Data Definitions

Use these definitions to help interpret data query results. They're intended as a general guide – some definitions may have changed because data has been collected over a long period of time.

Agency name: Name of the government agency or consulting firm that collected the data.

Alias: One of the, possibly many, locally used names for a waterbody.

Average channel width: The average channel width, in metres, taken from several measurements at a sample site.

Average Weight: The average weight in grams of fish released.

Cloud Cover: An estimate of cloud cover on a 0 to 10 scale where 0 is clear.

Distance from mouth: The distance in kilometres from the mouth of the stream to the point of obstruction.

Elevation: Lake elevation in metres, estimated from 1:50,000 paper maps.

Fish Count: The number of fish released into the waterbody at one time.

Gazetted Name: The legally registered name of the waterbody or island as obtained from Geographic Data BC.

Gradient: The slope, or rate of vertical drop per unit length of the channel bed expressed as a percentage.

Height: The estimated height of the stream obstruction in metres.

Hydrogen Sulfide: A yes/no field indicating that H2S was either present or absent in the lake at the time of the survey.

Length: The length in kilometres/metres of the sample site on the stream, excluding lakes, as measured from the 1:50,000 Watershed Atlas digital map.

Life Cycle Stage: The stage of development of the fish at the time of release.

Littoral Area: The surface area, in hectares, of that part of the lake extending from the shoreline that is less than 6 metres deep at the time of the survey as determined from a bathymetric map. The value for littoral area given for surveys prior to 1981 may be inaccurate. In many cases the calculation for pelagic area (greater than 6 metres depth) was entered instead. This is beiong investigated and erroneous values corrected. Until that is complete, littoral areas in surveys prior to 1981 should be treated as suspect and verified before being used.

Mapsheet (TRIM Map): TRIM 1:20,000 map of B.C.

Max. Depth: The maximum depth of the lake, in metres, at the time of the survey.

Mean Depth: An average of lake depth measurements, in metres, at the time of the survey as calculated from a bathymetric map.

Number of Channel Width Measurements: The number of channel width measurements that were taken at a sampling site and used in the calculation of Average Channel Width.

Obstruction Type: Identifies the stream obstruction e.g., falls.

Outlets: The number of streams flowing out of the lake, both permanent and intermittent, observed at the time of the survey.

Perimeter: The distance around the lake, excluding islands, in metres as calculated from a bathymetric map.

Permanent Inlets: The number of streams flowing into the lake year-round.

PH: A measurement of the acidity of the lake, taken at the surface, at the time of the survey. A surface pH is provided as measured in a laboratory or in the field.

RAB Code: Progenitor of the current 45-digit watershed code created by the Resource Analysis Branch.

Region: Ministry of Environment administrative region.

Relative Water Level: An estimated description of flow in a channel at the time of survey.

Release Date: The date the fish were released into the waterbody.

Secchi Depth: An estimate of turbidity determined by lowering a striped disk into a lake until it is no longer visible and recording the depth in metres.

Site #: A digital identifier for the sample site.

Special Sampling: This field indicates if any special water, fish plant or bottom samples were taken during the survey.

Species Name: Common name of fish species stocked.

Surface Area: The wetted area of the lake, excluding islands, in hectares at the time of the survey as calculated from a bathymetric map. Most surveys include wetlands surrounding the lake, but some may not. Some surveys may treat two or more small lakes as a single unit and the single surface area represents all the lakes surveyed. Surveys are done at different times of the year and over many years. A particular surface area measurement may have been taken during the spring runoff after a high snowfall winter or in late summer after several drought years. Also, the methods of calculating surface have improved over the years.

Survey Date: Day/Month/Year that the survey was conducted.

TDS: Total Dissolved Solids or non-filterable residue of the lake, in parts per million, at the time of the survey. A surface TDS is provided as measured in a laboratory or in the field.

Type: The type of waterbody: S — stream, L — lake and W — wetland. C is used for coastline. Coastline is not a real waterbody, but the watershed codes generated for the coastline are useful for rollups of all the lakes and streams on a particular island or the east coast of Vancouver Island.

UTM Zone, Easting, Northing: Universal Transverse Mercader NAD 83 co-ordinates for the mouth of the stream or the outlet of the lake as determined from the 1:50,000 Watershed Atlas digital map.

Volume: The total water volume, in cubic metres, of the lake as calculated from a bathymetric map.

Waterbody Identifier: There can be one or more lakes and wetlands in a watershed as well as a stream. The lakes and wetlands have the same watershed code as the stream. The waterbody identifier is used to uniquely identify lakes and wetlands in British Columbia.

Watershed Code: A series of groups of digits separated by dashes that uniquely identifies watersheds (a stream and the surrounding land that drains into the stream) in British Columbia. Each group of digits represents an unique watershed and shows the hierarchy from the ocean to the identified watershed. A watershed has a single mainstem, so the watershed code uniquely identifies streams, as well as the watershed.

WSA Area: Lake surface area, in hectares, as measured from the 1:50,000 Watershed Atlas digital map.

WSA Perimeter: Lake perimeter in kilometres, as measured from the 1:50,000 Watershed Atlas digital map.