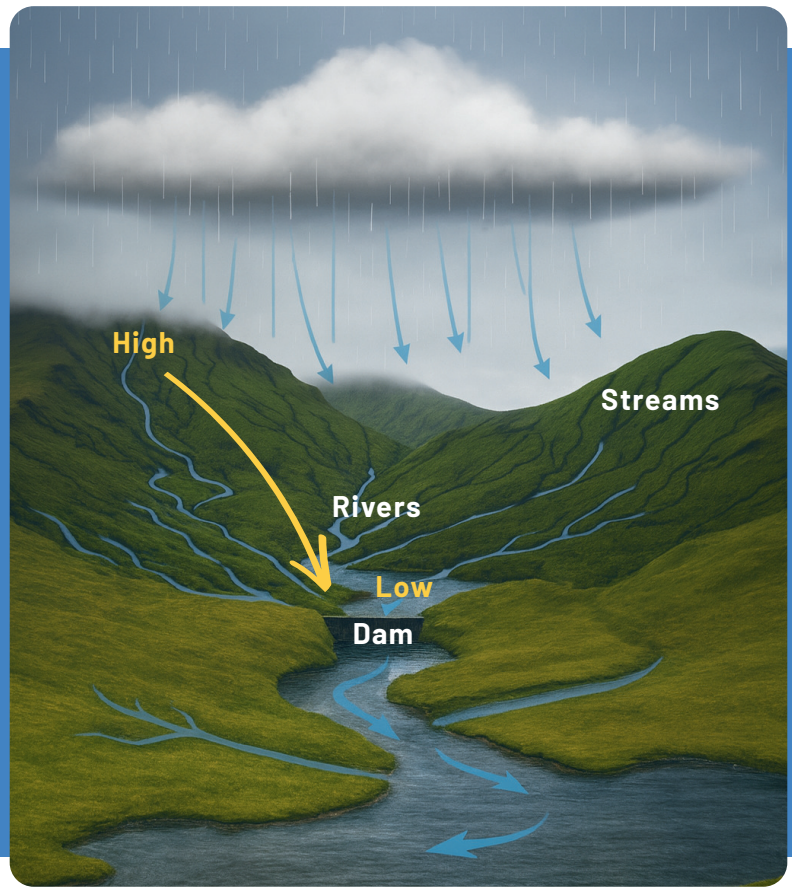
Catchments

FACTSHEET (Primary Learners)

What is a catchment?

A catchment is an area of land with high and low places. The water flows from the high to the low places and collects in the low places.



Why are catchments important?

We need freshwater to live. We build dams and weirs to collect water in catchments so that we can use the water. This is called a water supply system.

Healthy catchments = Healthy waterways

Healthy catchments have healthy waterways. Clean and healthy water is important for us and for the plants and animals living in it.

Human activities in catchments can put pollutants in our water. Pollutants are unwanted things that can cause harm. Pollutants can make water less clean and less healthy.

Common water pollutants:

- Rubbish
- Germs (from human and animal poo)
- Soil/Dirt (when there aren't enough plants)
- Chemicals (eg. bug and weed killers)
- Nutrients (from soaps and fertilisers)

Warragamba Dam collects most of Sydney's drinking water in the Warragama Catchment.

How can you keep pollutants out of your catchment and waterway?

- ✓ Put your rubbish and recycling in the right bins. Create less rubbish.
- ✓ Plant anything! The roots of the plants keep the dirt out of our water!
- ✓ Pick up and put your pet's poo in the bin or compost it. (Keeps the germs out!)
- ✓ Don't put anything into stormwater drains. They go right to your local waterway.

Photo: Andrew & Caitlin, Water Monitoring Officers, testing the water to make sure it is clean and healthy

Wyangala Dam collects water (1,217 gigalitres) in the Lachlan catchment.

Copeton Dam collects water (1,346 gigalitres) in the Gwydir catchment.

Did you know?

The **Gwydir Wetlands** are the Country of the Kamilaroi people. Water (environmental flow) is released from Copeton Dam for the wetlands. The wetlands are very important for waterbirds and plants.

How will you care for your catchment?