Acid rain - rainfall made sufficiently acidic by atmospheric pollution that it causes environmental harm, typically to forests and lakes.

Aquifer – a body of rocks or sediments, such as cavernous limestone and unconsolidated sand, which stores, conducts, and yields water in significant quantities.

Backsight – in surveying, a reading taken looking backwards to a previously occupied station.

Bat guano – the excrement of a bat.

Bedrock – the solid rock that underlies loose material, such as soil, sand, clay, or gravel.

Capillary action – the ability of a liquid to flow in narrow spaces without the assistance of, and in opposition to, external forces like gravity.

Carbonic acid – a heavy, odorless, colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances; absorbed from the air by plants during photosynthesis.

Chemical change – a process where one or more substances are altered into one or more new and different substances.

Chemical weathering – the erosion or disintegration of rocks, building materials, etc., caused by chemical reactions (chiefly with water and substances dissolved in it) rather than by mechanical processes.

Cistern – a tank for storing water.

Clinometer – an instrument used for measuring the angle or elevation of slopes.

Column – a speleothem that is formed by the union of stalagmites and stalactites.

Compass – an instrument which shows direction.

Compass rose – a circle showing the principal directions printed on a map or chart.

Contour lines – a line (as on a map) connecting the points on a land surface that have the same elevation.

Dark zone (in a cave) – the area deep within a cave where there is no light whatsoever, the temperature remains constant, and troglobites (organisms with undeveloped eyes, poor pigmentation, and long antennae, which have adapted to live in this environment) reside.

Diffuse recharge – groundwater recharge that trickles slowly through soil layers over a widespread area.

Discrete recharge – groundwater recharge that flows rapidly through soil layers via sinkholes.

Entrance zone (in a cave) – the cave environment which is closest to the environment above ground; this zone receives sunlight, has variable temperatures, has green plants such as moss and ferns, and is utilized by animals like raccoons, owls, and bears for eating, sleeping, or nesting (as well as by other organisms like snails and salamanders).

Downstream – with or in the direction of the current of a stream.
Erosion – The loosening and movement of rocks and soil by wind, water, and ice

Ferry – a commercial service with terminals and boats for transporting persons, automobiles, etc. across a river or other comparatively small body of water

Ford – a place where a river or other body of water is shallow enough to be crossed by wading

Foresight – in surveying, a reading taken looking forward to a new station

Karst – an area of limestone terrane characterized by sinks, ravines, and underground streams

Groundwater – water located beneath the earth’s surface in soil pore spaces and in the fractures of rock formations

Hydrologic Cycle – the continuous movement of water on the Earth and in the Earth’s atmosphere

Igneous – rock type produced under conditions involving intense heat, such as rocks of volcanic origin or rocks crystallized from molten magma

Karst - landscape underlain by limestone that has been eroded by dissolution, producing ridges, towers, fissures, sinkholes, and other characteristic landforms.

Land claim – something that is claimed, especially a piece of public land for which formal request is made for mining or other purposes

Leachate – solution or product obtained when liquid passes through a substance, removing chemicals or metals

Limestone – a hard sedimentary rock, composed mainly of calcium carbonate or dolomite; often used as building material and in the making of cement

Magma – molten material beneath or within the earth’s crust, from which igneous rock is formed

Metamorphic – Rock that was once one form of rock but has changed to another under the influence of heat, pressure, or some other agent without passing through a liquid phase.

Non-clastic sedimentary rock – known as “chemical rock,” it is composed of chemical precipitate from a solution made of different chemicals (examples include limestone and coal)

Nonpoint source pollution – pollution without an identifiable source (such as stormwater runoff)

Palisades – a line of cliffs

Permeate (permeable, permeability) – to pass into or through every part of

Pervious – Rock that has pores or openings that allow water to flow through.

Physical weathering - The breaking down of the earth’s surface, more specifically rocks and minerals as well as soils through the process of natural or physical means.

Pit - a hole, shaft, or cavity in the ground

Point source pollution – pollution that has an identifiable source

Potable – fit or suitable for drinking

Porous – permeable to water, air, etc.

Preserve – A tract of land managed so as to maintain its flora, fauna, and physical features
Research – to make an extensive investigation into

Runoff – water that does not soak into the ground, but rather runs over the surface of the land

Scat – the excrement of an animal

Sedimentary – rock type formed from sediments deposited by wind, water, or ice

Shaft – Vertical, or steeply inclined, sections of a cave passage, of enormously varied size.

Sinkhole – a bowl-shaped depression in the ground which forms from the dissolution and collapse of limestone

Sinking stream – a small stream that disappears underground

Speleothem – a crystalline deposit that forms in a solution cave after the creation of the cave itself

Spelunking – the hobby or practice of exploring caves

Spring – a place where water wells up from an underground source, or the basin or flow formed in such a way

Stalagmite – a common speleothem that grows upward from the floor of a cave passage

Stalactite – a common speleothem that grows downward from the ceiling of a cave passage

Subterranean – located or living under the surface of the ground

Supersaturate – to increase the concentration of a solution beyond its saturation point

Terrane – any rock formation or series of formations, or the area in which a particular formation or group of rocks is predominant

Topographic map – a map of the surface features of an area

Tributary – a stream that flows to a larger stream or other body of water

Twilight zone (in a cave) – the cave environment which is between the entrance zone and the dark zone; this zone receives little light, has somewhat stable temperature and humidity, has mushrooms but no plant life, and is home to animals such as bats, spiders, and moths

Watershed – the area of land that includes a particular river or lake and all of the rivers, streams, etc. that flow into it

Water table – the highest underground level at which the rocks and soil in a particular area are completely under water

Weathering – the various mechanical and chemical processes that cause exposed rock to decompose

Sources

1. Dictionary.com