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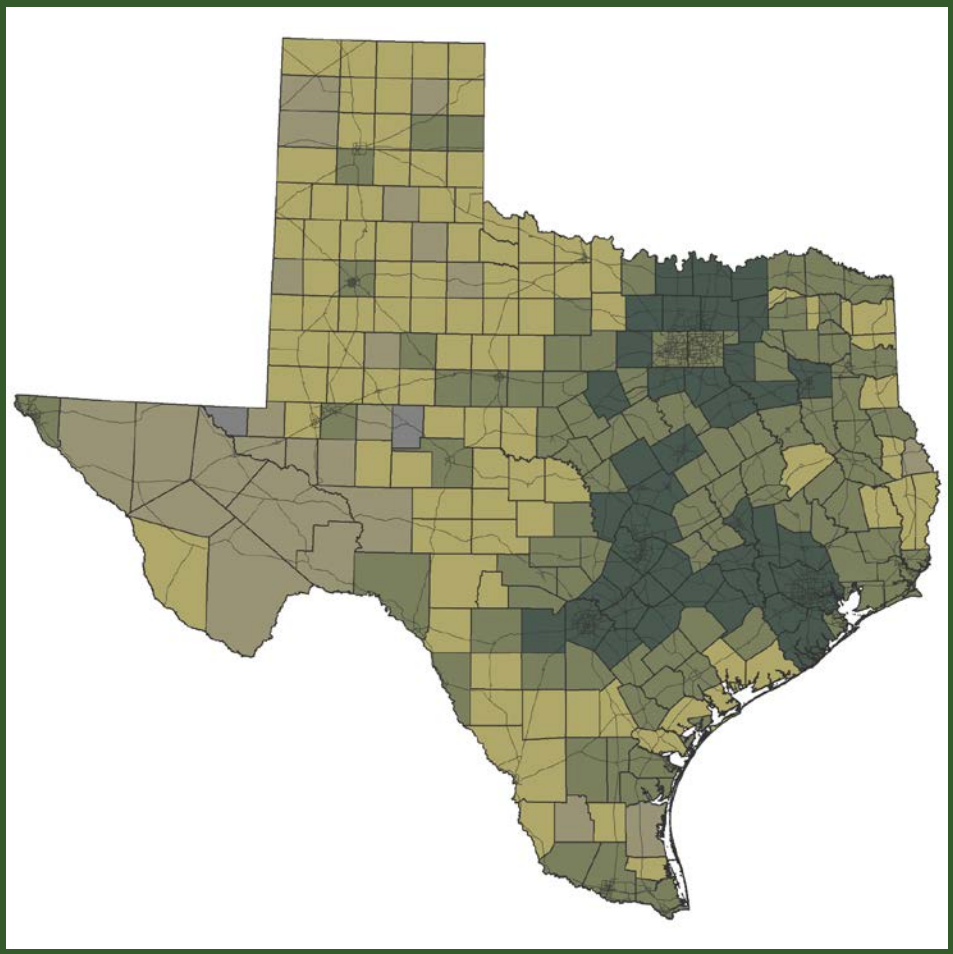
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE RESEARCH | EXTENSION

Trends in Texas Rural Lands



Jim Cathey

Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute

- A group of ***problem-solvers*** for natural resource challenges and we foster stewardship of private lands and their public benefits.

- ~80 staff members

- Four offices:
  - College Station
  - San Antonio
  - Dallas
  - Washington, D.C.

Leadership | BAT | Research | Policy | Engagement | GDAT

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Texas Land Trends

- Trends in land use (1997-2017)
- Primary datasets used
  - County Appraisal District
  - USDA NASS Census of Ag
  - Texas Landowner Survey
- Relationships among
  - Land Value
  - Land Ownership
  - Land Use

Texas Land Trends

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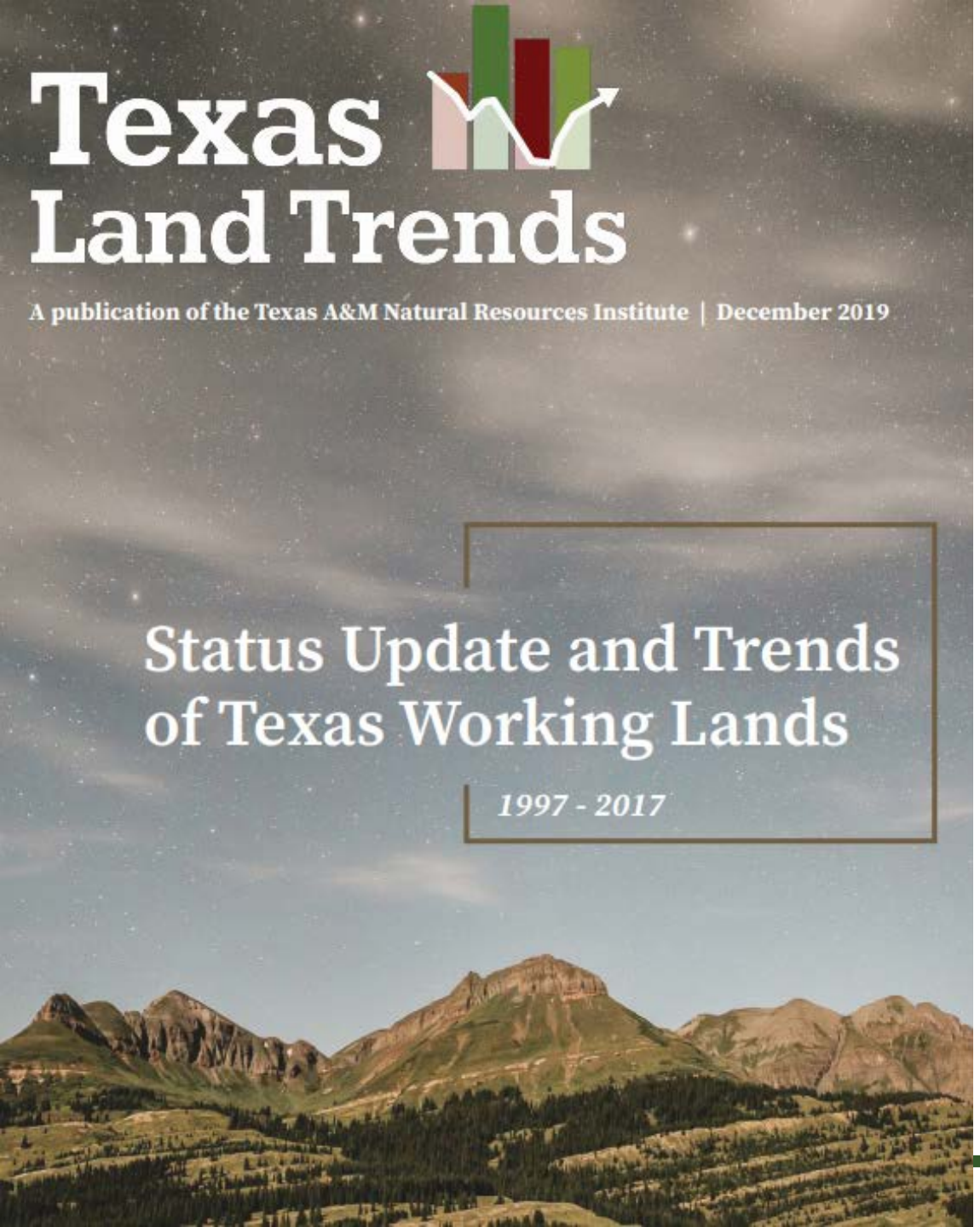

Land Trends Publication Series

- Trends in Ownership Along the Texas Borderlands
- Conservation Easements in Texas
- Texas Landowner Changes and Trend

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Report Topics

- Population Growth
- Land Values
- Working Lands
- Ownership Size

{in•flu•ence} *v.*
1. to affect the nature, development, or condition of;

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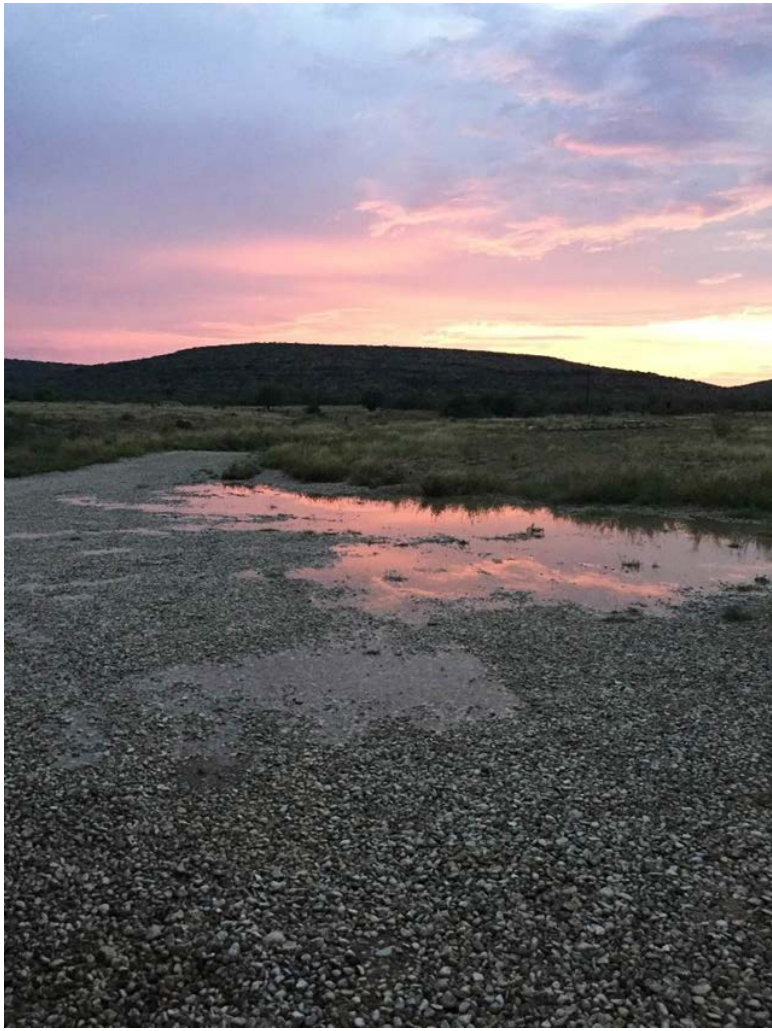
Benefits of Rural Lands

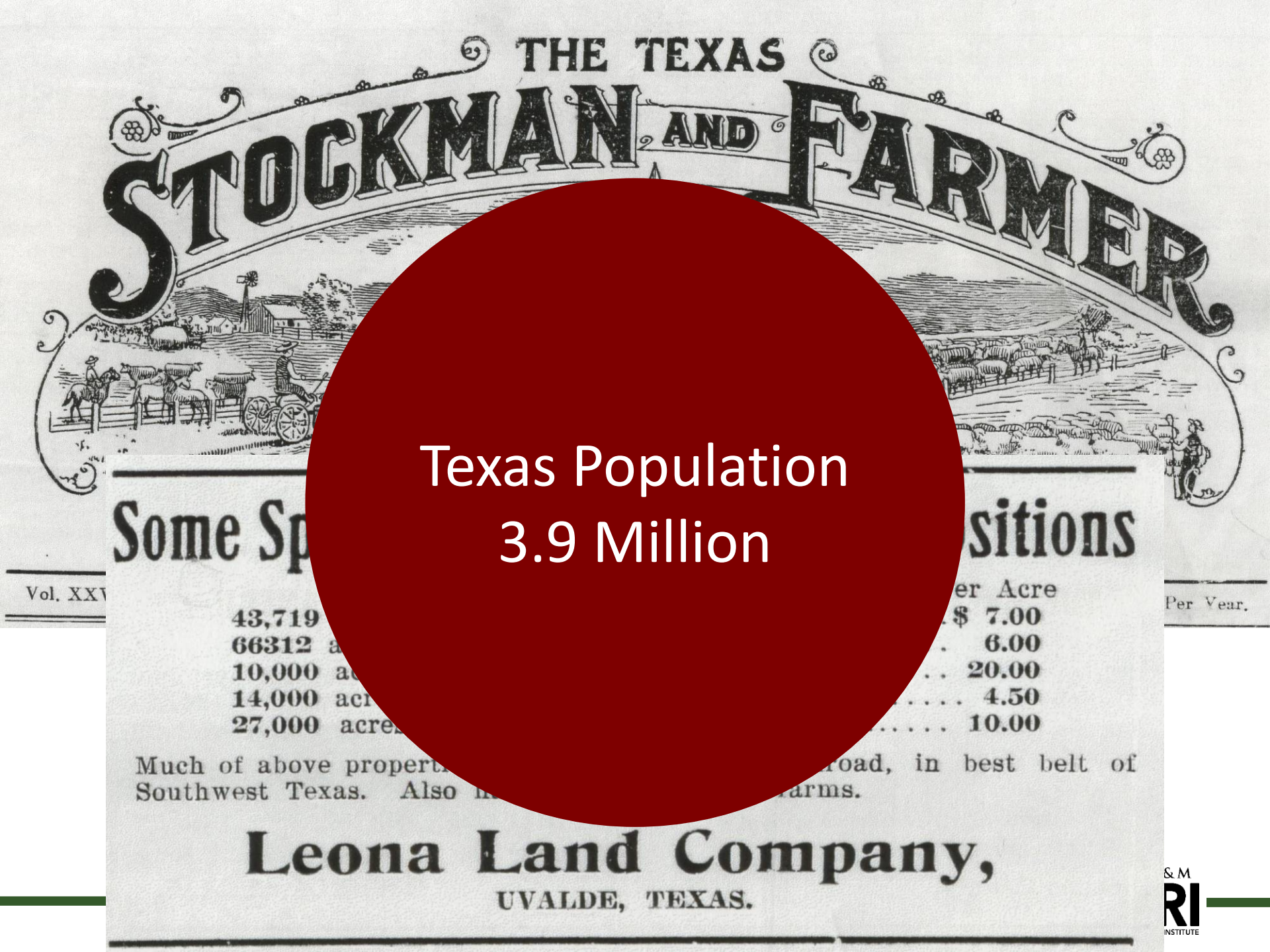
- ***Working Lands*** – farms, ranches, family forests, wildlife (1-D & 1-D-1 agricultural valuation)
  - These lands play a critical role in sustaining life by providing water, food, energy, and national security
  - *Effective* conservation requires innovative solutions to sustaining private rural working lands

Public Benefits – *"Ecosystem Services"*

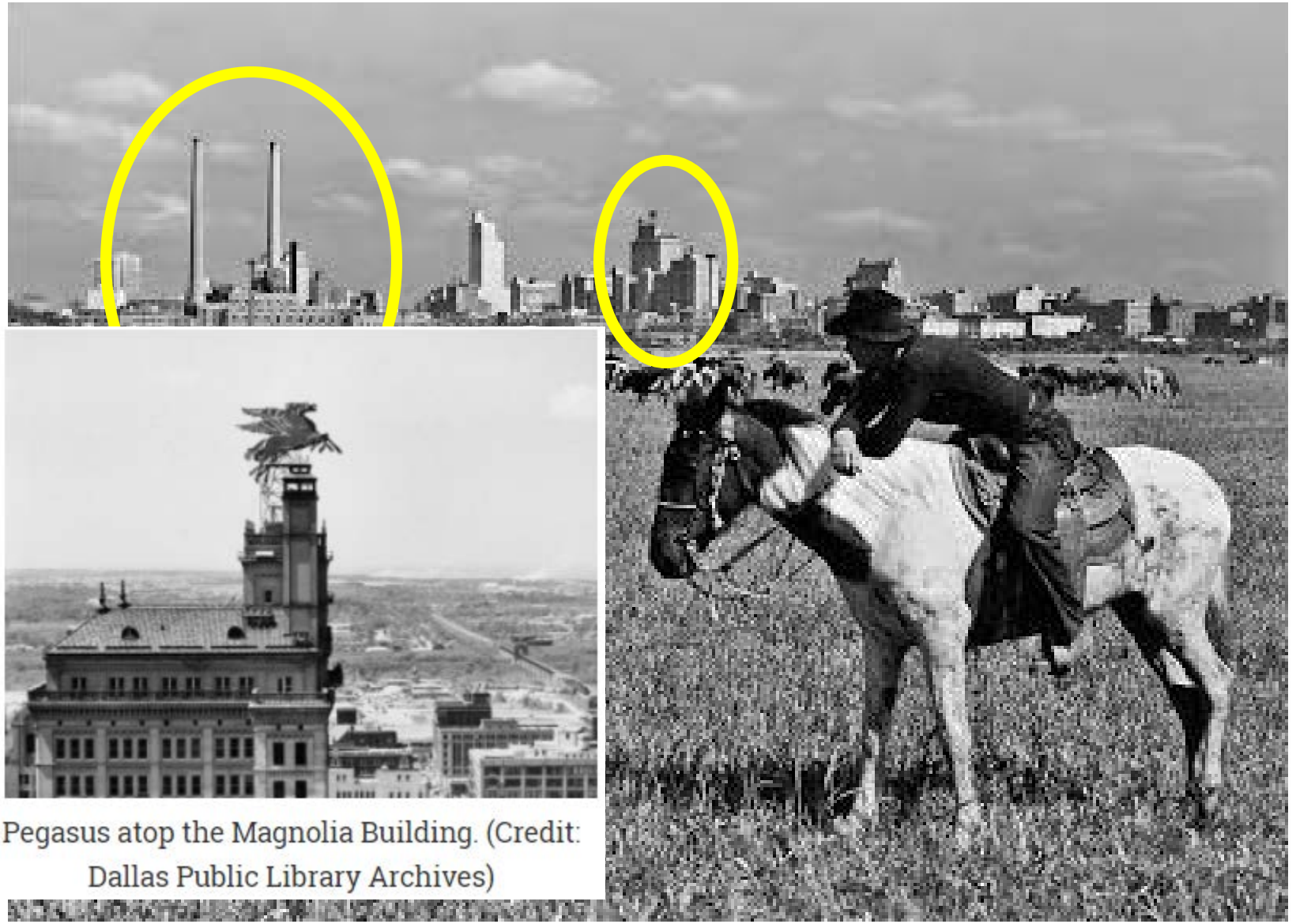
- Private lands provide "ecosystem services" or public benefits to communities
  - Clean water,
  - Clean air
  - Carbon sequestration
  - Recreation

- Disturbances or alterations to functioning landscapes can lead to degradation or loss of "ecosystem services"





Texas Population
3.9 Million

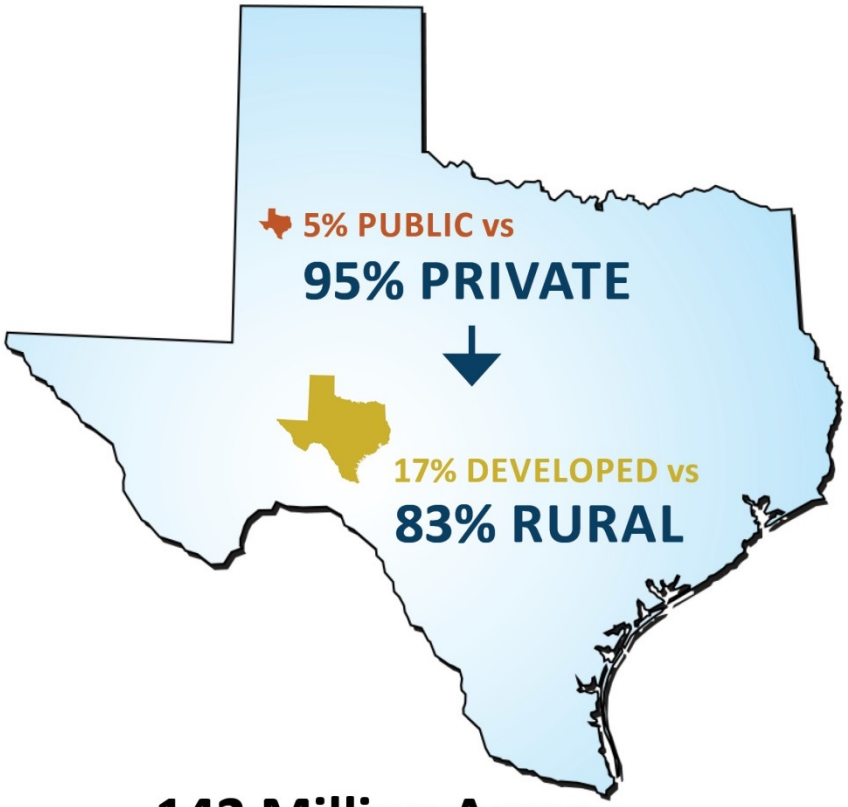


Pegasus atop the Magnolia Building. (Credit: Dallas Public Library Archives)

A cowboy overlooks the Dallas skyline in 1945. This photo was taken by William Langley

Changing Texas

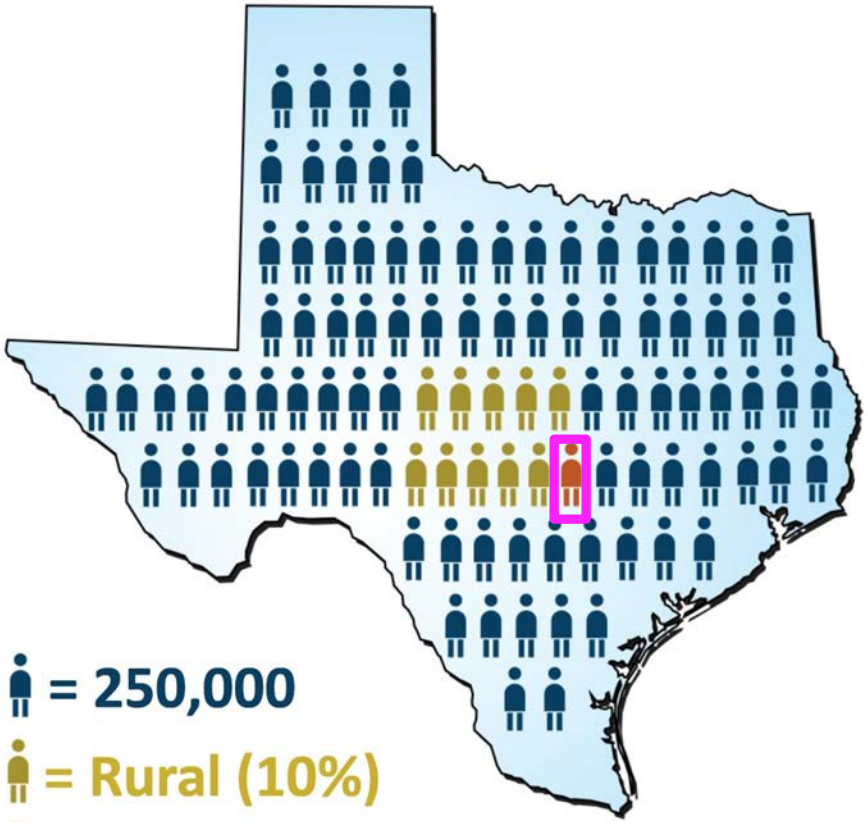
171 Million Acres...



...142 Million Acres

Private Working Lands

29 Million People...



= 250,000

= Rural (10%)

= Landowners (<1%)

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Population Growth…Get Ready for More People!

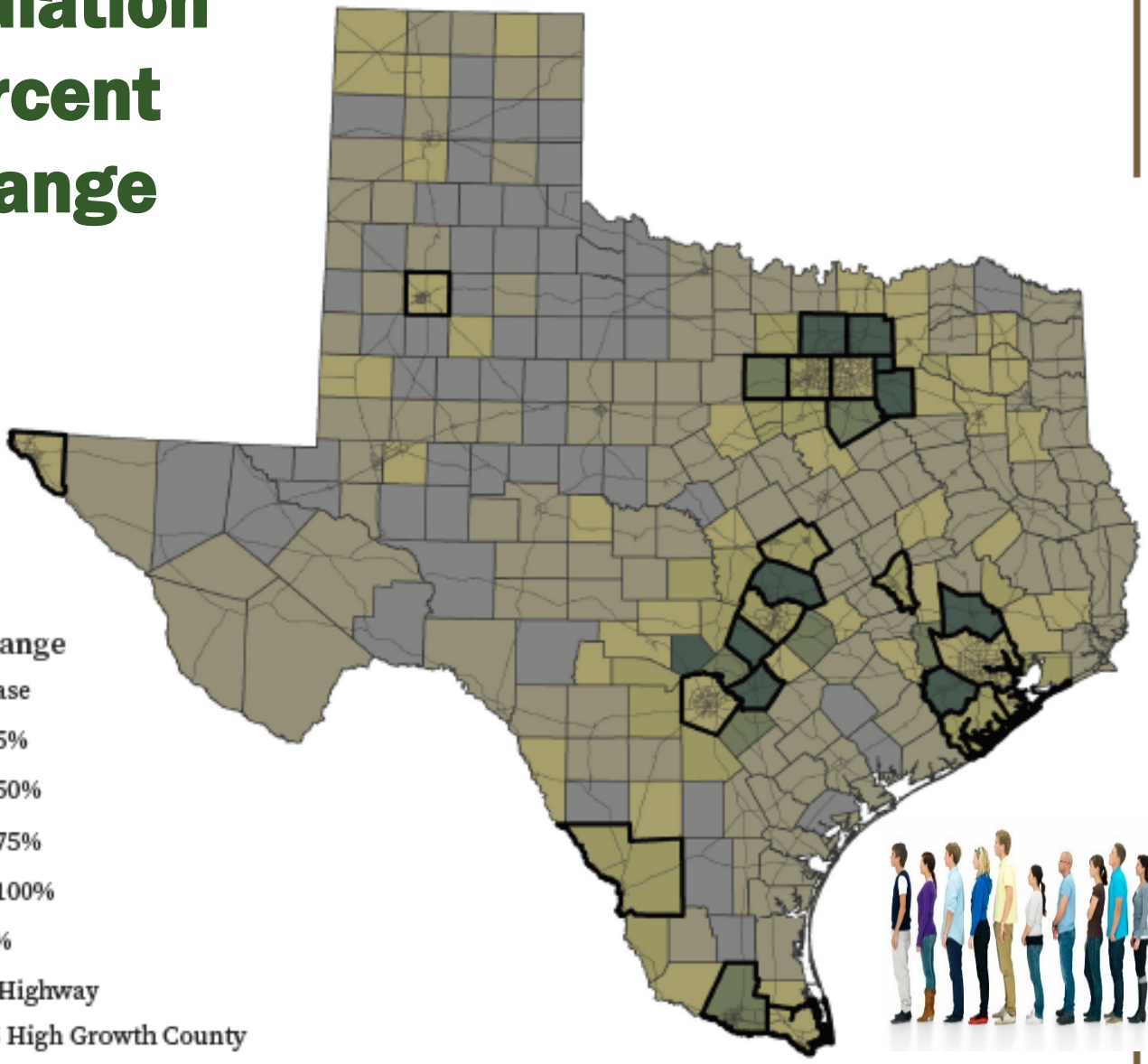
People in Texas

- 1945 = 7M
- 1997 = 19M
- 2017 = 29M

48%

470,000 annually
or
1,287 people/day

Population Percent Change



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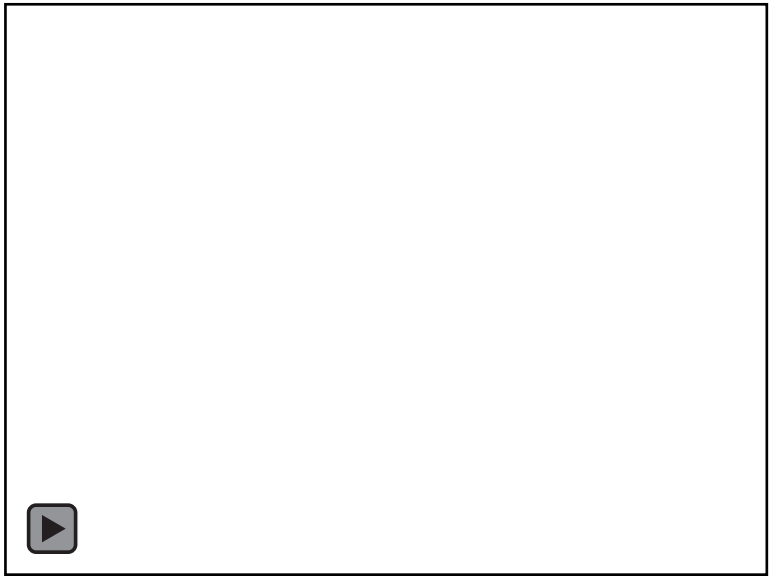
Texas Contains 7 of the 15 Most Rapidly Growing Cities in the Nation

Frisco

McKinney

Round Rock



Sugarland

Midland

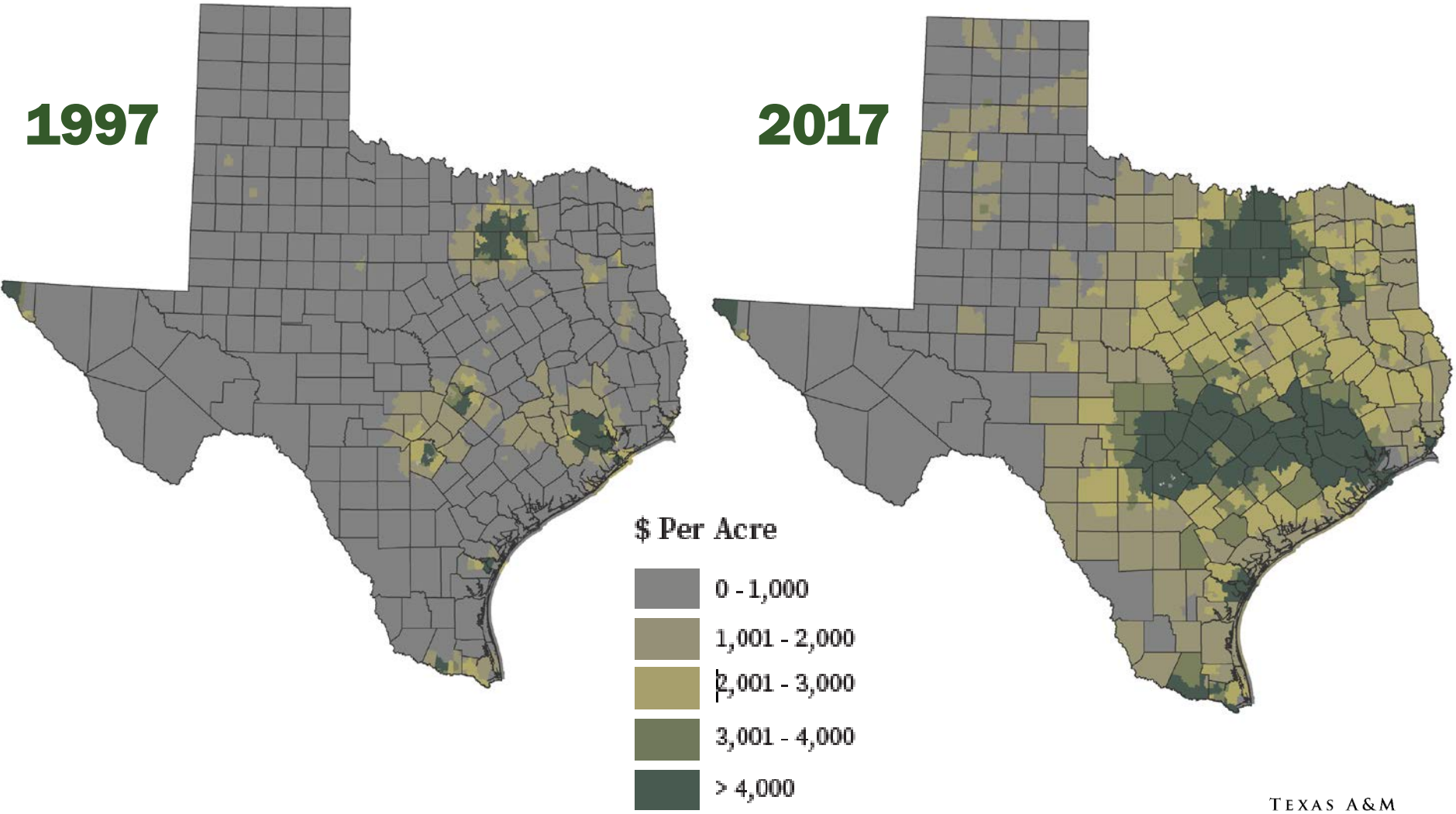
Austin

College Station

Conversion Path for Working Lands

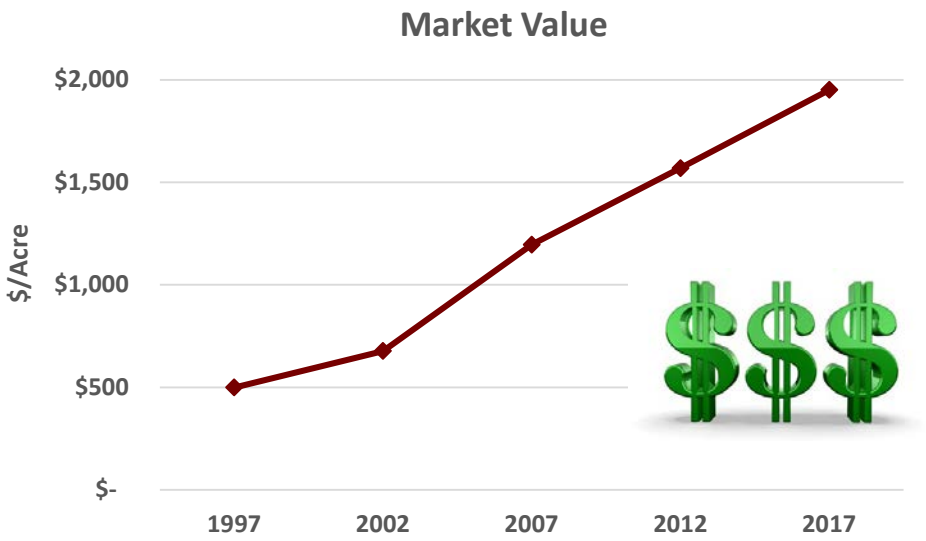
Where it all started: Spindletop in 1908.

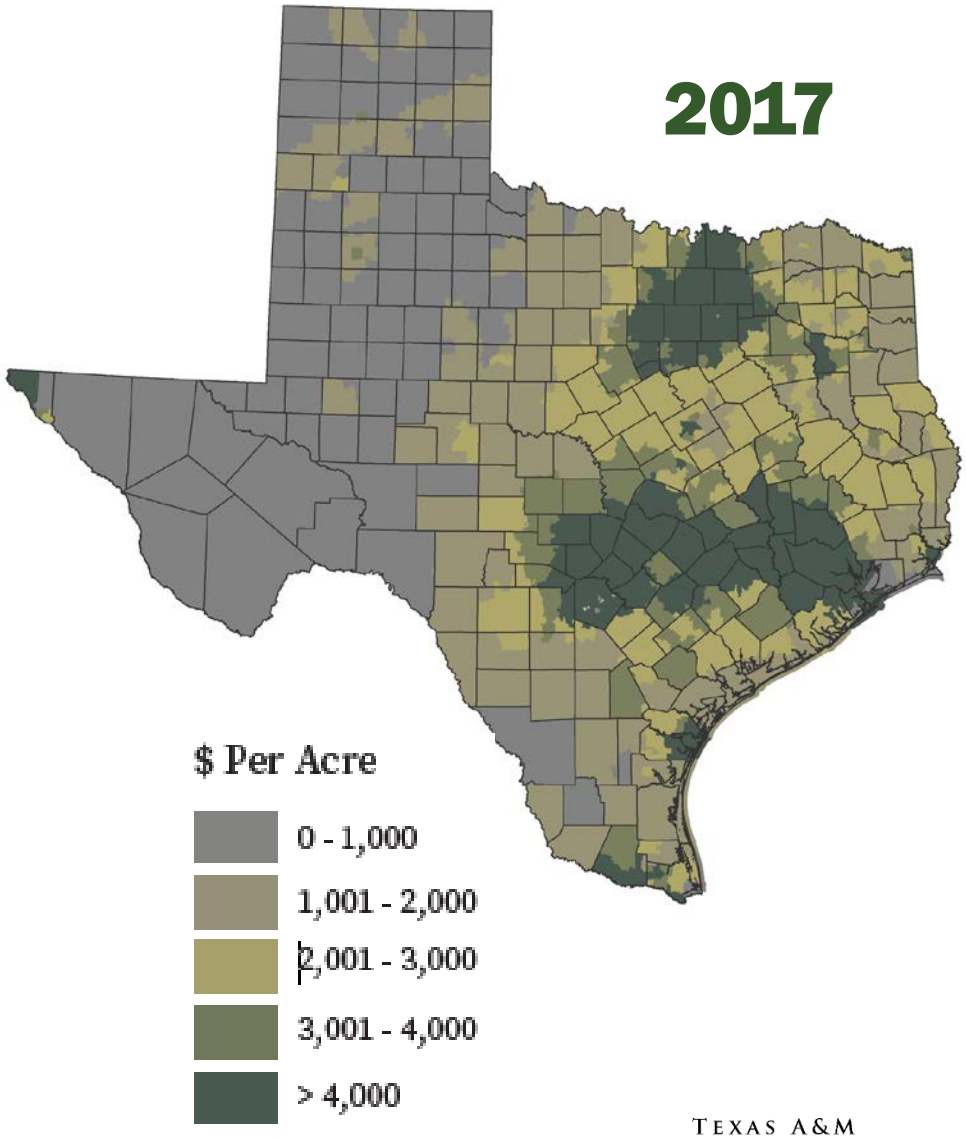
Land Values – Market value $/ac by ISD



Land Value – Market *Driver*

- 1997 – $499/Acre
- 2017 – $1,951/Acre
- Gain of $1,452/Acre





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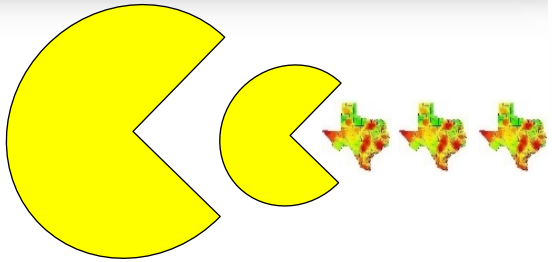
Working Lands – Loss and *Conversion*

- 1997 – 143 Million acres
- 2017 – 141 Million acres
- Loss ~2.2 Million acres



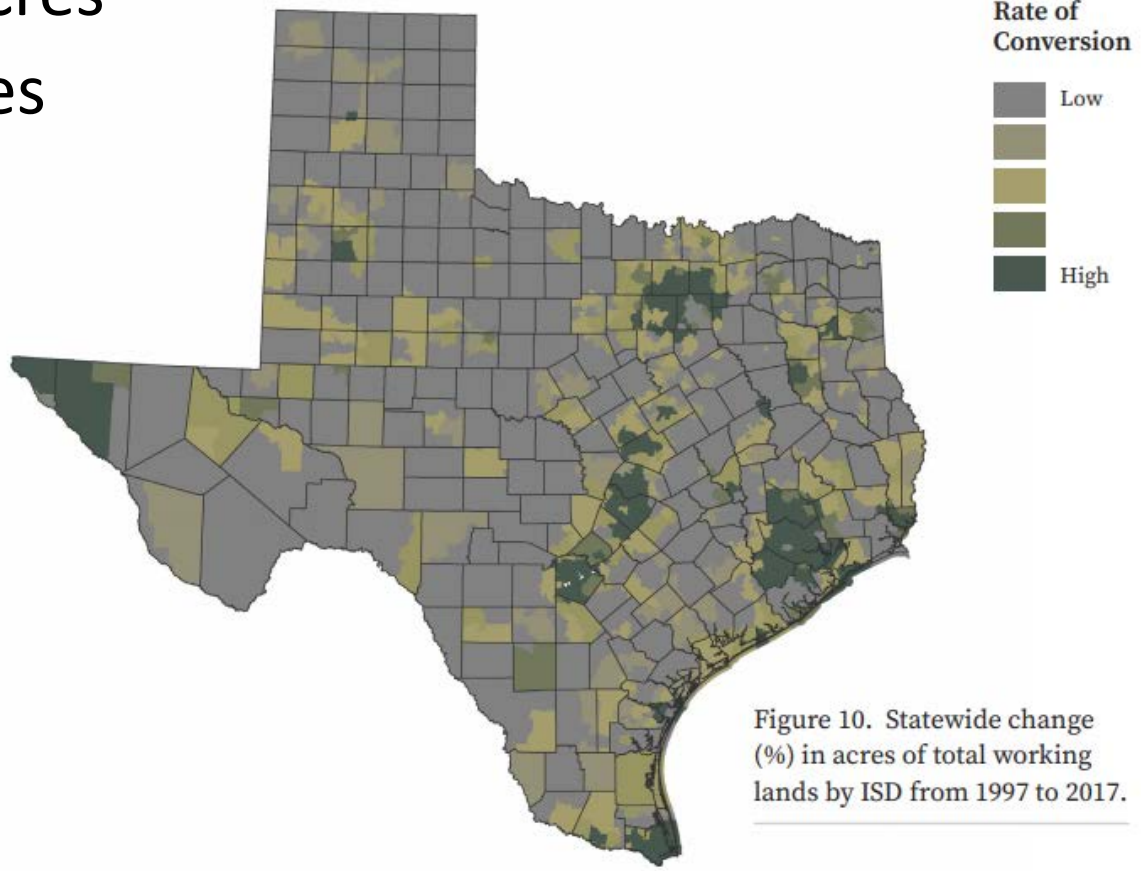
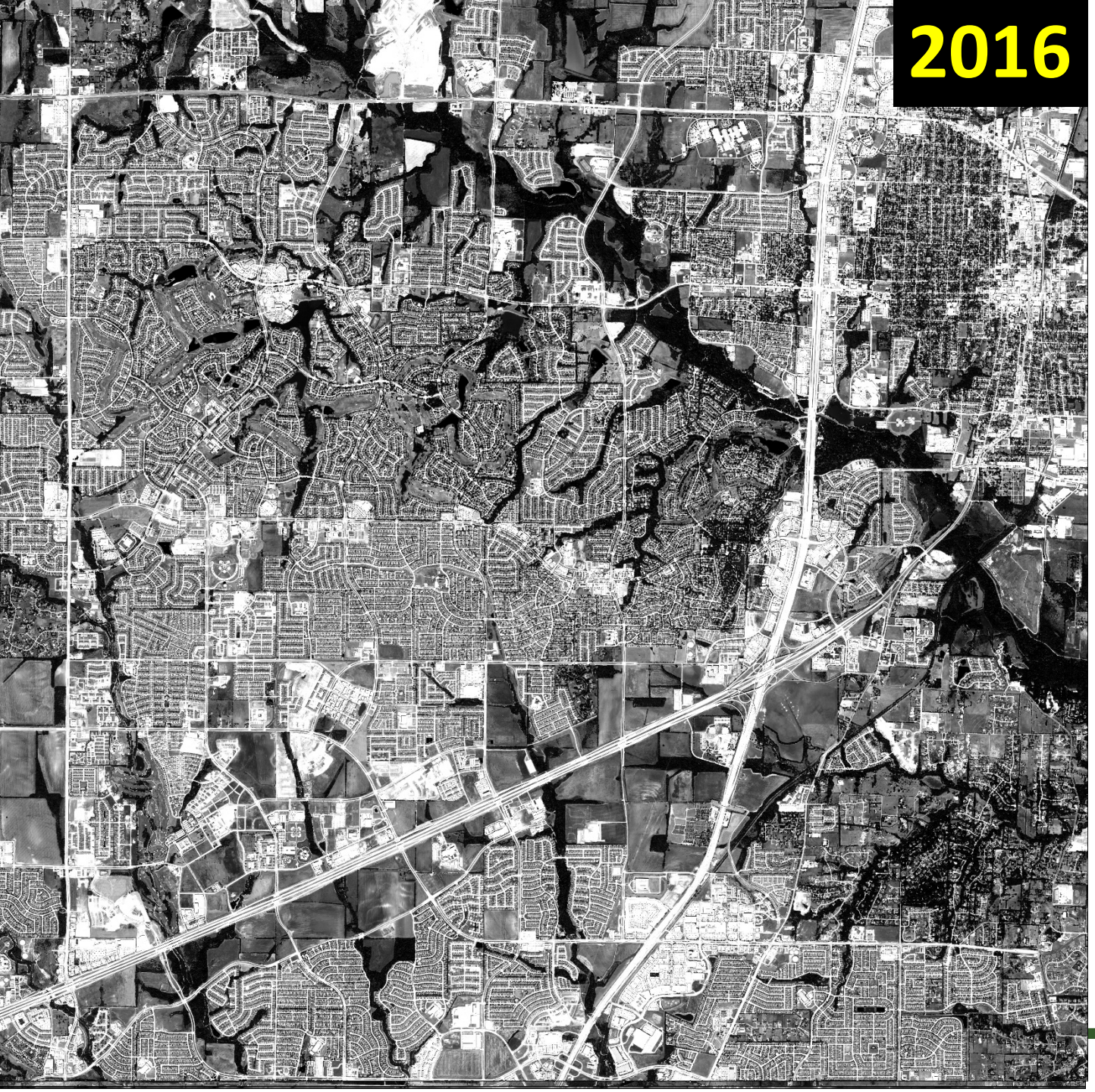


Figure 10. Statewide change (%) in acres of total working lands by ISD from 1997 to 2017.

Texas Land Trends

- From 1997 to 2017, Texas lost approximately 2.2M acres of working lands (i.e., converted to non-agricultural uses)
  - **a decline of nearly 1.2M acres converted in the last 5-year period**



McKinney, Texas

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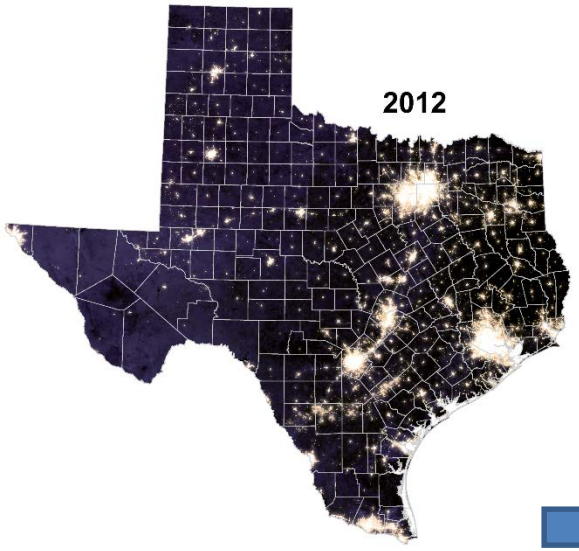
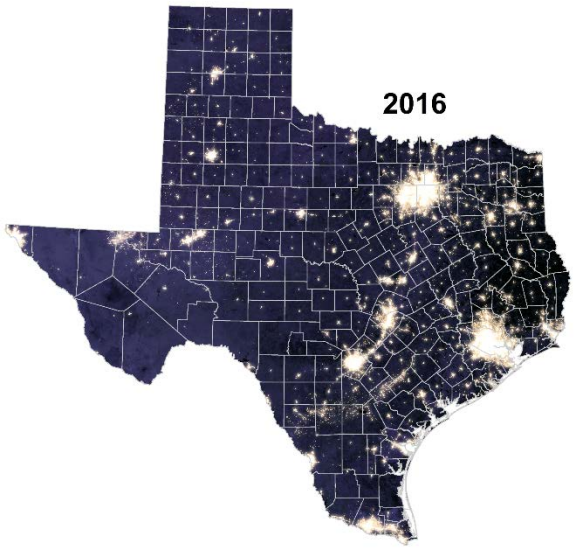
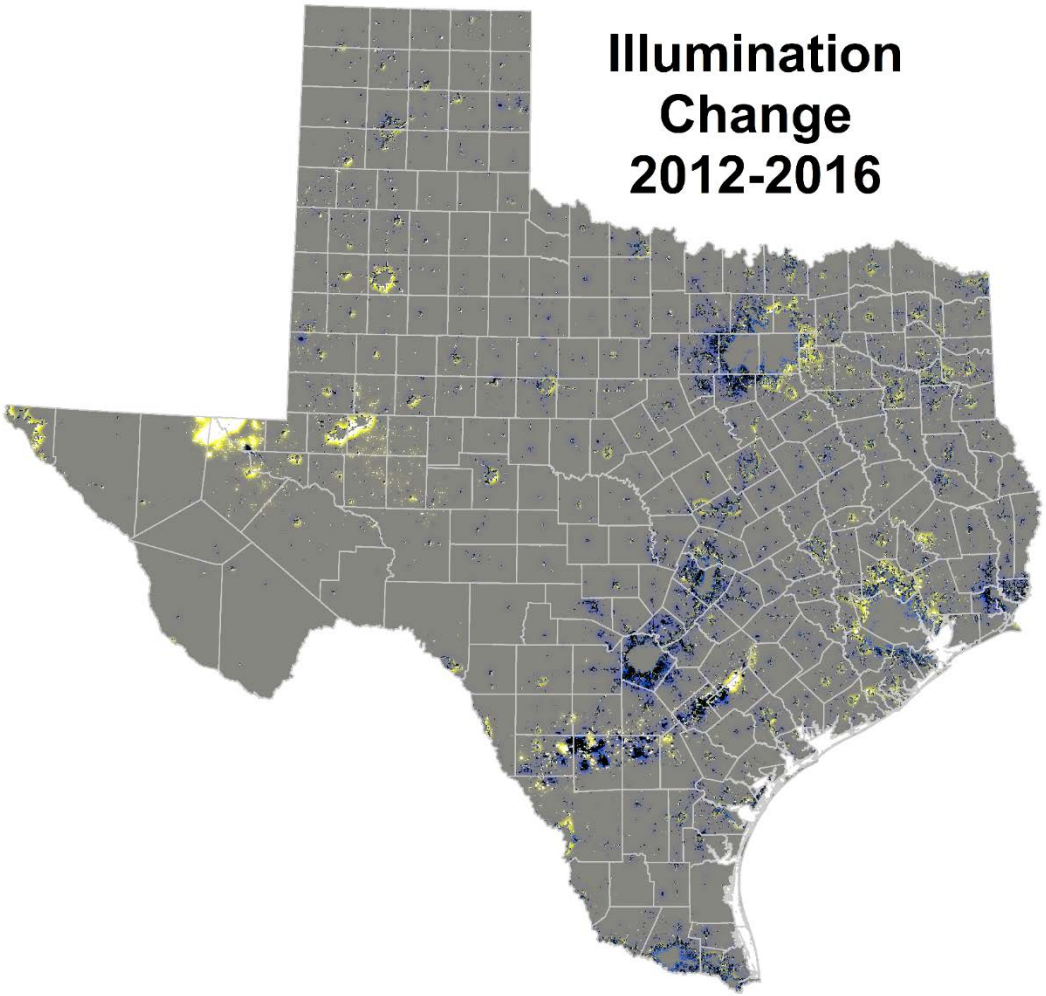
Night Time Illumination







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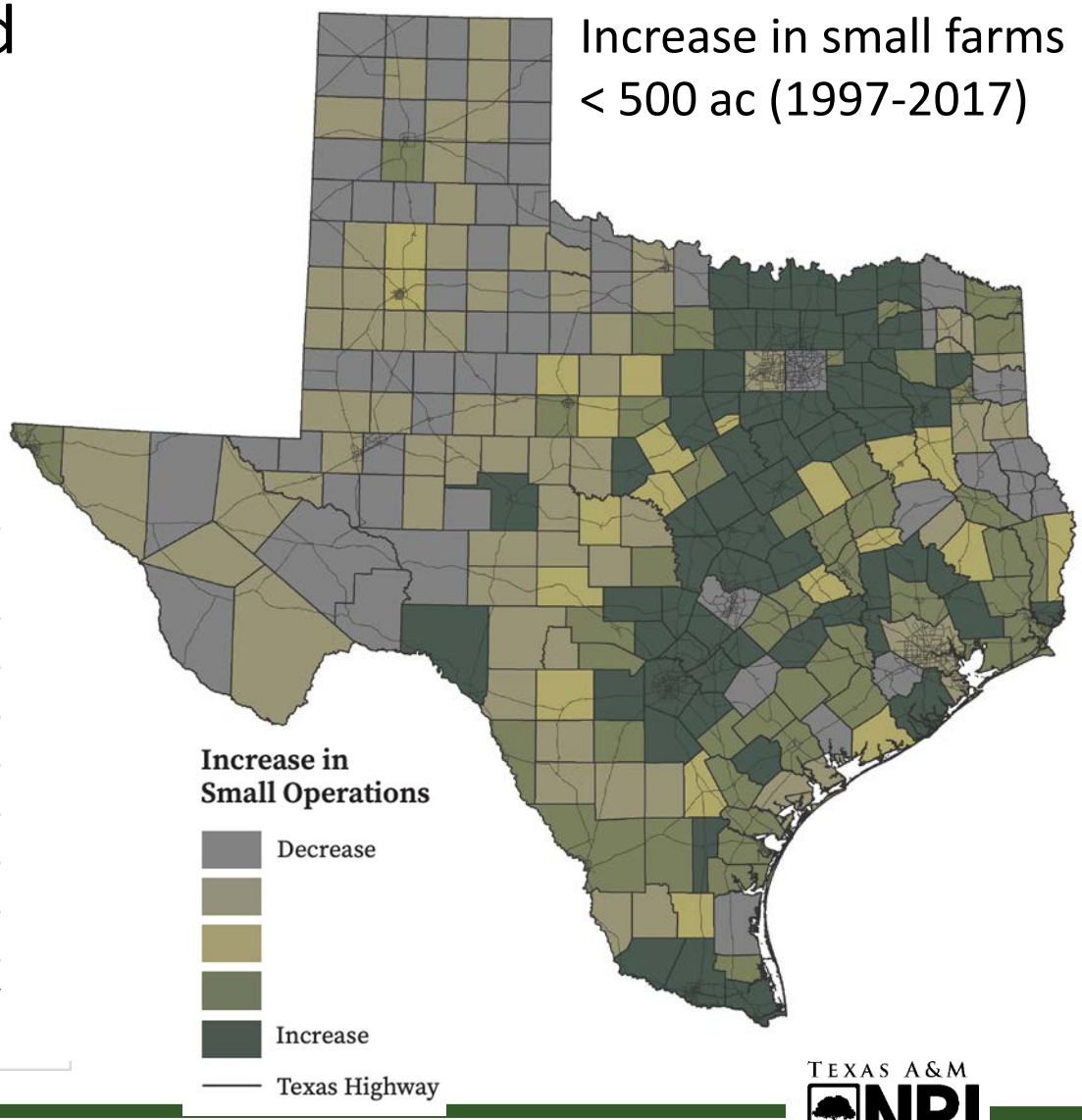
Ownership Size Less Than 500 ac

- 39,000+ *new* farms and ranches (1997-2017)

- ~149,000 operations
  - Accounting for only 4% of all working lands

Increase in small farms < 500 ac (1997-2017)



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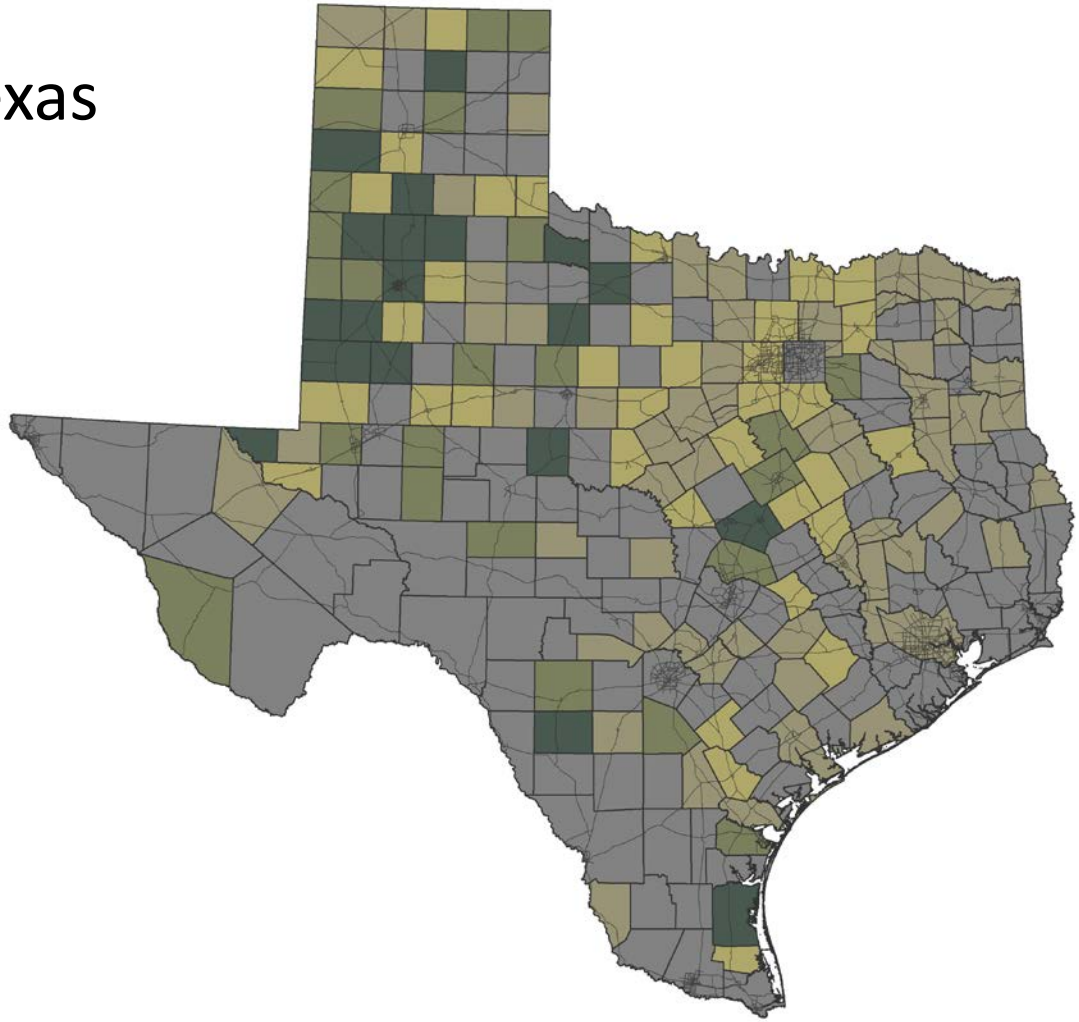
Working Land Consolidation

- Increase in acres of Texas farms and ranches
- Greater than 2,000 ac
- 1997 - 2017



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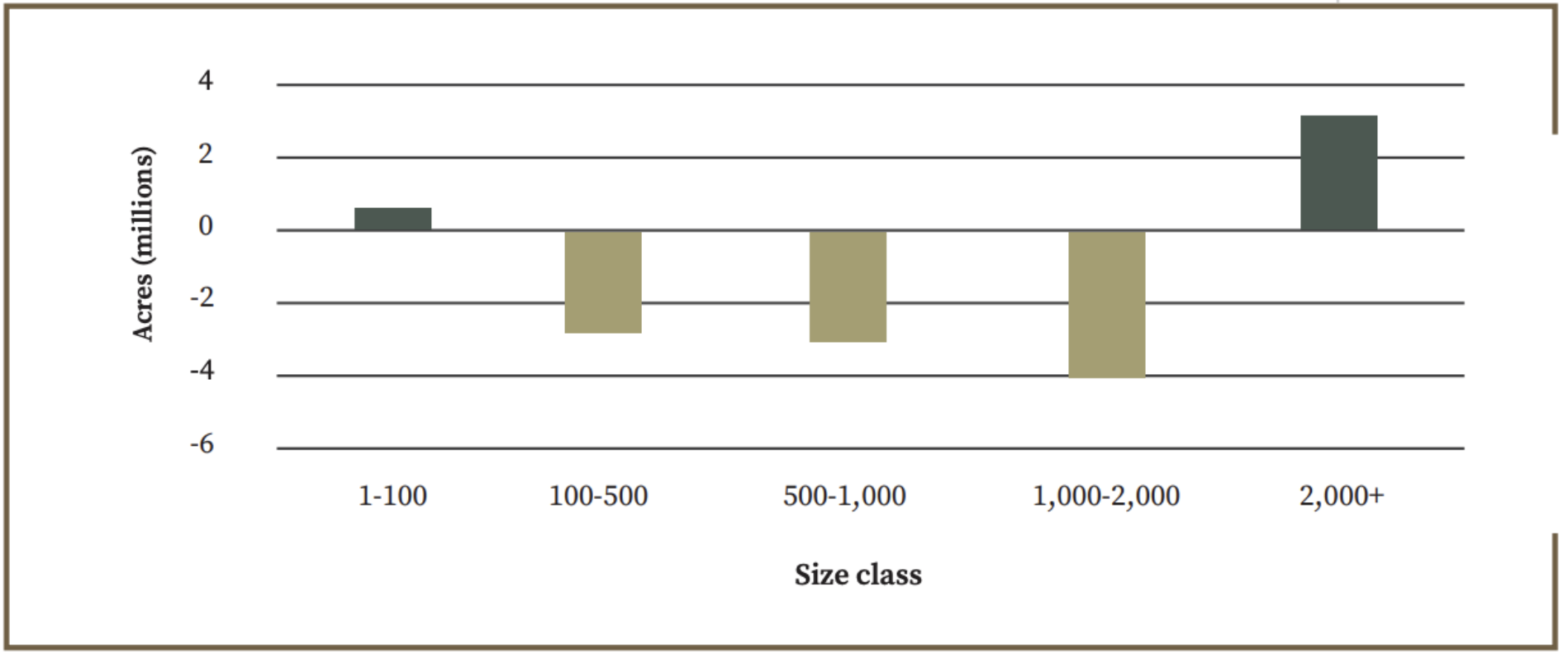
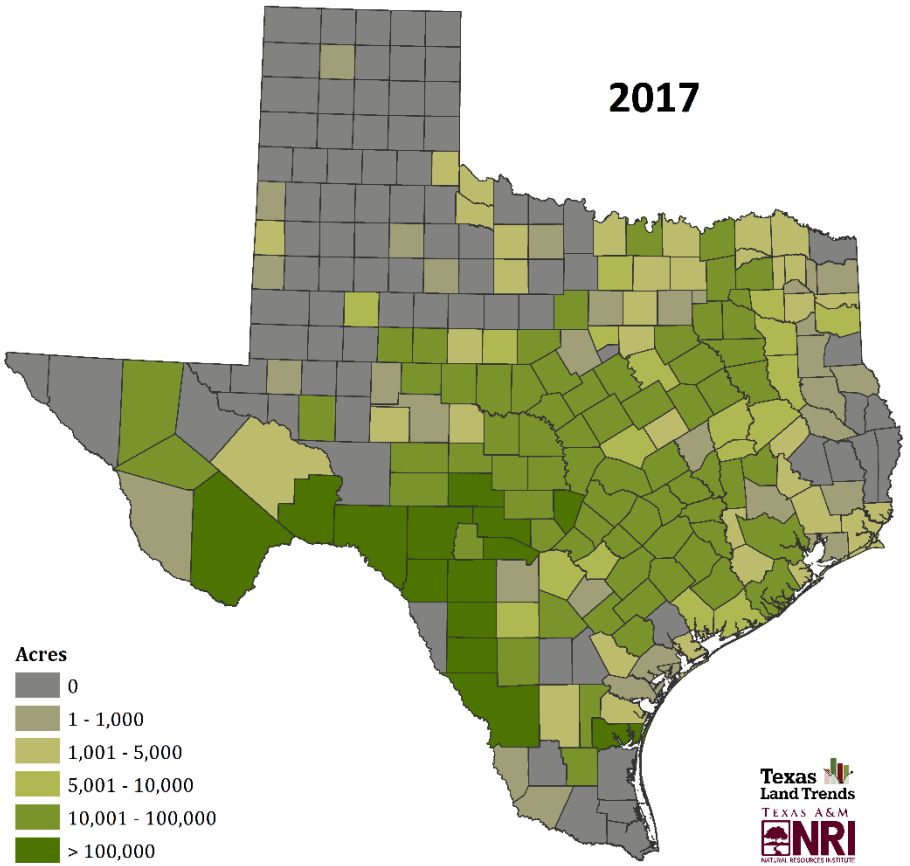
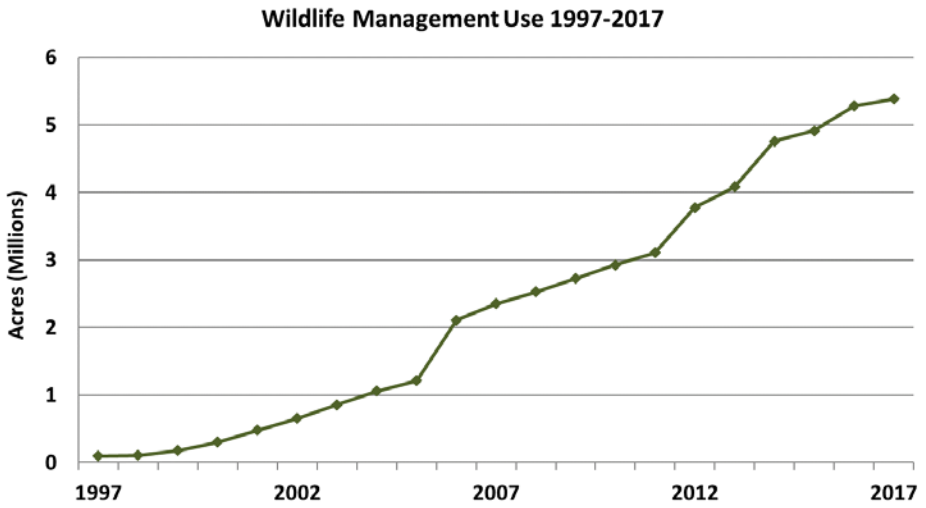


Figure 5. Change in acreage of Texas farms and ranches by ownership size class from 1997 to 2017.

Change to Wildlife Management

Increase to ~5.3M acres





Texas Land Trends
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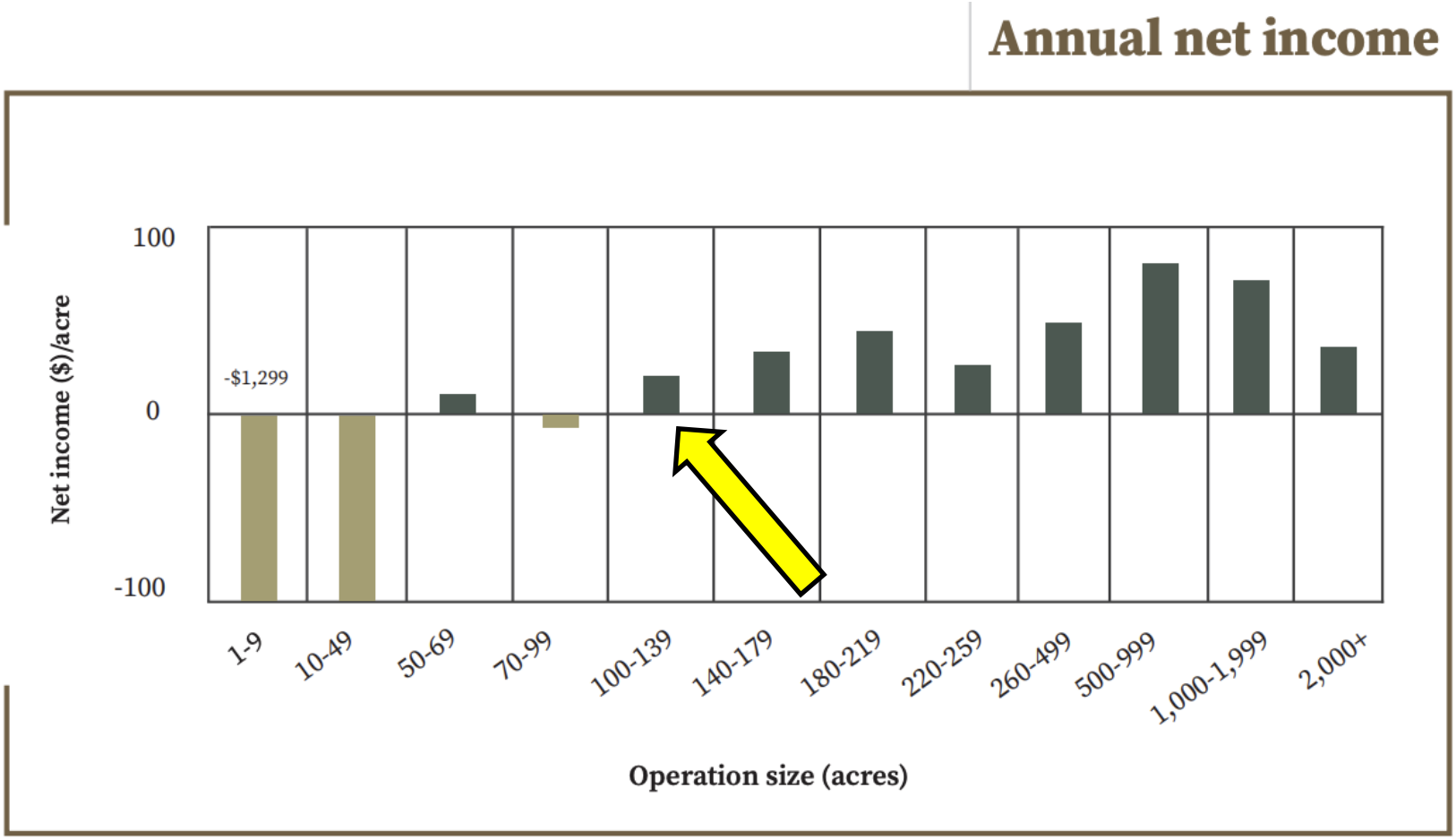
Farm and Ranch Proceeds – *Driver*



Is Economic Loss a Predictor of Land Conversion?

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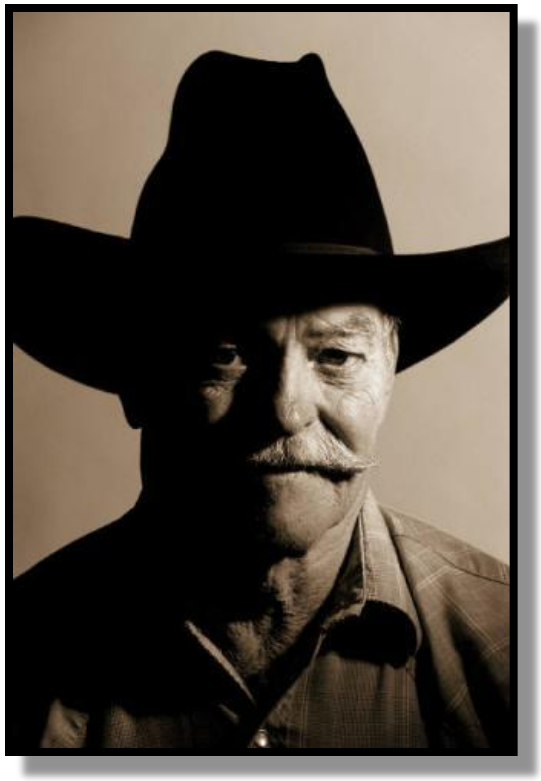
Landowner Demographics

- 2007
  - average farmer was 57 years old
  - forest owners was 65 years old

- During the next 20 years,
  - we will witness the largest intergenerational transfer of rural lands in its history

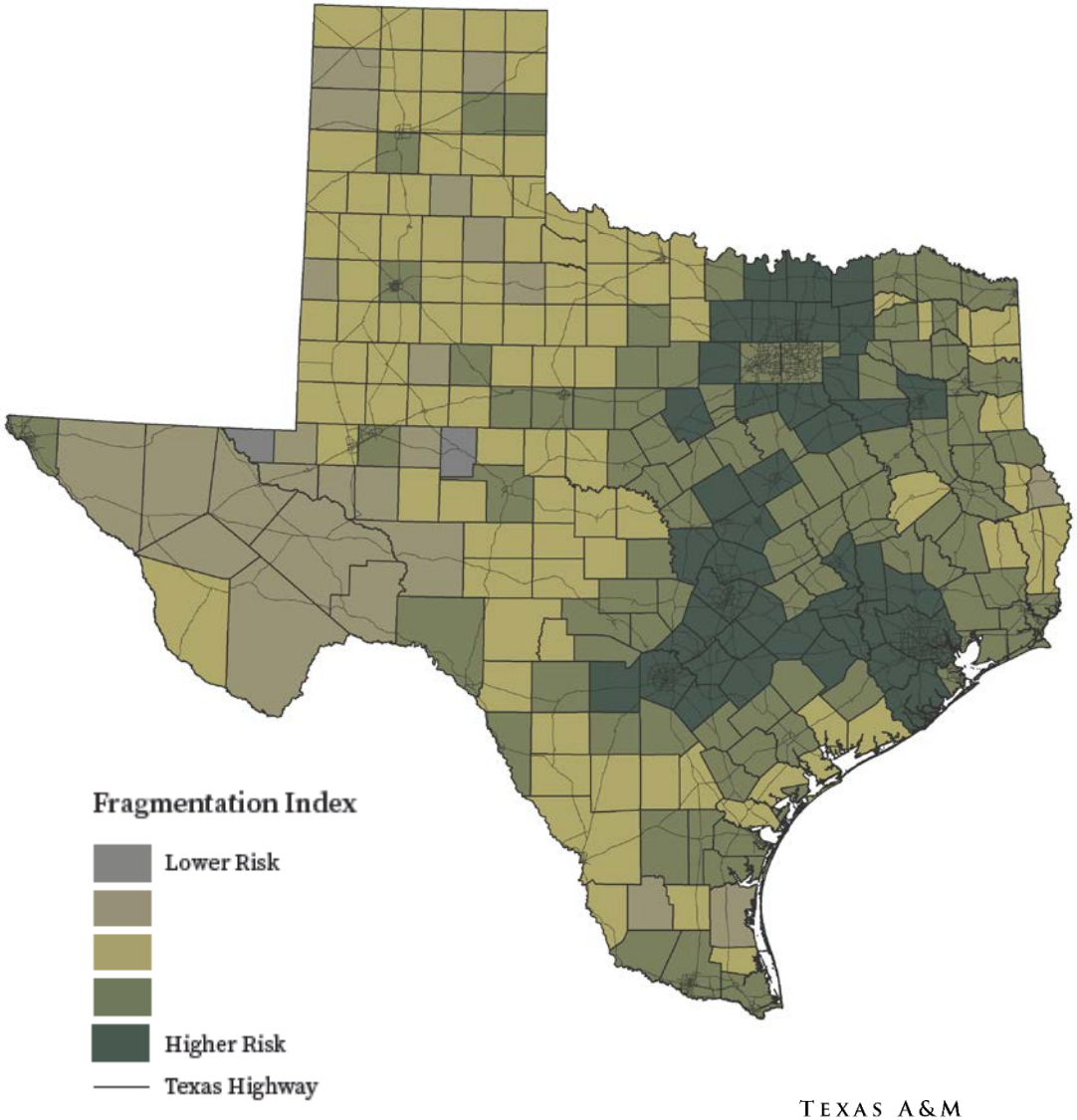


Landowner Demographics

- Future private landowner?
- Younger generation less tied to the land
- Concerns - estate taxes on holdings
- Buyers/developers who want to make a better return on their investments than farming or ranching can provide

Working Land Fragmentation Risk

- Profitability
- Ecosystem integrity
- Rural Communities



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Final Thoughts…

- **More People** – Increasing human population, shifts in ethnicity and urban residents

- **Impacts to Farms and Ranches** – Loss of working lands, fragmentation and conversion BUT not in all places…

- **Changing Landowner Perspectives** – Aging landowners, different objectives, largest intergenerational transfer.

- Communicate the *public* benefits of *private lands*…

Promoting Private Lands Stewardship through Research, Education, and Policy.

Texas Land Trends

http://nri.tamu.edu/

http://txlandtrends.org/