
GLOSSARY

accretion: Sediments carried by a stream and deposited along banks or surrounding areas.

active restoration: Specific, human actions taken to reestablish the natural processes, vegetation and resultant habitat of an ecosystem.

aggrade (aggradation): To raise the channel of a river by depositing sediment and similar materials.

alluvial: Pertaining to clay, silt, sand, gravel or other sedimentary matter deposited by flowing water, usually within a river valley.

anabranch: A channel that branches off from a river (often creating islands), rejoining it further downstream.

anadromous: Pertains to fish species that spend a portion of their life cycle in the ocean, but that migrate from to fresh water to spawn.

bank protection: A method of erosion control in which materials (usually rock revetment) are placed along the banks of a river in order to prevent encroachment on adjacent land.

bank stabilization: The prevention of channel migration through bank protection.

basin: An area drained by a river and its tributaries.

bottomlands: The low alluvial lands next to a river.

Central Valley Project (CVP): Agricultural water supply system that is operated and maintained by the Federal Bureau of Reclamation; water from the Sacramento River is captured and conveyed from Lake Shasta to the San Joaquin Valley.

channel migration: The lateral movement of a river channel as it adjusts to balance erosion with deposition.

channel: The space above the bed and between the banks occupied by a natural or artificial waterway that confines water.

chute cutoff: A channel that connects the converging areas of a meander bend; a chute cutoff creates an oxbow lake from an existing meander bend.



conservation easement: Legally binding restrictions that landowners voluntarily place on their properties that bind present and future owners; these restrictions limit certain rights and uses of the property for conservation, preservation or restoration purposes.

degrade (degradation): Opposite of aggrade (aggradation); to erode or deepen a river channel.

designated floodway: The river channel and that portion of the adjoining floodplain required to reasonably provide passage for the 100-year flood (defined by State Reclamation Board).

distributary: A branch of a river that flows away from the main river channel without rejoining it.

ecosystem: A community of different species interacting with one another and their environment.

endangered species: A species with so few surviving individuals that it is in danger of becoming extinct.

ephemeral: Lasting a short time; a stream that does not flow year round.

extirpation: Local extinction or complete disappearance of a species from a region.

floodplain: The relatively flat area along the sides of a river which is naturally subject to flooding.

floodway: The river zone that could theoretically (based on surveying data and hydraulic calculations) convey the 100-year flood with only a one-foot rise of water level above the height of the unconfined flood; construction is generally prohibited in these areas.

fluvial: Pertaining to a river.

forb: An herb that is not considered to be a grass or grasslike.

geomorphology: The study of the origins, processes and characteristics of landforms.

habitat: The environment of a plant or animal species.

hard points: Structures located adjacent to a river, such as buildings, bridges or levees, that change the direction or rate of channel migration by interfering with the river's movement.

hydrology: The science concerned with the properties, distributions and characteristics of the water in relation to the earth.

incidental take: The loss or harassment of a listed species or degradation of their habitat incidental to an otherwise lawful activity.

inner river zone: The estimated portion of river alluvium that has experienced river channel migration in the recent past and is likely to experience channel movement in the near future; the area includes the 100-year meanderbelt and areas of projected bank erosion over the next fifty years.

lagoon: Any small, pond-like body of water that may or may not be connected to a larger body of water.

levee: An embankment designed to prevent the flooding of a river; may be natural or human made.

levee toe: The outer edge of the levee base where it meets the levee grade.

limited meander: Allowing for river channel migration within a defined area.

marshlands: Wet areas of land dominated by typical wetland species, such as grasses and tule or cattails.

meander: The bend or curve in a river or stream channel. Also refers to the migration of the river or stream channel.

meander scar: The area of land marked by the earlier presence of a meandering river channel.

mitigation: An action designed to avoid, minimize, reduce or compensate for a significant impact to the environment.

natural levee: naturally occurring deposits along the sides of a river that constrain frequent floods.

neotropical migrants: Species, typically birds, that migrate to and from the tropical regions of North America, South America and the West Indies.

non-point source pollution: Water pollution deriving from a broad area rather than a specific place; for example, urban and agricultural runoff may contain non-point source pollutants.

one-hundred-year floodplain: The relatively flat portion of the river channel that has a one percent chance of being inundated by flood waters in any given year.

one-hundred-year meanderbelt: The area of land over which a river channel has historically migrated over a 100-year period.

oxbow lake: A horseshoe-shaped lake formed in an abandoned meander bend of a river.

passive restoration: Allowing a river system to restore its natural vegetation and processes without human help or interference (opposite of active restoration).

phreatophyte: Plant that draws water from saturated soils typically found in river floodplains.

reforestation: The replanting of trees in an area that was previously forested.

regulated floodway: The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved for the discharge of the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation by more than one foot.

restoration: The return of an ecosystem to an approximation of its former unimpaired condition.

riparian: Pertaining to the banks of a stream, such as riparian woodland or riparian vegetation.

riparian habitat: An area composed of native riparian vegetation that provides habitat for wildlife.

riparian corridor: A band of native riparian vegetation, or frequently flooded land, of variable width, adjacent to a river channel.

river gradient: The slope of a river's water surface profile.

rock revetment: A layer of rock designed to protect a river embankment.

Sacramento River Conservation Area (SRCA): The 222 miles of the Sacramento River and the adjacent 213,000 acres of land extending from Keswick Dam in Shasta County south to the town of Verona in Sutter County; the area is targeted for preservation of existing riparian habitat as well as restoration of previous zones of riparian habitat.

Senate Bill 1086 (SB 1086): Legislation authored by Senator Jim Nielsen that authorized the formation of the SB1086 Advisory Council to oversee issues related to the Sacramento River.

sensitive species: A plant or animal species listed by the state or federal government as threatened, endangered or as a species of special concern. SEE ALSO: threatened species, endangered species.

seral stages: Ecological communities that succeed one another in the biotic development of an area.

set-aside agreements: Short-term (5-year minimum) restrictions self-imposed by landowners that bind present as well as future owners, that enables land management with minimum interference; a contract, generally including the same types of conditions found in conservation easements, however, landowners could reserve the right to conduct limited agricultural and non-commercial activities within the set-aside area.

set-back levee: Levees that are constructed at a distance from the river channel in order to allow the river to occupy a portion of its floodplain; these levees are usually smaller in size than levees placed immediately adjacent to the river channel. SEE ALSO: levee, natural levee.

sinuous: Having many curves, bends or turns, such as a meandering river.

slough: A naturally occurring side or overflow channel that holds water.

snag: A dead tree or part of a tree, such as a stump, located in a river channel

State Water Project (SWP): The water storage and conveyance system that is operated and maintained by the California Department of Water Resources.

subreach: A general term used to describe a portion of a river reach.

succession: The replacement of one plant community by another over time.

threatened species: A species that is still abundant in its natural range but may become endangered if it declines in number.

trenched rock: A method of erosion control accomplished by burying rock or structural fill in an area set back from the main river channel; similar to windrowed rock.

tributary: A stream or body of water that flows into a larger body of water, such as a larger river.

understory: Underlying, low vegetation often including shrubs, small trees, grasses and forbs.

Upper Sacramento River Fisheries and Riparian Management Plan: Plan completed in 1989 by the SB1086 Advisory Council which recommends specific actions to be taken on the Sacramento River to restore fisheries and riparian habitat.

watershed: The total area above a given point on a watercourse that contributes water to its flow; the entire area from which a river receives its water supply. Also referred to as catchment or catchment basin.

weir: A notch or depression in a dam or other water barrier through which the flow of water is either measured or regulated.

wetland: Lands that are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where water is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water (typically streams, lakes and the open ocean).

windrowed rock: A method of erosion control where rock is piled in an area where the channel is likely to erode; theoretically, when erosion reaches the windrow, the rock will fall along the bank, increasing its stability; similar to trenched rock.