

Initial Watershed Assessment: The Monongahela River Basin

Pittsburgh District, US Army Corps of Engineers

West Virginia/Pennsylvania
Monongahela Area Watersheds Compact
January 5, 2010

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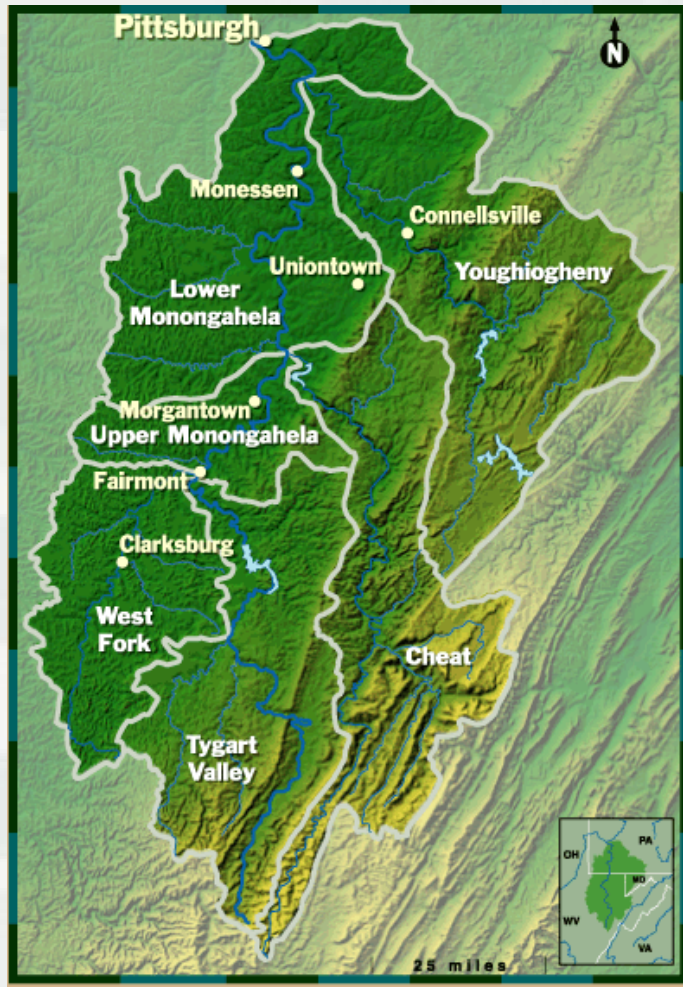


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Monongahela River Basin Overview



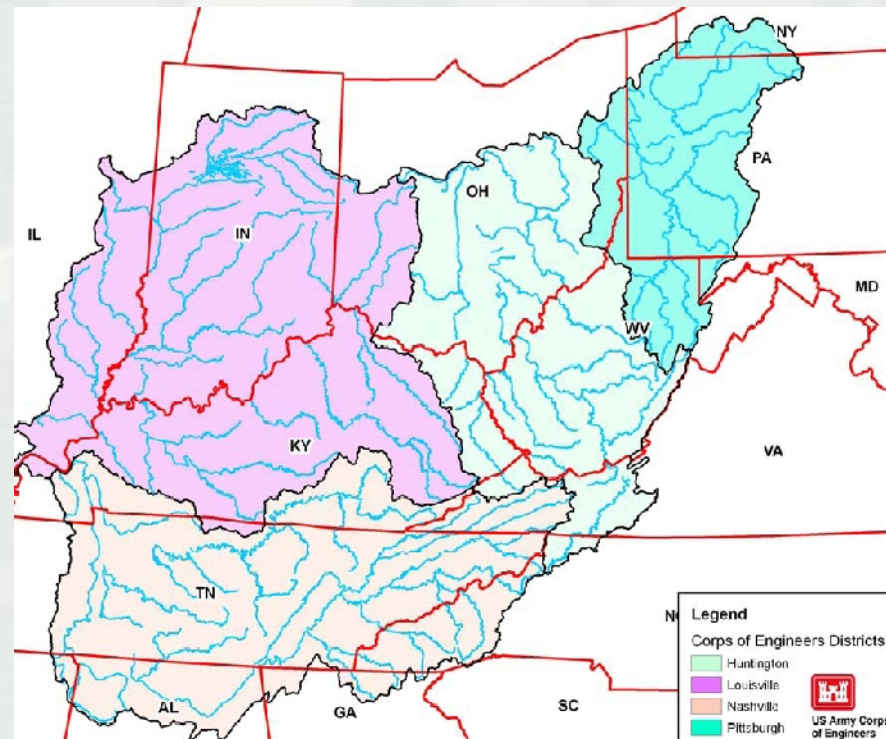
- Monongahela Watershed:
 - 7,340 square miles
 - covers portions of PA, WV and MD
- Six sub-basins within the Mon:
 - Lower Monongahela,
 - Upper Monongahela,
 - Youghiogheny,
 - West Fork,
 - Tygart and
 - Cheat
- An Initial Watershed Assessment has the potential to be the first step in developing a “watershed plan” for the Monongahela Basin
- Some areas of concern already identified:
 - Water Quality,
 - Public Awareness,
 - Recreation, Wildlife Habitat,
 - Natural Resource Extraction, Regulations



Initial Watershed Assessment Study Background

www.orboutreach.com

- Ohio River Basin Comprehensive (ORBC) Reconnaissance Report
 - ▶ December 2009
- Joint Watershed Study
 - ▶ Pittsburgh,
 - ▶ Huntington,
 - ▶ Louisville and
 - ▶ Nashville
- Ohio River Basin:
 - ▶ covers portions of 15 states
 - ▶ 204,000 square miles
- Public Outreach
 - ▶ concerns for the region's future
 - ▶ concerns about the state of water/land resources in the basin
- Recommendations:
 - ▶ Sub-basin level watershed assessments



Identified Basin-Wide Problems

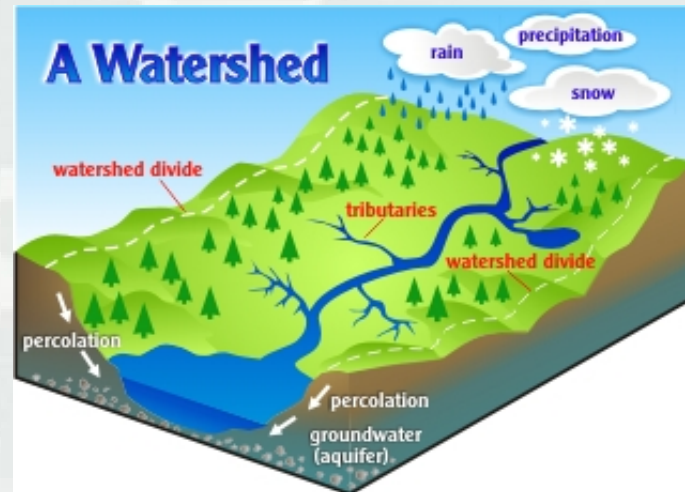
- Water quality/Water supply
- Aquatic ecosystem deterioration
- Infrastructure sustainability
- Recurring flood damages/floodplain management
- Stormwater management
- Land development practices
- Nutrient loading/sedimentation
- Reservoir operations
- Invasive species



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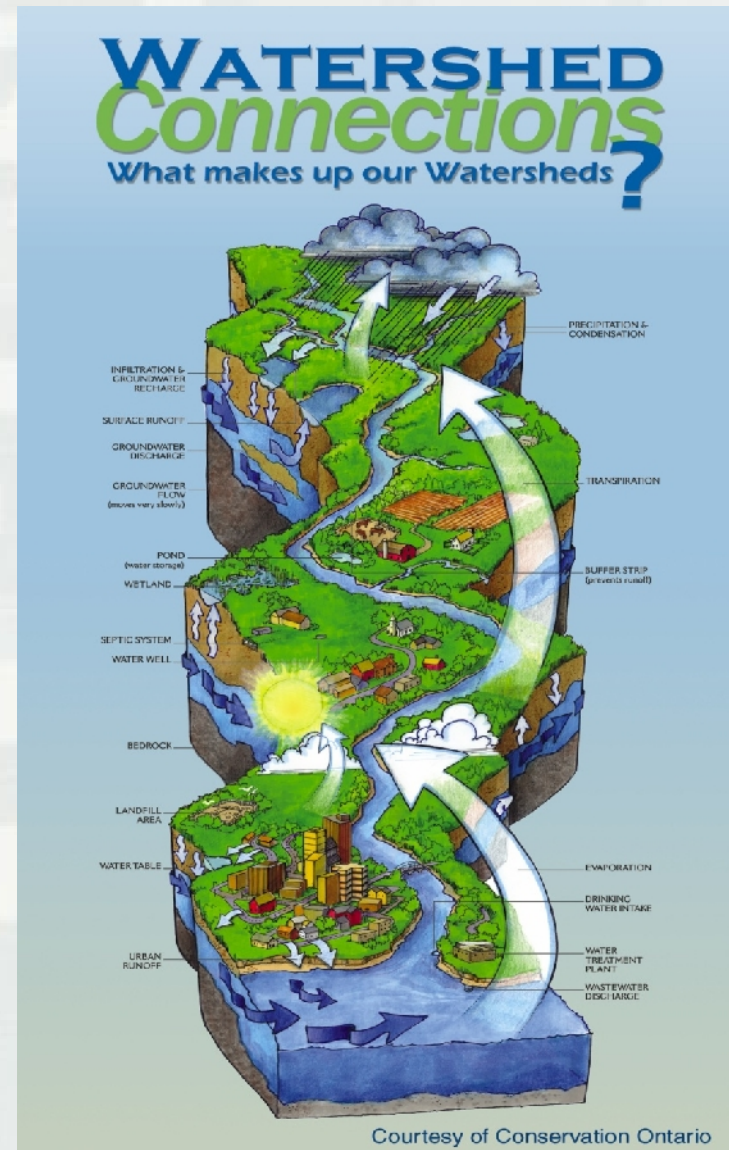
Watershed Planning Defined

- *Watershed planning* is an approach for managing water resources within specified drainage areas and addresses problems in a holistic manner that reflects the interdependency of water uses, competing demands and the desires of a wide range of stakeholders in addressing watershed problems and opportunities.
- Watershed planning addresses problems, needs, opportunities within a watershed/regional context and results in broader and more integrated planning.
- Ultimate goal is a watershed plan with general plans or strategies for addressing problems.



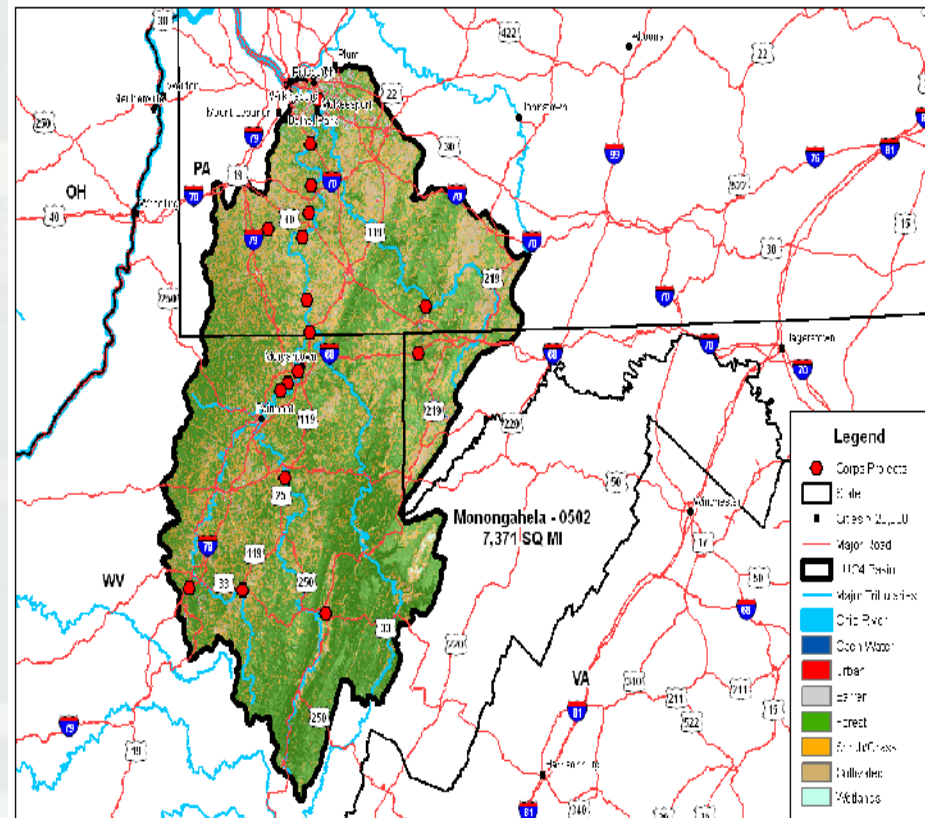
Why Use a Watershed Approach?

- Previously Corps has focused on problem solving/decision making for specific sites and projects
- Corps now recognizes the need to undertake planning in a broader, integrated systems context (instead of focusing on single purpose projects)
- Work collaboratively with a broad range of stakeholders to help solve water resources problems in an integrated and sustainable manner
- Addresses water resource needs from any source in the watershed and provides a joint vision of a desired end state
 - ▶ includes potential solutions regardless of agency responsibilities
- Public involvement is essential to the success of watershed planning



Initial Watershed Assessment Status

- ✓ Define the Study Area
- Identify Problems and Opportunities~
In progress
 - ▶ Next step is public outreach to assist in identification of problems and opportunities in the watershed
 - ▶ Plan on having a stakeholder meeting for watershed groups and resource agencies to voice their concerns in the watershed
- Inventory (*In progress*) and Forecast Conditions
 - ▶ If we generate interest, also searching for a non-federal partner
- Future Studies (Final Watershed Assessment):
 - ▶ Evaluate and Compare Alternative Approaches to Improving, Managing, or Protecting Watershed
 - ▶ Select Strategy for Improving, Managing, or Protecting the Watershed



Questions or Comments?

