Rhode Island Wildlife Action Plan

Glossary

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

State of Rhode Island
Department of Environmental Management

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Term	Definition
acid deposition	a general name for a number of phenomena, namely acid rain, acid fog, and acid mist; it can imply both wet and dry (gaseous) precipitation; is concerned with long-range rather than local effects. Pollutants are mixed in the atmosphere and therefore usually cannot be attributed to any local source; pollutants are generally more dispersed and of lower concentrations than local ground level pollutants. Acid deposition typically has a pH below 4, but this may be as low as 1.5 under seriously acidic conditions. It primarily consists of two types of compounds, namely sulfuric acid (H_2SO_4) and nitric acid (HNO_3).
acid mine drainage	the outflow of acidic water from metal mines or coal mines; occurs naturally within some environments as part of the rock weathering process but is exacerbated by large-scale earth disturbances characteristic of mining and other large construction activities, usually within rocks containing an abundance of sulfide minerals.
Agricultural Land Preservation Program	a program overseen by the Agricultural Land Preservation Commission the preservation of agricultural lands through the purchase of farmland development rights. Purchasing development rights from farmers enables them to retain ownership of their property and protects their lands for agricultural use. At the same time it provides farmers with a financially competitive alternative to development.
alien plant	plants that are non-native to an ecosystem
ameliorate	to improve or make something better
amphibians	cold-blooded animals that metamorphose from a juvenile to an adult form (most do).Amphibians cannot generate their own body heat, instead relying on the temperature of their environment to help them keep warm or cool enough to survive. They inhabit a wide variety of habitats with most species living within terrestrial, fossorial, arboreal, or freshwater aquatic ecosystems. Amphibians typically start out as larva living in water, but some species have developed behavioral adaptations to bypass this. The young generally undergo metamorphosis from larva with gills to an adult air-breathing form with lungs. Amphibians use their skin as a secondary respiratory surface and some small terrestrial salamanders and frogs lack lungs and rely entirely upon skin. They are superficially similar to reptiles but, along with mammals and birds, reptiles are amniotes and do not require water bodies in which to breed. With their complex reproductive needs and permeable skins, amphibians are often ecological indicators and in recent decades there has been a dramatic decline in amphibian populations for many species around the globe.
anadromous	of a fish, (such as the salmon) migrating up rivers from the sea to spawn.
anthropogenic	(chiefly of environmental pollution and pollutants) originating in human activity

Term	Definition
arbovirus	a class of viruses transmitted to humans by arthropods such as mosquitoes and ticks. The first two letters of the words **ar**thropod' and **bo**rne, make up the 'arbo' that now designates this group of viruses as arthropod-borne.
arousal	physiological readiness for activity; the period of awakeness after sleep or topor (e.g., awake from hibernation or topor for bats)
atmospheric deposition	gases and particulates released to the atmosphere from combustion sources such as motor vehicle emissions, slash burning, and industrial sources, contain nitrogen, sulfur, and metal compounds, which eventually settle to the ground as dust or fall to the earth in rain and snow
avifauna	the birds or the kinds of birds of a region, period, or environment
ballast	a heavy substance used to improve the stability and control the draft of a watercraft such as a boat or ship
benthic	of, relating to, or occurring at the bottom of a body of body of water or in the depths of an ocean
big box developments	development of large retail stores that are generally over 75,000 square feet that are not usually accessible by pedestrians; these developments cover large areas of land and are often criticized by urban planners, small independent businesses, and people concerned about sustainability
bilge water	water that collects in the bottom of a boat or ship
biodiversity	the variety of life and its processes; includes the variety of living organisms, the genetic differences among them, and the communities and ecosystems in which they occur
bog	a poorly drained usually acid area rich in accumulated plant material, frequently surrounding a body of open water, and having a characteristic flora (as of sedges, heaths, and sphagnum)
brackish	water that has more salinity than fresh water, but not as much as seawater resulting from the mixing of seawater with fresh water, as in estuaries (0.05-3% salinity based on dissolved salts)
canopy	the layer of foliage formed by the crowns of trees in a forest stand.
carcinogens	a substance or agent producing or inciting cancer
coastal plain	an area of flat, low-lying land adjacent to a seacoast
colonial birds	a group of birds nesting together in the same place at the same time; a colony contains birds that frequently communicate and react to each other (e.g., include such birds as ibises, gulls, terns, herons, egrets, etc...)

Term	Definition
combined sewer overflows (CSOs)	sewers that are designed to collect storm water runoff, domestic sewage, and industrial wastewater in the same pipe. Most of the time, combined sewer systems transport all of their wastewater to a sewage treatment plant, where it is treated and then discharged to a water body. During periods of heavy rainfall or snowmelt, however, the wastewater volume in a combined sewer system can exceed the capacity of the sewer system or treatment plant. For this reason, combined sewer systems are designed to overflow occasionally and discharge excess wastewater directly to nearby streams, rivers, or other water bodies.
commercial landings	the amount of fish (usually in tons) harvested from the sea and brought to the land; may be different from the catch, which includes the discards
coniferous	of, relating to, or belonging to the plant phylum *Coniferophyt*, conifer-any of numerous, chiefly evergreen trees or shrubs of the class Coniferinae (or group Coniferales), including the pine, fir, spruce, and other cone-bearing trees and shrubs, and also the yews and their allies that bear drupelike seeds; a plant producing naked seeds in cones, or single naked seeds as in yews, but with pollen always borne in cones.
coniferous swamp	forested wetlands in which the dominant trees are lowland conifers (e.g., northern white cedar -*Thuja occidentalis*)
connectivity (landscape or habitat)	the degree to which the landscape facilitates or impedes movement among resource patches; connectivity includes both structural connectivity (the physical arrangements of patches) and functional connectivity (the movement of individuals among patches). The degree to which a landscape is connected determines the amount of dispersal there is among patches, which influences gene flow, local adaptation, extinction risk, colonization probability, and the potential for organisms to move as they cope with climate change
consumptive use (of wildlife)	refers to those uses in which wildlife is killed, as in hunting, fishing, and trapping. Such uses may include those for a food source; for sport; for recreation; as a source of product for personal or commercial use and sale; as a means to control damage to private land and crops; and as a population management tool.
cover type	the current vegetation of an area
deciduous	falling off or shed seasonally or at a certain stage of development in the life cycle (e.g., deciduous trees shed leaves in autumn in New England)
demersal	living near, deposited on, or sinking to the bottom of the sea
detritus	loose material such as rock fragments and organic material that results directly from disintegration; debris

Term	Definition
dissolved oxygen	a measure of how much oxygen is dissolved in the water
disturbance regime	various modes of widespread floral replacement, e.g., flood, fire, disease or wind, or a combination thereof.
early successional	uplands where the potential natural vegetation is predominantly grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, or shrubs (Anderson et. al. 1976)
ecological land units	a concept developed by TNC, are areas on the landscape with unique physical properties based on soil characteristics and topography. ELUs provide an ecological setting for plant communities. Areas with many different ELUs often have diverse plant and animal communities and show high levels of biodiversity.
ecological sinks	very low quality habitats that, on their own, would not be able to support a population
ecological systems	reoccurring groups of biological communities that are found in similar physical environments and are influenced by similar dynamic ecological processes, such as fire or flooding.
ecoregion (TNC-terrestrial)	a regional landscape that supports recognizably distinctive groupings of plants, animals, and natural communities due to regional patterns of climate, landform, soil, and hydrology.
ecosystem	the complex of a community and its environment functioning as an ecological unit in nature; a natural community of organisms interacting with its physical environment, regarded as a unit
edge generalists	species that are able to survive and thrive in edge habitats (e.g., coyotes, raccoons, turkeys)
edge habitat	the transition between two types of vegetation and habitats (e.g., forest and field)
effluents	outflowings of waste material (e.g., liquid industrial refuse or sewage) discharged into the environment especially when serving as a pollutant
emergent marsh	the marsh found around shorelines out to relatively shallow water, and is generally characterized by up to 100% cover with emergent plant species
emissions scenarios	describe future releases into the atmosphere of greenhouse gases, aerosols, and other pollutants and, along with information on land use and land cover, provide inputs to climate models. They are based on assumptions about driving forces such as patterns of economic and population growth, technology development, and other factors. Levels of future emissions are highly uncertain, and so scenarios provide alternative images of how the future might unfold. They provide an appropriate tool with which to analyze how driving forces may influence future emission outcomes and to assess the associated uncertainties. They assist in climate change analysis, including climate modeling and the assessment of impacts, adaptation, and mitigation.

Term	Definition
encroach	to advance beyond the usual or proper limits (e.g., housing or commercial development encroach upon species habitat, sea level encroaches beyond its typical level onto beach, housing, marsh, etc…
endangered species	any species of plant or animal defined through the Federal Endangered Species Act or state Endangered Species Act as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range (for Federal ESA, published in the Federal Register)
Endangered Species Act	Federal legislation that aims to conserve the ecosystems upon which endangered and threatened species depend. The ESA was signed into law by President Nixon in December, 1973. The ESA protects plant and animal species and is jointly administered by the US Fish & Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries. Its aim is twofold: to provide protection for species that are in danger of extinction and to conserve the habitats on which those species depend.
erratics	boulders or blocks of rock transported from an original resting place especially by a glacier
estuarine	of or related to an estuary where the tide meets a river
eutrophic	characterized by the state resulting from eutrophication which is the process by which a body of water becomes either naturally or by pollution rich in dissolved nutrients (as phosphates) an often shallow with a deficiency in dissolved oxygen
evapotranspiration	a loss of water from the soil by both evaporation (water to vapor) and transpiration (the passage of watery vapor from a living body through a membrane) from the plants growing thereon
exclosure	an area of land, especially in a forest, fenced around to keep out unwanted animals (e.g., exclosure to keep out deer to prevent deer browsing)
extinction	the act of becoming extinct (no longer existing; no breeding pairs)
extinction debt	a concept in ecology that describes the future extinction of species due to events in the past. Extinction debt occurs because of time delays between impacts on a species, such as destruction of habitat, and the species' ultimate disappearance. For instance, long-lived trees may survive for many years even after reproduction of new trees has become impossible, and thus they may be committed to extinction. Technically, extinction debt generally refers to the *number of species* in an area likely to go extinct, rather than the prospects of any one species, but colloquially it refers to any occurrence of delayed extinction.
extirpated	status of a species or population that has completely vanished from a given area or region but that continues to exist in some other location
extractive industry	Processes that involve the extraction of raw materials from the earth to be used by consumers. The extractive industry consists of any operations that remove metals, mineral and aggregates from the earth. Examples of extractive processes include oil and gas extraction, mining, dredging and quarrying.

Term	Definition
exurban developments	low density residential developments with houses on large lot sizes of 5-40 acres. These types of development can be harmful to wildlife by displacing specialist-species with generalists, increasing human-wildlife conflict by intrusion of humans in wildlife habitat, and through incremental loss of habitats caused by expanded roads and driveway networks of the developments
fauna	the animals of a particular region, habitat, or geological period
federally listed species	refers to those species officially listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act as either endangered, threatened, or a species at risk ("candidate" species). Listing occurs through the publishing in the Federal Register
fen	low land covered wholly or partially with water; one of the six main types of wetlands, fens are characterized by their water chemistry, which is pH neutral or alkaline, with relatively high dissolved mineral levels but few other plant nutrients. They are usually dominated by grasses and sedges, and typically have brown mosses. Fens are less acidic than bogs, deriving most of their water from groundwater rich in calcium and magnesium.
feral	wild; not domesticated or having escaped from domestication and become wild
floodplain	flat or nearly flat land that may be submerged by floodwaters; a plain built up or in the presence of being built up by stream deposition
flora	all the plant associated with a given habitat, country, area, or period
fluvial	of, relating to, or living in a stream or river
forest composition	refers to all plant species found in a stand or landscape, including trees, shrubs, forbs,and grasses. It also refers to forest communities at the stand or landscape level whose canopies may be dominated by a single tree species or contain a mixture of species.
fragmentation (habitat)	the disruption of extensive habitats into isolated and small patches. Fragmentation has two negative components for biota; the loss of a total habitat area; and, the creation of smaller, more isolated patches of habitat remaining. [N.b. A habitat area that is too small may not provide enough space to maintain a breeding population of the species in question]
fungal dermatitis in snakes	Snake Fungal Disease (SFD) is an emerging disease in certain populations of wild snakes in the eastern and Midwestern United States. Laboratory analyses have demonstrated that the fungus Ophidiomyces (formerly Chrysosporium) ophiodiicola is consistently associated with SFD, but often, additional fungi are isolated from affected snakes. The most consistent clinical signs of SFD include scabs or crusty scales, subcutaneous nodules, premature separation of the outermost layer of the skin (stratum corneum) from the underlying skin (or abnormal molting), white opaque cloudiness of the eyes (not associated with molting), or localized thickening or crusting of the skin (hyperkeratosis). Skin ulcers, swelling of the face, and nodules in the deeper tissues of the head have also been documented.

Term	Definition
geographic information system (GIS)	a computerized system to compile, store, analyze and display geographically referenced information (e.g., GIS can overlay multiple sets of information on the distribution of a variety of biological and physical features)
geo-referenced	aligned geographic data to a known coordinate system so it can be viewed, queried, and analyzed with other geographic data.
glacial till	drift that is deposited directly from glacial ice and therefore not sorted by size
glaciation	the result of glacial action (covered by a glacial; to produce glacial effects upon)
glaciofluvial deposits	deposition from glacial meltwater
global warming	is the unequivocal and continuing rise in the average temperature of Earth's climate system
graminoid	of or relating to grasses
greenway linkage	system of linear open spaces often are used as buffers between differing types or intensities of land uses as a means to conserve areas of natural or historic value
habitat	an ecological or environmental area that is inhabited by a particular species of animal, plant, or other type of organism. It is the natural environment in which an organism lives, or the physical environment that surrounds a species population.
habitat specialists	species that can only thrive in a narrow range of environmental conditions or habitats
herpetofauna	the reptiles and amphibians of a particular region, habitat, or geological period
high density development	development designed to hold significantly more people than is typical for that much land in that region. There is no universal definition. There is usually a local definition in the zoning laws, such as more than 10 units (separate living quarters: apartments, townhouses, etc.) per acre
human disturbance	temporary changes in environmental conditions caused by humans that often cause pronounced changes in the ecosystem (e.g., clear cutting, pollution, fragmentation, recreational use)
hydraulic fracturing	the fracturing of rock by a pressurized liquid; Induced hydraulic fracturing (also hydrofracturing, fracking, and fraccing) is a well-stimulation technique in which a high-pressure fluid (usually water mixed with sand and chemicals) is injected into a wellbore in order to create small fractures (usually less than 1.0 mm wide) in the deep-rock formations in order to allow natural gas, petroleum, and brine to migrate to the well
hydrologic unit code	a sequence of numbers or letters that identify a hydrological feature like a river, river reach, lake, or area like a drainage basin(also called watershed (in North America) or catchment

Term	Definition
hydrology	the science of waters of the earth; their occurrences, distributions, and circulations; their physical and chemical properties; their reactions with the environment, including living beings
Important Bird Area (IBA)	an international bird conservation initiative to identify the most important places for birds, and to conserve them
impairment	injury or damage of some physical means
imperiled	in danger
impoundment	a body of water, such as a pond, confined by a dam, dike, floodgate, or other barrier, which is used to collect and store water for future use
Index of Watershed Indicators	EPA threat assessment
indigenous	having originated in and being produced, grown, living or occurring naturally in a particular region or environment
Integrated Pest Management	ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests or their damage through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they are needed according to established guidelines, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism. Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment.
interior specialists (forests)	species that are present only in relatively large forested areas and depend on these large patches to survive
intertidal	of, or relating to, or being part of the littoral zone (the shore zone between high and low tide marks) above low-tide mark
intrinsic resource value	value that the environment and life forms or the resources have in their own right, and which is not derived from the human use they can or cannot be put to
invasive species	introduced species (also called "non-indigenous" or "non-native") that adversely affect the habitats and bioregions they invade economically, environmentally, and/or ecologically. Such invasive species may be either plants or animals and may disrupt by dominating a region, wilderness areas, particular habitats, or wildland-urban interface land from loss of natural controls (such as predators or herbivores). This includes non-native invasive plant species labeled as exotic pest plants and invasive exotics growing in native plant communities
invertebrate	animal species that do not possess or develop a vertebral column, derived from the notochord (i.e. all animals apart from the subphylum Vertebrata). Familiar examples of invertebrates include insects, worms, clams, crabs, octopuses, snails, and starfish.

Term	Definition
ionizing radiation	in this context it means food irradiation used to keep food fresh longer and kill germs Food irradiation is similar to pasteurizing because the radiation destroys the disease-producing microorganisms with radiation energy instead of heat energy.
IUCN category of threats	a hierarchical classification of the broadest range of species according to their global extinction risk adopted originally in 1994 and later revised in 2000 by the International Union for Conservation of Nature
kettle pond	a shallow, sediment-filled body of water formed by retreating glaciers or draining floodwaters whose source of water is precipitation or groundwater
maritime	of, relating to, or bordering on the sea
marsh accretion	the increase in marsh surface elevation as a result of deposition and erosion of sediment on the marsh surface
mean sea level	an average level for the surface of one or more of Earth's oceans from which heights such as elevations may be measured; A common and relatively straightforward mean sea-level standard is the midpoint between a mean low and mean high tide at a particular location.
mesophyte (ic)	a plant that grows under medium conditions of moisture
migratory	moving from one place to another at different times of the year; of or relating to migration
movement corridor	strips or clumps of habitat that connect isolated habitats that allow wildlife to move from one habitat to another
mucks	dark highly organic soils
myotis	the scientific name for bats
natural succession	the natural, predictable and orderly changes in the composition or structure of an ecological community; progressive replacement of one community by another until a stable climax is established
natural system modifications	are defined as threats from actions that convert or degrade habitat in service of "managing" natural or seminatural systems, often to improve human welfare (e.g., suppression of fire; Salafsky et. al. 2008).
NERR-National Estuarine Research Reserve (System)	a network of 28 areas representing different biogeographic regions of the United States that are protected for long-term research, water-quality monitoring, education and coastal stewardship. Established by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, the reserve system is a partnership program between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the coastal states. NOAA provides funding, national guidance and technical assistance. Each reserve is managed on daily basis by a lead state agency or university, with input from local partners.
neurotoxins	any substance that is capable of causing damage to nerves or nerve tissue (e.g., arsenic and lead)
non-consumptive use	any non-hunting or non-extractive use of wildlife. Examples include bird watching, wildlife observation, and wildlife photography.

Term	Definition
nonpoint source of pollution	any source of water pollution that does not meet the legal definition of "point source" in section 502(14) of the Clean Water Act. That definition states: The term "point source" means any discernible, confined and discrete conveyance, including but not limited to any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation, or vessel or other floating craft, from which pollutants are or may be discharged. This term does not include agricultural storm water discharges and return flows from irrigated agriculture. Unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants, nonpoint source (NPS) pollution comes from many diffuse sources. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and ground waters.
nursery stock	a plant intended for planting or propagation, including but not limited to, trees, shrubs, vines perennials, biennials, grafts, cuttings and buds that may be sold for propagation whether cultivated or wild and all viable parts of these plants
odonate	belonging or pertaining to the order Odonata, comprising the damselflies and dragonflies; any of numerous large predatory aquatic insects of the order Odonata, occurring worldwide and characterized by two pairs of membranous wings
oligotrophic	refers to environments that offer little to sustain life, organisms that survive in such environments, or the adaptations that support survival
oxygenization	the act of impregnating, combining, or supplying with oxygen
palustrine	comes from the Latin word *palus* or marsh. Wetlands within this category include inland marshes and swamps as well as bogs, fens, tundra and floodplains. Palustrine systems include any inland wetland which lacks flowing water, contains ocean-derived salts in concentrations of less than 0.05%, and is non-tidal
peatland	wetlands with a thick water-logged organic soil layer (peat) made up of dead and decaying plant material. Peatlands include moors, bogs, mires, peat swamp forests and permafrost tundra.
pelagic	oceanic; of, relating to, or living or occurring in the open sea
perennial river	river (channel) that has continuous flow in parts of its river bed all year round during years of normal rainfall
phenology	a branch of science dealing with the relations between climate and periodic biological phenomena (as bird migration or plant flowering); periodic biological phenomena (as of a kind of organism) that are correlated with climactic conditions
plant community	a collection of plant species within a designated geographical unit, which forms a relatively uniform patch, distinguishable from neighboring patches of different vegetation types. The components of each plant community are influenced by soil type, topography, climate and human disturbance

Term	Definition
protection mosaic	the combined efforts of federal, state, and local reserves to protect land (in this case, coastal Rhode Island)
purchase of development rights	purchase of development rights programs provide a way to financially compensate willing landowners for not developing their land. When buying development rights, the community obtains a legal easement, sometimes referred to as a conservation easement that (usually) permanently restricts development on the land. The landowner, however, still owns the land and can use or sell it for purposes specified in the easement, such as farming, timber production, or hunting.
quagmire	soft, miry land that shakes or yields under the foot
quarrying	the business, occupation, or act of extracting useful material (as building stone) from quarries-an excavation or pit, usually open to the air, from which building stone, slate, or the like, is obtained by cutting, blasting, etc.
regional linkage	connection of habitats, wildlife corridors, or greenways in a given region to facilitate wildlife migration, breeding, and dispersal
reptile	a class of vertebrates whose skin is dry, lacking in glands, and covered with scales Claws are present and skull, limbs bones, vertebrae, muscles, and so forth are stronger and more advanced than those of amphibians. Egg fertilization is internal, there is no larval stage, and eggs have a protective, hard shell
Rhody Native	a program that preserves the biodiversity of Rhode Island's native plant communities, wildlife, and pollinators by facilitating the state's capacity to produce genetically native plants. Rhody Native™ celebrates Rhode Island's local identity
riffle-pool	riffles are shallow with fast, turbulent water running over rocks; pools are deep with slow water
riparian	related to or living or located on a bank of a natural watercourse (as a river) or sometimes of a lake or tidewater
ruderal forest	classified as such because the replacement of native species with exotics has altered the plant species composition dramatically. In these cases, the forest community is not recognizable as any RIECC forest type. Despite changes in species composition ruderal forests support canopy and cavity-nesting birds, and these upland forests are often associated with small wetlands, especially red maple swamps. Ruderal forests also serve as valuable resting and feeding areas for migrating birds.
sedimentation	the action or process of forming or depositing sediment (material deposited by water, wind, or glaciers)
seral	of, relating to, or constituting a series of ecological communities formed in ecological succession
shrub swamp	a type of freshwater wetland ecosystem occurring in areas too wet to become swamps, but too dry or too shallow to become marshes. They are often considered transitional (“mid-successional”) between wet meadows or fens and conifer or hardwood swamps.

Term	Definition
silt loams	soils containing not less than 70 percent silt and clay and not less than 20 percent sand
siltation	the deposition of silt (loose sedimentary material with rock particles usually 1/20 millimeters or less in diameter; soil containing 80 or more percent in silt and less than 12 percent in clay)
Species of Greatest Conservation Need	wildlife species indicative of the overall health of the state's wildlife resources. Some may be rare or declining. Others may be a vital component of specific habitats. Certain species may have a significant portion of their population in the state. The state's SGCN's are placed into categories based on their state or global status.
species of concern	species not federally listed as threatened or endangered, but about which are a concern for conservation
sprawl (urban or suburban)	the expansion of human populations away from central urban areas into previously remote and rural areas, particularly resulting in low-density communities reliant upon heavy automobile usage
storm surge	an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm, over and above the predicted astronomical tide
stranding	when an animal or boat is left aground or ashore (e.g., a whale or fish stranding)
structurally diverse habitats	habitats with more than one type of component or structure (i.e. vegetation type, forest type, height of vegetation)
sub-canopy	the plant layer just below the uppermost canopy layer (treetops exposed directly to sunlight)
subtidal	of, relating to, or being the part of the neritic (shallow part of ocean above the drop-off of the continental shelf) zone lying below the low-tide mark but still shallow and close to shore
synusia	a structural unit of a major ecological community characterized by relative uniformity of life-form or of height and usually constituting a particular stratum of that community
taxa	plural of taxon (the name applied to a taxonomic group in a formal system of nomenclature)
taxonomy	the study of the general principles of scientific classification; orderly classification of plants and animals according to their presumed natural relationships--taxonomic-adj.
terminal moraine	a moraine that forms at the snout of a glacier, marking its maximum advance; a moraine is any glacially formed accumulation of unconsolidated glacial debris (soil and rock) that occurs in currently glaciated and formerly glaciated regions
terrestrial	of or relating to land as distinct from air or water; living on or growing from land

Term	Definition
thermal stratification	the scientific term that describes the layering of bodies of water based on their temperature. As water heats and cools, it expands and contracts, changing in density. Still bodies of water including ponds and lakes separate into horizontal layers that have distinctly different temperatures. Each layer of water is stacked above or below the others with the warmest water on top and the coldest on the bottom.
tidal regime	the range of elevations in a wetland experiencing a specific pattern of tidal inundation.
topography	the configuration of a surface including its relief and the position of its natural and man-made features
torpor	state of mental or motor inactivity with partial or total insensibility;
Total Maximum Daily Load	caps on the amounts of pollutants that waterbodies can receive and still meet water quality standards, and they are required by EPA for waters classified as impaired under the Clean Water Act.
troposphere	the active weather layer extending up to about 8 to 12 miles above the ground
upland	dry ground (i.e., other than upland)
vernal pool	depressions holding water for a temporary period in the spring, and in which various amphibian lay eggs (no inlet or outlet of water, no fish present)
vertebrates	species of the comprehensive division (Vertebrata) usually held to be a subphylum of chordates comprised of animals with a segmented spinal column together with a few primitive forms in which the backbone is represented by a notochord
vulnerability assessment (re: climate change)	tools structured to determine the level of vulnerability (sensitivity, exposure, adaptive capacity) to climate change
wet meadow	semi-wetland meadow which is saturated with water throughout much of the year. Wet meadows may occur because of restricted drainage or the receipt of large amounts of water from rain or melted snow. They may also occur in riparian zones and around the shores of large lakes; Unlike a marsh or swamp, a wet meadow does not have standing water present except for brief to moderate periods during the growing season. Instead, the ground in a wet meadow fluctuates between brief periods of flooding and longer periods of wetness. Wet meadows often have large numbers of wetland plant species, which frequently survive as buried seeds during dry periods, and then regenerate after flooding. Wet meadows therefore do not usually support aquatic life such as fish. They typically have a high diversity of plant species, and may attract large numbers of birds, small mammals and insects including butterflies.
wind-throws	trees uprooted or broken by wind
xeric	characterized by, relating to, or requiring only a small amount of moisture (e.g., habitat or plant)

Term	Definition
zoonotic	pertaining to a zoonosis: a disease that can be transmitted from animals to people or, more specifically, a disease that normally exists in animals but that can infect humans