

12.16. GLOSSARY

Conveyance loss: Water that is lost in transit from a canal, conduit, or ditch by leakage or evaporation. Generally, the water is not available for further use; however, leakage from an irrigation ditch, for example, can percolate to a groundwater source and be available for further use.

Depletion: Losses from the water supply for agricultural, domestic, riparian use or evaporation from open water surfaces

Domestic water use: Water for normal household purposes, such as drinking, food preparation, bathing, washing clothes and dishes, flushing toilets, and watering lawns, gardens and livestock supplied from a domestic source. Also called residential water use. The water can be obtained from a public supply or be self-supplied.

Evapotranspiration (ET): the combined processes of simple evaporation and plant transpiration through which liquid water is converted to water vapor and lost from the water system.

Evaporation: Process by which water is changed from the liquid state to the vapor state. See also Evapotranspiration; Transpiration.

Fallow: Cropland, either tilled or untilled, allowed to lie idle, during the whole or the greater part of the growing season.

Ground water: Generally, all subsurface water as distinct from surface water; specifically, that part of the subsurface water in the saturated zone (a zone in which all voids, large and small, ideally are filled with water under pressure equal to or greater than atmospheric).

Ground water recharge: The addition of water to the zone of saturation. Infiltration of precipitation and its movement to the water table is one form of natural recharge.

Hydrologic cycle: The circulation of water from the atmosphere to the earth and back to the atmosphere through precipitation, runoff, infiltration, transpiration, evaporation, and storage.

Irrigation: Generally, the controlled application of water to arable lands to supply water requirements of crops not satisfied by rainfall. (See also Irrigation water use.) Systems used include the following:

Per capita use: The average amount of water used per person during a standard time period, generally per day.

Precipitation: Includes atmospheric hail, mist, rain, sleet and snow which descends upon the earth; the quantity of water accumulated from the above events.

Recharge: The addition of water to an aquifer by infiltration, either directly into the aquifer or indirectly by way of another rock formation. Recharge may be natural, as when precipitation

infiltrates to the water table, or artificial, as when water is injected through wells or spread over permeable surfaces for the purpose of recharging an aquifer.

Return flows: Water returning to the river after diversion into irrigation canals, including tail water from farms, drainflow or applied irrigation water seeping past the root zone to groundwater.

Rio Grande Compact: agreement passed by Congress in 1939 governing the delivery obligations of Colorado to New Mexico and New Mexico to Texas

Riparian vegetation: Vegetation growing on the banks of a stream or other body of surface water.

Surface water: An open body of water, such as a stream or a lake.

Transpiration: Process by which water absorbed by plants, usually through the roots. The residual water vapor is emitted into the atmosphere from the plant surface. See also Evaporation; Evapotranspiration.

USGS gauging stations: locations within a river system where the U. S. Geological Survey has installed equipment for monitoring of river level and flow

USBR: U. S. Bureau of Reclamation

USGS: U. S. Geological Survey

Water budget: A summary that shows the balance in a hydrologic system between water supplies to the system (inflow) and water losses from the system (outflow)

Water supply: the amount of water potentially available for use within a study area; this must account for both the hydrologic supply and the legal limitations imposed by water allocation agreements such as the Rio Grande Compact

Water exports: Artificial transfer (pipe, canals) of water to one region or subregion from another.

Water right: Legal rights to use a specific quantity of water, on a specific time schedule, at a specific place, and for a specific purpose.

Water table: The upper surface of zone of saturation. See also Potentiometric Surface.

Wetlands: Lands that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support and that, under normal circumstances, do support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

Withdrawal: Water removed from the ground or diverted from a surface-water source for use.

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