

airshed: geographical areas in which air quality is a function of the same sources, weather and topography.

ambient air or water quality: the overall or general condition of air or water in a region outside the zone of influence of discharges — in contrast to local condition, which may be related to a specific source of contamination.

baseline: an actual result or a composite of an organization's past performance in a particular area that can be used to set future targets, or for comparison to other organizations. A baseline provides a starting point against which future progress can be assessed.

B.C. water quality guidelines: guidelines developed in B.C. that provide benchmarks for the assessment of water quality. If a substance concentration is lower than the concentration indicated in the guideline, generally speaking, a water quality problem for that particular substance is non-existent; however, if the substance concentration exceeds its guideline, an assessment of the water quality is warranted.

benchmarking: a process of continuously comparing and measuring an organization or aspects of an organization against sector/industry leaders, with the objective of gaining information that will help the organization take actions and make changes to improve its performance.

brownfield: an abandoned, vacant, derelict or underutilized commercial or industrial property where past actions have resulted in actual or perceived contamination and where there is an active potential for redevelopment.

coal bed gas: natural gas found in underground coal deposits. The gas is contained within the coal seam where it is absorbed or attached to the coal particles. During production, water is pumped out of the coal seams lowering the pressure thus releasing the gas to be collected and sent to market.

compliance: conformity with regulatory requirements established by government to protect the environment, human health and safety.

ecosystem: organisms of a natural community, together with their physical, chemical and biological environment.

Fisheries Sensitive Watershed (FSW): a designation under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*. To qualify as an FSW candidate, watersheds must meet two criteria: significant fisheries values and watershed sensitivity. More information can be found at <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/frpa/fsw/index.html>.

greenhouse gases: gases that play a part in the greenhouse effect: carbon dioxide (CO₂, the most significant greenhouse gas), methane, nitrous oxide, ozone, water vapour, chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other trace gases.

industry-led product stewardship: places the responsibility for end-of-life product management on those who produce, distribute, sell or use products or containers listed under the B.C. Recycling Regulation.

low level ozone: Also called ground level ozone. A bluish gas with a pungent odour. At ground level, ozone is formed by chemical reactions between volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in the presence of sunlight. VOCs and NO₂ are released by burning coal, gasoline and other fuels, and are naturally released by plants and trees.

mountain pine beetle: the mountain pine beetle epidemic in B.C. is the largest forest insect infestation in Canada's history. The beetle prefers mature timber and is affecting lodge pole pines of 80 years or more.

nitrate: an essential plant nutrient found in fertilizers and which may be produced during the breakdown of organic wastes. Excessive fertilizer application, improper agricultural waste management or underground septic tanks may increase nitrate levels in groundwater. Nitrates reduce the ability of blood to carry oxygen. Infants under six months are particularly at risk from drinking well water containing excessive nitrates.

particulate matter (PM): fine liquid or solid particles (such as dust, smoke, mist fumes or smog) found in the air or emissions. Also known as particulates.

pollution prevention hierarchy: as follows in descending order of priority: reduce the environmental impact of producing the product by eliminating toxic components and increasing energy and resource efficiency; redesign the product to improve reusability or recyclability; eliminate or reduce the generation of unused portions of a product that is consumable; reuse the product; recycle the product; recover material or energy from the product; otherwise dispose of the waste from the product in compliance with the *Environmental Management Act*.

PM_{2.5}: a measure of particulate matter under 2.5 microns. Recent studies have shown that particles of 2.5 microns or less (PM_{2.5}) pose the greatest health risk. A particle of 2.5 microns is about 1/20th the width of a human hair.

protected areas: refers to parks, recreation areas, ecological reserves and designations under legislation for which the Ministry of Environment is responsible. They include:

- Class A parks established under the *Park Act* or by the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*.

- Class B and C parks and recreation areas established under the *Park Act*.
- Ecological reserves established under the *Ecological Reserve Act* or by the *Protected Areas of British Columbia Act*.
- "protected areas" and other conservation-oriented designations established under the *Environment and Land Use Act* that are managed by the Environmental Stewardship Division, Ministry of Environment.

species at risk: species at risk means endangered, extirpated or threatened.

stewardship: stewardship refers to the concept of responsibly managing natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations and encouraging the active participation of persons or groups, including citizens, communities, government and industry.

ungulate: a hoofed mammal such as a caribou, moose, bison or goat.

Ungulate Winter Range (UWRs): areas that contain habitat that is necessary for meeting the winter habitat requirements of ungulate species. UWRs are based on our current understanding of ungulate habitat requirements in winter, as interpreted by the Ministry of Environment regional staff from current scientific and management literature, local knowledge, and other expertise from the region. For more information, please visit <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/frpa/uwr/index.html>.

watershed: an entire area that is drained by a waterway or that drains into a lake or reservoir. Also referred to as a water basin.

Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHAs): mapped areas of Crown land containing critical habitat, such as breeding, feeding and denning habitat, crucial to identified wildlife. WHAs help protect species and plant communities at risk by specifying mandatory practices called general wildlife measures.