



Glossary

Algae

Small, often microscopic plants.

Aquifer

A large underground space between rocks where water seeps.

Biodiversity

The variety of life in all living organisms.

Buffer zone

A zone of vegetation between land and waterways which reduces runoff of sediment and nutrients into the waterway.

Catchment

An area of land that provides water to a stream, river, lake or estuary.

Cobbles

Small rocks and stones in the bed of a stream.

Condensation

The process by which a gas or vapour becomes liquid, e.g. when water is cooled it changes from steam or water vapour into liquid water.

Drainage

Lowering the water table to achieve productive land use for agriculture, horticulture, building, etc.

Effluent

A liquid waste material that is a left over product, usually from human activities, such as the waste from a milking shed.

Erosion

The wearing down and removal of soil and rock through the action of rivers, oceans, wind and rain. Soil erosion is accelerated by the removal of protective vegetation, over-cultivation, over-grazing and compaction.

Eutrophication

Nutrient enrichment of a water body (e.g. runoff into waterways of nutrient-rich effluent and fertilisers from agricultural and horticultural production). The nutrients accumulate at a rate greater than can be recycled by decomposition or used in photosynthesis often causing excessive weed growth or algal bloom.

Evaporation

The process where a liquid changes into a gas, usually as a result of heating.

Flocculate

The process whereby small particles in a liquid stick together to form clusters. Flocculation agents are used in the water treatment process to gather solids together.

Ground water

Water that is stored in the spaces between underground rocks and soil.

Grey water

Waste water such as from washing machines that can be reused e.g. in the garden.

Habitat

Place or type of site where biological communities naturally occur.

Indigenous

Native inhabitants, (plants or animals).

Invertebrate

Any animal that does not have a back bone, for example snails, insects, worms and many marine species. Invertebrates make up the biggest number of animal species.

Kaitiakitanga

The exercise of guardianship over a natural resource. Includes the ethic of stewardship.

Larva

A developmental stage in an insects life between the egg and the pupae or adult. Macroinvertebrate larvae are indicators of water quality

Macroinvertebrates

Any organism without a backbone or internal skeleton large enough to be visible to the naked eye. The diversity of macroinvertebrates in a stream is a good indicator of water quality. The greater the diversity, the better the water quality in the stream.

Mauri

Life force and spiritual life principle. Everything has mauri, including people, fish, animals and birds, land, seas and rivers.

Non point source discharge

A discharge that does not come from one specific point or place as it comes from many individual places or a widespread area. They include runoff from urban areas, agriculture, forestry and construction sites.

Organic matter

Decomposable plant material that helps improve soil structure.

pH

A scale of acidity and alkalinity from 0 - 14. 7 is neutral with numbers less than 7 representing acidity and those greater than 7 representing alkalinity.

Point source discharges

A source of pollution that can be pin-pointed to a particular site or pipe.

Pollution

An unwanted change in the atmosphere, water or soil that can harm living organisms.

Predator

Refers to an organism which obtains its energy (food) by consuming, usually killing, another organism - the prey.

Precipitation

Water falling in a liquid or solid state from the atmosphere to earth, e.g. rain and snow.

PTI (Pollution Tolerance Index)

A scale by which certain species of invertebrates are identified as living in particular quality of water. The higher the number the better the water quality required by the animal.

Pupae

A development stage in an insects life cycle between the larva and the adult stage; a resting stage where the larval insect is enclosed in a protective casing.

Resource Consent

An agreement between the Regional Council and a person/business/group to carry out an activity using a natural resource. Decisions about whether a consent should be granted are based on the Resource Management Act (1991).

Riffles

A stretch of a stream where the water is flowing over small rocks and cobbles and the water appears white and bubbly. This process helps to oxygenate the water.

Riparian

A strip of land, that can vary in width, next to a waterway.

Runoff

Water that moves across the surface of the land into streams rather than being absorbed by the soil. Runoff is typically a product of rainfall or melting snow and its volume is affected by factors such as rock and soil permeability, vegetation cover, ground temperature and ground slope.

Sediment

The soil particles and rock fragments transported and deposited by the action of rivers, sea and wind. Sedimentation is the build up of these particles.

Stormwater

Rainwater that drains off the land, usually from paved areas especially in towns. Stormwater drains systems usually flow straight into rivers, lakes or the ocean. The drain system is there to help prevent flooding.

Substrate

What the bottom of stream/river is formed from

Tephra

Solid matter ejected during a volcanic eruption.

Terrestrial

Of or living on land.

Topography

The natural surface features of the land area, its shape and height of the hills and valleys (mountains, hill, e.t.c).

Transpiration

The process by which water is absorbed by plants and then released back into the atmosphere.

Vascular plants

Plants which contain vessels that conduct fluid.

Water clarity

A measurement of how clear water is, the distance that objects can be seen through the water.

Wildlife corridors

Pockets of native vegetation close enough together to allow travel of native animals such as birds between them.

Water velocity

The speed at which water flows.