Spring 2026

College of the Redwoods

Course Information

Semester & Year: Spring 2026

Course ID & Section #number: FNR-80, 060488

Instructor's name: Liz McGee-Houghton

Day/Time of required meetings: Friday 10:05 to 2:25

Location: AT 127 and McKay Community Forest in Eureka

Course units: 2

Instructor Contact Information

Office location or Online : AT127

Office hours: Before or After Class

Phone number: 707-599-6138 (do not call me during class)

Email address: Liz-Houghton@redwoods.edu

Other method: Canvas email, Group text or Pronto for coordinating field meet up location

Required Material

The following textbook will be available on Canvas:

Primer on Watershed Management, edited by Pamela Edwards

Catalog Description

An introduction to hydrology and the science of managing watersheds. Topics include atmospheric inputs, run-off and erosion, storm-flow components, evapotranspiration impacts and groundwater use. Students participate in field exercises on evaluation and measurement of water resources

Course Student Learning Outcomes

1. Describe and classify features and hydrologic processes of watersheds
2. Explain potential impacts of management activities on streamflow, groundwater storage, sediment production, and water quality
3. Analyze the relationships between climate, weather, and vegetation and how these factors affect the movement of water through watersheds.
4. Lab specific outcome: Assess the physical and biological characteristics of watersheds.

Focus and Organization

Focus

In watershed management we will be focusing on the physical and biological characteristics, hydrologic function and management of the Ryan Creek watershed. Ryan Creek is located in Eureka in an area commonly known as the McKay tract. All of our field excursions will take place in this watershed.

Organization

The watershed management course is divided into three main topics. The three main sections and the topics covered for each is described below:

1. **Watershed characterization**

- In this section we will examine the characteristics of the Ryan Creek Watershed
- These characteristics include: size, location, ownership, land use, geology, soils, topography and vegetation

2. **Watershed hydrologic function**

- In this section we will explore the hydrologic function of the Ryan Creek watershed. We will be examining the hydrologic processes that take place in all watersheds: precipitation, evaporation, interception, infiltration, runoff, groundwater and streamflow.

3. **Watershed management (impacts to hydrologic function)**

- In this section we will be gathering information about the various projects taking place in the Ryan Creek watershed including, housing development, fish habitat restoration, sediment assessment, logging and road decommissioning.

Course Calendar

Week #	Date	Topic	What's Due
1	1/23/2026	What is a Watershed?	In-class assignments
		Watershed characterization: size, location, land use	

Week #	Date	Topic	What's Due
2	1/30/2026	Watershed characterization: Geology and Soils	In-class assignments Reflection on week 1 activity due Wednesday 1/28
3	2/6/2026	Watershed characterization: Topography and Vegetation	Reflection on week 2 activity Wednesday due 2/4
4	2/13/2026	Holiday	Reflection on week 3 activity due Wednesday 2/11
5	2/20/2026	Watershed Hydrologic function: precipitation and weather reports	Reflection on week 4 activity due Wednesday 2/18
6	2/27/2026	Watershed Hydrologic function: interception and evaporation	Reflection on week 5 activity due Wednesday 2/25
7	3/6/2026	Watershed Hydrologic function: infiltration	Reflection on week 6 activity due Wednesday 3/4
8	3/13/2026	Watershed Hydrologic function: groundwater	Reflection on week 7 activity due Wednesday 3/11
9	3/20/2026	Spring break	Nothing due
10	3/27/2026	Watershed Hydrologic function: streamflow 1	Reflection on week 8 activity due Wednesday 3/25
11	4/3/2026	Watershed Hydrologic function: streamflow 2	Reflection on week 10 activity due Wednesday 4/1
12	4/10/2026	Watershed management: roads and erosion	Reflection on week 11 activity due Wednesday 4/8
13	4/17/2026	Watershed management: water quality	Reflection on week 12 activity due Wednesday 4/15
14	4/24/2026	Watershed management: Fish and Wildlife	Reflection on week 13 activity due Wednesday 4/22
15	5/1/2026	Watershed management: Habitat Restoration	Reflection on week 14 activity due Wednesday 4/29
16	5/8/2026	Watershed management: social aspects	Reflection on week 15 activity due Wednesday 5/6
17	5/15/2026	Final	Reflection on week 16 activity due Wednesday 5/13 and Final Report due 5/15

Important Dates Calendar

If you are planning on graduating this year or want to drop a course and need to know the dates for certain events use this Enrollment services calendar **Here**

Evaluation & Grading Policy

Grades are based on attendance, weekly writing assignments and a Final watershed report. Attending all classes and completing all weekly assignments will give you a C in the course. If you miss one class you can complete the watershed report to get a passing grade or better.

Grade	Attendance	Weekly reflection	Watershed Report
A	Attend all classes	Turn in all weekly reflections *(with average score of 6 or better)*	Complete the watershed report with A grade
B	Attend all classes	Turn in all weekly reflections *(with average score of 6 or better)*	Complete the watershed report with B grade
C	Attend all classes	Turn in all weekly reflections *(with average score of 6 or better)*	No watershed report (note: completing the report will improve your grade)
Less than C	Miss one class or late 2 times	Miss one weekly reflection	No watershed report (note: completing the report will improve your grade)

Weekly Reflection (9pts each)

- Each week we will be covering a different topic in watershed management with particular emphasis on the Ryan Creek watershed in Eureka. You will be expected to participate in in-class and field activities along with read the material in each module. After each class you have 5 days to complete a reflection on the topic from the previous week.
- The reflection is worth 9pts and is due on Wednesday each week. No late assignments are accepted
- There is an example of a weekly reflection and rubric for the reflection assignments in the **Week 1 module**

Ryan Creek Watershed Report (32 pts)

- This course is divided into three major topics: Watershed characterization, Watershed Hydrologic function and Watershed management. Each major topic will build on the other. We will be focusing on these three major topics in the Ryan Creek Watershed and your final report should include all three topics and the subtopics included in each.
- The directions for the Ryan Creek watershed report and the rubric can be found in the **Ryan Creek Watershed report module.**

Late Policy

- No late assignments will be accepted. If you miss one class you can complete the watershed report to improve your grade

Attendance Policy

Missing Class

- If you miss 2 classes you will automatically be dropped from the course
- If you miss one class you can turn in the watershed report at the end of the course to improve your grade

Late Policy

- If you are late 3 times (10 minutes or more) for both in-class and field classes you will be dropped from the course

- **Note:** If you are late for the field class do not call me!

Canvas

Canvas is an important tool used in this course. It is where you can find the syllabus and links to weekly reading and reflection assignments.

Modules

- Weekly reading and reflection assignments can be found in the weekly module. Modules are labeled by week and by topic. For example the first module is labeled 'Week 1: What is a Watershed'.
- The weekly reflection assignments are turned in through Canvas
- There is a link to the modules on the course homepage.

Canvas communication.

I use Canvas almost exclusively for communication.

- Email me through Canvas and be sure that Canvas is linked to your phone or the device you use the most
- Announcements is another way I communicate and again be sure your device has the Canvas app or is connected to Canvas.

How to be successful in this class

- Attend class and do not be late
- Read the material provided in the module before class
- Complete all weekly reflections
- Communicate with me through Canvas with any questions or concerns

AI Use Class Policy

No AI use allowed

- Recent advancements in generative artificial intelligence (AI) have made large language models such as ChatGPT and Google's Bard widely available. However, overuse of these tools in this class can undermine your learning and curtail the development of your critical and creative thinking skills. In addition, AI outputs are often unreliable and frequently subject to bias. For these reasons, the policy of this class is that AI cannot be used at any point in the completion of class assignments. Any or all of your assignment submissions and discussion posts may be screened by AI detection software, but the real penalty for AI misuse is that you will miss out on an opportunity to learn.
- Most of the assignments in this class are based on your experience and what you learned. AI is not appropriate for this type of writing.
- If an assignment shows over 40% has been AI generated you will be asked to redo the assignment

Prerequisites / Co-requisites / Recommended Preparation

None

Educational Accessibility & Support

College of the Redwoods is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified students who could benefit from additional educational support and services. You may qualify if you have a physical, mental, sensory, or intellectual condition which causes you to struggle academically, including but not limited to:

- Mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, or bipolar disorder
- Common ailments such as arthritis, asthma, diabetes, autoimmune disorders and diseases
- Temporary impairments such as a broken bone, recovery from significant surgery, or a pregnancy-related disability
- Neurodevelopmental disorders such as a learning disability, intellectual disability, autism, acquired brain injury, or ADHD
- Vision, hearing, or mobility conditions

Available services include extended test time, quiet testing environments, academic assistance and tutoring through the **LIGHT Center**, counseling and advising, alternate formats of course materials (e.g. audio books or E-texts), assistive technology, learning disability assessments, approval for personal attendants, interpreters, priority registration, on-campus transportation, adaptive physical education and living skills courses, and more. If you believe you might benefit from disability- or health-related services and accommodations, please contact **Student Accessibility Support Services (SASS)**.

If you are unsure whether you qualify, please contact SASS for a consultation: **SASS@redwoods.edu**.

SASS office locations and phone numbers

Eureka campus

- Phone: 707-476-4280,
- Locations: Student Services building, first floor SS113

Del Norte campus

- Phone: 707-465-2353
- Location: Main building, near the Library

Klamath-Trinity campus

- 707-476-4280

Academic Integrity

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic integrity, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated a lack of academic integrity, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct (AP 5500) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the 2024-2025 College Catalog and CR Board and Administrative Policies.

Inclusive Language in the Classroom

College of the Redwoods aspires to create a learning environment in which all people feel comfortable in contributing their perspectives to classroom discussions. It therefore encourages instructors and students to use language that is inclusive and respectful.

Disruptive Behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include, but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the **2024-2025 College Catalog**and **CR Board and Administrative Policies**.

Final Note:

This Syllabus is subject to change at any time. I will let you know about the changes