

**U.S. LUC Analyses in RPA National Assessments  
and Interfaces with the Forest and Agriculture  
Sector Optimization Model-Green House Gases  
(FASOMGHG)—Linkages Across the Land Base**

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Forest and Ag GHG Modeling Forum—April 8, 2009

## Collaborators

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**Dave Wear, USDA Forest Service SRS**

## Sources of Support

**USDA Forest Service**

**USEPA**

# Risk and Uncertainty, and Decision Making

- Xylitol and Willie the doxie
- Ken Skog's mention of discount rate (and the current economic challenge, subprime mortgages, toxic assets, stock market valuations, etc.)
- Projections can go down, stay the same, or go up
- IPCC Scenarios/Storylines—equal probabilities
- Fire on public lands—stochastic element in modeling
- Robert Beach's upcoming talk on insurance tomorrow
- Bruce McCarl's risk modeling
- Interconnections, intersectoral interactions, etc.
- Policy-informative vs. policy prescriptive

# Outline of Talk

- **Background and History: Large-Scale Land Use Modeling in the US**
- **RPA Assessments and Total Land Base**
- **FASOM-GHG Modeling: Policy Context**
- **RPA and FASOM Ties**
- **Preliminary Results**
- **Summary, Wrap-Up, and Road Ahead**

# Preventing GHG Emissions Through Avoided Land-Use Change

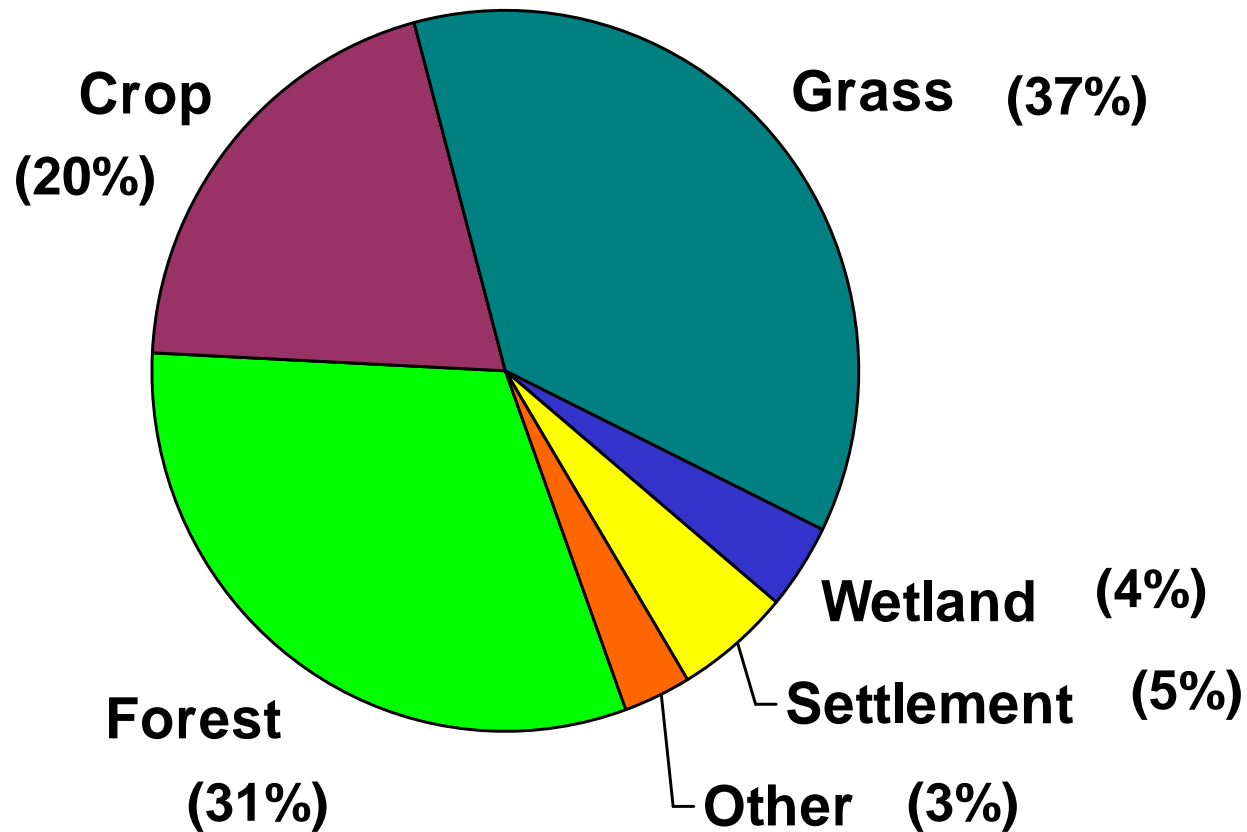
- April/May 2008: Society of American Foresters Task Force on Climate Change
- Globally, 1/3 of total carbon-related emissions between 1850 and 1998 due to forestland conversions
- Tools for Forest Retention or “Keeping Forests in Forests,” e.g., conservation easement
- Market-related effects for certain forest retention scenarios

# Background: Previous Forum

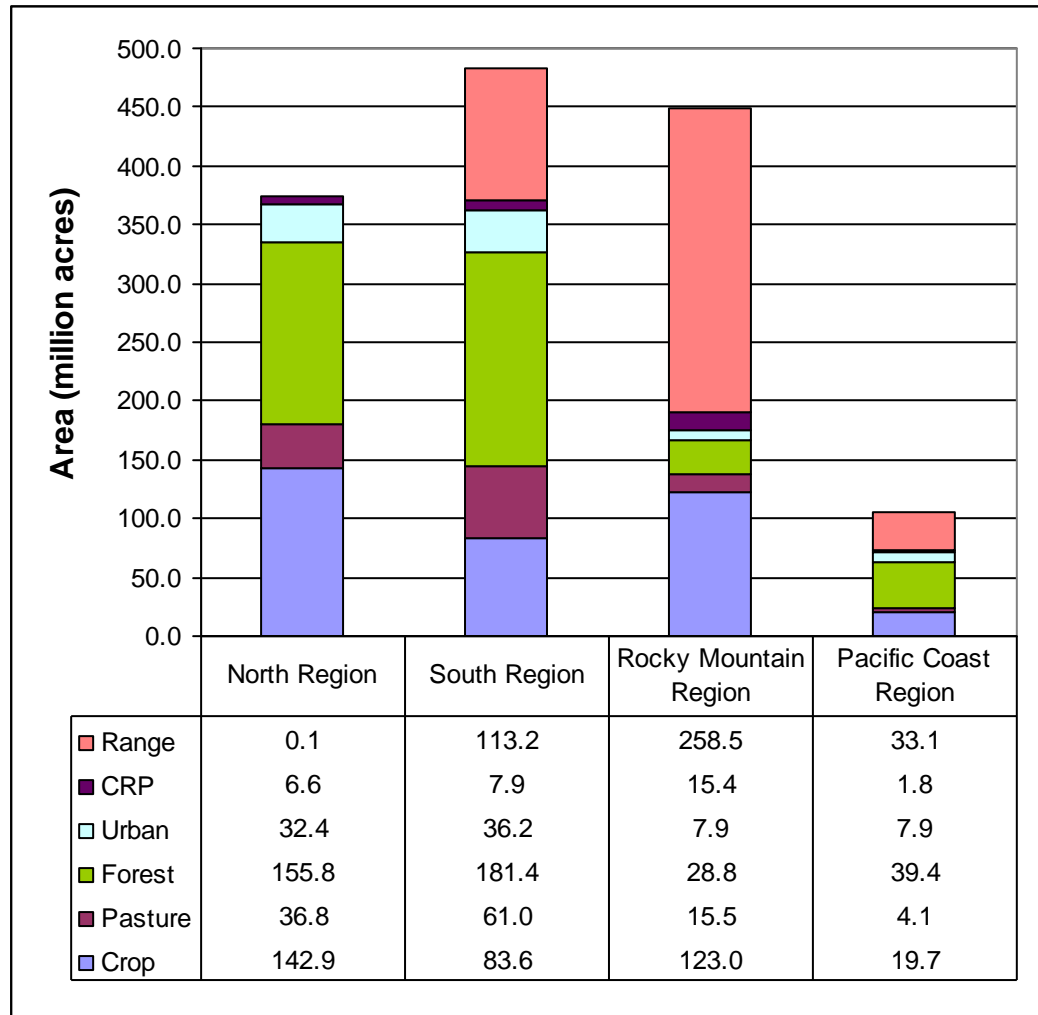
- Recent Trend: Two million acres of U.S. nonfederal rural land converted annually to developed uses
- Largest source is forest of land converted to developed uses
- Approximately one million acres per year of deforestation (roughly 8-10 times amount of that in Canada)
- Projections for >40 million acres of deforestation by 2060
- Tech. change affects demand for land, e.g., Green Revolution reducing pressure to convert forestland

# US land uses, 2006

Source: Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-2006, [www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/index.html#inv](http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/index.html#inv)



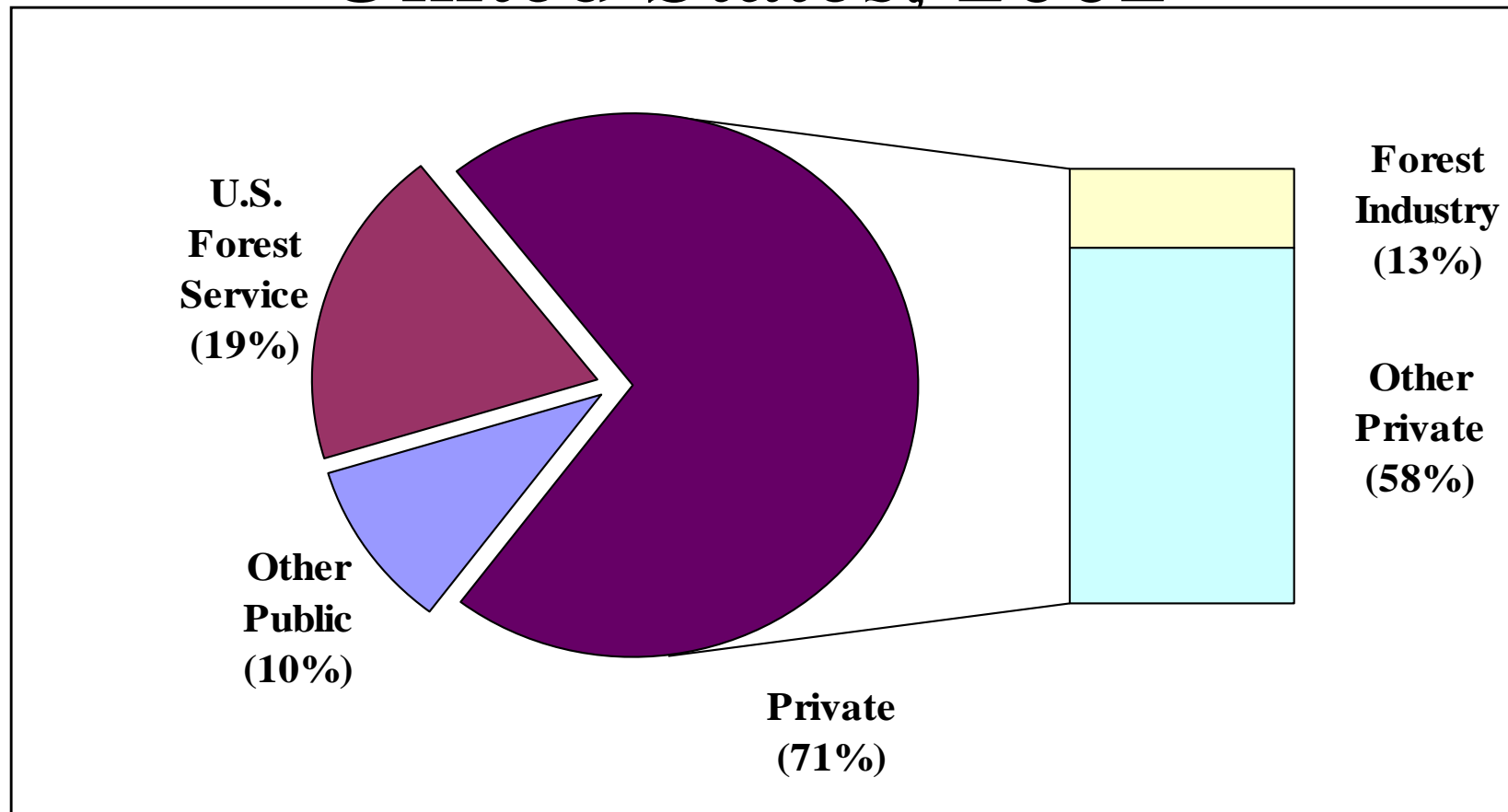
**Allocation of nonfederal land by major use by region for the U.S., 2002**



Data source: NRI



# Timberland Ownership in the United States, 2002

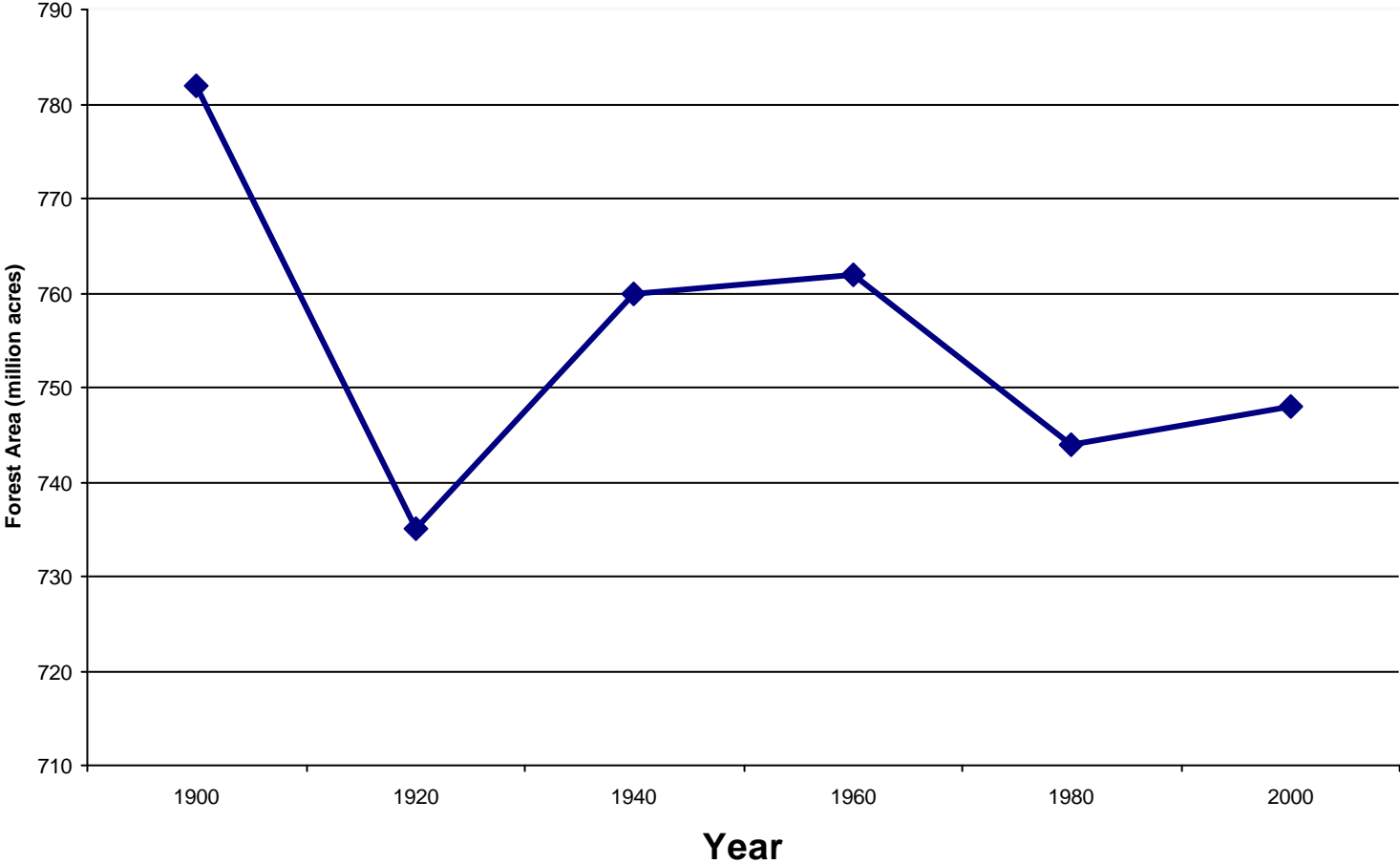


Source: Smith et al. (2004) GTR NC-241

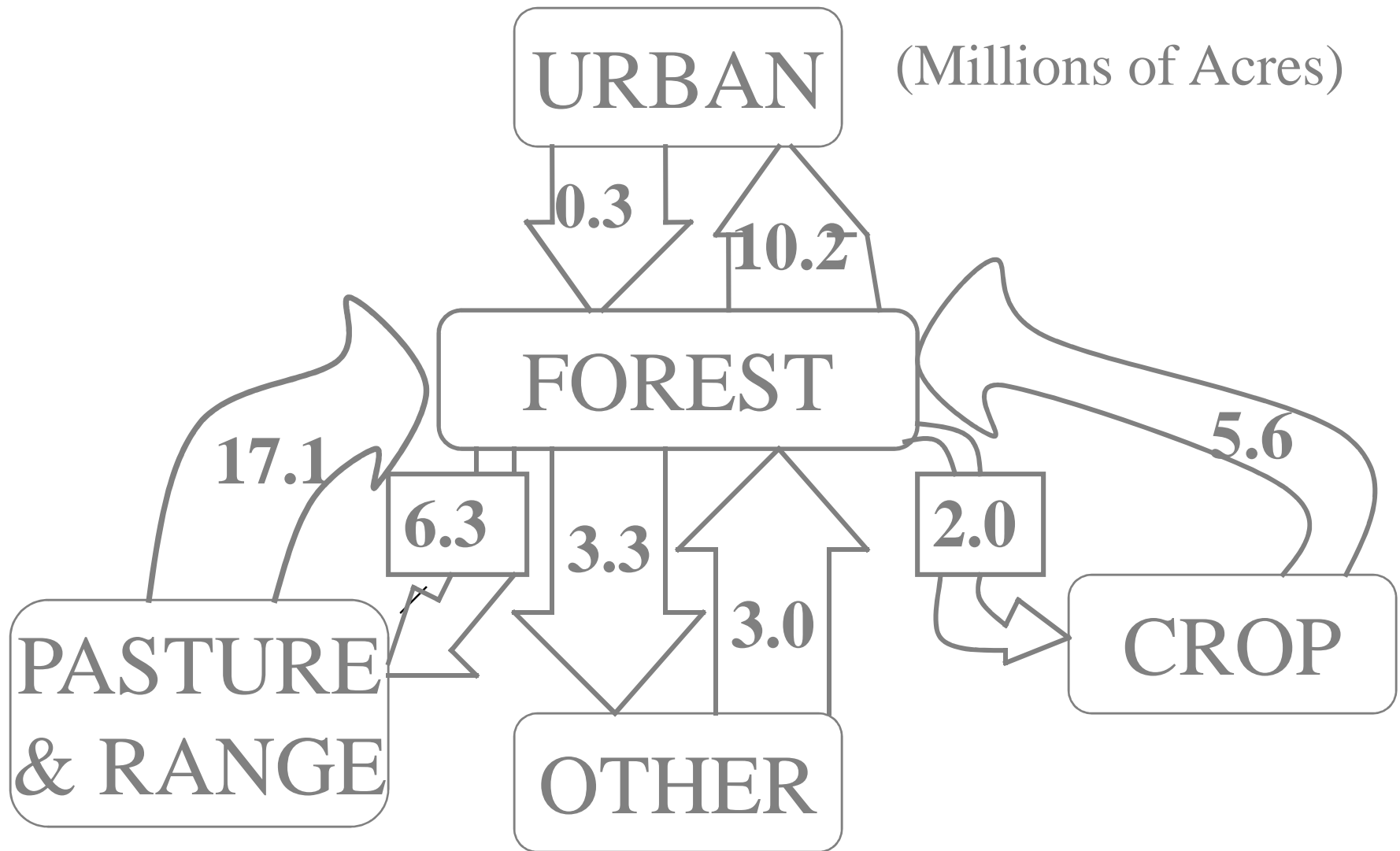
# **Parcelization—many private forested acres changing ownership**

- **19 million acres of forest changed hands in 5 years (Mike Clutter, U of Georgia)**
- **Growth in area owned by Timberland Investment Management Organizations (TIMOs) and Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) since 1987 was 22% per year (Hancock Timber Resource Group)**
- **Number of family forest owners increased from 9.3 million in 1993 to 10.3 million in 2003**

**Trends in U.S. Forest Area, 1900-2000 (source: RPA\FIA)**



# Sources and Sinks of U.S. Forestland, 1982-1997



Source: USDA NRCS, NRI

## Uncertainty . . . Forest Policy on Feedstock Development

**Where will extra land come from to grow biomass for energy, given exponential growth in withdrawals for land protection (not to mention urbanization and other development)?**

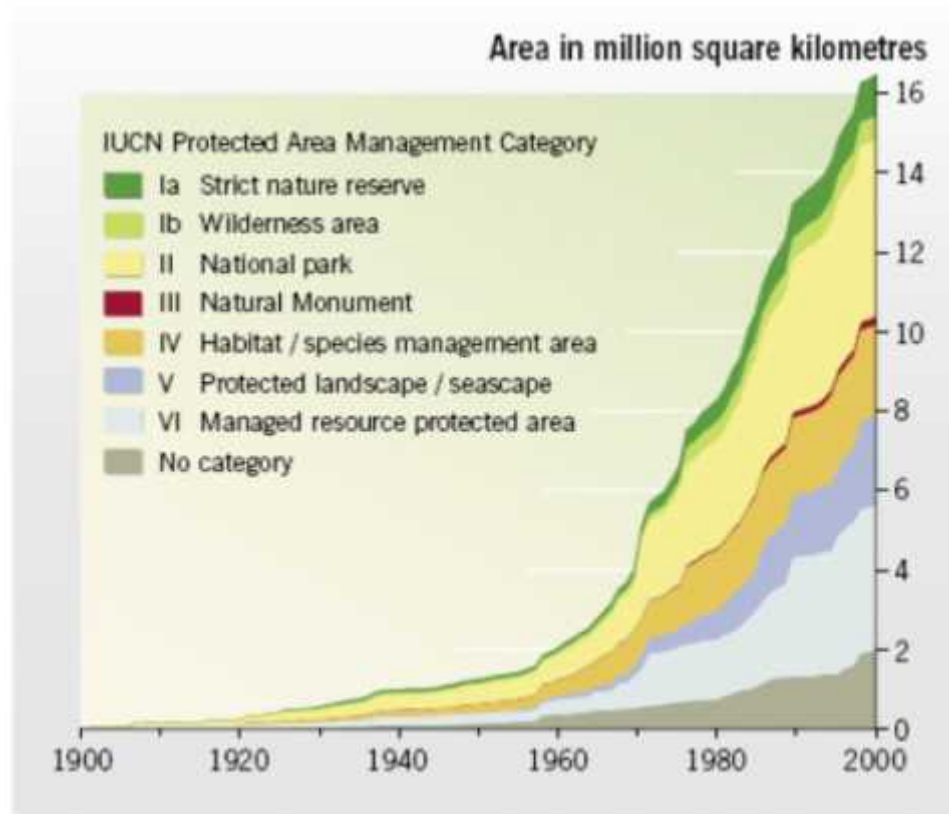


Figure 5.3 Trends in terrestrial surface under protection (CBD, 2006).

Source: Lysen, Erik, and Sander van Egmond (Eds.). 2008. Assessment of global biomass potentials and their links to food, water, biodiversity, energy demand and economy: Inventory and analysis of existing studies. Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency MNP.

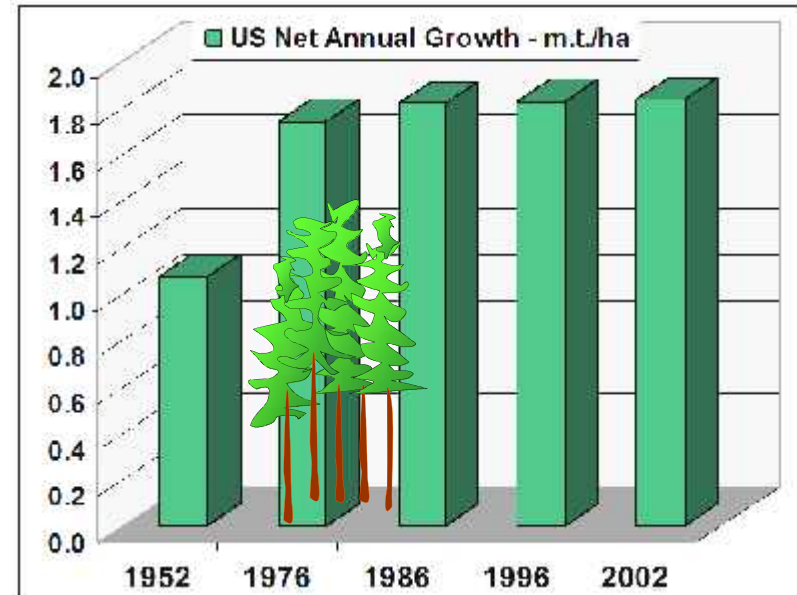
## Biomass feedstock economics

**A quantifiable source of uncertainty –**

**Future productivity of wood biomass . . .**

**Net annual growth of timber on all US timberland has leveled out at ~1.8 m.t./ha (Forest Service FIA Database)**

**Meanwhile, silviculture & commercial tree genetics promise future productivity of 25+ m.t./ha (in USA) [More than 10X higher! . . . But at higher cost]**



ARBORGEN 

# Land-use Data

- FIA, NRI: latter has two-way flows vs. net changes
- Land productivity: ground surveys
- National consistent set of data
- Forestry: existing timber stocks, site productivity, forest types, age class (region, owner, forest type, existing or new, age class, site class, etc.)

# Resources Planning Act Assessments

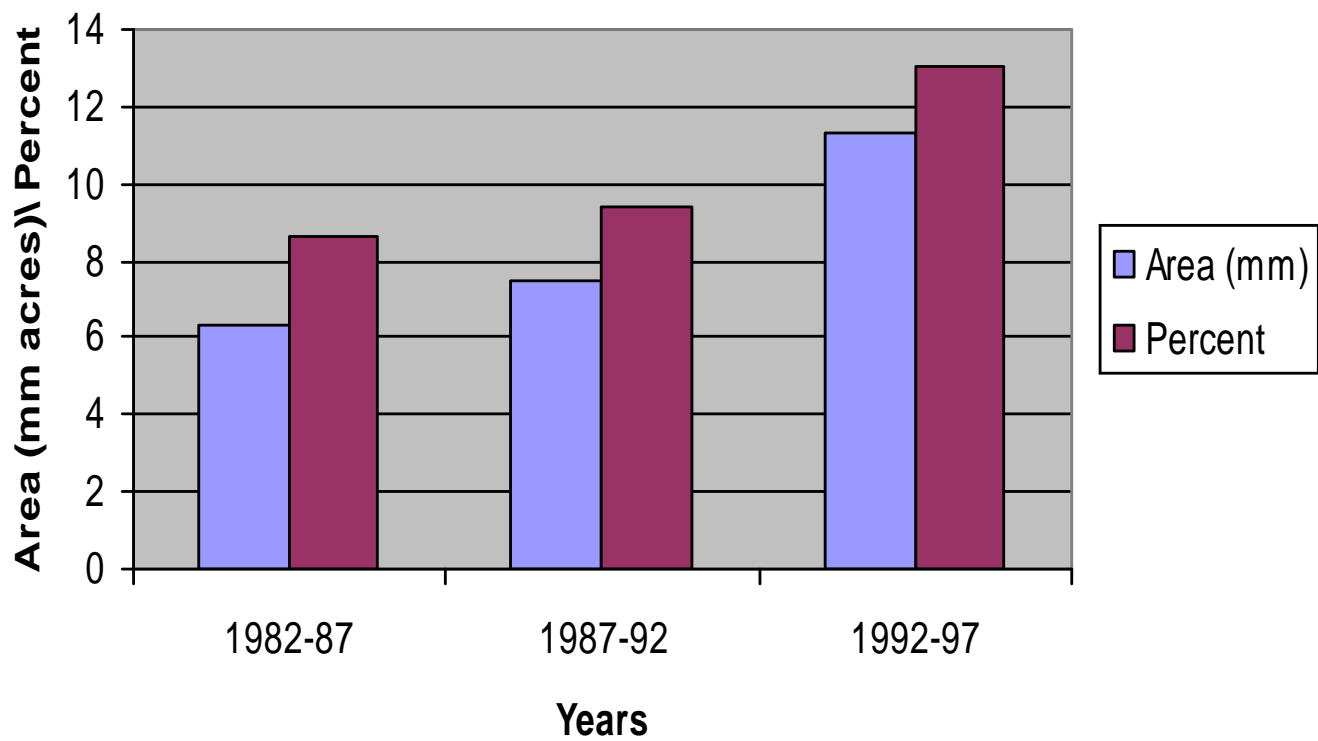
- 1979: expert opinion
- Early 1980s—Southern area model, tested in Special Study of “South’s 4<sup>th</sup> Forest”
- Other regional, econometric models of land-use change
- National econometric model
- 2010 RPA Assessment, IPCC scenarios



# Forest-Ag Modeling

- Forest land viewed as reservoir of potential cropland (CARD)--1979
- USDA Basic Assumptions Working Group—ERS's NIRAP, FS's model of urban and developed land (Alig and Healy)
- SE CARD Model with Forest Sector
- RPA Total Land Base Model
- FASOM

## Change in U.S. Developed Area



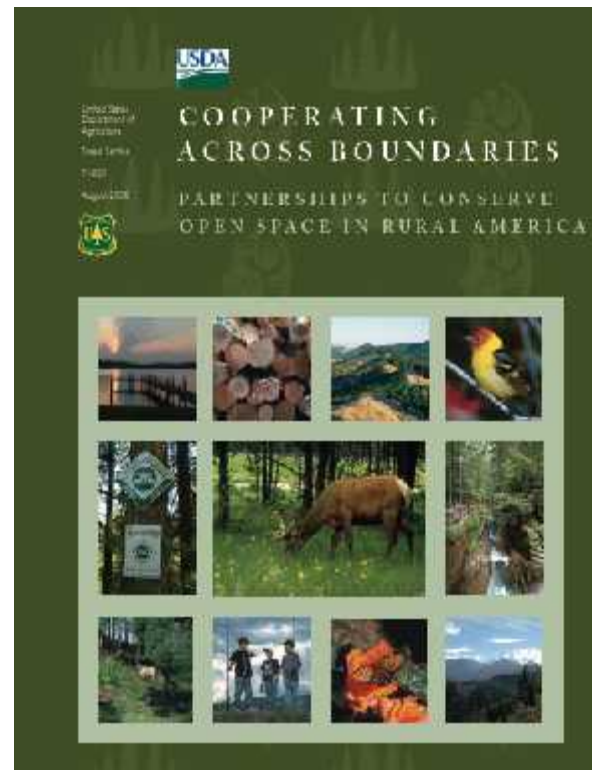
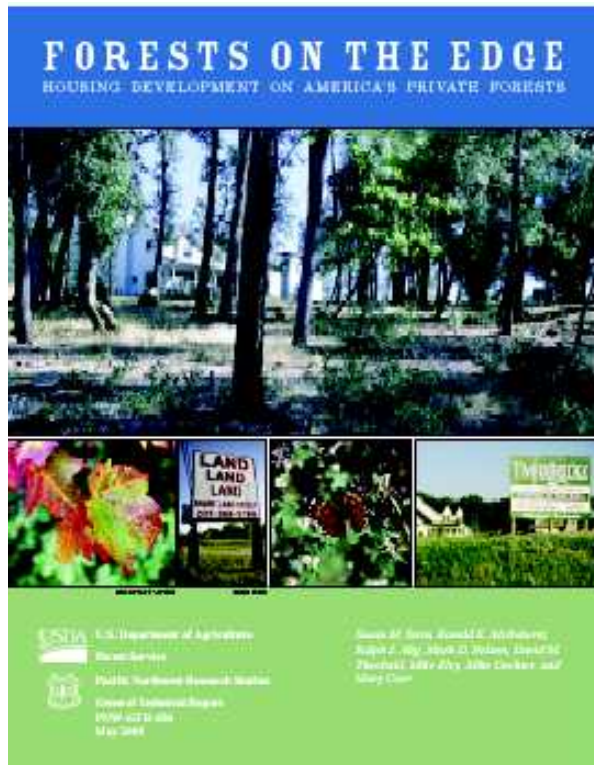


Losing 6,000 acres of open space per day

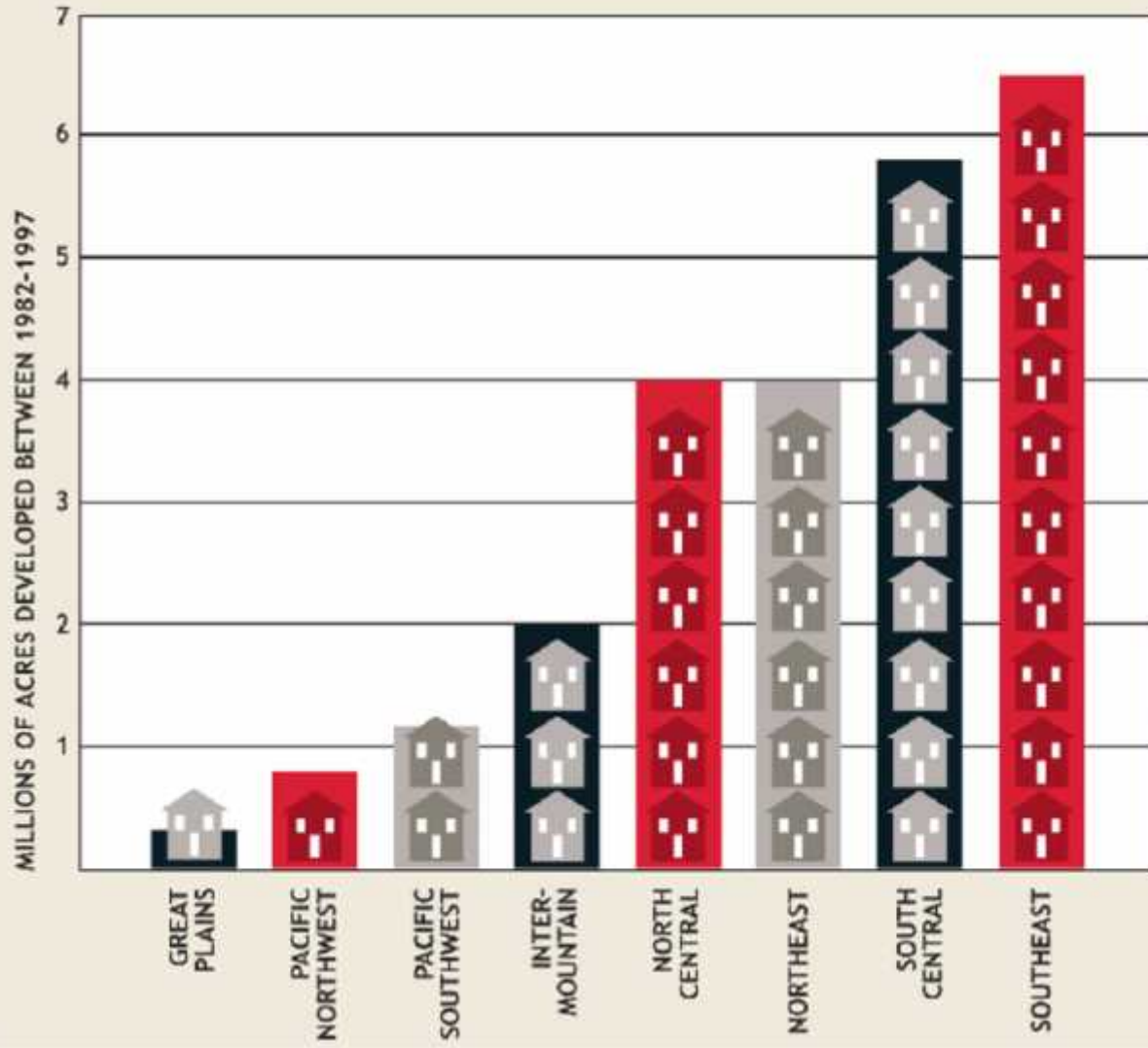


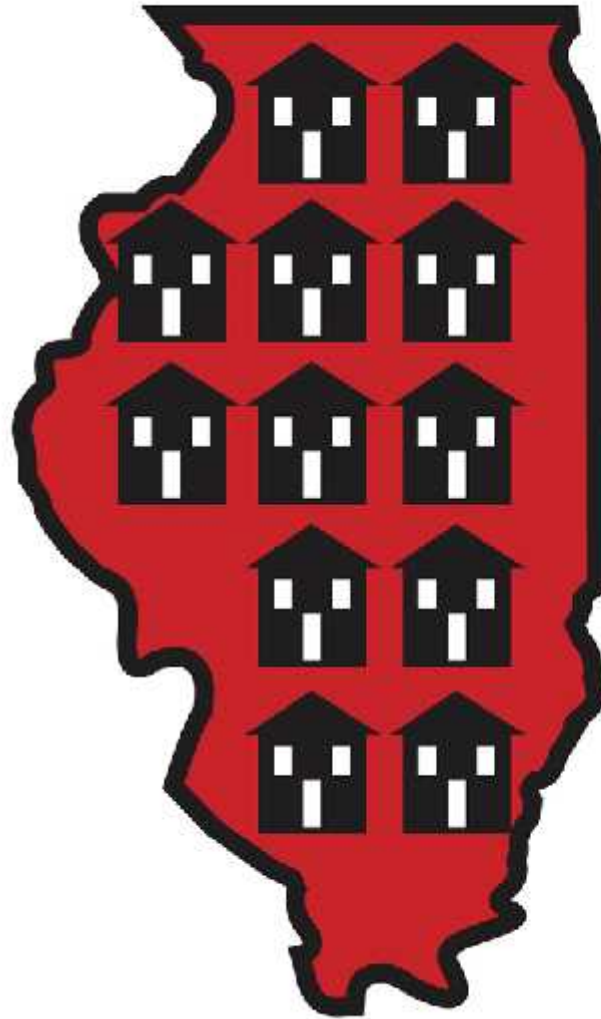
Photo Credits: USDA NRCS, The Regents at the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

[www.fs.fed.us/openspace](http://www.fs.fed.us/openspace)



## REGIONAL TRENDS

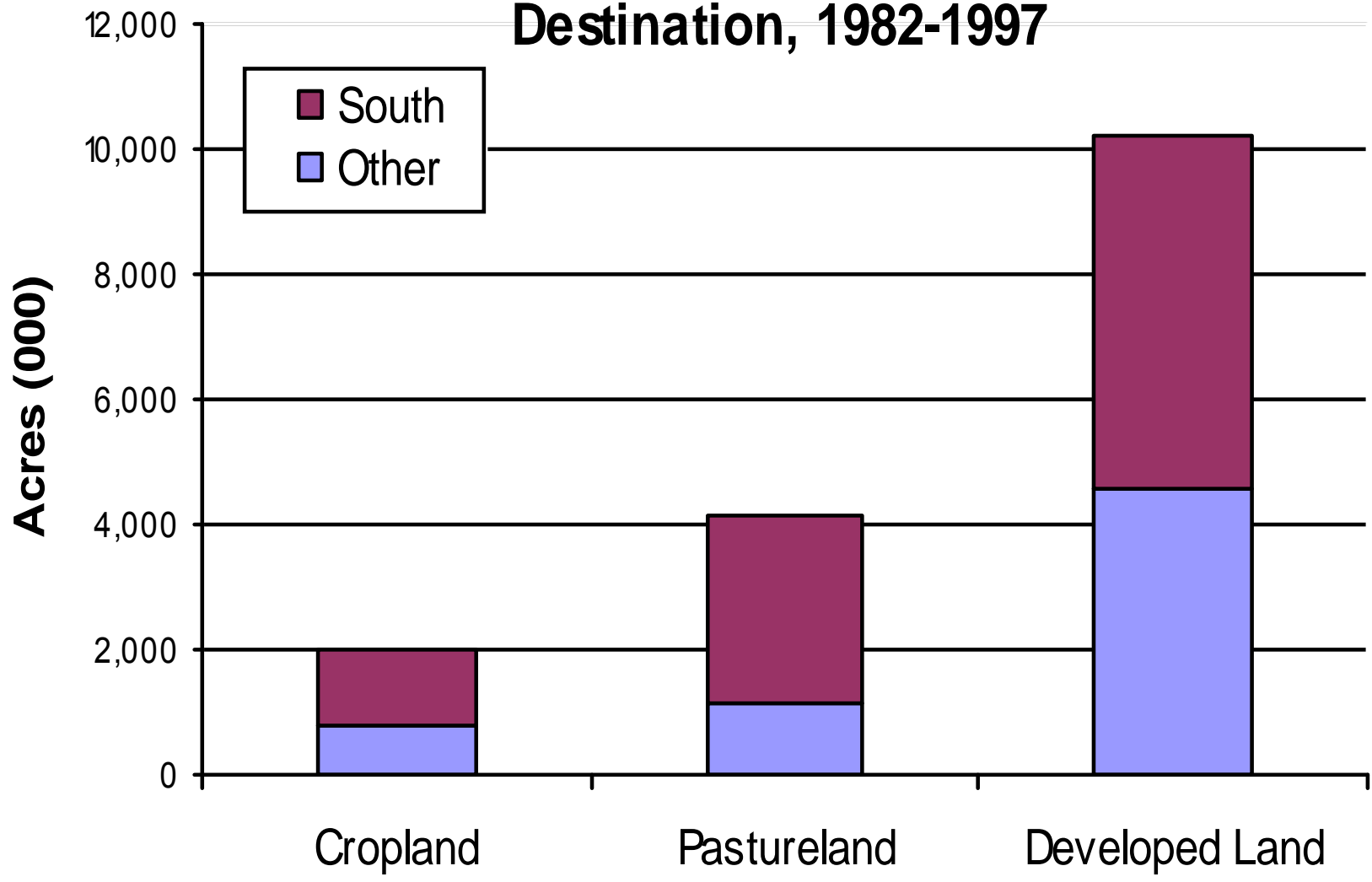




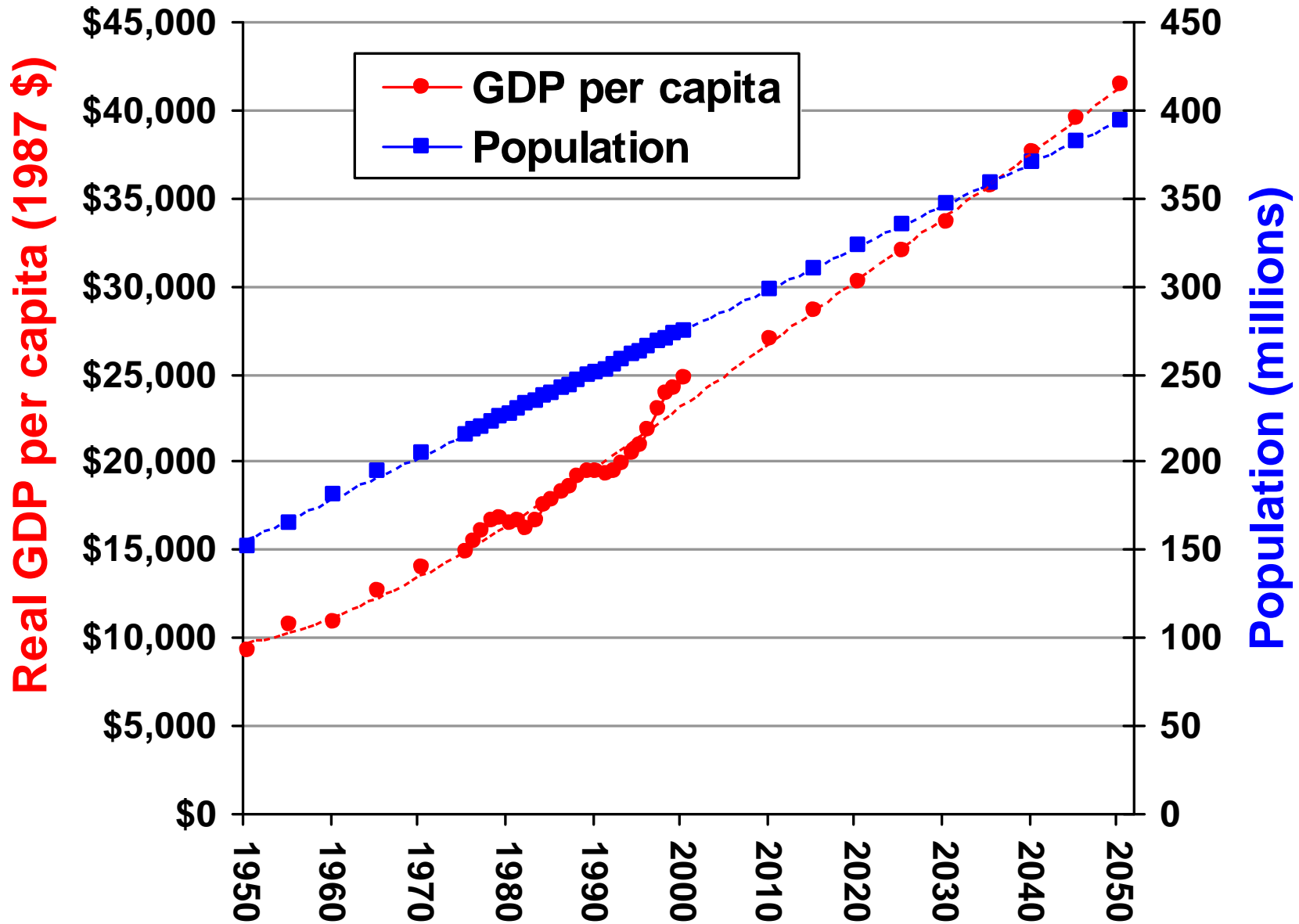
## SHRINKING SPACES

From 1982 to 2001, 34 million acres of open space were converted to development. That's equivalent to the state of Illinois.

# Forest Area Conversion by Region and Destination, 1982-1997



# U.S. Population and real GDP per capita





# More Changes in Demand For Land- Looking Ahead

- World population to grow from 6 to 9 billion by 2050
- National population to grow by 120 million: ~40% increase
- Regional (West) population to grow by 5 million ~70% increase
- Higher average personal incomes
- Increased demand for land to produce biofuels



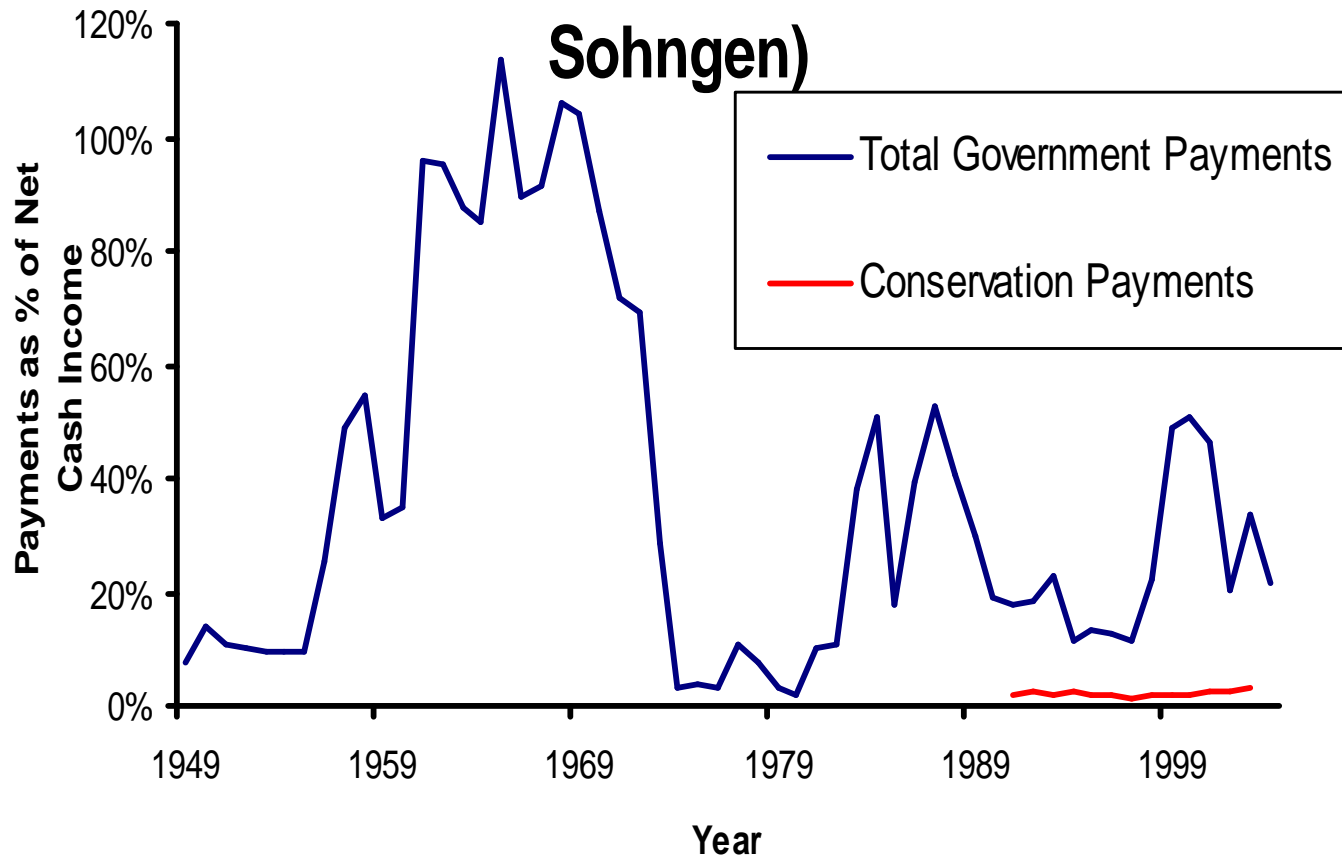
# U.S. National Econometric Model of Land Use: RPA Applications

- Ruben Lubowski's PhD work at Harvard
- Collaboration with Andrew Plantinga, Oregon State University
- Application in the 2010 Resources Planning Act Assessment: Projections of areas for major land uses, such as for developed land, for nonfederal land, at county level

# Forestry Intertwined with Cycles Involving Agriculture

- Soil Bank Program example
- World Demand for Agricultural Crops
- Conservation Reserve Program (nation's largest tree planting program)
- Freedom to Farm legislation/Record spending on farm programs

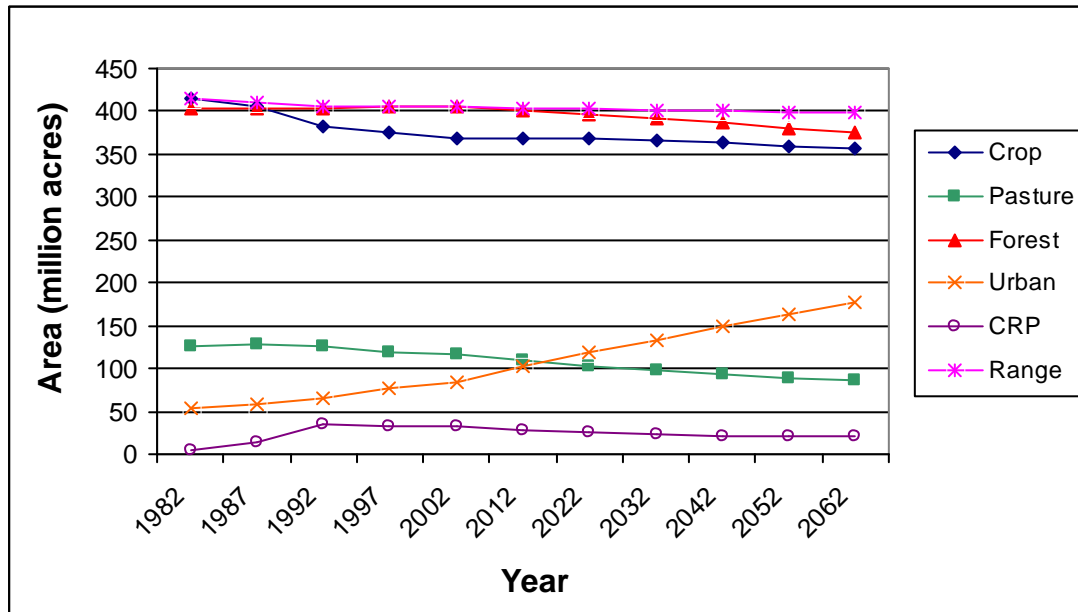
# Farm Program Payments Can Reduce Forest Area (slide from Brent Sohngen)



# Intersections in the South

- Region has large amount of timber harvests
- Has many acres suitable for use in either agriculture or forestry
- Had relatively large increase in developed area in recent decades
- Implications for production possibilities

### Historical and projected land-use trends on nonfederal land in the U.S., 1982 to 2062



# Forest and Agricultural Sector Optimization Model (FASOM)-GHG

- Unique features:
  - Links forest and ag commodity markets,
  - Connects those markets to private land use decisions (for crops, pasture, forest)
- 5-year time step for optimization, typically 80-100 year time horizon
- CO<sub>2</sub>, methane, and nitrous oxide emissions
- Underlying biophysical yields for ag, forest (including long-term forest growth process)
  - Can be adjusted to reflect projected impacts of climate change

# FASOM-GHG GHG Accounting

- Comprehensive for forestry and agriculture, and carbon on developed land
- Forest pools: standing stock, understory, below ground (Linda Heath, Jim Smith, and Rich Birdsey)
- Carbon in wood products (Ken Skog)
- Soil carbon dynamics with land use change between forestry and agriculture



# FASOM Application

- EPA's policy question (1995)—expand area of southern pine plantations, effects on carbon seq. and timber and ag markets
- Leakage—countervailing land transfers
- Unintended consequences

# FASOM-GHG research examples

- What may be the socio-economic impacts of climate change on the U.S. forest sector and recreation?
  - National climate change assessment: Irland, Adams, Alig, et al. (2001) *Bioscience*
- What may be the impacts of climate change on U.S. forest and ag. sectors and carbon budgets?
  - Alig et al. (2002) *Forest Ecology and Management*
- What is the economic potential for forestry and agriculture to supply GHG mitigation? (EPA, 2005)
- What is the magnitude of leakage from forest carbon sequestration projects/programs?
  - Alig et al. (1997) *Environmental and Resource Economics*
- How competitive would biomass-fueled energy be?
  - McCarl, Adams, Alig, et al. (2000) *Annals of Operations Research*

# Forestry/agriculture mitigation options

- Ag soil C-sequestration: crop tillage, crop mix, fertilization, grassland conversion
- Afforestation: from crop, pasture lands
- Forest management: harvest rotation, timber management intensity, forest set-asides
- Ag CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O: enteric fermentation; livestock herd size, management; manure management; rice acreage; crop tillage, crop mix, crop inputs
- Crop fossil fuel: crop tillage, crop mix, crop inputs, irrigation/dry land mix
- Biofuel offsets: produce crop or woody feedstocks

# PROJECTIONS USING FASOM-GHG MODEL

- FASOM-GHG MODEL: 2008 Version
- Model runs by GREG LATTA and BRUCE MCCARL
- 80-year model runs, focus on first 50 years of projections in talk
- Funding assistance by EPA

# Exogenous amounts of Deforestation to Developed Use in the Base Case

- Average exogenous loss of forest area to developed uses is more than 7 million acres per decade over next 50 years
- Largest losses are in the South and NE

# Scenarios: FOREST TO DEVELOPMENT

- 2X BASE amount
- No loss of timberland to developed uses

# Carbon Price Scenarios

- \$25 and \$50 per tonne (CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent)
- Constant prices used in this analysis
- Reflected in FASOM-GHG objective function

# Scenarios About Responses by Agricultural Sector

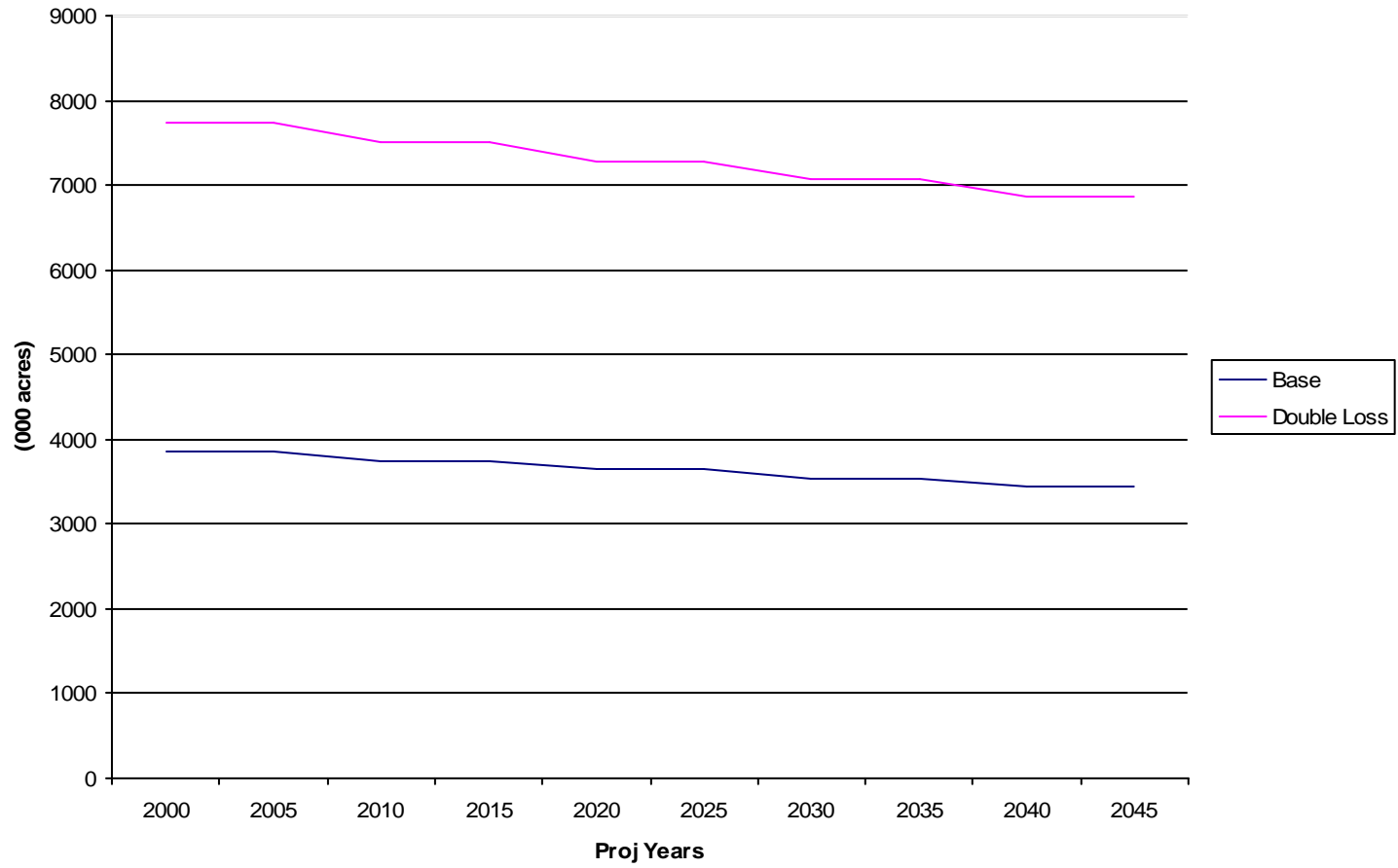
- Intersectoral land transfers (Fully endogenous)
- Intersectoral land transfers fixed at base run levels
- No transfers of land between forest and ag. sectors, such that timberland area is fixed except for transfers of timberland to developed uses



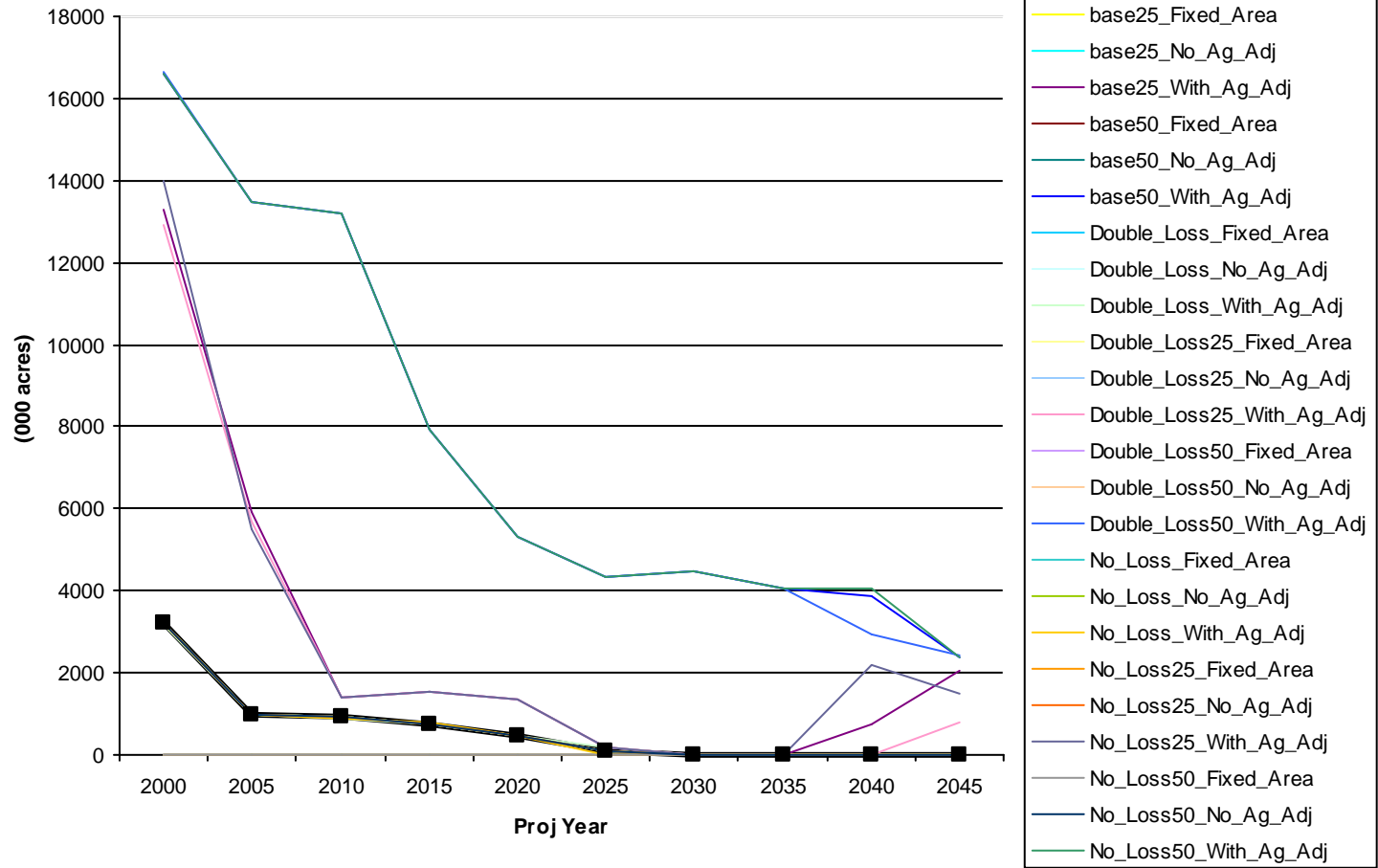
# COMBINATIONS

1. Timberland loss to development (Base, No Loss, Double Loss)
2. Carbon Price (0, \$25, \$50)
3. Intersectoral land transfers (Fully endogenous; Fixed at base run levels  
“limited ag adjustment;“ no transfers of "No land between forest and ag sectors"

FASOM Deforestation Scenarios (Base from RPA Assessment)

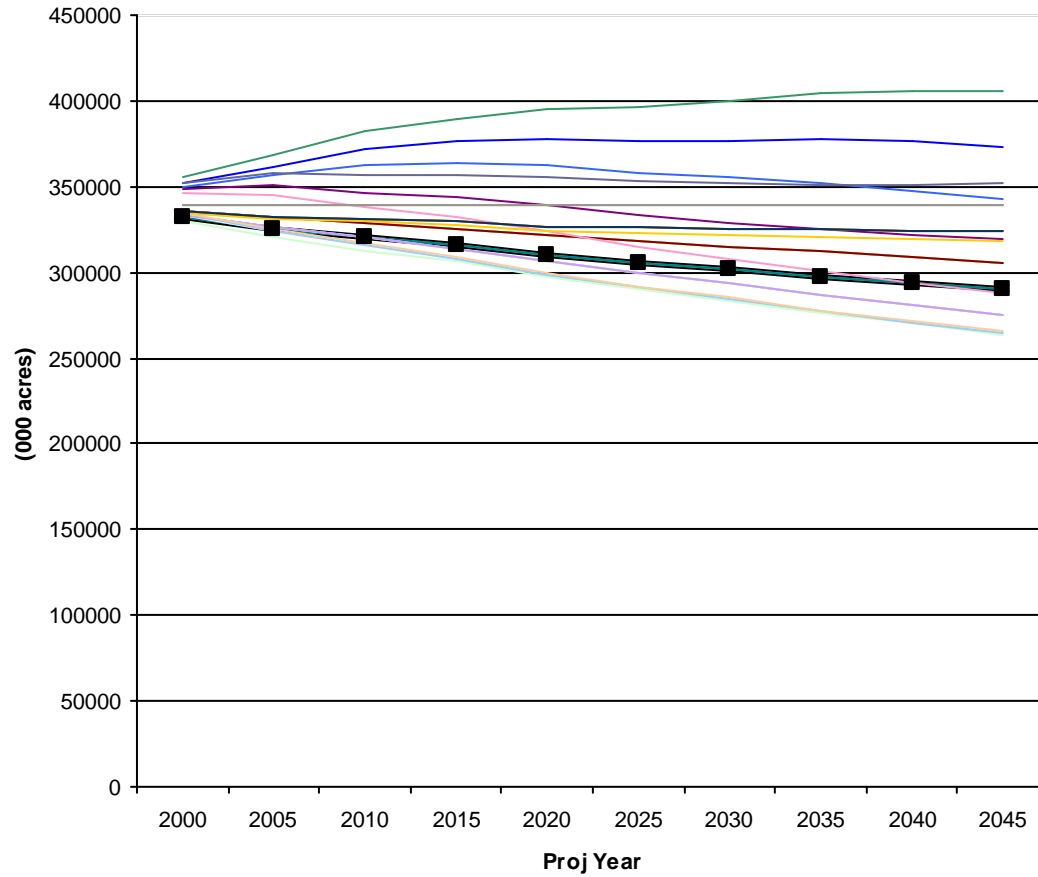


Afforestation Area



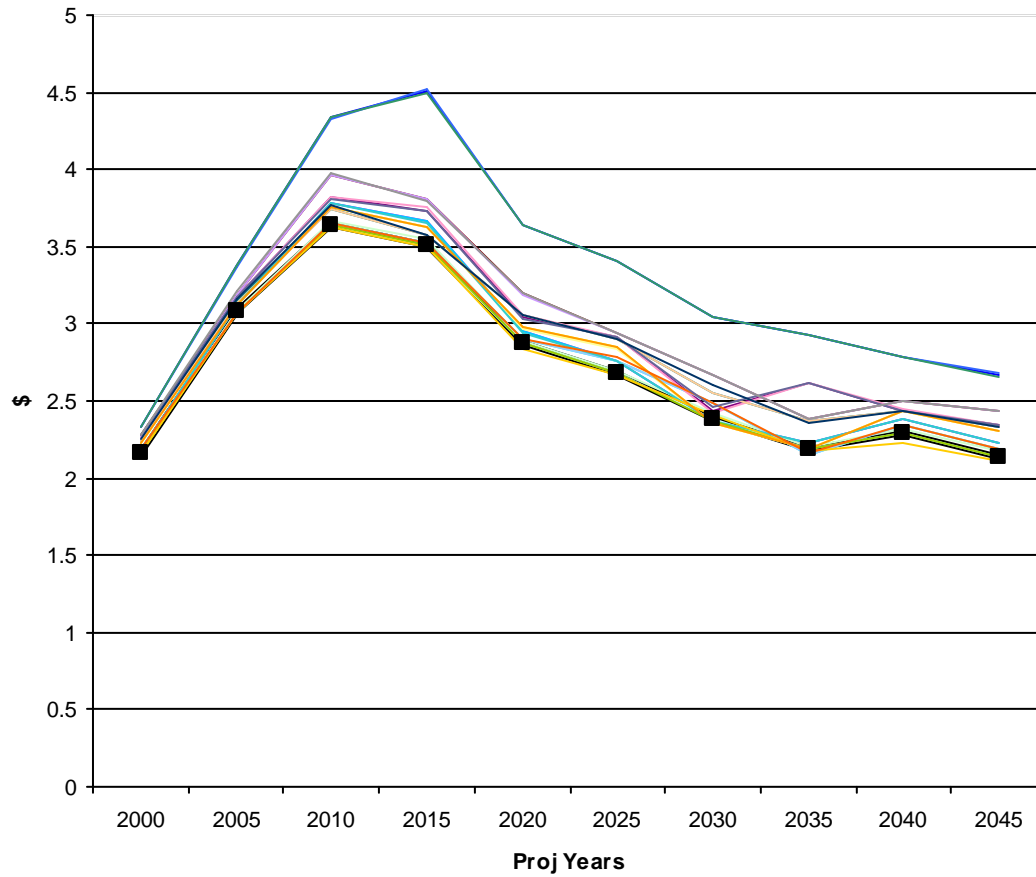


Forest Area



- base
- base\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_Fixed\_Area
- base50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss25\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss25\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj

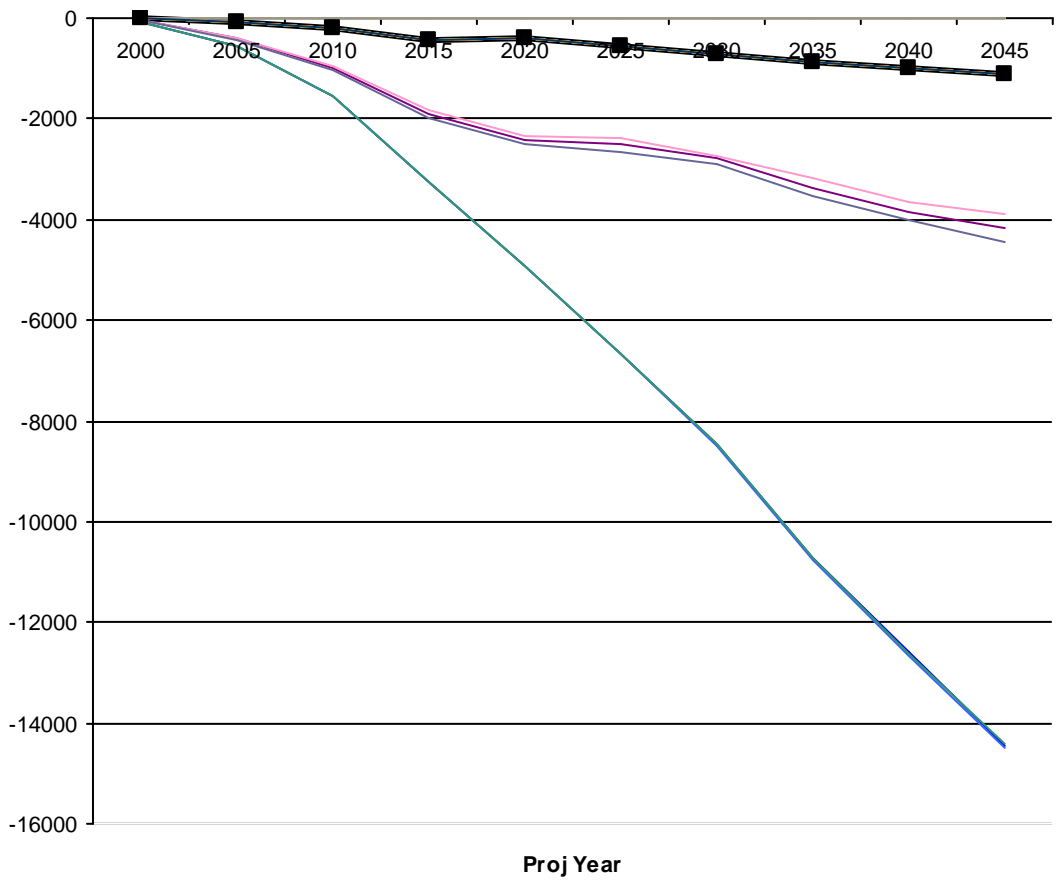
### Corn Prices



- base
- base\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_Fixed\_Area
- base50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss25\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
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- No\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
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- No\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj



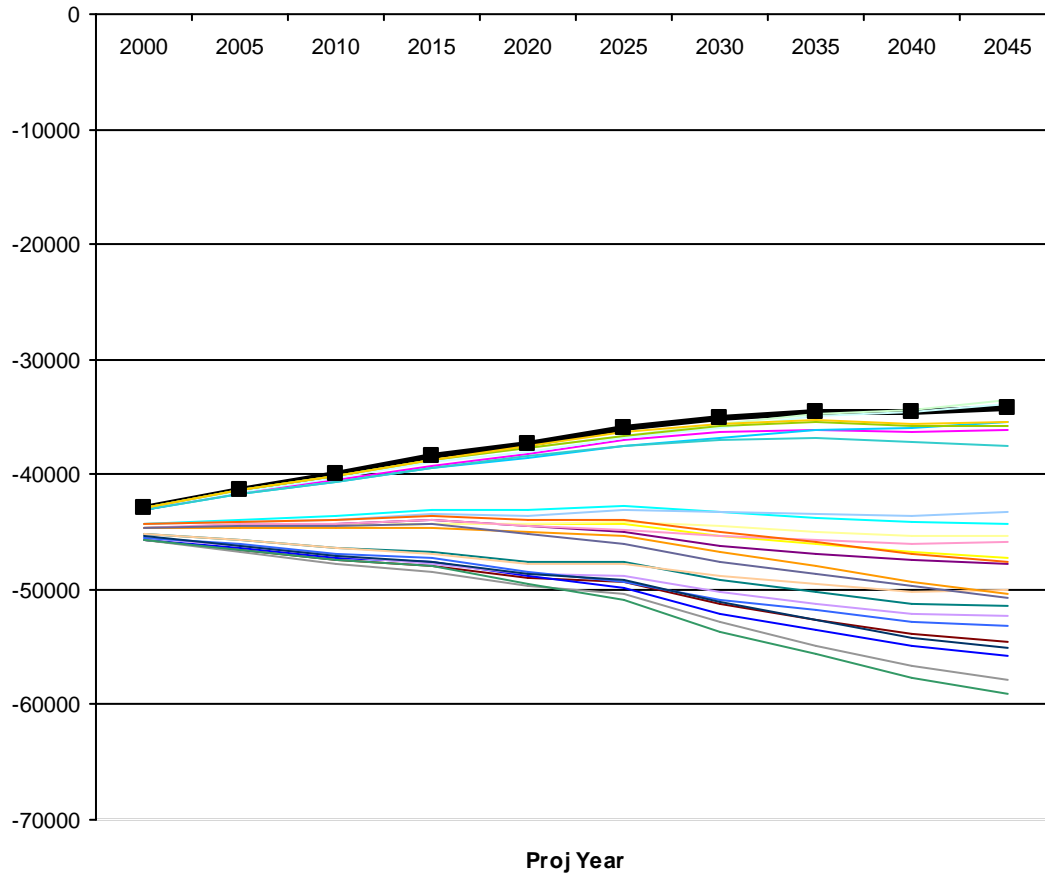
### Afforestation carbon



- base
- base\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_Fixed\_Area
- base50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
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- Double\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
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- Double\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
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- No\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj

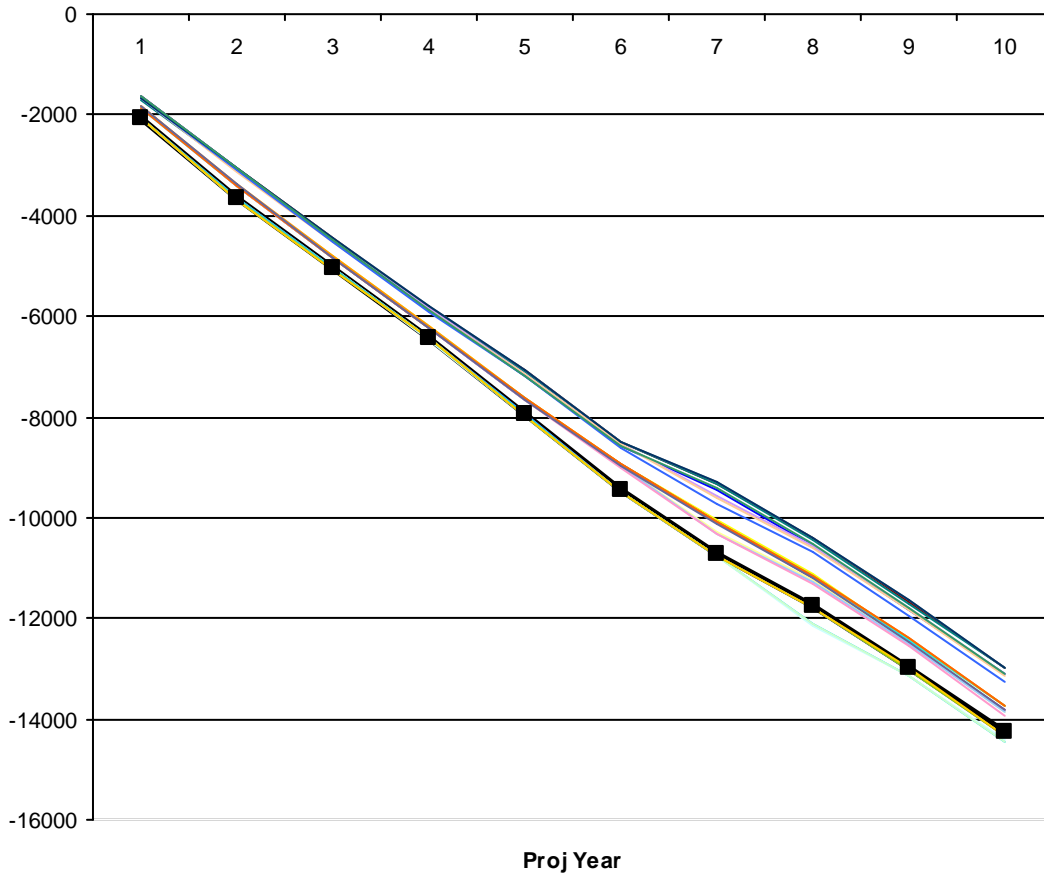


### Forest Management Carbon



- base
- base\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_Fixed\_Area
- base50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss25\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss25\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj

### Forest Products Carbon



- base
- base\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_Fixed\_Area
- base25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_Fixed\_Area
- base50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- base50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- Double\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss25\_Fixed\_Area
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- Double\_Loss25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
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- Double\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- Double\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss25\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss25\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss25\_With\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_Fixed\_Area
- No\_Loss50\_No\_Ag\_Adj
- No\_Loss50\_With\_Ag\_Adj



# Summary

- RPA Assessments foundation of forest sector modeling supporting FASOM-GHG development
- Carbon Price Has Relatively Large Influence on FOR-AG interactions in FASOM-GHG for Prices Examined--\$25 and \$50
- With large land base, U.S. deforestation can be largely accommodated in terms of aggregate effects
- Land transfers between forestry and agriculture are important in climate change mitigation options involving forestry, including when carbon prices are in effect

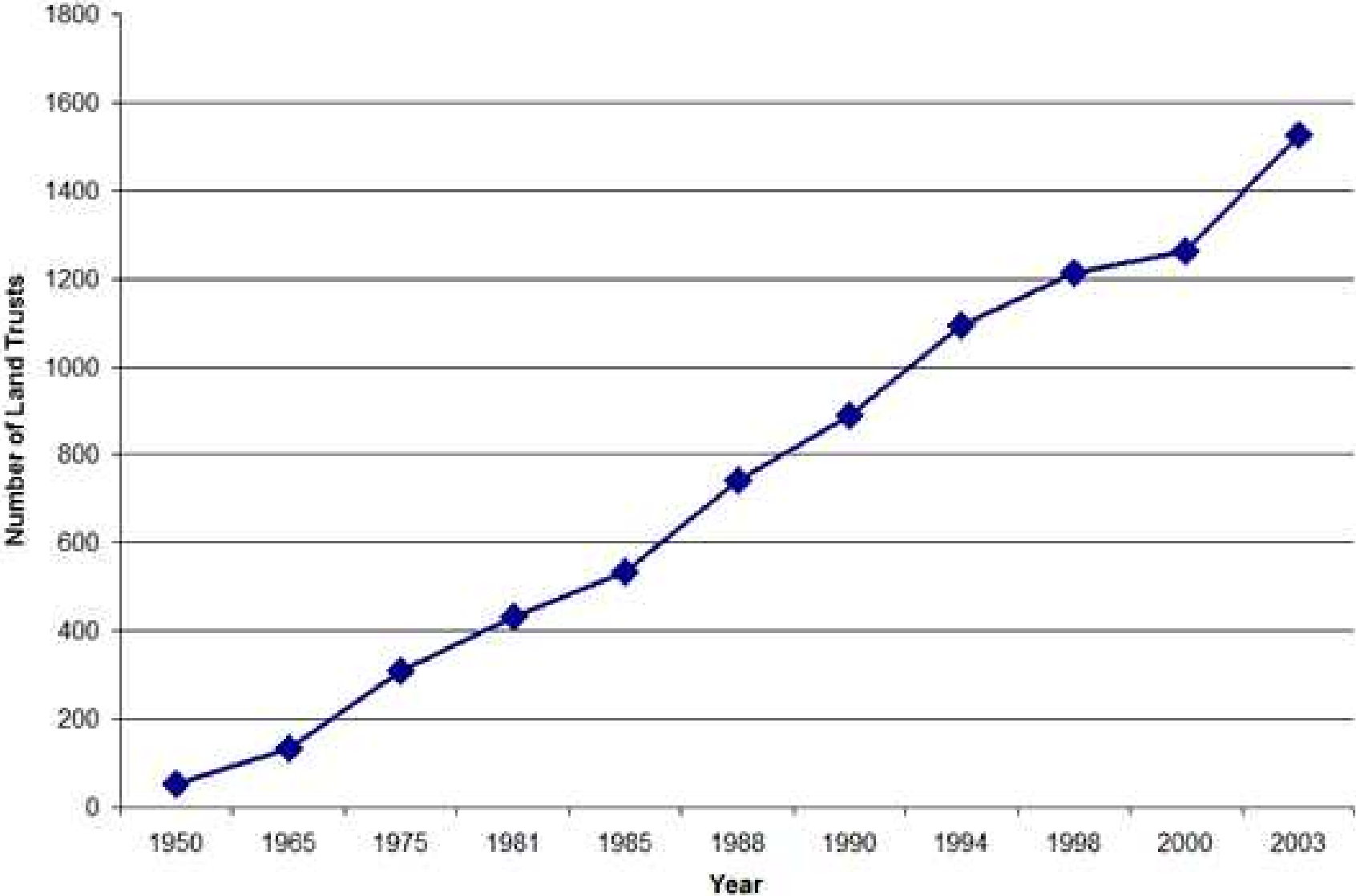
# Summary (con't)

- Timing of ag crop peak prices influenced by Renewable Fuels Standard, with corn price peaking around 2015-2020, and more reliance on switchgrass in subsequent decades and switchgrass prices peaking about 10 years later
- Amount of afforestation is frontloaded in projections, as is deforestation to ag
- Amount of bioelectricity from cellulosic sources is notably higher with \$50 carbon price

# Demand for land: examples

- World demand for agricultural commodities
- Green revolution in agriculture and land sparing effects for forestry
- Growing population
- Technological improvements, productivity increases
- Fewer people per household
- Spatial effects of policies: Maryland's no net loss or Oregon's land use law

# NUMBER OF LAND TRUSTS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1950 to 2003



Source: Land Trust Alliance

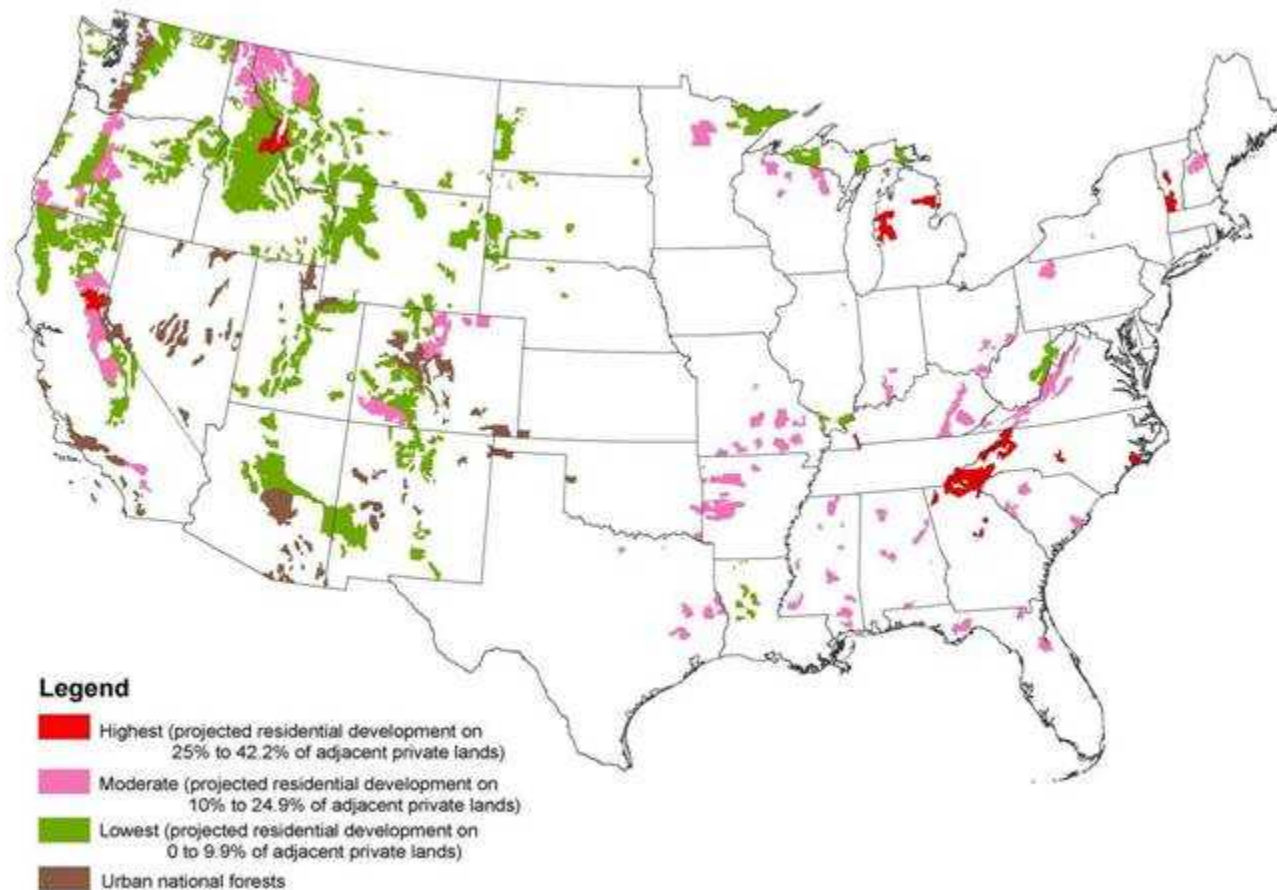
# Wildland-urban interface (WUI)

Across the U.S., the 1990s was a period of rapid housing growth, with a net gain of 13.5 million housing units, a rate of 13% growth.

- The WUI was a preferred setting for new housing. Nationwide, more than 60% of housing units built in the 1990s were constructed in or near wildland vegetation.



# Housing to increase on over 21 million acres of rural lands within 10 miles of national forests and grasslands (National Forests on the Edge)



# Climate Change Can Affect Land Conservation



- Effects on forest ecosystems and wildlife, outdoor recreation, water, and other resources
- GHG storage in forests and products as part of mitigation
- Increased demand for land for biofuels and use of cellulosic ethanol

## Land-Use Changes

- Mostly on private lands; private landowner behavior—e.g., conservation easements and opportunity costs
- Economic considerations: “keeping forests in forests” and economic hierarchy of land use
- Fixed land base, increasing demands for land—squeezing the balloon



# The Changing Character of Rural Areas: Driving to Shepherdstown

- U.S. urban and developed area increased by 25% (21.6 million acres) between 1992 to 2003
- Rural and exurban development is expanding more rapidly than urban/suburban
- The Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) was a preferred setting for new housing. Nationwide, more than 60% of housing units built in the 1990s were constructed in or near wildland vegetation.
- Population growth of counties with national forest land is among the highest in the country
- Parcelization—many forested acres changing ownership; TIMO's, REIT's, conservation groups, and others are involved



# Data Needs

- Nationally consistent database of recent land-use changes for entire land base
- Forest ownership changes, owner characteristics, etc.
- Adaptation, passive afforestation, and interactions of adaptation and mitigation (Bruce's bulldozer(s) and ambulance)

# Public Timberland Modeling

- Carbon seq. potential for: a) current harvest trend; b) return to early 1980s; and c) no timber harvest.
- Depro et al. (2008); *Forest Ecology and Management*
- Age class distribution by region and concentration of timber stocks in the West

# Future Public Forestland Modeling

- Endogenous in FASOM-GHG; application example—reduction of hazardous forest fuels and biomass utilization
- Public-private interactions: example complementary age class distributions

# Other FASOM-GHG Modeling Work

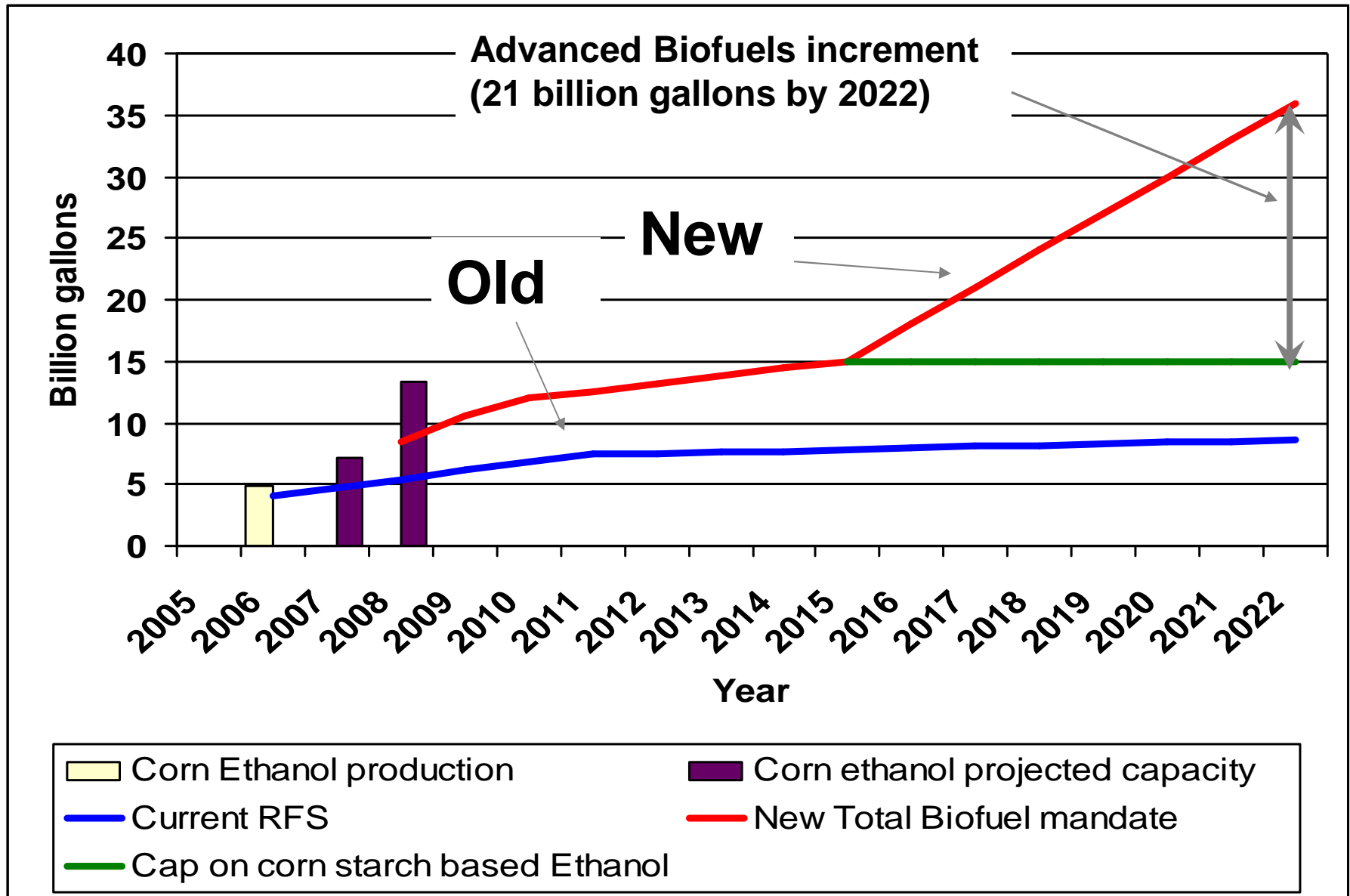
- Crowding out in markets—public and private forest lands; domestic and international markets
- Indirect land-use change and global modeling—collaboration with Bruce McCarl, Brent Sohngen, etc.
- Co-benefits of land-use change
- Forest bioenergy modeling, in collaboration with other FASOM-GHG team members and Ken Skog, Peter Ince, etc.
- Landowner responses to policies and incentives



# Documentation

- FASOM-GHG: Bruce McCarl's web site at Texas A&M; Ralph Alig's team web site (Land Use and Land Cover Dynamics)
- RPA Assessments: Linda Langner, USDA Forest Service, WO and other RPA Specialists at this meeting
- RPA Land Base Assessment—Gen. Tech. Report for review

# Old and new Renewable Fuels Standards



## Biomass feedstock economics

**“Wall of Wood”:  
Hybrid Poplar  
Plantation in  
Oregon**

Foresters can grow biomass much faster, but when it becomes more economical is as uncertain as future oil and timber prices.



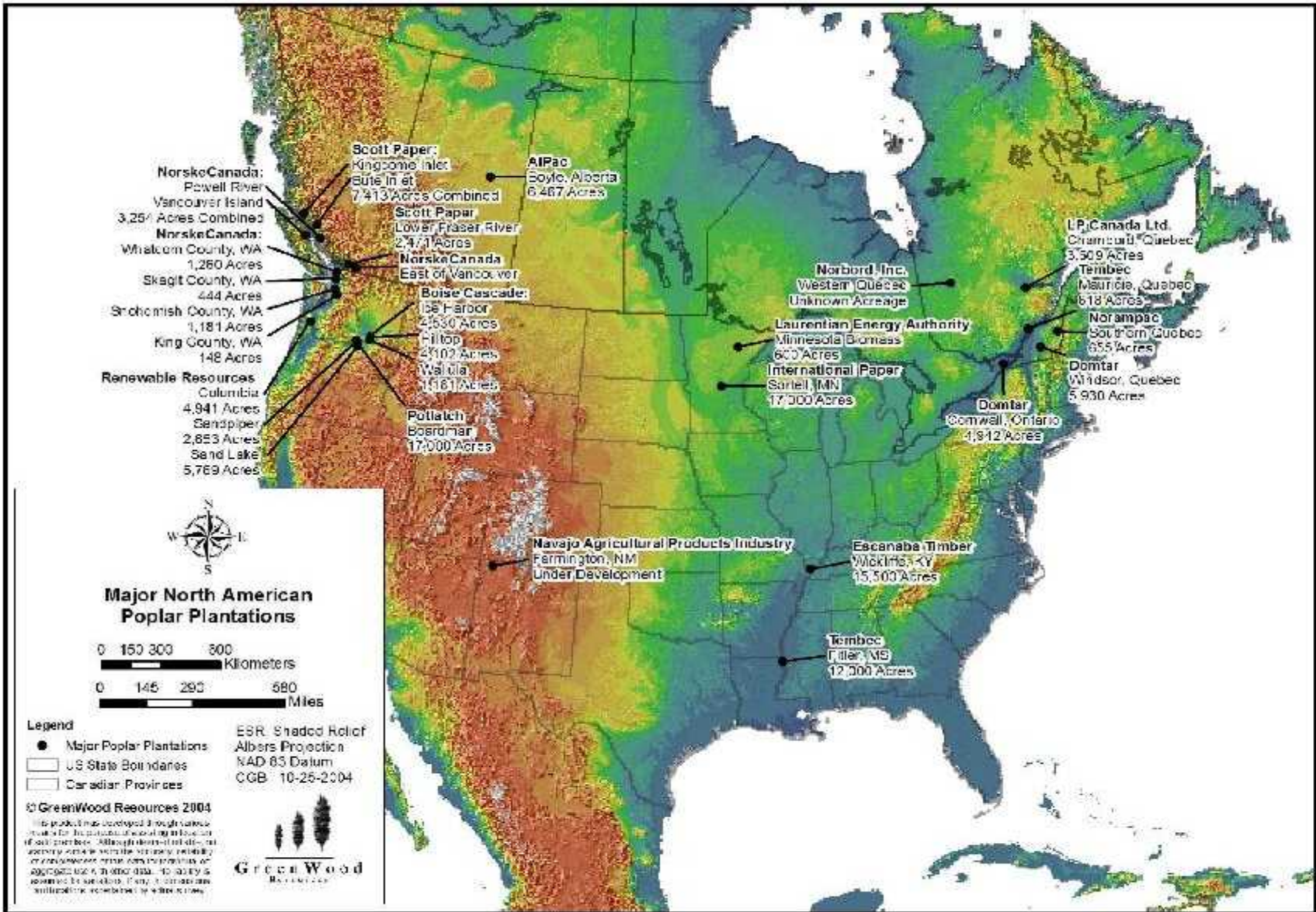
GreenWood Resources

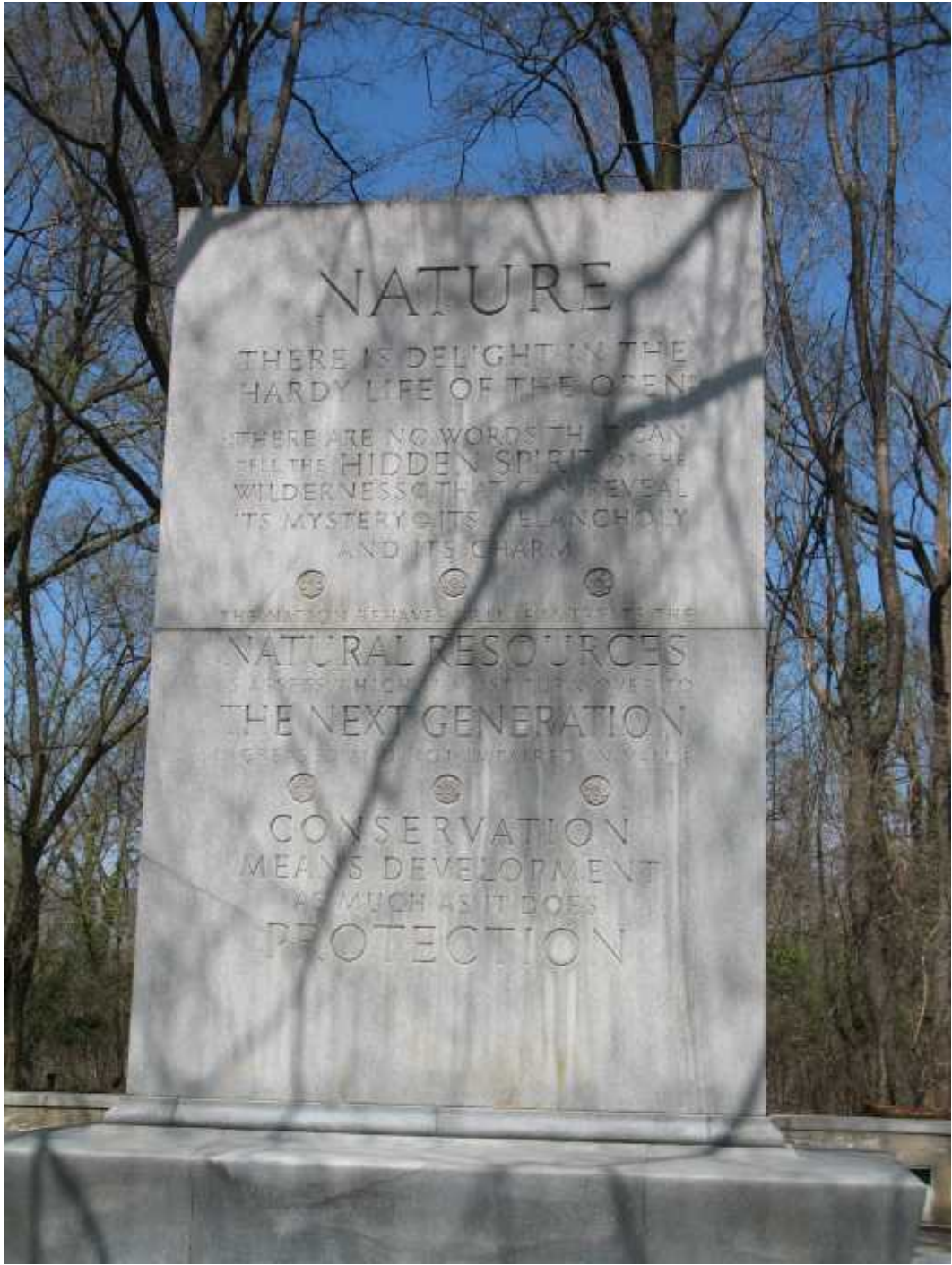


**If bioenergy places demands on land areas used for fiber production, then wood fiber competition is inevitable.**

**Also, expansion in biomass energy could result in higher wood prices and more SRWC's.**







# NATURE

THERE IS DELIGHT IN THE  
HARDY LIFE OF THE OPEN  
THERE ARE NO WORDS THAT CAN  
TELL THE HIDDEN SPIRIT OF THE  
WILDERNESS THAT CAN REVEAL  
ITS MYSTERY, ITS MELANCHOLY  
AND ITS CHARM

THE NATION BEHAVES AS IT BELONGS TO THE

## NATURAL RESOURCES

THE NEXT GENERATION

CONSERVATION MEANS DEVELOPMENT  
AS MUCH AS IT DOES  
PROTECTION