



Glossary



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Aboriginal Peoples (Canada)	As recognized by the Canadian Constitution, Aboriginal Peoples are descendants of the original inhabitants of North America and include Indians (commonly designated First Nations), Métis, and Inuit populations.
A horizon	
Air Quality Control Region	A contiguous area where air quality is relatively uniform. AQCRs may consist of two or more cities, counties, or other governmental entities, and each region is required to adopt consistent pollution control measures across the political jurisdictions involved.
Alfisol	A soil order that is primarily clay.
Alkaline tolerant	Plants tolerant of soils with pH above 7; opposite of acid-tolerant.
Ammonite	A group of extinct invertebrates; a type of mollusk closely related to squid and octopus.
Anadromous	Sea-run fishes that hatch in and return to their natal freshwater streams or rivers to spawn.
Andisol	Soil with high glass content, such as those in areas of volcanic activity.
Aquatic nuisance species	Invasive animal species of concern, including undesirable species such as quagga or zebra mussels and rusty crayfish.
Aquifer	A water-bearing stratum of permeable rock, sand, or gravel.
Aridisol	Desert soils that typically develop in arid or semi-arid regions.
Attainment areas	A zone within which the level of a pollutant is considered to meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
ATVs	All-terrain vehicles; either three-wheeled or four-wheeled vehicles capable of traveling off-road or on uneven, rugged terrain.
A-weighted decibels	An expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear.
Ballast water	Water in onboard tanks on large ships to maintain lateral stability during travel on the ocean or large lakes.

Barren land	As defined in the National Land Cover Data Classification (NLCD) Legend: barren areas of bedrock, desert pavement, scarps, talus, slides, volcanic material, glacial debris, sand dunes, strip mines, gravel pits, and other accumulations of earthen material. Generally, vegetation accounts for less than 15 percent of total cover.
Basement rocks	The oldest rocks in a given area.
Bentonite	A type of clay formed from weathering of volcanic ash, usually in the presence of water.
Biface/bifacial	A stone tool modified or flaked on two edges, often used as a knife or cutting tool.
Bioturbation	The displacement and mixing of marine sediments by living organisms.
Blastoids	A common ancient marine fossil called “sea buds” that look like hickory nuts.
Brachiopods	Marine “lampshells” with two hard valves enclosing the body.
Bryozoa	Small aquatic invertebrates known as “moss animals.”
Carrying capacity	The maximum population of a species (as of deer) that an area will support without undergoing deterioration.
Cephalopods	A category of mollusks to which octopus, squid, and cuttlefish belong.
Champsosaurs	Large, semiaquatic, extinct reptiles somewhat similar to crocodiles.
Child	As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, any unmarried individual under the age of 18 years.
Class I	Class 1 federal lands include areas such as national parks, national wilderness areas, and national monuments. These areas are granted special air quality protections under Section 162(a) of the federal Clean Air Act.
Conodonts	Small extinct marine organisms that resembled eels and had sharp teeth.

Continental Divide	Natural, high-elevation boundary line separating waters that flow into the Atlantic Ocean or Gulf of Mexico from those that flow into the Pacific Ocean.
Core	A primary stone piece from which smaller flakes are removed to fashion finished tools.
Corner-notched point	A projectile point with characteristic notches at the corners of the tool's base.
Crinoids	Marine organisms known as "sea lilies" or "feather stars."
Criteria pollutants	Six primary air pollutants found throughout the United States as defined by EPA pursuant to the Clean Air Act. They are particulates, ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, and lead.
Day-night sound level	The A-weighted equivalent sound level for a 24-hour period with 10 dB added to levels between 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.
Decibel	A logarithmic unit of measurement that expresses the ratio of a sound pressure level to a standard reference level. The decibel is useful for a wide variety of measurements in science (for this application, it is sound).
Developed	Land cover type that, for the purposes of this report, is a sum of the following NLCD classifications for development (Open Space, Low Intensity, Medium Intensity, and High Intensity). These areas commonly include housing units, surfaces that are more than 20 percent impervious (e.g., pavement), and commercial/industrial complexes.
Dolostone	Ancient sedimentary rocks similar to limestone.
Drainage or leach field	A field used to remove contaminants and impurities from the liquid that emerges from the septic tank.
Drumlin	An elongated hill formed by glacial ice acting on unconsolidated soils.
Ecoregion	An area defined by environmental conditions and natural features, including climate, landforms, and soils.
Entisol	A young soil with only an A horizon; entisols are the most extensive soils in the world.

Equivalent sound level	The level of a steady-state noise without impulses or tone components that is equivalent to the actual noise emitted over a period of time.
Erodibility	The measure of susceptibility to erosion, which is the wearing away of material.
Erosion	Breakdown of the continents, bedrock, large rock, or soil aggregates into smaller components, caused by wind, waves, rain, snow, or ice.
Erratics	Rocks relocated by glaciers or other geologic forces.
Escarpment	A steep slope or long cliff that results from erosion or faulting and separates two relatively level areas of differing elevations.
Esker	A long winding ridge of gravel and sand formed by past glaciers.
Evapotranspiration	The sum of water from evaporation and plant transpiration to the atmosphere.
Fir-waves	Set of alternating bands of fir trees in consecutive stages of development; observed in forests on exposed mountain slopes.
Flake tool	A small utilized tool made from a single small flake without the diagnostic characteristics of a finished artifact.
Fledged	Successfully emerged from the nest; as in a passerine bird making its first flight away from the nest.
Forearc	The region in a volcanic arc system that separates the volcanic front from the subducting oceanic plate.
Fossiliferous	Containing fossils.
Gastropods	A group of animals usually referred to as slugs and snails.
Glare	Light reflected off surfaces.
Gondwana	The southernmost of two continents formed when the original supercontinent Pangea broke up.
Graptolites	Extinct fossil colonial animals.
Grinder pump	A waste management device used in a septic tank that turns on once the waste inside the tank reaches a specific level and grinds it.

Groundwater	water within the earth especially that supplies wells and springs
Gullying	Land and soil depressions created by water erosion.
Gymnosperms	A type of seed-bearing plant including modern day conifers and ginkgo trees.
Herbaceous	As defined in the NLCD Classification Legend; Areas dominated by grammanoid or herbaceous vegetation, generally greater than 80 percent of total vegetation. These areas are not subject to intensive management such as tilling, but can be utilized for grazing.
Herptiles	Amphibians and reptiles.
Hertz	A unit of frequency equal to 1 cycle per second.
Histosol	Soils that contain primarily organic material that form in areas of persistent moisture such as wetlands.
Holocene	Of, relating to, or being the present epoch of geological history.
Humus	A brown or black complex variable material resulting from partial decomposition of plant or animal matter and forming the organic portion of soil.
Hydraulic flow	The volume of fluid that passes through a given surface per unit time.
Hyoliths	Extinct animals with conical shells.
Inceptisol	Soils that develop on surfaces that have not had adequate time to develop soil profiles and thus do not have extensive soil horizons.
Intentional destructive act	Includes intentional malevolent acts, intentional malicious acts, and acts of terrorism.
Intraplate quake	An earthquake that occurs inside the tectonic plate, as opposed to its boundaries.
Intrinsic quality	Scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archaeological, or natural features that are considered representative, unique, irreplaceable, or distinctly characteristic of an area.
Karst	A terrain formed by the dissolution of layers of limestone.
Kettle lakes	Lakes formed when melting glacial ice leaves a depression surrounded by glacial till, and the depression fills with water.

Keystone species	Species for which the impact on its biological community or ecosystem is disproportionately large in relation to its abundance.
Lanceolate	The shape of a tool (usually of flaked stone) in the form of the head of a lance, oval in outline with a sharp point at one or both ends.
Land subsidence	A gradual or sudden sinking of ground due to subsurface movement.
Level of Service (LOS)	A qualitative measure of the operating conditions of an intersection or other transportation facility. There are six LOS (A through F) defined; LOS A represents the best operating conditions, with no congestion, and LOS F is the worst, with heavy congestion.
Linear accelerator (linac)	The device most commonly used for external beam radiation treatments for patients with cancer.
Line of sight areas	Areas that are in the view.
Lithic	A flaked stone tool or waste fragment made by a reductive process of removing flakes and pieces of stone from a larger piece.
Lithologically	Related to the physical characteristics of a rock or rock formation.
Loam	A soil consisting of a friable (easily crumbled or pulverized) mixture of varying proportions of clay, silt, and sand.
Loess	Silt deposits from wind activity.
Loess-covered hills	Hills composed of wind-blown silt (fine soil particles).
Low income population	Populations that meet the threshold for poverty established by the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Reports on Income and Poverty. For Canada, the poverty threshold is defined on the basis of "low income" persons.
Lycopods	Related to modern club mosses; extinct forms were tree-sized.
Madrone	A Coast Range small tree species with very rich brown (chocolate-colored) bark.
Mélange	A disordered mix of rocks of different shapes, sizes, ages, and origins.

Mesic	Habitat with a medium or moderate supply of moisture (e.g., a mesic forest or mesic prairie).
Metamorphosed rock	Rock that is transformed inside the earth due to high temperature and pressure.
Microphytic	Plants of microscopic or nearly microscopic size, often forming a crust on the soil.
Mineral leaching	The loss of minerals by liquid.
Minimum peak horizontal ground acceleration value	The lowest value of an earthquake-propelled particle's change in speed at the ground level horizontally.
Minority population	Individuals who self-identify as belonging to any of the following protected groups: Hispanic (may include individuals of any other category); Black or African American (not of Hispanic origin); American Indian or Alaska Native; and Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander. In Canada, Aboriginal Peoples are also included in the minority category.
Mollisol	Organic-rich soils that typically form under grasslands in semi-arid to semi-humid areas.
Mollusks	A large group of invertebrate animals including gastropods and cephalopods.
Moraines	Unconsolidated soil and rock in ridges, mounds, or hummocks deposited by retreating glaciers.
Muck	Soil consisting mostly of stable organic matter where decomposition ceases.
Mylonite	Crushed rocks that can reform and are found in areas of faulting.
National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)	Standards established by the EPA that apply to outdoor air throughout the country. Primary standards are designed to protect human health, with an adequate margin of safety, including sensitive populations such as children, the elderly, and individuals suffering from respiratory disease.
National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants	Emissions standards set by the EPA for an air pollutant not covered by NAAQS that may cause an increase in fatalities or in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating illness.

Nautiloids	A large group of marine mollusks, most of which are extinct today, except for the chambered nautilus.
New Source Performance Standards	Pollution control standards issued by the EPA. The term is used in the Clean Air Act to refer to air pollution emission standards, and in the Clean Water Act to refer to standards for discharges of industrial wastewater to surface waters.
Nonattainment areas	A locality where air pollution levels persistently exceed national standards or contributes to ambient air quality in a nearby area that fails to meet standards.
Oreodonts	A sheep-like extinct mammal.
Organic loading	The amount of organic material added to a body of water.
Orogeny	Mountain building.
Ostracod	A small crustacean enclosed in two hard valves, sometimes called a “seed shrimp” because of its appearance.
Palouse	Region of undulating landscape in eastern Washington and Idaho with native short grasses, now an upland or dry-land farming area, producing wheat and legumes.
Pangea	The single continent that existed millions of years ago before it broke up into the continents found today on Earth.
Peat	Accumulation of incompletely decayed vegetation.
Pelecypods	A class of animals that contains the bivalves clams, oysters, and mussels.
Perennial	Continuing to grow year after year; opposite of annual.
Perforator	A tool made of stone, bone, antler, wood, or other material with a small diameter tip of elongated shape used for perforating other materials such as wood, hide, or other materials.
Permeability	A measure of the ability of fluids to transverse the soils.
Phase I Cultural Resource Investigation	An early phase of a cultural resource documentation project involving review and summary of existing information and literature to document known cultural resources within a project area.

Phase II Cultural Resource Investigation	A later phase of a cultural resource documentation project involving a limited sample survey or inventory of a project area for cultural resources.
Phase III Cultural Resource Investigation	A later phase of a cultural resource documentation and evaluation project involving a complete pedestrian survey of a project area and including an inventory of all discovered and previously known precontact and postcontact cultural properties.
Physiographic provinces	A landform region with common geological history creating similar terrain.
Piezometric surface	In an unconfined aquifer, the height to which groundwater rises. In a confined aquifer, the height to which groundwater would rise if not confined. The height of the piezometric surface indicates the energy present in groundwater.
Placoderms	Extinct armored fish that had jaws.
Plutonic rocks	A type of igneous rock that forms deep beneath the earth.
PM10	Particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter.
PM2.5	Particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter.
Polyhedral core	A stone core with many faces resulting from the purposeful removal of large exterior flakes.
Populations of concern	Any of the populations identified as minority, low income, or children that are the subject populations for consideration in an analysis of environmental justice impacts or the protection of children.
Precontact	The general cultural period of prehistory referring to the time of Native American groups living in an area prior to the initial contact with Anglo-European settlers.
Postcontact	The general term for describing the historic cultural period after the time of initial contact and interaction between Native American peoples and Anglo-European settlers.
Preform	A stone shaped by flaking into a definable bifacial or unifacial form from which finished tools can be made by further stages of lithic reduction.

Projectile point	A tool of flaked stone, bone, metal, or other material used as a projectile, often attached to a shaft of wood, bone, or other material and used as a projectile such as a spear, dart, or arrow.
Provincial administration	An establishment of provincial or territorial government primarily engaged in activities of a governmental nature, such as legislative activities, judicial activities, taxation, public order and safety, and the administration of provincial or territorial government programs.
Protohistoric	A general cultural time period immediately prior to or at the time of initial contact between Native American Peoples and European settlers. A phase when the Native American cultures exhibit traits of traditional artifacts and methods mixed with European trade goods and materials.
Pseudokarst	Pseudokarst-geological formations similar to karst in development but without carbonate bedrock.
PTE	Potential to emit, the maximum amount of air contaminants that a source could emit if each process operated at 100 percent of its design capacity 24 hours/day, 365 days/year; materials that emit the most air contaminants are used or processed 100 percent of the time; and air pollution control equipment is turned off.
Pyroclastic	Rocks (and sometimes gas) that are released through volcanic activity.
Rain-shadow effect	Effect caused by the process in which moist air on the windward side of a mountain rises and cools, causing precipitation to fall as rain or snow, and leaving the leeward side of the mountain or mountain range dry.
Richter scale	The measurement of earthquake magnitude.
Ring of Fire	The area of the Pacific Ocean where many earthquakes and volcanic activity occur.
Ruck march	Long march with a heavy backpack on.
Scree	Aggregation of loose rocks on a slope.
Seismicity/seismic	Relating to earthquakes or earth vibration generally caused by tectonic plate movements.

Shrub/Scrub	As defined in the NLCD Classification Legend, areas dominated by shrubs less than 5 meters tall, with shrub canopy typically greater than 20 percent of total vegetation. This class includes true shrubs, young trees in an early successional stage, or trees stunted from environmental conditions.
Side-notched point	A projectile point with characteristic notches in the side of the tool's base.
Silviculture	Forestry; the practice of deliberately controlling the growth, composition, health, and quality of forests.
Soil horizons/strata	A layer of soil with physical characteristics similar to those of the soil above and below.
Spodosol	An acidic soil with a sub-layer of humus typically found in cool, humid areas such as forests.
State Implementation Plan (SIP)	The state plan for complying with the Federal Clean Air Act. A SIP consists of narrative, rules, technical documentation, and agreements that an individual state will use to clean up areas not meeting NAAQS.
Stemmed point	A projectile point with a discernable stem at its base that has a width dimension that is different from the blade (e.g., contracting stem, expanding stem, or straight stem).
Strata	A horizontal soil layer.
Stratigraphic	Related to the study of rock layers.
Stromatoporoids	Ancient organisms related to sponges that grew massive calcareous layers, leaving obvious fossils.
Subalpine zone	Zone below timberline, either in a mountainous area or to the south of the tree line in an Arctic area.
Subduction zone	Where one oceanic tectonic plate slides underneath another tectonic plate.
Swiftwater rescue	The removal of persons from threat or harm from water that is moving faster than walking pace.
Tableland	Landscape with buttes and flat-topped plateaus.
Talus	A sloping mass of rocky fragments at the base of a cliff.
Taphonomic	Refers to the process by which organisms become fossils.

Taxonomy	Soil taxonomy is the science of classifying soils based on their physical qualities and characteristics.
Thrust faulting (thrusting)	Faulting that pushes one layer of rock over another, causing a break in the earth's crust.
Till deposits	Accumulations of unsorted glacial sediment.
Titanotheres	An extinct group of large-hoofed mammals.
Trackway	A series of fossil footprints.
Trailerling	Putting a horse in a trailer to travel to a destination.
Ultisol	A soil that has a high acid content and low fertility, and has been leached of minerals by the processes of weathering.
Unifacial	A stone tool modified or flaked on only one edge, often used as a scraper or cutting tool.
Vertical zonation	Vegetation or "life zone" with vertical separation by altitude, equal to vegetation and climate zonation from a change in latitude (higher altitude zones are similar to more northerly zones).
Viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS)	A virus affecting fish.
Viewshed	All the surface areas visible from an observer's viewpoint.
Viewer group	Classes of viewers differentiated by their visual response to the facility and its setting. Response is affected by viewer activity, awareness, and values.
Viewer sensitivity	The viewer's variable receptivity to the elements within the environment they are viewing. Sensitivity is affected by viewer activity and awareness.
Visual element	A particular feature of the visual environment.
Visual impact	The degree of change in visual resources and the viewer response to those resources caused by a development project.
Visual quality	Character of the landscape that generally gives visual value to a setting.
Volcanic arc	An arc of volcanoes parallel to a mountain range when viewed on a map.

Windthrow

The effect created when multiple trees in a forest are uniformly blown down by high winds.

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