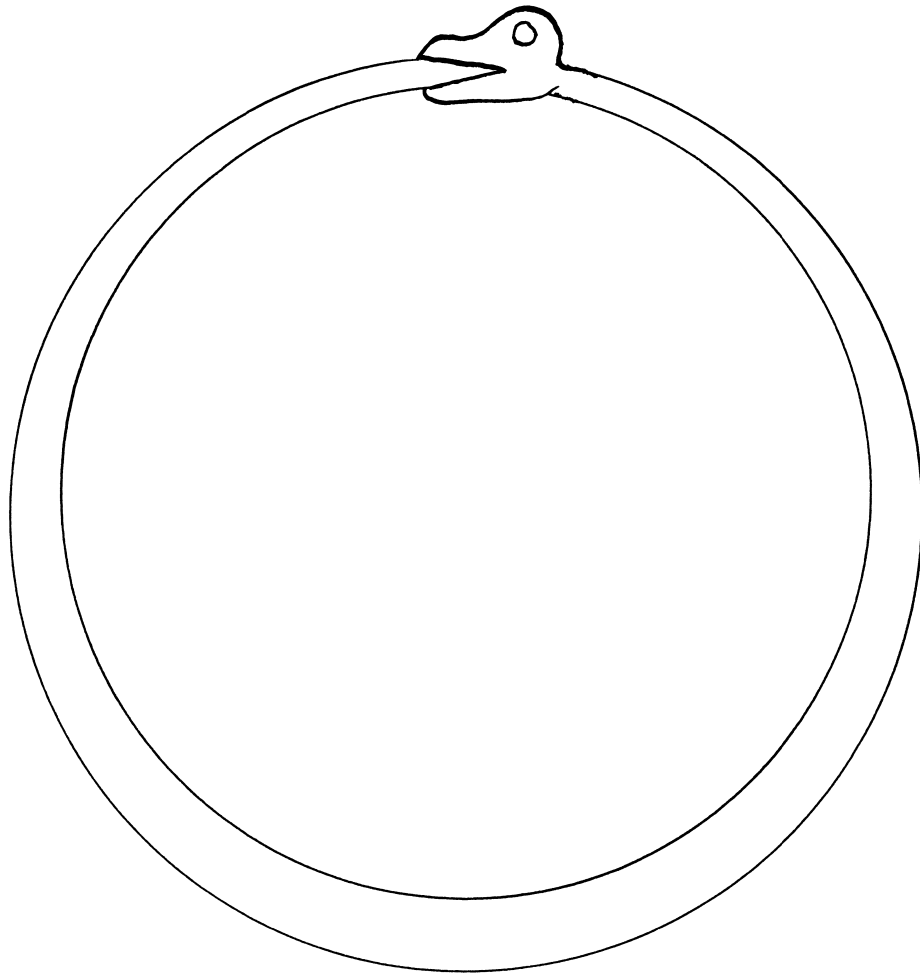
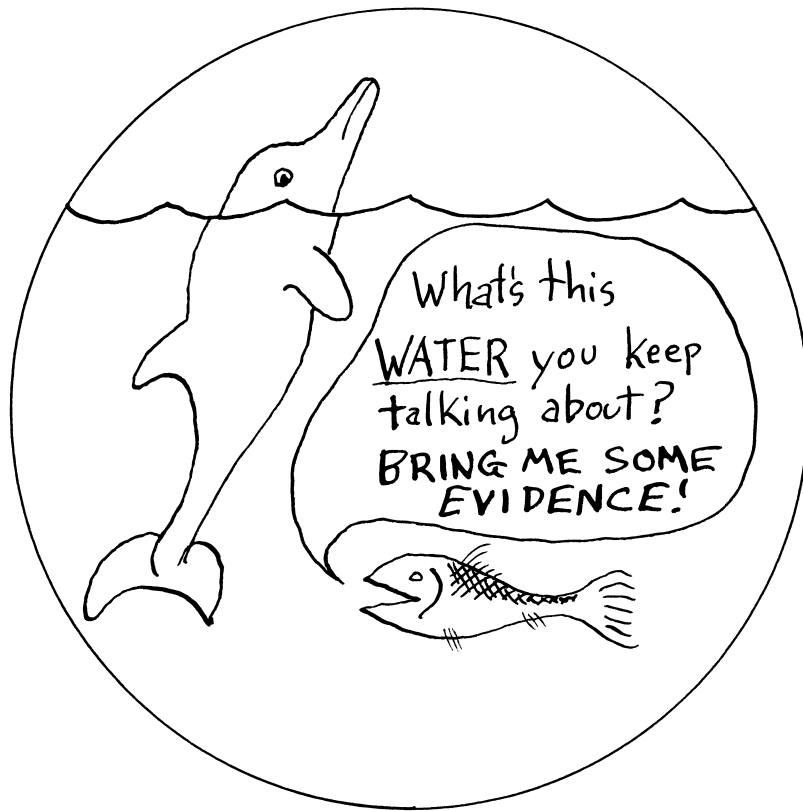


4 WAYS OF
RECOGNIZING
THE CIRCLE OF LIFE



Peter Donovan



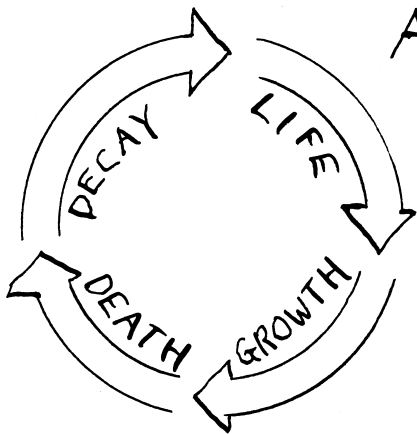
For regeneration of soils and watersheds, we need to know how to work WITH the circle of life—the most powerful geologic force. For example—how well does this field or yard accept a 5-inch fall of rain? How we recognize this power influences what we DO, which influences what we KNOW.

👉 see inside back cover for ways to participate

soilcarboncoalition.org

recognizing the CIRCLE of LIFE

1. INTUITIVE



A flow and change of **MATTER**.
Plants grow from soil. Dust
to dust. Composting and
manuring. Air plays little
part.

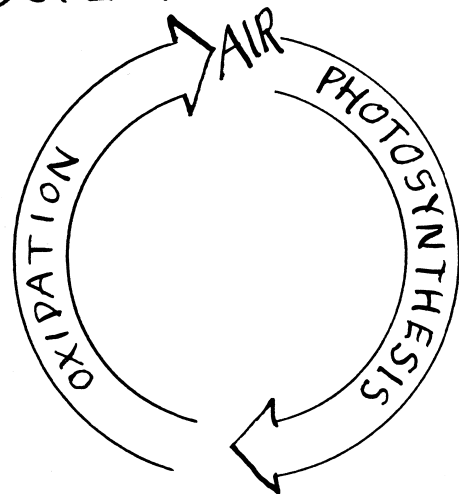
2. SCIENTIFIC

By 1800, chemists had
discovered carbon, oxygen,
photosynthesis, respiration, and
the **CARBON CYCLE**.

Nature was a **WHOLE**—a
verb— driven by **ENERGY**
from the sun.

1920s: Vladimir Vernadsky recognizes that
LIFE is the **MOST POWERFUL FORCE** on earth.

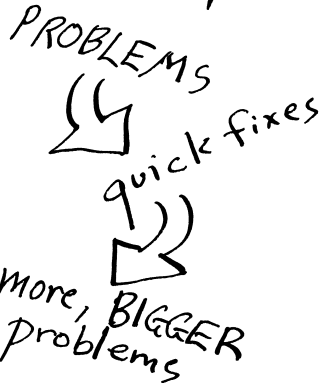
But there is little practical need or
context for this understanding.



REACTIVE

The circle of life has NOT BEEN the context for most human decisions.

Instead, we react:



OCTOPUS FIGHT! WE'RE TRASHING OUR SUPPORTS.

MAYBE SO, BUT THAT'S WHERE THE MONEY AND JOBS ARE.

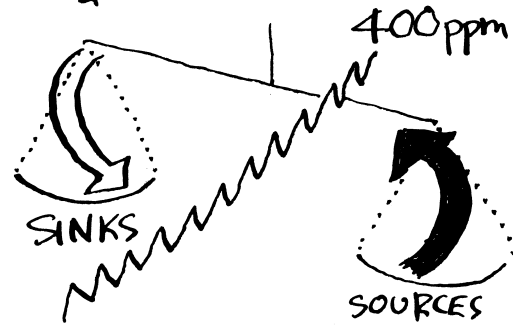


The climate industry

Climate change is a perfect fit for our reactive tendencies. People take sides and positions, which compete and multiply.

BLAME
POWER STRUGGLES
CONFLICT

CO₂ a POLLUTANT



CIRCLE OF LIFE DIVIDED INTO COMPETING PARTS

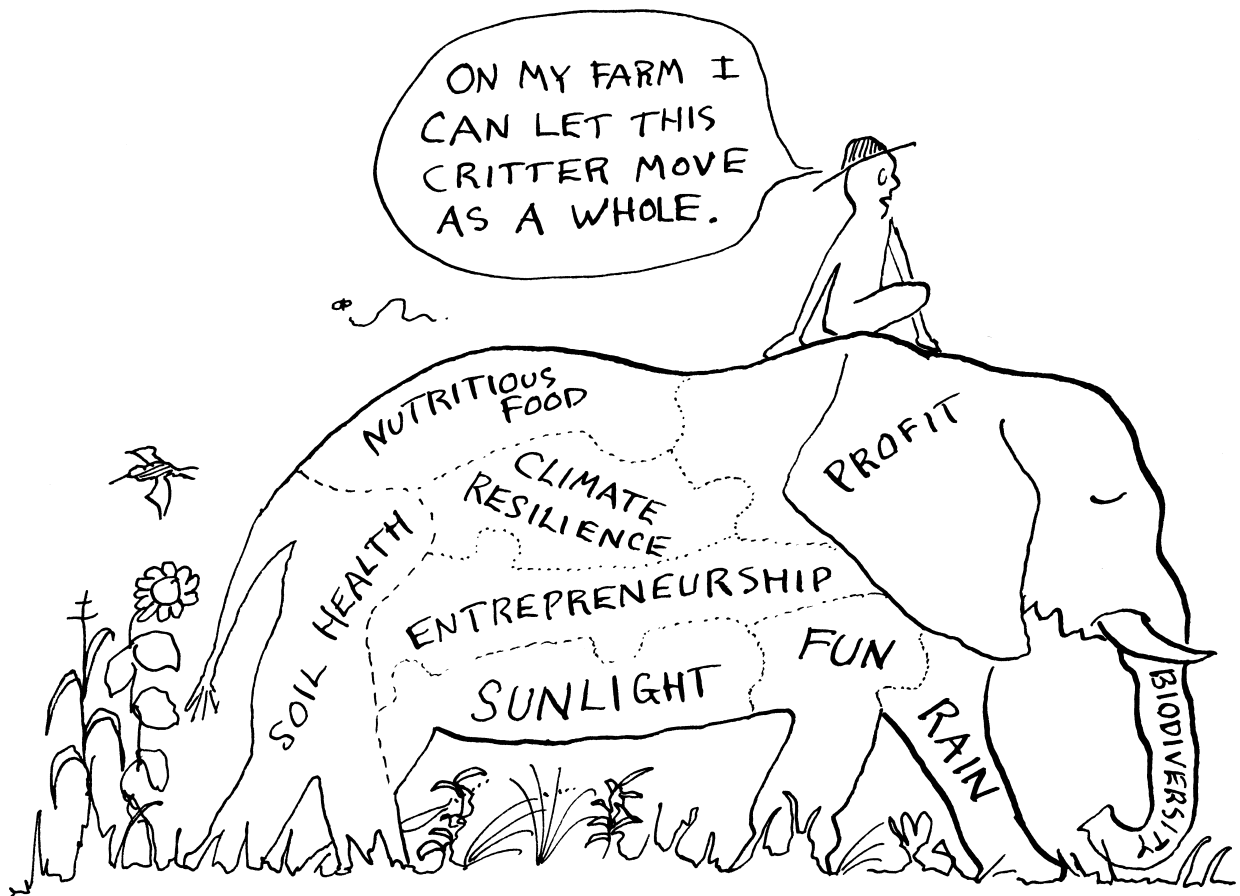


GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

We're NOT learning what works. We spend BILLION\$ on predictions, models, and the endless struggle to control or change each others positions.

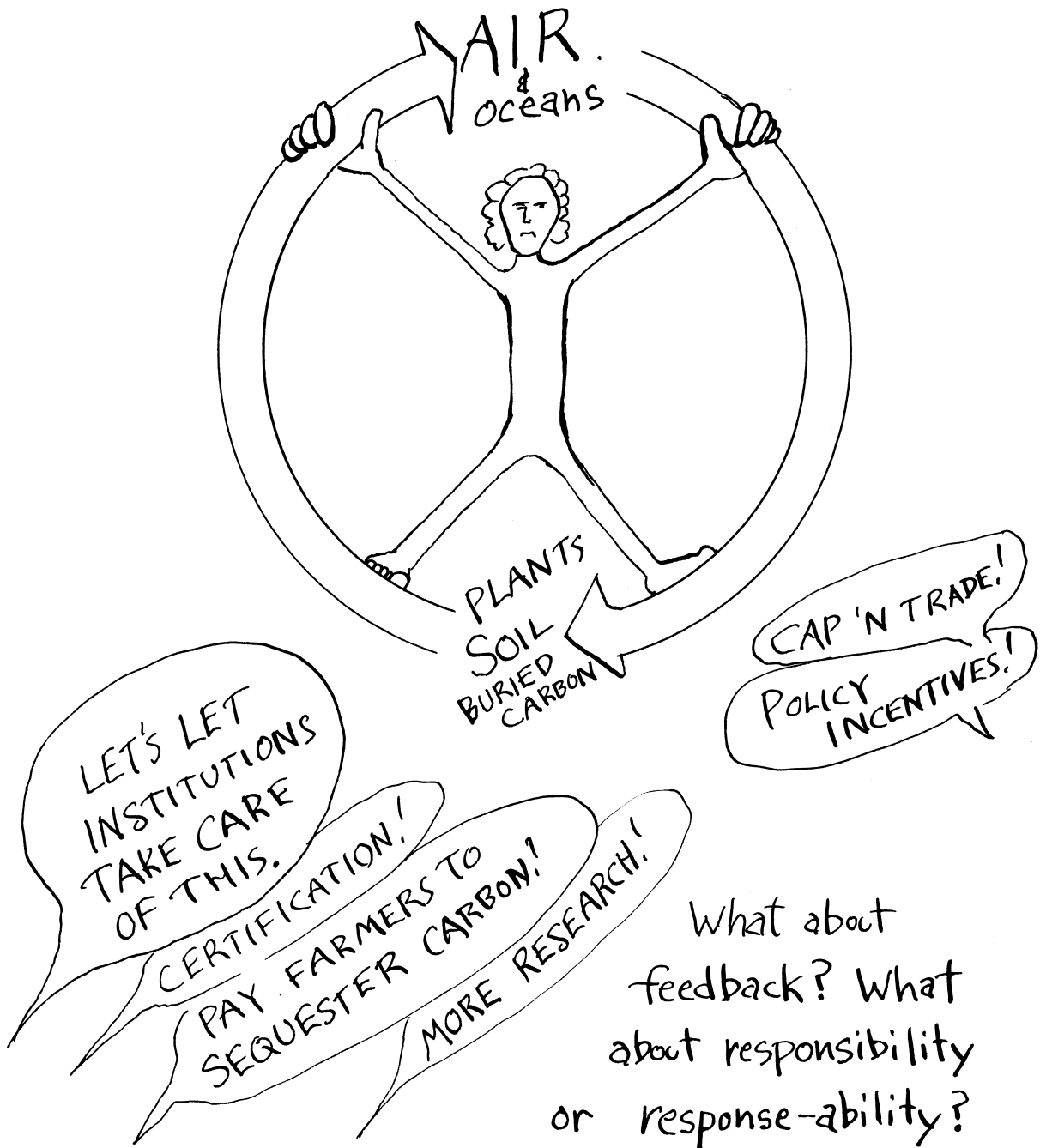
But shift is happening.

The climate issue has helped broaden and deepen understanding of the circle of life, the carbon cycle. More people understand that climate change is a SYMPTOM, and that the circle of life is deeply entangled at all scales with water, biodiversity, and soil health. More people are grasping the opportunity to work WITH the most powerful force.

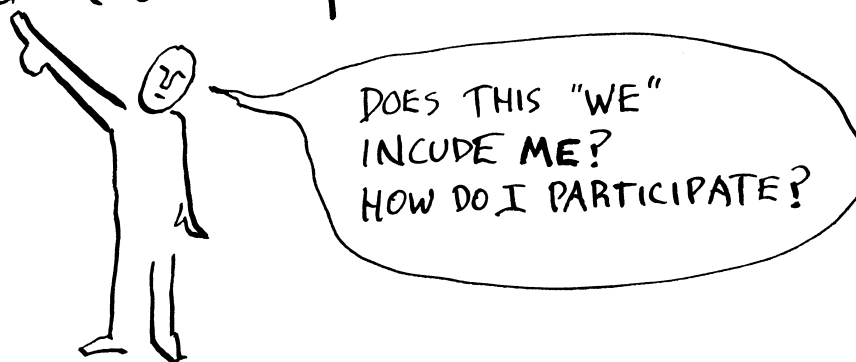


3. PROACTIVE

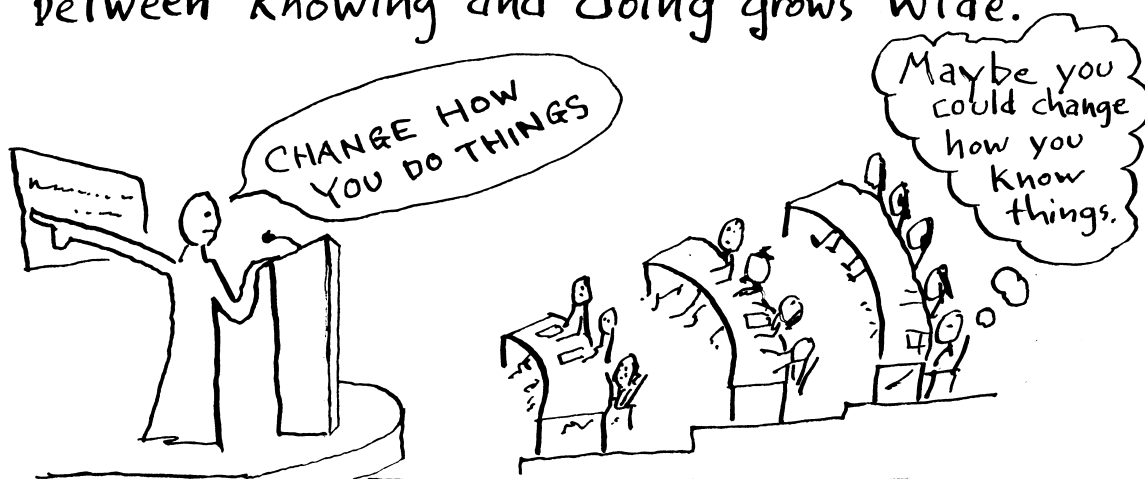
Many now recognize that human decisions and actions influence both sides of the carbon cycle.



We are responsible . . .

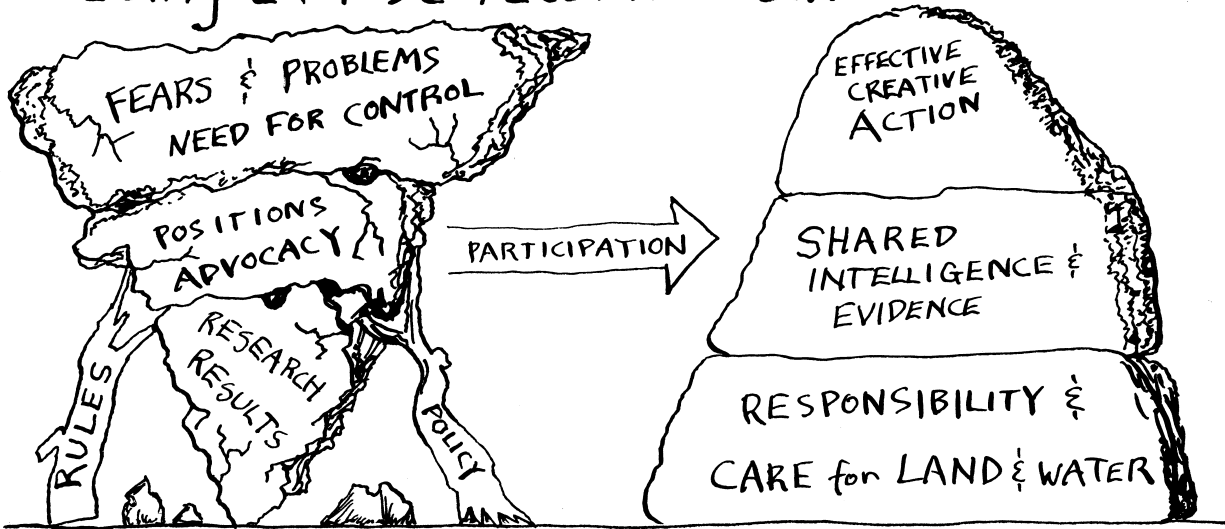


With the industrial and scientific revolutions, knowledge became more specialized and professional. Knowledge is produced, managed, and distributed by institutions. The disconnect between knowing and doing grows wide.



Learning and change are imposed (and resisted) by others. We lose trust in ourselves and in others. We lose accountability, imagination, creativity, participation, and the ability to lead.

There are alternatives. Knowing and doing can be reconnected.



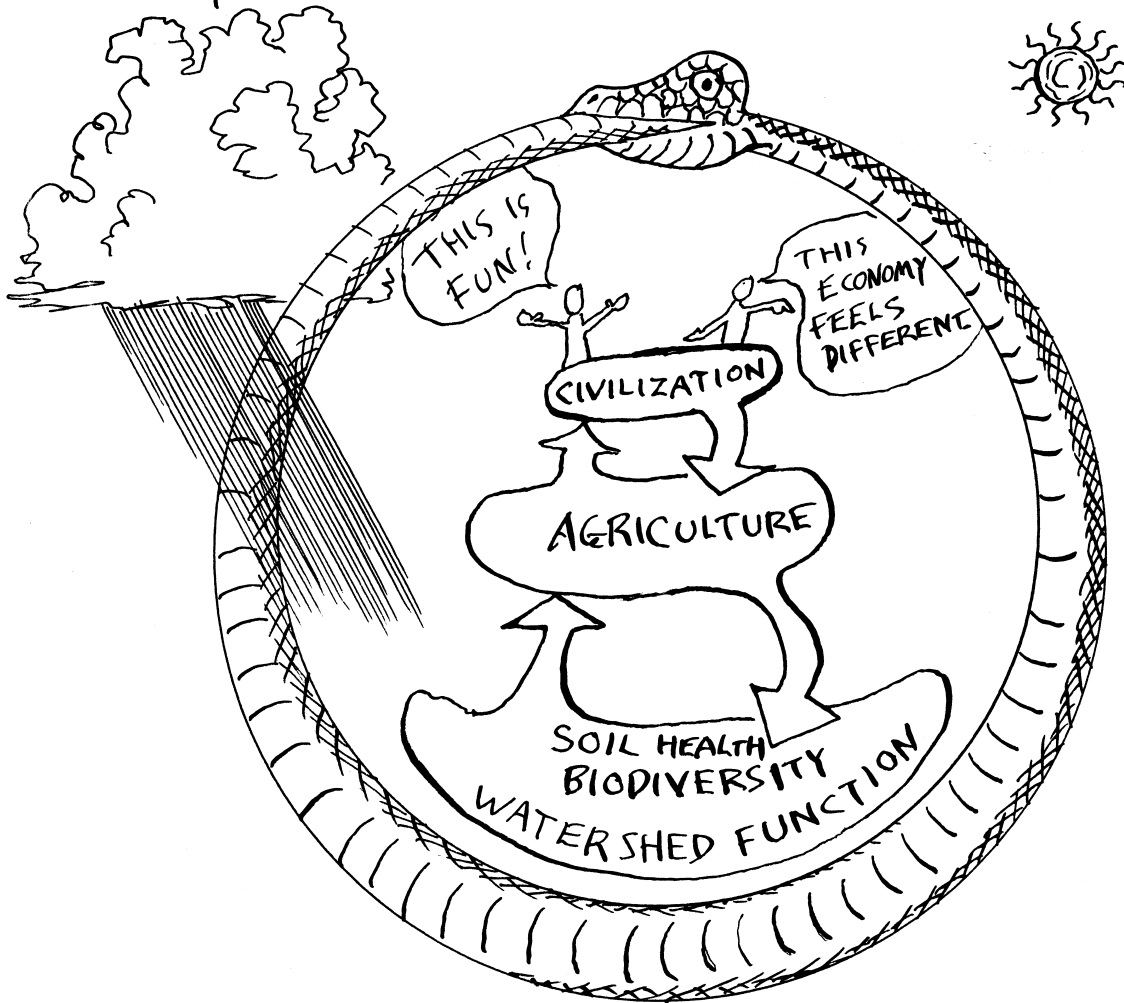
We can ACKNOWLEDGE
the problems,
the fears

and AFFIRM
the opportunities
for care of the
circle of life.

Professional research, scientific citizenship, and overlooked evidence can come together on open platforms and maps. We can grow a shared intelligence on what works in our situations and locales, with more people, more land participating in both knowing and doing.

4. RESPONSIBLE

The circle of life is a feedback loop, composed of countless other feedback loops, INCLUDING our processes of learning and recognition.



The circle of life, the carbon cycle, is not an external problem to be fixed or solved. It is a **MYSTERY** that we live within.



The Soil Carbon Coalition can help you and your community grow a shared, evidence-based intelligence on soil health and watershed function:

- inquiry-based learning for schools and communities: soilcarboncoalition.org/learn
- open-source, open-access data entry and mapping: atlasbiowork.com
- Land Listeners workshop: soilcarboncoalition.org/land-listeners-project
- Soil Carbon Challenge: soilcarboncoalition.org/challenge

Questions? Suggestions? info@soilcarboncoalition.org

4 ways we recognize it

The circle of life is the most powerful geologic force. How we recognize it influences our beliefs and actions, which influence the circle of life.

