Erosion and Watershed Vocabulary

1. Chemical weathering – chemical reactions break down the bonds holding the rocks together, causing them to fall apart, forming smaller and smaller pieces. Chemical weathering is more common in areas where there is a lot of water, because water is important to the many chemical reactions that can take place.
2. Mechanical weathering – takes place when rocks are broken down without any change in the chemical nature of the rocks. The rocks are essentially torn apart by physical force, rather than by chemical breakdown.
3. Eco-region- A relatively large area that is characterized

by distinctive plant and animal communities, climate, and ecological features

1. Ice wedging – when water and snow gets in a crack and has nowhere to go but has to go somewhere so it expands and the crack gets larger
2. Sediment –Earth material that is broken down by processes

of weathering, can be eroded and deposited by

the agents of water, wind, ice, and gravity

1. Weathering – The mechanical or chemical processes that

break rock into smaller pieces

1. Erosion – The process by which water, ice, wind, and

gravity remove and transport sediments (MOVEMENT)

from one place to another

1. Deposition – The process by which gravity, water, wind, and ice deposit weathered and relocated sediments
2. Ground water – Water that collects in cracks and pores in

underground soil and rock layers

1. Surface water – Water from precipitation that drains into a gully that flows into a stream, which in turn flows into a river,

lake, reservoir, estuary, wetland, or the ocean

1. Watershed – An area of land where the surface water and

groundwater drains into a particular body of water separated from each other by drainage divides

1. Runoff – water that flows on the surface and is not soaked into the ground because the soil is saturated with water and no more can soak in
2. Aquifer – A layer of permeable rock that allows water to flow through
3. Drainage divide -A geographical barrier, such as a ridge, hill, or mountain, separating one watershed land area from another
4. water table - Water that collects in cracks and pores in

underground soil and rock layers

1. Subsidence - Sunken land surface due to underlying

compression of earth material as a result of the

removal of ground water

1. Estuary -  is a partly enclosed coastal body of brackish water with one or more rivers or streams flowing into it, and with a free connection to the open sea.