

Creek Kid Program

Terminology

Water Cycle Terminology

Watershed - an area of land that drains water into a stream or other water body

Water Cycle - water constantly moving between the atmosphere, the surface of the earth and within the earth

Precipitation - rain, sleet, hail, snow and other forms of water falling to earth

Infiltration - when water is absorbed into the earth

Evaporation - surface water moving into the atmosphere

Transpiration - water moving from plants to the atmosphere

Runoff - when water flows over the land surface

Available Freshwater - 3% of the earth's water is freshwater (Only 1% is drinkable for humans, 2% is groundwater and glaciers)

Groundwater - water under the surface of the earth

Aquatic - things that are in or of water but not water itself

Water Resource - water bodies such as streams, rivers and lakes including groundwater

Pollution Terminology

Nonpoint source pollution - pollution occurring mainly through runoff (Example-oil, sediments, fertilize, animal waste, etc....)

Point source pollution - pollution that can be traced to a specific point of entry, such as discharge pipe from a factory

Nutrients - substances which help plants and animals live and grow (such as nitrogen and phosphorus)

Sediments - soil particles carried by rainwater into streams, lakes, rivers and bays

Pollution Indicators - sensitive macroinvertebrates (aquatic bugs) and relative numbers of fishes are used in studies to determine stream health

Fish Kill - when large numbers of fish die at one time

Stream Terminology

Riffles - fast moving water, high turbulence, has plenty of food and oxygen for organisms

Pools - slow moving water has finer sediments, lower turbulence and lower levels of oxygen

Runs - smooth flowing water between riffles and pools

Water Critters and Plants

Vertebrate - an animal that has vertebrae (a backbone): fish, bird, mammal, amphibian, or reptile

Invertebrate - an animal that does not have vertebrae: worm, insect, mussel, snail

Fish - a cold-blooded vertebrate animal that lives in water and has fins and gills



Alabama Hog Sucker

Mussel - an animal with two-valved (two-part) shell that filters water



Snail - slow moving animal (mollusk) that has a wormlike body and a spiral protective shell



Plankton - slow floating or swimming animal or plant life in a body of water



plankton

Phytoplankton - algae in the water column



Detritus - accumulated organic material or debris made from dead plants or animals which lies on the bottom of a water body