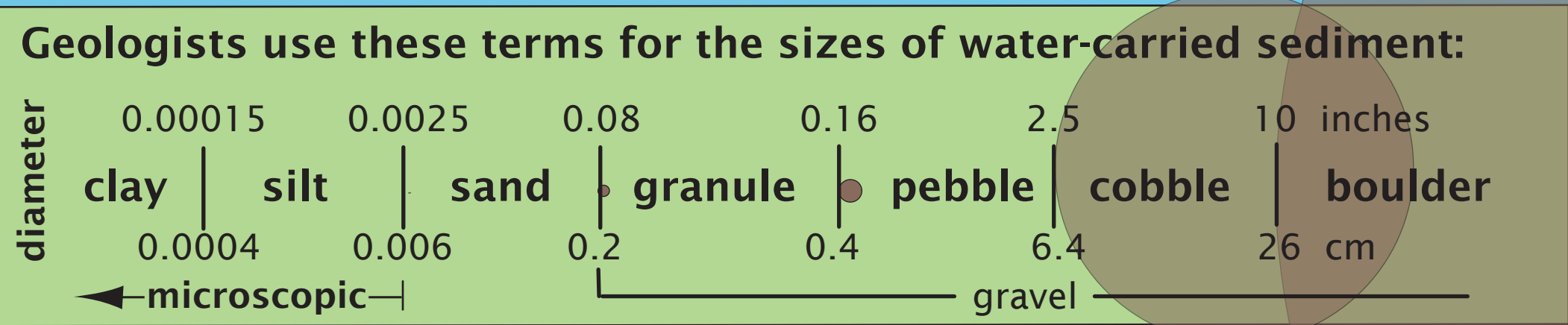


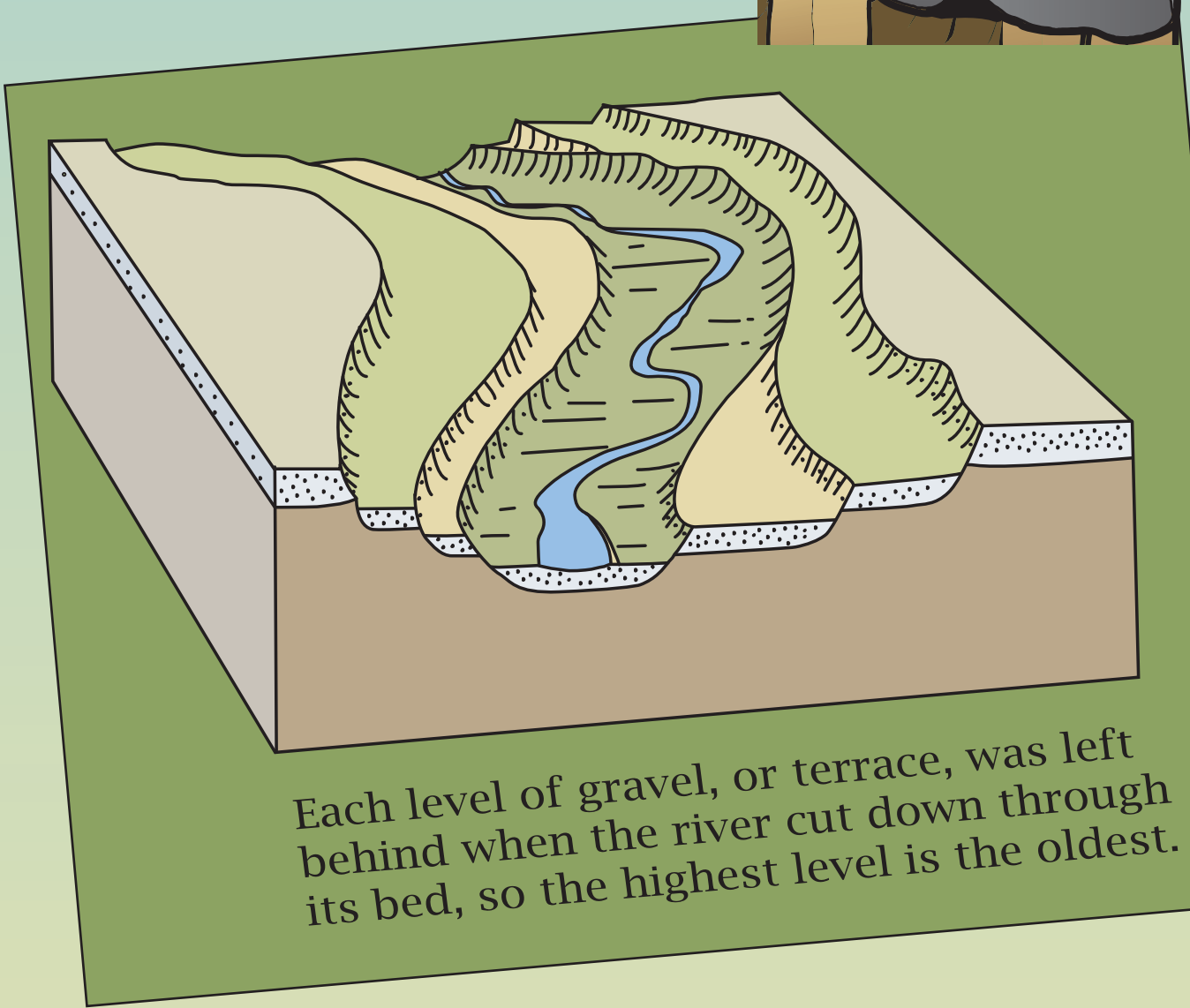
# 4. Silt, Sand, and Gravel, Mined Here for Many Years

Snooks Bottom lake and the lakes in James M. Robb Colorado River State Park were shaped not by the river, but by people, who mined the sand and gravel bars.

Holes in the gravel bars fill naturally with water to the level of the river, because water seeps through the gravel and sand from the river.



In the valley and on these slopes, you can see four levels of gravel: 1. the top of Red Hill, 2. the toe of Opal Hill and the parking lot, 3. Snooks Lake level, and 4. the active river channel. The upper three were deposited during the Pleistocene Ice Ages.



Each level of gravel, or terrace, was left behind when the river cut down through its bed, so the highest level is the oldest.

1954

An air photo taken before the gravel was mined shows there was no lake on the river's southwest bank. There was a big sand bar instead.

1997

When the area was being mined, there were a lot of piles of sorted gravel and sand and a small lake.

2009

After mining, the land was reclaimed, smoothed and sculpted into a lake and paths for Fruita Riverfront Park.

A gravel mine fills the front third of this photo. Gravel miners dig out the sediment, wash it to clean off the fine clay and silt, then sort it into separate piles by size: sand, pea gravel, gravel, and cobbles.

