The Red River Watershed encompasses approximately 1,268 miles of streams and rivers. Of this distance, roughly 27% is considered impaired (contaminated with pathogens, nutrients, and/or temperature alterations). The remaining streams are considered unimpaired, though their headwaters remain healthy. Both urban and rural streams are impacted by human activities. As one of the most endangered basins in the United States, the Red River Watershed is at increasing risk of suffering from the negative impacts of urbanization and development.

WATER QUALITY

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THREATS TO THE WATERSHED

Many of the threats to the Red River Watershed are derived from numerous agricultural and urban activities, which make up over 50% of the watershed’s land use. In addition to runoff, significant trends in urban development around the City of Clarksville, the largest city in the Red River Watershed and the second largest in the Cumberland Basin, the Red River has been formed by human activities. Urbanization and development have led to increased pollution and sedimentation, affecting the water quality of the Red River and its tributaries.

THE ECOLOGY

The Red River Watershed is one of the most endangered basins in the United States. Its ecoregion is characterized by a unique mix of both urban and rural landscapes. The Red River’s headwaters are located in the Lower Cumberland Basin, and its waters flow through this basin before entering the Red River. The Red River is home to over 200 species of fish and other aquatic organisms, including several endangered species of freshwater mussels. The Red River’s economy is heavily reliant on the use of its waters, with much of the region’s economic activity tied to the use of water resources. The Red River is an important source of recreation and tourism, and its water quality is a critical indicator of the health of the region.

THE RED RIVER WATERSHED

The Red River is one of the 14 major watersheds within the larger Cumberland Basin. The Red River is one of the 7 major tributaries of the Cumberland River, which flows for 750 miles across 9 states. The Red River is a critical source of water for millions of people in the region, and it is also home to a diverse array of species. The Red River is one of the most endangered basins in the United States, with over 200 species of fish and other aquatic organisms, including several endangered species of freshwater mussels. The Red River’s economy is heavily reliant on the use of its waters, with much of the region’s economic activity tied to the use of water resources. The Red River is an important source of recreation and tourism, and its water quality is a critical indicator of the health of the region.