

# How Upstream Land Use Changes Downstream Flooding

Flooding is shaped by what happens across the watershed, not just at the place that floods.



## What changes upstream?



less vegetation



more compacted soil



more drainage infrastructure



more sediment delivery



faster runoff

## More natural watershed



VS.

## More altered watershed



slower runoff



more infiltration



faster runoff



higher flood peaks

## Why this matters for policy



local flooding can be influenced by upstream decisions



stormwater, land clearing, and development have downstream consequences



watershed-scale planning is often more effective than site-by-site thinking



**KEY TAKEAWAY**

**Downstream flood risk is partly shaped by upstream land use.**

