ANNUAL RUNOFF IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES

Mark W. Busby

INTRODUCTION

Runoff is the part of precipitation that eventually reaches a stream channel. Runoff is of major concern to society, since it influences water resources, transportation, agriculture, forestry, and recreation. The map shown on this page presents the distribution of average annual runoff. The amount of runoff varies greatly from place to place in the country. The runoff is determined by the amount of precipitation in the area, the characteristics of the land surface, the distribution of vegetation, and the efficiency of the drainage system. The map provides a useful tool for understanding the distribution of runoff across the United States and for planning water resources management.