

Acronyms & Definitions

Anadromous - Fish, such as salmon and shad, that spawn in fresh water and then migrate to the sea.

ATSDR - Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

AWQC - Ambient water quality criteria for the protection of aquatic life

Benthic - Animals dwelling on the bottom of a water body. These organisms inhabit the sediment on lake, river, or ocean bottoms, as well as the sediment in marshes, tidal flats, and other wetlands.

Bioassay - A laboratory test that uses organisms to evaluate whether a sample is toxic.

Biological effects - Biological effects are measurements indicating that the health of animals living in the area (or evaluated in laboratory tests) has been adversely affected.

Biomagnify - The accumulation of certain chemicals (such as mercury and PCBs) biomagnifies (increases) as they pass through the food chain. This means that a low amount of mercury might be present in fish that eat plants, but higher amounts will accumulate in fish or birds that eat fish. Adverse effects are more likely to occur in birds or fish that eat other animals.

Catadromous - Fish, such as the American eel, that spawn in sea water and then migrate to fresh water.

CERCLA - CERCLA, or the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 created the Superfund and the National Priorities List ([NPL](#)).

CERCLIS - Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System

Cleanup - See remediation.

COC - Contaminant of concern

CPRD - Coastal Protection and Restoration Division, a program of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

CRC - Coastal Resource Coordinator

CWA - Clean Water Act

dbf - Database file

DDD - dichlorodiphenyldichloroethane

DDE - dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene

DDT - dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane

DOI - U.S. Department of the Interior

EPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency

ERL - Below the level of Effects Range Low (ERL), contaminants in sediment are not likely to have adverse effects on animals that live in sediment.

ERM - Above the level of Effects Range Median (ERM), contaminants in sediment probably have adverse effects on animals that live in sediment.

ESA - Endangered Species Act

ESRI - Environmental Systems Research Institute

Estuarine - Present, living or thriving in an estuary.

Estuary - A water passage where salt water meets fresh water. Estuaries often contain salt-marshes and other wetlands, which are important habitat for many species.

FUDS - Formerly Used Defense Site

GIS - Geographic Information System. GIS is used to join electronic files (databases) containing environmental measurements taken at a specific location, to maps showing geographic features. This approach allows scientists to show large amounts of data from specific locations on a map showing landscape features such as wetlands and land use.

GPS - Global Positioning System. GPS is a satellite navigation system, funded by and controlled by the U. S. Department of Defense (DOD). GPS provides specially coded satellite signals that can be processed in a GPS receiver, enabling the receiver to compute position, velocity and time. This very specific information allows the user to determine location with a high degree of precision. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) rely heavily on the precision afforded by GPS methods.

Habitat - The place where a plant or animal species naturally lives and grows; or characteristics of the soil, water, and biologic community (other plants and animals) that make this possible.

Hectare - One hectare is equal to 10,000 square meters, or 2.471 acres.

Injury - Harm or adverse effects to aquatic organisms and the habitats they require to complete their life cycle.

kg - kilogram

km - kilometer

L - liter

LID - Low Impact Development

LNAPL - light, non-aqueous phase liquid

LOEL - lowest observed effects level

m - meter

MARPLOT - Mapping Application for Response, Planning, and Local Operational Tasks

MBL - Marine Biology Laboratory

MDE - Maryland Department of the Environment

MDNR - Maryland Department of Natural Resources

MOA - Memorandum of Agreement

MOU - Memorandum of Understanding

NAD - North American Datum

NAPL - Non-aqueous phase liquid

NAWQA - National Water-Quality Assessment Program of the U.S. Geological Survey

NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act

NERR - National Estuarine Research Reserve

NGO - Non-Governmental Organization

NMFS – National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries)

NOAA – National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration

NOS – National Ocean Service

NPDES - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

NPL - The National Priorities List identifies locations throughout the U.S. where hazardous wastes have been found in the environment and the initial evaluation shows a significant risk of harm to human health or the environment. NPL sites are

frequently called "Superfund" sites, because Superfund money can be used by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to investigate and clean up these sites.

NS&T - National Status and Trends

NWIS - National Water Information System

ORR - Office of Response and Restoration

OU - Operable unit

PAH - Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbon

PA/SI - Preliminary Assessment/Site Investigation

PCB - Polychlorinated biphenyl

PCE - Perchloroethylene (also known as tetrachloroethylene)

PCP - Pentachlorophenol

ppt - Parts per thousand

PRP - Potentially Responsible Party

QA/QC - Quality Assessment/Quality Control

QM - Query Manager

RCRA - Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

RD/RA - Remedial Design/Remedial Action

Remediation - Also known as clean up, remediation is taking action to reduce, isolate, or remove contamination from an environment with the goal of preventing exposure to people or animals. Examples include dredging to remove contaminated sediment, or capping to prevent contaminated sediment from contacting benthic organisms.

Restoration - Improving or replacing habitat that is injured. Usually follows remediation.

RI/FS - Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study

Riparian - Beside or along the bank of a river.

ROD - Record of Decision

Superfund - The Superfund is money collected from a special tax on chemical feedstocks and raw petroleum. When a responsible party can not pay, Superfund money can be used by EPA to investigate, evaluate, and cleanup the hazardous waste sites identified on the NPL. Superfund is also used to refer to USEPA's program for

investigation and cleanup of hazardous waste sites.

SVOC - Semi-volatile organic compound

TCA - 1,1,1-trichloroethane

TCE - Trichloroethylene

TEL/PEL - Threshold and Probable Effects Levels

TMDL - Total Maximum Daily Load

TNT - 2,4,6-trinitrotoluene

TPH - Total petroleum hydrocarbons

Tributary - A stream feeding into a larger stream, lake, or other water body.

TSS - Total suspended solids

USACOE - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

USCG - U.S. Coast Guard

USEPA - U. S. Environmental Protection Agency

USFWS - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

USGS – U.S. Geological Survey

VOC - Volatile organic compound

Watershed - All the land and tributaries draining to a body of water.