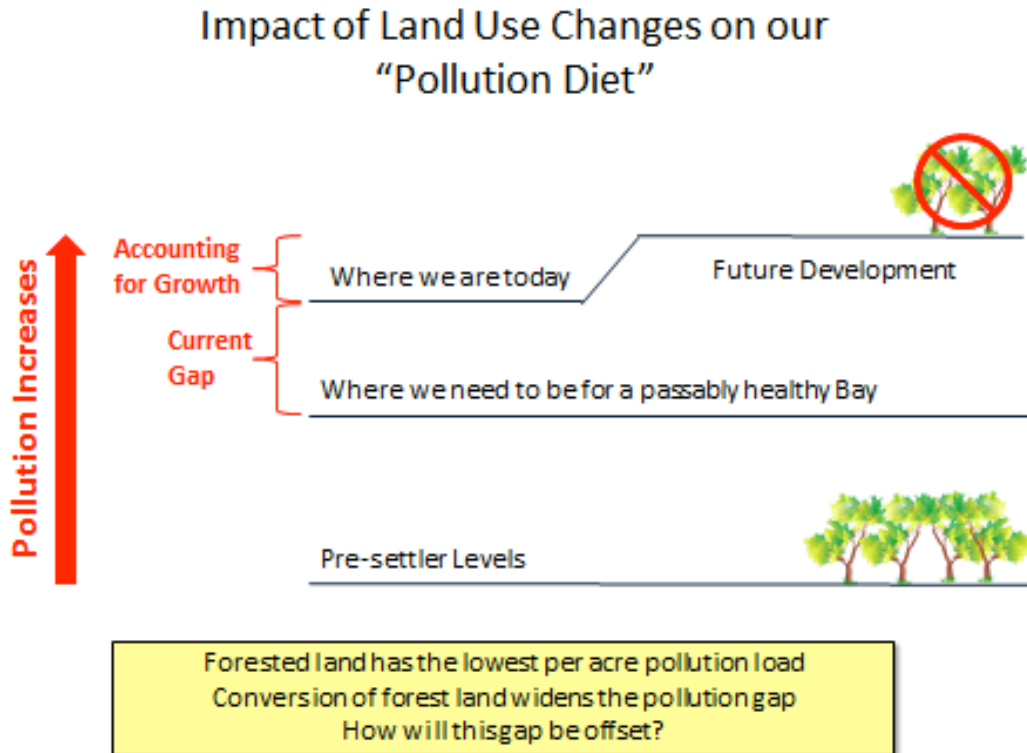


Watershed Implementation Plan - Accounting for Growth

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One of the interesting wrinkles in the new Bay-wide TMDL is that not only do we have to address the levels of pollution that we are currently putting into the Bay, we also have to account for the impacts of future growth and offset those loads as well.



When we read the word *Growth*, most of us probably think in terms of houses, offices, factories, etc. However, it is really any change in land use that will impact the amount of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment that we put into the Bay.

Forested land has the lowest per acre pollution load, so any loss of forest widens the pollution gap. Conversely, any addition of forest will help close the gap. As you walk, bike, ride, drive, paddle or fly around the county, look at the landscape and when you see cleared forest land, ask the question: How will this gap be offset?

Some of the timbering may well be sustainable forest management and be destined to be put back into forested land, other clearing may be for a subdivision, apartment complex or office park, and result in a fairly permanent land use change, with an

associated increase in N & P from wastewater, as well as from the increased run off and decreased filtration and cleaning that the forested lands do so well.

Our surface mining operations present an interesting case. The clearance is temporary, albeit long in duration, and it is the ultimate land use that will have the biggest impact on the Bay, provided the Erosion and Sediment Control measures work properly! One option for some of these mined lands is to reforest them, and / or create wetlands, as pollution offsets for that gap we are trying to close!