

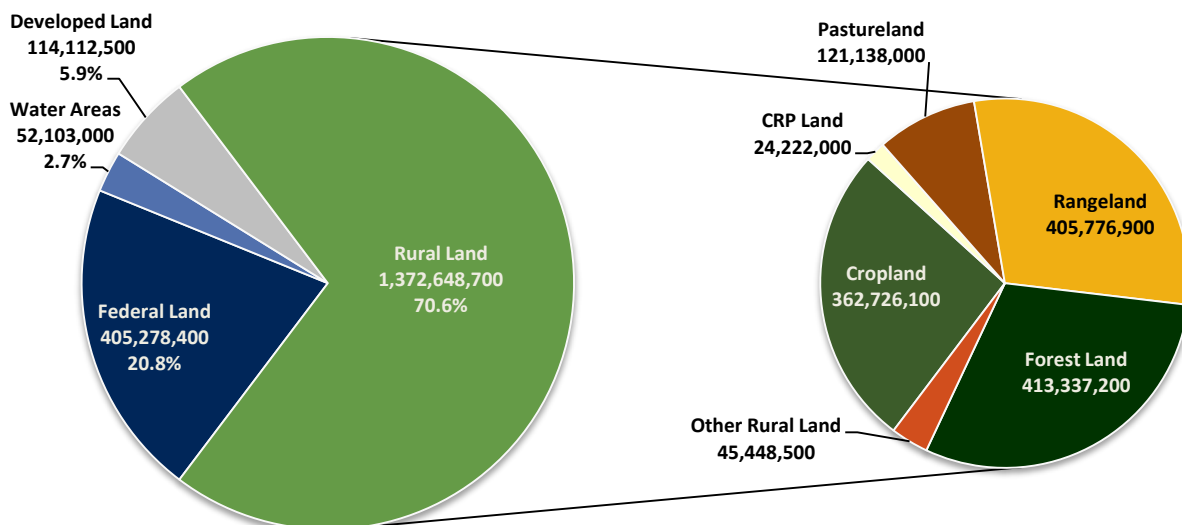
THE 2012 NRI: CHANGES IN LAND COVER/USE

BACKGROUND

- The National Resources Inventory (NRI) is a statistical survey of natural resource conditions and trends on nonfederal land. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service conducts the NRI in cooperation with Iowa State University's Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology
- NRCS released the 2012 NRI available in September 2015.
- The 2012 NRI tracks changes in land cover/use since 1982. The 2012 summary report provides estimates for the 48 contiguous states, Hawaii and Caribbean Territories and documents changes in land cover/use at the national level for seven different reporting periods: 1982–1987, 1987–1992, 1992–1997, 1997–2002, 2002–2007, 2007–2012 and 1982–2012.

TOTAL SURFACE AREA AND LAND COVER/USE CATEGORIES

- The contiguous 48 states, Hawaii and the Caribbean Territories cover 1,944,142,600 acres of land and water. Of this, there are 1,372,648,700 acres of non-federal **rural land**, 405,278,400 acres of **federal land**, 114,112,500 acres of **developed land** and 52,103,000 acres in **water areas**.
- **Rural land** is comprised of: cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forest land, other rural land and land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).
- American Farmland Trust uses the term **agricultural land** to refer to land cover/use categories that are readily available for agricultural production: cropland, pastureland, rangeland and land in CRP.



LAND CONVERTED TO DEVELOPMENT

- Nationally, **43,380,800 acres of rural land** were converted to **developed land** between 1982 and 2012.
- In 2012, there were 114,112,500 acres of developed land, a net increase of 42,187,100 acres from 1982. The net change in developed land differs from the amount of rural land developed because a small amount of developed land (1,193,700 acres) was reclassified to other land cover/uses between 1982 and 2012.
- According to the 2012 NRI, **24,498,500 acres of agricultural land** were converted to **developed land** between 1982 and 2012. This represents an area larger than the states of Indiana and Rhode Island combined and amounts to an **average annual rate of 816,617 acres per year**.
- Between 2007 and 2012, 1,812,700 acres of **agricultural land** were converted to **developed land**, which equals an **average annual rate of 362,540 acres per year, nearly an acre (.69) a minute, or more than 40 (41.4) acres every hour**.
- The national rate of agricultural land conversion declined during the most recent NRI reporting period (2007–2012). The average annual conversion rate (362,540 acres per year) was down 48 percent from the previous reporting period (2002–2007).