



National Resources Inventory

A summary of natural resource trends in Louisiana between 1982 and 1997

Source Data: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Louisiana 1997 NRI (Revised 12/2000)

About the NRI

The National Resources Inventory (NRI) is a statistically based survey that has been designed and implemented using scientific principles to assess the conditions and trends of soil, water and related resources on nonfederal lands in the United States.

The NRI also provides a record of trends in the Nation's resources over time. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conducts these inventories every five years.

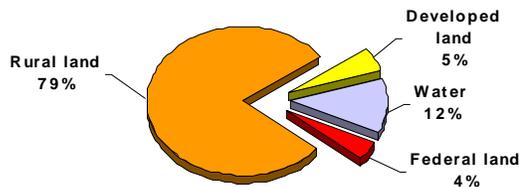
The inventory highlighted in this summary sampled 800,000 nonfederal sites across the nation to compile the database. Data was collected on 14,446 sites in Louisiana.

NRI Summary

This summary includes graphic highlights and explanations of the NRI data. For more information or data, call NRCS in Alexandria, Louisiana at (318) 473-7789 or visit the NRCS National website at www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/NRI/, or the Louisiana website at www.la.nrcs.usda.gov/nri/index.html.

- 1997 cropland acreage totaled more than 5.6 million acres. Cropland decreased by more than 751,000 acres between 1982 and 1997. Much of this decrease is attributed to development.
- Nearly 5 million cropland acres are considered "prime farmland." Prime farmland has the best combination of physical and chemical properties for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops and is also available for these uses.
- In 1997, nonfederal land totaled more than 26,287,000 acres. Six percent or over 1,623,000 of these acres were considered developed.
- Federal land totaled more than 1,308,000 acres. This represents almost four percent of the land area in Louisiana.
- Today, unparalleled growth and prosperity are leading to rapid expansion of small and mid-sized cities onto agricultural land. Since 1982, developed land has increased by 389,900 acres.

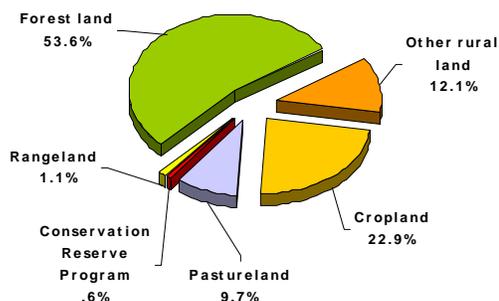
Major Surface Areas in Louisiana



Louisiana has a significant amount of nonfederally owned rural land.

Thus, private landowners and local, state, and tribal governments have the responsibility for conservation on 79 percent of the acreage in the state.

1997 Land Use of Louisiana's Nonfederal Lands



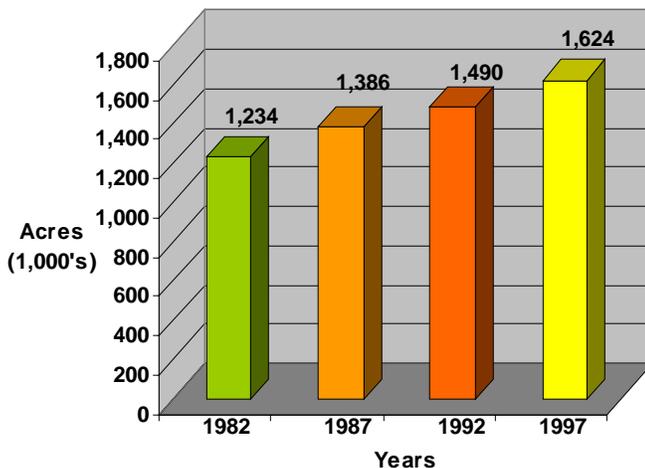
Nonfederal land is predominantly rural and supports a variety of land-based industries. Proper management of these lands is critical to the overall health of the State's natural resources.

Land use is dynamic--changes in use occur between each inventory period.



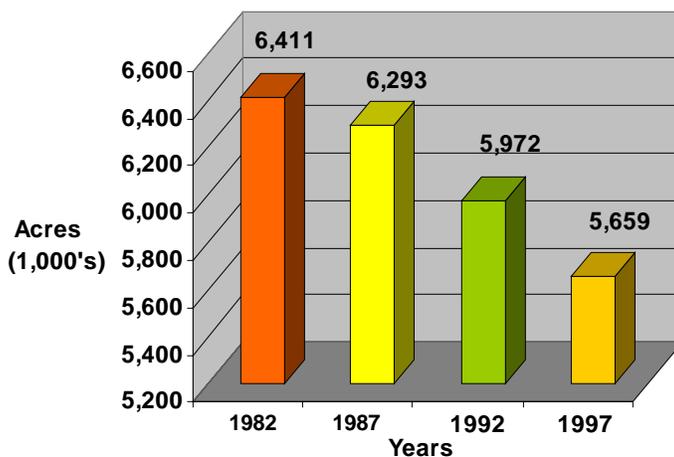
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Developed Land Trends 1982-1997



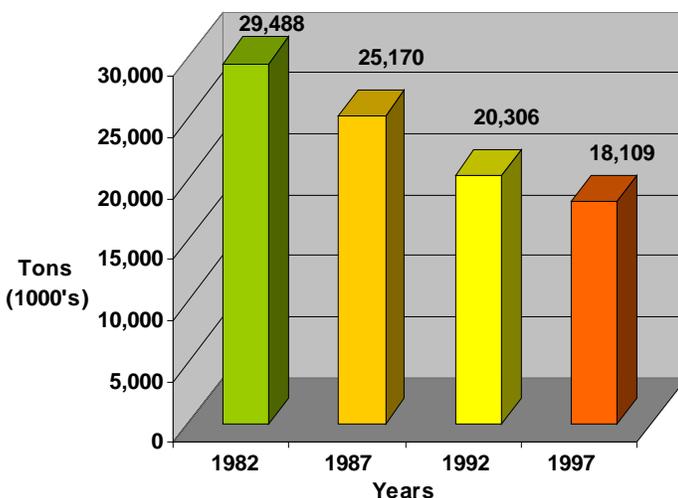
- The inventory reflects a continued conversion of Louisiana's rural land to development.
- In 1997 developed land totaled approximately 5 percent of the total surface area in Louisiana.
- The most significant losses during the 15 year trend are conversions from forest land, followed by cropland and pastureland.

Cropland Trends in Louisiana 1982-1997



- Cropland in Louisiana has declined by more than 751,000 acres from 1982 levels.
- With the decrease in total cropland, adequate protection of this resource becomes vital in maintaining sustainable agriculture.
- Almost 16 percent of the total acres converted from cropland was permanently lost to urban development.

Tons of Soil Erosion on Cropland has dropped in Louisiana 1982-1997



- Controlling erosion not only sustains the long-term productivity of the land, but also affects the amount of soil, pesticides, fertilizer, and other substances that move into the Nation's waters.
- Erosion rates on cropland from 1982 to 1997 have been reduced from 4.6 to 3.2 tons/acre/year, but excessive erosion continues to be a serious concern in many parts of the state.