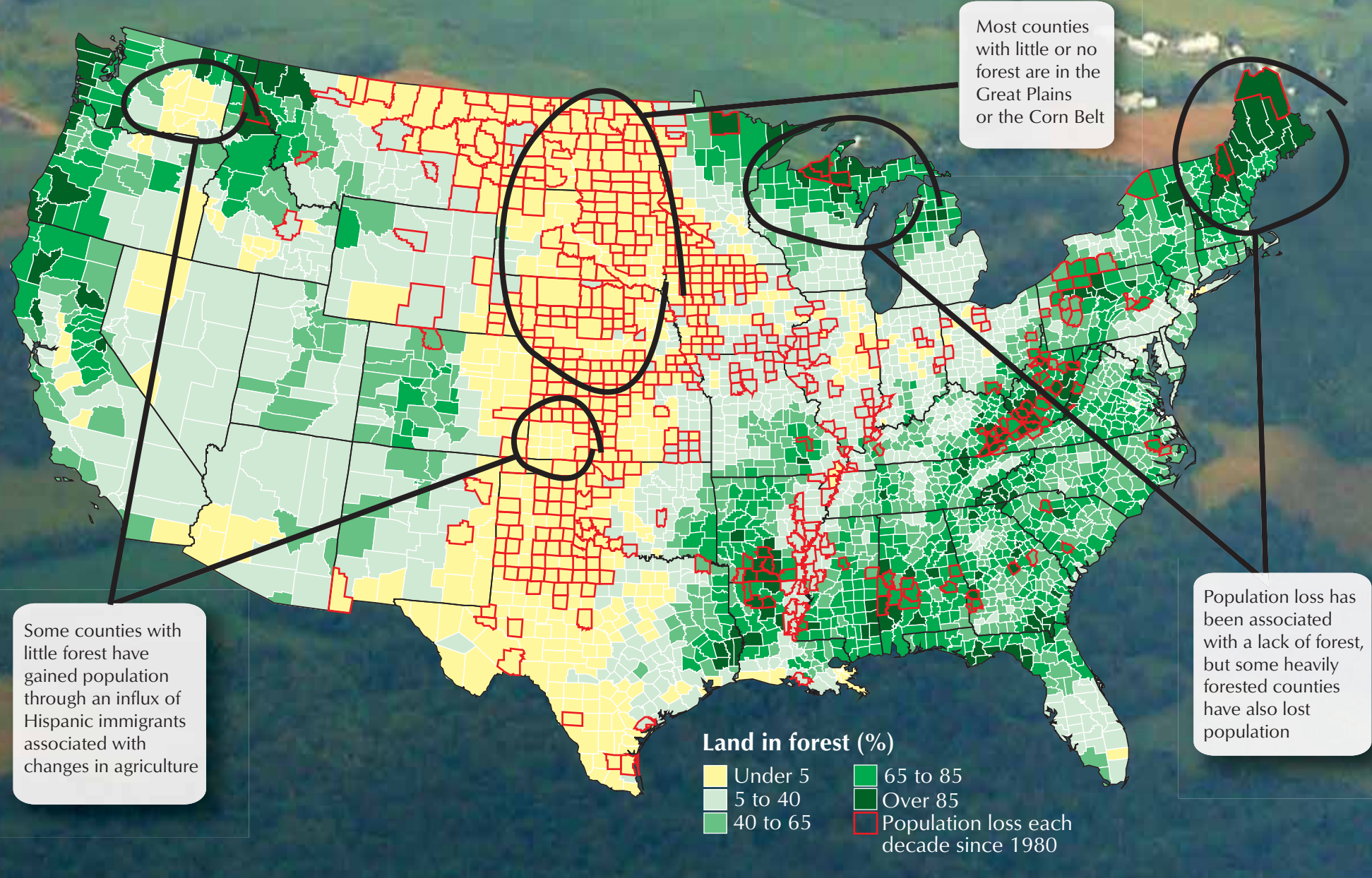
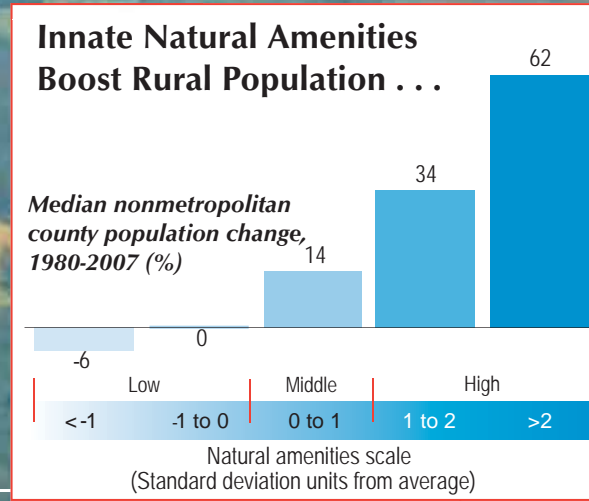


Forestland a Big Draw for Rural Living

While considerable attention is paid to the creation of rural jobs, much of current rural growth has resulted from the attraction of people to features of the rural outdoors. Topography and climate are relatively fixed, but other aspects, such as the mix of forest and open country and access to the outdoors are amenable to Federal policies, but generally ignored by them.

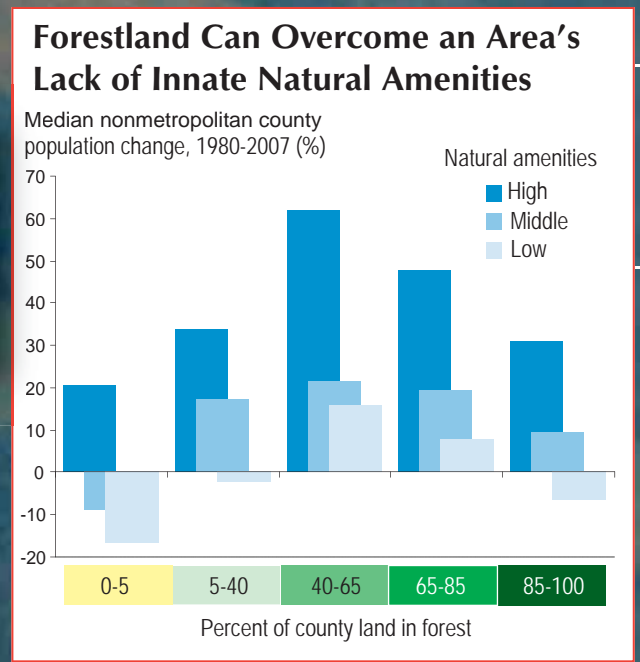
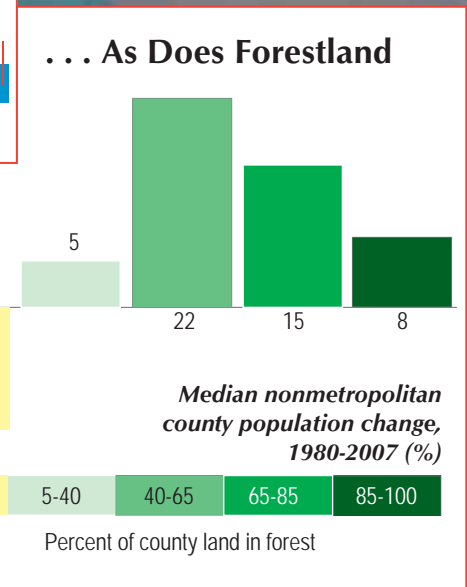


It seems likely that a natural park may sometimes do more for local development and well-being than an industrial park.

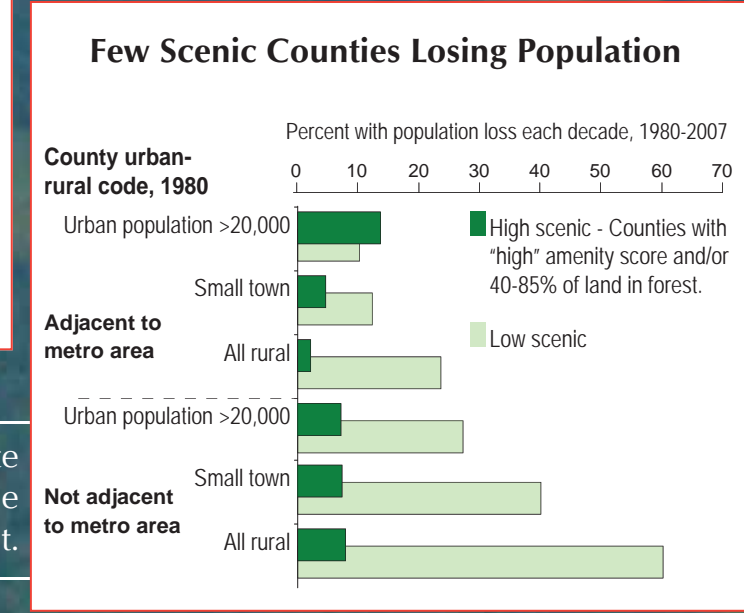


Those who live in or move to rural areas seem to be influenced by two primary environmental factors:

- innate natural amenities (topographic variation; bodies of water; warm sunny winters; and temperate, low-humidity summers) and
- the mix of forest and open country; most preferred is 40-85 percent of the land in forest cover.



Even counties lacking in innate natural amenities are perceived as more desirable places to live when the landscape offers a mix of forest and open country.



Likewise, the presence of forest cover and/or innate amenities can help retain population even among the most rural counties, which otherwise tend to lose it.