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- Kame** — A conical hill or short irregular ridge of gravel or sand deposited in contact with glacial ice.
- Kansan** — (Geology) Of or relating to one of the glacial stages of the *Pleistocene* epoch which occurred in North America, which consisted of the *Nebraskan* (first stage), *Kansan* (second stage), *Illinoian* (third stage), and *Wisconsin* (fourth stage).
- Karst, also Karstic Region** — Limestone and dolomite areas with a topography peculiar to and dependent on underground solution and the diversion of surface waters to underground routes. Characteristic of an area of irregular limestone in which erosion has produced fissures, sinkholes, underground streams, and caverns. Also referred to as *Karst Topography*.
- Karst Hydrology** — The branch of *Hydrology* that deals with the hydrology of geological formations having large underground passages or fractures which enable underground movement of large quantities of water.
- Karst Topography** — The structure of land surface resulting from limestone, dolomite, gypsum beds, and other rocks formed by dissolution and characterized by closed depressions, sinkholes, caves, and underground drainage.
- Karstic River** — A river which originates from a karstic spring or flows in a *Karstic Region*.
- Kelpie, also Kelpy** — A malevolent water spirit of Scottish legend, usually having the shape of a horse and rejoicing in or causing drownings; a water sprite of Scottish folklore that delights in or brings about the drowning of wayfarers.
- Kelvin (K)** — The *SI Unit* of temperature. The base unit of temperature in the International System of Units that is equal to 1/273.16 of the Kelvin scale temperature of the triple point of water. Zero Kelvin is *Absolute Zero*, and an interval of 1 K is equal to 1° on the *Celsius Scale (Centigrade Temperature Scale)* and 1.8° on the *Fahrenheit Temperature Scale*. 0°C = 273.15 K.
- Kelvin Scale** — An absolute scale of temperature in which each degree equals one kelvin. Water freezes at 273.15 K and boils at 373.15 K.
- Kettle** — (1) (Geology) A depression left in a mass of *Glacial Drift*, formed by the melting of an isolated block of glacial ice. (2) A pothole.
- Keyway (Key)** — The notch excavated into the side of a gully or stream to anchor a check dam or other structure.
- KGAL** — A thousand gallons (kilogallons).
- Kibble** — An iron bucket used in wells or mines for hoisting water, ore, or refuse to the surface.
- Kieselguhr** — A fine, powdered diatomaceous earth used in industry as a filler, a filtering agent, and absorbent, a clarifier, and an insulator. More commonly referred to as *Diatomite*.
- Kilogram** — The base unit of mass in the International System of Units that is equal to the mass of a prototype agreed upon by international convention and that is nearly equal to 1,000 cubic centimeters of water at the temperature of its maximum density. Also see *Metric System*.
- Kilowatt (KW)** — The electrical unit of power which equals 1,000 watts or 1.341 horsepower. Since one watt equals one *Joule* per second, a kilowatt equals 1,000 joules per second. The *Kilowatt-Hour (KWH)* is the basic unit of electric energy. It equals 1 kilowatt of power applied for 1 hour.
- Kilowatt-Hour (KWH)** — A unit of electrical energy equal to 1,000 watt-hours or a power demand of 1,000 watts for one hour. The equivalent of 3,600,000 *Joules*. Power company utility rates are typically expressed in cents per kilowatt-hour.
- Kinematic Viscosity** — The ratio of dynamic viscosity to mass density. It is obtained by dividing dynamic viscosity by the fluid density. Units of kinematic viscosity are square meters per second.
- Kinetic Energy (k)** — The energy inherent in a substance because of its motion, expressed as a function of its velocity and mass, or $MV^2/2$.
- Kinetic Rate Coefficient** — A number that describes the rate at which a water constituent such as a *Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)* or *Dissolved Oxygen (DO)* rises or falls.
- Knifing** — A means to incorporate slurry or liquid manures into the soil. The waste is injected just behind a thin, knifelike tool that opens a narrow slit in the soil.
- Known Geothermal Resource Areas (KGRA)** — Basically, KGRA's fall into two categories: (1) areas of obvious

geothermal activity such as hot springs designated by the *U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)*; and (2) areas where applications to lease overlap to such a degree as to indicate strong geothermal potential. The latter are called competitive interest KGRAs.

Krill — Small abundant crustaceans that form an important part of the food chain in Antarctic waters.