

The Role of Soil Science In Natural Resource Management

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Soils are the accumulated legacy of life on earth. Soils form under the combined influences of external factors that determine the internal soil-forming processes. Thus, soil profiles are the historical records of soil development and of the external factors. Soils are the key terrestrial component of the water cycle, serving as both storage bin and regulator for lakes, rivers and streams. They are earth's recycling bin, nutrient warehouse and plant rooting medium. Finally, soils are the most misunderstood and mismanaged of our natural resources. What should biologists, ecologists, foresters and recreation managers know about soils? The role of soil science in resource management and in the Land Grant university concept is examined and discussed.