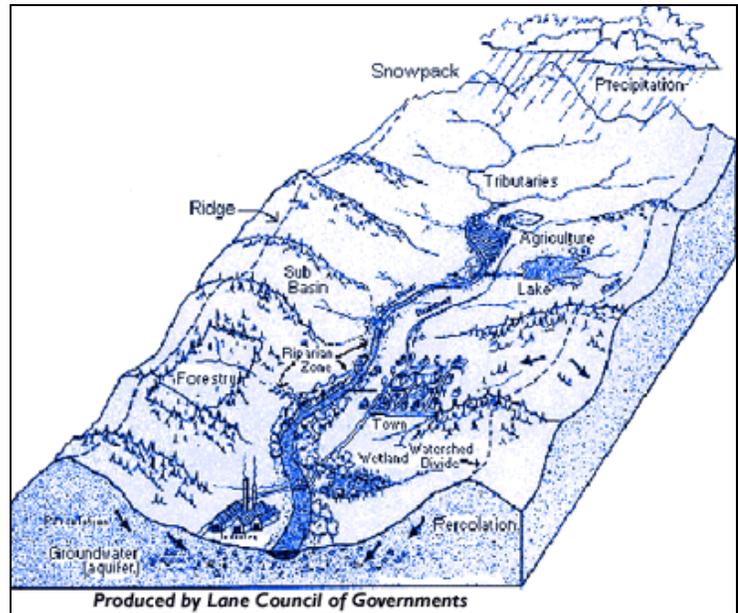


## WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

John Wesley Powell, scientist geographer, put it best when he said that a watershed is:

"that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community."

Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. They cross county, state, and national boundaries. In the continental US, there are 2,110 watersheds; including Hawaii Alaska, and Puerto Rico, there are 2,267 watersheds.



A watershed or water basin is the region of land that drains into a specified body of water such as a river, lake, or creek. Rain that falls anywhere within a given body of water's watershed will eventually drain into that body of water. A map of Nebraska Watersheds is shown below. It can be seen that a large area contributes to each watershed. In the Kearney area all drainage is in one way or another channeled to the Platte River, from there it ends up into the Missouri River and then onto the Gulf of Mexico. However, the journey is not complete without the waters first traveling through

many of our local recreational lakes.

