

# INCREASES IN IMPERVIOUS SURFACE

Impervious surfaces, including roofs, roads and parking lots, can affect the water quality and hydrology of a watershed. Impervious surfaces cause increases in polluted stormwater runoff, which can impact nutrient levels, temperature, bacterial load and heavy metals found in our streams and rivers. An impervious cover of as low as 4% has been shown to degrade aquatic life and habitat quality.



Photo: J. Rozum

The Eightmile River Watershed is currently estimated to have approximately 3% impervious cover. This low level of imperviousness is a key reason why the watershed is still an intact and functioning ecosystem. Various scenarios of how the watershed could be developed suggest that impervious cover could increase to over 11%—which would lead to a substantial degradation of watershed health.

## Recommended Management Tool

### *Set Maximum Allowable Impervious Cover*

- ◆ Set a maximum impervious cover target of 10% for any local basin within the Eightmile River Watershed.
- ◆ Set a maximum impervious cover target of 4% for the Eightmile River Watershed as whole.
- ◆ Work with the Eightmile River Committee to assess current and potential future imperviousness in each local watershed, and determine the amount of impervious cover still possible to meet the local watershed limit.
- ◆ Develop an effective, appropriate and realistic tool to locally manage impervious cover and pursue the tool's adoption within each community.