



# Studying Watersheds

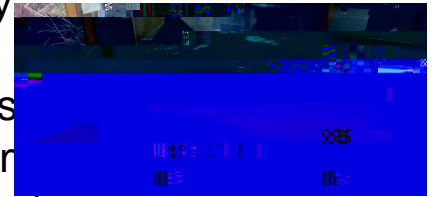
A watershed is an area of land where rainwater and snowmelt flows to a central point like a lake, river, or stream, and from there to the ocean. The boundary of a watershed is determined by the landscape, such as hills or mountain ridges. Every piece of land on Earth is in a watershed.

Rainwater and snowmelt pick up and carry whatever is on the land—such as trash, exposed soil, or pollution—to the nearest body of water. What happens upstream influences the water quality downstream.

Watch a video to learn more about watersheds:

[pbslearningmedia.org/resource/ket09.sci.ess.water.wshed/water-watershed/](https://pbslearningmedia.org/resource/ket09.sci.ess.water.wshed/water-watershed/)

At the UA Museum of the North, researchers study animals and plants that live in Alaska watersheds and how humans have used watersheds in the past and today. They collect specimens and objects from across the state, and investigate how our watersheds have changed over time.



Chinook Salmon model at UAMN

NASA scientists use satellites, rockets, balloons, planes, and other interconnected processes can help researchers make predictions about climate, weather patterns, and