

The Education Program at the New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium

22 Magruder Road Fort Hancock, NJ 07732 732-872-1300 njseagrants.org



Mapping A Watershed

Activity Overview:

In this activity you will make models of watershed ranges marking the area using color marker in the direction you think the rainwater will fall and the places it will accumulate.

Background:

A watershed is the area of land that drains into a body of water such as a river, lake, stream or bay. It is separated from other systems by high points in the area such as hills or slopes. It includes not only the waterway itself but also the entire land area that drains to it. For example, the watershed of a lake would include not only the streams entering that lake but also the land area that drains into those streams and eventually the lake. Drainage basins generally refer to large watersheds that encompass the watersheds of many smaller rivers and streams.

Instructions:

Step 1:

Crinkle up the sheet of 11"x17" paper slightly and then unfold the paper.

Step 2:

Choose two very different color markers.

Outline all the ridges or high points with the first colored marker. Draw circles where you think the water will flow and accumulate with the second marker.

Step 3:

Using the spray bottle with water, spray the paper. Observe what happens to your designated high point areas and low areas. Check to see if you guessed correctly.

Step 4:

Take one of the sheets "New Jersey's Watershed's and Drainage Basins". Circle the watershed or drainage basin where you live (or came from) and where you are now (Sandy Hook).



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