

The Ridge to Reef Watershed Project (R2RW) is a five year (with an optional sixth year) activity contributing to the achievement of USAID/ Jamaica's SO2 – "improved quality of key natural resources in areas that are both environmentally and economically significant". R2RW comprises three Components contributing to the achievement of the results under SO2. Component 1 assists targeted organizations identify and promote sustainable environmental management practices by resource users. Component 2 focuses on identifying and supporting solutions to improve the enforcement of targeted existing environmental regulations, primarily in the Great River and Rio Grande watersheds. Component 3 provides assistance to key organizations to support, coordinate, and expand watershed management efforts in Jamaica. For more information about R2RW, please contact one of the following organizations:



Ridge to Reef Watershed Project
5 Oxford Park Avenue
Kingston 5
Jamaica
Email: ard@cwjamaica.com
Web: www.r2rw-jm.org
Tel: 754-7598 or 906-2268
Fax: 754-3913



National Environment and Planning Agency
10 Caledonia Avenue
Kingston 5
Jamaica
Email: pubed@nepa.gov.jm
Tel: 754-7540
Fax: 754-7595/6



United States Agency for International Development
2 Haining Road
Kingston 5
Jamaica
Email: kmcdonald-gayle@usaid.gov
Tel: 926-3645 to 8
926-5066
Fax: 929-9944



What Is A Watershed?



Jamaica is known as the land of "wood and water", but it could just as well be known as the "land of watersheds." Next time you are driving along one of the main highways in Jamaica, keep a look out for one of our attractive watershed signs. There are a number of different rivers on the island and a total of 26 watershed units including:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. The South Negril-Orange River | 14. Drivers River |
| 2. Lucea River | 15. Plantain Garden |
| 3. Great River | 16. Morant River |
| 4. Montego River | 17. Yallahs River |
| 5. Martha Brae River | 18. Hope River |
| 6. Rio Bueno-White River | 19. Rio Cobre |
| 7. Rio Nuevo | 20. Rio Minho |
| 8. Oracabessa-Pagee River | 21. Milk River |
| 9. Wag Water River | 22. Gut-Alligator Hole |
| 10. Pencar-Buff Bay River | 23. Black River |
| 11. Spanish River | 24. Deans Valley River |
| 12. Swift River | 25. Cabarita River |
| 13. Rio Grande | 26. New Savannah River |



But exactly what is a watershed and why are they important?

A watershed is the total area of land around a river that drains into the

river at some point or another. When rain falls on the surface of the earth it seeps into the soil and eventually some of the water ends up in the ground water system. This ground water then flows under the ground and drains into a specific river system that is part of a single watershed.

The flow of water; the amount of the water; and its quality are all affected by many factors. If there are too few trees, the water will seep into the soil too quickly or will run off hillsides altogether. Animal wastes can pollute the water if livestock are tied too close to rivers and streams.

People affect the quality and amount of the water most of all. Improper use of farm chemicals, the washing cars and laundry in the river, and the illegal chopping down of trees all affect water quality. And when households don't have adequate sanitation facilities, human waste can also seep into the underground water system and endanger human health.

When watersheds are deforested too much, natural disasters are also more likely to happen. Floods will affect hillside communities during the rainy season and hurricanes will do greater damage to the natural environment if they occur.

More importantly, watersheds provide the drinking water that we all need to survive. Without proper watershed management therefore, we are all at risk. Each of us therefore needs to do our part as "watershed stewards" in protecting the natural resources of land, wood and water that are our watersheds.

To find out more about what you can do, contact the

Sustainable Watershed Branch
National Environment and Planning Agency
10 Caledonia Avenue
Kingston 5

Telephone: 754-7550 to 4

