

The State of the Nation's Ecosystems

www.heinzctr.org/ecosystems



State of the Nation's Ecosystems: Update 2005

Update 2005 is the second Web revision of *The State of the Nation's Ecosystems: Measuring the Lands, Waters, and Living Resources of the United States*. This groundbreaking report was published by The Heinz Center in September 2002 as the first in a series. Fully revised editions of the report will be issued every five years; in the interim, Web-only updates provide updated data for selected indicators that do *not* require custom analyses or extensive preparation as new data become available.

Update 2005 provides new data for 12 indicators—the second update for 11 indicators, and the first update for 1 indicator. Three of the 10 Core National Indicators were updated, and an additional 9 updated indicators provide revised data representing five of the six principal ecosystems (no Forest ecosystem indicators were updated) from all four major indicator categories—System Dimensions, Biological Components, Chemical and Physical Characteristics, and Human Uses. With two exceptions, the new data contained in *Update 2005* demonstrate continuation of existing trends; no major deviations were reported. The first exception—Air Quality (Urban and Suburban Areas)—shows a large decrease in ozone levels for 2003 and 2004. The second exception—Movement of Nitrogen (a Core National Indicator)—presents revised data now showing an increasing trend in the amount of nitrate carried by the St. Lawrence River.

Where appropriate, *Update 2005* notes how these new data affect longer-term trends. The 2007 edition of the State of the Nation's Ecosystems report will incorporate in-depth reviews of the indicators, the methods used to collect and analyze data, and the interpretation of findings.

The indicators listed below have been updated. See the attachment for a summary of changes, or go to the *Update 2005* web site (http://www.heinzctr.org/ecosystems/intro/updates_05.shtml)

Core National Indicators

- Movement of Nitrogen
- Plant Growth Index
- Production of Food and Fiber and Water Withdrawals

Coasts and Oceans

- Commercial Fish and Shellfish Landings

Farmlands

- Total Cropland
- Major Crop Yields
- Monetary Value of Agricultural Production

Fresh Waters

- Waterborne Human Disease Outbreaks
- Water Withdrawals

Grasslands and Shrublands

- Land Use
- Production of Cattle

Urban and Suburban Areas

- Urban Air Quality

*See Following Page for Additional Information on
The State of the Nation's Ecosystems and Update 2005*

Update 2005 was a collaborative effort involving The Heinz Center and eight federal agencies, overseen by the project's multi-stakeholder Design Committee. All agencies and organizations that provided data used in the 2002 report and *Update 2003* were contacted to determine whether data had become available since *Update 2003* was completed.

In producing *Update 2005*, Heinz Center staff worked closely with those experts responsible for managing the various monitoring and data collection programs. For 4 of the 12 updated indicators, the changes included in *Update 2005* go beyond simply providing new data for one or several years. In these instances, *Update 2005* includes revisions by the responsible agencies to data that were included in *Update 2003*. These changes ranged from minor changes to existing data to revision of large portions of a data series.

The following agencies contributed data and staff assistance to *Update 2005*:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Department of Commerce, Bureau of
Economic Analysis
Department of Commerce, NOAA, National
Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

USDA Economic Research Service
USDA Farm Service Agency
USDA National Agricultural Statistics
Service
Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological
Survey

The State of the Nation's Ecosystems is a periodic report on the condition and use of the nation's ecosystems. The report is the product of intensive collaboration between representatives of business, environmental organizations, academia, and federal, state, and local government, and the goal is to provide periodic, high-quality, nonpartisan information to decision makers and opinion leaders.

The first edition of the series was published in 2002, and future editions will be produced every five years, with the next edition due in 2007. Web updates are released in the interim.

The State of the Nation's Ecosystems is available in full text on the Web at no charge. Please inquire about individual review copies. The report is available through the publisher, Cambridge University Press, at www.cup.org.

Additional information on *Update 2005* or on the overall *State of the Nation's Ecosystems* project may be obtained from Robin O'Malley, Program Director, at (202) 737-6307, omalley@heinzctr.org; from Kent Cavender-Bares, Senior Research Associate, at (612) 624-6182, bares@heinzctr.org; or Holly Alyssa MacCormick, Research Assistant, at (612) 626-4055, MacCormick@heinzctr.org.

Web Links

The Heinz Center: www.heinzctr.org

State of the Nation's Ecosystems Project home page: www.heinzctr.org/ecosystems

State of the Nation's Ecosystems report: www.heinzctr.org/ecosystems/report.html

Annual Update 2005: http://www.heinzctr.org/ecosystems/intro/updates_05.shtml

Cambridge University Press: www.cup.org

The Heinz Center, established in 1995 in memory of Senator John Heinz, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan institution dedicated to improving the scientific and economic basis for environmental policy and to developing innovative solutions to environmental problems.