



Landslides as agents of diversity

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Landslides, often destructive and damaging, are also agents of change that introduce diversity to landscapes. I discuss landslide diversity at three levels: site diversity, soil diversity, and habitat diversity. There are many landslide types involving different materials and rates and styles of movement. Landscape diversity varies with different types of landslides. Landslides, at the same time depositional and erosional agents, influence sites by redistributing materials and changing microtopography. Eroded portions of landslides, with exposed parent material, revert to the initial stages of soil development and ecological succession. Landslides can also alter soil properties including, surface texture, chemistry and porosity. Landslides influence habitat diversity by creating ecosystem mosaics.