

Ota River

Akiota is situated in the middle and upper reaches of the Ota River system, and residents of the area have been making use of the Ota's plentiful resources for hundreds of years. The Shibaki River, which flows through Sandankyo Gorge, and the Takiyama River, location of the Nukui Dam, are both tributaries of the Ota River.

The Ota's watershed originates on Mt. Kanmuri in the city of Hatsukaichi, and the river system picks up water from numerous tributaries before eventually emptying onto the alluvial delta at Hiroshima. The river then splits into several branches as it spreads out across the delta, eventually terminating in the Seto Inland Sea.

The opportunities for water transportation provided by the Ota River helped make the Kake district in the eastern part of Akiota a thriving commercial hub in the early Edo period (1603–1868), when Kake was a center of iron production. The Ota was used to transport not only iron but also charcoal, rice, and lumber. It was a decline in the local iron industry, along with the development of cars, roads, and railways, that caused water transport to cease before World War II, leading the Ota to fall quiet.

The river, however, remains essential to Akiota. It is the source of tap water for the wider region, which includes the city of Hiroshima. It also hosts hydroelectric power plants and supports abundant river life, including the sweetfish (*ayu*) and red-spotted trout (*amago*) that attract anglers from spring to autumn.