

algae

a group of relatively simple plants that generally live in an aquatic or moist environment

aquifer

a layer of rock or gravel that holds water and allows it to move

artesian

a term given to a body of water confined in an aquifer

base flow

streamflow originating entirely from ground water discharging to the stream; also known as basal flow

benthic

relating to those plants and animals that inhabit the floor of lakes, rivers and oceans

biochemical
oxygen demand
(BOD)

the amount of oxygen used
when the organic matter
undergoes decomposition
by micro-organisms

biota

all living organisms,
including plants
and animals

braided stream

a network of converging and
diverging streams separated
from each other by narrow
strips of sand and gravel

centrifugal

moving or directed
away from the
centre

drainage texture

the channel type,
density and pattern of a
drainage network

environmental flow

a proportion of a river's flow considered necessary to maintain its riverine ecosystem

epilimnion

the surface layer, or stratum, of water in a water body

groundwater

water beneath the earth's surface that fills pores between materials such as sand, soil or gravel

horizon (soil)

an identifiable layer in a soil profile, distinguished as a result of soil forming processes

hypolimnion

the bottom layer in a water body

impermeable

a layer of rock through which ground water cannot pass

impoundment

a reservoir built from what was once part of a free-flowing river; state of being impounded or captured

infiltration

the movement of water through the soil surface

laminar flow

water moving in smooth layers around an object

lentic

a term referring to still or slow-moving water bodies

lotic

a term referring to fast-moving water bodies

morphology

the study of the shape of the ground or landscape

organic

living material and its by-products

permeable

rocks or soils that allow water to pass into them

ponding

collection of runoff in depressions where it cannot drain out

porosity

the degree to which
water may pass
through matter

regulated

streams and rivers that
have their flow
controlled by dams or
weirs

river capture

a geological event that results
in one river or stream
capturing or intercepting a
part of another

riverine

a term relating to a
river

runoff

the proportion of rainfall
that does not infiltrate the
soil and flows into river
channels

sheet flow

runoff that flows over the ground as a thin, even layer rather than concentrated in a channel

stratification

appearing to be layered

tectonic

relating to the processes of the earth's crust

topography

the detailed surface of an area

transpiration

the loss of water vapour from plants via the leaves and, to a lesser extent, the stems

turbidity

the clouding of water
by the suspended
sediment

unregulated

relating to streams and
rivers that have not had
their flow controlled by
dams or weirs
