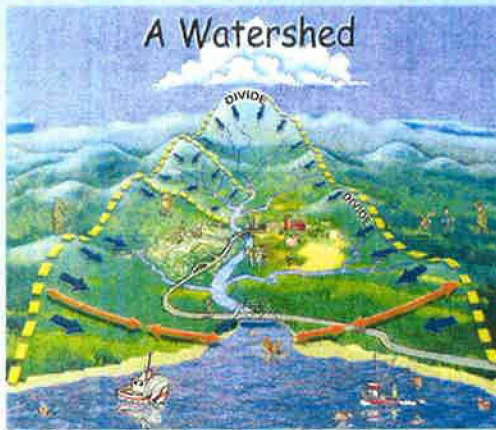


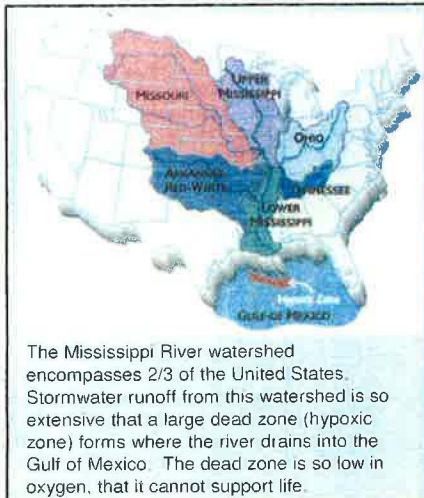
Rhode Island Watersheds

What is a Watershed?

A watershed, or drainage basin, is the area of land and all waterways that drains into a particular body of water. All rainfall and melting snow travel to the nearest waterbody that lies at the lowest point of a watershed.



Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. They can be as small as a footprint or large enough to encompass multiple states. Everyone lives in a watershed, and most are interconnected, eventually draining to the ultimate water bodies – the bays or oceans. There are about 14 different watersheds in Rhode Island, each named for the body of water that they drain into (i.e. Hunt River Watershed).



The Mississippi River watershed encompasses 2/3 of the United States. Stormwater runoff from this watershed is so extensive that a large dead zone (hypoxic zone) forms where the river drains into the Gulf of Mexico. The dead zone is so low in oxygen, that it cannot support life.

