

A watershed in my backyard

You may not live near a lake, reservoir, river, stream, or pond, but everyone lives in a watershed. A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is under it, or drains off of it, goes to a common outlet point. The common outlet point is a lake or pond overflow, mouth of a river, or any point along a stream or river. To make it simple, a watershed is the area of land that catches precipitation and drains or seeps into a marsh, stream, river, lake or groundwater. Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes; they cross city, rural water district, county, state, and national boundaries.

What watershed do you live in?

Watersheds are delineated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) using a nationwide system based on the surface hydrological characteristics. These areas are called Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC).

The first level of classification is dividing the nation into

regions. There are 21 regions in the United States. Two of these regions are located in Kansas. Region 10 is the Missouri Region and Region 11 is the Arkansas-White-Red Region.

The second level of classification is divided into sub-regions. The Kansas subregions in the Missouri Region are: Upper Republican, Solomon, Smokey

Hill-Saline, Kansas-Lower Republican, Missouri, and Marias des Cygnes. The subregions on the Arkansas – White – Red are: Upper Arkansas, Cimarron, Lower Arkansas, Walnut, Neosho and Verdigris.

unit. The cataloging unit is a geographic area representing part of all a surface drainage basin. There are approximately 2,150 cataloging units in the United States. The cataloging units are called watersheds. The HUC gives each watershed an 8-digit number

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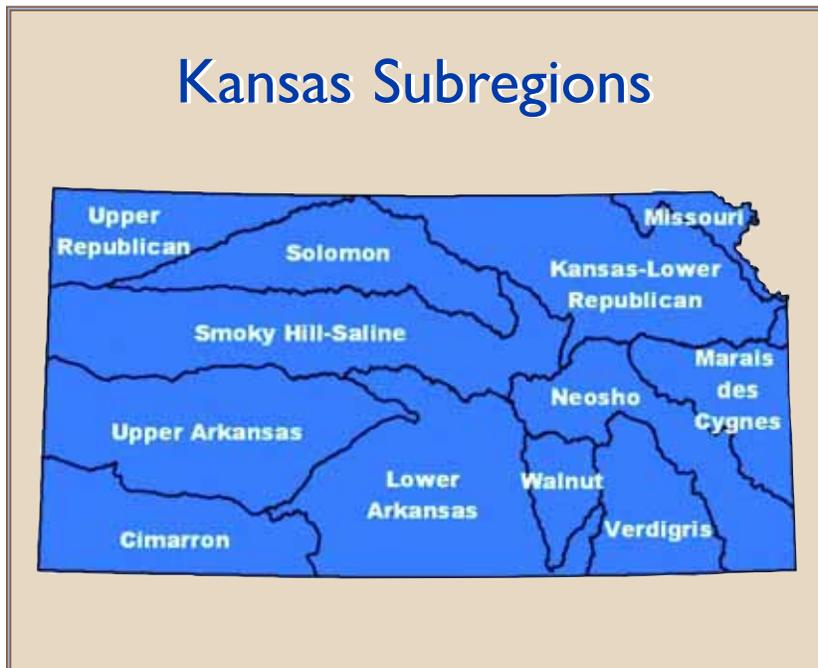
The third level of classification subdivides many of the subregions into accounting units. These accounting units are located within the subregions.

The fourth level of classification is the cataloging

according to each level of division. To find your watershed address, you can “Surf Your Watershed” on EPA’s Web site at www.epa.gov/surf. Click on “Locate Your Watershed.” An 8-digit HUC is divided even into



Jim Jackson
Source Water Tech



Looking at the 12 subregions that are located in Kansas. Notice how all but two cross state lines.

smaller 11-digit HUC watersheds, which are further divided into 14-digit HUC watersheds.

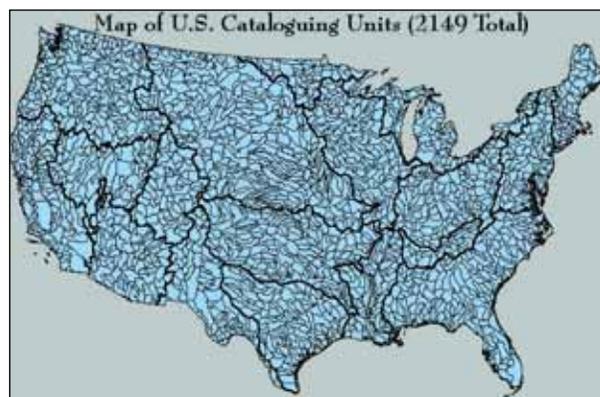
Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS)

A Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy is a planning process to identify all the water quality protection and restoration needs of a watershed. The WRAPS serves to integrate TMDL implementation, water quality restoration, water quality protection, Source Water

members and staff to interface with the general public, learn about common questions, and bring citizens on board as partners in improving public water supplies and services. Melissa Arthur, Coordinator of Statewide Water Celebration and Program Development with the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE), will be presenting during KRWA Annual Conference on March 29 at 1:30 pm in Room

Source Water Protection Plans

The City of Lyons Source Water Protection Plan was approved during the December 5 Lyons City Council meeting. The following water systems will have their plans approved in the near future: City of Eudora, Franklin RWD 6, City of White City, City of St Paul, and City of Mankato. All of these systems are commended for all work and effort in developing Source Water Protection Plans. Each plan



Protection and Wellhead Protection activities required under the Safe Drinking Water Act and habitat restoration and protection activities. Learn how your water system can get involved. Ron Graber, a Watershed Specialist from Kansas State Research and Extension, will present during the KRWA Annual Conference. His sessions will be at 10:45 a.m. in Room 210B on Wednesday, March 29. Plan to attend to learn more about WRAPS.

Improving public water systems through water celebrations

A water celebration is an educational, interactive, and fun event that will increase awareness and appreciation of local water resources and issues. These events provide a rare opportunity for water RWD board or city council

209B. This session will outline the benefits of water celebrations to public water systems, as well as the financial and technical resources available to help organize local events.

I have participated in several of these in conjunction with public water supply systems in the past year. They are fun and both adults and youngsters can and do learn a lot from them. If you would like to discuss how to organize one, contact KRWA at 785/336-3760 and I'll be in touch.

Another session which is related to this topic will be presented on Wednesday, March 29 in Room 210 C. "Ground Water Protection Using Groundwater Guardian" by Rachael Herpel of The Groundwater Foundation, Lincoln, Neb. KRWA has long been a supporter of the Foundation.

Above left: The first level of classification for dividing the United States into 21 regions is for watershed identification. The Missouri Region is number 10 and the Arkansas Region is number 11.

Above right: Pictured are the total watersheds located throughout the lower 48 states. There are approximately 90 watersheds located in Kansas based on the 8-digit HUC.

required an abundance of time and dedication for the voluntary project. If your system is interested in developing a Source Water Protection Plan please give KRWA a call.

Again, I look forward to seeing you at the KRWA conference. There's no better opportunity to see so much and attend so many sessions anywhere – and have a good time doing it.