Contextualizing Data

Discuss the importance of adding benchmarks and population densities to the graphs.

Discussion

Key Idea: Dr. Sujay Kaushal chose to compare urban, suburban, and forested streams to gauge human impact on streams.

> **Question:** Why was it important to incorporate the benchmarks and population densities of the different areas onto the graphs?
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> **Answer**: The benchmarks are a way to contextualize the salt levels in the Baltimore area with other salt levels. The population densities show how many people live and drive in the area, which has a direct relationship to how many roads there are and therefore how much salt enters area waterways.
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> **Note:** Remind students that NYC has a much higher population density (26.403 people/mile^2) than Baltimore.