

Chapter 4 Vocabulary

Essential Question: How can people best use and protect Earth's freshwater ecosystems?

1. glaciers: a large mass of ice found near Earth's poles (continental glacier) or in high, cold mountain valley (alpine glacier)
2. ecosystem: a community of all living things in an area and the environment in which they live
3. freshwater: made up of water that is fresh, not salty; also describes creatures that live in fresh water, such as a freshwater fish
4. watershed: a geographic area that includes all of the land and waterways that drain into a body of water; also called a drainage basin
5. food web: all of the feeding relationships within an ecosystem. Each living thing in a food web provides food energy to other living things within that ecosystem.
6. food chain: a series of plants and animals, each of which depends on the one below it for food. A food chain usually forms part of a much larger food web.
7. pollution: damage to the natural environment caused by harmful substances; also refers to harmful substances
8. point-source pollution: water pollution from a single place, such as a discharge pipe at a plant that treats sewage
9. non-point-source pollution: pollution that does not come from a single location, but rather from many sources such as runoff from farms
10. pollutants: something that pollutes, or damages, air, soil, or water
11. runoff: water from rainfall that is not absorbed into the soil and instead flows into streams or lakes
12. sediment: bits of soil left in place by moving water

13. invasive species: non native plants and animals that invade an ecosystem
14. habitat: the natural environment in which a plant or animal lives
15. wetlands: an area where the soil is usually wet or covered with water