

3 Land Use

This chapter describes the proposed land use plan for Garrett County. It lists land use goals and objectives, discusses land use and development trends since the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, and provides detailed information about existing and proposed land use in the County's major watersheds.¹ The Deep Creek Watershed is covered briefly in this Chapter, and is covered in greater detail in Chapter 4.

3.1 Goals and objectives

The County's land use goals and objectives are:

1. Conserve forest resource land.
2. Conserve agricultural resource land.
3. Encourage growth in designated growth areas, including the County's incorporated towns, and especially where development can be served by public water and sewerage systems.
4. Provide land in appropriate locations for growth and expansion of economic development opportunities.
5. Continue to encourage growth and development around Deep Creek Lake and its associated resort activities.
6. Provide land in appropriate locations and densities for a variety of housing types and choices.
7. Provide land in appropriate locations to allow for the development of affordable housing.
8. Improve the layout and design of residential subdivisions to conserve resource land and rural character.
9. Discourage strip commercial development.
10. Encourage high quality building and site design.

3.2 Land Use and Development Trends

This section discusses land use and development trends as background to the proposed land use plan.

3.2.1 Existing Land Use

Existing land use as of 2005 is shown on Map 3.1. Garrett County is a natural resource-rich County, with approximately 90 percent of the County comprised of resource lands—primarily forest and agricultural land. Less than 10 percent of the County is comprised of development lands (Table 3.1 and Map 3.1). Since 1973, approximately 23,100 acres of forest and agricultural have been converted to other uses, primarily low density residential development.

¹ Including the Bear Creek and Southern Youghiogheny "watersheds," as defined in Chapter 2 of this Plan.

Map 3.1: Existing Land Use

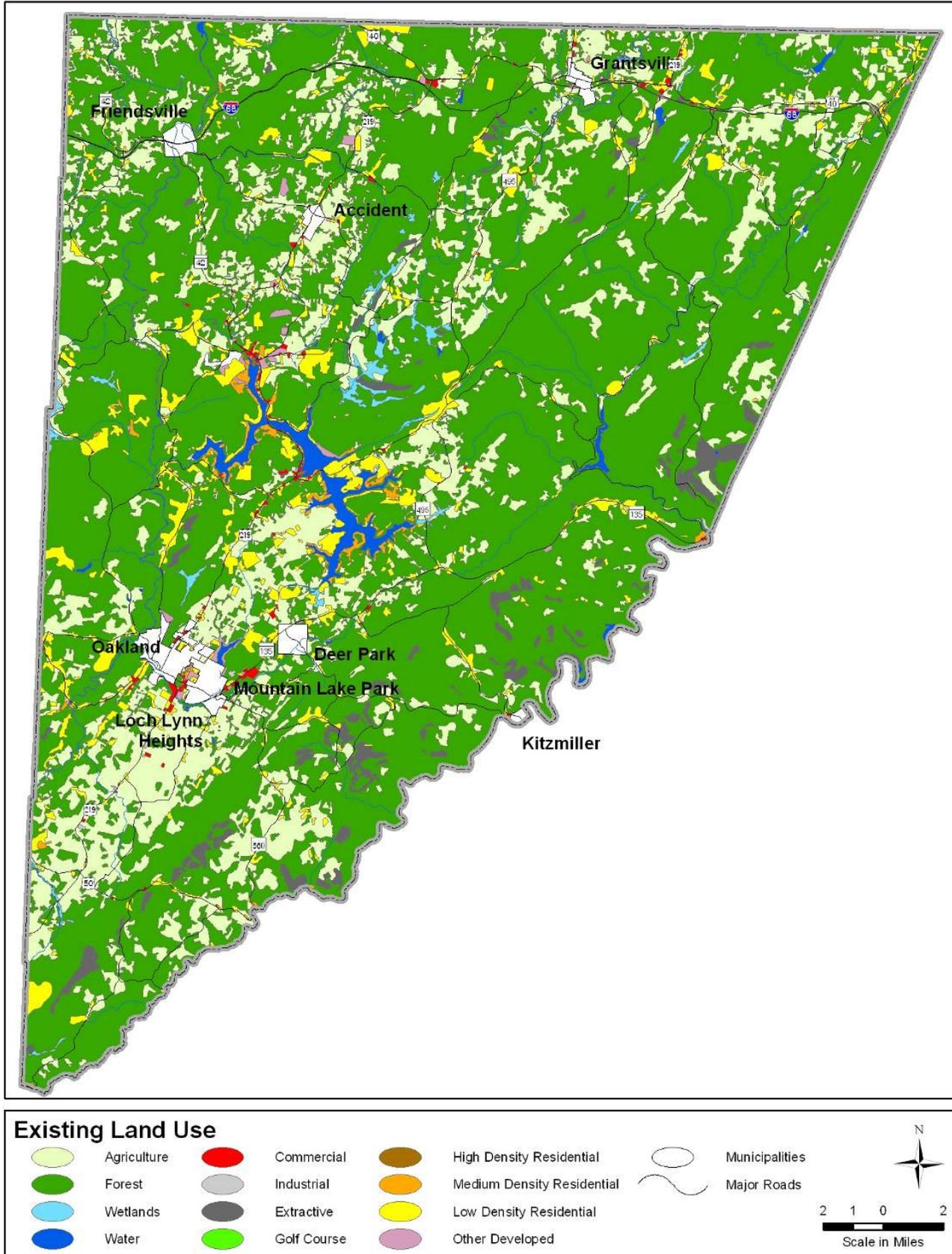


Table 3.1: Garrett County Land Use/Land Cover

Land Use	1973		2005		Change, 1973-2005 (Acres)
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	
<i>Development Lands</i>					
Low Density Residential	3,702	1%	22,024	5%	18,322
Medium/High Density Residential	1,368	0.3%	3,318	1%	1,950
Commercial/Industrial	941	0.2%	1,808	0%	868
Other Categories ¹	7,960	1.9%	9,372	2%	1,412
<i>Resource Lands</i>					
Agriculture	102,865	25%	89,142	21%	-13,724
Forest	295,116	70%	285,508	68%	-9,608
Wetlands ²	2,043	0.5%	2,663	1%	620
Water	5,635	1.3%	5,795	1%	161
Total	419,630	100%	419,630	100%	

Notes:

1: Institutional, Extractive, Open Urban, Beaches, Bare rock, Bare Ground.

2: MDP's Land Use/Land Cover dataset shows generalized land use types and areas, based on satellite imagery. The Maryland Department of the Environment estimates that there are approximately 5,088 acres of mapped, vegetated wetlands (excluding open water) in Garrett County.

Sources: Maryland Dept. of Planning 2002 Land Use Land Cover dataset; Garrett County (Garrett County made minor adjustments to the 2002 dataset to update it to 2005). 2007 LU/LC data were not available for this plan.

Protected Lands

Approximately 121,000 acres, 29 percent of the County's land area, is regulated or protected by virtue of federal, state, or County ownership (primarily state forests and parks); utilities; wetlands; tax exempt status; or the presence of protective easements established through agricultural or other preservation programs.² The Bear Creek watershed in the northern part of Garrett County is a state-designated Rural Legacy Area, an area of focused land conservation efforts. For more detail on protected lands see the County's Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan in the appendix to this Comprehensive Plan.

Priority Funding Areas

Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) are existing communities and places where the County wants to direct state investment—in the form of loans and grants for highways, sewer and water infrastructure, and economic development—to support future growth. PFAs (municipalities, rural villages, and county-designated areas) were established in response to the 1997 Priority Funding Areas Act. Map 3.2 shows PFAs in Garrett County. Enterprise Zones are areas where tax incentives are offered for job creation and the establishment of new businesses. Designated Neighborhoods, as identified by local jurisdictions, are mixed-used areas in need of social and/or physical revitalization, and where special state funding and programs are available for such improvements.

3.2.2 Growth and Development Since 1990

In 1990, Garrett County had a year-round population of 28,138, of which 6,265 (22%) lived in the eight incorporated towns (Table 3.2). There were a total of 13,805 total housing units in the County in 1990 (including the incorporated towns). Between 1990 and 2005, the County's population increased by approximately 1,800 persons or six percent. This was a modest level of growth compared to the 17 percent population increase in the entire state during the same period. From 1990 to 2005 the number of housing units in Garrett County increased by approximately 4,500, or 33 percent. This larger housing unit growth rate (compared to the population increase) reflects the continued popularity and development of vacation homes in the County.

² Maryland Department of Planning, analysis from MDPropertyView data.

Map 3.2: Priority Funding Areas

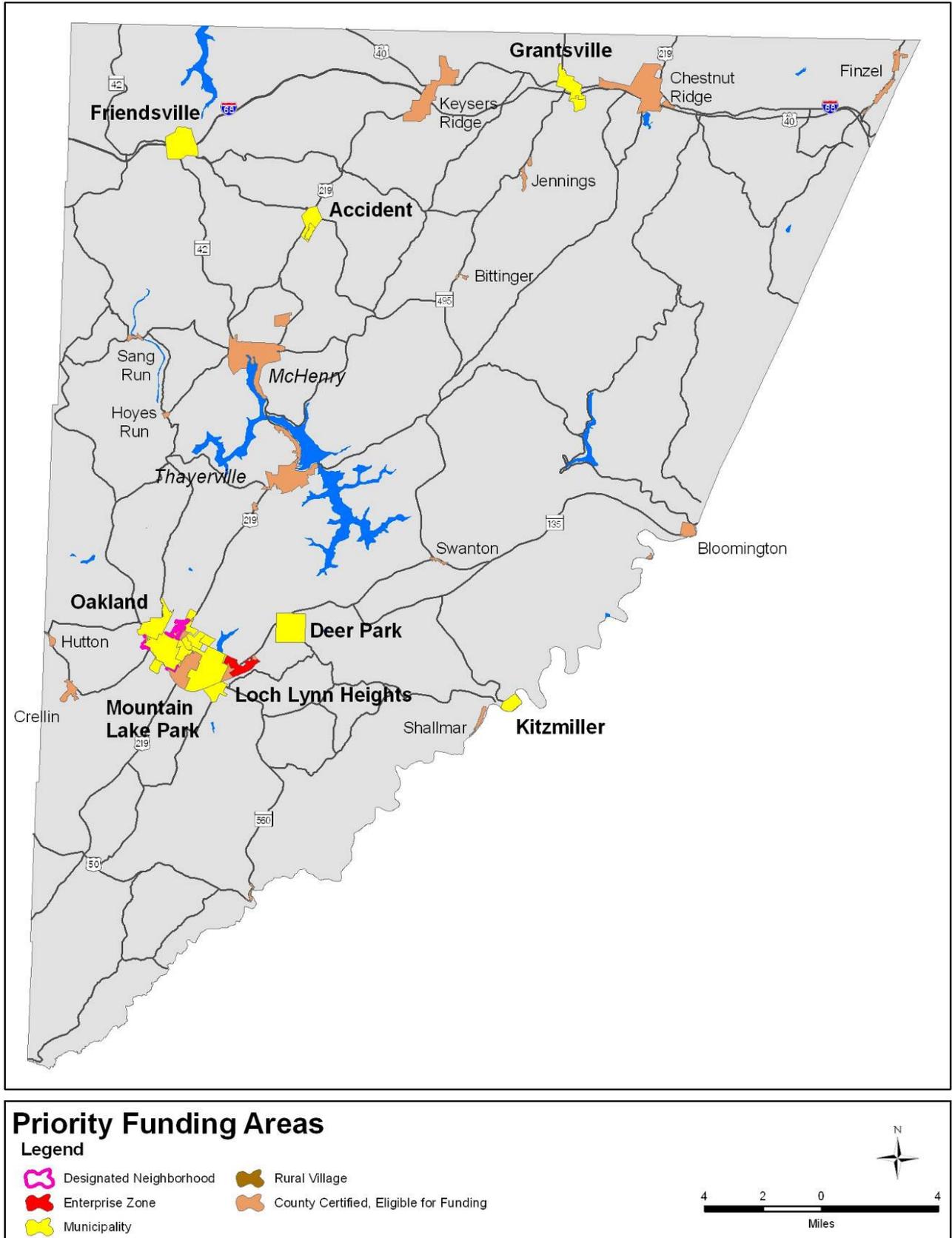


Table 3.2: Population and Housing Units, 1990-2005

	1990	2005	Change 1990-2005	
			Number	Percent
Population	28,138	29,950	1,812	6%
Incorporated Towns	6,265	6,640	375	6%
Housing Units (DAT)	13,805	18,326	4,521	33%

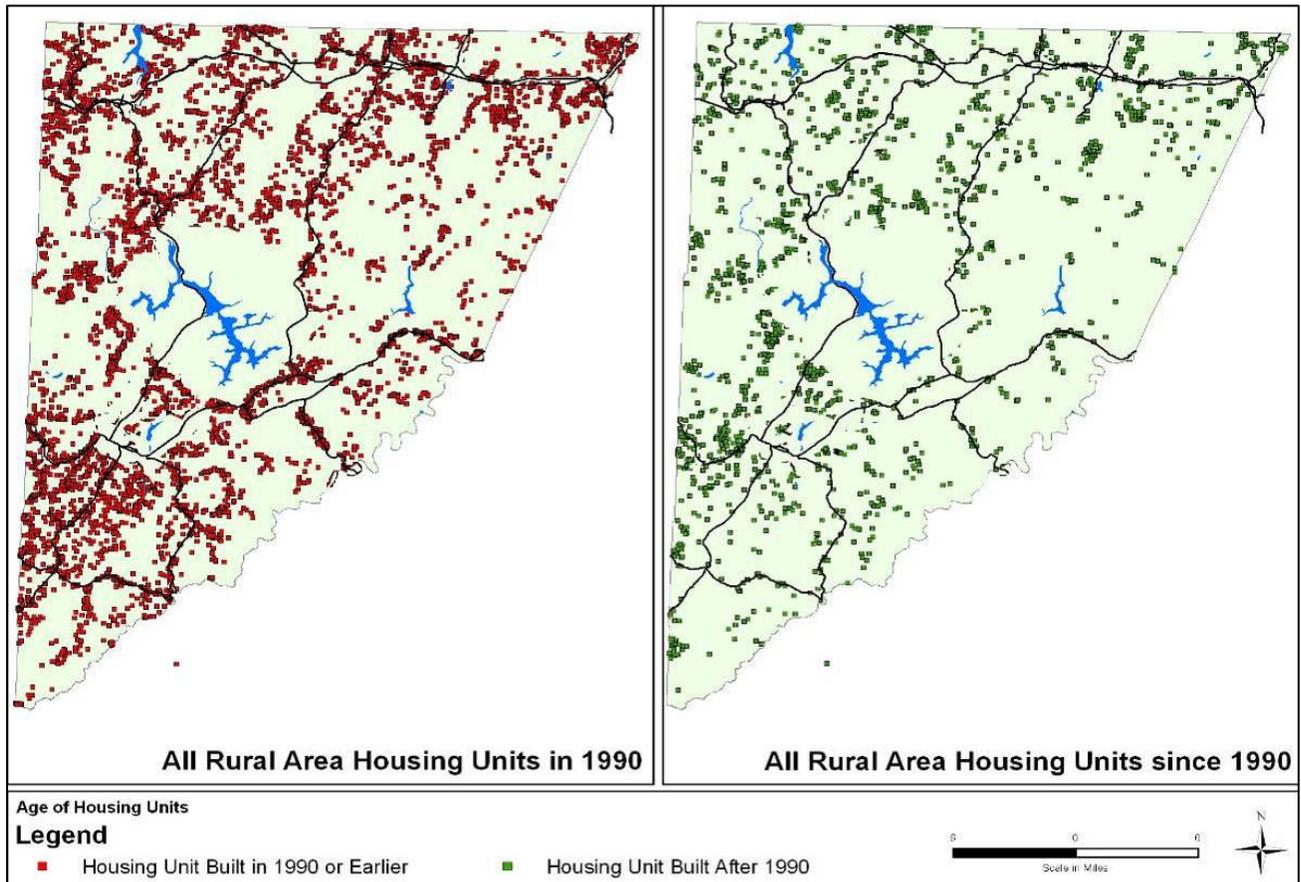
Sources: Population from the US Census; housing units are from MD Department of Assessments and Taxation (DAT)

Please note that the number of housing units for 1990 differs slightly (by around 300) from the number of housing units reported in the Census. Since the census is conducted only every 10 years, DAT's numbers are used to allow the housing data to be updated to 2005 for use in the Comprehensive Plan. 2005 is the Plan's baseline year.

Housing Units

Of the 4,500 new units built between 1990 and 2005, approximately 13 percent were built in the towns, 42 percent in the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area, and 45 percent in the rest of the County³. Approximately 1,800 units were built in the rural land use categories (AR, R, and RR). Map 3.3 shows the wide geographical distribution of these 1,800 units.

Map 3.3: Rural Area Housing Units



³ A more detailed breakdown is provided in Table 1 of Growth Projections Packet 020107 in the Appendices to this Comprehensive Plan.

Subdivision

Garrett County adopted subdivision regulations for the first time in 1997. Between 1997 and 2006 a total of approximately 16,000 acres were subdivided for residential development (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Subdivision Summary, 1997-2006

Subdivision Type	Deep Creek Watershed		Rest of County		Total	
	Acres	Lots	Acres	Lots	Acres	Lots
Major Subdivisions	5,021	4,320	1,408	325	6,429	4,645
Minor Subdivisions	1,117	246	4,767	661	5,884	907
Exempt Subdivisions	112	3	3,569	110	3,681	113
Total	6,250	4,569	9,743	1,096	15,993	5,665

Note that the "Rest of County" category includes some non-rural land use categories. Exempt subdivisions are subdivisions that due to their large size (over 25 acres) or prior health department approvals are exempt from the subdivision ordinance. This table only includes exempt subdivisions intended to create residential lots.

A little over 6,200 acres, or 40 percent of all subdivided land was in the Deep Creek watershed, while the remaining 60 percent was in the rest of the County—almost entirely in the County’s rural areas. A little over 80 percent of the lots created in the County between 1997 and 2006 were in the Deep Creek Watershed. During the same period 1,010 new lots were created on over 9,100 acres of rural land, at an average lot size of 9.1 acres (Table 3.4), accounting for approximately 57 percent of all land subdivided during that period.

Table 3.4: Subdivision Activity in Rural Areas, 1997-2006

Subdivision Type	Land Use Classification						Total, Rural Areas	
	Agricultural Resource		Rural		Rural Resource		Acres	Lots
	Acres	Lots	Acres	Lots	Acres	Lots		
Major Subdivisions	478	66	913	191			1,391	257
Minor Subdivisions	1,658	237	2,868	386	241	38	4,767	661
Exempt Subdivisions	746	22	2,140	67	102	3	2,989	92
Total	2,882	325	5,921	644	344	41	9,147	1,010
Average acres per lot	8.9		9.2		8.4		9.1	

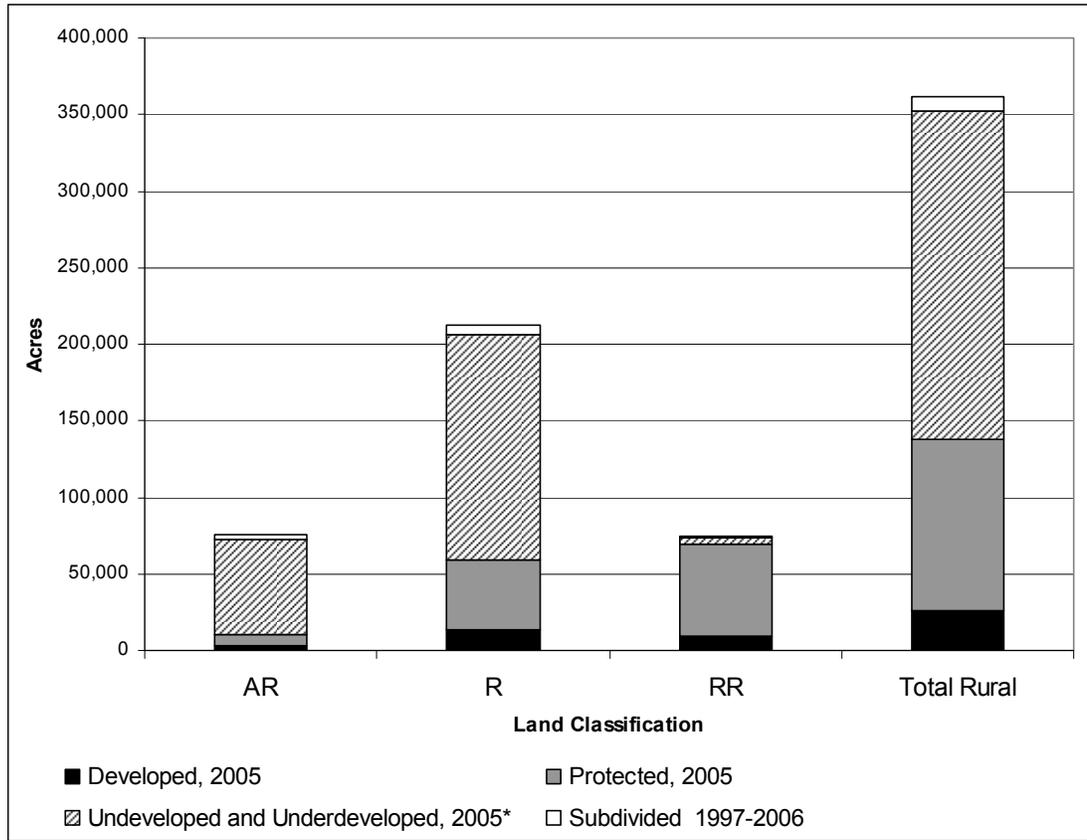
Note: Land use classifications are described in more detail in Section 3.4.

Figure 3.1 shows the amount of rural land that was subdivided between 1997 and 2006 in relation to developed, protected, and undeveloped or underdeveloped rural land as of 2005. Garrett County has a large rural land base in relation to developed land. However, the amount of subdivision and housing development in the rural portions of the County (9,147 acres in 9 years), as well as the way that this development fragments contiguous resource areas is of concern for its impact on forest and agricultural resources, rural character, and water resources.⁴

With regard to water resources, subdivision in rural areas has two primary impacts: increased numbers of septic systems and increased impervious surface. Septic systems are a major source of non-point source water pollution in the County, while increases in impervious surfaces can increase the amount of pollutants reaching streams and rivers, as well as the impact of nonpoint source flows (see Chapter 5, the Water Resources Element).

⁴ A PowerPoint presentation illustrating these concerns is included in the Appendix (Garrett Rural issues Presentation 6-13-07).

Figure 3.1: Subdivided Land, 1997 to 2006, In Relation to Other Rural Land



* "Undeveloped and Underdeveloped" indicates land that could be subdivided in the future.

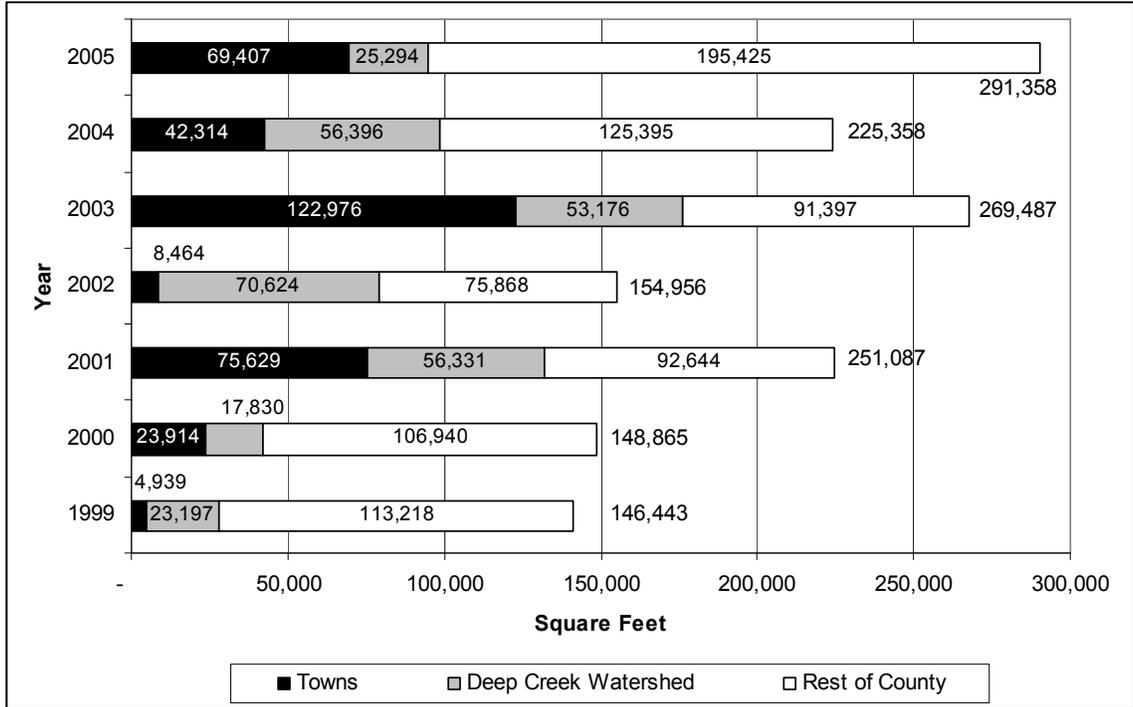
Commercial and employment development

Between 1999 and 2005 the County issued permits for approximately 1.45 million square feet of commercial space, valued at approximately \$85.7 million (Table 3.5 and Figure 3.2). Commercial development in the Deep Creek watershed accounted for approximately 20 percent of this new space and 27 percent of total declared value, while development in the incorporated towns (including the Northern Garrett Industrial Park in Grantsville and the Central Garrett Industrial Park in Accident) accounted for approximately 24 percent of the new space and 23 percent of value. Commercial development in the rest of the county accounted for the remaining 55 percent of square footage and 50% of value, including the Southern Garrett Business and Technology Park, the Keyzers Ridge Industrial Park, the Wisp Resort (particularly the Adventure Sports Center), and scattered development in the rural areas.

Table 3.5: Commercial and Employment Development Summary, 1999-2005

	Towns		Deep Creek Watershed		Rest of County		Total
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	
Total Square Feet	347,643	24%	302,848	21%	800,887	55%	1,451,378
Total Declared Value (\$M)	\$23.5	27%	\$20.0	23%	\$42.10	50%	\$85.7

Figure 3.2: Commercial and Employment Development, 1999-2005



3.3 Projected Growth and Land Use Needs

As discussed in Chapter 2, Garrett County (including the Towns) is projected to experience steady population growth through 2030, increasing the year-round population from 29,950 in 2005 to 33,400 in 2030 (an increase of approximately 3,400 persons). The number of housing units is projected to increase by approximately 6,750, including new vacation units. Business, industrial, commercial, and retail development is projected to increase by approximately 2.8 million square feet.

Given the above projected demands, and the land use and development trends since the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, the proposed land use plan is intended to achieve the following:

- Conserve agricultural and forest land by increasing the amount of land in the AR and RR categories.
- Protect state owned lands from encroachment by incompatible development.
- Expand opportunities for economic development, such as near Garrett County Airport and east of Mountain Lake Park.
- Designate land in the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area in a way that directs future development (particularly residential development) to areas served by existing and planned public water and sewer.
- Recognize future growth areas around the incorporated towns.
- Increase opportunities for housing development around the towns, including workforce housing, especially near Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, and Grantsville.

3.3.1 Proposed Land Use

Map 3.4 is the proposed countywide land use plan. The map divides the County into the following land use categories:

Rural Areas	Growth Areas	
• Rural Resource ²	• Suburban Residential ¹	• Commercial Resort ²
• Agricultural Resource ²	• Town Residential ¹	• Employment Center ¹
• Rural ¹	• Town Center ¹	• Incorporated Town
• Lake Residential 1 ³	• General Commercial ¹	• Future Growth Area (Towns)
• Lake Residential 2 ³		

1: Category originated in 1974 Comprehensive Plan 2: Category originated in 1995 Comprehensive Plan
 3: Category originated in 2008 Comprehensive Plan.

Most of these land use categories were established in the 1974 Comprehensive Plan (the County’s first plan). The 1995 Comprehensive Plan created the Rural Resource and Agricultural Resource categories (from the 1974 Plan’s Rural Development and Open Space categories) and added the Commercial Resort category. These land use categories have generally served the County well, and, except for the Rural Development category (see Chapter 4, the Deep Creek Lake Master Plan), are retained in the 2008 Plan update, together with changes in their extent and arrangement on the Land Use Plan Map.

This 2008 Comprehensive Plan also recognizes 11 Rural Villages, which were added to the 1995 Comprehensive Plan by amendment in 1998.

3.3.2 The Land Use Plan Map

The Land Use Plan Map has three primary purposes:

- In the Deep Creek Watershed, the land use map is the basis for a more refined classification of land into districts for zoning purposes that regulate the *use* of land (that is, what uses can occur where and under what conditions), as well as the subdivision and development of land. This more refined classification appears on the map that is adopted as part of the Deep Creek Lake Zoning Ordinance.

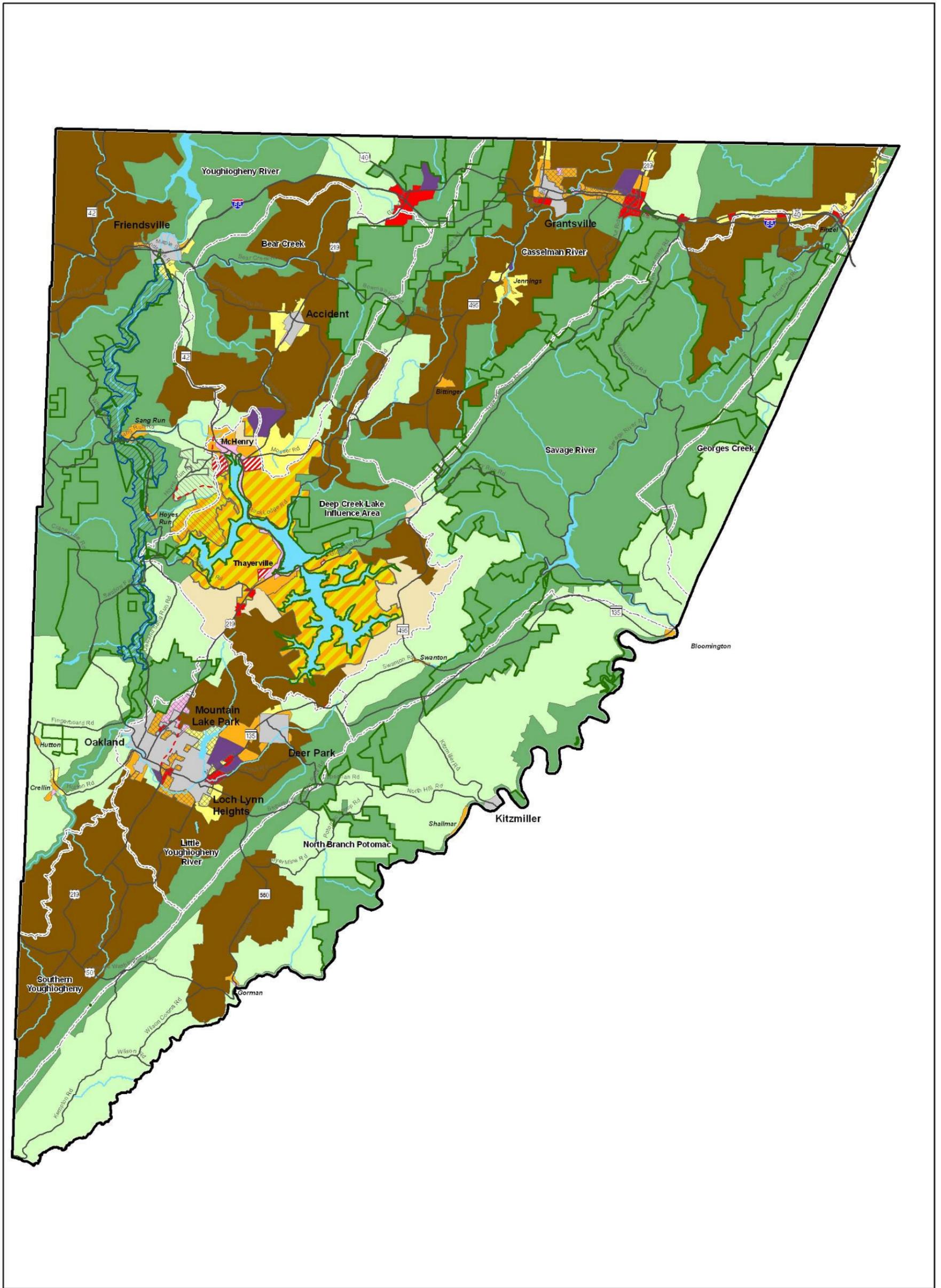
Chapter 4 discusses land use in the Deep Creek Watershed and the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area in greater detail.

- Outside the Deep Creek Watershed, the County does not have zoning. In these areas, the Land Use Plan Map is used as the basis for a Land Classification Map that regulates and controls the subdivision and development of land (but not the *use* of land). The Land Classification Map is adopted as part of the Garrett County Subdivision Ordinance.
- The Land Use Plan Map also serves as a guide to decision makers regarding community facilities—primarily water and sewer—as well as schools, economic development, and transportation.

3.3.3 Effect of the Land Use Plan Map on the Towns

The Land Use Plan Map does not apply to the County’s eight incorporated towns. The towns have their own planning authority and adopt their own comprehensive plans and land use regulations. The County coordinated the development of the Land Use Plan Map with the towns by sending them the preliminary draft land use map in the summer of 2007 for their review and comment.

Map 3.4: Proposed Land Use Plan Map



Proposed Land Use Plan

Legend

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--|-----------------------|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| | Town Center | | Commercial Resort | | Rural | | Future Growth Area | | Youghiogheny Wild River Corridor |
| | Town Residential | | Employment Center | | Lake Residential 1 | | Watersheds | | Wisp Resort |
| | Suburban Residential | | Rural Resource | | Lake Residential 2 | | Water | | Major Roads |
| | General Commercial | | Agricultural Resource | | Town | | State Owned Land | | Proposed Roads |



3.3.4 Changes from 1995 Land Use Plan Map

The 2008 Land Use Plan map makes the following changes to the 1995 Comprehensive Land Use Plan map:

- Significantly expands the Rural Resource areas and the Agricultural Resource areas, primarily by reclassifying large areas of Remaining Rural areas to either Rural Resource areas or Agricultural Resource.
- Changes the Remaining Rural classification to Rural.
- Expands the growth area around Friendsville, Grantsville, Loch Lynn Heights, Mountain Lake Park, and Oakland.
- Adjusts land classifications around Oakland and Mountain Lake Park.
- Major changes to the land classifications in the Deep Creek Watershed
- Deletes the sensitive areas information and the Special Water Resource land use category. Relevant information is now presented in Chapter 7, Sensitive Areas.
- Deletes recreation and open space information. This information is presented in the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan.
- Does not show land classifications within the towns.

3.4 Land Use Categories

As noted in Section 3.3 the County is divided into 12 categories. The relative sizes of each category are shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Proposed Land Use

Land Use Category	Existing (2005) ²		Proposed	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Rural Resource (RR)	66,489	16%	181,761	43%
Agricultural Resource (AR)	73,056	17%	106,074	25%
Lake Residential 1 (LR1) ¹	39,663	10%	17,495	4%
Lake Residential 2 (LR2) ¹			5,719	1%
Rural Development (RD)	361	<1%	0	0%
Rural (R)	221,771	53%	88,423	21%
Suburban Residential (SR)	6,626	2%	4,748	1%
Town Residential (TR)	2,412	<1%	4,842	1%
Town Center (TC)	853	<1%	1,157	<1%
General Commercial (GC)	2,337	<1%	1,926	<1%
Commercial Resort (CR1/CR2)	475	<1%	483	<1%
Employment Center (EC)	740	<1%	1,870	<1%
Towns	4,847	<1%	5,131	1%
Total	419,630	100%	419,630	100%
Future Growth Areas ³	0	0 %	3,057	1%

1: The existing LR category was split into LR1 and LR2 in this plan.
 2: From the Subdivision Ordinance Land Classification Map;
 3: Future Growth Areas overlay other land classifications.

3.4.1 Rural Resource

Rural Resource (RR) areas comprise approximately 43 percent of the County. Rural Resource areas are comprised primarily of the County's large, contiguous timber and forest lands.

Garrett County's current Land Classification Map (which implemented the 1995 Comprehensive Plan) classified portions of the following areas as RR: Savage River State Forest; Potomac River State Forest; land around Jennings Randolph Lake; and land along the Youghiogheny River south of Mount Nebo. This 2008 Comprehensive Plan expands the RR category to include large contiguous public and private timber and forest lands categorized as Remaining Rural Area in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. The RR category also includes some small scattered areas of agricultural land, low density rural housing, and limited commercial development.

The County's intent is for these areas to remain rural and to conserve these areas' natural resources, primarily forest and timber resources, for future generations. New residential and other forms of development are permitted, provided rural resources are protected (see "New Residential Development in Rural Resource and Agricultural Resource Areas" in Section 3.4.2). The purpose for expanding the area categorized as RR in this Plan is to provide greater protection from rural development for these resources. The County will continue to support the permanent preservation of these areas for their natural resources through purchase or easement acquisition by government agencies and private organizations.

The County's water and sewer policies for land designated RR are as follows:

- Shared septic systems that support cluster development are permitted.⁵
- No extensions of public water or sewer services will be permitted, except to correct health or safety problems in existing developed areas.
- No private wastewater treatment plants (including package treatment plants) will be permitted.⁶

The state owns and maintains over 85,500 acres of park, forest, and open space in Garrett County. These state-owned lands are an asset to the County, contributing to its rural character and supporting resource-based industries. Private property abuts these lands and, in some locations, such as within Savage River State Forest, is surrounded by state land. Both the state lands and nearby private properties are worthy of protection from incompatible adjoining development. Accordingly:

- This Comprehensive Plan designates a 500-foot buffer from state-owned land designated RR where it adjoins land in the Rural (R) category⁷. This buffer, which is on the adjoining R land, is not shown on the proposed Land Use Plan Map. The actual line is implemented through the subdivision ordinance and is surveyed at the time a subdivision is proposed.
- This Plan supports consideration of private property interests when potentially incompatible activities such as snowmobiling and all-terrain vehicle routes are sited or permitted on state lands.

⁵ A shared septic system is a form of community sewerage system, which is defined under the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) as, "any system, whether publicly or privately owned, serving two or more individual lots for the collection and disposal of sewage combined with industrial waste, including various devices for the treatment of that sewage" (COMAR 26.04.02.01).

⁶ Package treatment plants are pre-manufactured wastewater treatment plants designed to serve small communities or individual properties, typically with a treatment capacity of 2,000 – 500,000 gallons per day (US EPA, 2000. http://www.epa.gov/owm/mtb/package_plant.pdf)

⁷ A similar buffer was identified in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan.

3.4.2 *Agricultural Resource*

Agricultural Resource (AR) areas comprise approximately 25 percent of the County. AR areas are large contiguous areas predominantly devoted to agricultural use. There are in six large blocks of AR in the County:

- In the northwest corner of the County, west of Friendsville;
- Large parts of the Bear Creek watershed, surrounding the Accident area;
- Large parts of the Casselman River watershed, surrounding, and south of the Grantsville area, stretching into part of the Cherry Creek sub-watershed in the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area (see Chapter 4);
- In the northeast part of the County near Finzel;
- Most of the Southern Youghiogheny watershed, and parts of the Little Youghiogheny River watershed, surrounding the Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, and Deer Park area, and extending into the southwestern portion of the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area; and
- North and west of Gorman.

One additional smaller block of AR land is in the northeastern portion of the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area.

This 2008 Comprehensive Plan expands the AR category by more than 30,000 acres to include some agricultural lands categorized as Remaining Rural Area in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. These areas were identified based on refined aerial photography and mapping, especially north of Friendsville, west of Accident, and east of Jennings and Bitteringer⁸. The AR category also includes some scattered areas of forest land, low density rural housing, and commercial development.

The County's intent is for these areas to remain rural, and to conserve these areas' natural resources—primarily their agricultural resources—for future generations. New residential and other forms of development are permitted, provided rural resources are protected (see "New Residential Development in Rural Resource and Agricultural Resource Areas"). The purpose for expanding the area categorized as AR in this Plan is to provide greater protection from rural development for these resources. The County will continue to support the permanent preservation of these areas for their natural resources through purchase of development rights or easement acquisition by government agencies and private organizations. As part of this support, the County will consider using its funds to supplement state funding through the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), which is used to purchase development rights on agricultural lands. For more information about agricultural land preservation, see Chapter 4 of the Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan.

The County's water and sewer policies for land designated AR are as follows:

- Shared septic systems that support cluster development are permitted.
- No extensions of public water or sewer services will be permitted, except to correct health or safety problems in existing developed areas.
- No private wastewater treatment plants (including package treatment plants) will be permitted.

⁸ The basis for this mapping was a public information meeting and workshop on rural planning and policy issues held on March 27, 2007 in Oakland. The handouts and PowerPoint presentation are provided in the Appendix to this Comprehensive Plan (Rural meeting 3-27-07 agenda & hand outs). Also relevant are the results of two questionnaires conducted at meetings sponsored by the Garrett Preston Rural Development Coalition in January 2007 and at the Land Use Planning meeting on March 27, 2007 (see Appendix, Rural Issues Questionnaires Results).

New Residential Development in RR and AR Areas

New residential development will be permitted in RR and the AR areas at the existing maximum density of one dwelling unit per three acres, but will be subject to the following strengthened development standards designed to protect rural resources:

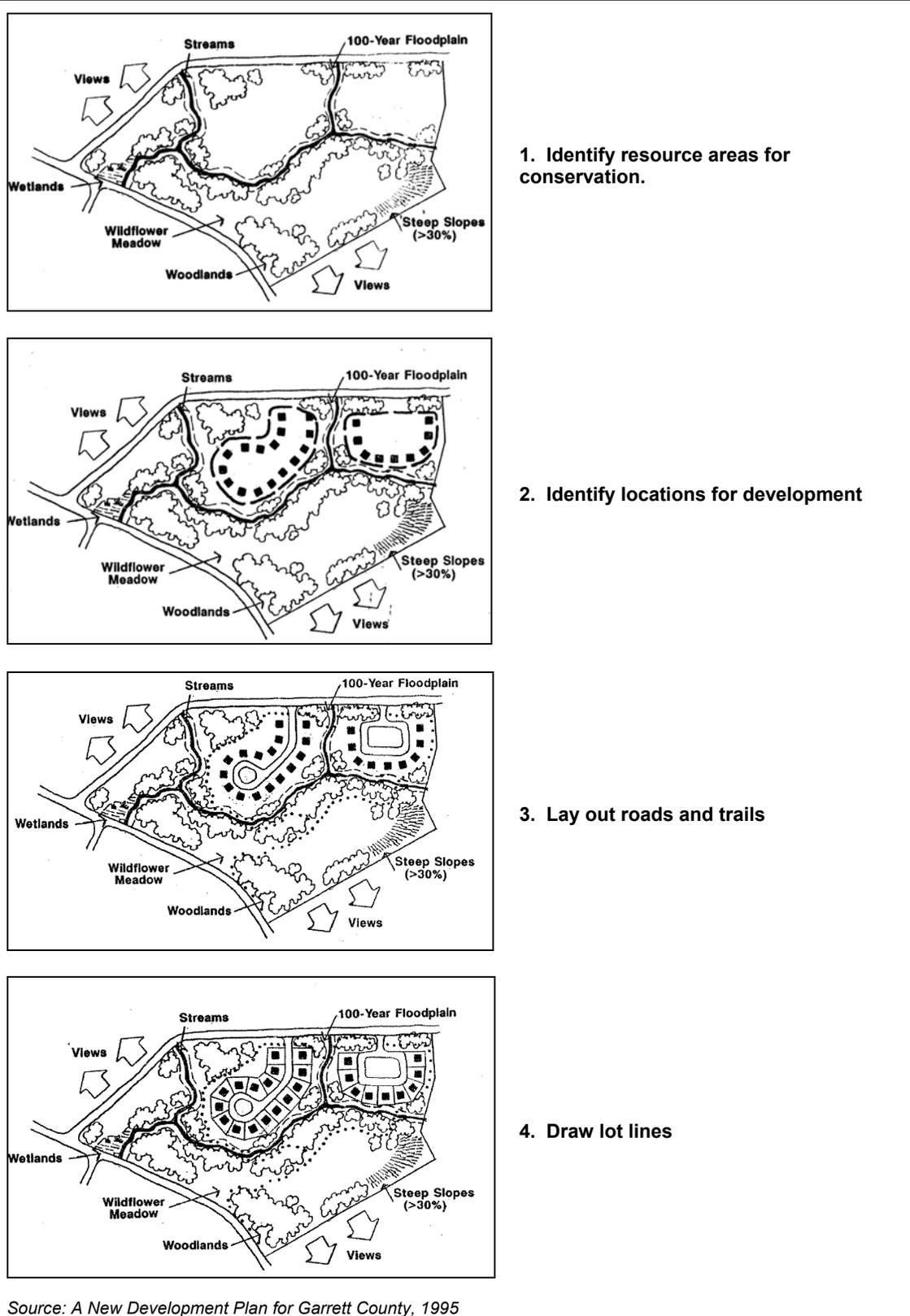
- Minimum protection share of 80 percent of the tract to be subdivided, unless special design or other measures are used to mitigate impacts to rural resources (see next bullet). Within the 20 percent developable area, encourage a maximum residential lot size of 1.5 acres, to maximize the amount of land for forest and agricultural activities.⁹
- Ability, upon application, for the Planning Commission to approve a minimum protection share of 66 percent of the tract to be subdivided. To make such an approval the Planning Commission would have to make affirmative findings that the development will meet the following criteria:
 - The subdivision meets the intent of the land use category.
 - Existing and potential contiguous forest and agricultural resources are conserved to the extent possible.
 - The additional development area (between 80 and 66 percent) does not impact important elements of rural character such as scenic views, and the quality and extent of open space.
 - The subdivision will fully mitigate for any adverse impacts on forest and agricultural resources and rural character.
- Design emphasis on conserving resources versus home siting, specifically:
 - Designing the subdivision in a way that gives highest priority to the protection of contiguous resources, rather than the location of potential home sites. Resources include farm fields, forests, scenic views, environmentally sensitive areas, and cultural features such as historic sites (see Figure 3.3).
 - Cluster the home sites on a maximum of 20 percent of the tract (33 percent with Planning Commission approval, as described above). Use shared septic systems if necessary.
- Preserving the value of the developable portion of AR and RR properties is a prime concern of AR and RR landowners, stakeholders such as the Farm Bureau and the Board of Realtors®, and the County. The County believes that the owner of a developable (or “parent”) tract of AR or RR land who wishes to sell land for development should receive appropriate compensation for their development rights, even if the developer wishes to create fewer lots than permitted by density limits.

In order to address this concern, the County should require the developer to prepare a Sketch Plat for development on AR and RR land (the Subdivision Ordinance “strongly encourages,” but does not require, Sketch Plats). The developer may prepare multiple Sketch Plats, but must, at minimum prepare one layout showing the maximum amount of development possible on the parent tract.

Regulations applying the above standards would be added to the County’s Subdivision Ordinance and to the Deep Creek Lake Watershed Zoning Ordinance. These regulations would address definitions of necessary terms, such as “rural character” and “scenic views,” and details regarding matters such as subdivision solely for agricultural purposes, minimum parcel size (if any), specific watershed protection provisions (likely to be similar to those proposed for the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area in Section 4.8.2), and other specific requirements.

⁹ The Garrett County Health Department estimates that 1.5 acres would be adequate to accommodate septic systems in areas where soils are not highly suitable for on-site wastewater disposal.

Figure 3.3: Steps in Site Analysis for Conservation Subdivisions



Source: *A New Development Plan for Garrett County, 1995*

3.4.3 *Rural*

Rural (R) areas comprise approximately 21 percent of the County. The County's intent for Rural areas is to accommodate a wide range and variety of rural residential and non-residential uses at low densities, while maintaining open space and rural character. Residential densities in R areas will range from low to very low—i.e., from one dwelling unit per acre to one unit per 25 or more acres. The R category also includes some small scattered areas of agricultural land, forest land, and commercial development. There are seven large blocks of R areas in the County:

- East of Chestnut Ridge
- Route 40 corridor west of Keyzers Ridge
- North and south of Friendsville
- A portion of the Cherry Creek sub-watershed in the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area, formerly designated RD
- Areas on the periphery of the Deep Creek watershed
- West of Oakland
- Much of the North Branch Potomac River watershed, east of Backbone Mountain

While reduced in size compared to their extent in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, Rural areas are extensive. Based on the rate of subdivision activity between 1997 and 2006 (see Table 3.4 and Figure 3.1), the amount of land in the R category provides an approximately 80 year supply of land for its intended purposes.

New residential development in R areas will essentially be permitted subject to current regulations. Unlike the changes proposed for the AR and RR categories, there would be no maximum lot size, no minimum protection share of the tract to be subdivided, and no new design emphases regarding home siting in the R areas. The same water and sewer policies established for the RR and AR areas would apply:

- Shared septic systems that support cluster development are permitted.
- No extensions of public water or sewer services will be permitted, except to correct health or safety problems in existing developed areas.
- No private wastewater treatment plants (including package treatment plants) will be permitted.

3.4.4 *Lake Residential 1*

This Plan splits the LR land use into two new classifications: Lake Residential 1 (LR1) and Lake Residential (LR2). Chapter 4 provides a more detailed discussion of the proposed future land uses in the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area.

LR1 covers approximately 17,400 acres of land, or 4 percent of the County. It includes land currently designated LR that falls within existing or future public sewer service boundary. The land use types (agriculture, recreation, and low-density residential development) and maximum residential densities (one dwelling unit per acre) envisioned for LR1 are unchanged from those in the existing LR land classification.

3.4.5 *Lake Residential 2*

LR2 covers approximately 5,800 acres of land, or 1 percent of the County. It includes land currently designated LR that falls outside of existing or future public sewer service boundaries. The land use types envisioned for LR2 are unchanged from those in the existing

LR land classification. However, the maximum envisioned residential density for LR2 areas is one dwelling unit per two acres.

3.4.6 Suburban Residential

Suburban Residential (SR) areas are intended to accommodate medium density residential development, with lot sizes of at least 20,000 square feet for properties with public water and sewer service (larger lot sizes if served by on-site wells and wastewater systems). Approximately 4,748 acres are in the SR category, equivalent to slightly more than one percent of the County. SR areas are located in several areas of the County, outside many of the incorporated towns and some of the rural villages. No areas within the Deep Creek Watershed are in the SR category, although the area east of Garrett College, north and south of Mosser Road (in the Bear Creek watershed) is designated SR.

3.4.7 Town Residential

Town Residential (TR) areas provide for higher density, more compact development near incorporated towns, villages (such as Bittinger and Swanton), and other places such as McHenry, and Thayerville. Development densities in TR areas are up to eight multi-family dwelling units per acre and approximately four to five single-family dwelling units per acre in areas served by public water and sewer. Minimum lot sizes are 8,000 to 10,000 square feet, or larger if served by on-site wells and wastewater systems. TR areas can accommodate a mix of housing types, including single family detached, townhouses, and apartments. Approximately 4,815 acres are in the TR category, equivalent to slightly more than one percent of the County.

3.4.8 Town Center

Town Center (TC) areas also provide for higher density, more compact development. The largest TC areas are in the Deep Creek watershed along US 219, especially in McHenry and Thayerville. Other TC areas are near some of the incorporated towns and in rural villages. TC areas are intended to be served by both public water and sewer. Development densities in TC areas are typically five to six dwelling units per acre, but can go up to nine units per acre. TC areas, like TR areas, can accommodate a mix of housing types including single family detached, townhouses, and apartments. TC areas, unlike TR areas, are mixed use areas where a variety of retail, service, and commercial uses can be intermixed with residential uses.

3.4.9 General Commercial

General Commercial (GC) areas provide for retail, service, commercial, and some light industrial uses including large businesses such as warehouses, service stations, and lumberyards. Because such uses are frequently highway-oriented and can generate vehicle traffic, noise, and glare, residential uses are discouraged in GC areas. There are approximately 14 GC areas in the County, including four areas near Oakland and Mountain Lake Park, two near Thayerville, and several near the interchanges along I-68 and on US 40 (alt).

The County's policy is to encourage concentrated commercial centers, and to discourage "strip commercial" development (see Table 3.7).

Table 3.7: Strip Commercial vs. Concentrated Commercial Development

Consideration	Strip Commercial	Concentrated Centers
Economic Land Use	Fosters linear, uneconomic use of land. Large individual sites require separate functions such as parking and storm water management.	Concentrated commercial development promotes the economic use of land including sharing facilities such as parking and storm water management.
Safety and Convenience	Requires consumers to use their cars to move from one destination to another.	Consumers can use an internal walkway system designed for pedestrians.
Effect on Real Estate	Can have a depressing economic effect on adjacent residential areas. Adjacent vacant areas tend to be held for speculation. This hinders immediate development and vacant lots proliferate.	Can be effectively buffered with landscaping from surrounding uses. This can make the area more attractive for residential purposes.
Customer Drawing Power	Businesses in strip development tend to draw customers on their own merit rather than also benefiting from the potential buying power associated with customers from adjacent complementary commercial uses.	The combined goods and services of the stores in a concentrated center attract customers.
Traffic	Unlimited driveway access onto main roads increases the risk of accidents.	Common driveways and controlled access to major roads enhance safety and convenience.

Source: Adapted from Garrett County 1995 Comprehensive Plan

3.4.10 Commercial Resort

Commercial Resort (CR) areas provide for commercial recreation uses and supporting commercial uses and residential development, such as the Wisp Resort and the Garrett County Fairgrounds and nearby land. CR areas promote resort-type light commercial uses and family recreation, as opposed to the highway-oriented uses that GC areas accommodate. CR areas are designated only in the Deep Creek Watershed. The Deep Creek Watershed zoning ordinance distinguishes two types of CR: CR1 provides for visitor-oriented commercial development only, while CR2 which emphasizes land-based family-oriented commercial development, as well as low density residential development.

3.4.11 Employment Center

Employment Center (EC) areas provide for business, manufacturing, and industrial economic development uses with varying land use requirements. EC areas are located at strategic points in the County, with the intent of providing business park or campus type settings near major highways, with access to public water and sewer services, and where there will be minimal adverse effects on adjoining land uses. Five EC areas are designated on the Land Use Plan Map. Three other employment areas are the industrial parks located in the incorporated towns of Oakland, Accident, and Grantsville (see Chapter 11, Economic Development).

3.4.12 Incorporated Towns

The land use plan map shows the current 2008 boundaries of the incorporated towns. As noted above, the towns have their own planning authority and adopt their own comprehensive plans.

3.4.13 Future Growth Area

Future Growth Areas (FGA) are areas that the incorporated towns have identified for future annexation. The land use plan map shows FGAs adjacent to Friendsville, Grantsville, Loch Lynn Heights, Mountain Lake Park, and Oakland, in recognition of the towns' interest in these areas, as expressed through the County-Town coordination process for this Comprehensive Plan. As noted in Chapter 2, most of the towns began an update of their comprehensive plans in 2007. Future Growth Areas for Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, and Loch Lynn Heights are generally within the boundaries of Priority Funding Areas as of 2008. The County will need to modify PFA maps to reflect other FGAs identified on Map 3.4.

FGAs are displayed as cross-hatched areas on top of land classifications. The underlying land classifications reflect the County's intended land uses for the FGAs (or the Town's intended land use, where the Towns' intent was expressed), and will apply until the area in question is annexed, at which time the land classification may change. As the towns complete their plans, the location and size of FGAs may change.

3.4.14 Rural Villages

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the following 11 rural villages as growth areas:

- Bittering
- Bloomington
- Crellin
- Finzel
- Gorman
- Hoyes Run
- Hutton
- Jennings
- Sang Run
- Shallmar
- Swanton
-

These villages are designated Priority Funding Areas (see Map 3.2).

3.5 Watershed Land Use Plans

This section discusses the land use plan as it applies to each of the County's nine planning area watersheds. As discussed in Chapter 2 these areas are comprised of the County's seven major watersheds, plus two subareas within the Youghiogheny River watershed—Bear Creek and Southern Youghiogheny.

The watershed boundaries are shown on Map 3.4. Existing land use, as of 2005, in each of the planning areas is shown in Table 3.8. Proposed land use is shown in Table 3-9.

Table 3.8: Existing Land Use/Land Cover in Planning Area Watersheds, 2005

		Low Density Residential	Medium/ High Density Residential	Commercial Industrial	Other Categories ¹	Agriculture	Forest	Wetlands	Water	Total
Bear Creek	Acres	1,719	30	182	378	9,494	19,401	0	33	31,236
	Percent	6%	<1%	1%	1%	30%	62%	0%	<1%	100%
Casselman River	Acres	2,742	129	263	748	14,113	39,614	637	356	58,602
	Percent	5%	0%	<1%	1%	24%	68%	1%	1%	100%
Deep Creek	Acres	4,813	1,758	307	781	8,002	20,527	1,060	3,688	40,938
	Percent	12%	4%	1%	2%	20%	50%	3%	9%	100%
Georges Creek	Acres	41	0	0	908	1,690	9,167	0	8	11,815
	Percent	<1%	0%	0%	8%	14%	78%	0%	<1%	100%
Little Youghiogeny River	Acres	2,406	812	730	767	10,063	11,214	15	205	26,214
	Percent	9%	3%	3%	3%	38%	43%	<1%	1%	100%
North Branch Potomac River	Acres	1,739	254	60	4,285	10,221	50,204	50	436	67,249
	Percent	3%	0%	<1%	6%	15%	75%	<1%	1%	100%
Savage River	Acres	1,665	51	59	840	10,186	60,449	133	314	73,697
	Percent	2%	0%	<1%	1%	14%	82%	0%	<1%	100%
Southern Youghiogeny	Acres	674	0	37	14	8,915	6,999	132	1	16,773
	Percent	4%	0%	<1%	<1%	53%	42%	1%	<1%	100%
Youghiogeny River	Acres	6,224	282	170	651	16,458	67,932	635	755	93,107
	Percent	7%	<1%	<1%	1%	18%	73%	1%	1%	100%
Total	Acres	22,024	3,318	1,808	9,372	89,142	285,508	2,663	5,795	419,630
	Percent of Land Use Type	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Percent of County	5%	1%	<1%	2%	21%	68%	1%	1%	100%

1: Institutional, Extractive, Open Urban, Beaches, Bare rock, Bare Ground.

Source: ERM (Table 3-1)

Table 3.9: Proposed Land Use in Planning Area Watersheds

		Rural Resource	Agricultural Resource	Lake Residential 1	Lake Residential 2	Rural	Suburban Residential	Town Residential	Town Center	General Commercial	Commercial Resort	Employment Center	Towns	Total ¹	Future Growth Area
Youghiogheny River	Acres	52,785	17,219	425	0	19,897	368	755	62	540	58	277	721	93,106	202
	Percent	29%	16%	2%	0%	23%	8%	16%	5%	28%	12%	15%	14%	22%	7%
Bear Creek	Acres	9,675	17,016	0	0	1,757	1,789	16	24	215	12	399	333	31,236	0
	Percent	5%	16%	0%	0%	2%	38%	<1%	2%	11%	3%	21%	6%	7%	0%
Southern Youghiogheny	Acres	2,939	13,834	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16,773	0
	Percent	2%	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%
Little Youghiogheny River	Acres	5,118	11,534	0	0	2,324	740	1,763	346	303	0	618	3,467	26,214	2,028
	Percent	3%	11%	0%	0%	3%	16%	36%	30%	16%	0%	33%	68%	6%	66%
Casselman River	Acres	24,300	24,963	0	0	5,029	1,534	1,235	70	616	0	411	445	58,602	827
	Percent	13%	24%	0%	0%	6%	32%	26%	6%	32%	0%	22%	9%	14%	27%
Savage River	Acres	54,308	6,355	0	0	12,536	278	80	0	140	0	0	0	73,697	0
	Percent	30%	6%	0%	0%	14%	6%	2%	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	18%	0%
Georges Creek	Acres	6,429	0	0	0	5,347	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,815	0
	Percent	4%	0%	0%	0%	6%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%
North Branch Potomac River	Acres	18,379	7,173	0	0	41,267	0	252	12	0	0	0	165	67,249	0
	Percent	10%	7%	0%	0%	47%	0%	5%	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%	16%	0%
Deep Creek	Acres	7,828	7,981	17,070	5,719	266	0	741	643	110	412	166	0	40,938	0
	Percent	4%	8%	98%	100%	<1%	0%	15%	56%	6%	85%	9%	0%	10%	0%
Total	Acres	181,761	106,074	17,495	5,719	89,423	4,748	4,842	1,157	1,926	483	1,870	5,131	419,630	3,057
	Percent of Land Use Type	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Percent of County	43%	25%	4%	1%	21%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	100%	<1%

1: Totals may not match due to rounding errors.

3.5.1 Youghiogheny River watershed (excluding Bear Creek and the Southern Youghiogheny)

This watershed is approximately 145 square miles, or 22 percent of the County. It extends from the northwest corner of the County east to Keyzers Ridge and south past Hutton Road (MD 39). I-68 crosses the northern part of the watershed. The Youghiogheny River flows north along the western edge of the County, through Friendsville and into Pennsylvania, where it joins with the Monongahela River, part of the broader Ohio/Mississippi River watershed.

As of 2005 the watershed was 73 percent forest and 18 percent agriculture (Table 3.8). Large areas of state-owned lands in the watershed include Garrett State Forest, Swallow Falls State Park, Herrington Manor State Park, and the Youghiogheny Scenic and Wild River management area. The US Army Corps of Engineers manages the Youghiogheny River Lake, north of Friendsville, as a flood control and hydroelectric power facility. The Youghiogheny River, especially south of the lake, is nationally-renowned for its whitewater recreation amenities (e.g., rafting, kayaking).

The Youghiogheny River watershed includes the Town of Friendsville and a portion of the Deep Creek Lake Influence Area. In 2005 there were approximately 3,085 housing units in the watershed, of which approximately 281 were in Friendsville, 124 in the Deep Creek Influence Area, and 2,680 in the “remainder” of the watershed (Table 2.3). Between 1990 and 2005, approximately 660 units were built in the “remainder” area.

The Youghiogheny River watershed is projected to add approximately 1,875 housing units through 2030, of which 25 will be in Friendsville, 1,273 in the Deep Creek Influence Area (Wisp Resort), and 663 in the remainder of the watershed.



The Youghiogheny River is one of the nation's premier whitewater recreation resources.

Map 3.5 shows the land use plan for the Youghiogheny River watershed. See Table 3.9 for the acreage summary associated with the plan.

Highlights of the land use plan

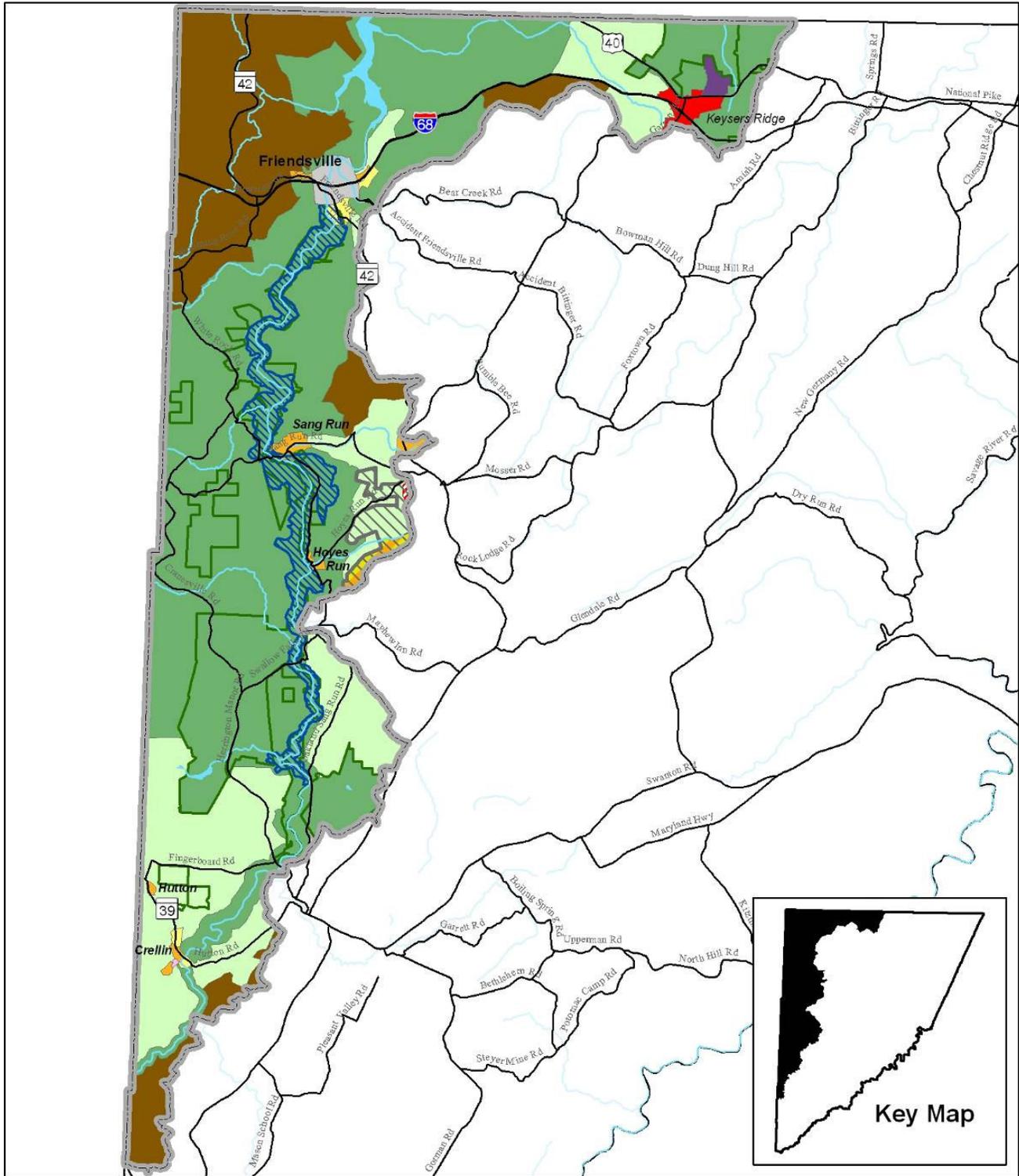
The land use plan emphasizes resource land conservation. The 2008 plan classifies the majority of the watershed as RR. Some large areas in the watershed that were classified as R in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan have been redesignated as RR in the 2008 plan. This plan also increases the amount of land designated AR, especially northwest of Friendsville¹⁰.

The Youghiogheny River is a state designated Scenic and Wild River between Millers Run (near Mount Nebo Road) in the south, and the Town of Friendsville in the north.¹¹ This area is subject to state use and development regulations designed to protect the wild and scenic qualities of the river and its corridor. These state regulations function like zoning regulations (even though the area is not subject to County zoning).

¹⁰ To assist in seeing the differences between the 2008 map and the 1995 map (as implemented by the 1997 Land Classification Map) the appendix to this plan contains “side by side” maps.

¹¹ COMAR Title 8 Subtitle 15.

Map 3.5: Youghiogheny River Watershed Land Use Plan



Future Land Use - Youghiogheny River Watershed

Town Center	Employment Center	Rural	Youghiogheny River Watershed	Wisp Resort PRD
Town Residential	Rural Resource	Lake Residential 1	Youghiogheny Wild River Corridor	Major Roads
Suburban Residential	Agricultural Resource	Town	State Owned Land	
General Commercial	Future Growth Area	Water		

Miles

Growth areas in the watershed are the Town of Friendsville, and the rural villages of Crellin, Hutton, Hoyes Run and Sang Run. Small areas east of Friendsville are designated SR and TR.

The map shows a Future Growth Area along I-68 west of the town and along Friendsville Road (MD 42), south of town. Hoyes Run, Sang Run, and Hutton retain their existing TR designation, while Crellin retains its existing mix of TC, SR, and TR designations. Crellin is served by public water and sewer. Hutton is served by public sewer.

Keysers Ridge Business Park is Garrett County's newest industrial park, occupying 240 acres on the north side of the intersection of US 40 and US 219, with access from US 40. It is designated EC in the land use plan (a change from GC in the 1995 Plan). Construction of the park was completed in 2006, with the first tenants anticipated in 2008. South of the business park around the I-68 interchange is a GC area.

Youghiogheny Mountain Resort is a 2,000 acre second home subdivision on the west side of the Youghiogheny River, due west of Deep Creek Lake. Approximately 1,600 residential lots have been platted in this subdivision, with fewer than 200 residential units built. Many of the remaining lots are not suitable for future development, due to platted lot sizes that are inadequate for septic systems. As of fall 1997, the County health department is reviewing issues concerning building on these lots and other similar types of lots elsewhere in the County.

The Garrett County landfill is located on the east side of Oakland-Sang Run Road, approximately one mile north of Mount Nebo Road (see Chapter 8, Community Facilities). The landfill's is currently expected to be in service through 2028. See Chapter 8 (Community Facilities).

The western portion of the Wisp Resort is located in the Youghiogheny River watershed. The proposed Wisp Resort would include a mixed commercial/residential village, and approximately half of the overall proposed 2,500 residential units in the resort. The Wisp Resort property is covered by a County-approved Planned Residential Development (PRD). The approximate area covered by the PRD is shown on the land use plan map. The Wisp Resort is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. A recirculating whitewater course—which opened in 2007, and is operated by the Adventure Sports Center Institute—is found in this area.

3.5.2 *Bear Creek Watershed*

As noted in Chapter 2, the Bear Creek watershed is a combination of three 12-digit watersheds within the 8-digit Youghiogheny River watershed. Bear Creek is broken out separately in this Plan because of its special agricultural and scenic resources. Bear Creek covers approximately 49 square miles, or seven percent of the County. It lies north of the Deep Creek watershed between Elder Hill, Negro Mountain, and Winding Ridge (Map 3.6).

As of 2005, the watershed was 62 percent forest and 30 percent agriculture (Table 3.8). The incorporated town of Accident is located on US 219, almost in the center of the watershed. US 219 runs north-south through the watershed, and is the County's second most heavily traveled roadway, after I-68. Agricultural lands are concentrated in the central portions of the watershed (see Map 3.1). The western portion of Savage River State Forest occupies much of the eastern part of the watershed.

Bear Creek is among the County's most scenic areas, with a combination of agricultural and forested landscapes. As noted earlier in this chapter, the entire Bear Creek watershed is a designated Rural Legacy Area, an area of focused land conservation efforts under the state-sponsored Rural Legacy program, which began in 1997. As of 2007, protective easements



The Cove, a scenic rural and agricultural area in the Bear Creek watershed

had been placed on 600 acres using Rural Legacy funds. An additional 4,469 acres of land in the Bear Creek watershed are protected through other means (parks, the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, and the Maryland Environmental Trust). Approximately 4,011 of those protected acres are in Savage River State Forest.

In 2005 there were approximately 990 housing units in the watershed, of which approximately 168 were in Accident and 822 in the “remainder” of the watershed (Table 2.3). Between 1990 and 2005, approximately 227 units were built in the watershed, outside of Accident.

The Bear Creek watershed is projected to add approximately 250 new housing units through 2030, of which 25 will be in Accident and 225 in the remainder of the watershed.

Map 3.6 shows the land use plan for the Bear Creek watershed. See Table 3.9 for the acreage summary associated with the plan.

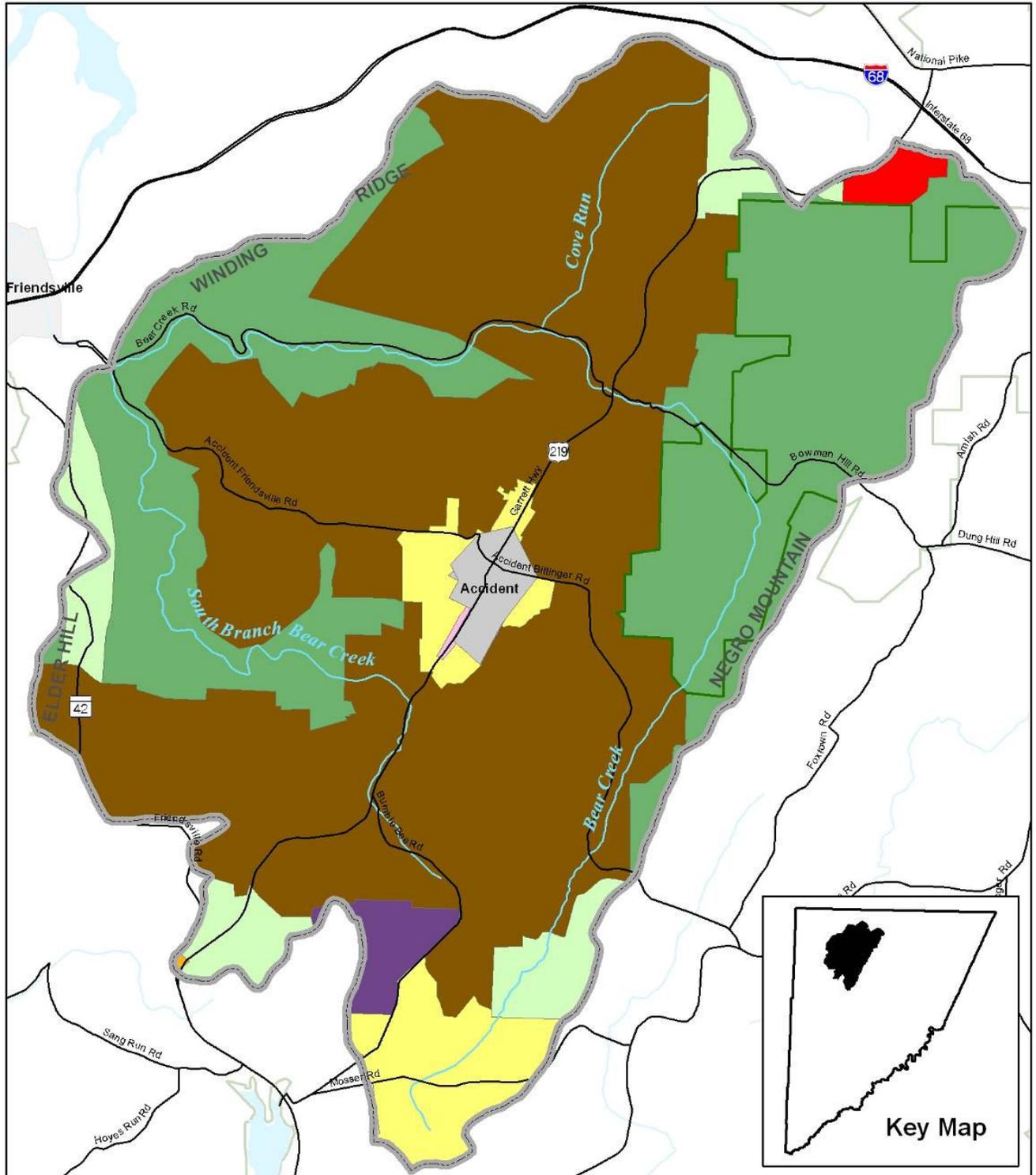
Highlights of the land use plan

The land use plan emphasizes resource land conservation. The plan designates more than three quarters of the watershed as AR and RR. Some areas that were designated R in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan (such as Savage River State Forest) have been redesignated RR in the 2008 plan. This plan also increases the amount of land designated AR, mostly west of Accident.

Growth areas in the watershed are the Town of Accident and the area around Garrett County Airport. Accident anticipates little growth over the life of this Comprehensive Plan, and the Plan does not propose changes to the growth boundaries around the town. Central Garrett industrial park is located in Accident, and is approximately 90 percent built out.

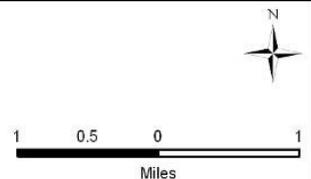
Garrett County Airport is located off Bumble Bee Road east of McHenry. It is designated EC on the land use plan. South of the airport is White Face Farm, an approximately 340 acre site that straddles the Bear Creek and Deep Creek watersheds. A portion of White Face Farm was designated EC in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, but was not developed. This Comprehensive Plan slightly expands the area around White Face Farm designated EC. As of 2007 the County is actively working to develop a technology park here. A portion of the site is also being considered for housing, to be developed by Garrett County Community Action (see Chapter 9, Housing). The entire White Face Farm site will be connected to the McHenry water system and to the Deep Creek Lake sewer system.

Map 3.6: Bear Creek Watershed Land Use Plan



Future Land Use - Bear Creek Watershed

- | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Town Center | Employment Center | Lake Residential 1 | Water |
| Town Residential | Rural Resource | Town | Major Roads |
| Suburban Residential | Agricultural Resource | Bear Creek Watershed | |
| General Commercial | Rural | State Owned Land | |



3.5.3 Southern Youghiogheny Watershed

As noted in Chapter 2, the Southern Youghiogheny watershed is a combination of two 12-digit watersheds within the Youghiogheny River watershed, and is broken out separately because its agricultural and cultural character differentiates it from the areas in the middle and upper portions of the Youghiogheny River watershed. The Southern Youghiogheny watershed is approximately 26 square miles, or four percent of the County. It covers much of the area known as Pleasant Valley, extending from the southwest corner of the County east to Backbone Mountain and north approximately to Wes White Road and Pleasant Valley Road (Map 3.7). US 219 runs north-south through the watershed.

As of 2005, the watershed was 53 percent agriculture and 42 percent forest (Table 3.8). The Southern Youghiogheny Watershed contains some of the County's most productive farm land, set in a largely intact agricultural landscape. North and south of Redhouse (the intersection of US 219 and US 50) are two concentrations of agricultural districts and easements.¹² A third concentration lies to the northeast along Mason School Road.

As of 2005 there were 386 housing units in the Southern Youghiogheny watershed. It is projected to add approximately 50 housing units through 2030, similar to the number of units added between 1990 and 2005.

Map 3.7 shows the land use plan for the Southern Youghiogheny watershed.

Highlights of the land use plan

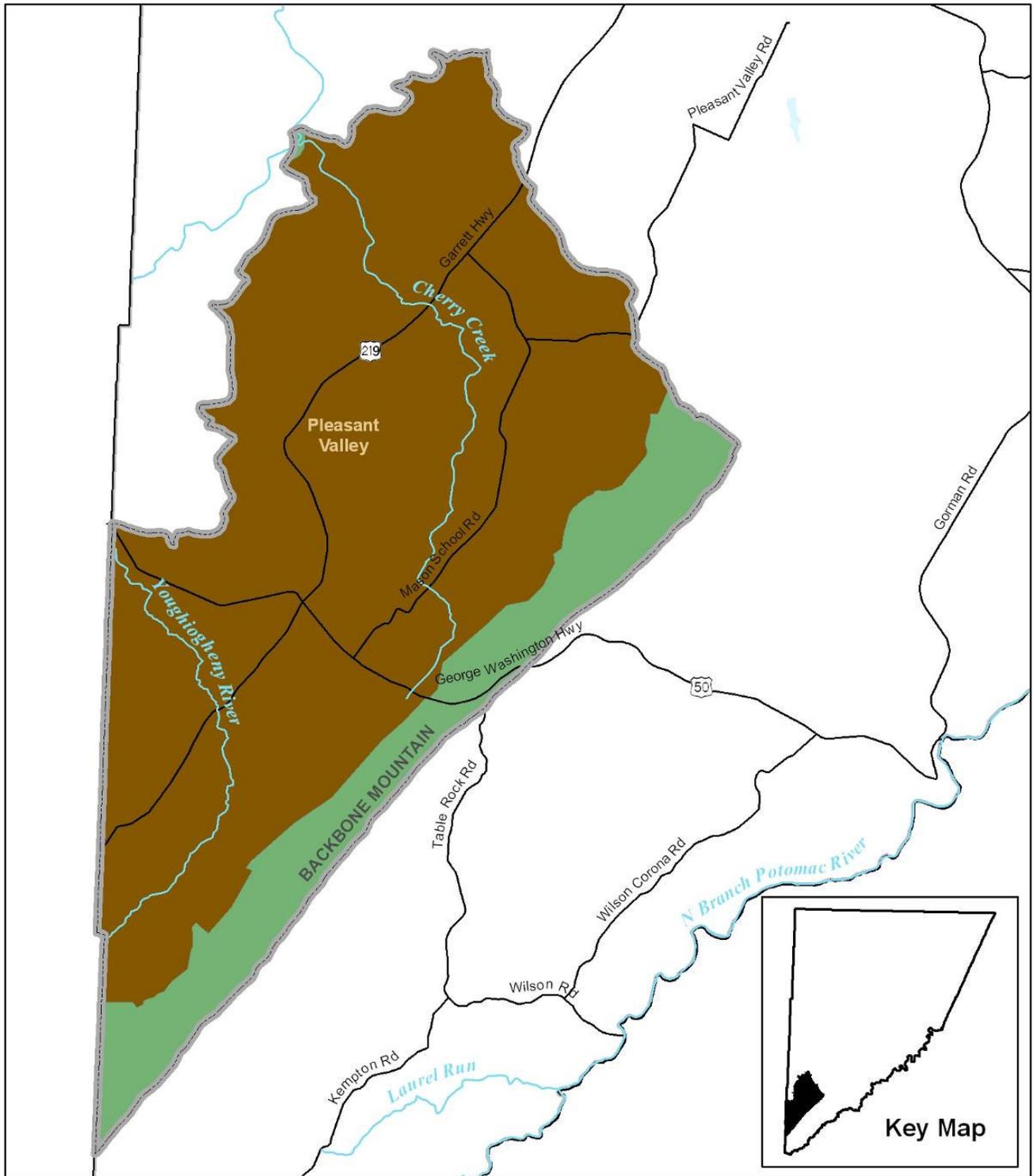
The plan designates nearly all the watershed as AR. The plan increases the amount of AR acreage (compared to the 1995 Comprehensive Plan) along Mason School Road and west of US 219 near the western watershed boundary. No growth areas are designated in the Southern Youghiogheny watershed.



Agricultural uses in Pleasant Valley

¹² Most agricultural districts and easements in the County are coordinated through the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), part of the Maryland Department of Agriculture. A MALPF district is an area of agricultural land that has been designated as eligible to sell development rights (or easements) to MALPF. A MALPF easement permanently prevents subdivision or development.

Map 3.7: Southern Youghiogheny Watershed Land Use Plan



Future Land Use - Southern Youghiogheny Watershed

 Rural Resource	 Agricultural Resource	 Southern Youghiogheny Watershed	 Major Roads
	 Water		




3.5.4 *Little Youghiogheny River Watershed*

The Little Youghiogheny River Watershed covers approximately 92 square miles, or 14 percent of the County. It is located between the Southern Youghiogheny watershed and the Deep Creek Watershed, and is bordered by the Youghiogheny River to the west and by Backbone Mountain to the east (Map 3.8). The Little Youghiogheny River flows into the Youghiogheny River just west of Oakland.

As of 2005, the watershed was 43 percent forest and 38 percent agriculture. The four incorporated towns of Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, Loch Lynn Heights, and Deer Park are located along, and primarily north of the east-west-flowing Little Youghiogheny River and MD 135. The towns and surrounding areas form the largest continuous urban area in the County. Agricultural lands are concentrated south of the incorporated towns, in the northern part of Pleasant Valley (see Map 3.1). Northwest of Oakland is the approximately 1,800 acre Mount Nebo Wildlife Management Area (WMA), which protects a red spruce bog special wetlands area.

In 2005, there were approximately 3,675 housing units in the Little Youghiogheny River watershed, of which approximately 961 were in Oakland, 210 in Loch Lynn Heights, 1,017 in Mountain Lake Park, 181 in Deer Park, and 1,306 in the "remainder" of the watershed (Table 2.3). Between 1990 and 2005, approximately 212 units were built in the watershed outside of the towns.

The Little Youghiogheny River watershed is projected to add approximately 712 new housing units through 2030, of which 250 will be in Oakland, 25 in Loch Lynn Heights, 150 in Mountain Lake Park, 75 in Deer Park, and 212 in the remainder of the watershed.

Map 3.8 shows the land use plan for the Little Youghiogheny River watershed.

Highlights of the land use plan

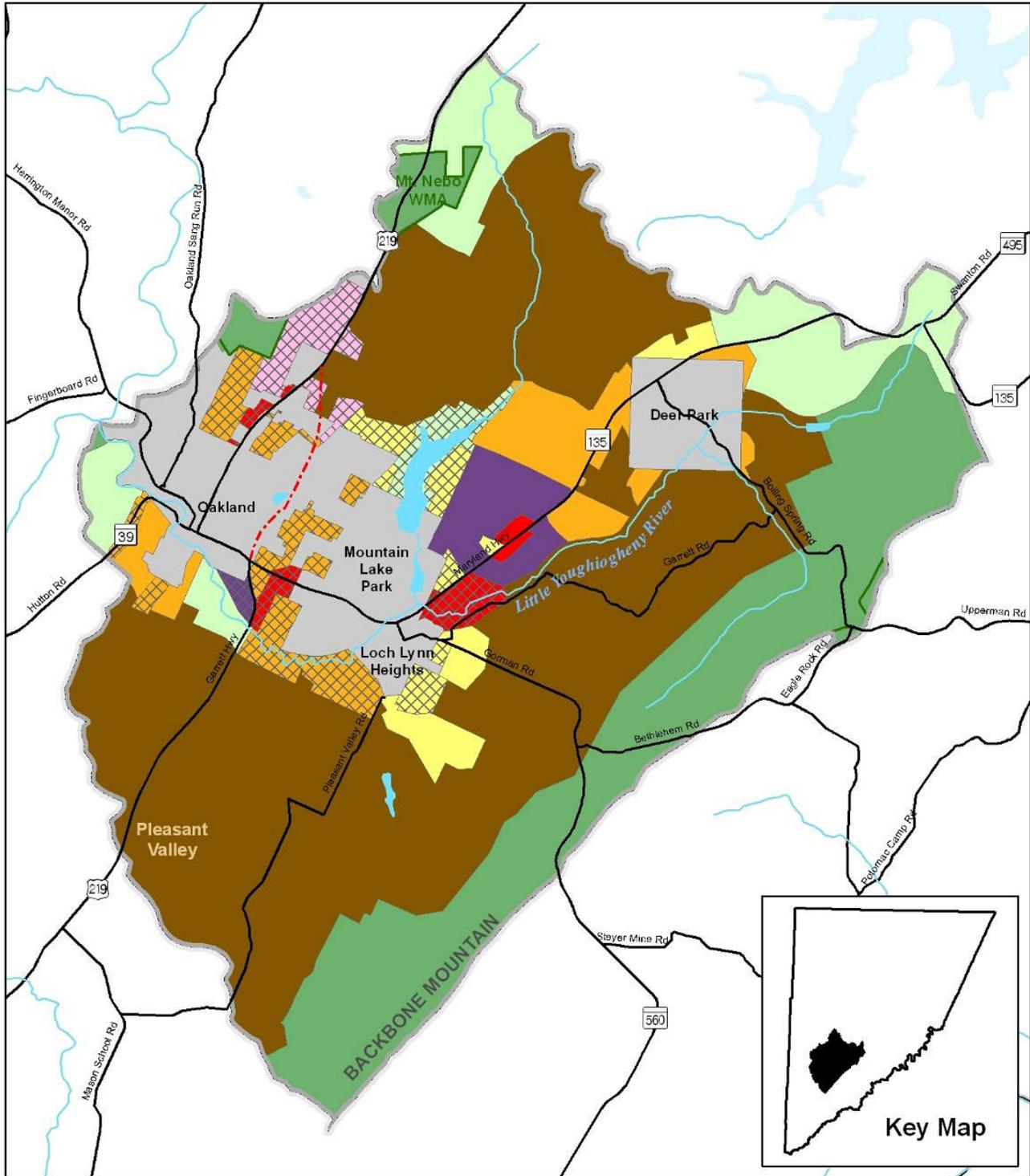
The plan designates the watershed a mix of AR, RR, and growth area. AR areas are designated north of Oakland and Mountain Lake Park and south of Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, and Loch Lynn Heights in the northern portion of Pleasant Valley. Along Jasper Riley Road and Pleasant Valley Road are two concentrations of agricultural districts and easements.

Mount Nebo WMA and portions of Backbone Mountain are designated RR. These areas were designated R in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan.

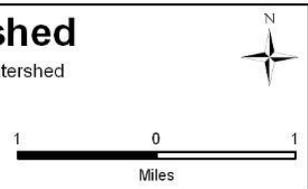
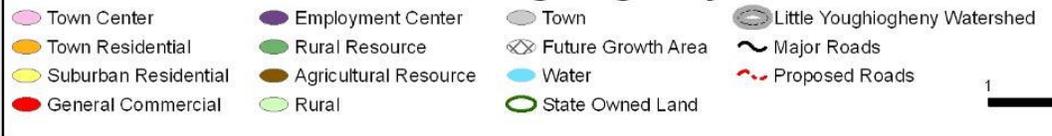
The four incorporated towns and most of the unincorporated land between and immediately surrounding them are designated growth areas. South of Oakland and between Oakland and Mountain Lake Park, some land is designated TR by this plan, a change from the SR designation in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. This change supports the land use goals of encouraging growth in designated growth areas, providing land in appropriate locations and densities for a variety of housing types and choices, and allowing for the development of affordable housing (see Section 3.1 above).

Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, and Loch Lynn Heights have identified more 2,000 acres of Future Growth Area, as shown in Map 3.8. These FGAs encompass all of the land between Oakland and Mountain Lake Park, as well as areas to the north and south of the towns.

Map 3.8: Little Youghiogheny River Land Use Plan



Future Land Use - Little Youghiogheny River Watershed



The 224-acre Southern Garrett Business and Technology Park east of Mountain Lake Park is designated EC. This Comprehensive Plan expands this EC area east along the north side of MD 135 by nearly 350 acres. Two nearby areas that were designated SR in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan are designated TR in this 2008 Comprehensive Plan: lands north of this EC area up to Broadford Road, and an area south of the Southern Garrett Business and Technology Park on the south side of MD 135.

The land use plan recognizes a future town growth area on the north side of Oakland east and west of US 219.

The State Highway Administration is proposing to build a new road, known as the Oakland bypass, to re-route the portion of US 219 that runs through downtown Oakland. This road would run roughly due north from the existing intersection of US 219 at Oak Street, reconnecting to US 219 north of 4th Street, providing a more direct north-south route than the existing dog-leg, while separating long-distance traffic from local traffic in downtown Oakland. This project was identified in the 1995 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan and is supported by Garrett County (see also Chapter 6, Transportation).

3.5.5 *Casselman River Watershed*

The Casselman River Watershed covers approximately 92 square miles, or 14 percent of the County. It is located in the north-central part of the County, north of the Deep Creek watershed. It is bordered to the west by Negro Mountain and to the east by Meadow Mountain and Little Savage Mountain. The Casselman River flows north into Pennsylvania and eventually to the Youghiogeny River, and is part of the broader Ohio/Mississippi River watershed. Major roads crossing the watershed are I-68, MD 495, US 219 north of I-68, and National Pike (US 40 Alt). There are two interchanges with I-68, at Grantsville and at Chestnut Ridge.

As of 2005 the watershed was 68 percent forest and 24 percent agriculture (Table 3.8). The watershed contains large portions of Savage River State Forest, both north and south of I-68. The Western Maryland 4-H center occupies a large site south of Bittinger, extending west into the Glades, a large water and wetlands complex. The City of Frostburg owns and draws drinking water from Piney Reservoir and surrounding land on Piney Creek, northwest of Finzel. Map 3.9 shows the land use plan for the Casselman River watershed.

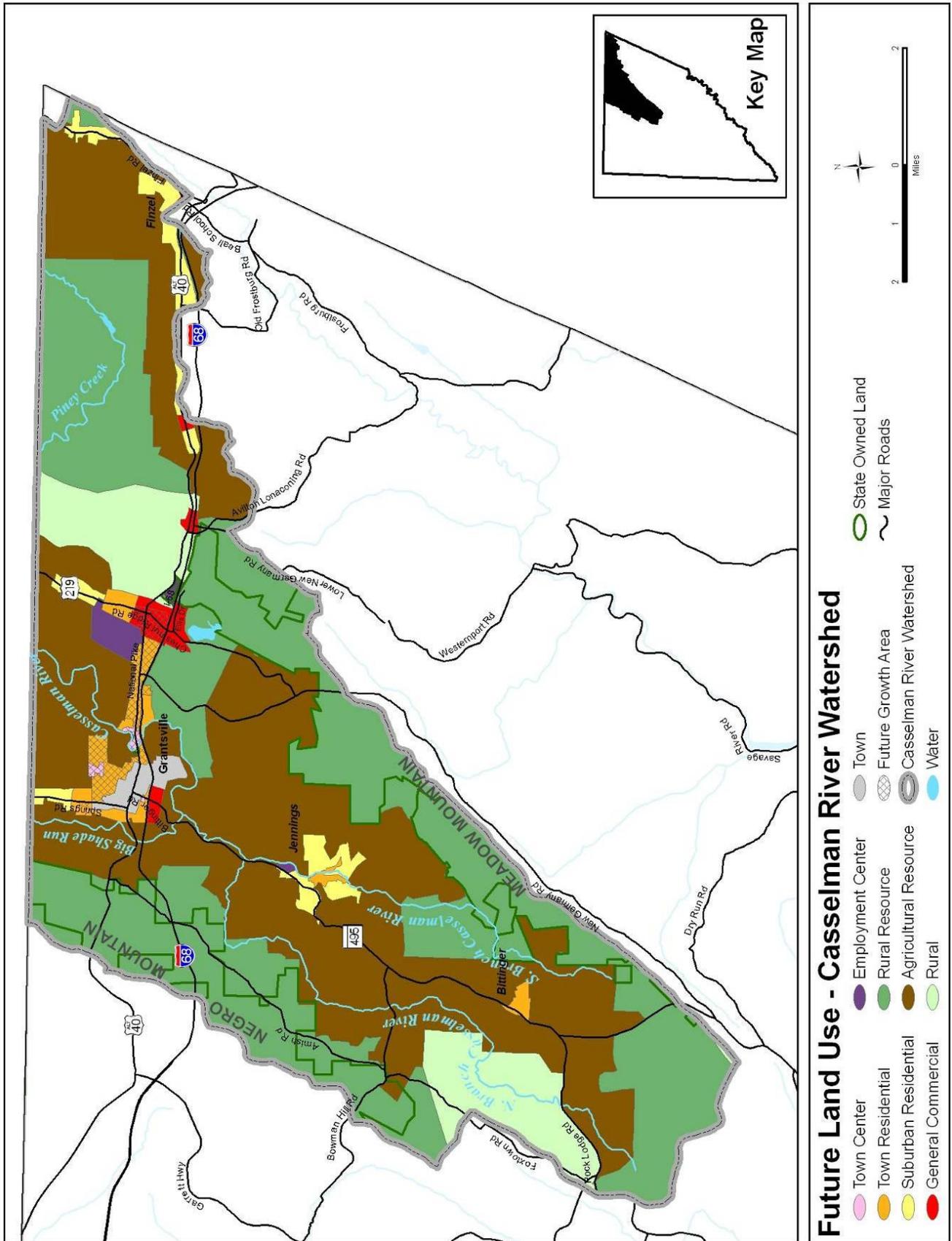
The Casselman River watershed includes the Town of Grantsville and the villages of Jennings and Bittinger. In 2005, there were approximately 1,950 housing units in the watershed, of which approximately 305 were in Grantsville (Table 2.3). Between 1990 and 2005 approximately 430 units were built in the area of the watershed outside Grantsville.

Little Meadows and the associated Tomlinson Inn, three miles east of Grantsville, is significant historic site dating back to colonial times. For additional detail see the Heritage Plan in the Appendix.

The Casselman River watershed is projected to add approximately 532 housing units through 2030, of which 100 will be in Grantsville.

A potential future economic development area has been identified in the Chestnut Ridge area, south and east of the I-68 interchange with US 219 North (Chestnut Ridge Road). This site would have access to I-68, and an upgraded US 219 (see the Transportation Chapter) via Ellis Drive. The creation of this economic development area would be consistent with this Plan's land use and economic development objectives, but would depend on the resolution of a number of issues, including support from property owners and the State, and final selection of the US 219 North alignment. Because these issues are not fully resolved, the area is not designated as an Employment Center on the Land Use map.

Map 3.9: Casselman River Watershed Land Use Plan



Highlights of the land use plan

The land use plan emphasizes natural resource land conservation. The plan designates a large portion of the watershed as RR. Some large areas in the watershed that were classified as R in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan have been redesignated as RR in the 2008 plan, mostly on the western side of the watershed. The plan also increases the amount of land designated AR, especially east of Jennings and Bittinger.

Growth areas in the watershed are the Town of Grantsville and the rural villages of Jennings and Bittinger. Land along the I-68/National Pike corridor between Grantsville and Chestnut Ridge is designated TR. Along National Pike, between Meyersdale Road and Finzel Road (MD 546), additional lands are designated a mix of SR and GC.

Land around the Chestnut Ridge interchange with I-68 is designated a mix of GC and EC. An area, covering approximately 400 acres northwest of the interchange is designated EC. This area is undeveloped and maintains its designation from the 1995 plan. A second area east of the interchange is designated EC and currently houses the County roads garage.

West and north of the Grantsville, land is designated TR by this plan, a change from the SR designation in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. This change is consistent with the land use goals of providing land in appropriate locations and densities for a variety of housing types and choices, and allowing for the development of affordable housing. It is also consistent with the Future Growth Area identified by the town. The Grantsville FGA extends north of the existing town east of Springs Road, and east along US 40 Alt to the I-68/US-219 North interchange.

Land at the northern end of Springs Road (MD 669) up to the state line is designated SR. The 66-acre Northern Garrett Industrial Park is located in the Town of Grantsville.

Jennings is designated a mix of TR and SR. Bittinger is designated TR. Jennings is served by public sewer via an extension from the Grantsville system. The Plan does not propose changes to the growth boundaries around Jennings or Bittinger.

3.5.6 *Savage River Watershed*

The Savage River Watershed covers approximately 115 square miles, or 17 percent of the County. It is located on the east side of the County, east of Meadow Mountain and north of Backbone Mountain. The Savage River flows into the North Branch Potomac River at the village of Bloomington (Map 3.5). This watershed has rugged mountainous terrain with extensive areas of steep slopes.

As of 2005, the Savage River watershed was 82 percent forest and 14 percent agriculture (Table 3.8). Large areas of state-owned lands in the watershed are Savage River State Forest, New Germany State Park, and Big Run State Park. While Savage River State Forest is extensive (over 84 square miles), the state holdings are not contiguous and are interspersed with privately owned lands, some of which are entirely surrounded by state-owned land. Agricultural lands are mostly concentrated in the northeast part of the watershed, south of I-68. The Savage River Reservoir in the south central portion of the watershed was built in 1952 as flood control and water supply project. Like the Youghiogheny, the Savage River below the reservoir is nationally renowned for its whitewater recreation amenities.

No incorporated towns are located in the watershed, but there are three rural villages: Bloomington, Finzel, and Swanton. In 2005 there were just under 1,100 housing units in the watershed (Table 2-3), among the lowest housing densities of all the County's watersheds. Between 1990 and 2005 approximately 260 new units were built.



The Savage River reservoir

The watershed is projected to add approximately 260 new units through 2030.

Map 3.10 shows the land use plan for the Savage River watershed.

Highlights of the land use plan

The land use plan emphasizes natural resource land conservation in the Savage River watershed, by designating nearly three-quarters of the watershed as RR. Some large areas that were designated R in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan are designated RR in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. These include the northern part of Backbone Mountain and areas in the northeast part of the watershed. This plan also expands the AR area in the Pea Ridge-Avilton area. Most of the Savage River watershed adjacent to the Deep Creek watershed is designated R, consistent with its designation under the 1995 Comprehensive Plan.

The only growth areas in the watershed are the three rural villages. Finzel, which is located near an interchange on I-68, is a mix of GC, TR, and SR. Bloomington is located on MD 135 near Luke and Westernport in Allegany County, and is partially located in the North Branch Potomac River watershed. It is designated TR, and is served by a small public water and sewer system. Swanton, located on MD 495, is designated TR.

3.5.7 Georges Creek Watershed

Georges Creek flows north-south through Allegany County into the North Branch Potomac River. A small portion, approximately 18 square miles (three percent) of the northeastern edge of Garrett County drains down the eastern side of Big Savage Mountain, towards Georges Creek. The Georges Creek watershed in Garrett County is 78 percent forest and 14 percent agriculture (Table 3.8).

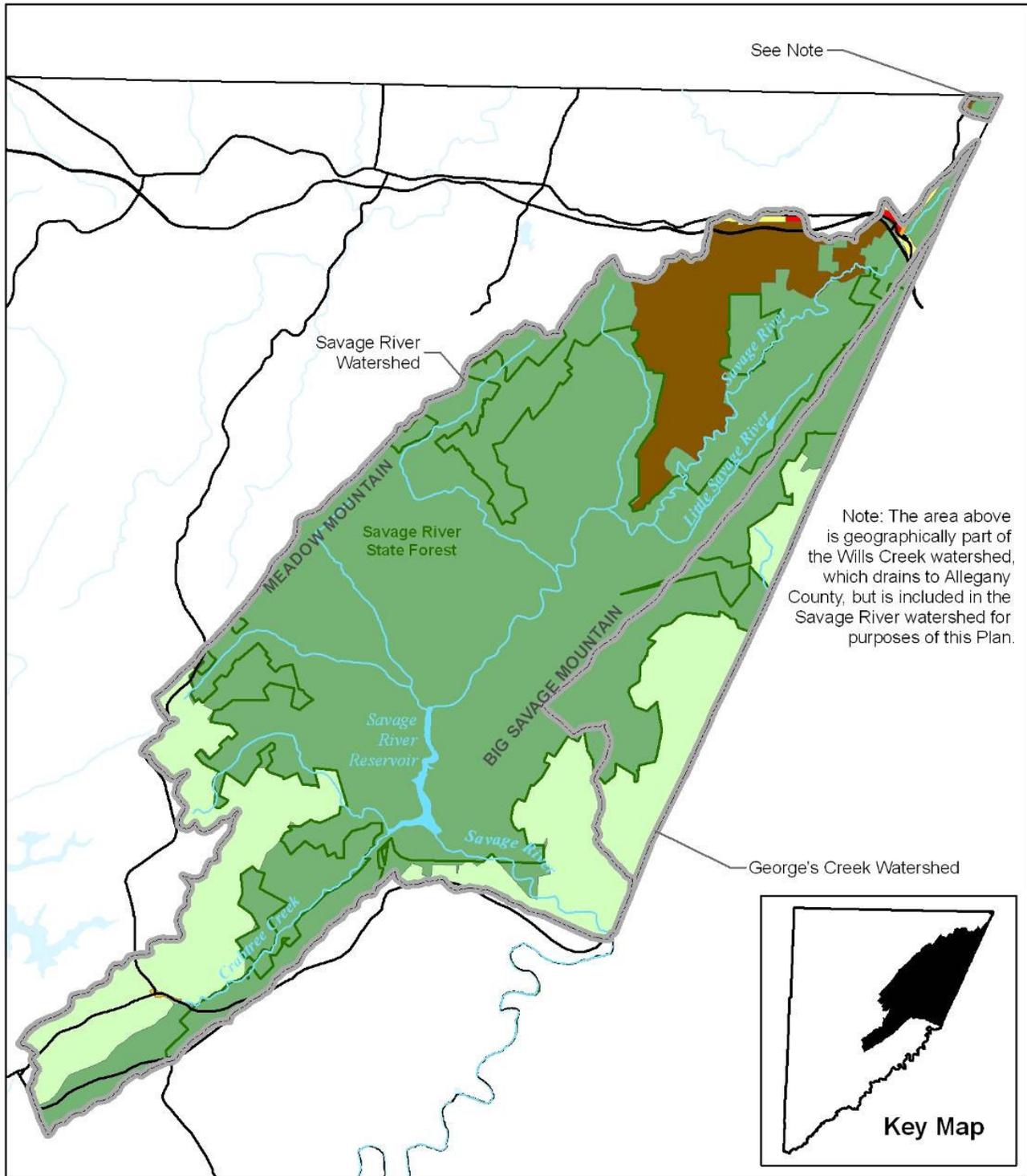
Map 3.10 includes the land use plan for the Georges Creek watershed.

In 2005 there were approximately 66 housing units in the watershed. Less than 10 units are projected to be added through 2030.

Highlights of the land use plan

The plan designates nearly all the watershed a mix of RR and R. A portion of Savage River State Forest runs along Big Savage Mountain on the western edge of the watershed, and is designated RR. The southern part of the watershed includes some farmland and some former mining sites. These areas are designated R. No growth areas are designated in the Georges Creek Watershed.

Map 3.10: Savage River and Georges Creek Watershed Land Use Plans



Future Land Use - Savage River and Georges Creek Watersheds



A wind power electricity generation project has been proposed on Big Savage Mountain on the Allegany County/Garrett County border north of Lonaconing Road (see discussion of wind power in Chapter 7).

3.5.8 North Branch Potomac River Watershed

The North Branch Potomac River watershed covers approximately 105 square miles, or 16 percent of the County. It occupies the southeastern edge of the County, bordered on the west by Backbone Mountain and on the east by the North Branch Potomac River.

As of 2005, the watershed was 75 percent forest and 15 percent agriculture (Table 3.8). Approximately six percent of the watershed is “other categories,” most of which are “extractive” uses, reflecting the remains of former coal mining sites in this area. Approximately 10,500 acres in the central part of the watershed make up Potomac State Forest. Jennings Randolph Lake is a 952 acre impoundment created along the North Branch Potomac River in 1982 as a flood control facility. Surrounding the lake the US Army Corps of Engineers owns and manages a 4,500-acre national recreation area with many recreational opportunities. At the north end of the recreation area, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) operates a 270-acre fish management area.

The North Branch Potomac River watershed includes the town of Kitzmiller and the villages of Gorman, Shallmar, and Bloomington. Bloomington is partially located in the Savage River watershed. In 2005 there were 1,212 housing units in the watershed (Table 2.3). Between 1990 and 2005 approximately 185 new units were built. The watershed is projected to add approximately 200 new units through 2030, of which 25 would be in Kitzmiller.

Map 3.11 shows the land use plan for the North Branch Potomac River watershed.

Highlights of the land use plan

The land use plan emphasizes natural resource land conservation in the North Branch Potomac River watershed, and designates the watershed a mix of RR, AR, and R. Potomac State Forest the Jennings Randolph Lake area and Backbone Mountain are designated RR.

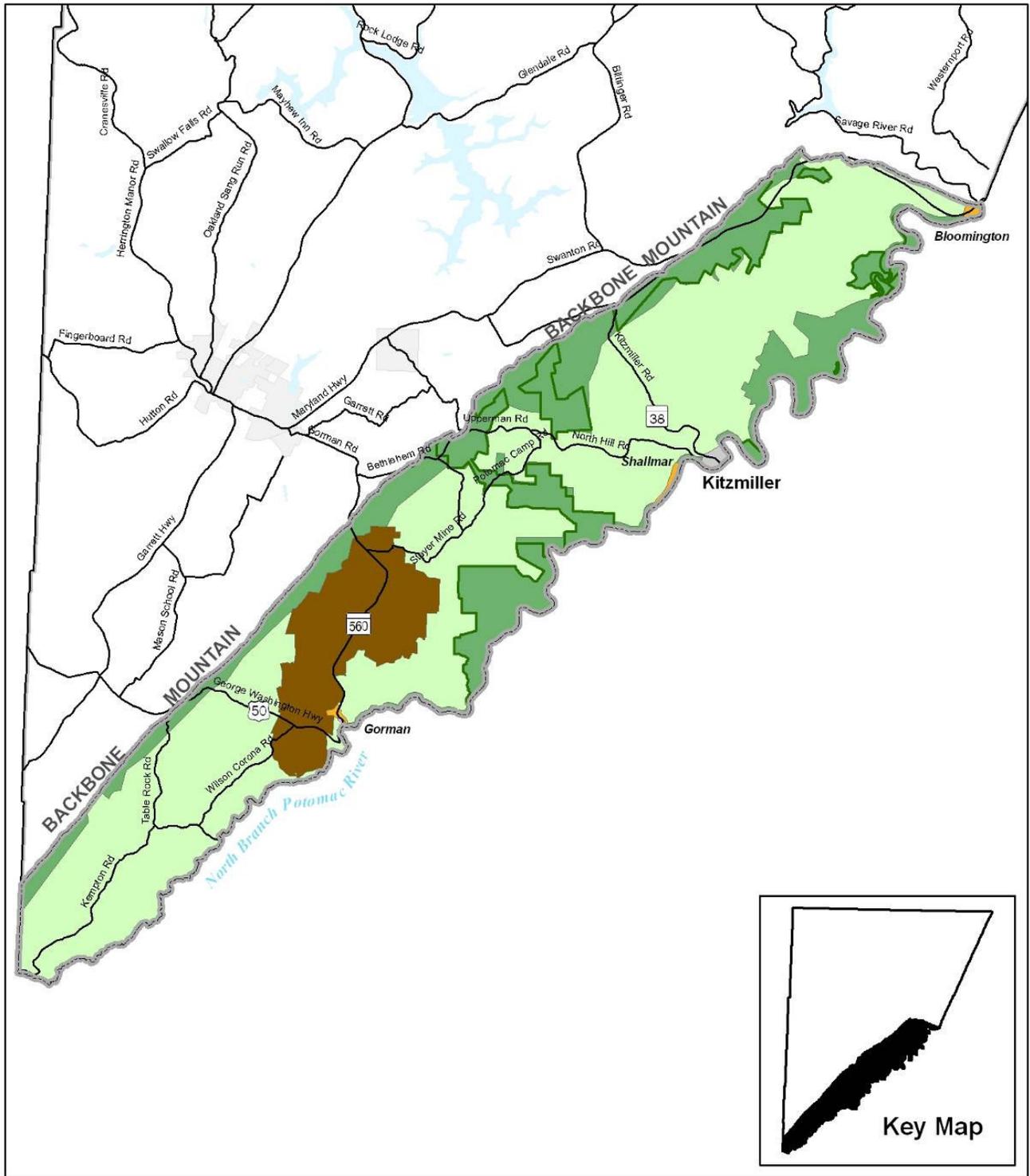


The view to the south from Kelso Gap



Gorman, MD, along the North Branch Potomac River

Map 3.11: North Branch Potomac River Watershed Land Use Plan



Future Land Use - North Branch Potomac Watershed

Town Center	Agricultural Resource	North Branch Potomac Watershed	Major Roads	
Town Residential	Rural	Water	State Owned Land	
Rural Resource	Town			

The area north and west of Gorman is one of the County's six major blocks of contiguous areas of farmland, and is designated AR. The remaining area east of Backbone Mountain is designated R.

The village of Shallmar, south of Kitzmiller is designated TC. Gorman is a mix of TR and TC. Bloomington is designated TR.

A wind power electricity generation project has been proposed along the ridge at the southern end of Backbone Mountain, one of several sites in Garrett County that are considered by DNR to be suitable for wind power because of the strong steady winds (see discussion in Chapter 7).

3.5.9 *Deep Creek Watershed*

Of all the watersheds in the County the Deep Creek watershed has the largest number of housing units (although not the largest year-round population) and the most complex land use issues. Accordingly, the Deep Creek watershed (and the broader Deep Creek Lake Influence Area) is described in detail in a separate Chapter, Chapter 4.

3.6 Policies and Actions

1. Use the Land Use Plan Map as the basis for revisions to the Land Classification Map, which is the reference map for the County's Subdivision Ordinance.
2. Revise the text of the Subdivision Ordinance:
 - Incorporate the recommendations in this chapter with respect to clustering and site layout in subdivisions, especially in the AR and RR land use categories.
 - Require mandatory Sketch Plats for development in AR and RR areas.
 - Add a reference in the ordinance text to the required 500-foot buffer designated around state-owned lands in the RR category adjoining land designated R (see above section 3.4.1). The Land Classification Map adopted as part of the Garrett County Subdivision Ordinance refers to the buffer but the text does not.
 - Clarify that development on public water and sewer on land designated TR is permitted at up to eight multi-family dwelling units per acre, and on land designated TC is permitted at up to nine multi-family dwelling units per acre (Ordinance Section 302).
3. Use the Land Use Plan Map as the basis for revisions to the Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Ordinance.
4. Revise Priority Funding Area mapping to reflect town Future Growth Areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.
5. Concentrate commercial development in centers rather than in "strip commercial" developments (see Table 3.8).
6. Consider direct County contributions for agricultural land preservation. Such funds could be used directly to purchase development rights from willing sellers or to supplement offers from the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF).
7. Consider the recommendations for agricultural land preservation in the LPPRP (pages 4-11 to 4-13). Key recommendations that supplement the recommendations in this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan are:
 - Encourage formation of a private, non-profit local land trust to support current efforts to protect farmland
 - Encourage farmers who must sell their farms to sell to other farmers by working with local agricultural interests to establish a farm brokerage program that would match older farmers with younger ones and sellers with prospective farmer buyers.
8. Resolve issues concerning development of old platted lots that were of legal sized when created but do not meet current health requirements for on site water and/or wastewater systems. The largest number of such lots is in Youghioghney Mountain Resort in the Youghioghney River watershed.

