you are, you are in a watershed. The term watershed refers to the geographic boundaries of a particular water body, its ecosystem and the land that drains to it. A watershed also includes groundwater aquifers that discharge to and receive discharge from streams, wetlands, ponds and lakes.

Rivers and lakes don't stop at a state border, and neither does a watershed. Large watersheds are sometimes referred to as river basins. The Red River Basin stretches from northeastern South Dakota and west-central Minnesota northward through eastern North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota into southern Manitoba. It ends where the Red River empties into the southern end of Lake Winnipeg.

You are part of the watershed community. You influence what happens in your watershed, good or bad, by how you treat the natural resources. What happens in your small watershed also affects the larger watershed downstream. Always consider the “ripple effect” of your actions, everything you do in your watershed impacts others!

This Ripple Effect water minute is brought to you by the Red River Basin Commission.