

DATA LOSSES 2002-2007
STATE OF THE NATION'S ECOSYSTEMS
(BASED ON GAO REPORT AND RECENT USGS/NLCD INFORMATION)

**23 INDICATORS WILL BE AFFECTED BECAUSE DATA SOURCES WILL BE *UNABLE TO PROVIDE*
CONSISTENT DATA FOR THE 2007 REPORT**

Note: This list includes two programs listed as not providing data by GAO (i.e., USGS NAWQA and USGS NASQAN) and one for which more recent information indicates that GAO's assessment was overly optimistic, when in fact data will not be available (USGS EROS-NLCD)

National Water Quality Assessment (USGS NAWQA)—9 indicators affected because reliance upon fewer monitoring sites will limit data coverage:

- Movement of Nitrogen (Core National Indicator)
- Nitrate in Farmland Streams and Groundwater
- Phosphorus in Farmland Streams
- Pesticides in Farmland Streams and Groundwater
- Nitrate in Forest Streams
- Phosphorus in Lakes, Reservoirs, and Large Rivers
- Nitrate in Urban and Suburban Streams
- Phosphorus in Urban and Suburban Streams
- Chemical Contamination (Urban / Suburban)

1 indicator affected because some data are no longer collected (e.g., contaminants in fish tissue and streambed sediments):

- Chemical Contamination (Core National Indicator)

National Stream Quality Accounting Network (USGS NASQAN)—1 indicator affected because reliance upon fewer monitoring sites (from ~400 down to 35) will greatly reduce data coverage:

- Movement of Nitrogen (Core National Indicator) (*also listed above*)

Geographic Analysis & Monitoring Program (USGS Geography Discipline, National Land Cover Dataset)—10 indicators affected because delays in production of National Land Cover Dataset are more significant than were known at time of GAO inquiry. USGS indicates that “budget cuts and reliance on partner funding have impacted delivery dates, spatial coverage, and QA/QC functions for NLCD. In addition, reliance upon partners for funding makes the program inherently unstable.” Additional delays in Landsat continuity mission may affect longer term data provision as well:

- Ecosystem Extent (Core National Indicator)
- Plant Growth Index (Core National Indicator)
- The Farmland Landscape
- Forest Types
- Forest Pattern and Fragmentation
- Extent of Freshwater Ecosystems
- Altered Freshwater Ecosystems
- Area of Grasslands and Shrublands
- Area of Urban and Suburban Lands
- Patches of Forest, Grasslands and Shrublands, and Wetlands (Urban / Suburban)

(Three additional indicators noted below were not reported in 2002, but likely could be reported in 2007 if data were available.)

- Shape of “Natural” Patches in the Farmland Landscape
- Fragmentation of Farmland Landscapes by Development
- Total Impervious Cover in Urban/Suburban Areas

2 INDICATORS MAY BE AFFECTED BECAUSE GAO CONCLUDES THERE IS *UNCERTAINTY* THAT DATA SOURCES WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE CONSISTENT *DATA* FOR THE 2007 REPORT

National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (USDA Forest Service)—*2 indicators affected because overall budgetary uncertainty may reduce program scope, timing, etc. Uncertainty exists for longer term future as well (note that 3 other indicators would rely on similar data, however, these data have not yet been available):*

- Outdoor Recreation (Core National Indicator)
- Recreation in Forests

10 INDICATORS MAY BE AFFECTED BECAUSE GAO CONCLUDES THERE IS *UNCERTAINTY* THAT DATA SOURCES WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE CONSISTENT *DATA* BEYOND 2007

National Ocean Service (NOAA)—*1 indicator potentially impacted because budget cuts may affect breadth and comprehensiveness of data collection and fieldwork:*

- Shoreline Types (Coasts / Oceans)

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)—*4 indicators potentially impacted because funding cuts or rising costs could result in lower sampling levels and delayed processing and reporting:*

- Production of Food and Fiber and Water Withdrawals (Core National Indicator)
- Commercial Fish and Shellfish Landings (Coasts / Oceans)
- Status of Commercially Important Fish Stocks (Coasts / Oceans)
- Unusual Marine Mortalities

Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program (EMAP)—*3 indicators potentially impacted because funding cuts have affected nature, scope and timing of program. In addition, program is not “operational,” which is required for stable long term data provision:*

- Chemical Contamination (Core National Indicator)
- Contamination in Bottom Sediments (Coasts / Oceans)
- Condition of Bottom-Dwelling Animals (Coasts / Oceans)

National Streamflow Information Program and National Water information System (USGS)—*2 indicators potentially impacted because budget cuts will result in operations at reduced levels. In addition, reliance upon partners makes system inherently unstable:*

- Changing Stream Flows (Fresh Water)
- Number and Duration of Dry Periods in Streams and Rivers (Grasslands / Shrublands)