Come on down and discover the amazing world of soils!

1 **THE SKIN OF THE EARTH**
   What on Earth are soils and why are they important to us? Find the answers to these questions, and uncover the dynamic roles soils play in supporting life on Earth.
   - **The Skin of the Earth**
     Get into the landscape. Look under the trunk of an oak tree at a cut-away mural and close-up videos to see and hear what’s happening in soils.

2 **SIZING UP SOILS**
   See how a soil forms. Discover what various soils are made of and what gives them their special characteristics.
   - **Color It Wet or Dry**
     Study soils like a scientist by comparing six soil samples with Munsell color test cards.
   - **Where in the Soil World Are You?**
     Follow the clues to figure out where three mystery soils come from.
   - **Hidden Horizons**
     Touch the layers in a column of soil, and put together puzzle blocks to see how soils stack up.
   - **Texture Matters**
     Flip tumblers of “giant” soil particles to see how water moves through sand, silt or clay.

3 **MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH**
   Soils are alive and teeming with millions of living things. Take a peek into the life, death and decay beneath your feet.
   - **Soil Emissions Inspection Station**
     Touch two modeled soils; then activate two soil “breathalyzers,” and watch the simulation as they detect carbon dioxide emissions from soil microbes.
   - **Matters of Life and Death theater**
     Watch this edgy and gripping detective story that takes you into the underworld of life, death and decay in the soil food web.

Find **fun hands-on and interactive activities for the whole family!**
Make sure you see these before you leave the Dig It! exhibition.
DIG IT! The Secrets of Soil

Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Exhibition
Open until January 2010

4 THE BIG PICTURE
What do soils have to do with clean drinking water and climate change? Find out in this section, and unearth the roles soils play in Earth’s processes.

The Big Picture
Get soil savvy! Visit our global map to see the 12 basic types of soils found around the world. Then take our Big Picture computer quiz to learn about global connections between soils and life on Earth.

5 WHAT’S SOIL GOT TO DO WITH IT?
How do soils affect where you live, work and play? What’s your personal relationship to soils? Explore the many ways we use and benefit from soils and how we affect their health.

Underneath It All
Touch models of two very different urban soils found in Washington, D.C.

6 OUR WORLD, OUR SOIL
How close are you to soils? In this section, take steps to uncover the many ways soils touch your life every day.

Soil Wisdom Worldwide
Touch a model of a dark earth Amazonian rainforest soil.

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Connections to Other Exhibitions
What did soils look like before they were soils? Find out in the Geology, Gems and Minerals Hall on the 2nd floor!

Want to learn more about some of the countless animals that live in soils? Check out the Mammals Hall on the 1st floor and the Insect Zoo on the 2nd floor to see how some critters “dig” soils.

Visit the Discovery Room on the 1st floor for more hands-on activities!

For Teachers
Overarching exhibition themes:

- Geology and Earth systems: water cycle, carbon cycle, nutrient cycling
- Environmental science: general, local and international issues; biodegradation using soil microorganisms
- Social studies: land use and planning, agricultural issues, soil as a natural resource
- Soil science: classification, evaluation, composition and texture

Visit the exhibition website at http://forces.si.edu/soils for family activities, behind-the-scenes information, soils events and more!