**Words to Know**

**Precipitation** water released from clouds in the form of rain, freezing rain, sleet, snow, or hail

**Infiltration** water that is absorbed by the soil and funneled down to groundwater

**Runoff** water that flows over the surface of the earth into rivers and lakes

**Groundwater** water that soaks into the the ground and collects in the pores and empty spaces in rocks

**Weathering** process that breaks down rock into smaller pieces

**Erosion** process of transporting weathered material by natural agents

**Deposition** process of laying the weathered material down in a new location

**Chemical Weathering** process by which rock's minerals are changed into different substances

**Mechanical Weathering** process by which rock is split or broken into smaller pieces without changing its chemical composition, disintegration

**Abrasion** the collision of rocks with other rocks, resulting in the breaking and wearing away of the rocks.

**Soil Profile** a cross-section in which layers of the soil and bedrock can be seen.

**Humus** dark soil that contains decaying remains of plants and animals

**acid rain** rain that is very acidic, formed by pollution, an example of chemical weathering

**wind** moving air

**soil** loose, weathered rock and organic material in which plants with roots can grow

**A horizon** topsoil horizon that is generally gray to black, contains organic material (litter), the remains of living things (humus)

**B horizon** subsoil horizon that is lighter in color, the rock has been weathered into fine grains, material moves into this layer by leaching

**C horizon** horizon made of partially weathered bedrock, the bottom horizon

**parent material** material from which a soil is formed, determines composition and properties of the soil

**bedrock** solid rock that lies beneath the soil

**aquifer** A layer of permeable rock that lets water move freely

**permeable** water can pass through open spaces. Example: sandstone

**porosity** percentage of open space in a given volume of rock or sediment

**zone of saturation** groundwater forms this zone where water fills all of the open spaces in sediment and rock

**water table** upper level of the saturation zone

**pores** holes in the rock and soil

**leaching** the removal of minerals that have been dissolved in water.

**mass movement** any type of erosion that happens as gravity moves materials downslope.

**slump** when a mass of material slips down a curved surface

**creep** occurs when sediments slowly shift their position downhill

**loess** fertile soil created by wind deposition

**drainage basin** the area of land from which a stream or river collects runoff

**impermeable** water cannot pass through. Examples: granite