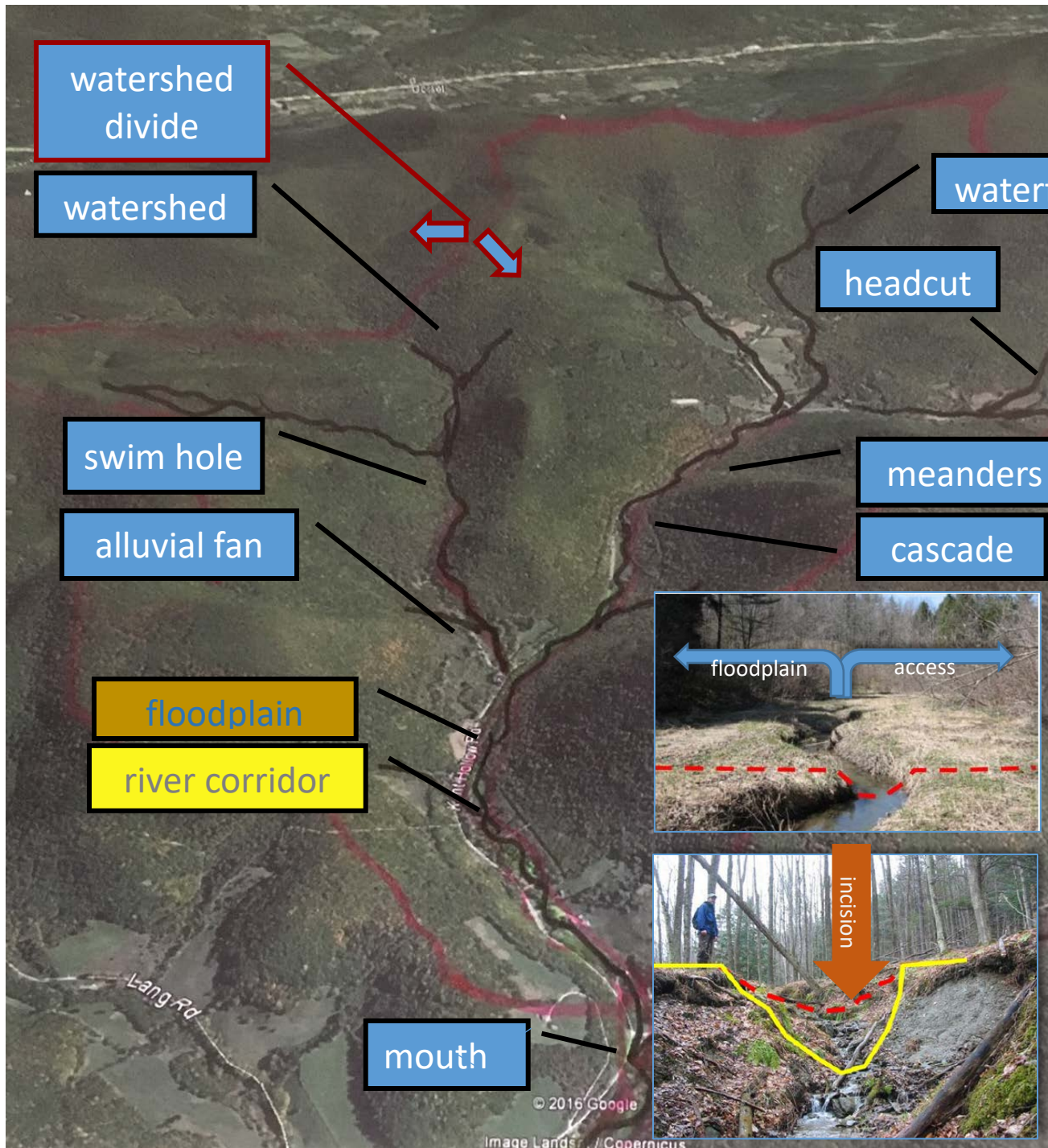
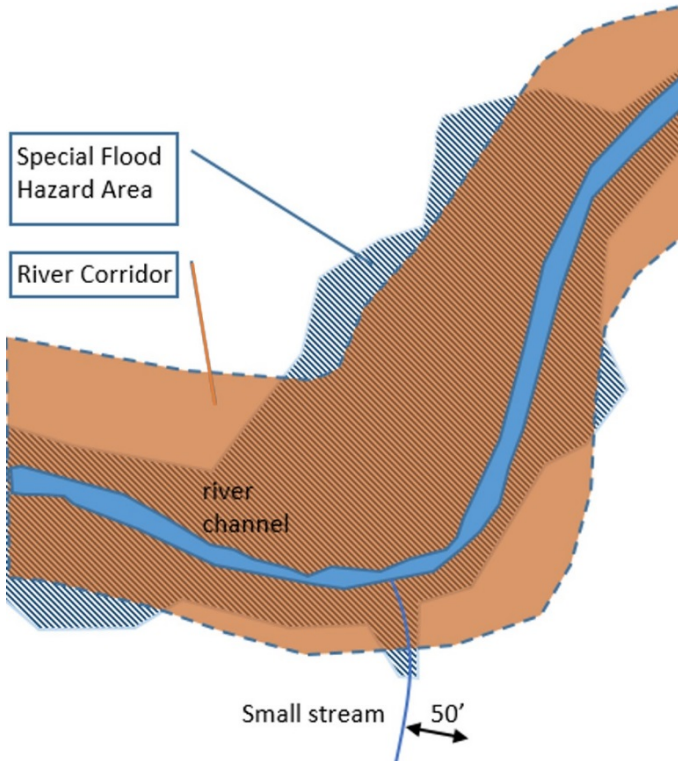


# Speaking of Rivers

*A quick guide to river terms*

[Click here for more river words and diagrams](#)





**Special Flood Hazard Area** is the high-risk floodplain with a one in a hundred chance of being exceeded each year. This is usually mapped as Zone A or Zone AE. Within this area there will be many smaller floods. Beyond this area there will be fewer larger floods.

**River Corridor** includes the space for a riparian buffer and the room required for the channel to slowly adjust and maintain a least erosive slope.

**Base Flood Elevation (BFE)** is the elevation of the flood water.

**No Adverse Impact Standards** – require projects to not harm other families, property owners, and ecosystem services.

**Channelization** – a stream becoming a straightened, armored, and often a more powerful conduit for water.

**Compensatory Storage** – where material is removed to compensate for the addition of new materials and avoid displacing floodwater and erosive energy onto others.

**Elevation Certificate (EC)** – shows how high the lowest floor of the house is above the flood water.

**Equilibrium slope** – a stream that is not steeper and more erosive than under natural conditions.

**Floodplain** - the normally dry area where excessive water spreads out and slows down.

**Floodway** – a part of the Special Flood Hazard Area that protects the right-of-way for floodwater to flow.

**Fluvial Erosion** is the scouring away of bank and channel material by stream flow.

[Click here for more river words and diagrams](#)

**Geomorphic Equilibrium** – is the natural condition of a river when it has the room it needs to maintain its least powerful slope and access to its floodplain.

**Hazard Mitigation** – steps taken to reduce risk to public safety and avoid damage.

**National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)** provides a source of flood insurance.

**River Corridor Encroachment**  
when valuable things are placed too close to the river and later attempts to defend them destabilize the river causing more erosive damage.

**No Adverse Impact** – projects that do not harm other families, property owners, and ecosystem services.

**No Rise Analysis** – an engineering analysis to confirm no rise in flood elevations.