



Glossary of Wetlands Terms

A

Ambient: The surrounding area or environment, the background.

Ammocoetes: Juvenile or larval lamprey

Anadromous: Fish that are born in freshwater, spend most of their lives in saltwater, then return to freshwater to spawn

Attributes: The qualities or characteristics of something.

B

Baseline: A guide or value used for comparisons. The baseline is usually considered to be the normal or average.

Biodiversity: The variety of species in an ecosystem

Biomass: The total amount of living organisms or material

C

Channel morphology: The shape and direction of a river.

Composition: The components or parts that make up something.

Correlate: The connection between two things which depend or affect one another.

Culturally important species: Species which are very significant to local people and play roles in the diet, materials, medicine, cultural and/or spiritual values of communities.

D

Decompose: To become rotten or decay and break down into smaller parts.

Degradation: The break down or wearing down of something. Degradation usually leaves something in a worse state.

Density: A measure of how much matter occupies a given amount of space.

Diked wetland: Dikes are a structure used to control the water level and direction of flow. Diking wetlands can degrade the health of the wetland by interfering with natural processes like flooding, wave action, and drought.

DNA: The molecules that store and transmit genetic information about a living organism.

E

Ecosystem: The community of living (plants, animals, humans) and non-living things (water, rocks, climate) that interact together in an area.

Emergent marsh: A shallow-water wetland with grasses and plants that are adapted to live in the water

H

Haline: The measure of saltiness; salinity.

Homogenous: The same, made up of similar components.

Hydrology: The movement and distribution of water in an ecosystem. Wetland hydrology focuses on where there is water present at the surface (like in a stream) and beneath the surface (called groundwater).

I

Inundate: To cover or flood with water.

Invasive species: A species that is not originally from an ecosystem and causes harm. Invasive species often grow and reproduce quickly, which hurts the other living beings in the ecosystem and costs money to get rid of.

L

Large woody debris: Logs, branches, sticks, and other wood that falls into the stream.

M

Microorganisms: An organism that is too small to be seen with the eye, such as a bacteria, virus, or algae.

N

Non-native species: A species that originated somewhere other than the location that it now lives in.

P

Perennial Creek: A creek or river that has a constant flow of water throughout a year of normal rainfall.

Pool: Areas of relatively slow moving, deep water.

R

Riffle: Areas of relatively fast, shallow, and turbulent water, which run over larger gravel or rocks.

S

Salinity: A measurement of how much salt is in the water.

Solar radiation: Energy released by the sun, partly in the form of sunlight and heat.

Species richness: The number of species in an ecosystem.

Substrate: The surface on which an organism lives. The substrate often refers to the material that makes up the ground (soil, gravel, sand, etc.).

Succession: The progressive change from one biological community to another over time.

U

Unconsolidated: Consisting of parts that are not stuck together.

V

Vegetation cover: The percentage of the ground which is covered by plants. Vegetation cover can show what plant species are common in an area.