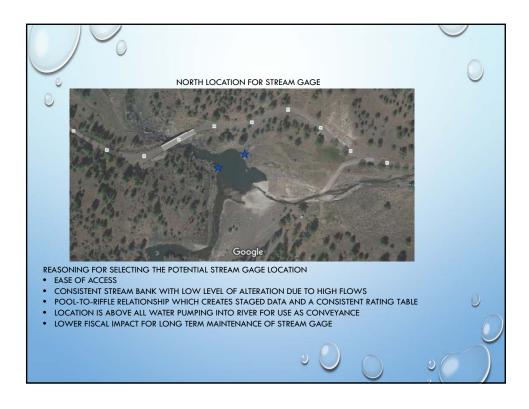
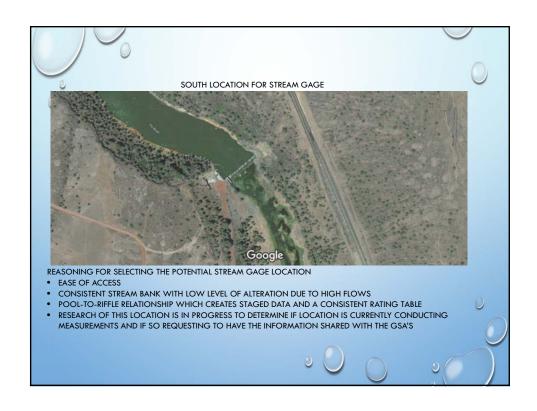


## SUBJECT #2: NEW STREAM GAGES









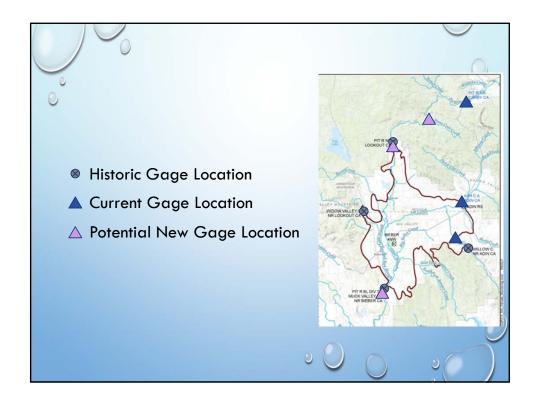
## What is a rating curve? Why does it change over time?

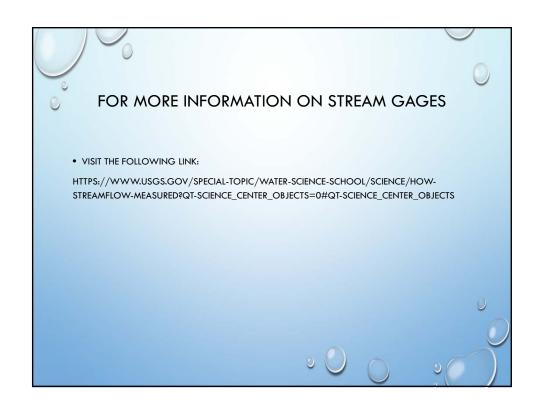
In order to convert water height (or "stage", usually expressed as feet) into a volume of water (or "discharge", usually expressed as cubic feet per second), USGS hydrographers must establish a relationship between them. This <u>stage-discharge relationship</u> is called a rating curve. It's developed by making frequent direct discharge measurements at stream gaging stations.

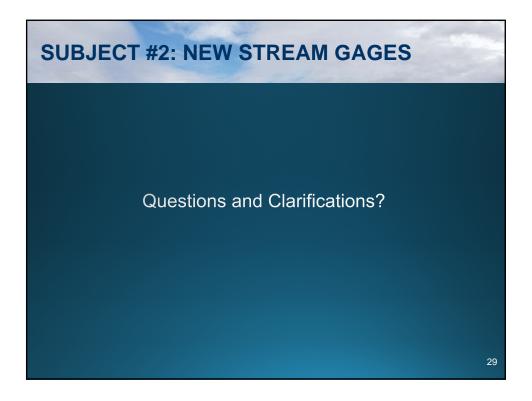
The rating curve depends on the hydraulic characteristics of the stream channel and floodplain, and will vary over time at almost every station.

There might be subtle changes to a stream channel, such as the growth of aquatic vegetation in the summer, frequent shifting of a sand-bed stream bottom, catastrophic changes due to floods, or man-made changes such as construction of a bridge. These changes might require only minor or temporary adjustments to streamflow records, or could require a complete reevaluation of the rating curve.

## Diagram of Channel Cross Section With Subsections. THE MOST COMMON METHOD USED BY THE USGS FOR MEASURING VELOCITY IS WITH A CURRENT METER HOWEVER, A VARIETY OF ADVANCED EQUIPMENT CAN ALSO BE USED TO SENSE STAGE AND MEASURE STREAMFLOW. IN THE SIMPLEST METHOD, A CURRENT METER TURNS WITH THE FLOW OF THE RIVER OR STREAM. THE CURRENT METER IS USED TO MEASURE WATER **VELOCITY AT PREDETERMINED POINTS (SUBSECTIONS)** ALONG A MARKED LINE, SUSPENDED CABLEWAY, OR BRIDGE ACROSS A RIVER OR STREAM. THE DEPTH OF THE WATER IS ALSO MEASURED AT EACH POINT. THESE Area = Depth x Width VELOCITY AND DEPTH MEASUREMENTS ARE USED TO Discharge = Area x Velocity COMPUTE THE TOTAL VOLUME OF WATER FLOWING PAST THE LINE DURING A SPECIFIC INTERVAL OF TIME, USUALLY A RIVER OR STREAM WILL BE MEASURED AT 25 TO 30 REGULARLY SPACED LOCATIONS ACROSS THE RIVER OR







## SUBJECT #2: NEW STREAM GAGES Comments and Discussion

