

# HOW DO FORESTS AFFECT OUR DRINKING WATER ?



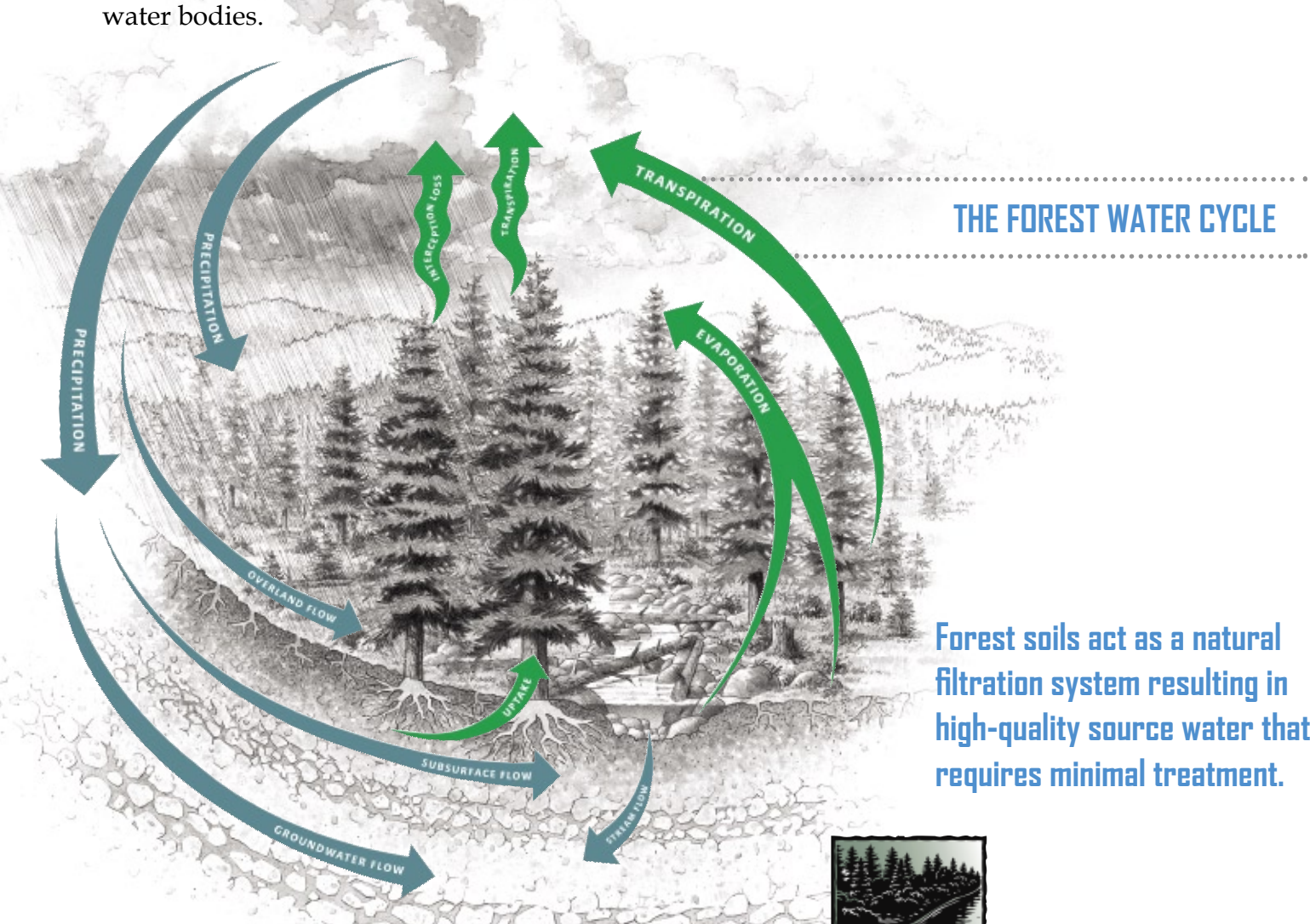
Clean water is among life's basic necessities. Healthy forests promote soils that provide natural filtration to keep streams clean and water quality high. Most of Oregon's municipal water systems use water that originates from forestlands, including those managed for wood production. The quality of this source water is among the best in the nation.

## WHAT IS A WATERSHED ?

A watershed is an area of land that absorbs rain and snow and drains it through a network of streams into a river or other major water body. All land in Oregon is within one watershed or another. Watershed boundaries can be generally identified by mountains and ridges that divide the drainage areas for different water bodies.

## HOW DOES THE WATER CYCLE WORK ?

As the water reaches healthy forest soils, most is absorbed and, over time, is released to nearby streams or groundwater aquifers, filtering it in the process. Most communities in the United States get their water from watersheds where mixed land uses such as agriculture and development may impact source water quality.



Oregon's Legislature created the Oregon Forest Resources Institute to improve public understanding of Oregon's forest resources and to encourage sound forest practices



Learn more at [www.oregonforests.org](http://www.oregonforests.org)