

Glossary of Flood Protection Terms

- **Catchment area** – an area of land where water flows from, to form a stream, lake or river.
- **Channel change** – river channels are straightened or deepened to speed up water flow and stop flooding.
- **Culvert** – a tunnel carrying a stream under a road or railway.
- **Current** – the flow of the river.
- **Dam** – a barrier to hold back or divert water.
- **Drainage** – the ability of water to flow away from somewhere.
- **Embankment** – a human-made raised earth bank by a river which is created to prevent flooding.
- **Environment Agency** – a government agency that is responsible for providing information on environmental issues and protecting the environment.
- **Flash flood** – a sudden flood occurring after unusually heavy or excessive rainfall released in a short period of time, usually a few hours.
- **Flood** – a natural disaster where water rises above its normal level, usually overflowing on land that is not usually covered by water.
- **Flood damages** – negative impacts caused by flooding, such as economic costs for rebuilding, physical damage to crops, buildings, roads and social damages to human life and health.
- **Flood gates** – a gate that can be opened to let water out or closed to keep water in.
- **Flood relief channels** – human-made channels that are created to divert water around or away from important locations if a river is at risk of flooding.
- **Flood risk zones** – a particular area that has the potential to be flooded.
- **Flood storage area** – an artificial area created to store flood water and prevent spill over to land.
- **Flood walls** – a wall built to prevent flooding by temporarily containing high water levels.
- **Fluvial flooding** – flooding specifically caused by a river, where water level in a river rises and overflows into neighbouring land.
- **Food alleviation** – activities and regulations that aim to reduce or stop damages and problems caused by flooding.
- **Hard engineering** – building artificial structures to control natural processes.
- **Hydrology** – the scientific study of the properties of the earth's water.
- **Local Partnership** – a formal group that contains representatives from all parts of the community, which can provide funding for local developments.
- **Mitigation** – the action of reducing negative impacts.
- **Natural habitats** – the place an animal or plant naturally lives and grows.
- **Peak flow** – the maximum rate of flow through a watercourse in a storm.
- **Precipitation** – water that falls from the atmosphere to the Earth's surface, such as rain and snow.
- **Progress evaluations** – reports and examinations of a project to judge the qualities, success and needs.
- **Quality assurance** – the maintenance and investigation of quality levels in the delivery of a project or a specific aspect of a project.
- **Regeneration** – actions aiming to reverse economic social and physical decline.
- **Resilience** – the ability of a community and ecosystem to cope with a hazard or disturbance.



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- **River** – a large natural stream of water that empties into an ocean lake or other body of water.
- **Riverbanks** – the sides of the river channel.
- **Soft engineering** – using natural environment to help reduce flooding.
- **Stakeholders** – people, groups and organisations that are interested or affected by developments in the community.
- **Upstream** – the direction opposite to the flow of the river, towards the river source.
- **Vegetative buffers** - areas of vegetation around a river or lake that aim to reduce the speed of water flow and absorb flow waters.
- **Vulnerability** – how much a community or ecosystem is likely to be damaged by a hazard.
- **Weir** – a barrier structure across a river to control the timing and quantity of water flowing into an area.



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