

The effects of nonpoint-source contamination on the water quality of four tributaries to the Toms River in Ocean County, New Jersey, have been investigated in a 5-year study by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). The purpose of the study was to relate the extent of land development to loads of nutrients and other contaminants to these streams, and ultimately to Barnegat Bay. Volumetric streamflow (discharge) was measured at 6 monitoring sites during 37 stormflow and base-flow sampling events over a 5-year period (May 1994-September 1999). Concentrations and yields (area-normalized instantaneous load values) of nitrogen and phosphorus species, total suspended solids, and fecal coliform bacteria were quantified, and pH, dissolved oxygen, and stream stage were monitored during base-flow conditions and storms. Sufficient data were collected to allow for a statistical evaluation of differences in water quality among streams in subbasins with high, medium, and low levels of land development.

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