

Oostanaula Creek and North Mouse Creek Watersheds

Vital Water Resources for Athens and McMinn County Residents

All of us who live, work play in the Watersheds of Oostanaula and North Mouse Creek influence the water quality! How we use our land is the most important factor determining water quality of our creeks and streams. The illustrations below shows the current land use throughout our community's watersheds. Predominant land use in Oostanaula Creek and North Mouse Creek Watersheds is forest, followed by agriculture and then urban activities. Development pressure is increasing as more people realize the economic benefits, abundant natural resources, and superior quality of life that the Athens-McMinn area offers to residents, industry, and commerce.

Water Quality in Oostanaula Creek and North Mouse Creek is Impacted by Pollution! Nutrient, sediment, and pathogen concentrations often exceed water quality standards set by Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, due to both agricultural and urban activities.

What IS A Watershed?

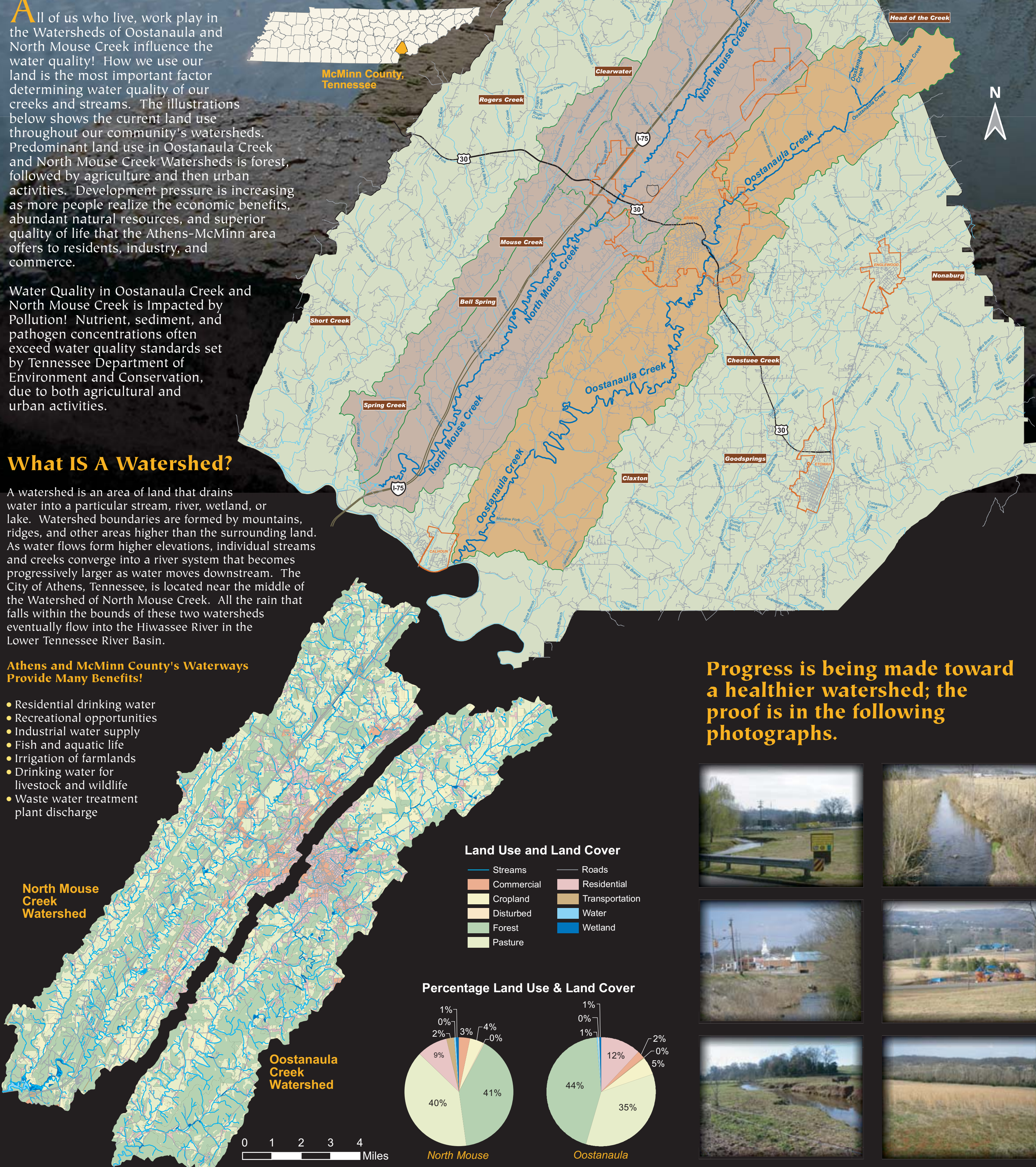
A watershed is an area of land that drains water into a particular stream, river, wetland, or lake. Watershed boundaries are formed by mountains, ridges, and other areas higher than the surrounding land. As water flows from higher elevations, individual streams and creeks converge into a river system that becomes progressively larger as water moves downstream. The City of Athens, Tennessee, is located near the middle of the Watershed of North Mouse Creek. All the rain that falls within the bounds of these two watersheds eventually flow into the Hiwassee River in the Lower Tennessee River Basin.

Athens and McMinn County's Waterways Provide Many Benefits!

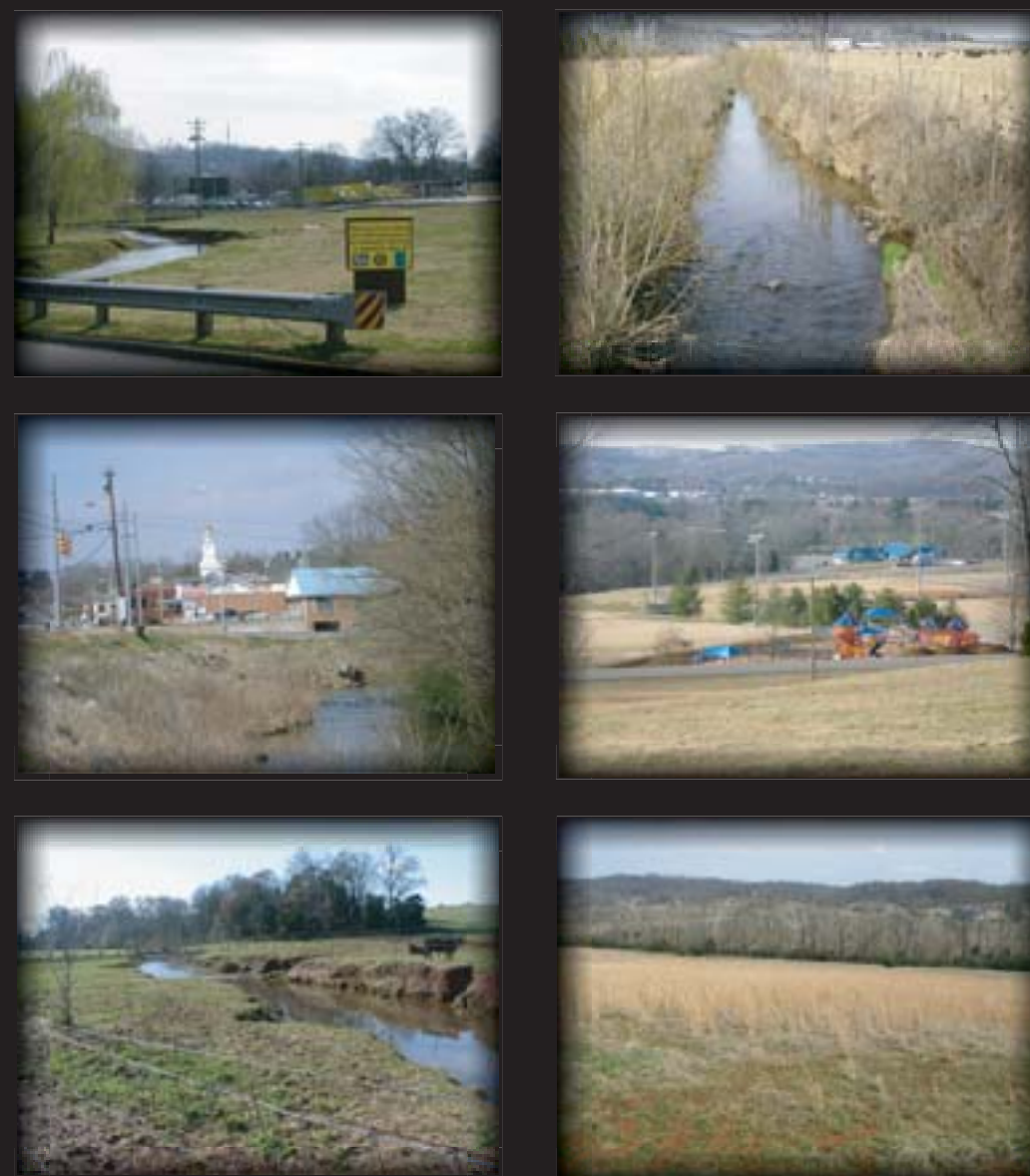
- Residential drinking water
- Recreational opportunities
- Industrial water supply
- Fish and aquatic life
- Irrigation of farmlands
- Drinking water for livestock and wildlife
- Waste water treatment plant discharge

North Mouse Creek Watershed

Oostanaula Creek Watershed



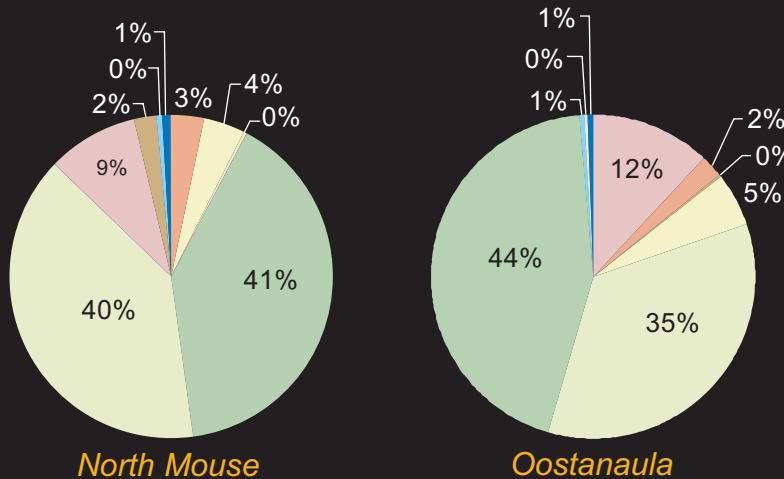
Progress is being made toward a healthier watershed; the proof is in the following photographs.



Land Use and Land Cover

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| Streams | Roads |
| Commercial | Residential |
| Cropland | Transportation |
| Disturbed | Water |
| Forest | Wetland |
| Pasture | |

Percentage Land Use & Land Cover



0 1 2 3 4 Miles