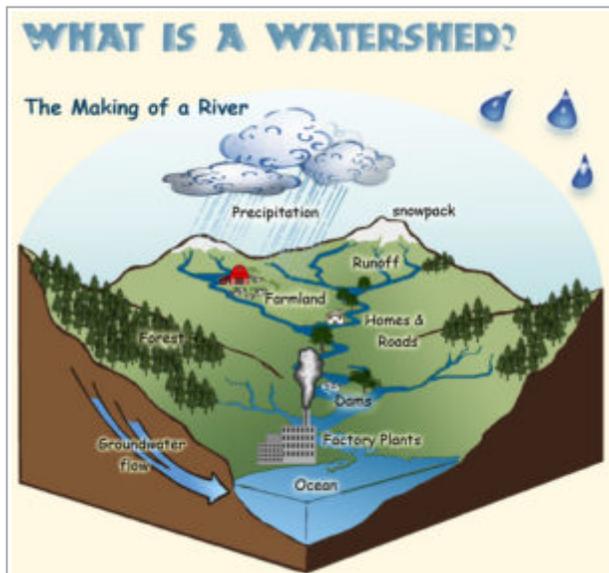


What is the Pine River Watershed Management Plan?

Posted on Wednesday, July 12th, 2017 and is filed under [News](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.



**By Julie Spencer
Gratiot Conservation
District Administrator**

Because of the challenges in the Pine River, there has been a lot of discussion in the community regarding watershed management planning. But what does that really mean?

Water doesn't know where the county line is, nor where the township ends and the city begins. Water flows where it wants to flow, and that is usually downhill. That's why

it's important to conduct planning activities at the watershed level rather than at the municipal level.

A watershed is all the land that flows downhill to a common water body, the two most noticeable in Gratiot County being the Pine River and Rainbow lake. The Pine River has gotten a great deal of attention in recent years because of several pollution sources. Identifying those pollution sources has been the main goal of those who have conducted water quality testing. It is difficult to fix a problem if it's unclear where the problem starts.

The Gratiot Conservation District, together with local concerned citizens and professors from Alma College, is working with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) to obtain an approved watershed management plan. The process is long and tedious but important.

The watershed management plan is a document that shows a description of what is currently happening in the watershed and what needs to be done to improve the watershed. The plan explains causes and sources of pollution, solutions to address those problems and maps out a plan to implement those changes.

After obtaining an approved watershed management plan, the next step is to locate funding to implement the identified changes. But first the plan needs to be written. The Gratiot Conservation District continues to apply for funding sources to make that happen.

Working together, positive changes can be made to improve the Pine River Watershed.