

THE WATERSHED GAME

Information Guide



The Watershed Game is an active, hands-on simulation that helps groups learn how land use impacts water quality and natural resources. While making management choices about land use, participants learn about practices, plans, and policies that improve and protect the quality of a stream, lake or river. The object of this team-building simulation is to use limited financial resources to reduce excess sediment and/or phosphorus to levels that meet a clean water goal. The Game illustrates that cooperation is an essential part of managing water and land use. Participants learn to consider and involve all land uses within a watershed as they work to achieve their clean water goals.

There are two versions of the Watershed Game – *the Watershed Game for Local Leaders* and the *Watershed Game: Classroom Version*.



The **Watershed Game for Local Leaders** is designed for use with groups of up to 25 elected and appointed officials, members of watershed organizations, lake or river association members, and other community leaders. It comes in three table-top versions:

Game Requirements

- ✓ Trained facilitator
- ✓ Large table and chairs for participants
- ✓ A minimum of 45 minutes.*

**More time allows for discussions and supporting presentations.*



The **STREAM** version addresses an entire headwaters watershed and the land uses often found in it.

The **RIVER** version addresses the land uses associated with large river systems and urban areas.

The **LAKE** version concentrates on land uses surrounding a typical lake.



The Watershed Game: Classroom Version is designed for middle school (grades 6 – 8), but can easily be extended to upper elementary and high school.

This large-format board game is designed to include both small group work and whole-class play components. It helps students understand the relationship between land uses within a watershed, water quality, and their community. Working in teams, students apply tools (practices, plans, and policies) to decrease water pollution while balancing financial resources. The goal of the activity is to reduce nonpoint source water pollution from various land uses to the stream without going broke.

The Game emphasizes collaboration and cooperative decision-making, persuasive argument, teamwork, and leadership skills along with science and math.

The ***Watershed Game: Classroom Version*** requires 1-2 class periods and is supported by a number of online resources available to educators using the Game.

The Game can be connected to multiple education standards, including Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards, and various state standards.

For more information

Visit the Watershed Game website at watershedgame.umn.edu or contact one of the following:

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ABOUT THE WATERSHED GAME

The Watershed Game Program was developed by Minnesota Sea Grant and University of Minnesota Extension and includes educational games, training, and resources. For more information, visit watershedgame.umn.edu. Bilotta, J., Hagley, C., and Schomberg, J. (2018). Copyright Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved.