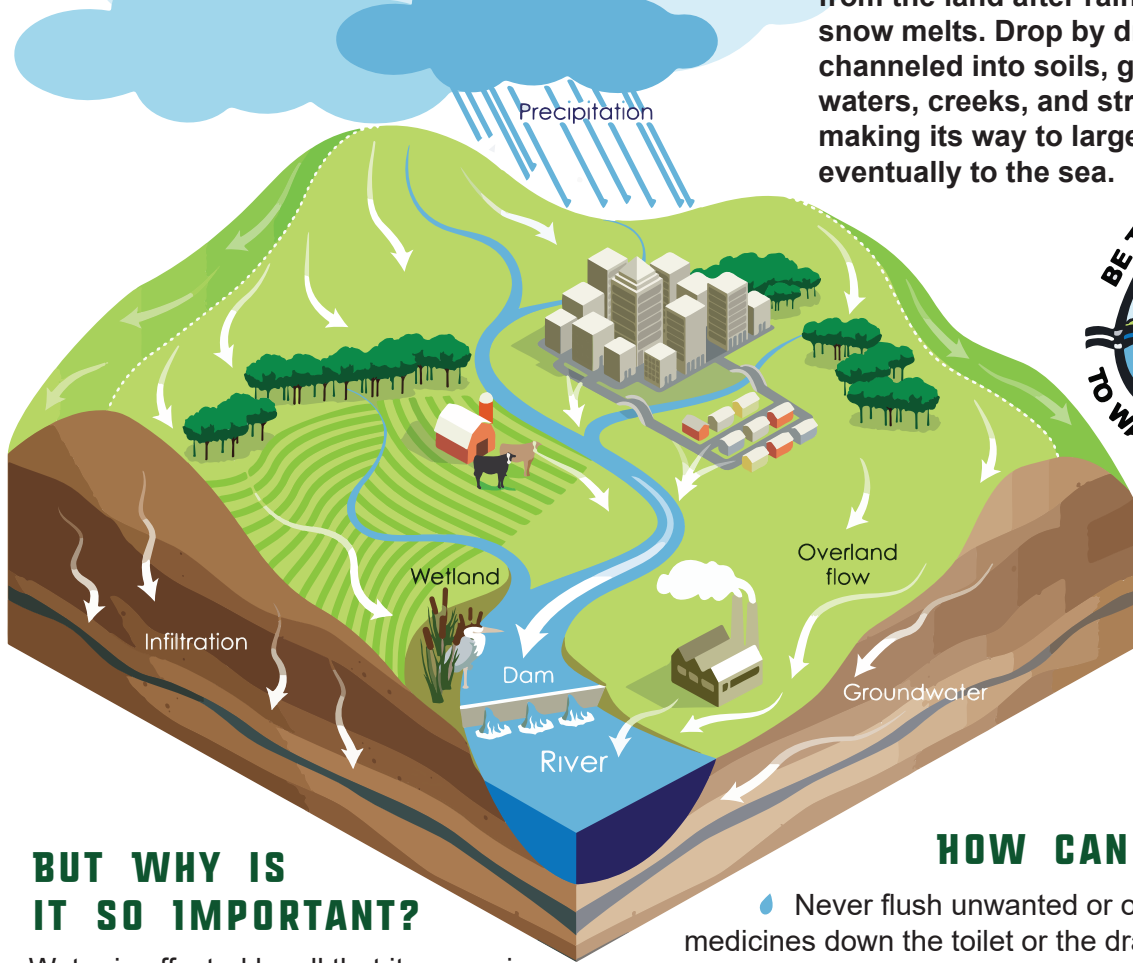


## WHAT IS A WATERSHED?



A watershed is a basin-like landform defined by highpoints and ridgelines that descend into lower elevations and stream valleys. A watershed carries water "shed" from the land after rain falls and snow melts. Drop by drop, water is channeled into soils, ground waters, creeks, and streams making its way to larger rivers and eventually to the sea.



### BUT WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

Water is affected by all that it comes in contact with: the land and soils which it travels. The most important thing about watersheds is that what we do on and to the land affects water quality for all communities living downstream. A watershed isn't just a small area or limited to bodies of water. It is a large area consisting of land, buildings, farms, homes, roads, bodies of water, and more! A watershed is a lot like a funnel, sending stormwater runoff through the area and ultimately into large body of water. For Nitro, our runoff ultimately goes into Ridenour Lake and the Kanawha River.

Clean and safe water is the most valuable and needed resource for life not only for humans but also for wildlife, aquatic life, and our environment. Plus, we like to swim, fish, and kayak in these bodies of water.

### HOW CAN I HELP?

- Never flush unwanted or out-of-date medicines down the toilet or the drain. Find out if your city has a site or program to collect unwanted pharmaceuticals.
- Don't put anything except water down storm drains. These drains are there to carry storm water to our local waterways.
- Pick up after your pets. Like other contaminants, pet waste can run down the storm drains, spreading bacteria.
- Easy with the concrete. The more paved areas there are, the more rain water will run to storm drains, picking up pollutants instead of soaking into the ground.
- Planting native plants allows more water to soak into the ground can help prevent flooding, recharge groundwater supplies, and dilute contaminants.
- Avoid using harmful pesticides or chemical fertilizers and never apply them right before a rain storm.
- Fix leaks that drip from your car and put down a liner in your driveway to collect oil and other materials.