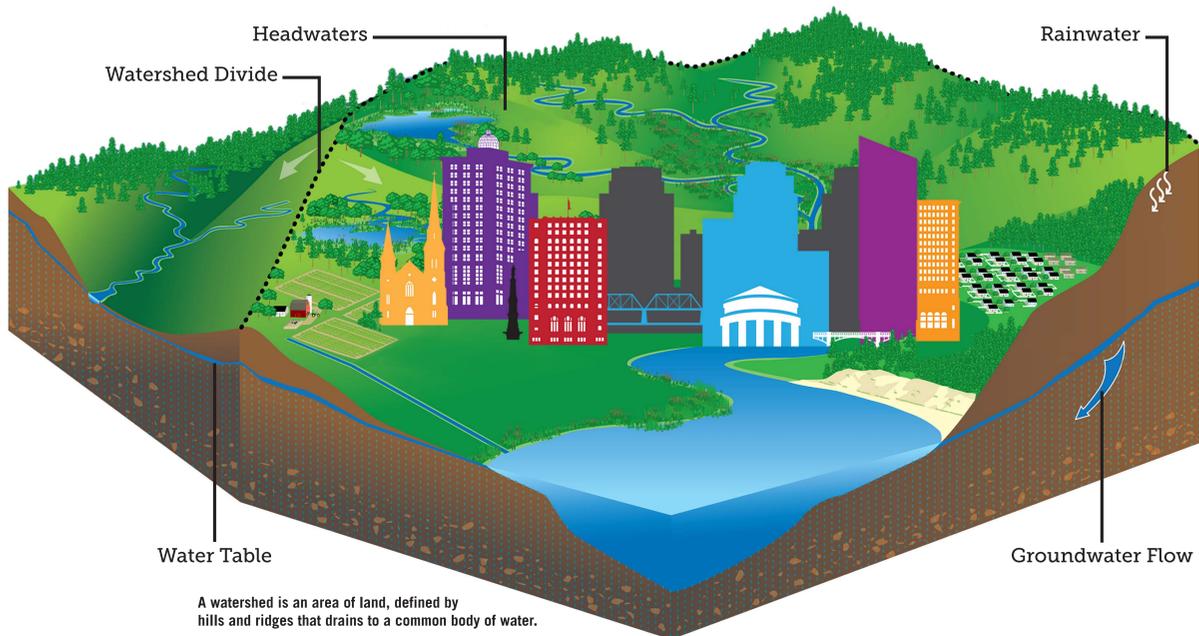


THE GRAND RIVER WATERSHED

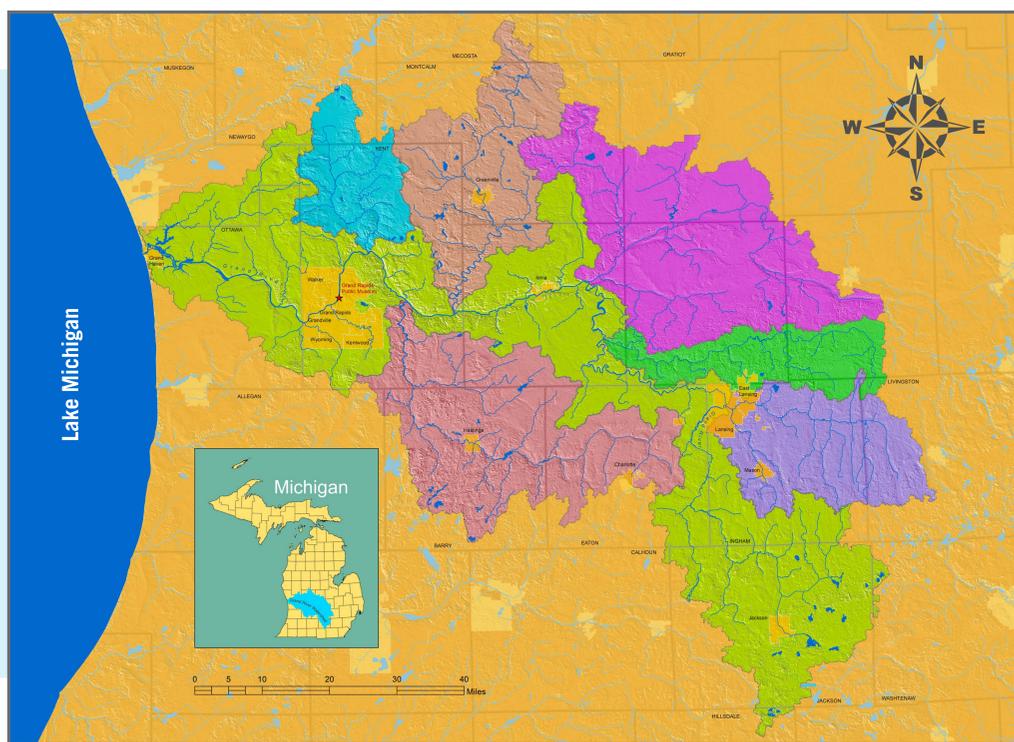
HOW WATERSHEDS WORK



Every drop of water in our watershed eventually makes its way into the Grand River and Lake Michigan. This water is used for manufacturing and agriculture, supports many of our native plants and animals, and even provides opportunities for recreation - such as fishing and kayaking. The way we plan and build our communities,

including homes, lawns, schools, businesses, roads and more, impacts the quality of the entire watershed. In this way, everybody who lives within the watershed is connected. It is vital that we all work together to keep the water in our Grand River Watershed clean for generations to come!

GRAND RIVER WATERSHED

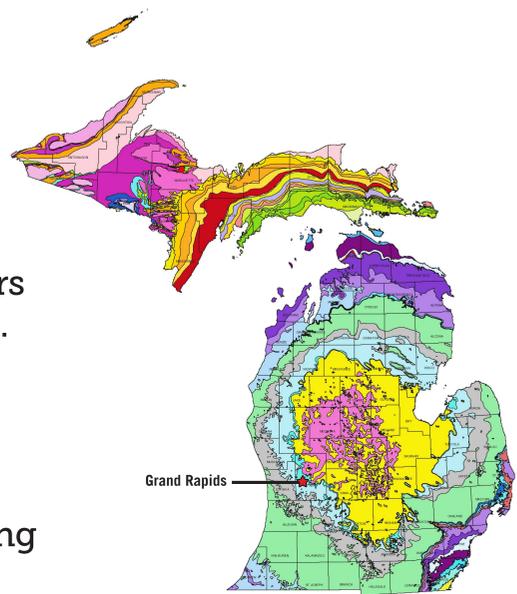


The Grand River is the longest river in Michigan, flowing 252 miles and covering 5,572 square miles in 18 counties.

RAPIDS IN THE WATERSHED

The City of Grand Rapids is named after a hydraulic feature that no longer exists!

In downtown Grand Rapids, limestone lies just beneath the surface of the Grand River. This sedimentary rock was deposited 350 million years ago when Michigan was covered in shallow seas. Over millions of years the limestone fractured and cracked into a series of ledges and shelves, and as the Grand River flowed over these ledges it formed the rapids. As the river cascaded downstream it became a chaotic tumble of roaring white water, very unlike the placid Grand River we know today.



Geologic Map of Michigan. Note the blue bayport limestone outcropping in Grand Rapids. This was the basis of the namesake rapids.

Before the river was changed by the work of man, the rapids had a nearly uniform descent for about a mile...sufficient to give a decided turbulent and wild appearance to the waters, and to make a noise that broke the stillness of the forest and echoed from the neighboring hills.

- Charles A. Whitmore, Kent Scientific Institute of Grand Rapids, 1895

GRAND RAPIDS
PUBLIC MUSEUM