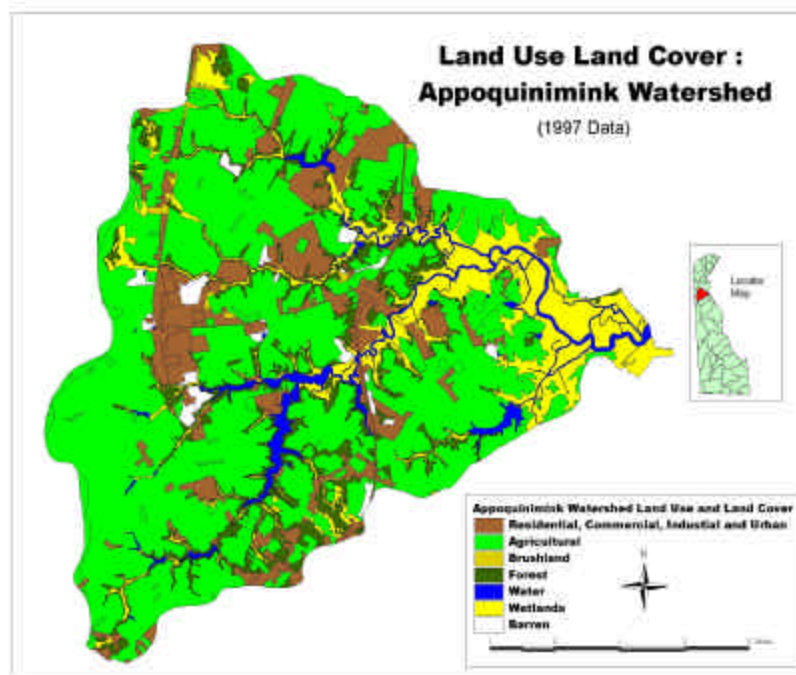


LAND USE TRENDS



DEFINITION

A watershed is the land area that drains surface and ground water to one point, usually a larger body of water. Activities that occur on the land impact water quality of the surrounding streams, rivers, bays and groundwater. The Appoquinimink watershed is located in one of the two fastest growing regions of the state, southern New Castle County.

WATER QUALITY IMPACTS

Different land uses have different water quality impacts. Land in agriculture may impact water quality through the use of fertilizers. Residential use adds pollutants through home fertilizer use, on-site wastewater treatment systems, and on-site wastewater disposal

LAND COVER CHANGE

From 1986 to 1997 the watershed land use cover changed as more people moved into the watershed.

- 30% loss of forested land
- 15% loss of farmland
- 300% increase in residential area

During the same time period, impervious cover in the watershed increased from 2 to 8%. Impervious cover prevents water from permeating the ground. Many scientists look to impervious cover percentages as an indicator of

watershed health. When data become available for 2002 it is likely that the percent impervious cover will continue to increase.

MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

No matter how one uses their land, actions can be taken to reduce the pollution that is generated from those uses. These actions are called “best management practices” or BMPs. Some farmers will be required to use a nutrient management plan. Homeowners can leave their grass clippings on their lawn, reduce the amount of fertilizers used, wash their car on their lawns, and capture stormwater runoff from their roofs to prevent erosion. Developers can install stormwater retention systems with nutrient removal components and use conservation design to reduce the amount of impervious cover.

APPOQUINIMINK WATERSHED

This fact sheet was prepared by the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Whole Basin Team for citizens and stakeholders interested in one of Delaware's most environmentally and economically attractive areas—the Appoquinimink River and its surrounding lands, surface and ground waters.

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