What is a Watershed?

The word means a parting, a shedding of waters. But a watershed is a gathering place, also. It is a place where hills and plains and people's lives are connected by falling rain and flowing water.

A watershed is measured by the hilltops and ridges that are its boundaries. It is shaped by the hills, valleys and plains that are the landscape and is tempered by the forests, fields, lakes and marshes that are habitats for its creatures.

Most of us know a watershed through its streams and rivers that connect forest with farm, farm with city and city with San Francisco Bay... and each of us changes the watershed day by day, bit by bit, as we go about the business of our lives.