



How Water Works

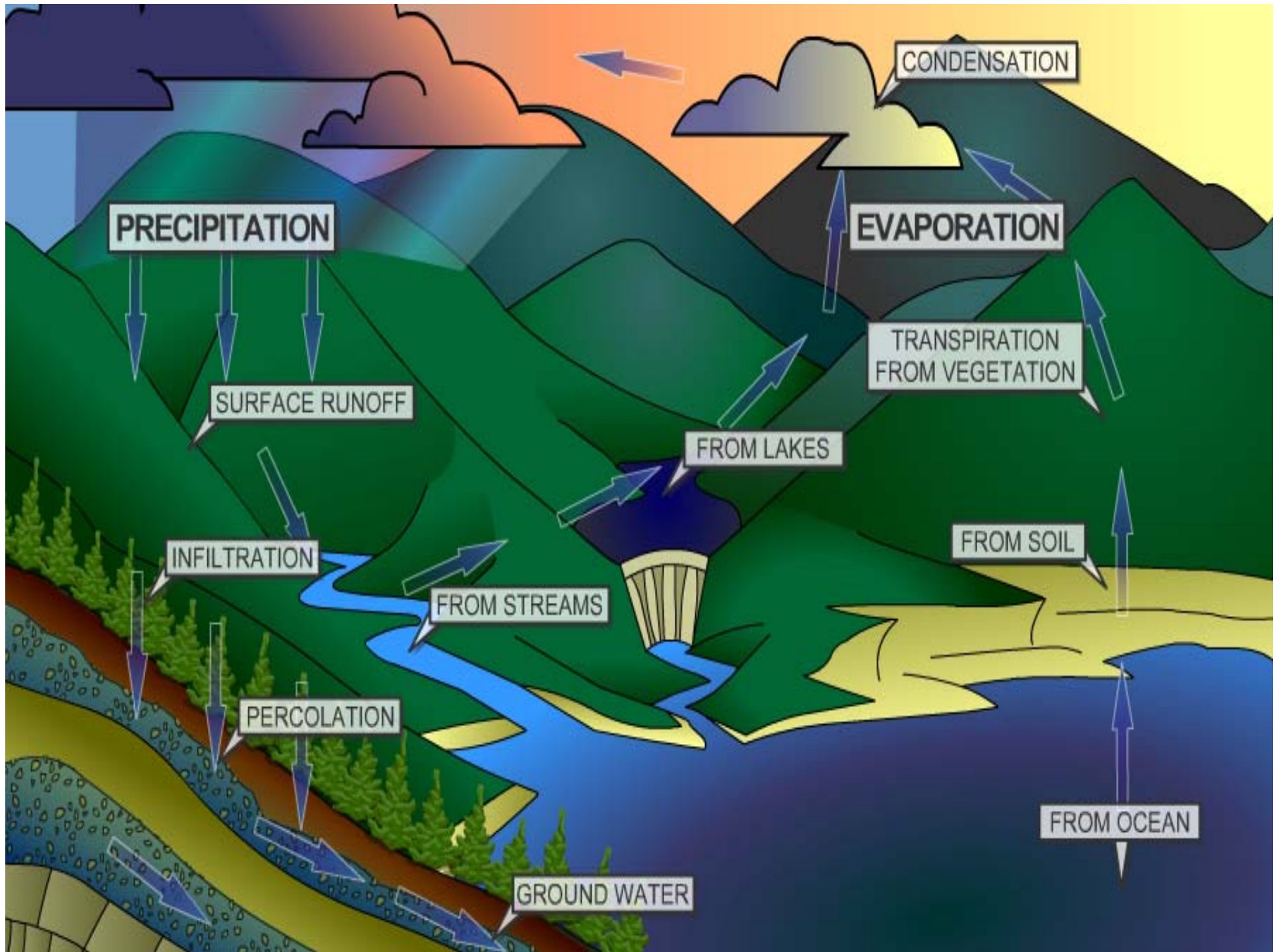
September 21, 2009

Water Policy Interim Committee



Concepts

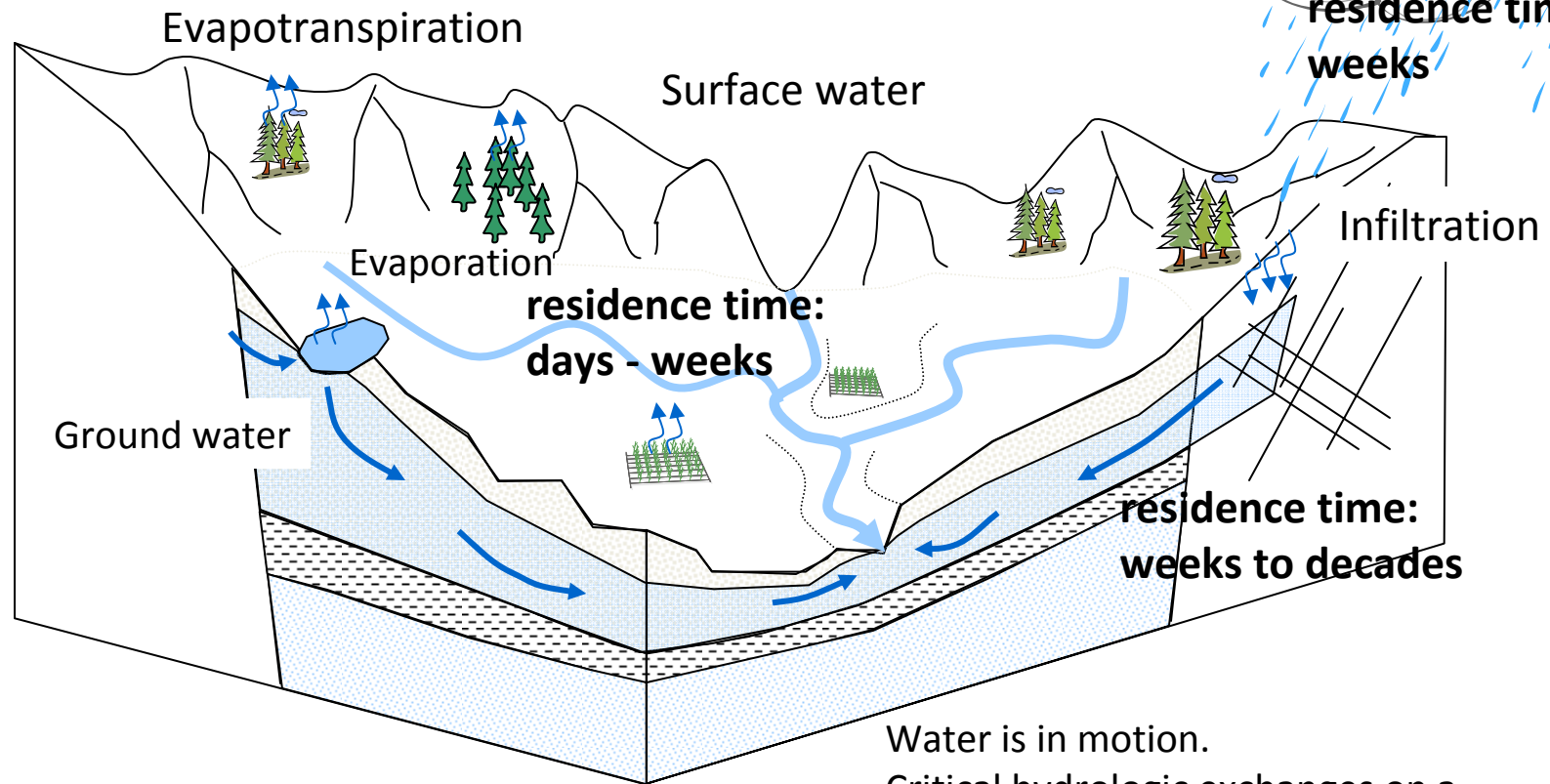
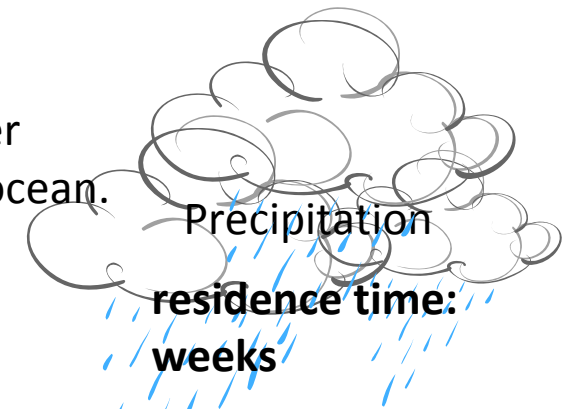
- The hydrologic cycle
- Watershed definition
- Aquifer characteristics
- Surface water – groundwater interactions
- Hydraulic effects of floodplain development
- Non-point source pollution



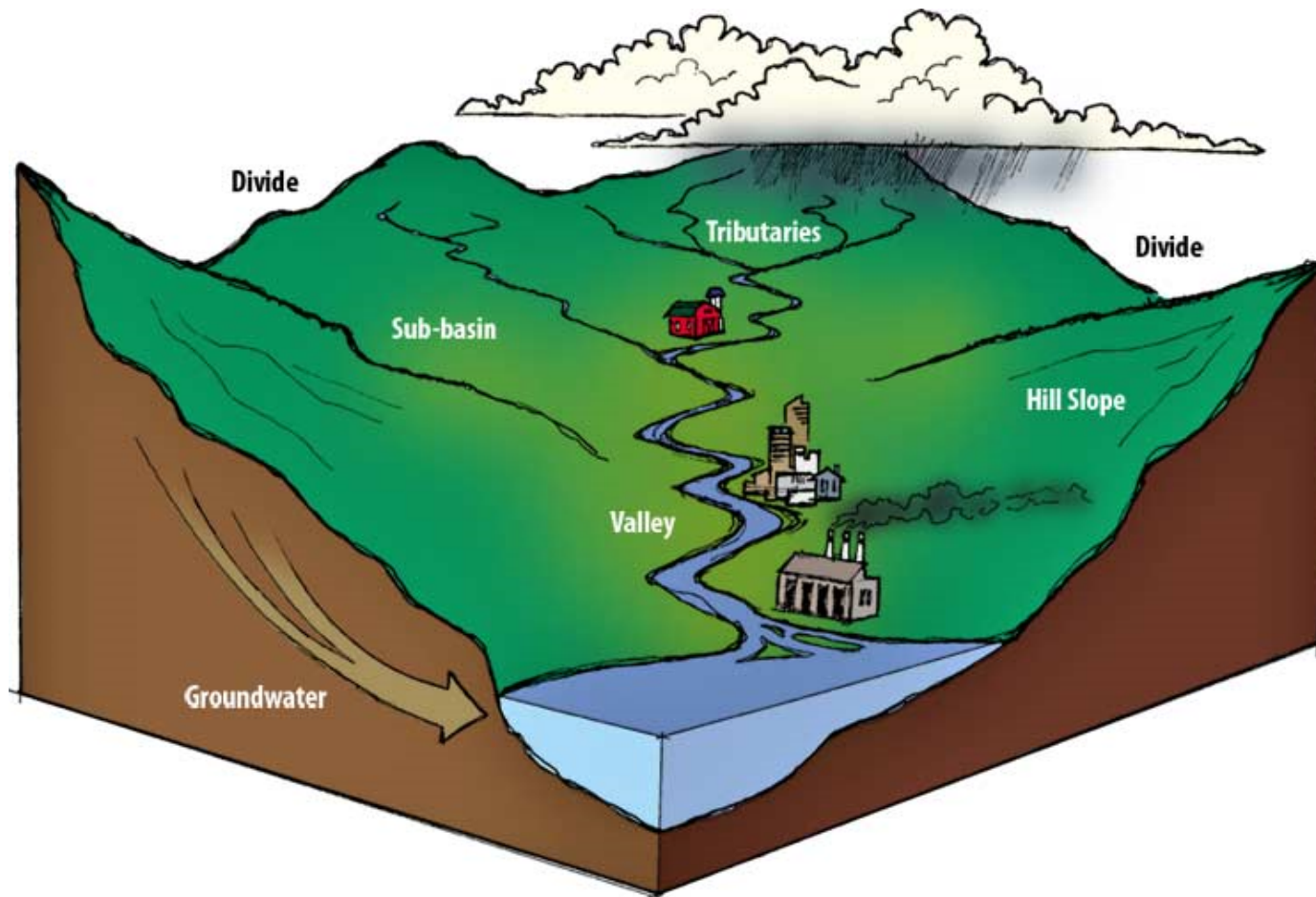
Water Cycle: Basin Scale



Hydrologic cycle: the endless circulation of water between the atmosphere, the land surface and the ocean.



Water is in motion.
Critical hydrologic exchanges on a typical Montana basin scale include: precipitation, infiltration, surface runoff, evaporation and transpiration



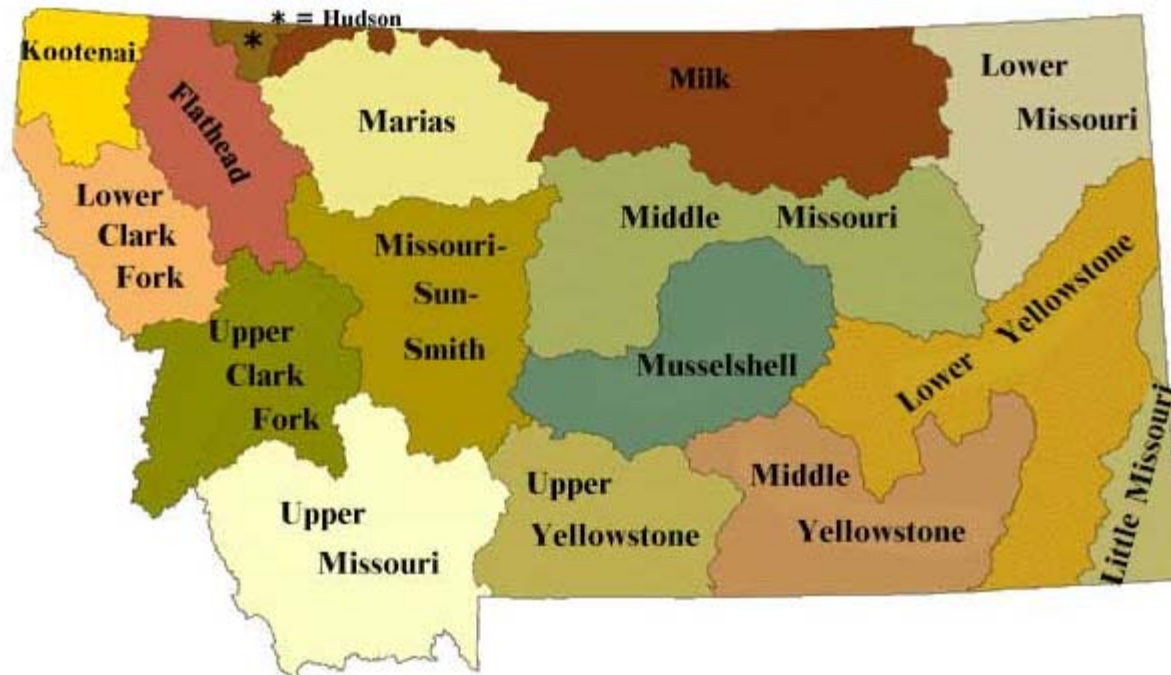
Watershed (noun) 1) a ridge of high land dividing two areas; 2) the region draining into a river, river system or other body of water; 3) critical point that marks a division or change of course.

American Heritage Dictionary



USGS Fourth-Code: Watershed Selection

STEP 2a: Select a river basin from the map below



Ground Water, Aquifers and Confining Units

Ground water occurs in unconfined (water table) or confined aquifers. The water table marks the upper surface in an unconfined aquifer. Confined aquifers are bounded by low permeability units.

