

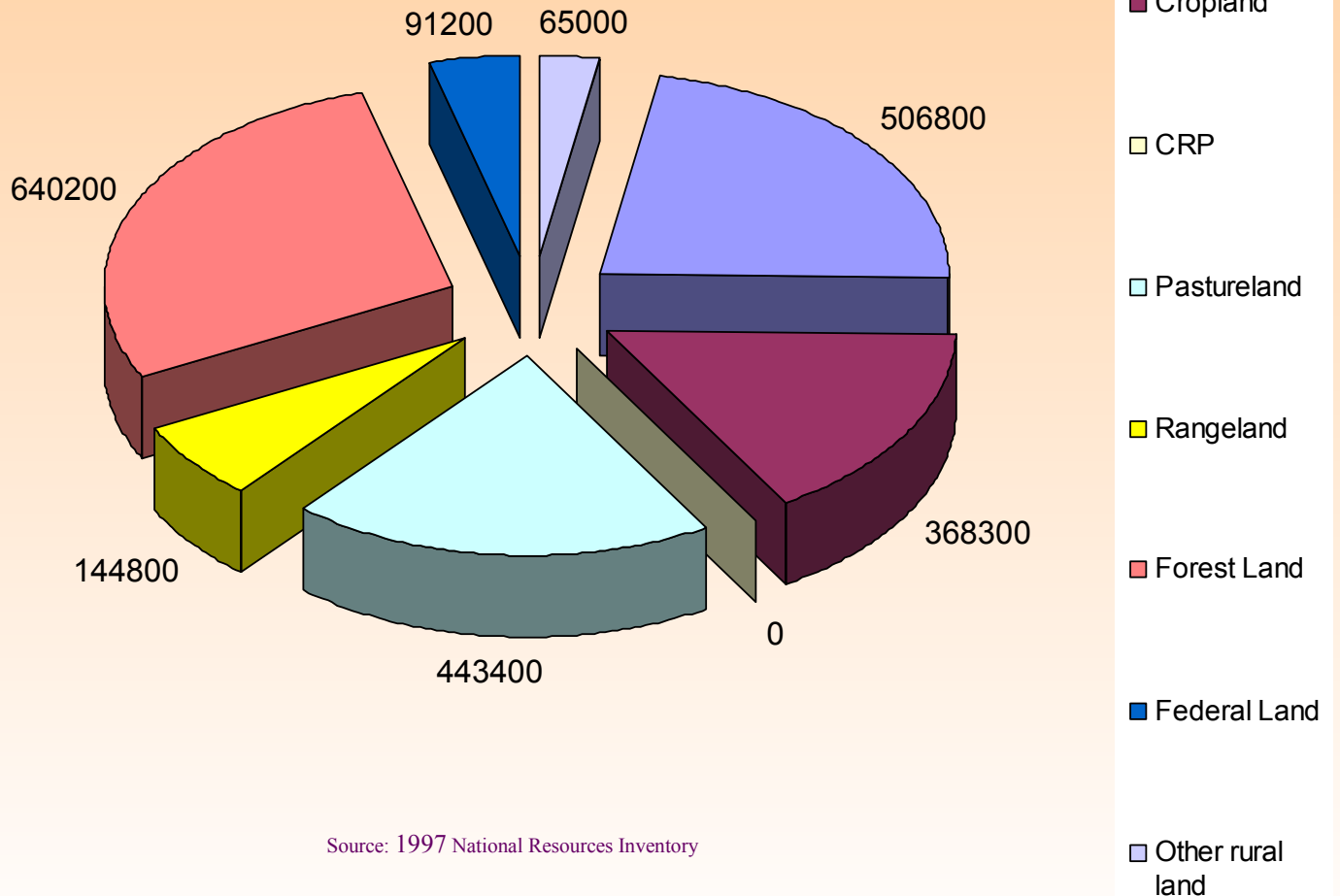


Land Use in the Caribbean Area

The total land and water surface area of the Caribbean Area is 2,307,100 acres. Federal lands and non-federal lands total about 91,200 acres and 2,168,500 acres, respectively.

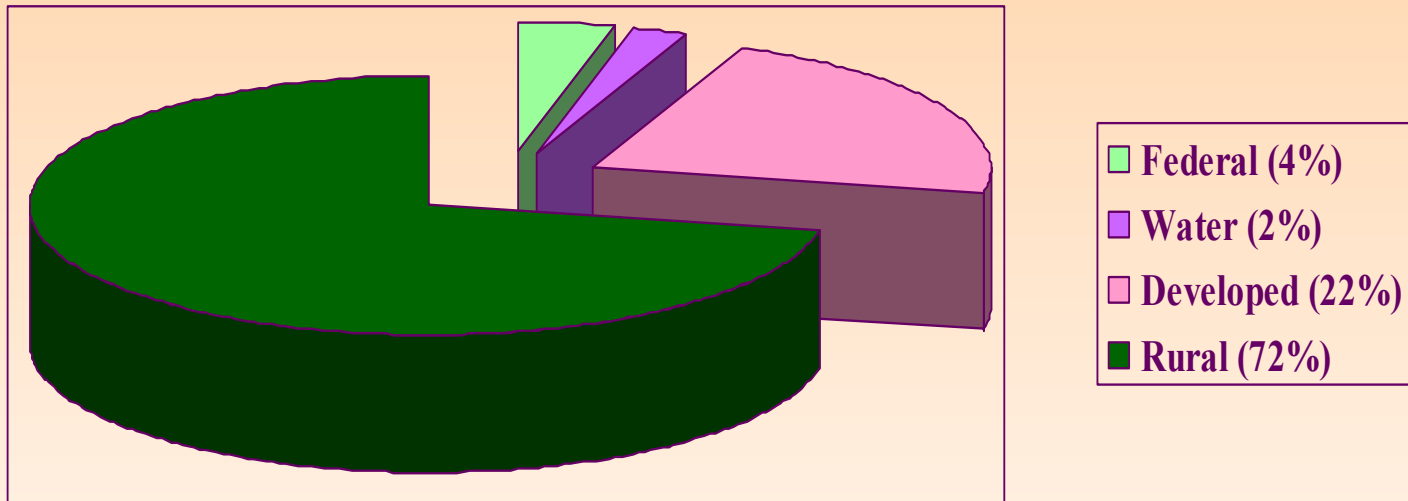
According to the 1997 NRI, since 1982, federal land in the Caribbean Area decreased by 4,800 acres, non-federal rural lands decreased by 229,000 acres, and developed lands increased to 233,100 acres. Crop declined from 407,800 acres to 368,300 acres, for a loss of 39,500 acres. Pastureland and Rangeland also declined with losses of 314,300 acres and 6,000 acres, respectively.

Caribbean Area Land Use in 1997



Source: 1997 National Resources Inventory

1997 Caribbean Area Land Ownership



Source: 1997 National Resources Inventory

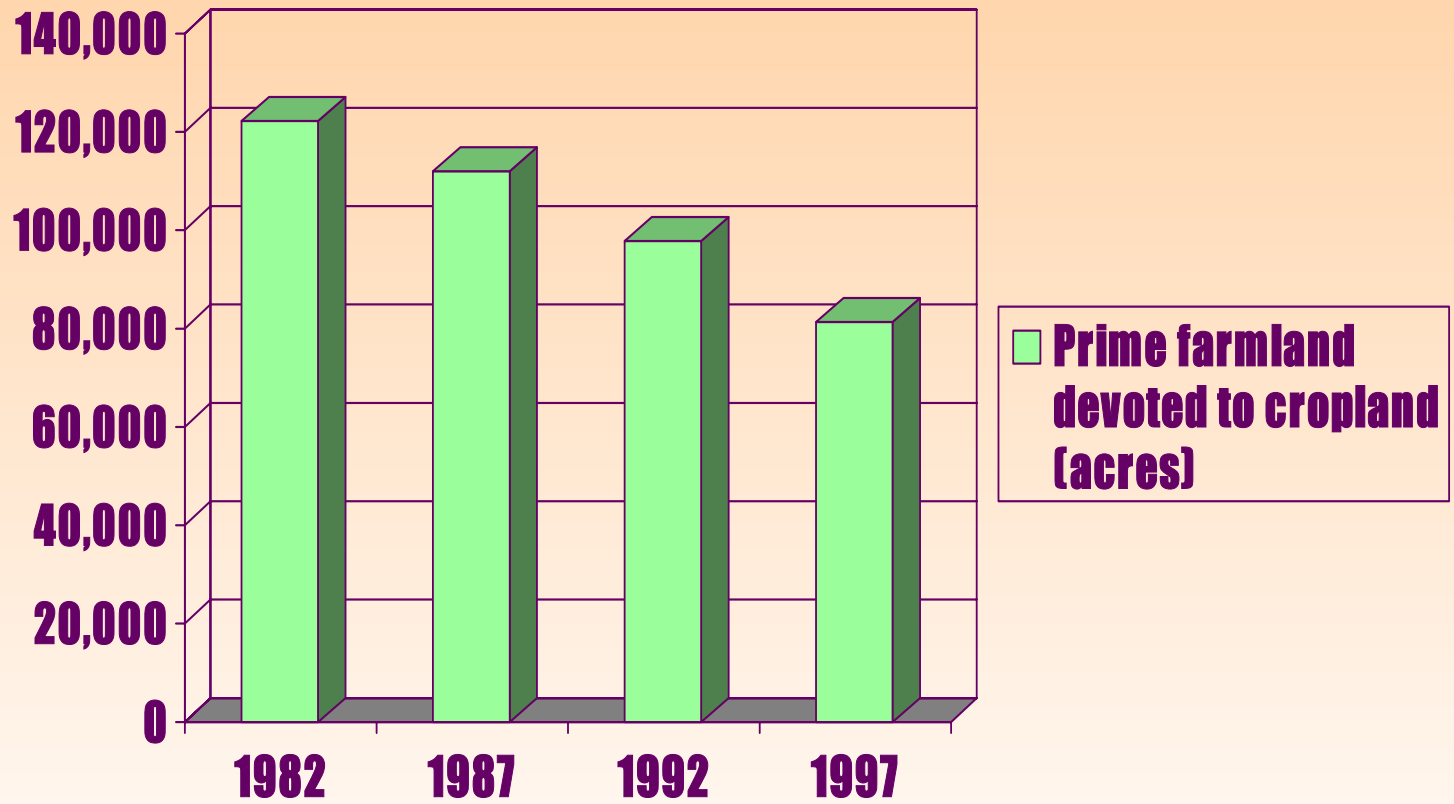
Prime farmland

Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses.

By 1997, total rural land in the Caribbean Area equaled 1,661,700 acres, of which 191,700 acres were classified as prime farmland (11.54%). Prime farmland devoted to cropland decreased by approximately 41,000 acres over the 15 year period from 1982 to 1997.



Decline of Prime farmland



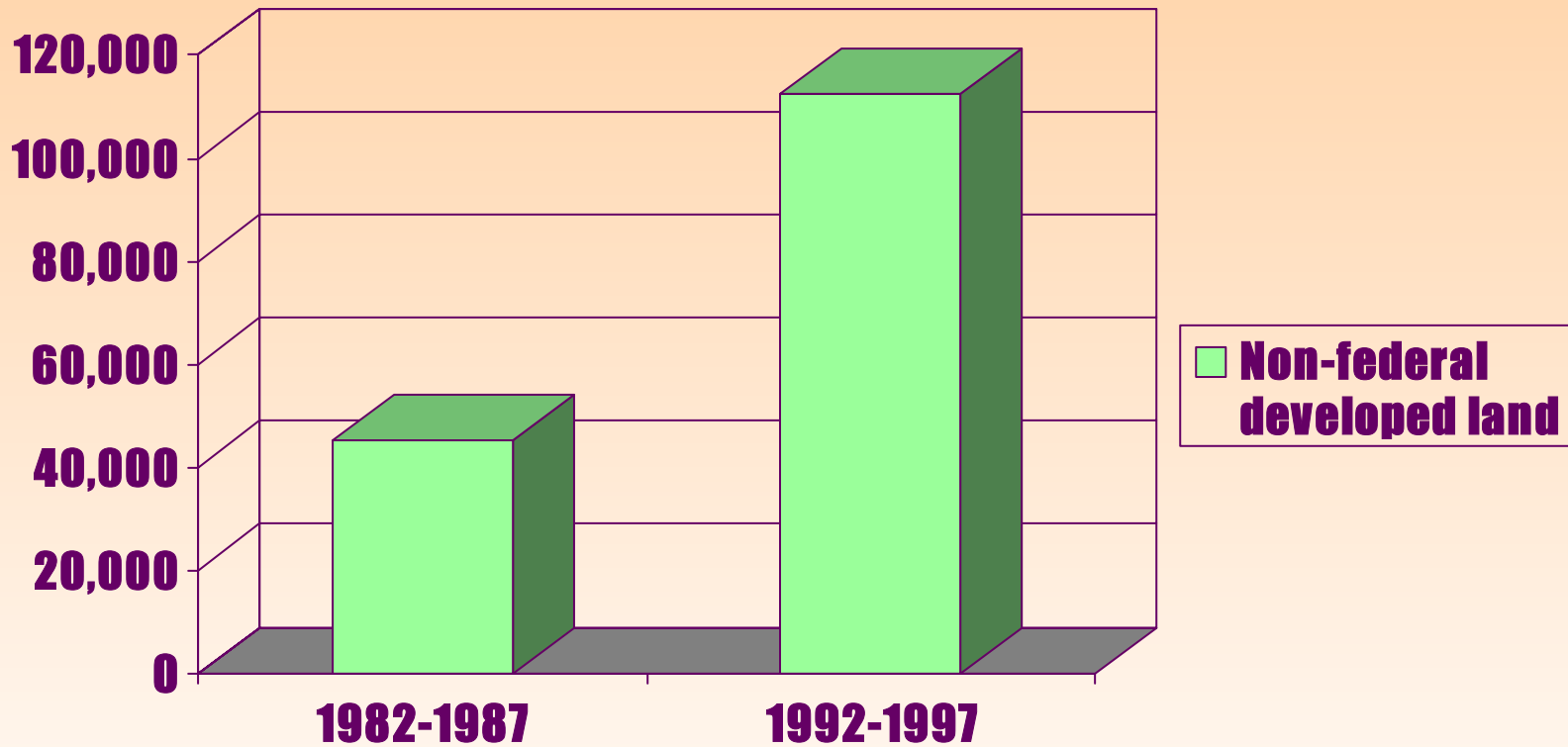
Source: 1997 National Resources Inventory

Land Converted to Development

Acres of developed lands in the Caribbean Area increased by 11 percent from 1982 to 1997, a net increased of 233,100 acres. Developed land conversion is directly related to net loss of cropland and pastureland.

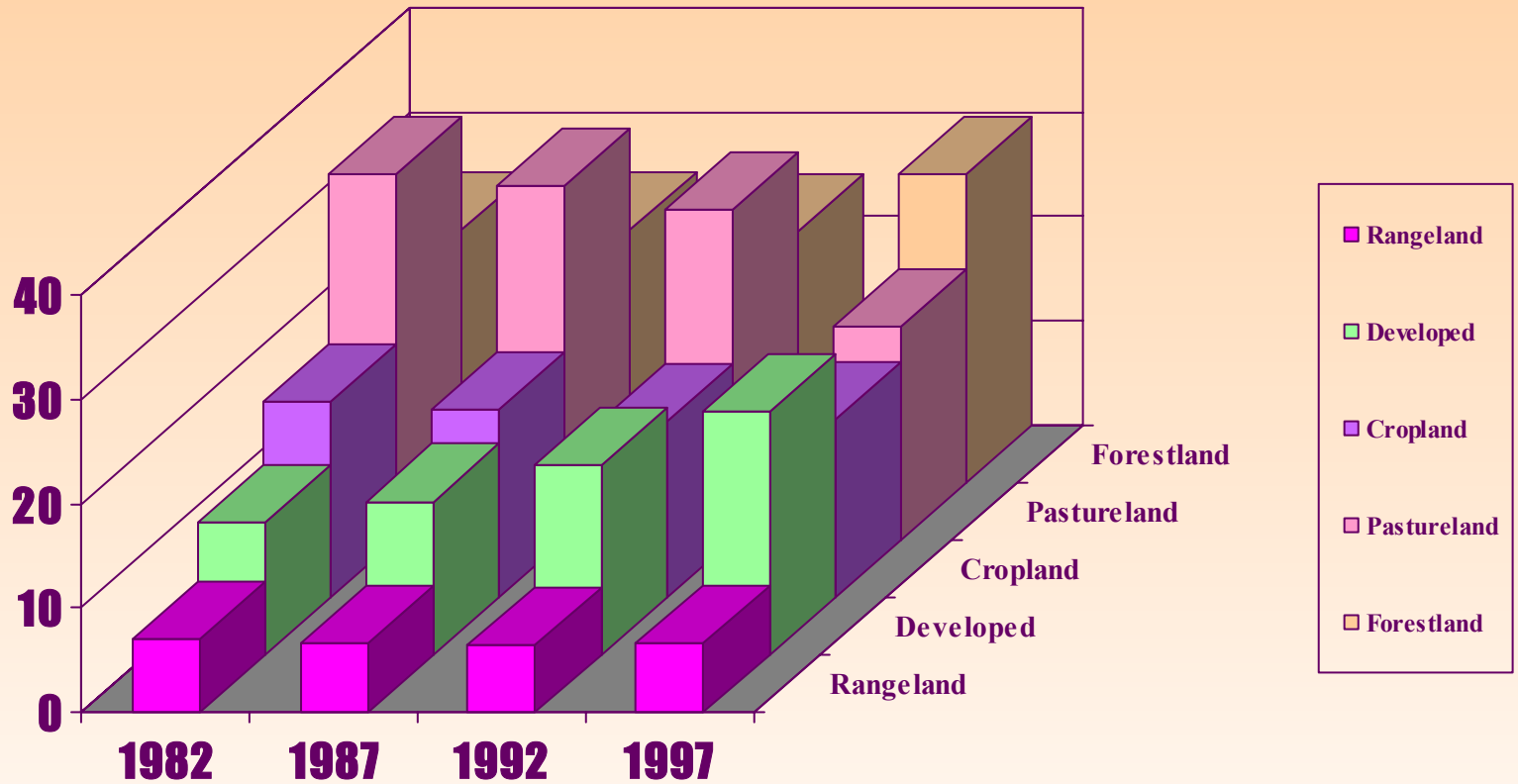


Land Converted to Development



Source: 1997 National Resources Inventory

Percent of total rural land by land use



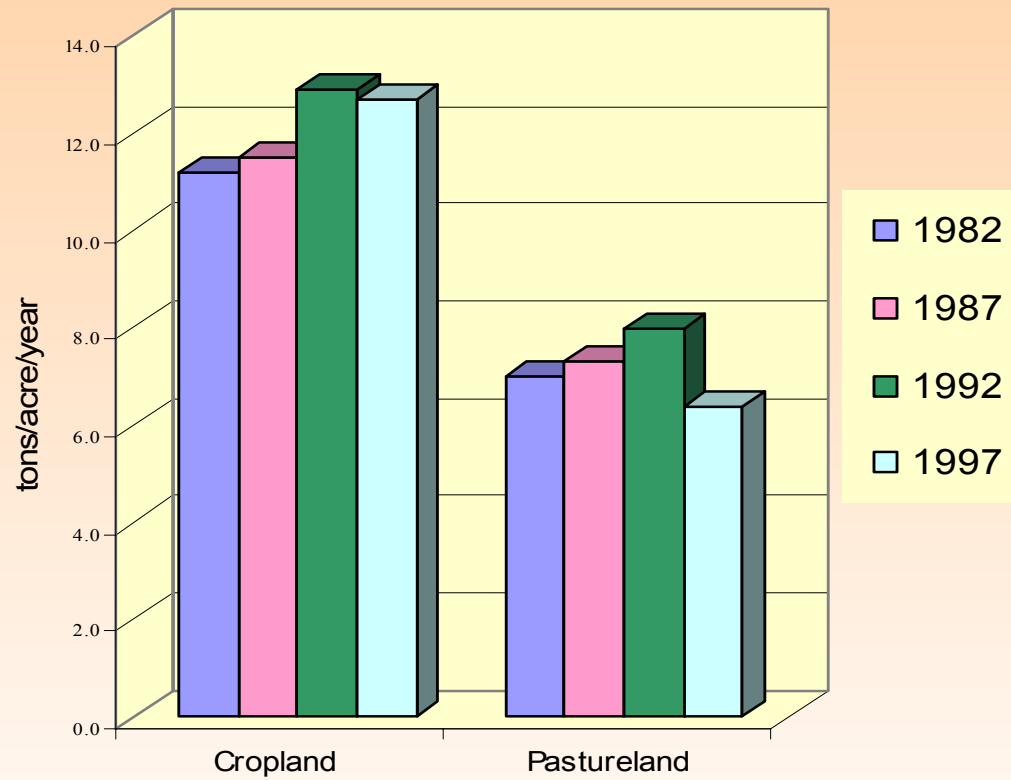
Source: 1997 National Resources Inventory



Soil Erosion

In 1997, the Caribbean Area had approximately 368,300 acres of cropland. The estimated average annual sheet and rill erosion for cropland was 12.7 tons/acre/year. This represents an increase of 1.5 tons/acre/year compared to 1982, but a reduction of 0.2 tons/acre/year compared to 1992.

Erosion Rates by Land Use



Source: 1997 National Resources Inventory