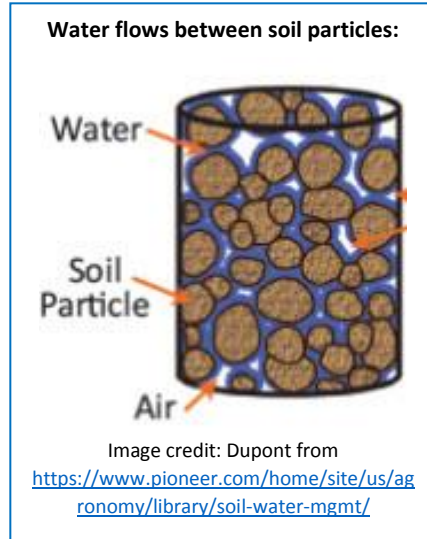


Groundwater

Groundwater is water that is moving or sitting in the soil. Most plants and soil organisms need the groundwater to live. As the water flows through ground it moves into streams, bubbles forth as springs, or is drawn up by wells for people and animals to drink. Groundwater is an important source of water for plants, animals, streams, and people!

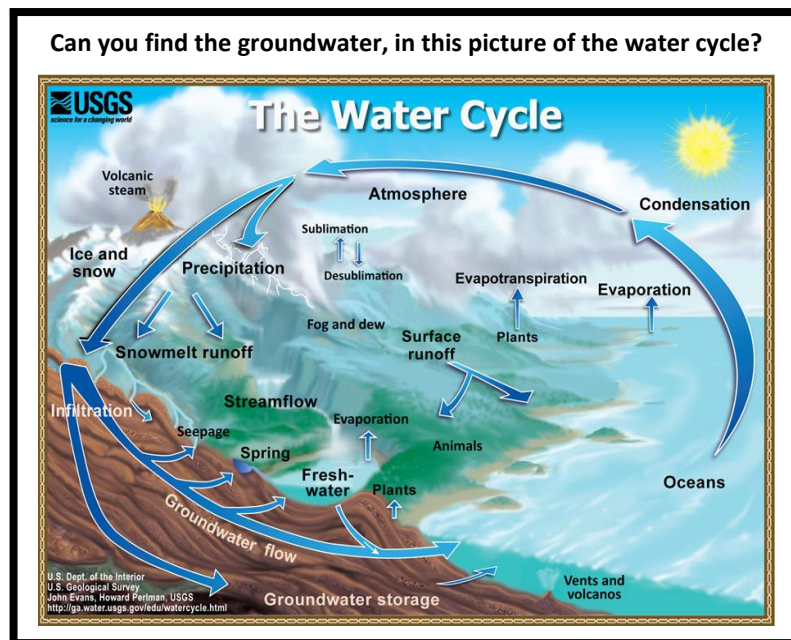
Soil is made up of materials like rocks, sand, clay, and humus. Groundwater clings to these materials and through the spaces between them.

How fast groundwater moves through the soil or rock depends on the material. Some materials, like gravel, interconnected cracks or spaces that are large enough to water to move freely. Materials with few spaces between them, like clay or solid rock, force the water to move very slowly or not at all. Groundwater may move several each day in gravel, but only a few inches in a hundred through clay!



moves
have
allow
move
yards
years

The source of most groundwater is rain and snow that falls on the surface of the ground. If there is a surface like concrete that water can't soak through, less water moves into the ground, and less water is there for later use by plants, animals, streams, people.



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