

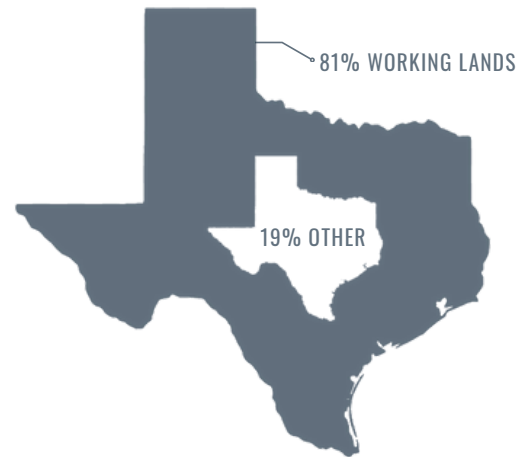


# Changes in Texas Working Lands

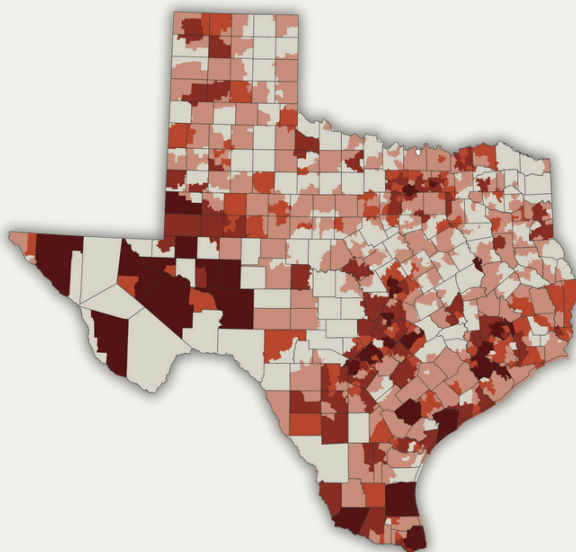


Texas has more than 139 million acres of private working lands, providing economic benefits to rural communities, vital ecosystem services for residents, and habitat for fish and wildlife species. While Texas continues to lead the nation in working land acreage, these lands are undergoing a fundamental change—one that has implications for rural economies, national security, food security, and conservation of water and other natural resources.

Published every five years following the release of the USDA Census of Agriculture data (2022 data recently released), the Texas Land Trends *Status Update and Trends of Texas Working Lands* report is developed to provide public and private decision-makers with information needed to plan for the conservation of Texas’ working lands. The latest iteration provides essential insights into the transformation of land uses, population, land value, and ownership patterns across the state from 1997 to 2022.



**WORKING LANDS:  
PRIVATELY-OWNED FARMS,  
RANCHES, AND FORESTS**

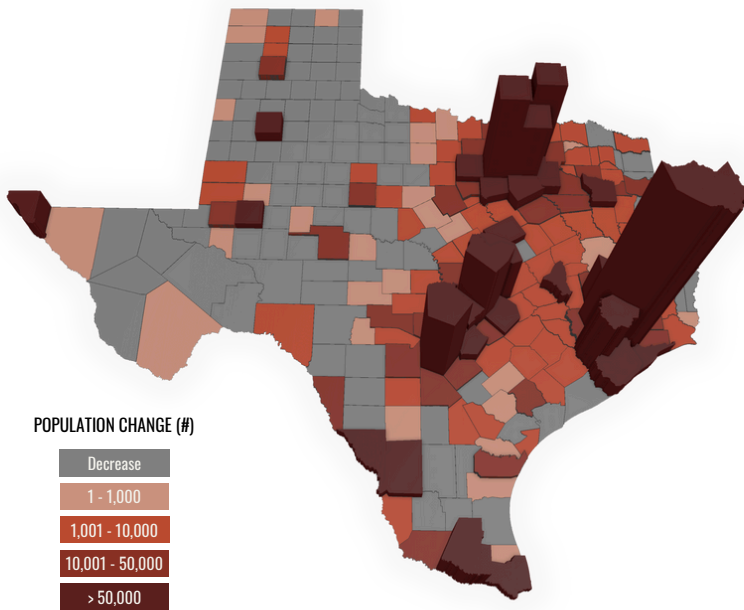


WORKING LAND LOSS (ACRES) →  
0 - 5,000    5,001 - 10,000    10,001 - 25,000    > 25,000

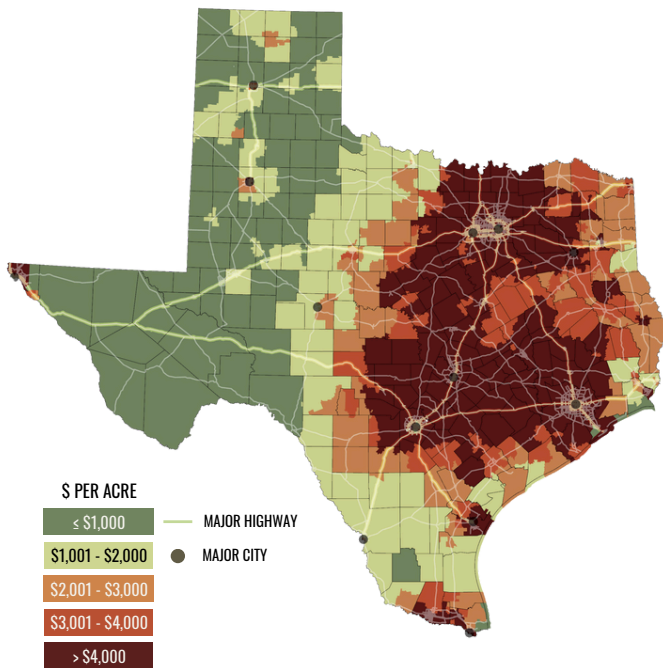
## CHANGING LAND USES

Texas lost nearly 3.7M acres of working lands to non-agricultural uses between 1997 and 2022, with a significant loss of over 1.8M acres in the last 5-year period.

- Grazing lands, which make up most of the state’s working lands, have steadily declined since 1997, losing about 6.7M acres to other land uses over the last 25-years.
- Wildlife management land has significantly increased in recent years, growing from about 94,000 acres in 1997 to approximately 7.1M acres in 2022.



Change in population (number) by county, 1997-2022.



Land market value (\$/acre) by independent school district, 2022.

## GROWING POPULATION

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Texas contains 8 of the top 15 fastest growing cities in the nation.

- From 1997 to 2022, the Texas population grew from 19M to 30M residents, a 55% increase, or over 1,100 new residents/day.
- The majority of the population increase (88%) occurred within the state's top 25 highest population growth counties.

## INCREASING LAND VALUE

The largest land value increases were observed in areas surrounding major urban centers.

- The average appraised market value rose 55% since 2017, from \$1,951/acre to \$3,021/acre, and 505% from \$499/acre in 1997.

## CHANGING OWNERSHIP PATTERNS

Texas lost over 17,000 operations in the last five-year period, though still has almost 2,500 more operations than in 1997, totaling over 230,000

- Average ownership size increased from 509 to 541 acres between 2017 to 2022.
- Small operations (< 100 acres) represent 60% of all ownerships, but only account for 3% of all working land acreage in 2022.
- Large operations (> 2,000 acres) saw the sharpest five-year decline in the past 25 years, with more than 1,000 operations lost between 2017 and 2022.

Read the full report at [tx.ag/TLT2025](https://tx.ag/TLT2025)

### CONTACT US

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