Lake Mendocino
Ukiah
Clear Lake
Cloverdale
Mt. St. Helena
Healdsburg
Guerneville
Windsor
Monte Rio
Forestville
Occidental
Jenner
Graton
Santa Rosa
Sebastopol
Bodega Bay
Rohnert Park
Petaluma

Russian River
WATERSHED

What is a watershed?

A watershed is all the land area that delivers runoff to a specific body of water. From its high ridges to its low valleys, it is a catch basin. A watershed is a living system, which includes all the biological and physical factors contained within its boundaries. There are watersheds within watersheds, creating smaller sub-watersheds.

Why learn about watersheds?

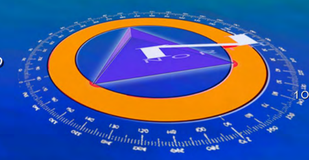
· Your watershed is a community, an interconnected web of life that shares water. The people in your watershed make important decisions about the health of your community.
· The boundaries of your watershed from ridge to ridge, and the land within them from the uplands to the mouth of the waterway create a basin or container. It is in this basin of relations that we decide how we care for the water of our community. Exploring and knowing about our watershed helps us care for and understand our home and gives us a sense of place.
· All organisms need water to live. Water cycles food, nutrients and energy through ecosystems, thus linking everything to everything else. With clean water, communities thrive.

· In exploring and getting to know your local place, you will find new ways of creating a healthier watershed community. You might ask yourself some questions about your watershed:

1. Where does my water come from, and where does it go?
2. Where do I live in my watershed? (Create a map of the watershed.)
3. How clean is my water? How is my water being polluted? Who's polluting it?
4. Who lives in my watershed? (Include the plants and animals.)
5. What helps my water stay in my watershed? What makes water leave my watershed too fast?
6. Is water pumped out of or into my watershed? Are there water diversions in my watershed? (What's my water budget?)

As you re-story your watershed:

Create poetry about your watershed
Have a watershed perspective
Have watershed moments
Think like a watershed
And remember:
We all live downstream



For more information about this map and the Russian River Watershed, contact:

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Friends of the Russian River – www.envirocentersoco.org/forr
Russian Riverkeeper – www.russianriverkeeper.org
Russian River Watershed Protection Committee – www.envirocentersoco.org/rrwpc
Sonoma County Water Agency – www.scwa.ca.gov
Water Institute, Occidental Arts and Ecology Center
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