

## Understanding Your Environment: Land Use Planning Activity 5 - Soil and Land Use in Your Community

### This investigation will help you to:

- Classifying Soils
- Soil Formation
- Soil Horizons
- Soil as a Natural Resource
- To learn more about soils in your community, visit the following web sites:

#### Classifying Soils

- "Photo Gallery" - USDA-NRCS  
This site includes a written description of different soil types and a photograph and United States distribution map for each soil type.
- "Keys to Soil Taxonomy" - USDA-NRCS  
Online textbook covers a wide range of topics, including which soils scientists classify and how they classify them.

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#### Soil Formation

- Soil Composition and Formation - NOAA Coastal Services Center  
Brief summary of soil horizons and the mechanisms that produce them. Click on significant terms to view a definition.
- "Soil forming factors" - The Encyclopedia of Earth, Boston University  
This article reviews how soil is formed from the erosion of rocks exposed at the Earth's surface.

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#### Soil Horizons

- "Photo Gallery" - USDA-NRCS  
This site includes a written description of different soil types and a photograph and United States distribution map for each soil type.
- Examination and Description of Soils - USDA-NRCS  
Excerpt from the text "Soil Survey Manual". This very detailed review defines the different soil horizons and transitional zones. Site also explains soil horizon nomenclature.

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#### Soil as a Natural Resource

- "Soil Quality Information Sheets" - USDA-NRCS

PDF documents (you must have Adobe Acrobat to view these files), each addressing a different soil resource issue, including erosion, salinization, soil biodiversity, and much more. Each sheet includes text and good color images.

- "Urban Soil Quality Information" - NRCS

Three fact sheets (PDF, need Adobe Acrobat to view) which cover soil erosion and sedimentation on construction sites, urban soil compaction, and heavy metal soil compaction.

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To learn more about soils in your community, visit the following web sites:

- "Photo Gallery" - USDA-NRCS

This site includes a written description of different soil types and a photograph and United States distribution map for each soil type.

- "List of Soil Surveys by State" - USDA-NRCS

Click on your state to be linked to your state's soil office.

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