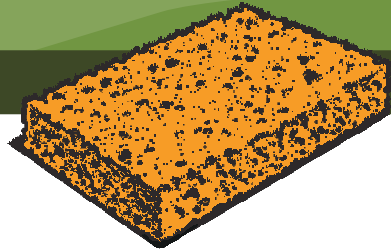




# Functions of a Healthy Living Soil



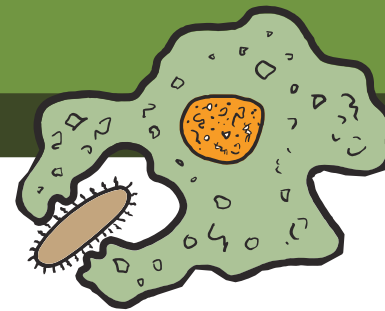
## Store water and nutrients

Much like a giant sponge, healthy soil acts as a storehouse for water and nutrients. The slow release helps plants absorb the correct amount. As a storage reservoir for both water and nutrients, healthy soil has a greater holding capacity than soils that lack sufficient organisms, organic matter and pore spaces.



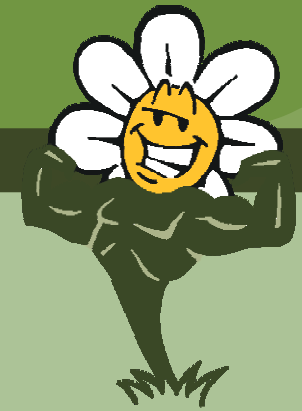
## Water flow and regulation

Like the on/off function of a faucet, healthy soil regulates and partitions water flow, naturally maintaining the water cycle by slowly discharging to streams, lakes and recharging aquifers.



## Neutralization of pollutants

Healthy soil is the site of intensive physical, chemical and biological activity, thus it can prevent water and air pollution. Soil rich in organic matter contains microorganisms that can immobilize or degrade pollutants.



## Resists pests

Living soil has an incredible array of organisms, most of which are beneficial. The beneficial organisms protect plants from disease through predation, parasitization, competition and antibiosis. Bacteria, for example, cover leaf surfaces and block infection. Beneficial nematodes prey on harmful nematodes.

Adapted from: *The Relationship Between Soil And Water*, King County Department Of Natural Resources.

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