

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Terms related to streamflow characteristics described in this report are defined below:

Cubic feet per second (ft³/s) is the rate of discharge representing a volume of 1 cubic foot passing a given point during 1 second and is equivalent to approximately 7.48 gallons per second.

Discharge is the volume of water that passes a given point within a given period of time.

Drainage area of a stream at a specified location is that area, measured in a horizontal plane, enclosed by a topographic divide from which direct surface runoff from precipitation normally drains by gravity into the stream upstream from the specified location.

Gage height is the water-surface elevation referred to some arbitrary gage datum. Gage height is often used interchangeably with the general term "stage," although gage height is more appropriate when used with a reading on a gage.

Gaging station is a particular site on a stream, canal, lake, or reservoir where systematic observations of gage heights and discharges are determined.

Recurrence interval, or frequency, of a flood is the average number of years between exceedances of a particular flood event. It is emphasized that this is an average interval, and does not imply that there cannot be another flood of that magnitude within a shorter time. The reciprocal of recurrence interval is the probability of having a flood equal to or greater than that magnitude in any year. Recurrence intervals were determined from individual station records according to procedures described by the Water Resources Council (1981).