

HOW TO READ THIS MAP

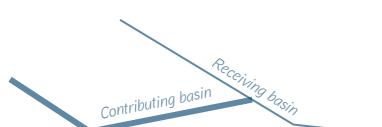
Each sub-basin is represented by three vertices, which are connected by two lines:



The width of each line is proportional to the amount of runoff (flow per unit area) that was generated in that sub-basin in 2018

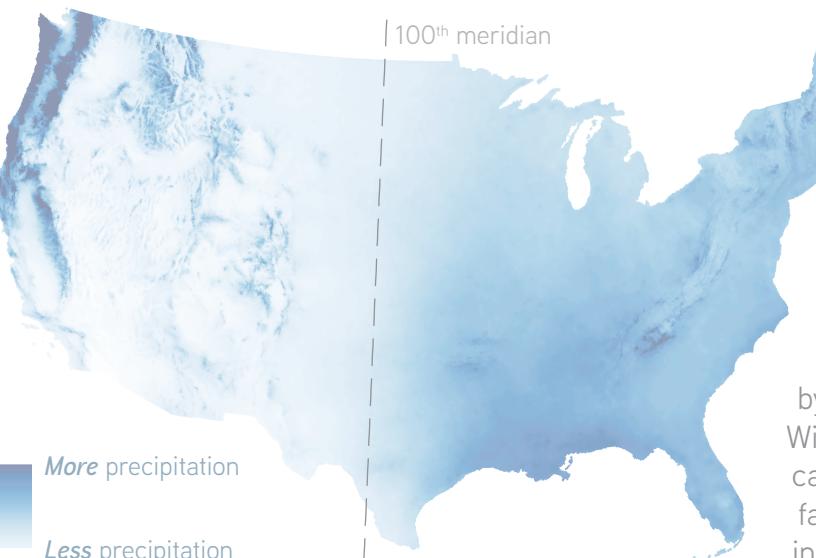
THIS BASIN HAS MORE RUNOFF
AND THIS ONE HAS LESS

If one basin flows into another, the outlet of the contributing basin connects to the line representing the basin that receives that runoff



SO WHY AREN'T THESE CIRCLES CONNECTED?

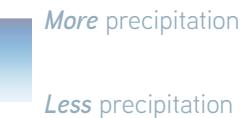
A closed circle indicates that the sub-basin contributes little to no runoff to another basin. Here, the amount of water generated within the sub-basin is represented by the width of the dotted line



100th MERIDIAN

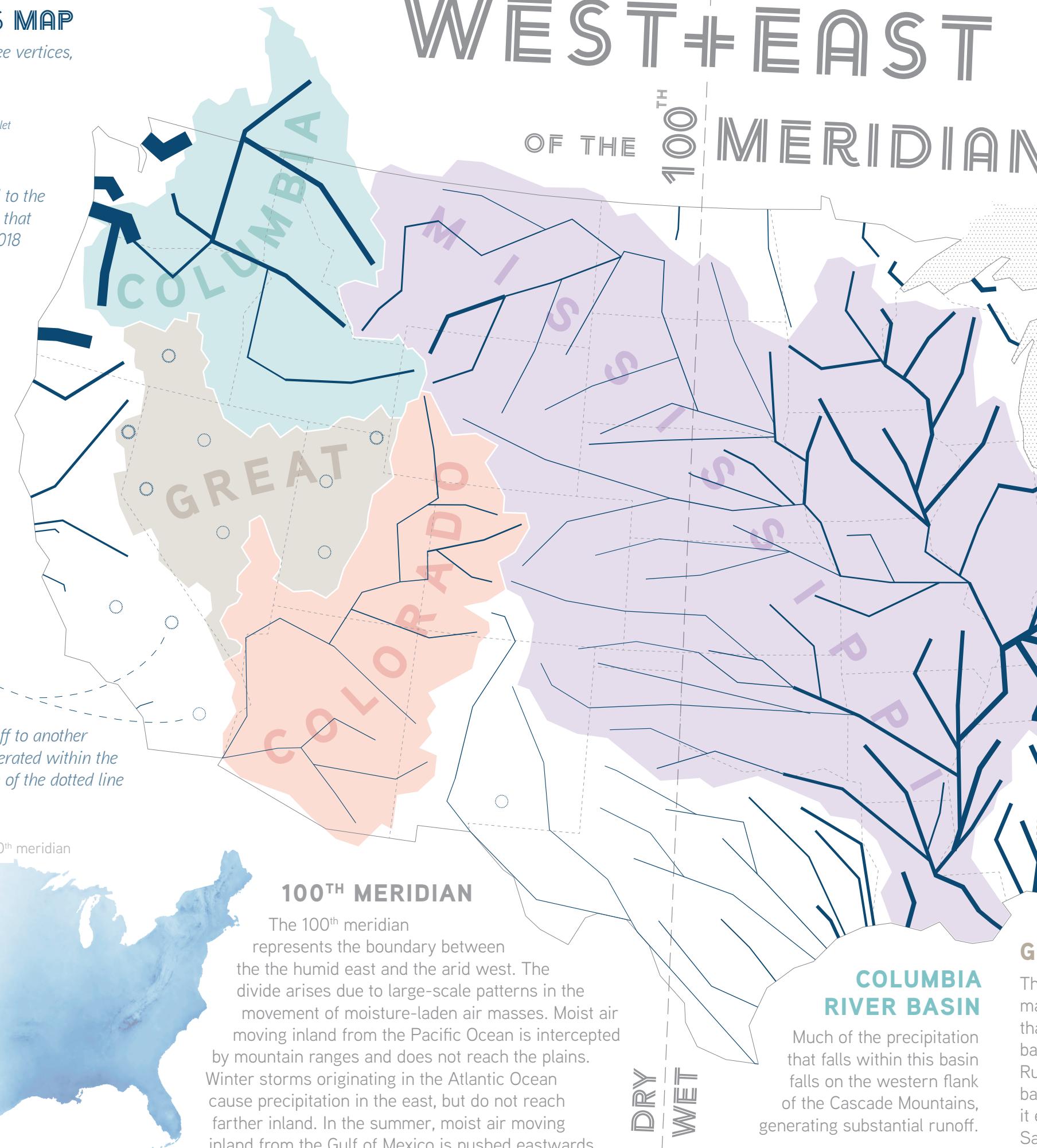
The 100th meridian represents the boundary between the the humid east and the arid west. The divide arises due to large-scale patterns in the movement of moisture-laden air masses. Moist air moving inland from the Pacific Ocean is intercepted by mountain ranges and does not reach the plains.

Winter storms originating in the Atlantic Ocean cause precipitation in the east, but do not reach farther inland. In the summer, moist air moving inland from the Gulf of Mexico is pushed eastwards.



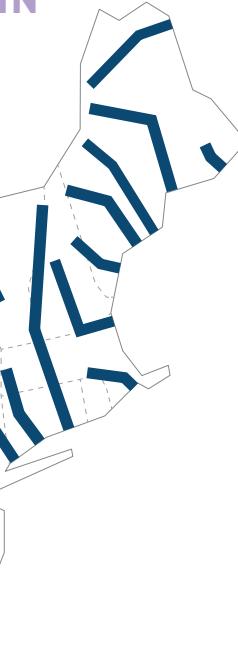
WEST + EAST OF THE 100th MERIDIAN

DRY
WET



MISSISSIPPI RIVER BASIN

Within the Mississippi River Basin, the smaller, eastern portion of the basin generates much more runoff than the larger, western portion.



COASTAL BASINS

Along the eastern seabord, sub-basins generally drain directly to the ocean, rather than to other sub-basins.

COLORADO RIVER BASIN

The Colorado River Basin is uniformly dry, with much less water generated per unit area than in other large river basins like the Columbia and the Mississippi.

Created by: Hayley Corson-Dosch
Projection: USA Contiguous Albers Equal Area Conic
Sources: USGS, Natural Earth, NOAA, PSMFC, PRISM Climate Group - Oregon State University, Columbia University State of the Planet blog

200

Miles

GREAT BASIN

The Great Basin is made up of closed basins that do not flow into other basins or drain to the ocean. Runoff generated within these basins converges into lakes where it evaporates, such as the Great Salt Lake in Utah.

COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN