



## Use Key Words Effectively

Key words can be misleading. For example, *plasma*, *waves*, *flares* are all useful words, but they mean different things to people in different fields or under different circumstances. Are *waves* mentioned in your metadata sound waves? waves that result from earthquakes? Coastal waves? Are *flares* solar flares? Automotive flares? Kuwaiti oil fire flares?

**Put yourself in the place of someone who is seeking your data set. What key words would you use to search for the data in a library catalog or Internet search engine?**

- Think broadly.** If you have information about stream networks, don't forget to include words like *hydrology*, *waterbodies*, and *watercourses*.
- Think narrowly.** What terms describe your data in detail? Again, using the stream networks example, include *water quality*, *flow dynamics*, *sediment*, *monitoring sites*, and *suspended vegetation*.

**Your list of key words:**


**Don't Duck  
Metadata**

