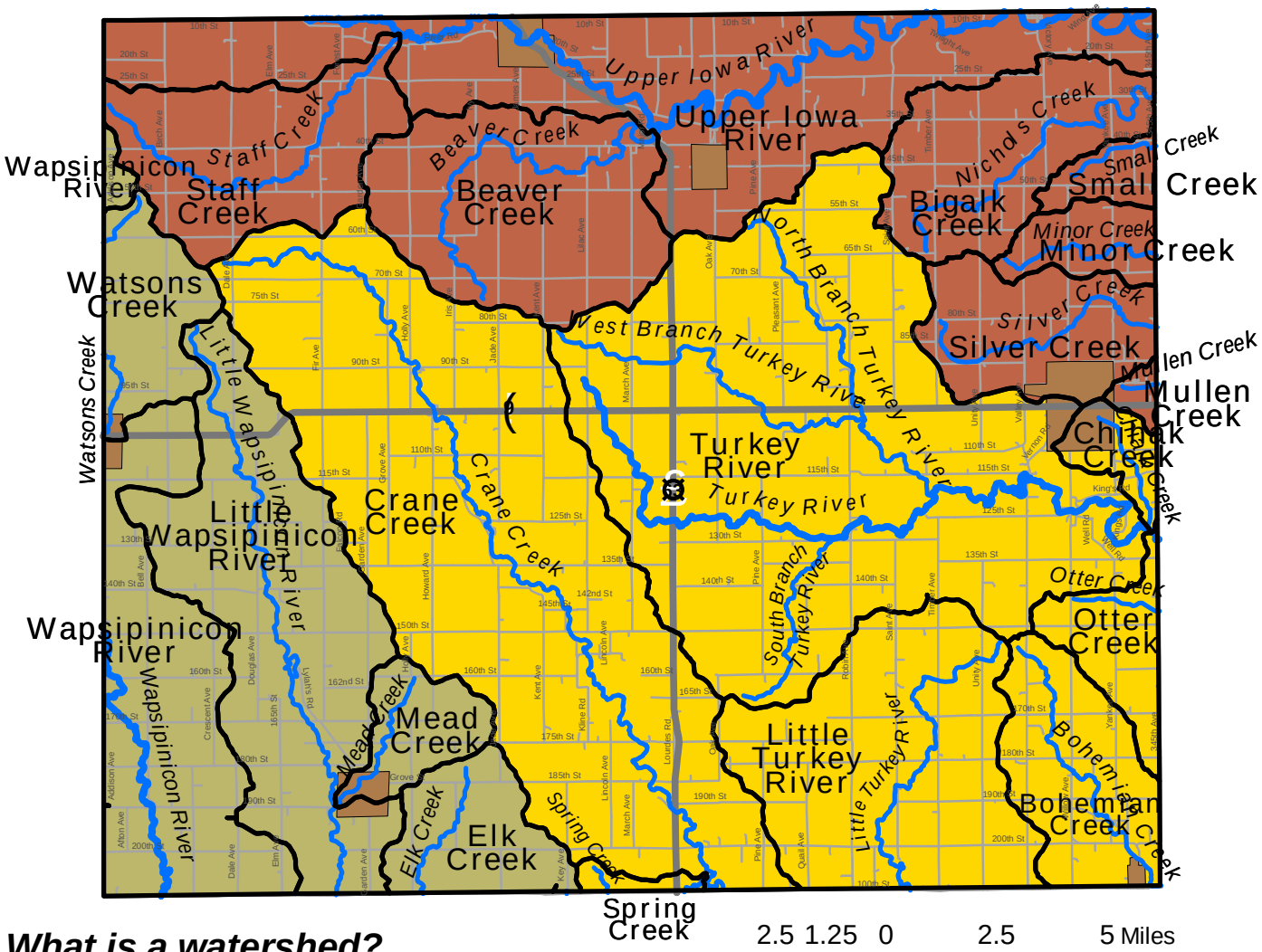
The Watersheds and Creeks
of Howard County, IA



What is a watershed?

It's the area of land that catches rain and snow and drains or seeps into a marsh, stream, river, lake or groundwater.

What's your watershed?

You're sitting in a watershed right now. Locate your home on the map above to find your watershed. Some cross county, state, and even international borders. Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. Some are millions of square miles, others are just a few acres. Just as creeks drain into rivers, watersheds are nearly always part of a larger watershed.

LEGEND

Howard County's Major Watersheds
- Upper Iowa River
- Turkey River
- Upper Wapsipinicon River

Howard Co. Sub-Watersheds

What is nonpoint source pollution?

Unlike pollution from factories and sewage treatment plants, nonpoint source pollution comes from many different areas with no particular place of origin. Nonpoint source pollution (or polluted runoff) occurs when water runs over land or through the ground, picks up pollutants, and deposits them in the river, lake, bay, or groundwater.

These pollutants include:

- Excess fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides from farms, cities, and suburban streets
- Oil, grease, and toxic chemicals from urban runoff and energy production
- Sediment from improperly managed construction sites, crop and forest lands, and eroding streambanks
- Bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet waste, and faulty septic systems

Increased runoff from rainwater and changes to stream flow such as creek straightening and dams can also adversely affect watersheds.

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