

Glossary

agriculture (n.) The practice of growing crops and raising animals for food, fiber, or other use by humans

alluvial soil (n.) Sand, silt, clay, gravel, or other matter deposited by flowing water, such as a stream

aqueduct (n.) An artificial channel for moving a large quantity of flowing water

aquifer (n.) An underground layer of rock or sediment that holds usable amounts of groundwater

arid (adj.) Very dry; not having enough rainfall to support much natural vegetation or agriculture

atmosphere (n.) The air surrounding and bound to Earth

basin (n.) A hollow or depression in the Earth's surface that holds or can hold water; an area of land that shares a common drainage system

bay (n.) An inlet of a body of water, such as a sea, that is usually smaller than a gulf

biodiversity (n.) The variety of plant and animal species existing within a location or region

border (n.) A boundary, especially of a county, state, or country

canal (n.) A structure through which water flows from one point to another for irrigation or transportation purposes

census (n.) An official count of all the people in a particular place, often a country

climate (n.) The average weather conditions of a particular place or region over a long period of time

delta (n.) A piece of land created at the mouth of a river through deposition of sediments; can take characteristic shapes such as triangle, fan, or bird's foot

desert (n.) Dry land with little rainfall and few plants

elevation (n.) Height above sea level

Equator (n.) An imaginary circle around the Earth that is at every point equal distance from the North and South Poles

ethnic (adj.) Sharing distinctive cultural traits as a group

evaporate (v.) When a liquid changes to a vapor; removing moisture

expedition (n.) A journey or trip undertaken for a specific purpose, such as exploring or research

export (v.) To send to another country; (n.) an item sold in another country

fog (n.) Fine particles of water floating in the atmosphere near the ground

foothill (n.) A hill at the base of higher mountains

freshwater (n.) Water from precipitation and aquifers that flows in rivers, lakes, and other water ecosystems

glacier (n.) A large body of ice moving slowly down a slope or spreading outward over a land surface

granite (n.) A very hard rock that can be polished and used in buildings and monuments

grasslands (n.) Land covered by herbs (grasses and clover) rather than shrubs and trees

groundwater (n.) Water within the Earth that supplies wells and springs

gulf (n.) A part of an ocean or sea extending into the land

headland (n.) A point of land rising above the sea; a cliff

hemisphere (n.) One half of the Earth as divided by the Equator or a meridian

hydrology (n.) Movement, distribution, and characteristics of water on and below the surface of the land and in the atmosphere

immigrant (n.) A person who comes to a country to live there

indigenous (adj.) Native to a certain region or country

interior (n.) The inland part of a state or country

irrigation (n.) A system that supplies water to land through pipes, canals, aqueducts, or other means

isthmus (n.) A narrow strip of land connecting two larger land areas

lagoon (n.) A shallow channel or pond near or connected to a larger body of water

landscape (n.) The land that can be seen at one glance

latitude (n.) A measure of distance north or south of the Equator on Earth

longitude (n.) A measure of distance east or west from the Prime Meridian on Earth

marsh/marshland (n.) An area of saturated land usually comprising a mixture of grasses and open water

migrate (v.) To move from one place to another; to move seasonally between regions and climate zones, usually for feeding or breeding purposes

mineral (n.) A naturally occurring substance obtained usually from the ground

mountain range (n.) A series of peaks and/or ridges that are alike in form and origin

orient (v.) To set or arrange in a definite position, especially in relation to the points of the compass

Pacific Rim (n.) The countries bordering on or located in the Pacific Ocean

peninsula (n.) A piece of land nearly surrounded by water but connected to a larger land mass

plain (n.) A broad area of level or rolling and often treeless land

plateau (n.) A broad, flat area of elevated land

physiography (n.) A description of the features and changes of the Earth's surface, often specific to a place or region

populated (adj.) Serving as home to people

population (n.) The whole number of people living in a place or region

precipitation (n.) Water, or the amount of water, that falls to the Earth as rain, snow, or in another form

pueblo (n.) Land set aside by Spanish and Mexican rulers for settlers to establish farms and towns

rancheria (n.) American Indian settlement established by the U.S. government

rancho (n.) Land granted by Spanish and Mexican rulers for settlers to farm and raise livestock

region (n.) An area with common features or interconnections that set it apart from other areas

reservation (n.) An area of public lands reserved for a special use, such as land set aside for Native American communities

reservoir (n.) An artificial or natural lake used to collect water and provide a reliable supply

riparian (adj.) Pertaining to or situated along the banks of a river or stream

river (n.) A natural body of running water that is usually larger than a stream or creek and flows into an ocean, lake, or another river

rural (adj.) In or relating to an area of low and dispersed population

sediment (n.) Matter (such as sand or clay) deposited by water or wind

snowpack (n.) Snow that accumulates during a season

stream (n.) A body of running water smaller than a river; similar to a creek or brook

suburb (n.) A community close to a city

survey (v.) To find out the size, position, and characteristics of a piece of land

swamp (n.) Wet, spongy land often partly covered with water

terrain (n.) The surface features of land

topography (n.) The physical features and characteristics of an area of land

urban (adj.) Pertaining to or associated with a city

vegetation (n.) Plant life

volcano (n.) An opening in the Earth's crust through which molten rock, steam, and gases may come out of the Earth

watershed (n.) The area of land that drains into a common river or lake

wetland (n.) Land covered part of the time by fresh or saltwater, such as a swamp or marsh

woodlands (n.) Land covered with trees and shrubs

Credits

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