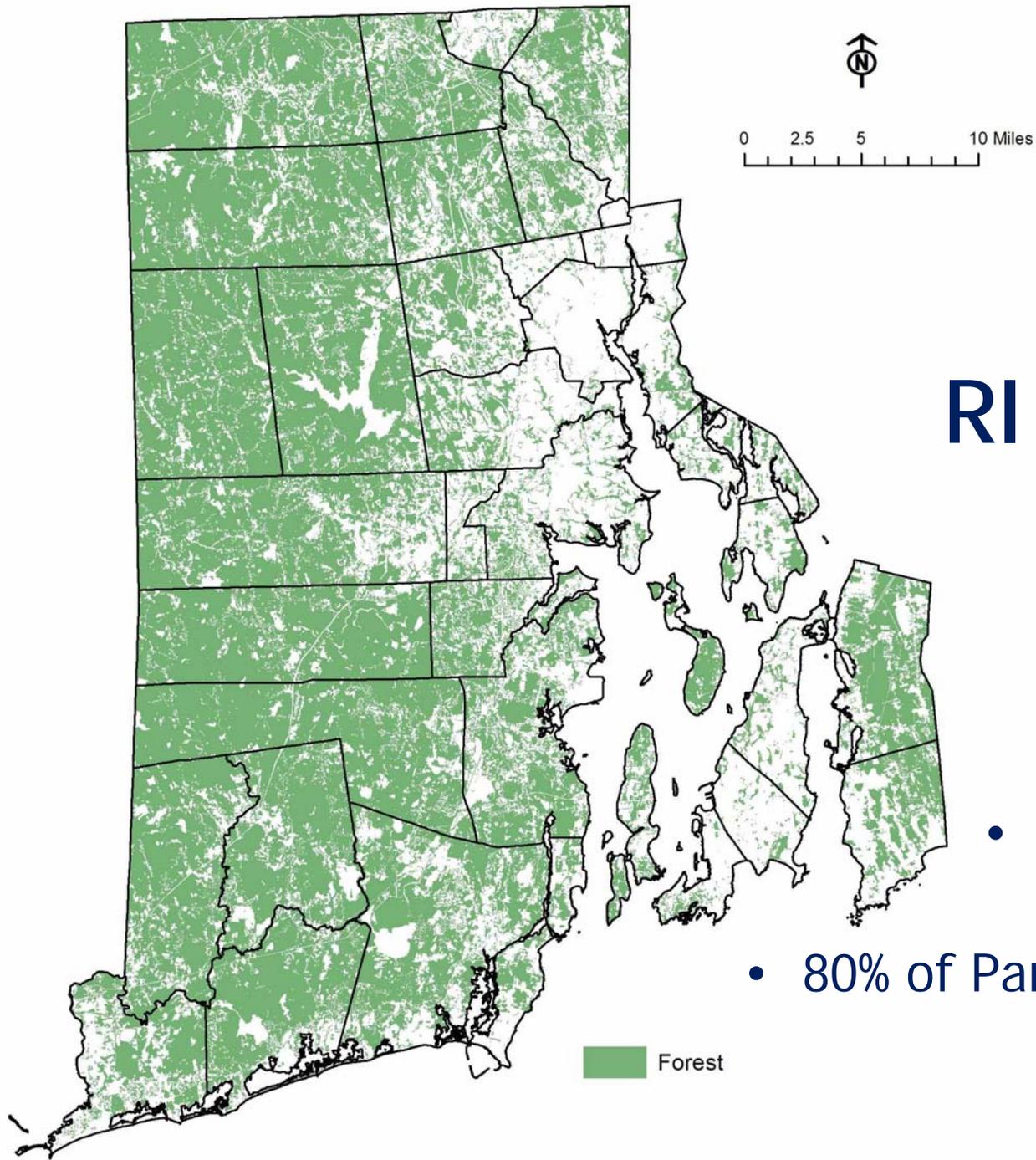


Community Guidance to Maintain Working Farms and Forests

Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management



RI Forest Land

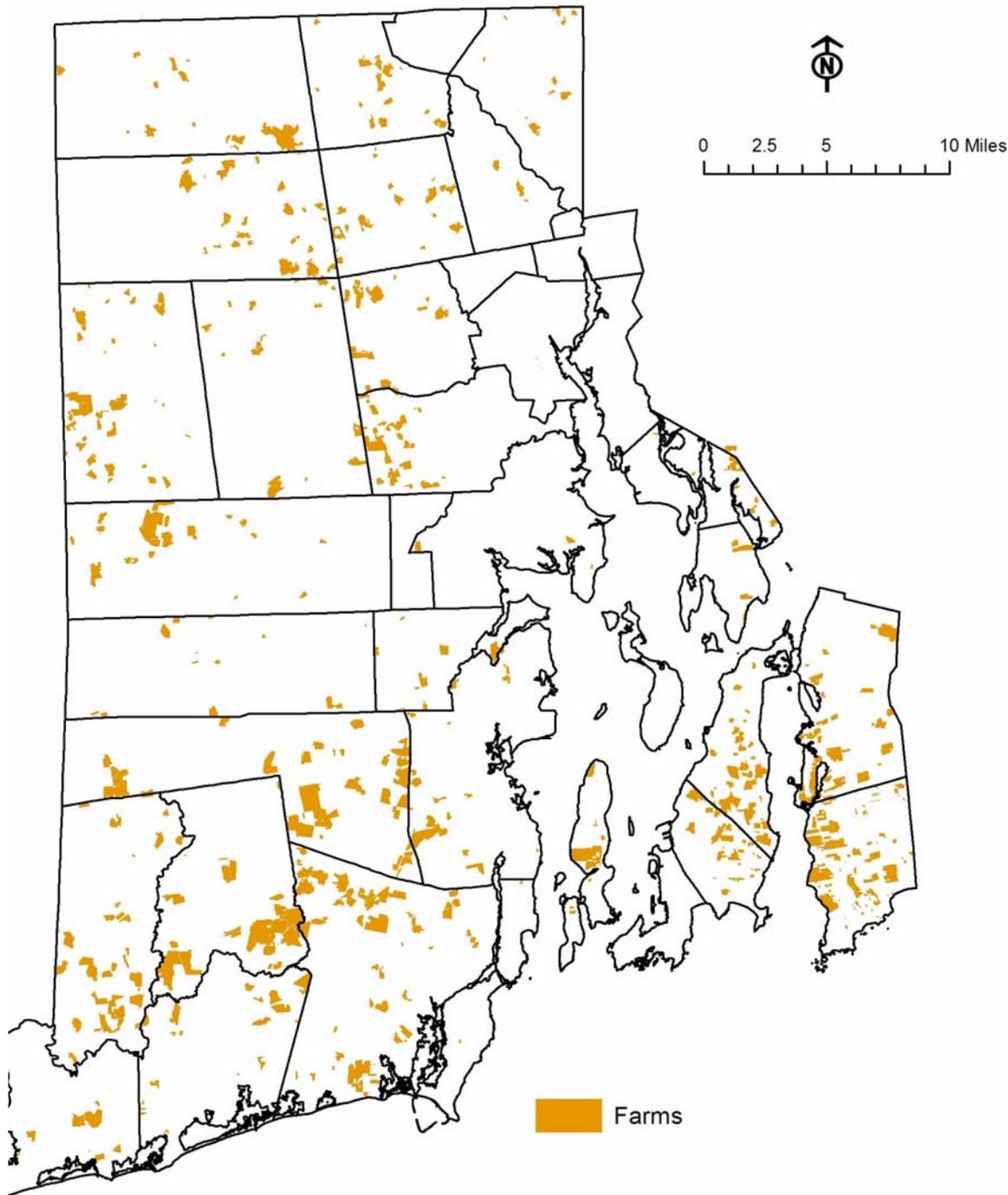
- RI 53% Forested
- 405,000 Forest Acres
- 80% of Parcels 10 Acres or Less
- 70% Unprotected

Forest Values

- Clean Air
- Clean Water
- Recreation
- Habitat
- Fuel Source

Forest Values

- 2,051 Jobs Wood Products and Paper
- 156 Wood Product Companies
- Annual Payroll = \$108,160,000



RI Farm Land

- 40,000 Acres of Farms
- 67% Not Protected

Farm Values

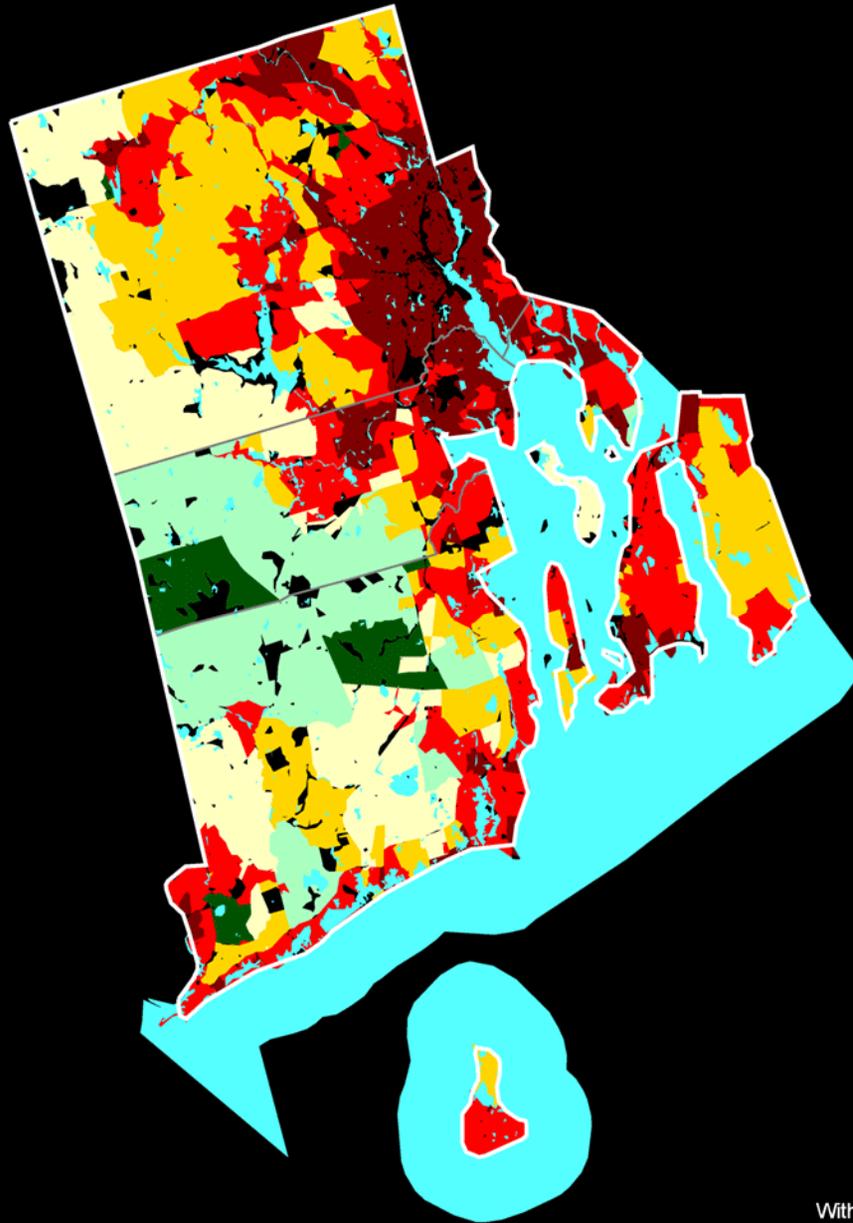
- Local Food Production
- Habitat
- Recreation
- Community Character

Farm Values

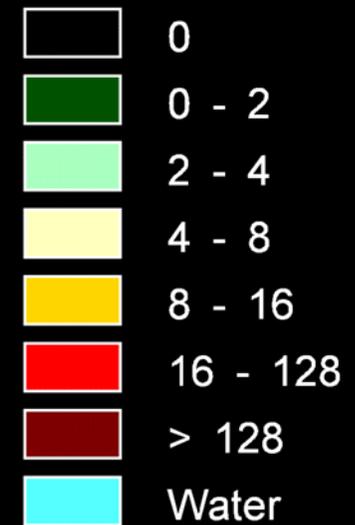
- 1,219 RI Farms
- 1,792 Direct and 542 Indirect Jobs
- Annual Direct Sales = \$170,650,704
- Annual Indirect = \$ 97,452,764

Rhode Island

1950 Housing density
Census partial block groups



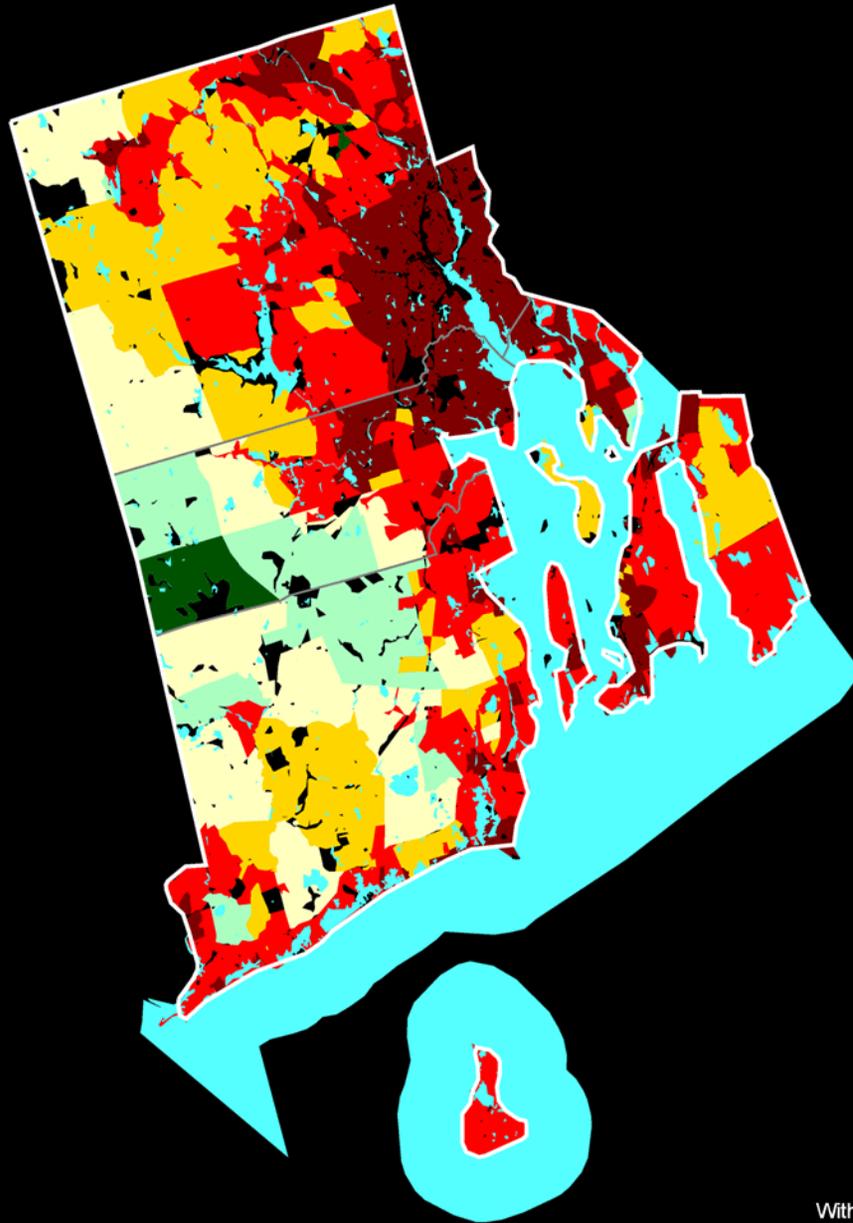
Housing units / km²



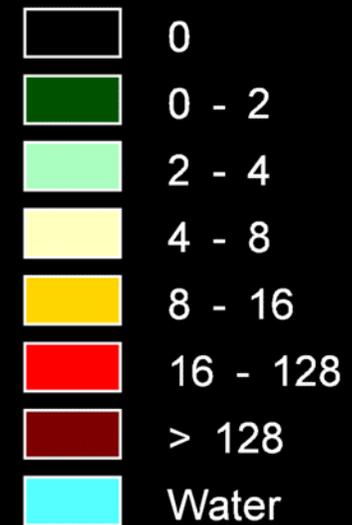
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Rhode Island

1960 Housing density
Census partial block groups



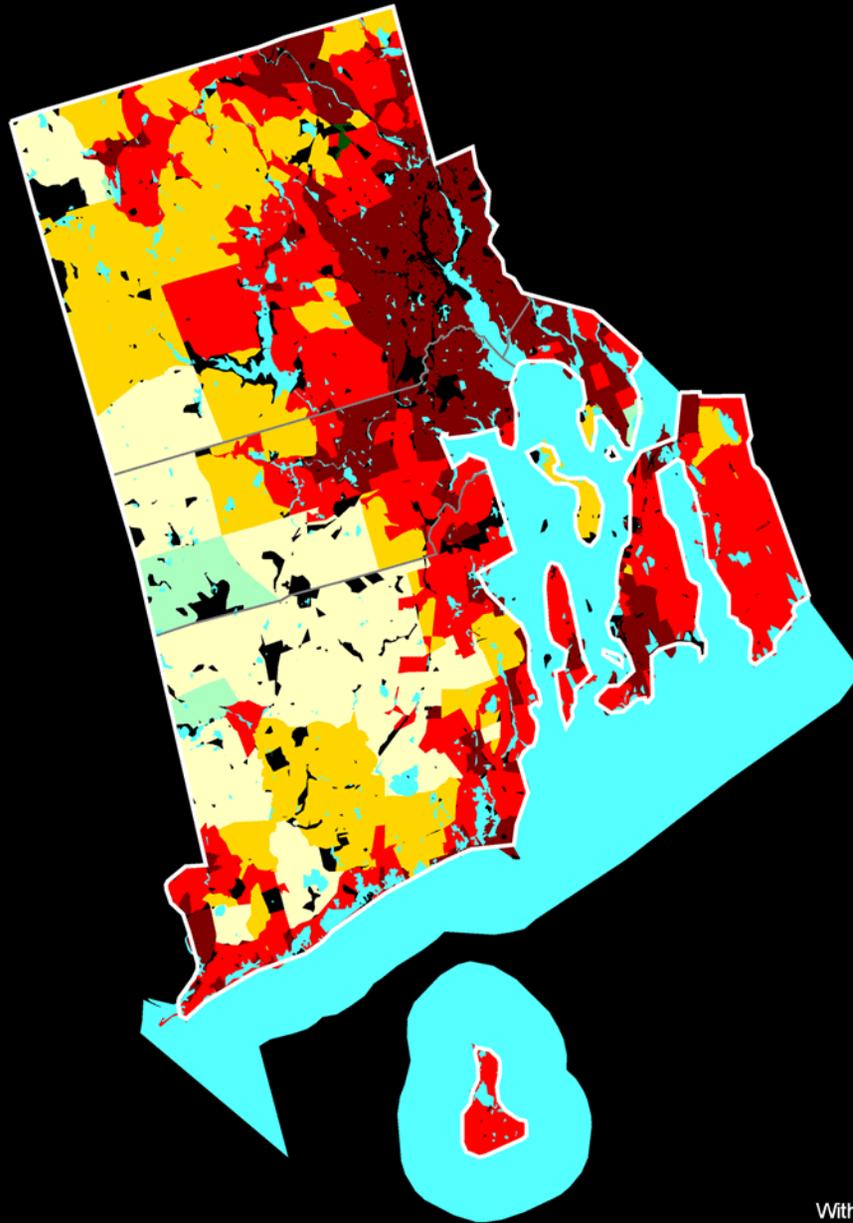
Housing units / km²



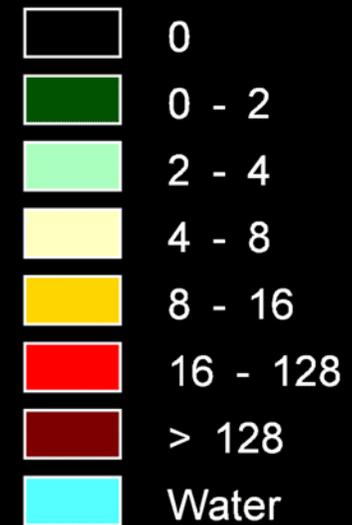
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Rhode Island

1970 Housing density
Census partial block groups



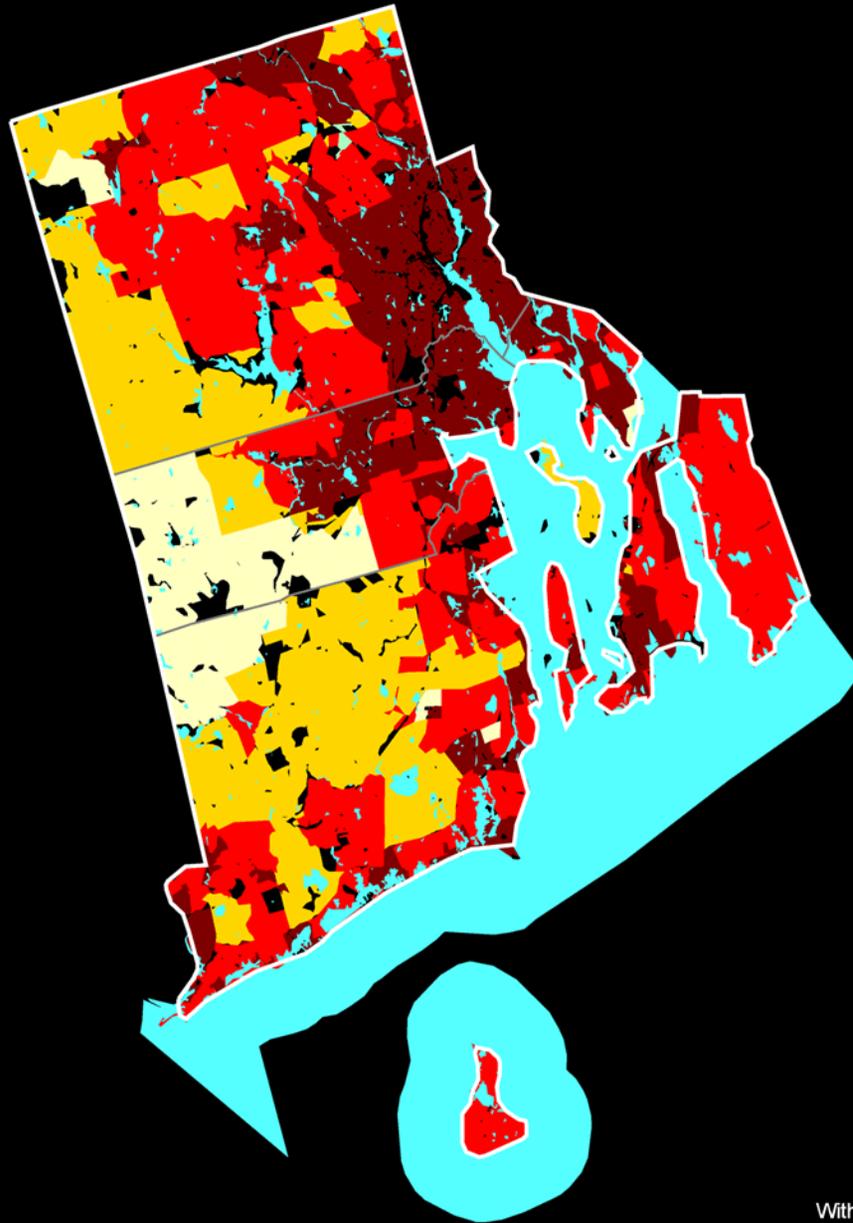
Housing units / km²



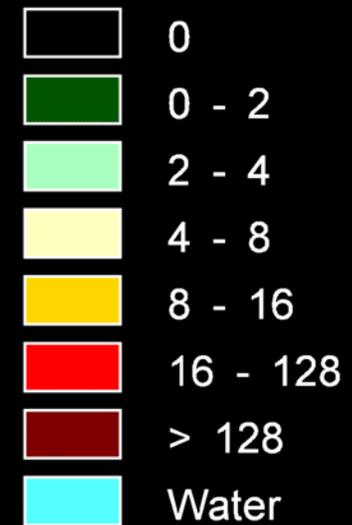
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Rhode Island

1980 Housing density
Census partial block groups



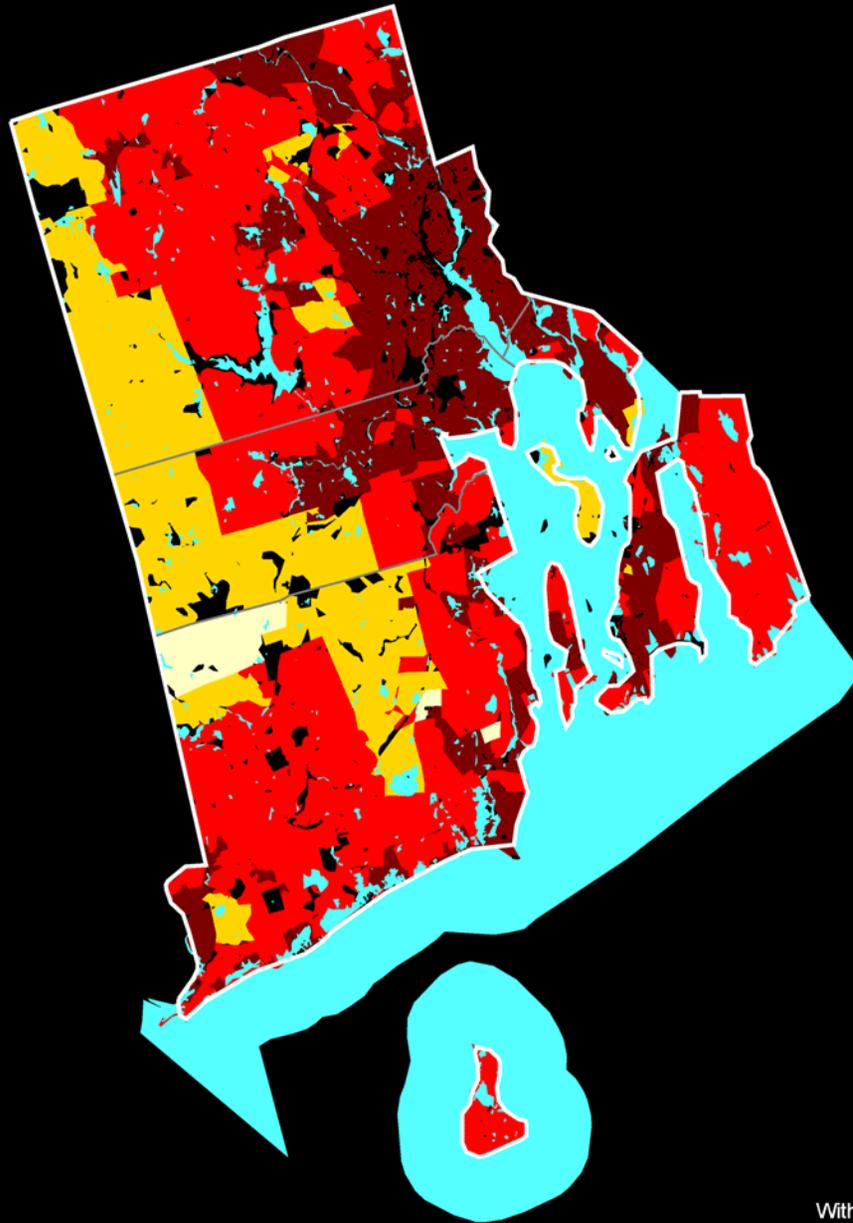
Housing units / km²



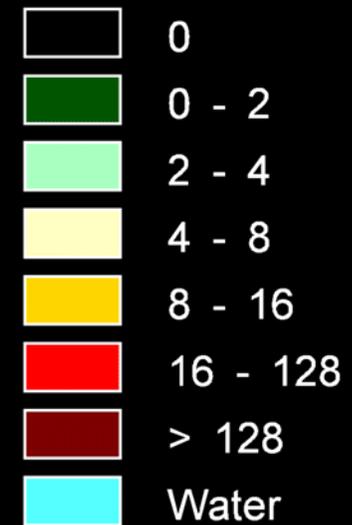
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Rhode Island

1990 Housing density
Census partial block groups



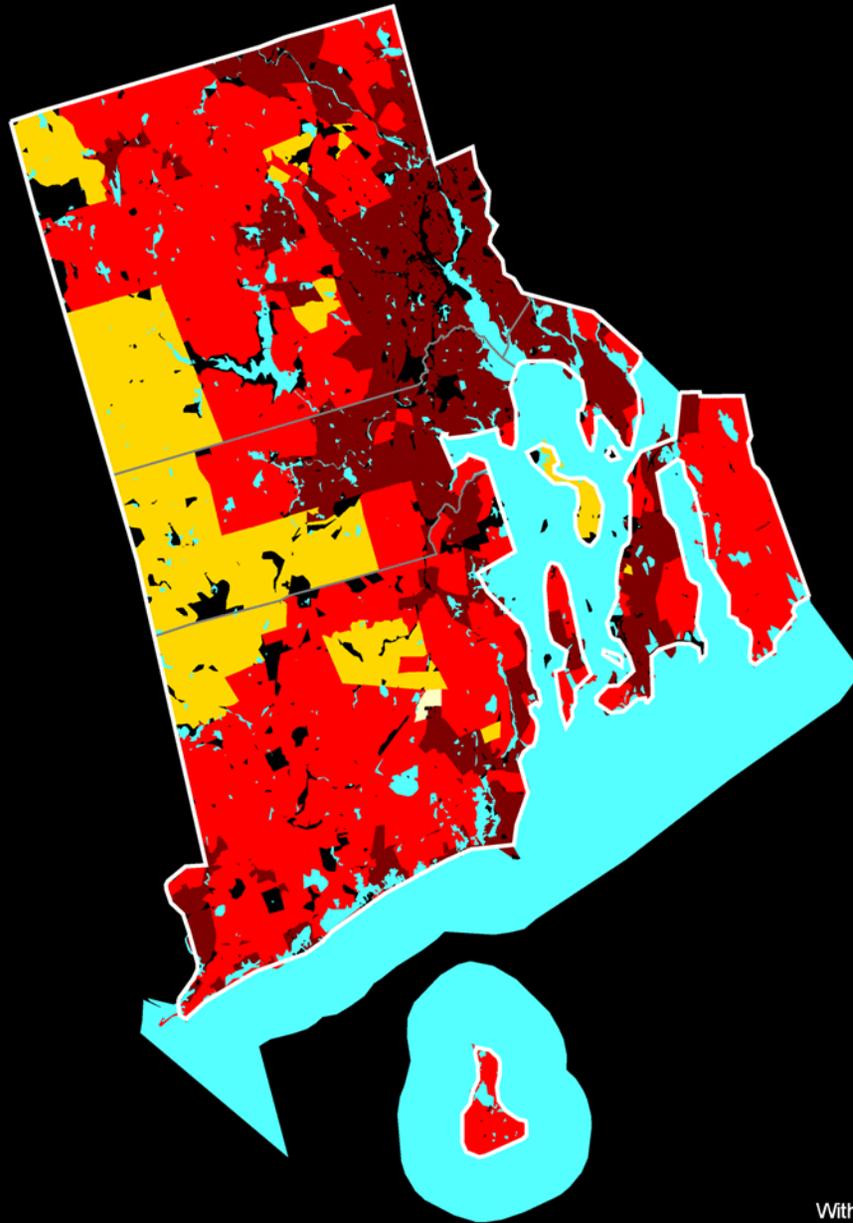
Housing units / km²



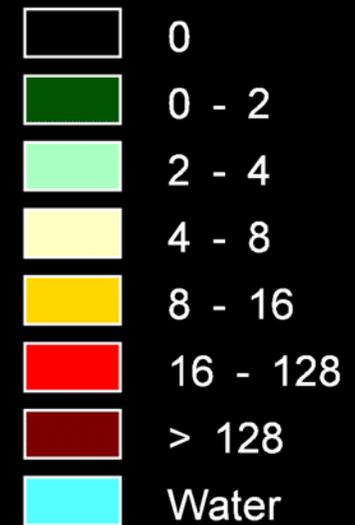
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Rhode Island

2000 Housing density
Census partial block groups



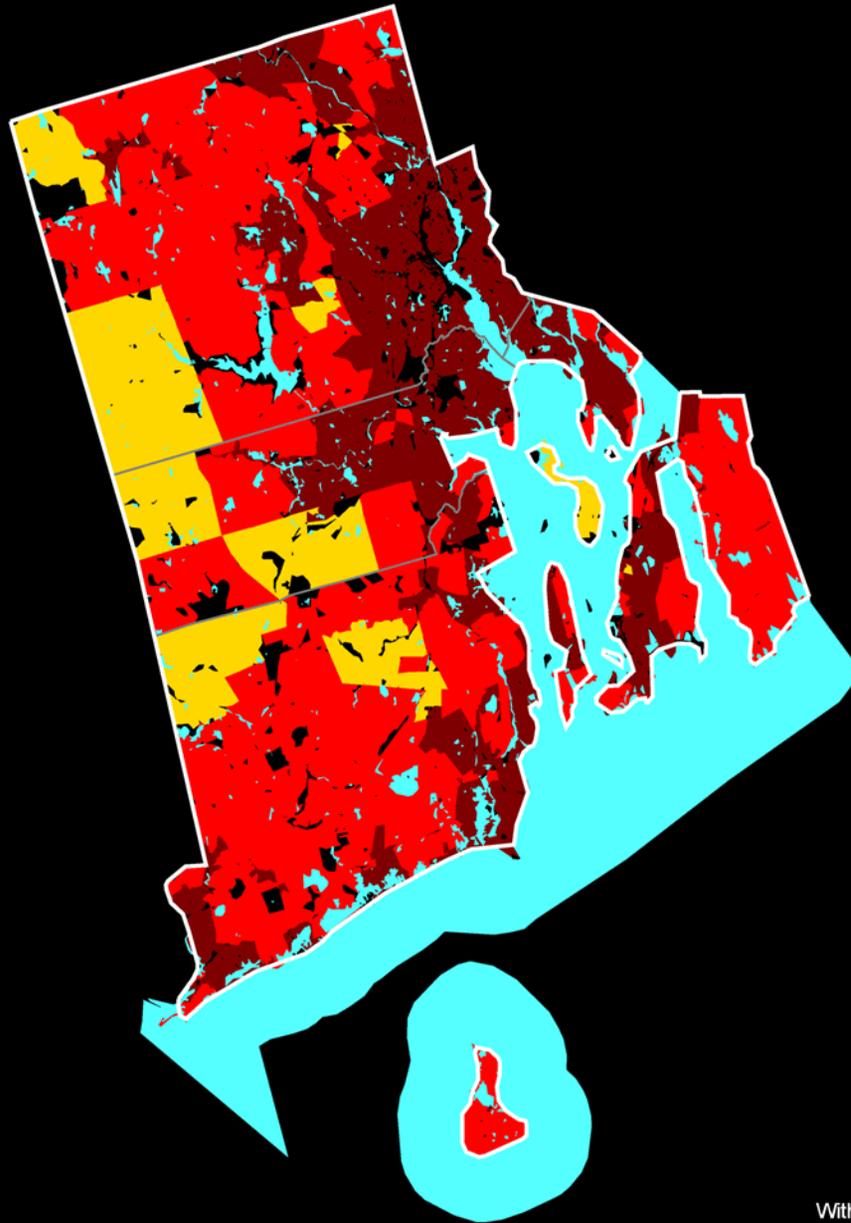
Housing units / km²



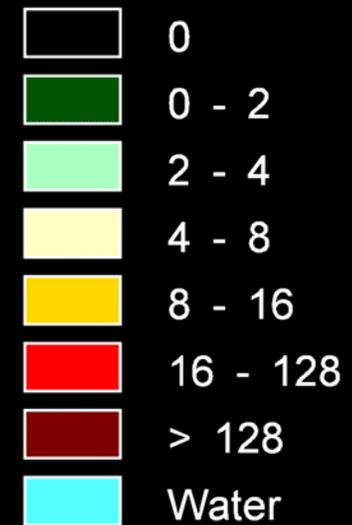
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Rhode Island

2010 Housing density
Census partial block groups



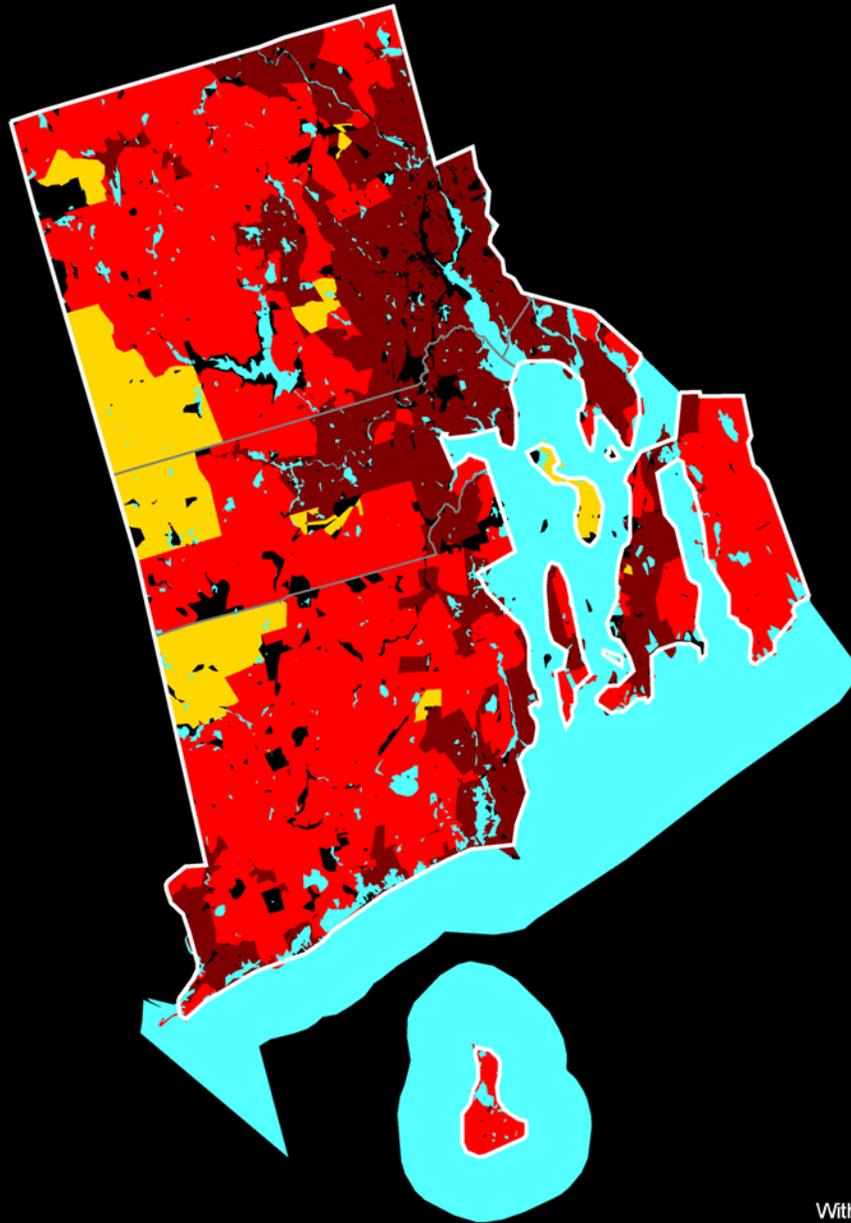
Housing units / km²



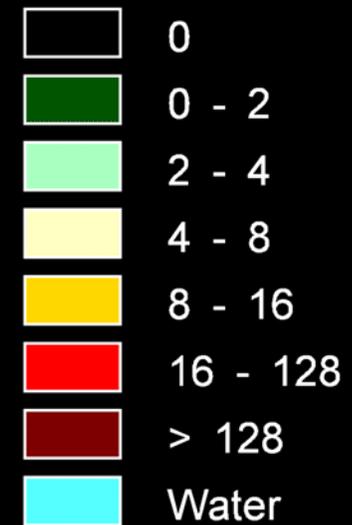
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Rhode Island

2020 Housing density
Census partial block groups



Housing units / km²



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Farm and Forest Threats

- High Land Values
- Aging Land Owners
- Lost Infrastructure Support
- Regulations Prevent Adaptation

Goals

- Help towns to maintain farms and forests.
- Encourage small businesses

Approach

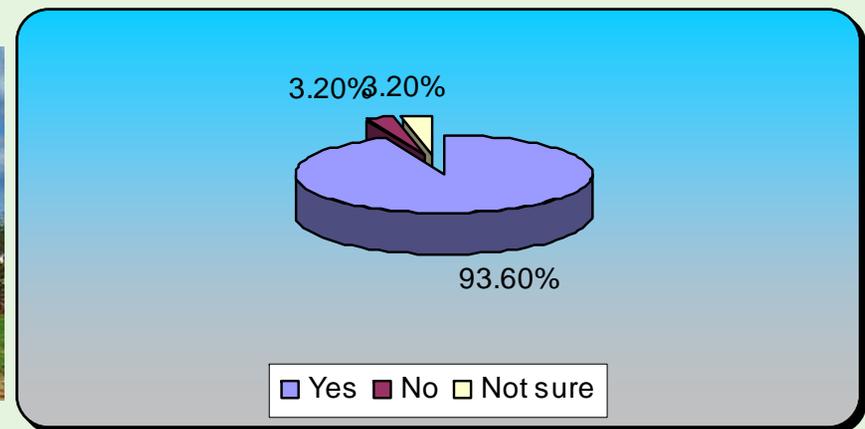
- IDENTIFY BUSINESS USES
- DEVELOP PERFORMANCE STANDARDS
- CREATE REGULATORY GUIDANCE

Community Advantages

- Preserve Community Character
- Expand Tax Base
- Create Local Jobs
- Save Money

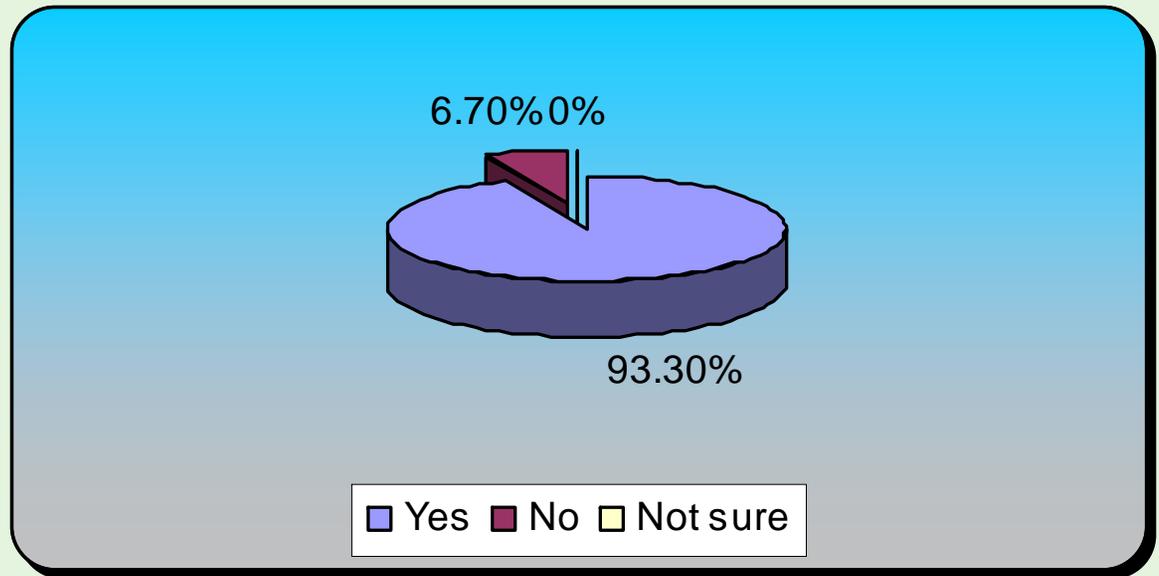
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure



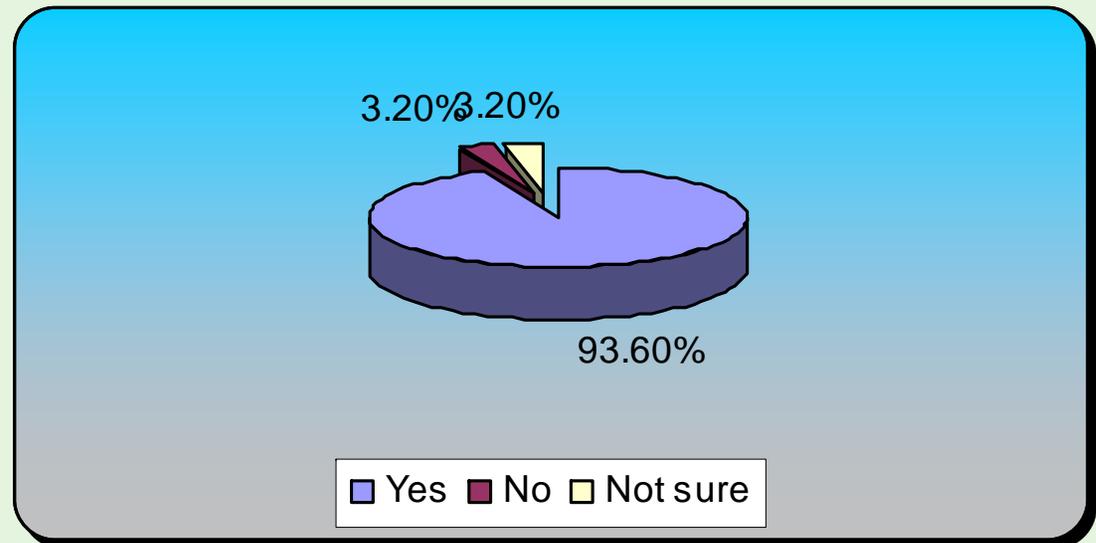
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure



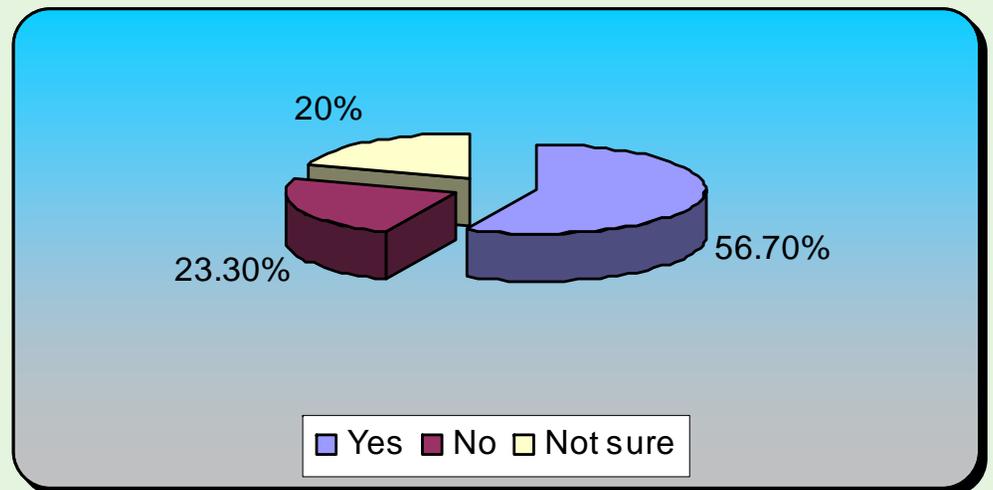
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure



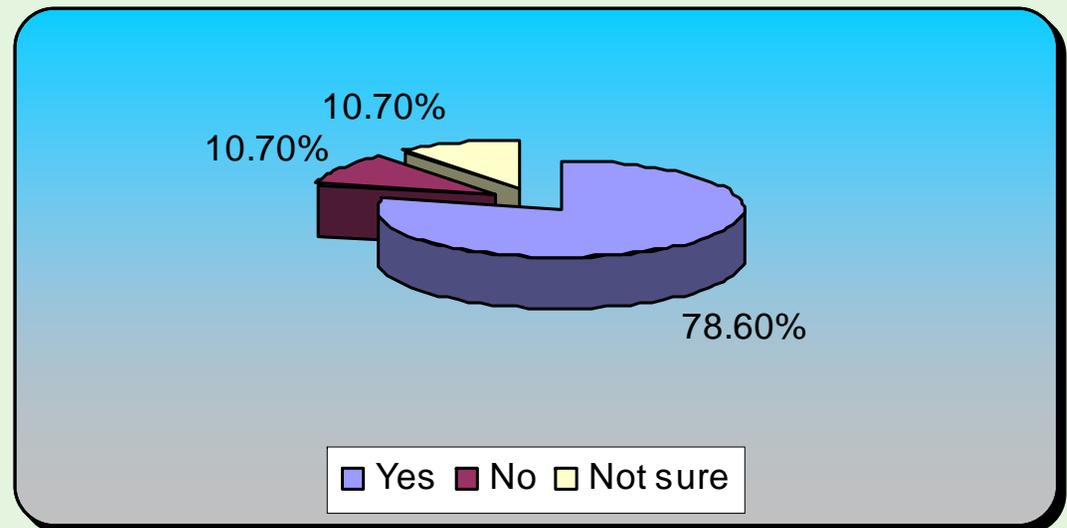
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure



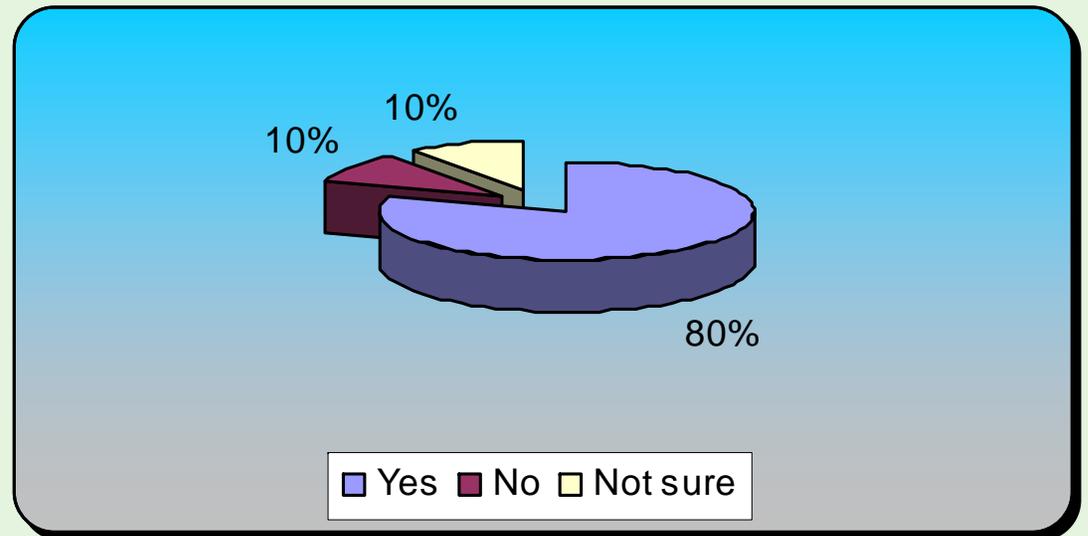
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure



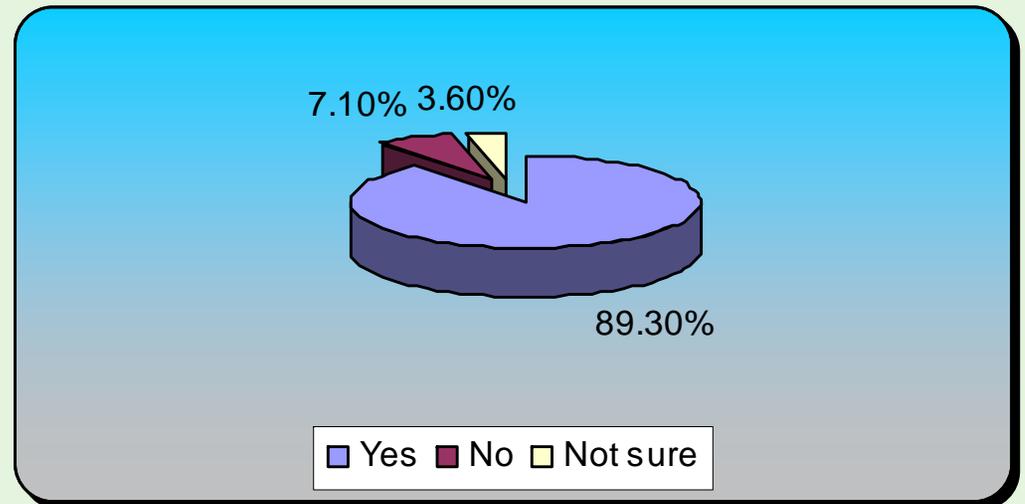
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

1. Yes
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3. Not sure



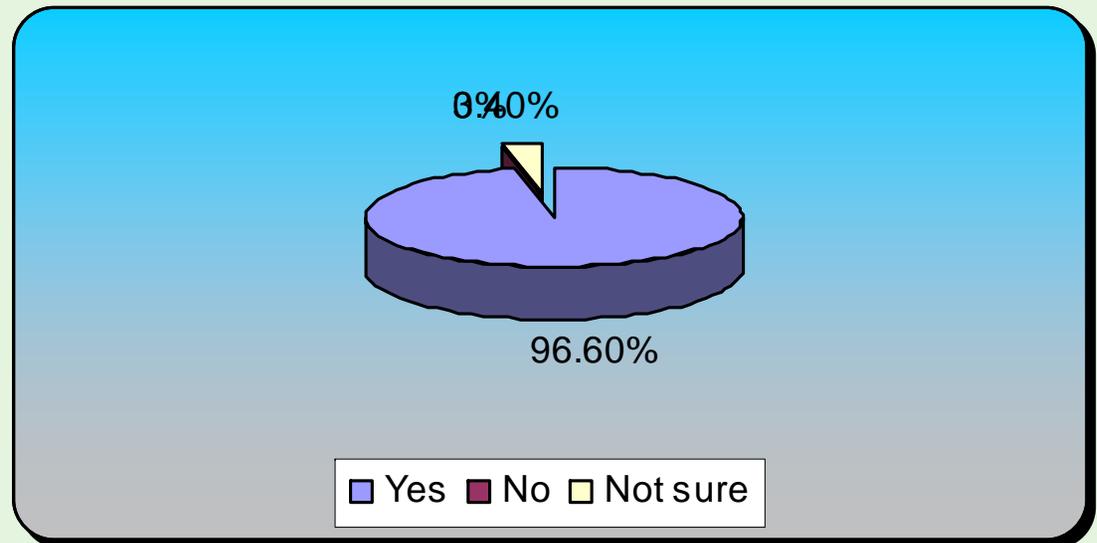
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

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2. No
3. Not sure



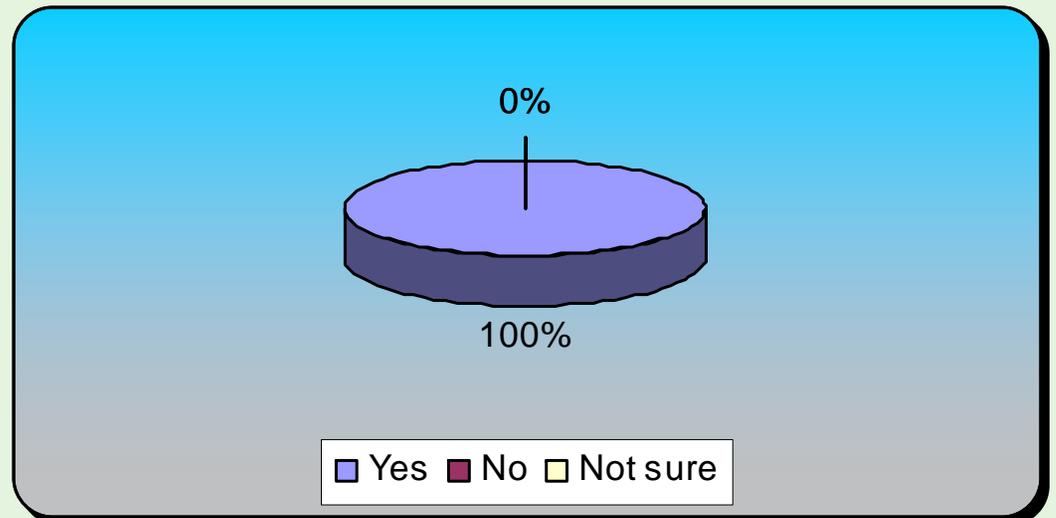
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure



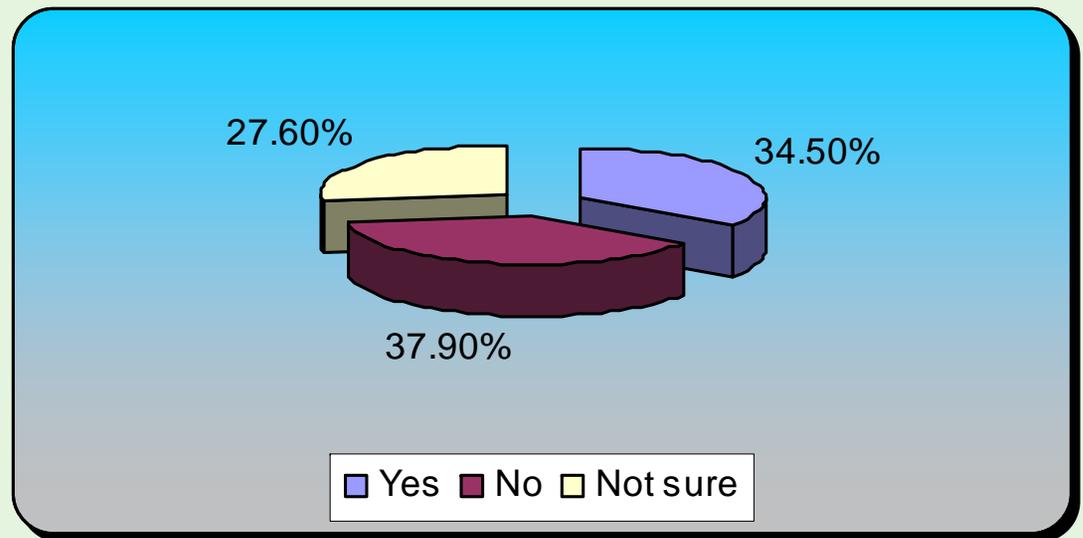
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

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- 2. No
- 3. Not sure



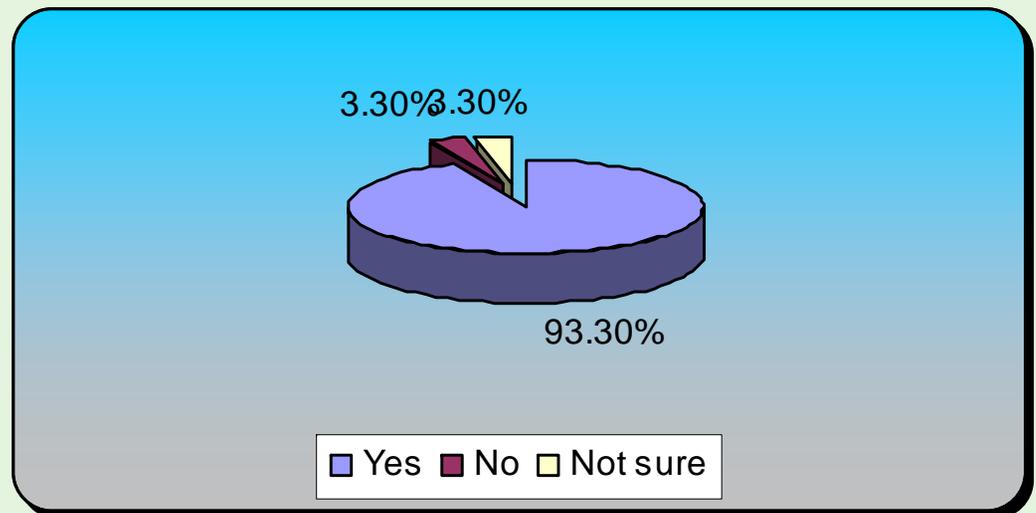
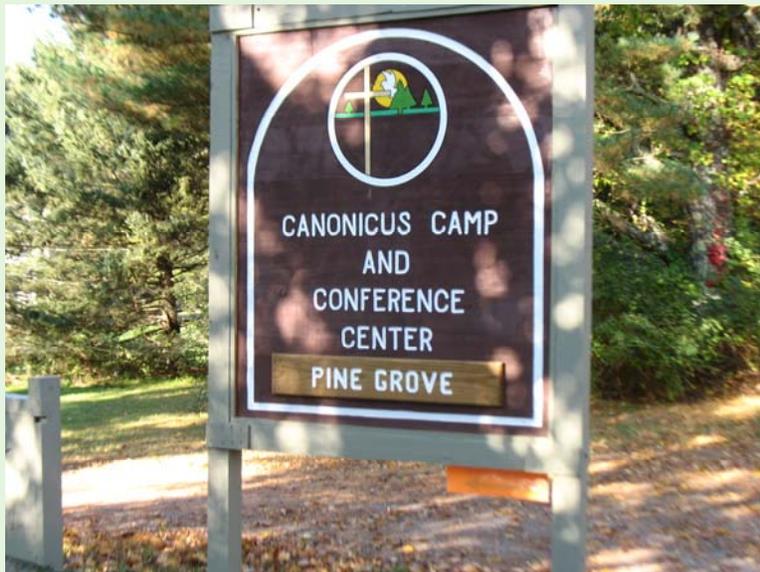
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure



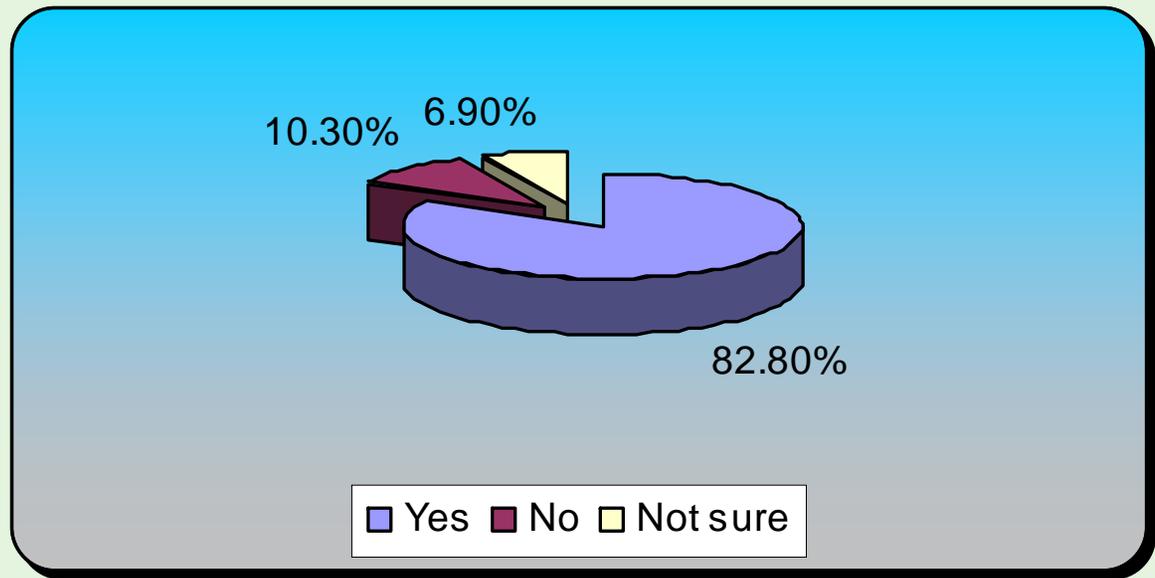
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure



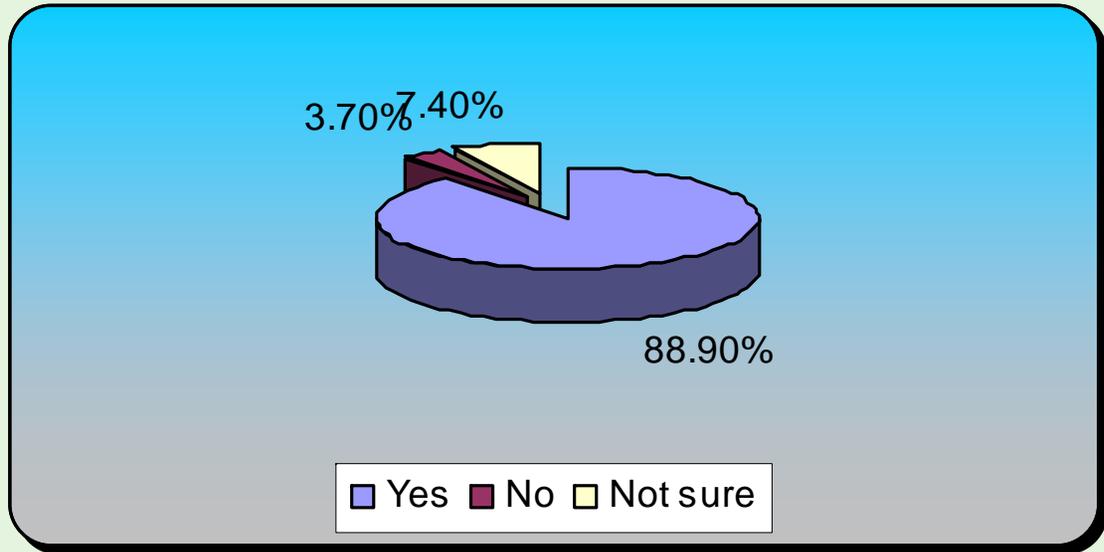
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure



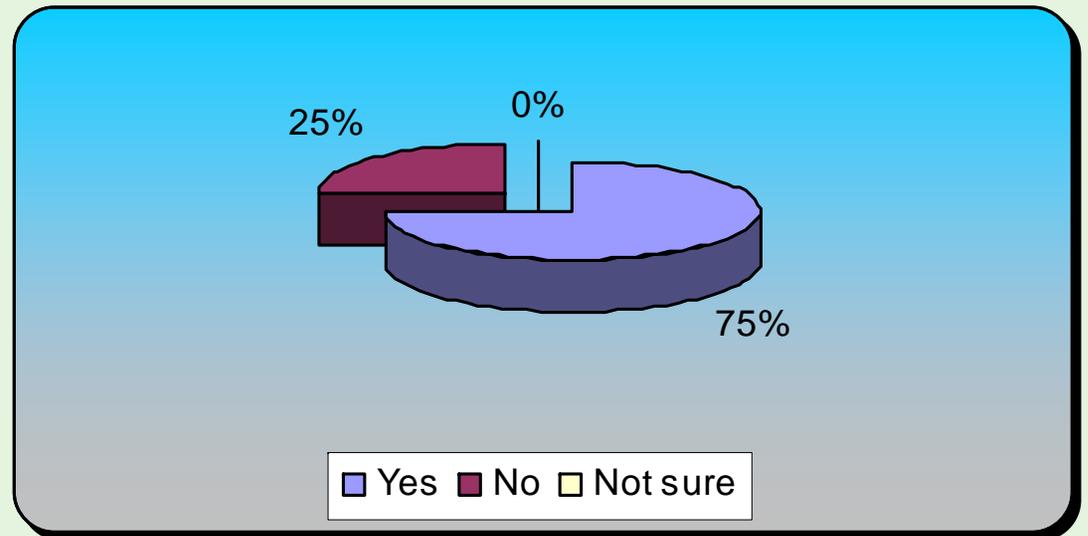
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure



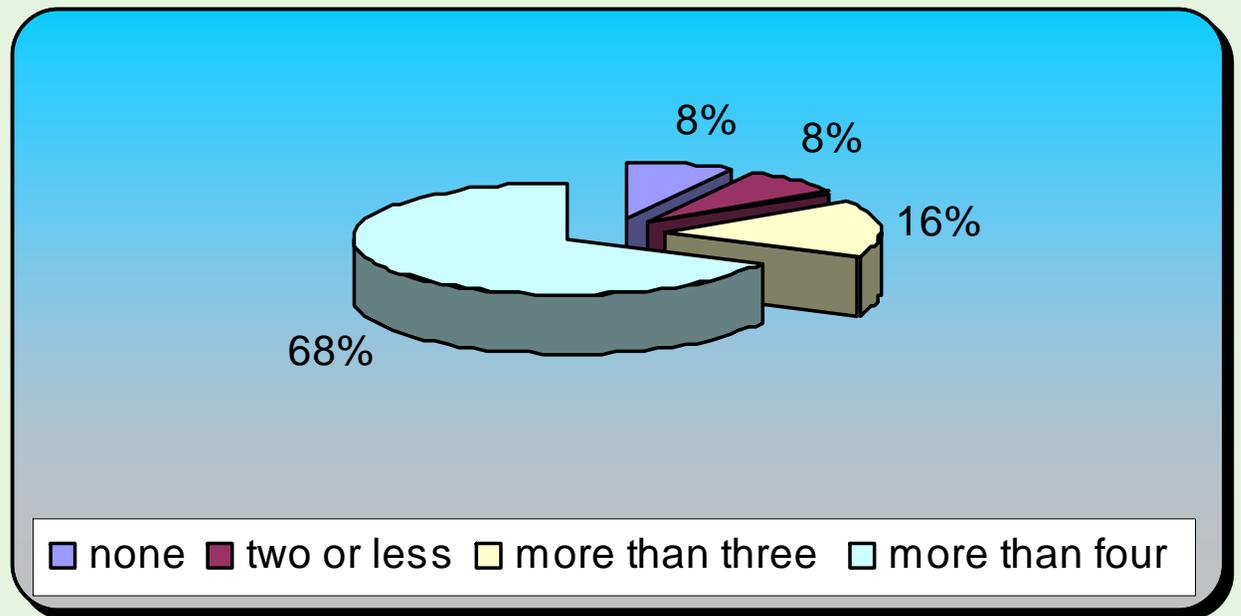
Do you think that the following use is appropriate in rural areas?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure



How many similar uses do you have in your town already in residential zones?

1. none
2. two or less
3. more than three
4. more than four



New uses in an old landscape: **potential business uses in residential zones**



Potential uses to allow in association with farm operations



Customary accessory agricultural uses



- **Raising of crops**
- **Raising of animals**
- **Poultry farm**
- **Nurseries**
- **Landscaping business**

Farm-based Retail Sales



- **Roadside Stand**
- **Sale of compost/manure/mulch**
- **Artisanal products/crafts**
- **Sale of timber**
- **Farm café/restaurant**

Ag-tivities



- **Pick-your-own**
- **Farm Winery/Brewery/Distillery**
- **Competitive Equine Enterprise**
- **On-farm processing**
- **Seasonal Attractions (hay rides, festivals, fairs, etc.)**
- **Special Events (concerts, weddings/receptions, etc.)**

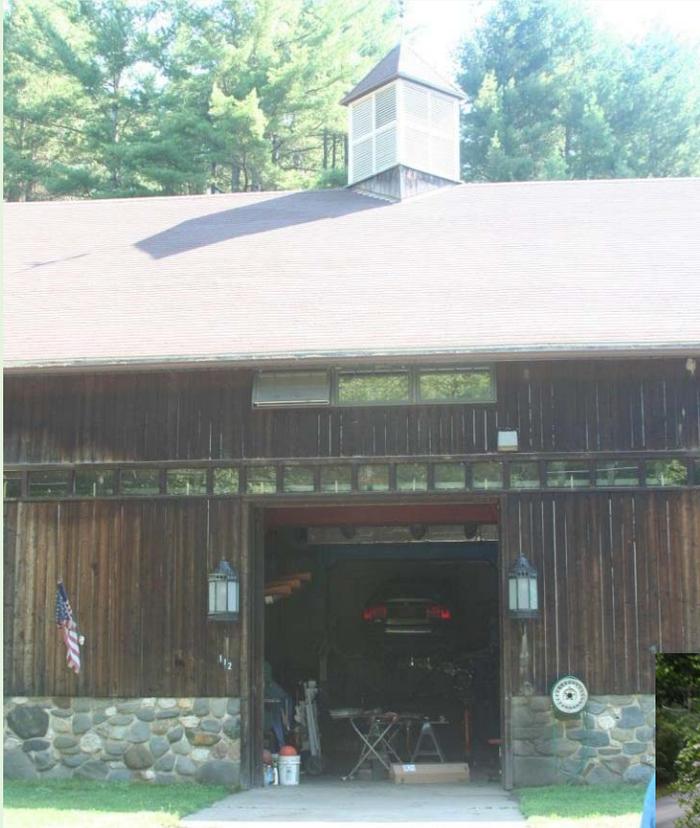


Agriculture-related Educational Activities



- **Agri-tourism**
- **Farm Demonstration Center**

Farm-based service business



- **Farm Conference Center**
- **Riding Academy/Tack Shop**
- **Machinery Repair/Mechanic Shop**



Farm-based Recreational Activities



- **Passive Recreation**
- **Fee-based Bird-Watching/Skiing/Snowshoeing**
- **Hunting**
- **Seasonal Attractions**

Farm building re-use



- **Accessory Dwelling, such as farm-hand housing**
- **Bed and Breakfast**



Farm-based light manufacturing



- **Crafts/Cabinetry**
- **Tools**
- **Clothing**

Potential uses to allow in association with forest lot residences



Customary, Incidental and Accessory Uses



- **Cutting/Buying/Selling of Wood**
- **Wood Processing for mulch and other products**
- **Flowers**



Neighborhood Service



- **Day Care**
- **Bed and Breakfast**
- **Forest-base service business**

Forest-Related Educational Activities



- **Forest Nature Center**
- **Museums**



Forest-Based Recreational Activities



- **Passive Recreation**
- **Fee-based bird watching/skiing/snowshoeing**
- **Nature Trails**
- **Open Recreation Events, such as paint ball**
- **Campground**
- **Hunting and Fishing**

Forest-based light manufacturing



- **Crafts/Cabinetry**
- **Tools**
- **Clothing**
- **Specialty Foods**

Professional Office/Services



- **Physician**
- **Dentist**
- **Psychiatrist**
- **Engineer/Consultant**
- **Architect**
- **Accountant**
- **Contractor (electrical, plumbing, carpentry, etc.)**
- **Attorney**
- **Word-Processing**

Small Business



- Barber
- Beautician
- Shoe/Watch/Clock repair
- Tailor/Seamstress
- Catering
- Handcrafts
- Artist
- Teacher/Tutor
- Author/Book Binder
- Small Engine Repair
- Weaving
- Chair Caning/upholstery
- Antique/Florist/Gift Shop
- Ceramics/Pottery

Potential Impacts

NOISE

TRAFFIC

TRASH

GLARE

AESTHETICS

Performance Standards

MINIMUM LOT SIZE AND SETBACKS

LOCATION OF USE

PARKING (VOLUME AND DESIGN)

SIGNAGE

TEMPORARY STRUCTURES AND STORAGE

Performance Standards

LANDSCAPING/ SCREENING

NUISANCE STANDARDS

OTHER AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS



**NOTICE:
THIS
PROPERTY
IS A FARM**

~~FARMS HAVE ANIMALS.~~

ANIMALS MAKE:
FUNNY SOUNDS,
SMELL BAD, AND
HAVE SEX OUTDOORS.

UNLESS
YOU CAN TOLERATE:
NOISE, ODORS,
AND OUTDOOR SEX,

**DON'T BUY PROPERTY
NEXT TO A FARM!**

Small Business Regulatory Guidance

A Performance-Based approach:

- How things should be developed, rather than what will be developed.
- How the use performs in the context of the neighborhood, rather than what the use is.

Four Basic Steps of Regulatory Review:

1. **ELIGIBILITY:**

Is the property owner eligible to participate in small business development?

2. **ALLOWED USE:**

Is the desired use allowed?

3. **CLASSIFICATION:**

What is the intensity of the proposed use?

4. **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:**

What performance standards apply for the proposed use and intensity?

Eligibility: Definition of “Farm or Forest Lots”

Farm Lot – Land that has the following elements:

At least [**five (5) acres**] of contiguous land dedicated to or available for agricultural production;

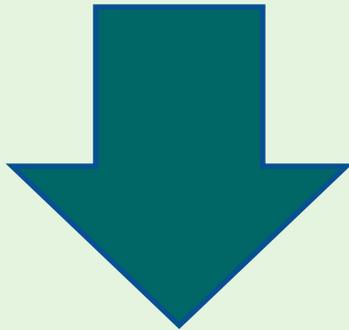
Forest Lot: Land that has the following elements:

At least [**ten (10) acres**] of contiguous forest, meadow or other naturally functioning landscape;

Allowed Uses

LIST FROM "A TO Z" (26 USES IDENTIFIED)

From Home Occupation



To Festivals and Weddings

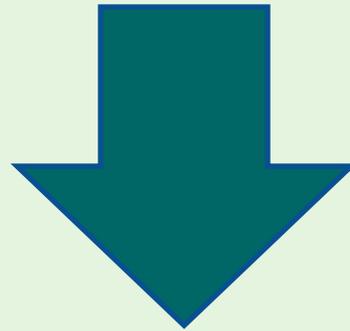
Classification: Class I-IV

- **Broken out from lowest to highest impact.**
- **Parking needs, occupancy, food service, and other characteristics used to categorize.**
- **The classification determines the permit process (e.g., Who reviews the activity and under which procedures?)**
- **Each classification has its own suite of performance standards.**

Performance Standards

FOUR SETS OF STANDARDS

From Lowest Impact (Class I)



To Highest Impact (Class IV)

**How would a farm stand be regulated
under this performance-based approach?**

under



Scenario #1: Joe Gardner's Surplus



Is the use allowable?

- **Yes, as “on-site retail.”**

What is the classification of the use?

- **Use outside primary residence.**
- **Use will generate income, but no labor of employees that do not live at the residence.**

Scenario #1: Joe Gardner's Surplus



Therefore it's a Class II Use:

- **Allowed by right**
- **No permit review procedures**

But subject to Class II Performance Standards

Scenario #2: Suzy Grower's Vegetables



Is the use allowable?

- **Yes, as "on-site retail."**

What is the classification of the use?

- **400 square foot structure.**
- **Use requires parking for 4-8 cars.**

Scenario #2: Suzy Grower's Vegetables



Therefore it's a **Class III use**, subject to **Class III performance standards**:

- **Signage.**
- **Number of parking spaces with pervious surface.**
- **Controls on noise and light levels.**
- **Screening for storage and trash.**
- **Licensing.**

Scenario #3: Janet Farmer's Farm Stand/Café



Is the use allowable?

- **Yes, as “on-site retail”**

What is the classification of the use?

- **800 square foot structure**
- **Parking for 24 cars**
- **Seasonal/full-time staff**
- **Food service stand**

Scenario #3: Janet Farmer's Farm Stand/Café



Therefore it's a Class IV use, subject to Class IV performance standards:

- Permanent signage (larger)
- Temporary signage
- Number of parking spaces with pervious surface (more)
- Noise and glare
- Screening for storage and trash
- Fencing
- Licensing

The Farm and Forest Lot Small Business Regulatory Guidance

POTENTIAL NEW DEFINITIONS

POTENTIAL REGULATORY LANGUAGE

I.Purposes

II.Procedures

III.Uses Allowed

IV.Classification of Uses

V.Performance Standards

VI.Severability

Caution!

THIS COULD REQUIRE EXTENSIVE PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND VETTING.

- **Make sure you have consistency with local plans**
- **Know the stories of other towns around you**
- **Use the research from this report!**

Caution!

BE AWARE OF STATE LEGISLATION

- Special provisions for agriculture
- Definitions for specific uses

BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN RULES

- Signage
- Lighting
- Parking
- Noise
- Home Occupation
- Bed and Breakfasts
- Etc.

Questions?