

# WHAT'S YOUR WATERSHED ADDRESS?

Objective: To define the limits of your watershed and determine your watershed address.

Materials: Magic marker (fine point)  
Watershed map for your geographic location

What type of area do you live in? Are you city-dwellers, suburbanites or country folk?

We all live on terra firma (solid land) and whether our home is in an urban, suburban, or rural area, we have one thing in common: we need a source of fresh water.

What is a watershed?

A watershed (catchment or drainage basin) is the area of land from which rain and melting snow drain into a river, stream, or other body of water. Besides lakes, rivers, streams and other surface waters, watersheds include all the water that soaks into the ground and becomes part of groundwater. This water is what we use every day for drinking cooking, cleaning and everything else. It is important for us to know exactly where that water comes from!

Large watersheds are made up of smaller watersheds. The above map of the Chesapeake Bay watershed is made of many smaller watersheds, such as; the Potomac watershed—our watershed.

On the next page you will find a map of the major surface waters of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Use this map to answer the following questions.

1. Locate and label the Chesapeake Bay.
2. The second largest river that drains into the Chesapeake Bay is the Potomac River. Locate and label the Potomac River.  
\* Depending upon your school's location, have students locate other large Chesapeake Bay tributaries that they should also know.
3. Locate the mouth of the Potomac River and on the north shore of the mouth place a point and label this Point Lookout. On the southern shore place a point and label this Smith Point.
4. Dot-to-Dot: Outline the area that makes up the Potomac watershed by connecting the dots for Point Lookout and Smith Point. The shortest distance to connect the dots would be to draw a line across the mouth of the Potomac. But to outline the watershed connect the two dots by drawing one continuous line over land without crossing any water (black lines.)
5. Place a star on the map to represent the location of Washington, DC.  
\* Have students locate other large cities nearby that they should also know.
7. Once again observe the map on page three and the graphic at the top of page 1 and list the states found in the Potomac watershed.
8. Author Tom Horton suggests that “virtually no one in a watershed lives more than half a mile, about a 15 minute walk, from a stream.” (*Turning the Tide*, p. 59) Using what you now know about your watershed, describe your watershed address by listing the stream, creek, or river located nearest your home or school.



