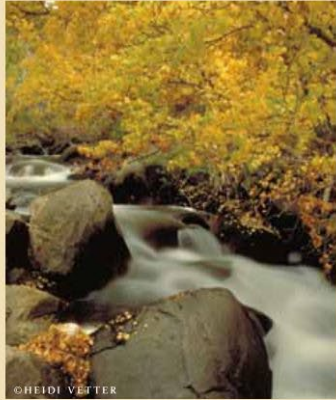


What is a Watershed?

A watershed is where a drop of water would flow from the top of a ridge down to the lowest point, where it joins together with water from other watersheds. Water flows from small streams to larger streams and rivers. It doesn't care about county or city lines, as it follows the path of least resistance to its final destination, the ocean.

Maintaining clean water within a watershed is of concern to everyone. Water is an important commodity to all living organisms. Although it appears as if we will never run out of water, 97% of the earth's water is salt water which is unusable. Only 3% is fresh and of this 3%, two-thirds is locked up as ice and is unusable. **Only 1% of all water on the planet is available for us to use.**

Since only pure water evaporates, pollution is left behind. Even though this pollution does not enter our water cycle, it is still present in our streams, rivers and oceans. For this reason, we must be concerned with what we put into our water systems.



To read *Watersmarts - A Homeowner's Guide to Mountain Ground Water*, go to www.co.jefferson.co.us/jeffco/planning_uploads/water_ed/water_smarts_print.pdf

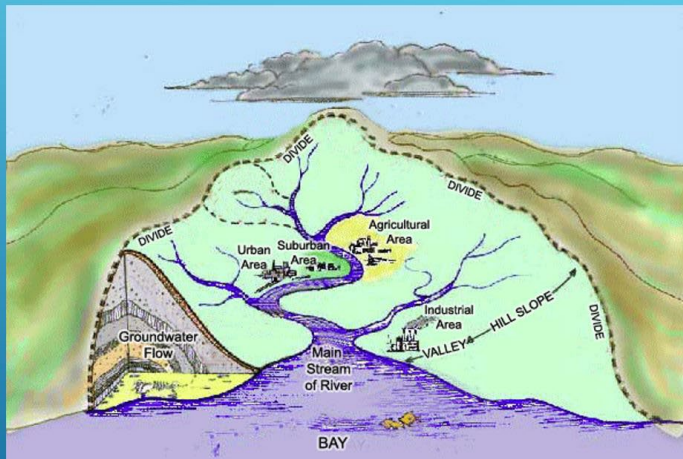
Where does your water come from?

As precipitation falls to the Earth, it remains on the surface, evaporates or seeps into the ground. Surface water includes lakes, rivers and reservoirs. Water beneath the land surface that is not held in the soil is called groundwater. Rain and snow are the principal sources of groundwater in the mountains.

Beneath the surface layers of soil is a thick bed of hard rock. The bedrock is full of cracks or fractures, created over millions of years. Water collects in some of these cracks and, if the fractures are connected, passes through. A well may access one of these water-filled fractures and provide water. These cracks may not refill with water as quickly as it is used. When this happens, wells go dry.

Water is a precious commodity and it is important to use it wisely for the sake of everyone.

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?



A watershed is the "area of land" where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes into a common waterway, such as a stream, lake, river, etc. and/or ultimately to the ocean. Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes; and cross county, state, and national boundaries. Everyone lives in a watershed!

Watersheds of Eastern Madera County



LEGEND	
	COMMUNITIES
	MAJOR LAKES
	MAJOR ROADS
	MAJOR WATERSHEDS