

## Appendix D: Glossary

**Condensation:** The process by which a vapor becomes a liquid; the opposite of evaporation.

**Erosion:** The wearing down or washing away of the soil and land surface by the action of water, wind or ice.

**Evaporation:** The conversion of a liquid (e.g., water) into a vapor (a gaseous state) usually through the application of heat energy; the opposite of condensation.

**Evapotranspiration:** The loss of water from the soil through both evaporation and transpiration from plants.

**Infiltration:** The process by which water on the ground surface enters the soil.

**Nonpoint source pollution:** Refers to pollution sources that are diffuse and do not have a single point of origin. Run-off from agriculture, forestry and construction sites are examples.

**Point source pollution:** Refers to pollution resulting from discharges into receiving waters from any discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance such as a pipe, ditch, or sewer.

**Percolation:** Describes the action of water as it moves through spaces in the soil and rock.

**Precipitation:** Water falling, in a liquid or solid state, from the atmosphere to Earth (e.g., rain, snow).

**Riparian vegetation:** The vegetation growing in the riparian area. Healthy riparian vegetation consists of native, hydrophilic (water loving) plants that help stabilize the stream banks and control flood waters from inundating adjacent lands.

**Runoff:** Precipitation that flows overland to surface streams, rivers, and lakes.

**Transpiration:** The process by which water absorbed by plants (usually through the roots) is evaporated into the atmosphere from the plant surface (principally from the leaves).

**Water cycle:** The paths water takes through its various states-vapor, liquid, and solid-as it moves throughout Earth's systems (oceans, atmosphere, groundwater, streams, etc.). Also known as the hydrologic cycle.

**Watershed:** An area of land from which all the water drains to the same location such as a stream, pond, lake, river, wetland, or estuary.