Soil and Water Stewardship Week
Where does your water shed?
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A grasshopper or snake sheds its skin as it grows. Kids when they fall and skin their knee they might shed a tear. A tree can shed its leaves. A watershed is land that sheds water. Water from rain or snow can flow over or under the land it falls on. The land sheds the water. The water can flow to a river, lake, stream or ocean.
The world’s fresh water supply is not new. Our water is being constantly recycled through the earth’s water cycle. Does a glass of ice-cold, crystal-clear water sound good? A drink of water, whether from a fountain, faucet or bottle, could be thousands of years old and may have travelled around the world a few times.
In the continental US, there are 2,100 watersheds. If Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico are included the count rises to 2,267 watersheds.
Since we all live in a watershed, our actions, habits and decisions can have a strong affect on the animals and plants that share life in the watershed with us. Here are some of the things you can to protect your watershed:
Never dump used motor oil, hazardous chemicals, pet waste, or any other materials down storm drains, water bodies or on the ground. The water in storm drains flows to rivers, lakes or other bodies of water and could end up in our drinking water. Sweep hard surfaces instead of spraying with a hose. You’ll save water and keep harmful pollutants from “shedding” into storm drains.
If there are bare spots in your yard, get busy planting. Plants prevent erosion which leads to soil being moved through the watershed into our lakes and rivers. Grow some healthy vegetables like broccoli or tomatoes. planting, flowerbed, broccoli, tomato.
You can be a voice for conservation

The average person uses 70 gallons of water every day! Tell your family and friends how important it is to practice good conservation habits in your watershed.
Litany
Where does your water shed?
Written by Gina DeMarco, Northern RI Conservation District, RI
LEADER: LORD, you are the hope of Israel; all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD, the spring of living water. Jeremiah 17:13.

CONGREGATION: But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit. Jeremiah 17:7-8.
LEADER: Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. Psalm 1:1-2.

CONGREGATION: That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers. Psalm 1:3.
LEADER: Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” John 7:37b – 38.

ALL: As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God! Psalm 42:1.
Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. They cross county, state and national boundaries. There are many ways to help protect your watershed. Find a local watershed group and participate in educating your community about this precious resource.
Your local conservation district is eager to help you care for your watershed. Contact them for information.

National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)
http://www.nacdnet.org/about/districts/directory

POWERPOINT EXTENSION IDEA: Conservation Districts – download the PowerPoint to your computer and add in slides of projects in your community that you can share.