

410 - PRIMARY LANDFORM:

1. CANYON - Any steep-walled feature cut by running water into bedrock, the sides of which are comprised of very steep slopes or cliffs rising from its bottom. Many canyons are named as such on U.S.G.S. Quad sheets, but the term can also apply to branches of these major canyons as well as gorges, ravines, or channels. Canyons are distinct from gullies which are cut into unconsolidated alluvium or colluvium. A canyon has slopes and cliffs in and on which there may be benches, fans, rimrock, colluvium and talus, landslides and slumps, caves and rockshelters.
2. HILL - A more or less isolated prominence with a peak or a crest, generally less than 1000 feet in elevation relief and limited in area. Often near a valley floor, a ridge system will be dissected into a series of hills.
3. MESA - A hill or small mountain with a flat top bounded on at least one side by a steep cliff.
4. MOUNTAIN SPINE - Mountains are the largest elevated landforms in the landscape, are of great areal extent with peaks and crests and are named as ranges and mountains on U.S.G.S. Quad sheets. Mountains are over 1000 feet in elevation and have been created by volcanic depositions and/or uplift. Used here, the mountain includes the buttes which are small, isolated mountains with steep sides, sometimes part of a larger range and sometimes not. Buttes do not have flat tops (see MESA).
5. PLAIN - A region of generally uniform slope, comparatively level or lightly hilly (0-3 degrees), of considerable extent and not broken by marked elevations and depressions. It may be an extensive valley floor or plateau summit (i.e. greater than 30 km.)
6. RIDGE - An elevated, relatively narrow landform with steep sides, which is a feature of a mountain, tableland, mesa, or hills. The bottom portion of the ridge along its sides is its foot, while the toe is at its distal end.
7. TABLELAND - A mountain sized landform with a flat or gently undulating top, bounded on one side by a cliff.
8. VALLEY - Low-lying land surrounded by mountains, either transversed by a stream or river or containing a lake or playa which receives the drainage of the surrounding highlands. Also used in the vernacular for intermontane and intramontane basins.