Surficial geology

January 1, 1984

Surficial materials are those at or near the Earth's surface. They constitute, by far, the largest and most used part of the ground around us. Areas not covered by surficial deposits--bare bedrock--form probably less than 5 percent of our land surface.

BEDROCK IS NOT A SURFICIAL DEPOSIT

DEFINITION

Most surficial deposits are composed of poorly consolidated clay, silt, sand, or gravel-sized particles that are produced chiefly by erosion and are transported by and finally deposited by water, wind, or ice, but are also partly produced by the in-situ weathering of bedrock. The major genetic categories are shown on the map by various colors; the principal compositional types in each category are indicated by patterns. Colors, patterns, and letter symbols are given in the explanation which follows this summary description.

Surficial deposits have characteristics important to our environment--water-bearing properties, mineral resources, and suitability as a natural foundation for buildings. They are also susceptible to flooding, erosion, ground subsidence, land slides, and earthquakes.

Citation Information

Publication Year	1984
Title	Surficial geology
DOI	10.3133/70211058
Authors	Charles B. Hunt
Publication Type	Report
Publication Subtype	USGS Unnumbered Series
Series Title	National Atlas of the United States of America
Index ID	70211058
Record Source	USGS Publications Warehouse