

9. Watershed Central

Watershed Central supports the development and implementation of effective watershed management programs by providing guidance, tools, case studies, data sets and data analysis. Watershed Central's stakeholders and data providers include:



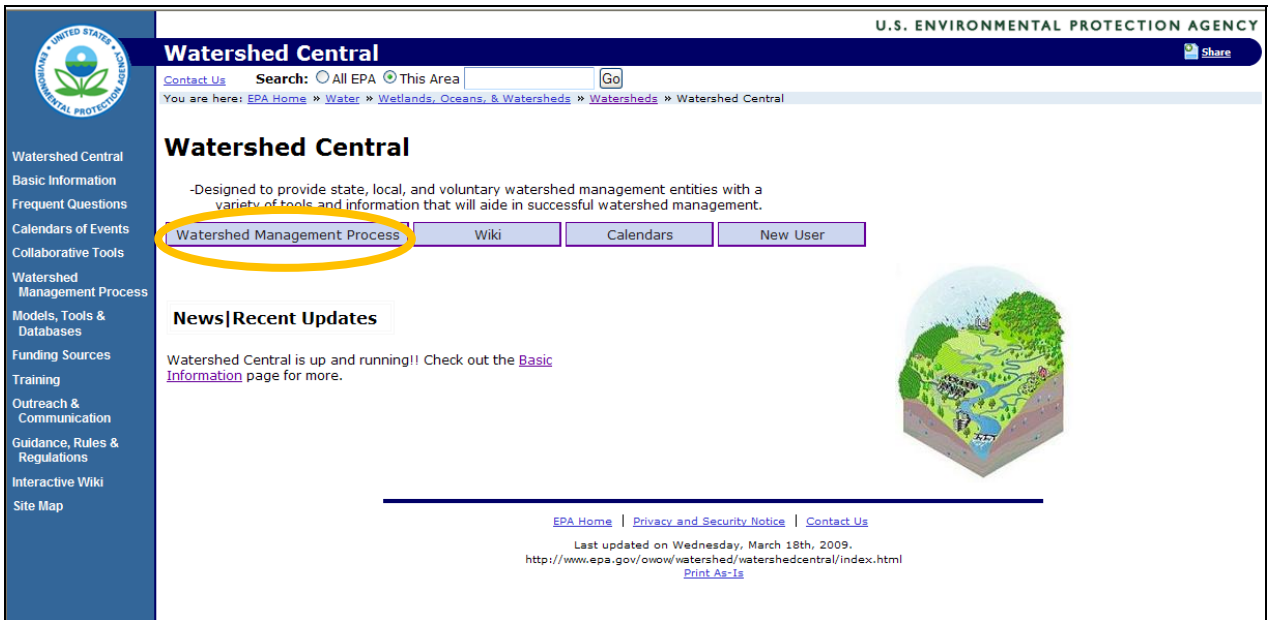
- Local watershed management groups
- Regulated entities subject to EPA's various clean water act provisions
- EPA Headquarters and the Office of Water
- EPA regional water and water management offices
- Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service on issues related to electronic access to data submitted
- States
- Tribes
- Public

Watershed Central includes a “public” side that provides watershed management process information that is accessible to everyone and a “wiki,” a Web site that allows users to submit and edit content so that the information is constantly updated by the watershed community (just like Wikipedia). The wiki is only available to registered users and everyone is encouraged to join the wiki. The wiki includes case studies, information on watershed organizations and various watershed management tools. Submitted content will be reviewed every two weeks and key items will be published to the public-facing Watershed Central Web site on a regular basis. The wiki contains the following information:

- Tools & models for every step in the watershed management process
- Articles on watershed organizations, written by watershed organizations
- A map view into watershed activities & experts around the country
- Spatial data such as land use, impaired streams, water quality monitoring station locations and information, permitted facility locations, watershed boundaries, and much more
- Calendars for events, workshops and trainings around the country
- Information resources on regulations, guidance and funding sources

9.1 Go to the [Watershed Central](#) site.

9.2 On the front page of the Watershed Central site, there are links to the watershed management process, the wiki, calendars and new user information. Click on the **Watershed Management Process** link.



9.3 The Watershed Management Process page provides links to detailed sections for each of the watershed planning and implementation steps through the Steps quick link box on the right side. Click on the step that is of interest to you.



- 9.4 Each hyperlinked step takes the user to a page that provides a brief description of the step. Notice that the quick links box on the right side of the page is now titled More info on Build Partnerships and contains links to sub-steps.

Build Partnerships

The very nature of working at a watershed level means you should work with at least one partner to improve watershed conditions because it is often too complex and too expensive for a single entity. New ideas and input from partners not only provides a more solid commitment to solutions, but also helps to leverage resources. Stakeholders' involvement also increases the probability of long-term success through trust, commitment, and personal investment.

Build Partnerships Links

[EPA Adopt your Watershed](#) - This on-line database can help you learn about opportunities to get involved in activities in your community, such as monitoring, cleanups, and restoration projects. You can download the Adopt Your Watershed Brochure to find out more about stewardship opportunities or add your watershed group to the searchable database.

[The River Network](#) [EXIT Disclaimer] - Visit this resource (for River Network members only) for the Directory of Funding Sources for Grassroots River and Watershed Conservation Groups. It lists private and corporate sources, as well as federal sources.

[EPA / Source Water Protection](#) - EPA Headquarters, Regional and State Contacts for Source Water Protection, Underground Injection Control, and Sole Source Aquifers

[More ...](#)

More info on Build Partnerships

- [Identify Key Stakeholders](#)
- [Identify Issues of Concern](#)
- [Set Preliminary Goals](#)
- [Develop Indicators](#)
- [Conduct Public Outreach](#)
- [Results and Next Steps](#)

[+] Steps

[Watershed Management Process](#)

- 9.5 Each subpage contains links to relevant sections of the Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters as well as other EPA sites.

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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Build Partnerships - Identify Issues of Concern

One of the first activities in developing a management plan is to identify issues of concern. These issues will help to shape the goals for your watershed and determine what types of data you will need to collect.

Set up a meeting with stakeholders to identify what they feel are the major concerns in the watershed. At this stage, you can start to link the problems in the watershed with possible causes or sources. As an example, stakeholders might identify beach closures as an issue of concern. This could lead to a discussion of sources of the bacteria that led to the closures.

It is often useful to diagram the links between problems and causes and present them as a picture, or a conceptual model (see [Figure 4-1 \(PDF\)](#), 615 kb, 20 pp.) on page 4-4 of EPA's Watershed Handbook for an example of a conceptual model). These diagrams provide a graphical representation that you can present to stakeholders, helping to guide the subsequent planning process. The conceptual model can be used to clarify the relationships between the possible causes and sources of impacts seen in the watershed and identify what types of data you need to collect later. [Figure 4-2 \(PDF\)](#), 615 kb, 20 pp.) on page 4-4 of EPA's Watershed Handbook shows an example of an initial conceptual model of impairment developed to facilitate the identification of problems and their probable causes for the Greens Creek watershed in North Carolina. The conceptual model was presented to stakeholders for discussion at a meeting at which they identified upland loading of sediment and subsequent impacts on water clarity (turbidity) as the key risk pathway for support of uses in Greens Creek.

As you move through the process and gather more data, these links will become more discernible. Establishing these links between pollutants or stressors and the impacts in the watershed is one of the keys to developing a successful watershed management plan.

For more information on the development of conceptual models as part of the watershed planning process, refer to [EPA's Guidelines for Ecological Risk Assessment](#). Build your own conceptual model using [Worksheet 4-2 \(PDF\)](#), 320 kb, 28 pp.), provided in appendix B of EPA's Watershed Handbook. [CADDIS](#), the Causal Analysis/Diagnosis Decision Information System, is another useful tool when identifying causes of biological impairments.

More info on Build Partnerships

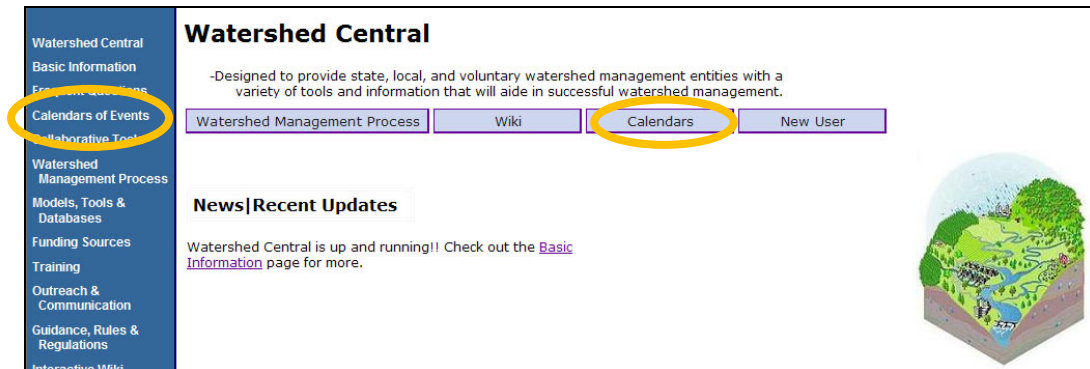
- [Identify Key Stakeholders](#)
- [Identify Issues of Concern](#)
- [Set Preliminary Goals](#)
- [Develop Indicators](#)
- [Conduct Public Outreach](#)
- [Results and Next Steps](#)

[+] Steps

[Watershed Management Process](#)

- 9.6 Click the **Watershed Central** link at the top of the blue menu bar on the left to return to Watershed Central's Home page.

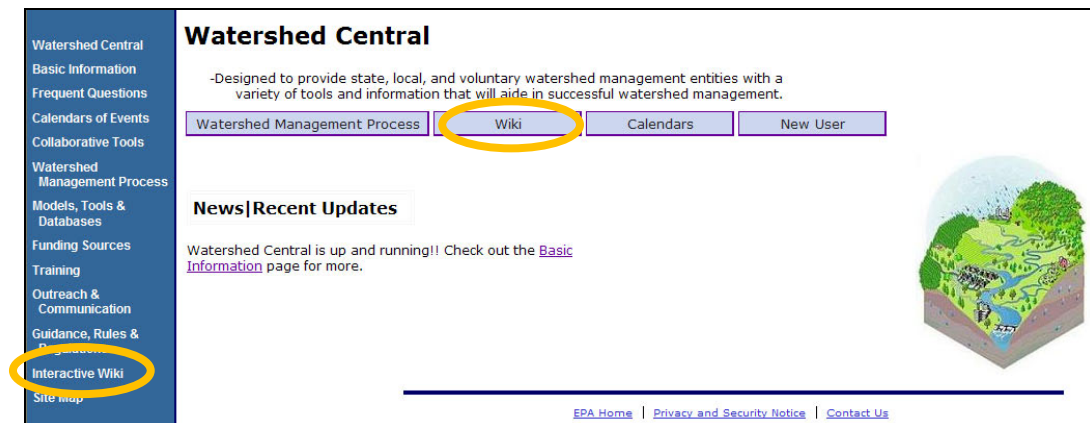
- 9.7 Click on the **Calendars** link on the Home page. The calendar page lists several EPA water-related and nonpoint source calendars.



- 9.8 Return to the Watershed Central Home page by either clicking the **Back** button at the top left of your screen or by clicking the **Watershed Central** link at the top of the blue menu bar on the left side of the screen.

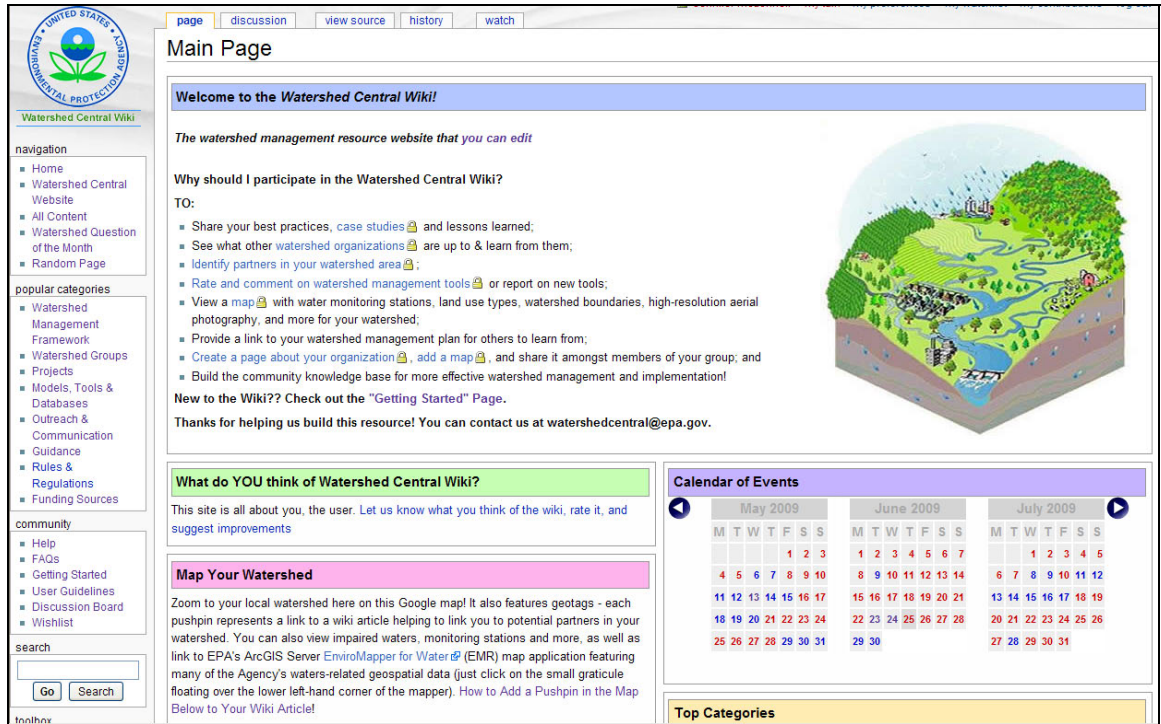
Accessing Watershed Central's Wiki

- 9.9 On the Home page, click on the **Wiki** link.



- 9.10 First-time visitors to the wiki will need to register. Registration instructions can be found on the [Watershed Wiki Privacy Statement page](#).

9.11 **Sign-in** to the wiki. (Approval of the request to join the wiki is required before a new user can sign in.)

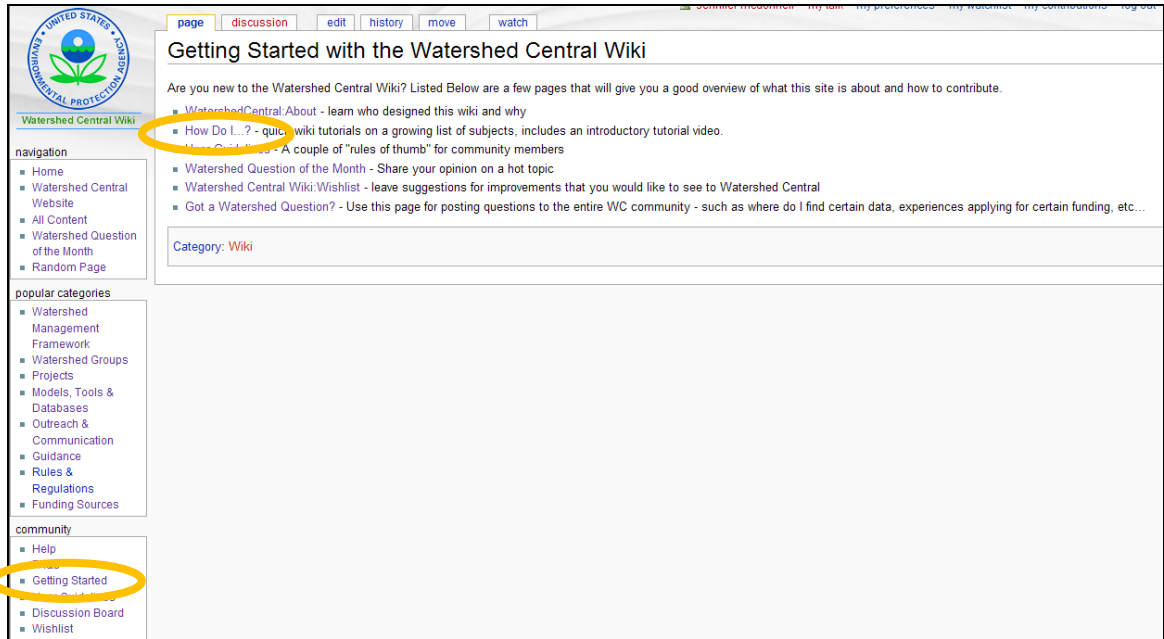


The Watershed Central Wiki is designed to:

- Facilitate technical exchange between people involved in the watershed planning process.
- Provide improved networking and encourage discussion of issues related to watershed planning.
- Provide improved access to recommended processes, tools and data required to prepare and implement watershed management plans.

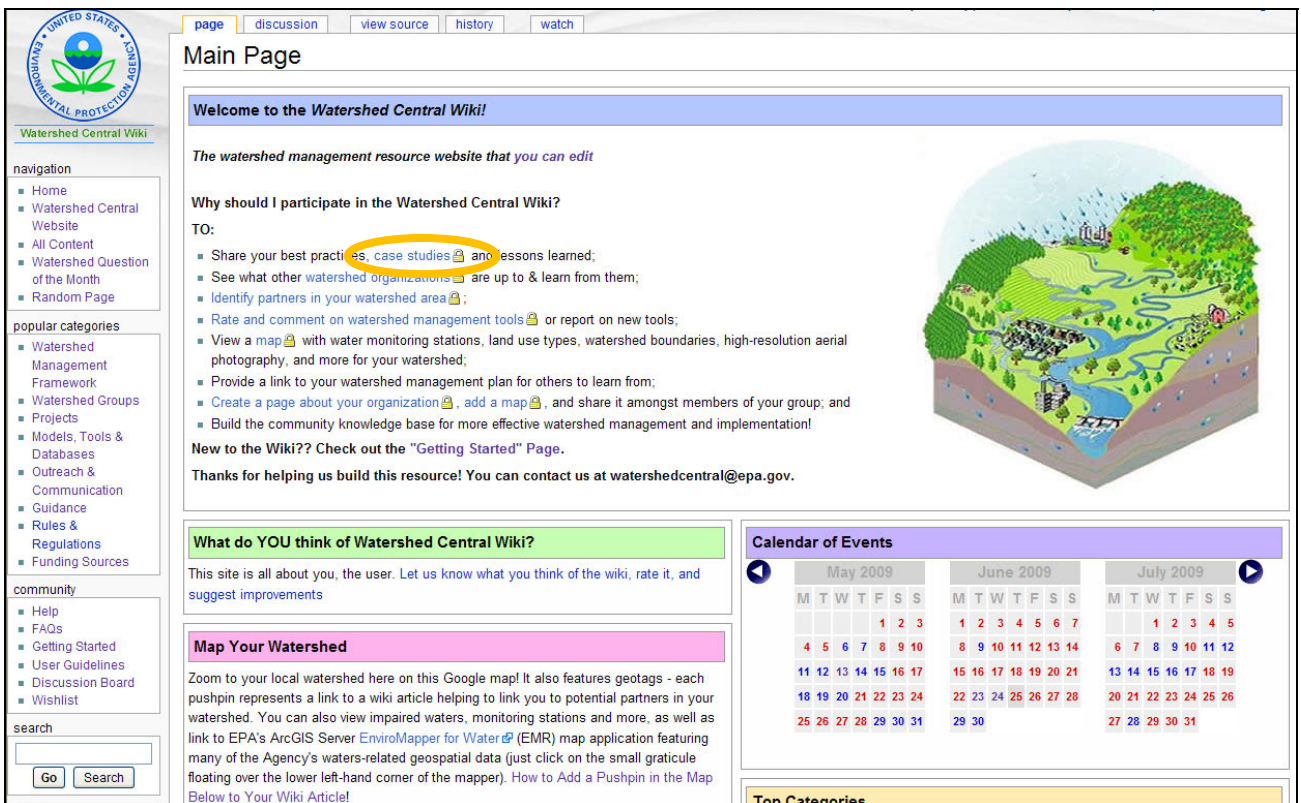
The wiki is not an appropriate place to post a commercial advertisement. Anyone who is willing to become a registered user is welcome to read and contribute to the wiki. Some of the content knowledge captured in the wiki will be published on Watershed Central's public-facing Web site.

9.12 New wiki members will benefit from the getting started tutorials. To access the tutorials, click on the **Getting Started** link in the community box on the lower, left menu bar.

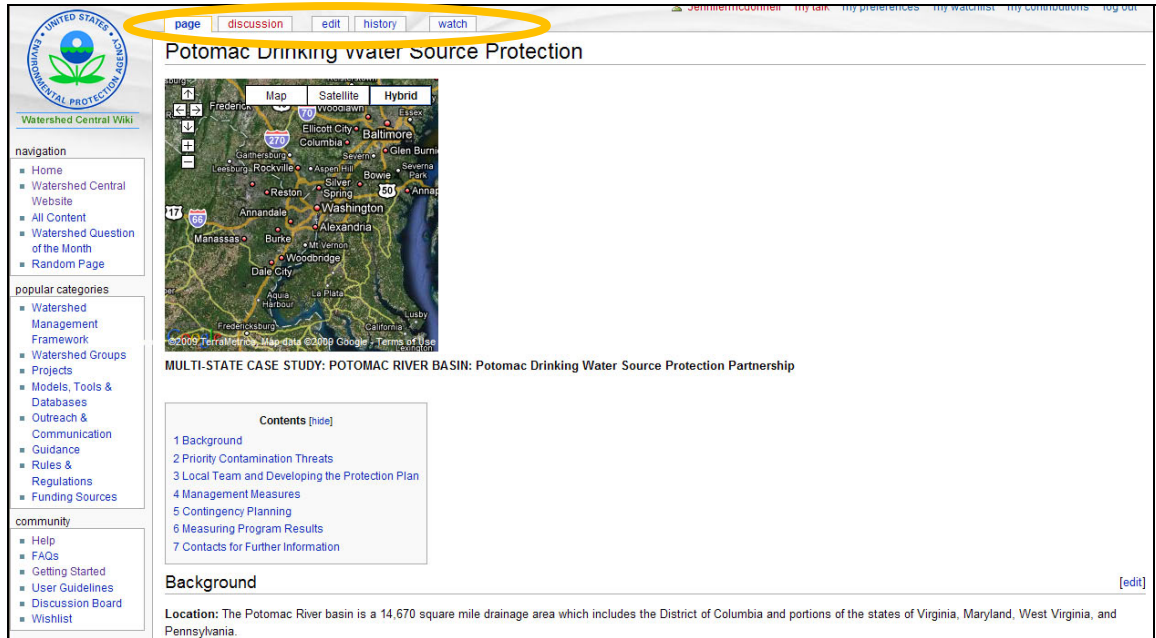


9.13 Click on the **Home** link on the top, left menu bar to return to the wiki home page.

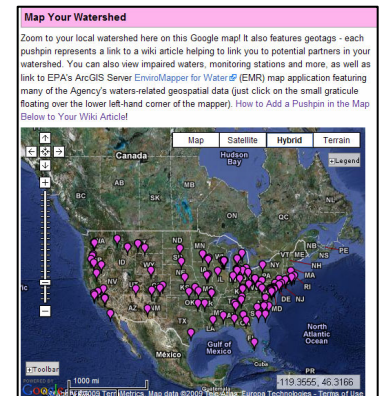
9.14 Click on the **Case Study** link in the center of the wiki home page. The next page to appear will have a complete listing of case studies.



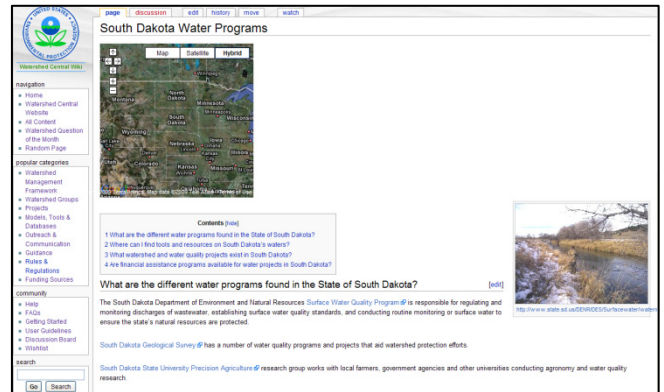
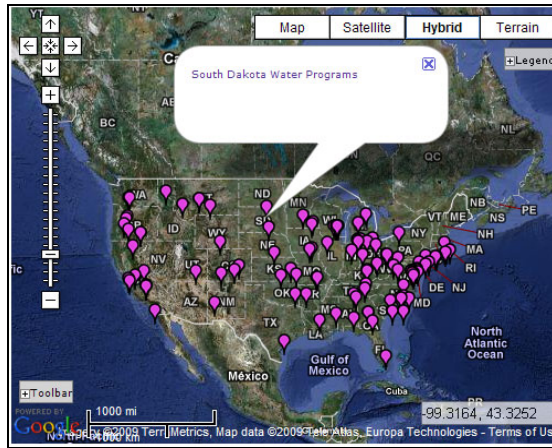
- 9.15 Click on any case study to see an example. If a security warning box appears on the screen, click **No**.
- 9.16 At the top of the selected case study, note the Discussion, Edit, History and Watch Tabs.



- 9.17 Click on the **Discussion** tab to post questions or responses to a page's content.
- 9.18 Click on the **Edit** tab to update a page's content.
- 9.19 Click on the **History** tab to learn when the most recent updates to a page were made and by whom. If a large error is made such as accidentally erasing a page's content, go to the History page and load a previous version of the page.
- 9.20 Return to the wiki Home page by clicking the **Back** button or by clicking **Home** at the top of the left menu bar.
- 9.21 Scroll down the home page to the **Map Your Watershed** section.
- 9.22 Each purple pushpin on the map indicates an existing article related to that location. Click on the **pushpin** closest to your location. (Zoom into your region of the United States if many pushpins are close together.)



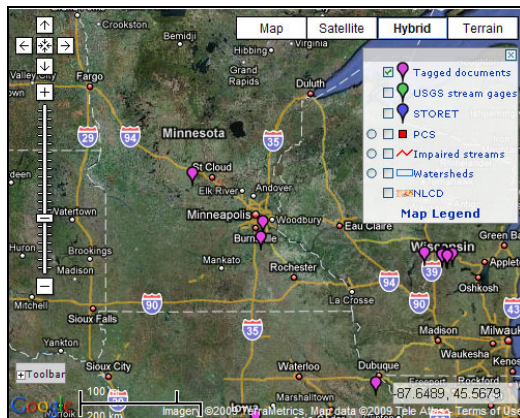
9.23 The name of the program associated with the pushpin will appear. Double click on the **hyperlinked name** of the organization to visit their wiki page.



What is the name of the organization that was selected?

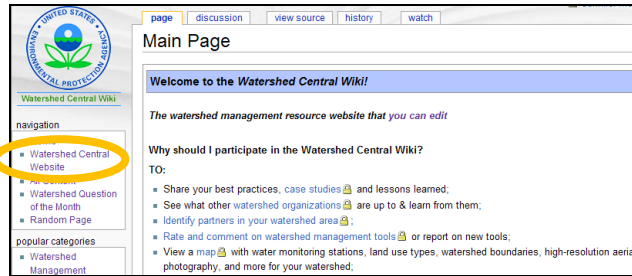
9.24 Click the **Back** arrow to return to the home page.

9.25 **Zoom** to a region of interest on the map and open the map legend by clicking on the + sign.



The map contains information on the location of USGS steam gauges, STORET collection sites, PCS-reporting facilities, impaired waters, watershed boundaries and national land cover data (NLCD). Further land cover details are available in the map legend. Some map features only function if the map is adequately zoomed in. Select a map feature by checking the box to the left of the feature in the legend. The map will refresh with the data.

- 9.26 Return to the “public” side of Watershed Central by clicking on the **Watershed Central Website** link, located on the left side menu, second from the top.



- 9.27 Click on **Models, Tools & Databases** on the left, blue menu bar. The next page provides links to tools that help gather data and conduct data analyses to characterize the condition of a watershed and its waterbodies, identify pollutant sources, and support quantification of the pollutant loads.

