

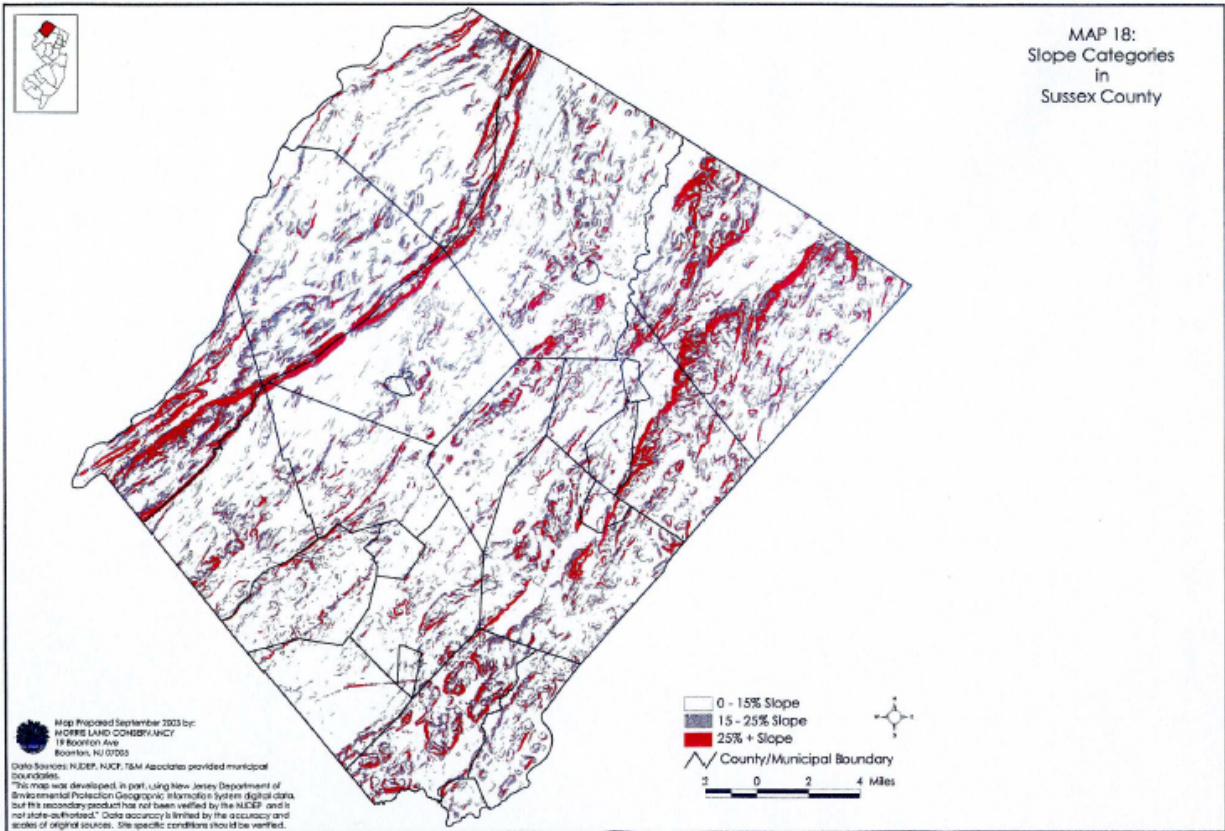
A summary of land use according to data derived from the NJDEP’s 1995/97 Landuse/Landcover data layer is as follows:

- Total Upland Forest: 194,259 acres 57%
- Total Wetlands: 47,670 acres 14%
- Forested Wetlands (30,744 acres 9%)
- Herbaceous Wetlands (16,926 acres 5%)
- Tilled Agriculture: 44,075 acres 13%
- Urban Land: 42,445 acres 12%
- Water: 12,827 acres 4%
- Barren Land: 2,169 acres <1%
- Total: 343,445 Acres 100%**

Steep Slopes

Occurring across all of the previously mentioned land use/land cover categories are steep slopes. The benefit of mapping steep slopes lies in the ability to catalog topographic trends and to use that information in making informed land use decisions. According to **Map 18: Slope Categories in Sussex County**, the most striking occurrence of steep slopes is along Kittatinny Mountain, and along the escarpment of Sparta, Hamburg and Wawayanda Mountains.

A third area of steep slopes occurs throughout the Pochuck Mountain area of northwest Vernon Township. In these areas slopes exceed 25%, indicating a rapid elevation change over a short distance.



Moderate slopes of 15% to 25% are less predictable throughout the county. The soils of these areas are less susceptible to erosion and have a lesser impact on stormwater flows. They occur more frequently in the county's eastern, northern and western areas, but are found throughout Sussex County.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Sussex County's diverse topography and land use patterns provide excellent habitat for many plant and animal species. Many of the species found in the county, such as deer, game birds and several species of fish, provide abundant hunting and fishing opportunities. Other habitat types contain non-game threatened and endangered species. Certain of these species are considered to be important indicators of the overall health of the ecosystems they inhabit. Therefore, taking steps to conserve functional threatened and endangered species habitat will provide benefits for many other species in the county.

There are two state-maintained databases that highlight important habitat for threatened and endangered species: the Natural Heritage Database and the Landscape Project. Information from the Natural Heritage Database is used to map Natural Heritage Priority