

Glossary

- acre-foot.** The volume of water sufficient to cover one acre of land to a depth of 1 foot. Equals 43,560 cubic feet or approximately 325,851 U.S. gallons.
- Albedo.** The amount of solar energy (shortwave radiation) reflected from the Earth back into space. It is a measure of the reflectivity of the earth's surface.
- Anhydrite.** Relatively common sedimentary mineral that forms massive rock layers and develops from the dewatering of gypsum.
- Anticline.** A geologic structure in which rocks are folded so the rock layers are convex, forming a dome, with the younger rocks on the outside.
- Applicant–committed Environmental Protection Measures.** Actions agreed to in advance of project initiation by the proponent; designed to protect resources.
- Aquifer.** A body of rock that is sufficiently permeable to conduct groundwater and to yield economically significant quantities of water to wells and springs.
- Aquitard.** A bed of low permeability adjacent to an aquifer that may store groundwater, although it does not yield water readily.
- Aridisols.** Soils that occur under arid climates, where evaporation greatly exceeds precipitation. They are characterized by an accumulation of carbonates and other salts.
- Big Game.** Native ungulate wildlife species that are hunted, such as deer and pronghorn antelope.
- Biological Soil Crust.** Community of non-vascular primary producers that occur as a "crust" on the surface of soils; made up of a mixture of algae, lichens, mosses, and cyanobacteria (bluegreen algae).
- Breccia.** A deposit consisting of fragmented rock materials caused by the collapse of underground voids due to dissolution of evaporite layers.
- Clastic rocks.** Sedimentary rocks composed of particles weathered from any type of pre-existing rocks and minerals.
- Convergence (mining).** Closure of the mined area through subsidence
- Cumulative Effect.** The impact that results from identified actions when they are added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of who undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.
- Diagenetic (geology).** The process of chemical and physical change in deposited sediment during its conversion to rock.
- Drawdown Contour.** A line derived from water modeling that depicts a certain lowering of the water level compared to its previous level.

Drawdown. The lowering of the water level in a well, spring, water body, or water table as a result of water withdrawal from an aquifer.

Elastoplastic rock. Massive, homogeneous, and relatively elastic rock with load-deformation characteristics that allow the rock to deviate significantly from a straight line without fracturing.

Ephemeral stream. A stream, or reach of a stream, that flows only in direct response to precipitation. It receives no continuous supply from melting snow or other source, and its channel is above the water table at all times.

Erosion. Detachment and movement of soil or rock fragments by water, wind, ice, or gravity. Wearing away of the land surface by running water, wind, ice, or other geologic agents, including such processes as gravitational creep.

Escarpment. A long, precipitous, cliff-like ridge of land or rock, commonly formed by faulting or fracturing of the underlying bedrock.

Evaporite (geology). Any of a variety of minerals found in the sedimentary deposit of soluble salts that result from the evaporation of water.

Facies (geology). A rock or stratified body with specific characteristics such as appearance or composition.

Forage. The plant material actually consumed by or available to grazing animals.

Fugitive Dust. A non-point source of air pollution, such as from unpaved roads, agricultural croplands, and construction sites.

Granitic (geology). A common, coarse-grained, light-colored, hard igneous rock consisting chiefly of quartz, orthoclase or microcline, and mica.

Groundwater. Subsurface water that is in the zone of saturation. The top surface of the groundwater is the "water table." Source of water for wells, seepage, springs.

Gypsite (geology). A variety of gypsum consisting of dirt and sand, found as a deposit in arid regions overlying gypsum.

Habitat Fragmentation. The division of large contiguous blocks of wildlife habitat into isolated smaller parcels separated by distances great enough to discourage wildlife movement between parcels.

Habitat. An environment that meets a specific set of physical, biological, temporal, or spatial characteristics that satisfy the requirements of a plant or animal species or group of species for part or all of their life cycle.

Hypersaline. Extremely salty, having much more salt than normal seawater or brine water.

Karst. Terrain with distinctive, often rolling, landforms created from the dissolution of soluble rocks, principally limestone and dolomite. It is characterized by springs, caves, and sinkholes that are often directly connected to aquifers.

Langbeinite. A potassium magnesium sulfate mineral with formula $K_2Mg_2(SO_4)_3$.

Metamorphic (geology). Rock that has been changed or transformed from its original form by excessive heat or pressure.

pH. A measure of the acidity or alkalinity of a solution. The pH scale ranges from 0 to 14, with 7 used for neutral solutions, increasing with increasing alkalinity and decreasing with increasing acidity.

Physiography. The physical geography of an area, characterized by similar landforms and geology.

Potash. Common name for various mined and manufactured salts that contain potassium in water-soluble form.

Potentiometric surface. The level to which groundwater would rise if not confined; equivalent to the top of a water table in an unconfined aquifer.

Sedimentary rocks. Rocks formed by accumulation and cementation of minerals transported by wind or water, or chemically precipitated.

Sylvite. Potassium chloride in natural mineral form. It forms crystals in the isometric system very similar to normal rock salt, halite.

Talus. The loose rock created by physical weathering, typically found on a steep mountainside or at the base of a cliff or slope.

Topography. The form and structure of the surface of land.

Troglobidic species or troglobites. Small cave-dwelling animals adapted to their dark surroundings.

Volcanic (geology). Relating to or produced by volcanoes.

Vug. A small cavity in a rock or vein, often with a mineral lining of different composition from that of the surrounding rock.

Watershed. The area of land where all of the water that drains from it flows into the same place.