



Garrett County 2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan

Adopted May 2012



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Cover pictures: Left to right top to bottom: Oakland Train Station (courtesy of Don Eilenberger); Cross-country Skiing (MD Department of Natural Resources); Whitewater Kayaking (Adventure Sports Center Institute); Women's Soccer (Casselman Soccer Complex); Cranesville Swamp (Brad Nesline)

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RESOLUTION 2012-10

WHEREAS, Subsection 5-905(c) 2 Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and requires counties to prepare and adopt a Plan for the general purpose of establishing a comprehensive strategy for the protection and appropriate use of land-based and water-oriented resources of the County including acquisition goals and projected needs for recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, a Plan entitled the GARRETT COUNTY 2012 LAND PRESERVATION PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN has been prepared in cooperation with the County comprehensive planning agency; and

WHEREAS, Garrett County has by duly adopted resolution of the Board of County Commissioners appointed a Planning Commission to exercise the powers and duties conferred by Article 66B; and

WHEREAS, Said Garrett County Planning Commission, acting with the advice and assistance of the citizens of the County has recommended adoption of the GARRETT COUNTY 2012 LAND PRESERVATION PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN; and

WHEREAS, Said Plan is designed and intended to determine needs for agricultural and forest preservation, demand for recreation areas and protection of unique natural areas for the present and future residents of Garrett County; and

WHEREAS, Said Plan has been subject to public review and to public hearings; and

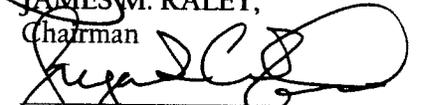
WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissions have carefully considered said Plan together with the comments and suggestions regarding said Plan and find that said Plan constitutes a suitable rational and timely plan to preserve agricultural and forest land, provide recreation areas and facilities and protect unique natural areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the document entitled "GARRETT COUNTY 2012 LAND PRESERVATION PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN" is hereby adopted as the Recreation Plan for Garrett County.

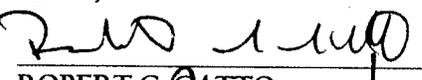
DULY ADOPTED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONER OF GARRETT COUNTY, MARYLAND
THIS 15TH DAY OF MAY 2012.



JAMES M. RALEY,
Chairman

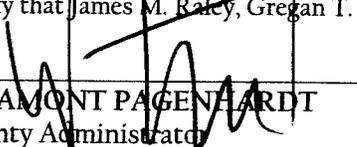


GREGAN T. CRAWFORD
County Commissioner



ROBERT G. GATTO
County Commissioner

I certify that the foregoing resolution was duly passed and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners at a regular meeting held May 15, 2012; I further certify this reproduction is an accurate facsimile of said resolution; and I further certify I am the County Administrator for the said County Commissioners charged with the responsibility of keeping and recording all minutes, records and acts of the said County Commissioners; and I further certify that James M. Raley, Gregan T. Crawford, and Robert G. Gatto to be the appropriate officials to sign the same resolution.



R. LAMONT PAGENHARDT
County Administrator

GARRETT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LAND DEVELOPMENT

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Subsection 5-905(c) 2 Natural Resources Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and requires counties to prepare and adopt a Local Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan for the general purpose of establishing a comprehensive strategy for the protection and appropriate use of land-based and water-oriented resources of the County including acquisition goals and projected needs for recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, Garrett County has by duly adopted resolution of the Board of County Commissioners appointed a Planning Commission to exercise the powers and duties conferred by Article 66B; and

WHEREAS, Said Garrett County Planning Commission, acting with the advice and assistance of the citizens of the County has caused to be prepared the draft of the GARRETT COUNTY 2012 LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN; and

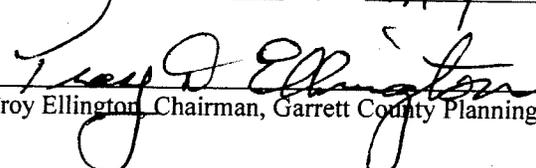
WHEREAS, Said plan is designed and intended to determine needs for agricultural and forest preservation, demand for recreation areas and protection of unique natural areas for the present and future residents of Garrett County; and

WHEREAS, Said Plan has been subject to public review and to public hearings; and

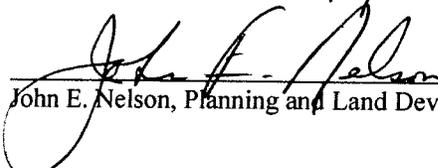
WHEREAS, The Garrett County Planning Commission has carefully considered said Plan together with the comments and suggestions from the public and find that said Plan constitutes a suitable rational and timely plan to preserve agricultural and forest land, provide for recreation areas and protect unique natural areas;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Garrett County Planning Commission is hereby submitting its recommended document entitled "GARRETT COUNTY 2012 LAND PRESERVATION, PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN" to the Board of County Commissioners for their adoption.

DULY ADOPTED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE GARRETT COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION THIS 9th day of May, 2012.


Troy Ellington, Chairman, Garrett County Planning Commission

I certify the foregoing resolution was duly passed and adopted by the Garrett County Planning Commission at a regular meeting held May 9, 2012.


John E. Nelson, Planning and Land Development Director

Executive Summary

The State of Maryland requires that counties update Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plans (LPPRP) every six years; one year prior to the revision of the statewide Maryland Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. The LPPRPs qualify local governments for State Program Open Space (POS) grants and other programs related to three land resource elements:

- Recreation and parks;
- Agricultural land preservation; and
- Natural resource land conservation.

This 2012 LPPRP has been developed in accordance with guidelines developed in 2010 by the Maryland Departments of Planning and Natural Resources. The main purpose for the 2012 Garrett County LPPRP is to identify future needs and priorities for parks, recreation and open space acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation in the County and its eight incorporated towns. These needs and priorities serve as a guide for land acquisitions and capital investments in the County's and towns' Capital Improvements Programs. This 2012 LPPRP:

- Describes progress in parks and recreation, agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation since the 2005 LPPRP.
- Addresses the recommendations for parks and recreation made in the 2009 State LPPRP.
- Identifies needs and priorities of current and future County residents and visitors for parks and recreation through 2027 and beyond;

Upon adoption, this LPPRP replaces the 2005 LPPRP and becomes one of a number of functional plans that help implement the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter I introduces the plan including its legal framework and describes the plan preparation process. Chapter II provides the framework for the plan including background information about the County, growth and development, and the planning framework.

Chapter III is the recreation chapter. It describes the goals of the recreation and parks program and the organizational structure and operating procedures for recreation in the County. The chapter also includes a needs analysis that sets priorities for recommended land acquisitions, facilities, and rehabilitation projects. Inputs to the needs analysis include an update of the supply inventory, a demand analysis based on projected population growth, and public input. Based on the needs analysis the chapter sets forth a 10 to 20-year parks and recreation priorities program for meeting the County's land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation needs. Facility development and rehabilitation rather than land acquisition are the major priorities for Garrett County due to the fact that the County far exceeds the State's goal of 30 acres of recreation land per 1,000 residents. The chapter also includes a section describing recent and ongoing trail planning efforts in the County, with a renewed focus on developing and interconnecting winter trails.

Chapter IV Agricultural and Natural Resource Lands is an update of two separate chapters from the 2005 plan, discussing the extent to which progress has been made toward achievement of their goals and objectives.

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Chapter I Introduction

This chapter describes the purpose and context for preparing the 2012 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP), its objectives and legal framework.

A. Purpose of the Plan

The State of Maryland requires that counties update their Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plans (LPPRPs) every six years; one year prior to the revision of the statewide Maryland Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan¹. The LPPRPs qualify local governments for State Program Open Space (POS) grants and other programs related to three land resource elements:

- Recreation and parks;
- Agricultural land preservation; and
- Natural resource conservation.

Based on changing priorities at the state level, the purposes of the statewide and local LPPRPs have evolved over the years. This 2012 LPPRP has been developed in accordance with guidelines developed in 2010 by the Maryland Departments of Planning and Natural Resources.

The main purpose for the 2012 Garrett County LPPRP is to identify future needs and priorities for parks, recreation and open space acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation in the County and its eight incorporated towns. These needs and priorities serve as a guide for land acquisitions and capital investments in the County's and towns' Capital Improvements Programs.

Past LPPRPs have also had a strong emphasis on agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation. This LPPRP describes progress in these areas since the 2005 LPPRP. However, based on the LPPRP guidelines, discussion and policies related to agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation programs are set forth in the 2008 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan.

To achieve these purposes, this 2012 LPPRP:

- Describes progress in parks and recreation, agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation since the 2005 LPPRP.
- Addresses the recommendations for parks and recreation made in the 2009 State LPPRP.
- Identifies needs and priorities of current and future County residents and visitors for parks and recreation through 2027.
- Evaluates State and County land preservation goals and objectives for the three land resource elements and identifies where they are the same, complementary, or different.

This LPPRP also includes an update of trails planning in Garrett County including winter trails.

B. Local Agency Preparation of the Plan

Garrett County government is responsible for the preparation of the LPPRP. The Department of Planning and Land Development was responsible for overall coordination. The eight towns in Garrett County were also consulted during preparation of the plan.

¹ Program Open Space: § 5-905 of the Natural Resources Article, Maryland Annotated Code.

Public participation

Public participation was part of the LPPRP preparation process. Two public meetings were held on October 5, 2011 to kick off the process. The first meeting was a planning workshop with representatives of various trails organizations who were asked to provide input on the current trail systems and help identify future trail needs. The second public meeting took place at a Planning Commission meeting at which members of the public and recreation organizations made recommendations.

The Planning Commission held a joint public hearing with the County Commissioners on the Plan on May 9, 2012. The Planning Commission unanimously passed a resolution recommending the plan to the County Commissioners. The County Commissioners passed a resolution approving the plan on May 15, 2012.

C. The LPPRP's Relationship to the Comprehensive Planning Process

The LPPRP is one of a series of companion plans, regulations, and guidance documents that form Garrett County's planning program. The current Garrett County Comprehensive Plan, adopted in October 2008, is the County's primary planning policy guide and is used to guide growth and conserve agricultural and natural resource lands.

This LPPRP has been prepared to be consistent with pertinent Comprehensive Plan policies, goals and objectives. Following State approval of the LPPRP, anticipated to occur in the Summer or Fall of 2012, it will replace the 2005 LPPRP and become one of a number of functional plans that help implement the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter II Framework

A. Physical Characteristics

1. Location

Garrett County is the westernmost county in Maryland and is predominantly rural in character. It is bordered by Pennsylvania to the north; West Virginia and the North Branch of the Potomac River to the west and south-east; and Allegany County to the east (Figure II-1). Garrett County contains eight incorporated towns: Accident, Deer Park, Friendsville, Grantsville, Kitzmiller, Loch Lynn Heights, Mountain Lake Park and Oakland.

2. Land Cover

Garrett County comprises approximately 656 square miles². As of 2005, approximately 9 percent or 36,522 acres of this area was developed, an increase of approximately 22,551 acres since 1973. There was a comparable decline of resource lands during this period. Resource lands totaled approximately 383,108 acres or 91 percent of the County in 2005, down from 97 percent in 1973 (see Table II-1 and Figure II-2). Most of the developed land is located in and around the eight incorporated towns and Deep Creek Lake. Approximately 68 percent of the County is forested.

Table II-1 Land Cover 1973 to 2005

Land Use	1973		2005		Change, 1973-2005 (Acres)
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	
<u>Development Lands</u>	13,971	3.3%	36,522	8.7%	22,551
Low Density Residential	3,702	0.9%	22,024	5.2%	18,322
Residential	1,368	0.3%	3,318	0.8%	1,950
Commercial/Industrial	941	0.2%	1,808	0.4%	868
Other Categories ¹	7,960	1.9%	9,372	2.2%	1,412
<u>Resource Lands</u>	405,659	96.7%	383,108	91.3%	-22,551
Agriculture	102,865	24.5%	89,142	21.2%	-13,724
Forest	295,116	70.3%	285,508	68.0%	-9,608
Wetlands ²	2,043	0.5%	2,663	0.6%	620
Water	5,635	1.3%	5,795	1.4%	161
Total	419,630	100%	419,630	100%	

Note:

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

Source: 2008 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan.

² The Maryland Department of Planning has released 2010 Land Use Land Cover data; however, there is a discrepancy between the County boundary used by MDP and the boundary used in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan boundary is based on the Chisholm Boundary, which results in a slightly smaller land area. This Chisholm Boundary is now formally recognized and MDP is expected to update its LULC data; therefore, this LPPRP uses the data from the Comprehensive Plan.

Figure II-1 Location

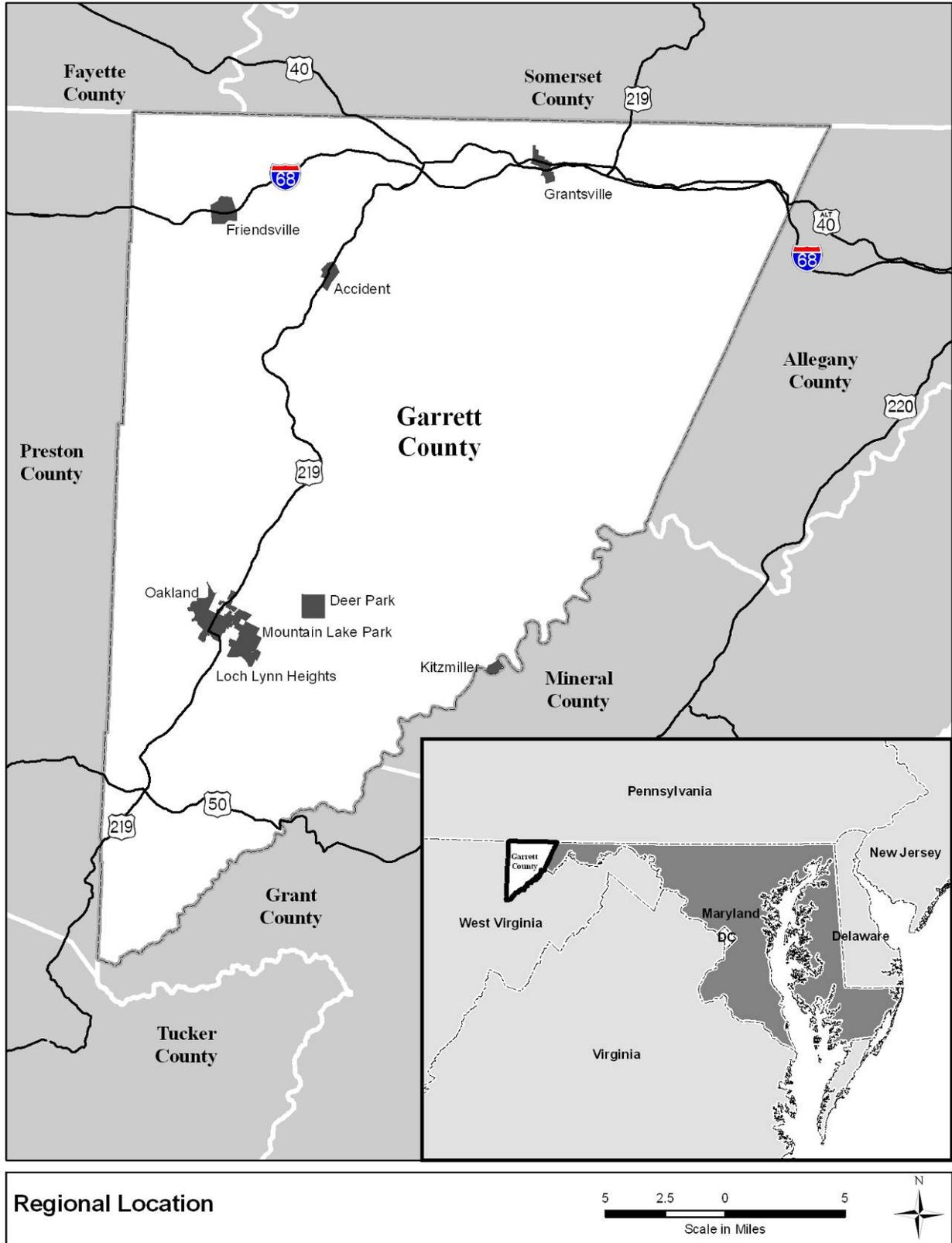
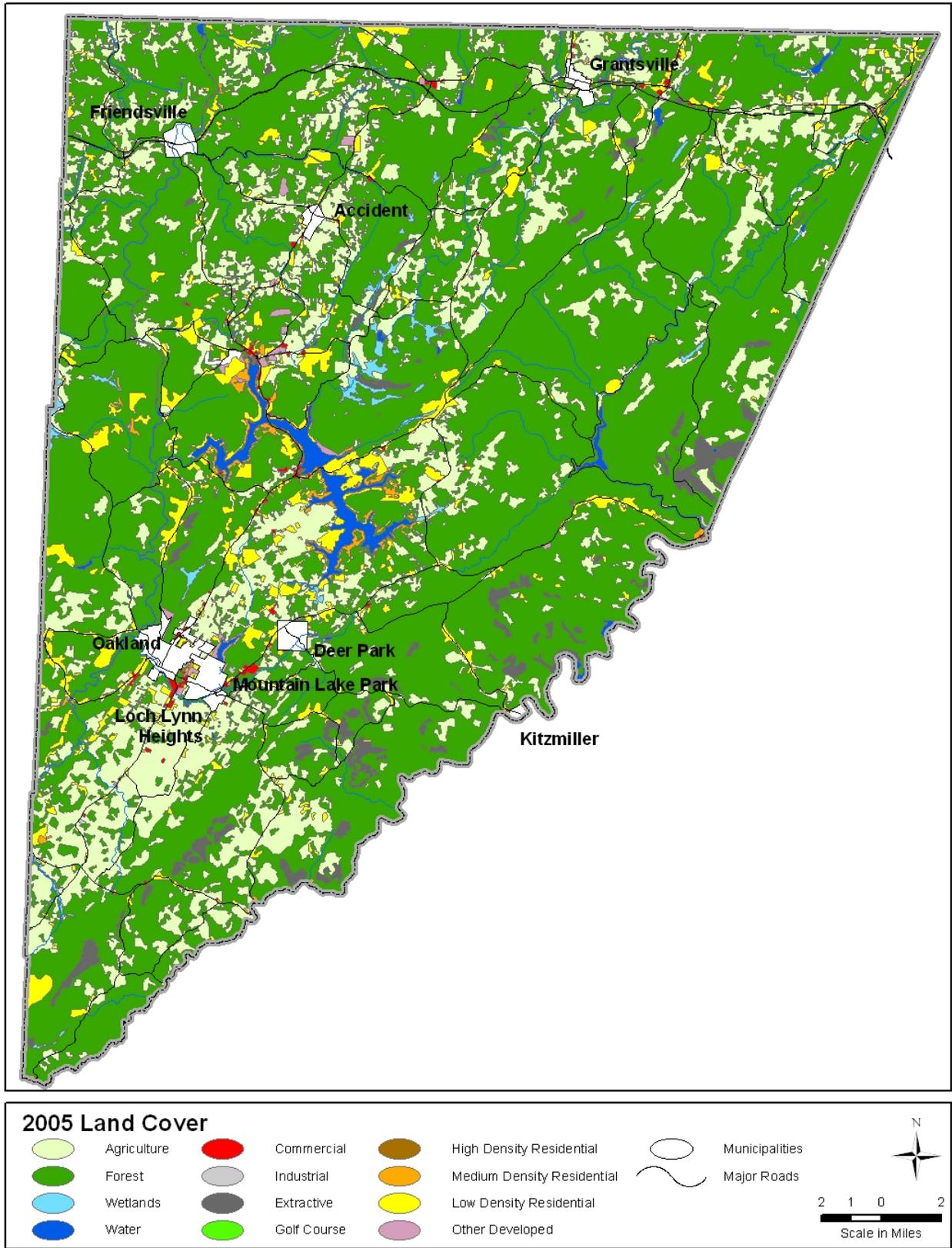


Figure II-2 Land Cover



3. Natural Resources

Garrett County's environmental assets include scenic and wild rivers, large tracts of forested areas, the Allegheny Mountains and rolling rural landscapes. This abundant natural beauty is appreciated not only by residents, but also by outdoor enthusiasts that flock to the County's many state parks and forests, world class whitewater, and winter sports opportunities. The County's natural resources have benefited greatly from the preservation afforded by a high level of recreation and resource land owned by the Federal government, State of Maryland and various conservation organizations.

B. Demographic Characteristics

As of the 2010 Census, the County's total population was 30,097. While the three adjoining towns of Mountain Lake Park, Oakland, and Loch Lynn Heights contain the large majority (66 %) of the County's town dwelling population, 77% of the County's residents live in the unincorporated area. Table II-2 shows the distribution of this population among the County's eight towns and unincorporated areas. The County experienced a population increase of 251 residents between 2000 and 2010; however, the population of the towns increased by only six persons, while the population of the unincorporated area increased by 245.

Table II-2 Population Distribution 2000 and 2010

Location	Population		2010 % of County Population	Change 2000 - 2010	
	2000	2010		Number	Percent
Unincorporated	22,981	23,226	77%	245	1%
All Towns	6,865	6,871	23%	6	0%
Accident	353	325	1%	-28	-8%
Deer Park	405	399	1%	-6	-1%
Friendsville	539	491	2%	-48	-9%
Grantsville	619	766	3%	147	24%
Kitzmiller	302	321	1%	19	6%
Loch Lynn Heights	469	552	2%	83	18%
Mountain Lake Par	2,248	2,092	7%	-156	-7%
Oakland	1,930	1,925	6%	-5	0%
Total	29,846	30,097	100%	251	1%

Source: 2010 Census

The County's population is projected to increase to 31,550 by 2025 (Table II-3). While this is a change of less than five percent, the age distribution is projected to change more significantly. The population age 19 and under is projected to decrease by approximately 900 persons and will represent 21% of the population, down from 25%. The population age 65 and over is projected to increase by about 3,100 and will comprise 26 percent of the population in 2025 compared to 17 percent in 2010.

Table II-3 *Garrett County Population Projections by Age 2010 and 2025*

Age	2010		2025	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-19	7,509	25%	6,600	21%
20-64	17,357	58%	16,590	53%
65+	5,231	17%	8,360	26%
Total	30,097	100%	31,550	100%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning's 2010 Demographic and Socio-Economic Outlook.

C. Comprehensive Plan Framework

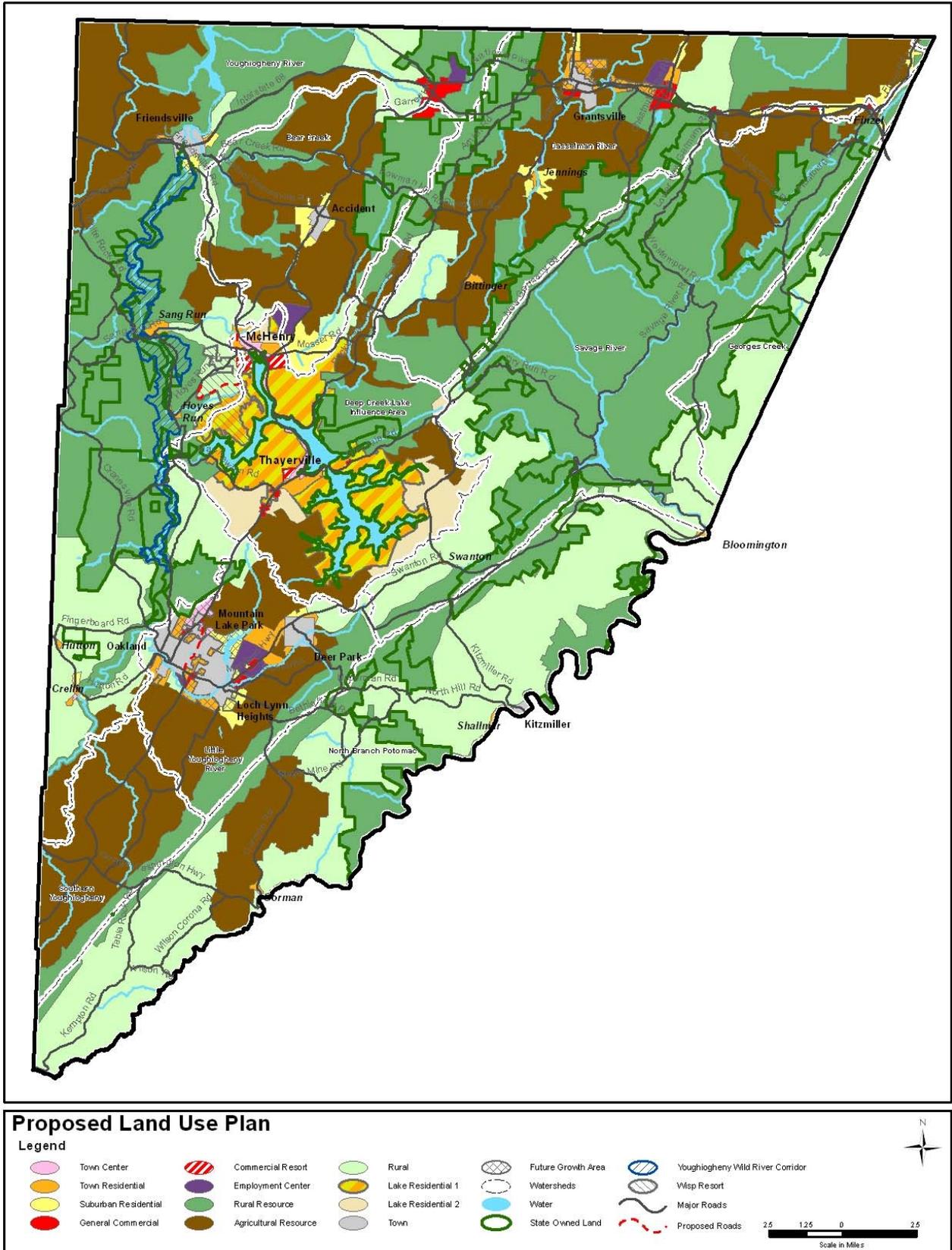
The County's 2008 Comprehensive Plan provides the policy framework for the County's land use management policies and decisions. The County's land use goals and objectives are:

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.

These goals and objectives are reflected in the Comprehensive Plan's land use plan map (see Figure II-3) and its associated policies. These are intended to:

- 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.

Figure II-3 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan Map



D. The LPPRP's Relationship to State Planning

The LPPRP's goals, objectives, and implementation policies are developed in the context of and support the 12 visions for planning in Maryland³. These were established as part of Maryland's Smart, Green and Growing initiative and provide a context for growth and development, land preservation, resource conservation, and parks and recreation planning (see box this page).

The LPPRP also responds to other state plans, programs and initiatives such as the state LPPRP and PlanMaryland, a state sponsored statewide planning initiative. These are discussed in chapters III and IV.

State Planning Visions

- (1) Quality of life and sustainability: a high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment;
- (2) Public participation: citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals;
- (3) Growth areas: growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers;
- (4) Community design: compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources;
- (5) Infrastructure: growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner;
- (6) Transportation: a well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers;
- (7) Housing: a range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes;
- (8) Economic development: economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the State's natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged;
- (9) Environmental protection: land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources;
- (10) Resource conservation: waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved;
- (11) Stewardship: government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection; and
- (12) Implementation: strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, State, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.

³ House Bill 294, 2009. The 12 visions replaced the eight State visions of Maryland's 1992 Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act, as amended

E. Implications for Land Preservation and Recreation

Garrett County's physical characteristics, demographics, and regional tourism draw have important implications for land preservation and recreation policies.

- 77% of Garrett County residents live outside of an incorporated town, but many of the parks and recreational opportunities are located within the eight towns.
- With 68% of the county in forestlands and 21% in agricultural use the County offers some of the most pristine landscapes in Maryland. Resource conservation is a major interest of residents, businesses, and state and local governments and non-governmental organizations.
- While the population of the county is relatively small at approximately 30,000, Garrett County is a regional draw for visitors seeking outdoor recreation opportunities. These visitors come to take advantage of boating, hiking, kayaking, winter sports and other outdoor activities. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) estimated that 1.5 million people visited Deep Creek NRMA, Deep Creek State Park, Herrington Manor, Jennings Randolph Lake and Swallow Falls in 2009⁴. DNR also estimated that the area in and around Deep Creek Lake (the Deep Creek Lake Watershed) draws approximately 27,000 visitors per day on a summer weekend⁵. This visitation is an important part of the local economy. As a result this LPPRP needs to consider recreation for visitors as well as residents. Some of these recreation activities are specialized (e.g. snowmobile trails) and require special attention.
- Projected changes in the population in the next 15 years show a relative minor rise in population; however, there is projected to be a greater increase in the number of residents over 65 years of age who have different recreation needs compared to younger people.

⁴ Source: Garrett County Heritage Area Management Plan, October 2011

⁵ Source: Deep Creek Lake Boating and Commercial Use Carrying Capacity Study (2004).

Chapter III Recreation, Parks and Open Space

Introduction

This chapter identifies Garrett County's goals and objectives for parks and recreation and evaluates them in the context of the Comprehensive Plan, State goals, and the future needs and priorities for park and open space acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation. The County's goals and priorities are established based on:

- State goals and policies for recreation and parks;
- Goals, objectives and policies from Garrett County's 2008 Comprehensive Plan and the 2005 LPPRP, and
- A supply and demand needs analysis of recreational facilities and activities based on existing facilities and demand factors and state surveys of public recreational interests.

Based on the supply and demand analyses, along with input from the Department of Planning and Land Development, incorporated towns, various park and recreation organizations, and the public, a program for recreational land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation is outlined.

A. Recreation and Parks Program

1. Goals

The 2008 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan does not set specific goals for parks and recreation facilities. Instead, the document incorporates by reference the 2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP). Revised County goals in this LPPRP are built upon the 2005 LPPRP goals and are consistent with the 2008 Comprehensive Plan's overall goals and objectives for Community Facilities.

a. County Goals

The County's goals, objectives, and policies for public recreation and parks are:

- Provide a wide range of recreation areas and facilities that is well-distributed to serve the needs of residents and visitors, and that takes into account future residential growth patterns.
- Work cooperatively with the County's incorporated towns to provide parks and recreation facilities.
- Use public schools as focal points for community recreation, in addition to education. Maximize use of school facilities when they are not needed for school activities.
- Support community and non-profit organizations to provide recreation programming for persons of all ages.
- Cooperatively work with state and federal agencies and through private-public partnerships to expand recreational offerings that promote year-round tourism.
- Develop an inter-connected countywide trails network to serve different uses including, but not limited to, walking, hiking, bicycling, skiing, snowmobiling, off-road vehicles, and horseback riding.

b. State Goals

The State's goals for recreation, parks, and open space are established in the 2009 Maryland LPPRP. They are compatible with and provide guidance to the County's Comprehensive Plan (see box on next page). The County's objectives and policies complement and are consistent with the State's goals. They place a strong emphasis on recreation that supports year-round tourism.

State of Maryland Goals for Recreation, Parks and Open Space

1. Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily available to all citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.
2. Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work and visit.
3. Use State investment in parks, recreation and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans.
4. To the greatest degree feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.
5. Complement infrastructure and other public investments and priorities in existing communities and areas planned for growth through investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.
6. Continue to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate that land is developed at a statewide level.

The State LPPRP states that the over-arching need for this 2012 round of local LPPRPs is to focus more on how well these goals are being achieved. Specifically, the State LPPRP is looking for plans and projects to demonstrate the following principles:

- Plans should be oriented to population centers, communities, and neighborhoods designated for growth and development in comprehensive plans. Parkland and recreational needs, accessibility of populations to recreational opportunities, and spending priorities should be evaluated and determined for those specific areas.
- Spending priorities should emphasize locations accessible to residents in population centers, communities, and neighborhoods, and the use of State funds to make them more desirable places to live, work, and visit.
- Parks and recreation facilities that support highly desirable activities that are most appropriate at community and neighborhood scales should not generally be located in areas designated in comprehensive plans for conservation of agricultural and/ or natural resource land. There may be exceptions.

2. Programs and Procedures

This section describes the framework in which Garrett County plans, acquires, develops and operates parks and recreation facilities and open space, including sources of funding.

a. Organizational Structure and Planning Procedures

Garrett County

Garrett County has over 90,000 acres of recreation land. Of these, however, Garrett County itself owns only approximately 630 acres (see Table III-2 below under Supply). The County does not have a dedicated department of recreation and parks. The functions that such a department typically performs are, in Garrett County, split among different groups and organizations.

The Department of Planning and Land Development is responsible for organization and administration. It also serves as a form of “central clearinghouse” for recreation initiatives in the County by other organizations activities such as State, the towns, and trails organizations.

The Planning Commission provides policy support, input and guidance for the Department of Planning and Land Development for planning and recreation. This includes reviewing applications for funding from local towns and organizations through Maryland's Program Open Space (POS).

Garrett County does not routinely operate or maintain the recreation land it owns. Operation and maintenance is taken care of by local groups and organizations under joint use agreements with the County.

Towns

The County's eight towns are responsible for the planning and maintenance of their town-owned parks and facilities. The towns fund their parks and programs through a variety of sources. They apply through the County for POS funds to develop, improve, and renovate parks and facilities.

Other Organizations

Local organizations and athletic clubs in Garrett County fully or partially fund and maintain public or quasi-public⁶ recreation facilities. These include, but are not limited to, the Casselman Valley Soccer Association, the Adventure Sports Center International, and the Garrett County Fairgrounds. For example: the Casselman Valley Soccer Complex is owned by Garrett County; however, the Casselman Valley Soccer Association is responsible for upkeep, scheduling for the facility and obtaining funding for improvements. The Eastern Garrett County Recreation and Parks Association maintains the Finzel Community Park/Eastern Garrett County Recreation Area.

The Board of Education and Garrett College are especially important for recreation in Garrett County. The Board of Education owns and operates gyms, playgrounds and other facilities that are also used by residents. The new Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex at Garrett College which opened in 2011 provides community members with a fitness center, gymnasium and two pools (Olympic and heated) for a fee.

b. Funding

The County's FY 2012 operating budget for parks and recreation is \$55,000. The operating budget is distributed between municipal parks, Program Open Space projects, the Historical Society, and the Garrett County Arts Council. Additional funding for upkeep and recreational planning is provided by the towns and other organizations that provide recreational opportunities. They raise funds via town taxes, grants including POS, user fees, and other fundraising activities. Many of the County's towns have taken advantage of grants provided by Maryland's Community Parks & Playgrounds Program.

Recreation projects in the County's capital budget are funded mostly through grants and in-kind contributions. For example the FY 2012 Capital Budget includes \$133,000 to complete the first leg of a trail from the Visitor's Center in McHenry to the Wisp Resort area. This cost will be offset with \$50,000 from an Appalachian Regional Commission grant, \$56,000 from a National Recreational Trails grant, a \$2,100 in-kind contribution from the Garrett Trails organization and donated materials from the Garrett County Roads Department.

POS is very important to Garrett County. On average since 2001 the County has received approximately \$240,000 a year through the program. The program is funded through the state's real estate transfer tax and, due to the economic recession and fiscal restructuring by the State, since 2008 revenues have fallen dramatically leaving a large funding gap (Table III-1).

⁶ Quasi-public recreation facilities include facilities that are publically owned while being managed by a non-governmental organization or privately owned facilities that allow a degree of public access.

Table III-1 *Garrett County Program Open Space Apportionments, 2001-2010*

Fiscal Year	Amount
2001	\$ 198,873
2002	\$ 238,867
2003	\$ 97,086
2004	\$ 105,000
2005	\$ 85,118
2006	\$ 252,268
2007	\$ 757,694
2008	\$ 539,984
2009	\$ 80,852
2010	\$ 34,805
Total	\$ 2,390,547
Annual Average	\$ 239,055

B. Needs Analysis and County Priorities for Lands, Facilities and Rehabilitation

County priorities for land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation are based on consideration of identified needs in the context of State and County goals. A needs analysis using statewide surveys and methodology contained in the 2010 LPPRP Guidelines was performed to evaluate the amount of land and facilities needed on a countywide basis, to satisfy the demand for recreational facilities and activities. The analysis uses three time frames: short (2012-2016), mid (2017-2021), and long-range (2022-2027 and beyond). Estimates for short-range demand and need are based on 2010 population; mid and long-range on projected 2017 and 2022 population⁷.

The results from the needs analysis are the County's best estimates, especially for the mid- to long-range planning horizons. The State recognizes in its guidelines for the LPPRP that priorities are subject to change for a variety of legitimate and sometimes unpredictable reasons.

The following sections examine the supply, demand and facility needs in the County including a special analysis for 14 recreation activities selected by the State and County.

1. Supply

The County updated its inventory of recreation and open space land and facilities for the LPPRP. This detailed inventory table of park and recreation sites, acreage, and facilities at each site is presented in Appendix A. Figure III-1 shows the location of each site.

As of 2011 Garrett County had a total of 97,835 acres of recreation and resource land. Table III-2 shows a breakdown summary of this land by owner.

⁷ Countywide projections used MDP projections dated November 2010.

Table III-2 Recreation and Resource Land by Owner

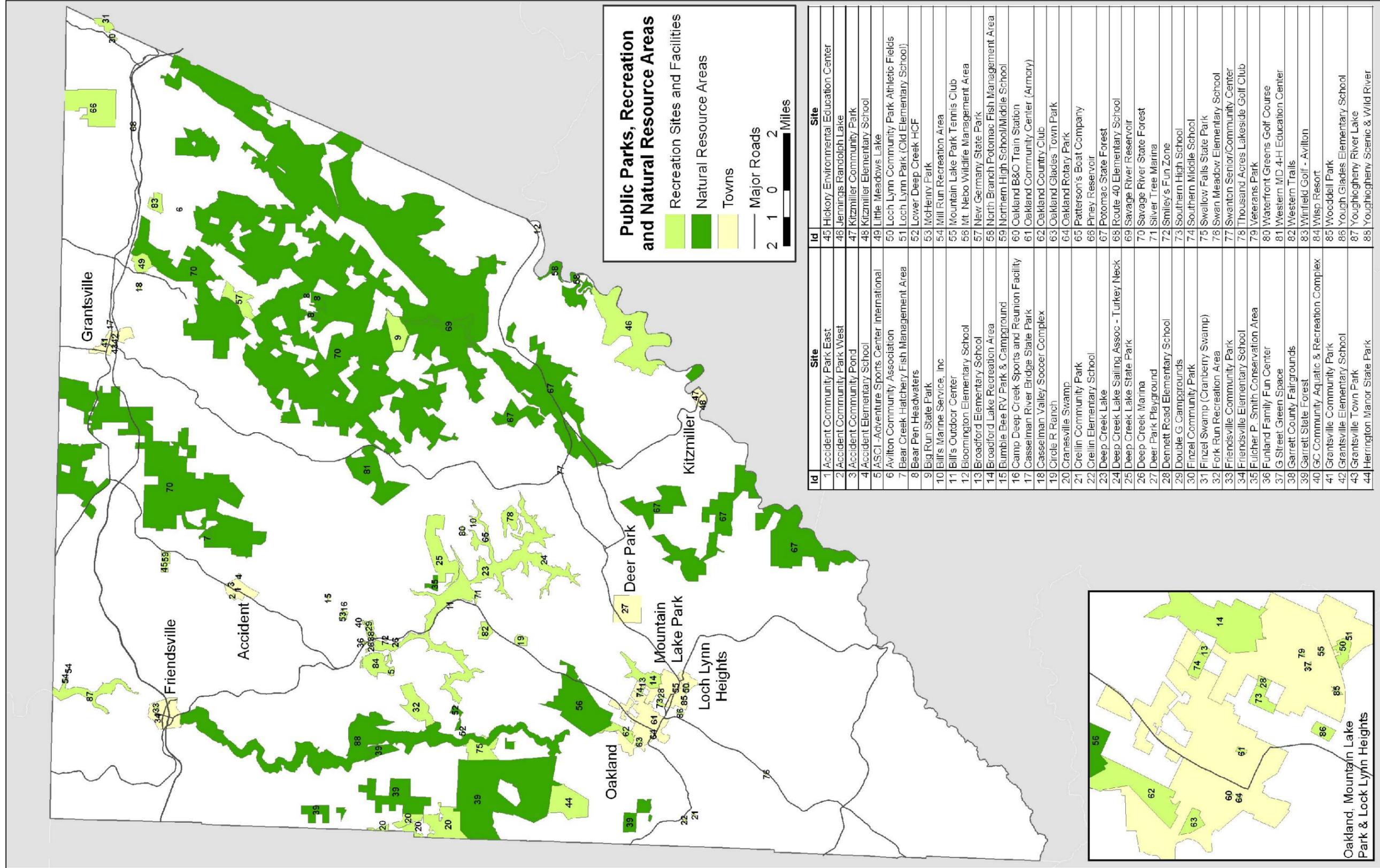
Owner	Acres		
	Recreation	Resource	Total
Board of Education	242	-	242
Garrett County	626	-	626
Towns	544	2	546
Garrett College	48	-	48
Total Local	1,460	2	1,462
State	82,293	6,916	89,209
Federal	3,164	-	3,164
Total State and Federal	85,457	6,916	92,373
Private/ quasi-public	1,280	2,720	4,000
Grand Total	88,197	9,638	97,835

Source: Compiled from data in Appendix A.

Notes:

1. Private/quasi-public resource acreage is made up of Cranesville Swamp and Finzel Swamp, owned by The Nature Conservancy, and Piney Reservoir, owned by the City of Frostburg.
2. Recreation land is land on which the primary recreational activities do not depend on the presence of natural resources. Resource land is land and/or related water areas for which natural resource protection, conservation, or management is of primary importance. This land may support agricultural, recreational, economic, or other uses to the extent that they do not conflict with protection or preservation of the natural resource.

Figure III-1 Recreation Sites



a. *County and Town Land*

Garrett County, the Towns and the Board of Education provide approximately 1,450 acres of local recreation land in different types of parks ranging from regional parks to mini parks. Table III-3 lists these parks and recreation areas by type.

Table III-3 County and Town Recreation Land by Type

	Number	Acres	Examples
Regional Parks	3	463	Broadford Lake Recreation Area, Casselman Valley Soccer Complex, Garrett College & Community Aquatic & Recreation Complex (CARC)
Community Parks	12	176	Kitzmilller Community Park, Oakland Community Center, Oakland Rotary Park, Veterans Park
School Recreation Parks	13	242	Bloomington Elementary School, Hickory Environmental Education Center, Northern High School/Middle School
Special Use Areas	2	551	Fork Run Recreation Area, Mountain Lake Park Tennis Club
Natural Resource Areas	1	2	Grantsville Town Park
Neighborhood Parks	6	28	Accident Community Park East, Crellin Community Park, Deer Park Playground, G Street Green Space
Mini-parks	1	0.7	Oakland B&O Train Station
Total	38	1462	

Source: Compiled from Appendix A

Regional Parks: Regional parks are large parks, typically 100 to 200 acres plus, and serve large areas of a county with a wide variety of recreation opportunities such as field sports, boat ramps, equestrian facilities, swimming, trails, tennis, or golf. Garrett County’s largest regional park is Broadford Lake Recreation Area, which has 400 acres of water and land offering facilities for boating, fishing, basketball, volleyball and softball. Casselman Valley Soccer Complex, located near Grantsville in the northeastern portion of the county. The facility has 6 soccer fields and is managed by the Casselman Valley Soccer Association. Garrett College owns and operates the new Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex (CARC), featuring a warm water pool, full size competition pool, weight lifting equipment and fitness programs. Membership to CARC is offered to all residents of Garrett County as well as visitors from outside the county.

Community and Neighborhood Parks: Community and neighborhood parks serve similar functions, with community parks generally serving larger areas than neighborhood parks. Community parks typically range in size from 15 to 75 acres and serve communities within a three- to five-mile radius of users. Neighborhood parks typically range in size from 5 to 25 acres and are ideally within walking distance of users. The County owns three such parks, with the remaining 15 being owned by the various towns.

School Recreation Parks: These parks comprise land at facilities owned by the Board of Education and Garrett College. Local sporting organizations have use agreements allowing a degree of public use of fields, gymnasiums, and other facilities at certain times. Most of the parks are located in or close to towns.

Natural Resource Areas: Natural resource areas are parks that have important natural, historical, cultural or recreational resources. In most cases, providing recreational opportunities such as trails is secondary to the preservation of the existing natural resources.

Mini-parks, Special Use Areas: Mini-parks are small parks, typically under one acre, that are located within a neighborhood or business district. The Oakland B&O Train Station is a mini-park that features a historic train station and an outdoor amphitheater (see picture on cover).

Special use areas encompass a range of specialized facilities. Fifteen of the special use areas in the county are under private ownership and include campgrounds, golf courses, Wisp Resort, and the Oakland Country Club. Mountain Lake Park Tennis Club, the Avilton Community Center, and the Western Maryland 4-H Education Center are also special use areas. Adventure Sports Center International (ASCI) and Fork Run Recreation Area are two special use areas that have a unique relationship. Built in conjunction with the Adventure Sports Institute at Garrett College (which offers an Associate's degree in adventure sports), the ASCI is a non-profit center which operates an artificial, recirculating whitewater course. The course is capable of hosting championship level canoe and kayak competitions and will be the site of the 2014 Canoe Slalom World Championships. ASCI uses the County owned Fork Run Recreation Area for rock climbing, hiking and mountain biking opportunities.

b. State and Federal

State and Federal recreation lands and water in Garrett County total over 92,000 acres made up of approximately 85,000 acres of recreation land and water and 7,000 acres of natural resource land (Table III-2). Approximately 6,000 of the 92,000 acres are made up of surface water in Deep Creek Lake, Youghiogheny River Lake, Jennings Randolph Lake, Savage River Reservoir, and Herrington Lake.

Deep Creek Lake State Park is the largest of the six State-owned recreational parks in Garrett County. The other State Parks are Big Run, Casselman River Bridge, Herrington Manor, New Germany and Swallow Falls. The State also manages numerous natural resource areas, allowing various levels of recreational activity. Savage River State Forest, Potomac State Forest, and Garrett State Forest are the three largest State owned natural resource areas and are popular for camping, hiking, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, bird watching, and other recreational activities.

There are two federally owned natural resource areas in Garrett County. Jennings Randolph Lake straddles the Maryland/West Virginia border and is open for boating, fishing and hiking with additional recreation facilities located on the West Virginia portion of the property. Youghiogheny River Lake/Mill Run Recreation Area is on the Maryland/Pennsylvania border and allows boating, fishing, and swimming.

c. Private Quasi-Public Lands and Facilities

Private quasi-public lands account for 1,280 acres of recreational land in Garrett County. Due to the visitor-oriented nature of the County, there are many privately owned camping facilities and three golf courses. Seven privately owned marine oriented facilities, including the Deep Creek Lake Sailing Association, offer boat rentals, slips, and ramp access. The Wisp ski resort and the Adventure Sports Center International are two facilities that have a regional and for some activities a national recreational draw.

d. Accomplishments since the 2005 LPPRP

Several improvements recommended in the 2005 LPPRP have been implemented (see Table III-4). From a countywide residents' perspective the most important improvement was Garrett College's new Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex.

Table III-4 Facility Improvements and Additions Since 2005 Plan

Site	Description
Accident Community Park West	Install swing set
Avilton Community Center	New Playground
Broadford Recreation Area	Boating facilities; handicap-accessible restroom and fishing pier; security improvements; replacement of outdated playground equipment; new concession stand
Casselman Valley Soccer Complex	New concession stand
Friendsville Community Park	General improvements
Garrett College	Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex
Glades Town Park	Community expansion of playground and construction of Community Center
Grantsville Community Park	Updated electrical service; new score board
Kendall Trail	Phase I of trail project
Loch Lynn Community Park	Ongoing improvements with bollard lighting at parking areas and trails; expand parking; prepare Master Plan to guide improvements; new walking trail and benches
Northern & Southern High Schools	Pressbox, concession and restroom improvements
Oakland Community Center	Basketball floor and lighting improvements

2. Demand

Garrett County used state surveys conducted in 2003 as the source for determining the baseline demand for recreational facilities: *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland* and *State Parks and Natural Resource Areas in Maryland: A Survey of Public Opinion*. Findings were based on responses from 400 households in the Western Maryland region, representative of each County's population⁸. While these data are almost 10 years old they are the latest available data of their type. Further information on demand was gathered via interviews with County staff regarding the supply, acreage, location, and demand for facilities. Special consideration was also made to include the effect of tourism on demand.

The demand analysis used State survey data, daily carrying capacity and season length data unless other information or local experience indicated otherwise. For example, Garrett County believes that its demand and participation rates are different from some of the other counties included in Western Maryland in the survey (Allegany, Washington and Frederick) for certain activities. In such cases, either sport season length or daily carrying capacity were adjusted to better represent local participation rates or demand was adjusted based on local activity and facility utilization experience. Detailed tables for the supply, demand, and needs analyses are provided in Appendix B. The electronic versions of tables include comments to note where changes were made to season length or daily carrying capacity.

⁸ The full results of the survey may be found at <http://www.umbc.edu/mipar/Documents/LocalParksSurvey.pdf>

Trails

As part of the LPPRP a special effort was made to consolidate and update the demand for trails based on planning efforts that have taken place since the 1980s. The results of this effort are described in section D of this Chapter.

3. Needs Analysis

The needs analysis compares recreation facility supply to demand. The analysis results in two products:

- A summary of surpluses or deficits in the amounts of land and facilities needed to serve County residents and visitors, and
- Identification of County priorities for land acquisition, facility development, and rehabilitation.

Table III-5 summarizes results obtained from the detailed supply, demand and needs analysis tables contained in Appendix B. The table shows the supply of existing facilities and the estimated surplus or deficit of facilities for 2010 and 2022. While the table shows only one specific facility deficit, it is important to acknowledge the demand for some facilities from visitors to the County. While Garrett County may have a surplus of some facilities for residents, demand from visitors must be taken into account when calculating demand on facilities. For example, both residents and visitors want to enjoy hiking, cross country skiing and snowmobiling. Further, providing more of such facilities will attract visitors supporting the tourism industry.

Thus, even though the table may indicate a surplus, for example for cross country skiing, this does not necessarily mean that no more cross country skiing trails should be developed. Furthermore, this table does not evaluate the quality of existing facilities or whether these existing facilities may need further improvements or maintenance. Consideration is also given to the size of the County and the distribution of facilities in relation to population and needs.

Table III-5 Summary Needs Report

Note: A positive surplus number (without parenthesis) indicates a facility surplus. A number in parenthesis indicates a facility deficit. For example, 2010 demand shows a deficit of 13.3 miles of snowmobile trails				
Activity	Facility Type	Existing Facilities	2010 Surplus (Deficit)	2022 Surplus (Deficit)
Baseball/Softball	Diamonds	38	25.5	25.0
Basketball	Courts	51	38.3	37.8
Tennis	Courts	22	15.0	14.7
Soccer	Fields	10	5.9	5.7
Football	Fields	4	0.8	0.7
Walking/Hiking	Miles	121	18.9	14.9
Biking (mountain)	Miles	83	20.3	17.8
Snowmobiling	Miles	57	(13.3)	(16.1)
X-Country Skiing	Miles	27	21.5	21.2
Swimming (indoor/outdoor)	Pools	3	2.3	2.3
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	31	26.0	25.8
Picnicking	Shelters	38	15.6	14.7
Public Boat Ramp/Launch Areas	Ramps	15	2.3	1.8
Golf (18 hole)	Courses	4.5	0.9	0.7

Note: Detailed supply, demand and needs analysis tables are contained in Appendix B.

C. County Priorities

The public input process resulted in approximately 50 recommended projects. This is a large number of projects and probably larger than can be implemented through 2022. Therefore this LPPRP divides these projects into “priority projects” and “other projects.”

1. Priority Projects

Table III-6 lists the County’s park and recreation priorities for meeting its land acquisition, facility development and rehabilitation needs through 2022. In developing the priorities, consideration was given to needs based on:

- The results of the supply and demand analysis
- The role tourism plays in Garrett County
- Efficiency of recreation service delivery with respect to location and utilization
- Potential for meeting recreational facility needs through joint use, especially at public schools
- How projects relate to the State’s and County’s recreation goals and objectives
- Input from the County’s towns and from the public, with special attention to project size and scale and geographic distribution

2. Acquisition and development projects

Four projects include land acquisition and total approximately six acres. This number is small and reflects both the extensive amount of existing recreation land in the County and the low demand for new acquisition projects. Acquisition is also rare due to the limited funding available for purchase of real estate and the high cost of larger tracts within or near desired locations.

Neighborhood Park

The Town of Deer Park would like to expand its existing park by purchasing 2 acres for a playground, volleyball and/or tennis courts. The Town of Mountain Lake Park would also like to acquire and develop Garrett County Heritage Area Management Plan land (exact acreage to be determined) as part of a Mountain Lake Park Trail Project.

The Avilton Community Association would like to acquire four acres adjacent to its existing community center to construct a softball field.

Community Parks

The town of Loch Lynn Heights would like to acquire land (exact acreage to be determined) adjacent to the Community Park Athletic Fields in order to build basketball and tennis courts.

Table III-6 County Priorities for Acquisition, Development and Rehabilitation

Project	Location	Description	Total Estimated Cost	Fiscal Year Programmed	Acres to be Acquired	Estimated Short-Range (2012-2016) Cost			Estimated Mid-Range (2017-2021) Cost			Estimated Long-Range (2022 -2027) Cost		
						Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab	Acquisition	Capital Development	Rehab
Acquisition and Development Projects														
Mountain Lake Trail Project	Town of Mountain Lake Park	Acquire land and develop new trails	\$500,000	FY12-16		\$100,000				\$200,000			\$200,000	
Avilton Community Center	Avilton Community Association	Acquire adjoining property for softball field	\$85,000	FY17-21	4				\$85,000					
Athletic Fields Complex	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Purchase land for recreation (basketball and tennis courts)	\$55,500	FY17-21					\$55,500					
Playground Installation	Town of Deer Park	Acquire property for playground, volleyball and/or tennis court	\$50,000	FY22-27	2							\$50,000		
Total		Acquisition cost	\$690,500		6 Ac.	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$140,500	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$0	
Facility Development Projects														
Athletic Fields Improvement	Garrett College	Relocation of existing ballfield and addition of a soccer and softball field	\$500,000	FY12-16				\$500,000						
Fort Alice Interactive Center	Town of Oakland	Construct interactive center for history of Fort Alice	\$250,000	FY22-27									\$250,000	
Broadford Recreation Area	Town of Oakland	Add handicapped fishing pier and install new tennis courts; renovate park office and bathhouse	\$320,000	FY17-21						\$200,000			\$120,000	
Fort Alice Walking/Biking Path	Town of Oakland	Construct Glades path extension to Fort Alice	\$200,000	FY17-21						\$200,000				
Recreation Parking	Town of Friendsville	Parking improvements for river use and trails	\$150,000	FY12-16				\$150,000						
Athletic Fields	Northern Garrett High School	Construct softball/soccer field	\$125,000	FY22-27									\$125,000	
Boardwalk Loop Trail	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Completion of trail, install signage, construct observation deck	\$115,000	FY12-16				\$115,000						
Friendsville Community Park	Town of Friendsville	Walking trail connections, paving area around stage, replace upper ballfield dugout, new pavilion	\$140,000	FY12-16				\$140,000						
Accident Community Park West	Town of Accident	Build new restrooms w/ attached storage room in West Park	\$60,000	FY12-16				\$60,000						
Town Park	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Replace pavilion and restrooms with larger facility	\$60,000	FY12-16				\$60,000						
Grantsville Community Park	Town of Grantsville	Amphitheater/Pavilion addition	\$25,000	FY12-16				\$25,000						
Finzel Community Park/Eastern Garrett County Recreation Area	Northeastern Garrett County	Walking/running track extension	\$17,500	FY12-16				\$17,500						
Total			\$1,962,500			\$0	\$1,067,500	\$0	\$0	\$400,000	\$0	\$0	\$495,000	\$0
Facility Rehabilitation and Development Projects														
Tennis Courts	Southern Garrett High School	Upgrade existing and add one tennis court	\$75,000	FY17-21						\$60,000	\$15,000			
Glades Town Park	Town of Oakland	Boardwalk improvements & fence replacement	\$60,000	FY12-16				\$60,000						
Athletic Fields Complex	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Resurface 1/2 mile walking trail	\$25,000	FY12-16				\$25,000						
Total			\$160,000				\$0	\$85,000	\$0	\$60,000	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grand Total			\$2,813,000			\$100,000	\$1,067,500	\$85,000	\$140,500	\$460,000	\$15,000	\$50,000	\$495,000	\$0

3. Facility development projects

Facility development projects are on land already owned by the County, Towns, Garrett College or Board of Education, or where no additional acquisition of land would be necessary. These projects are:

Trail Projects:

- The existing walking/running track at Finzel Community Park/Eastern Garrett County Recreation Area would be extended.
- The Boardwalk Loop Trail in Loch Lynn Heights would be completed with new signage and an addition to the observation deck for visitors.
- The Town of Oakland would extend the existing Glades path to Fort Alice, where additional improvements are planned. Additionally, Oakland plans to build an interactive learning center to explain the history of Fort Alice.
- The walking trail at Friendsville Community Park would be expanded so it will interconnect and the parking facilities for visitors and residents accessing the river and trails would be improved.

Development/Expansion at Existing Parks:

- Northern Garrett High School would expand its current facilities by building new playing fields.
- Accident Community Park West would add new restrooms and an equipment storage facility.
- The Town of Grantsville plans to add an amphitheater and an addition to the existing pavilion at Grantsville Community Park.
- The ballfield dugout at Friendsville Community Park would be replaced and the area around the stage would be paved.
- The Town of Oakland would like to build a handicapped accessible fishing pier and add two new tennis courts at the Broadford Recreation Area.
- Garrett College would like to relocate their current baseball field and replace the existing baseball field with a new soccer and softball field. The improvements will create space for additional athletic programs, centralize the baseball facilities and eliminate damage to facilities from foul balls coming from the existing baseball field.
- Loch Lynn Heights would like to replace the existing pavilion and restrooms in the Town Park with upgraded facilities.

4. Rehabilitation

There are three rehabilitation projects on the priority list.

The Town of Oakland would like to improve the existing boardwalk and replace existing fencing at Glades Town Park. Loch Lynn Heights would like to resurface a walking trail at its Athletic Fields Complex. The Board of Education is proposing to upgrade and expand the tennis facilities at Southern Garrett High School.

Other Projects

Other projects generally comprise minor projects such as parking lots, fence replacement, small lighting projects and minor improvements to trails (Table III-7). Some larger projects are on this list due to continued anticipated lower funding availability in the next 10 years compared to the mid 2000s. Some of these projects may “move up” onto the priority list should priorities change in the next few years. The County will consider on an annual basis whether facility improvements and maintenance should take priority over development and expansion projects.

Table III-7 Other Projects

Project	Location	Improvement	Estimated Cost, If Known
Avilton Community Center	Avilton Area	Swing set, rope and bar climb; fencing and landscaping; storage building and outdoor restroom; small pavilion	\$41,500
Avilton Community Center	Avilton Area	Develop softball field	
Playground	Broadford Elementary School	Replace existing playground equipment	\$50,000
Driveway and Parking Lot Improvements	Casselman Valley Soccer Complex	Improve traffic flow and increase parking	\$14,000
Perimeter Fencing	Casselman Valley Soccer Complex	Control access to complex	\$13,000
Playing field improvement	Casselman Valley Soccer Complex	Add topsoil to low area, fertilize and reseed	\$4,000
Crellin Softball Field	Community of Crellin	Various field upgrades	
Friendsville Community Park	Town of Friendsville	Lighting for basketball and volleyball courts	\$50,000
Friendsville Community Park	Town of Friendsville	Electrical and plumbing improvements	
Friendsville Community Park	Town of Friendsville	Replace fencing in park	
Friendsville Community Park	Town of Friendsville	Replace playground equipment	
Kendall Trail	Town of Friendsville	Improvements to Kendall Trail	
Town Park	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Replace playground equipment	\$90,000
Athletic Fields Complex	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Resurface boardwalk trail	\$35,000
Athletic Fields Complex	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Refurbish Concession Stand	\$10,000
Athletic Fields Complex	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	New structure for equipment storage	\$6,000
Athletic Fields Complex	Town of Loch Lynn Heights	Quit claim deeds near boardwalk trail	\$1,000
Accident Community Park West	Town of Accident	West Park improvements	
Accident Community Park East	Town of Accident	East Park Improvements	
Accident Community Park East	Town of Accident	New playground equipment in East Park	
Comfort Station/Pavilion	Town of Deer Park	Safety, parking and lighting upgrades	\$8,500
Grantsville Community Park	Town of Grantsville	Parking lot addition	\$25,000
Grantsville Community Park	Town of Grantsville	Water park addition (splash zone)	
Grantsville Community Park	Town of Grantsville	Basketball light upgrade	
Casselman Bridge	Town of Grantsville	Bike trail beginning at the Casselman	
Grantsville Community Park	Town of Grantsville	Volleyball light upgrade	
Grantsville Community Park	Town of Grantsville	Walking track expansion around park	
Glades Town Park	Town of Oakland	Extension of parking facilities	\$75,000
Broadford Recreation Area	Town of Oakland	Revamp existing comfort station for ADA compliance	\$40,000
Broadford Recreation Area	Town of Oakland	Replace outdated security equipment	\$15,000
Train Station	Town of Oakland	Purchase and install fencing for children's train	\$15,000
Broadford Recreation Area	Town of Oakland	Continue resurfacing parking lot (\$5,000 annually)	\$5,000

5. Consistency with State and Local Goals

Table III-8 summarizes how the priority development projects fulfill the state and county goals for recreation. This is a required table under the LPPRP preparation guidelines.

Table III-8 Goals Met by Acquisition and Development Recommendations

Project	Short Range	Mid Range	Long Range	State Goals Met (see table notes)	Local Goals Met (see table notes)	Notes
Acquisition and Development Projects						
Mountain Lake Trail Project				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8, 12	Expands trail network
Avilton Community Center Softball Field				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8, 10	Expands existing facility
Athletic Fields Complex Expansion				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8	Expands existing facility
Deer Park Playground Installation				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8	Upgrades increase functionality and safety
Facility Development Projects						
Garrett College Athletic Fields Improvement				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 9, 10	Upgrades increase safety
Fort Alice Interactive Center				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8, 11	Encourages tourism
Broadford Recreation Area Pier and Tennis Courts				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8,	Provides handicapped accessible facilities
Fort Alice Walking/Biking Path Extension				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8, 11, 12	Expands trail network
Friendsville Recreation Parking				1, 2, 5	7, 8, 12	Encourages use of existing trail network
Northern Garrett High School Field Addition				1, 2	7, 9	Expands existing facilities
Loch Lynn Heights Boardwalk Loop Trail				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8, 11, 12	Expands trail network
Friendsville Community Park Improvements				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8, 11, 12	Expands trail network
Accident Community Park West Improvements				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8	Upgrades improve use as a community park
Loch Lynn Heights Town Park Pavilion and Restroom				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8	Upgrades improve use as a community park
Grantsville Community Park Amphitheater				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8	Upgrades improve use as a community park
Finzel Community Park/Eastern Garrett Co. Recreation Area Track				1, 2	7, 8	Expands outdoor recreation opportunities
Facility Rehabilitation and Development Projects						
Southern Garrett High School Tennis Upgrades				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 9	Maintenance repairs and improvements to retain asset value of past investments
Glades Town Park Improvements				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8, 12	Upgrades improve safety and usage of park
Loch Lynn Heights Athletic Fields Complex Trail				1, 2, 4, 5	7, 8	Upgrades to improve safety of facility

Table Notes

		State Goals
State	1	Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to all of its citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well being.
	2	Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work, and visit.
	3	Use State investment in parks, recreation, and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans.
	4	To the greatest degree feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.
	5	Complement infrastructure and other public investments and priorities in existing communities and areas planned for growth through investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.
	6	Continue to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate that land is developed at a statewide level.
		Local Goals
County	7	Provide a wide range of recreation areas and facilities that are well-distributed to serve the needs of residents and visitors, and that take into account future residential growth patterns.
	8	Work cooperatively with the county's incorporated towns to provide parks and recreation facilities.
	9	Use public schools as focal points for community recreation, in addition to education. Maximize use of school facilities when they are not needed for school activities.
	10	Support community and non-profit organizations to provide recreation programming for persons of all ages.
	11	Cooperatively work with state and federal agencies and through private-public partnerships to expand recreational offerings that promote year-round tourism.
	12	Develop an inter-connected county-wide trails network to serve different uses including, but not limited to, walking, hiking, bicycling, skiing, snowmobiling, off-road vehicles, and horseback riding.

6. Funding

The priority projects program through 2027 (Table III-6) would cost \$2.8 million, of which approximately \$300,000 would be for acquisition, \$2.65 million for new facility development projects and \$160,000 for facility rehabilitation and development projects. Cost estimates are approximate and are in 2011 dollar values, based on knowledge of recent land acquisitions, real estate values in different parts of the County, and facility development and rehabilitation costs. Projects are in three time-frames: short range – 2012 to 2016, mid-range 2017 to 2022, and long-range 2022 to 2027.

The funding required to realize the project priorities will be leveraged to the maximum extent possible, using a combination of user fees, general and capital program funds, POS, and other Federal, Regional and State programs, grants and donations.

Over the 15 year program, the average annual cost of implementation would be approximately \$188,000, far in excess of the \$35,000 the County received in POS funds in 2010. The model for future funding will

likely be similar to the funding for the McHenry to Wisp trail in the county's FY 2012 CIP (combination of grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission, National Recreational Trails, and Garrett Trails).

7. Administration

As noted above Garrett County does not have a dedicated Department of Recreation and the functions that such a department typically performs are, in Garrett County, split among different groups and organizations. Garrett is unusual among Maryland counties in not having a department. Even counties with small populations like Kent and Somerset have one, even if small. With Garrett County's outdoor and visitor-oriented economy a specialized department could bring multiple benefits.

The idea of having a dedicated Department has been raised in previous plans including the 2005 LPPRP. As of 2011 local government revenues are down, and this may not be a good time to increase operating expenses by adding a new position. However, in the medium to long term, the County should consider creating a dedicated Department of Recreation that would, for example:

- Coordinate maintenance of recreation land and facilities.
- Serve as a clearing house for youth and adult recreation.
- Develop, organize, and coordinate recreation programs for residents.
- Coordinate county recreation efforts with the state initiatives, County agencies-such as Economic Development and Garrett County Community Action Committee, as well as non-governmental organizations such as Garrett Trails.
- Apply for grants to fund projects.

Most counties with a Department of Recreation also have a volunteer County Commissioner-appointed citizens' recreation board to serve in an advisory role to staff and in an advocacy capacity for recreation. An alternative to a Recreation Department could be the formation of a citizen recreation Council or Advisory Committee that could help plan and administer recreation in the County.

8. Recreation Land Acquisition Goal

Garrett County far exceeds the State's recommended goal of 30 acres of recreation land per 1,000 persons. As of 2011, the County has surpassed this goal by 84,209 acres (Table III-9). Acquisition is not a major goal for the County though the County will support strategic acquisitions to enhance existing recreation lands or to connect parcels.

Table III-9 Acreage Goal Analysis

Year	1 Current/ Projected Population	2 Recreation and Open Space Acreage Goal (30 acres per 1,000 population)	3 County Recreation Land	4 County Natural Resources Land	5 Acres Applicable State and Federal Land	6 Total	7 Acreage Required to Meet Goal
2010	30,097	903	1,460	2	83,651	85,112	-84,209
2022	31,280	938					-84,173

Notes:

Acres in Columns 3, 4, 5 and 6 are obtained from Appendix A, the Recreational Inventory. Column 3 comprises 100 percent of County, Board of Education, and municipal recreational land.

There are 85,457 acres of State and Federal owned recreational lands in Garrett County, of which the acreage over 60 acres per 1,000 persons (60 x 30 or 1,806 acres) may be used to meet the acreage goal.

There are 6,916 acres of other State and Federal land that may not be counted toward the County's acreage goal because they are classified as natural resource lands.

D. Trails Planning

Trails are an increasingly popular way of exploring rural and urban areas. In recent years there has been special interest in developing and connecting long-distance trails. Garrett County wants to have a well developed trail system both for residents and to add to its visitor-oriented attractions. As part of this LPPRP a special effort was made to update and to further trail planning efforts, including winter trails, which are not mentioned in the 2005 LPPRP.

Winter Trails Plan, 1986

The first consolidated countywide trail planning effort in Garrett County was a 1986 Winter Trails Plan. This plan recognized some existing trails and identified potential interconnections primarily for snowmobiling, though all or portions of such trails could also be used by others such as hikers, mountain bikers, and cross country skiers and equestrians. The 1986 plan map is reproduced here as Figure III-2.

Trails Plan Update, 2003

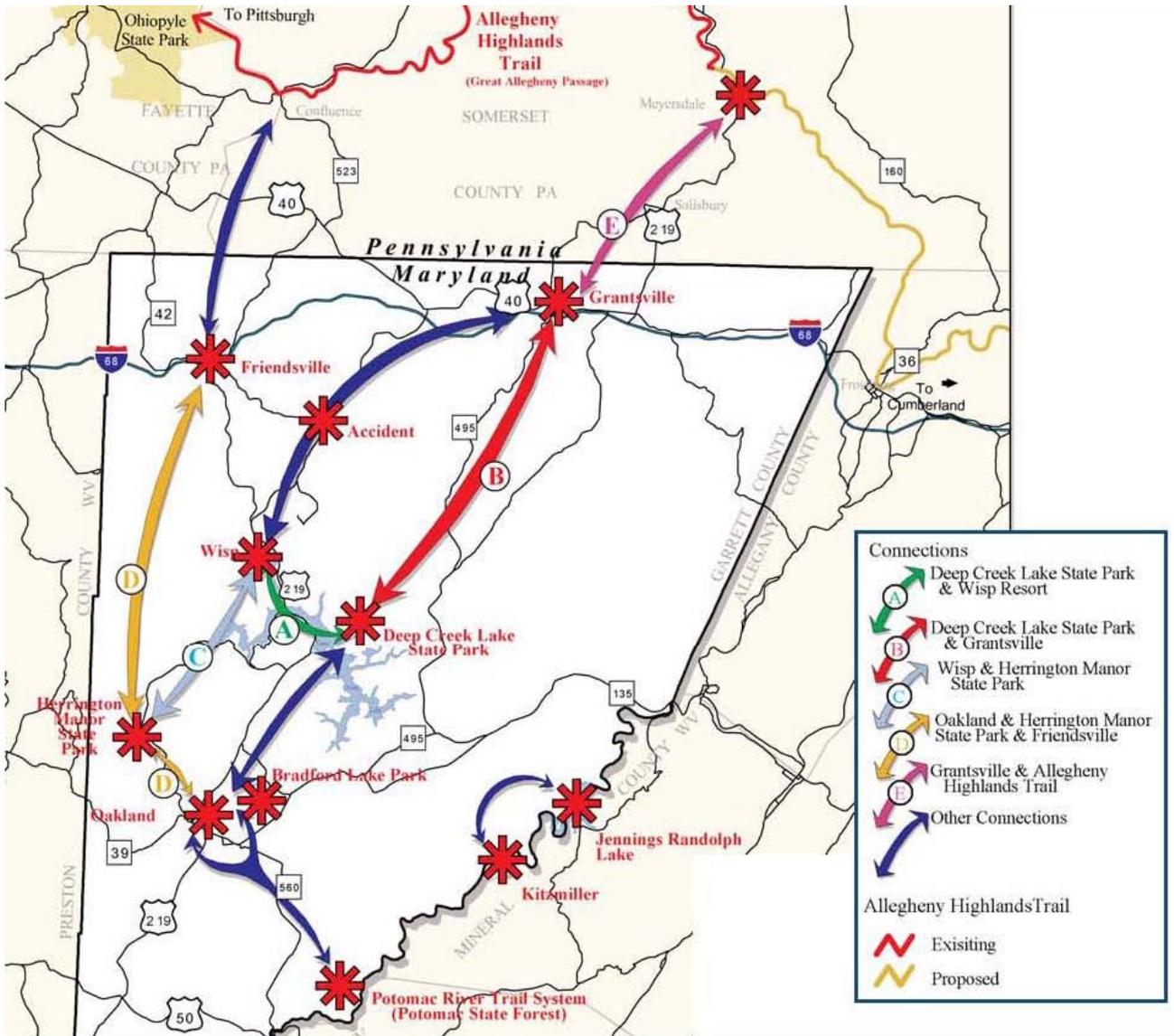
In 1999, a Recreational Trails Task Force was formed under the auspices of the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce to develop a recreational trails plan for the County. The Task Force reviewed different opportunities for trail development with particular emphasis on interconnecting trails in Garrett County to nearby regional trails, especially the long-distance Allegheny Highlands Trail that was then being developed. This trail runs just north of Garrett County and now runs continuously between Washington DC and Pittsburgh.

The outcome of the effort was the Garrett County Recreational Trails Plan Update, 2003. The plan goal was to "...lay the groundwork for the development of the major arteries of the Garrett County Recreational Trail System." What resulted was the identification of five potential major trail connections, and five secondary trail connections. Figure III-3 illustrates these connections, each of which is explored in more detail in individual plan chapters.

Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail, 2011

Garrett Trails is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development of an interconnected Garrett County trail system that is also linked to regional trails outside the County. Building on the 2003 Trails Plan, Garrett Trails' current major planning focus is on developing a trail system called the Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail. This trail would loop in horseshoe manner through Garrett County down from and back up to the Allegheny Highlands Trail. The Loop Trail would use some existing trails with some inter-connections yet to be identified (Figure III-4).

Figure III-3 Garrett County Recreational Trails Plan Update Framework

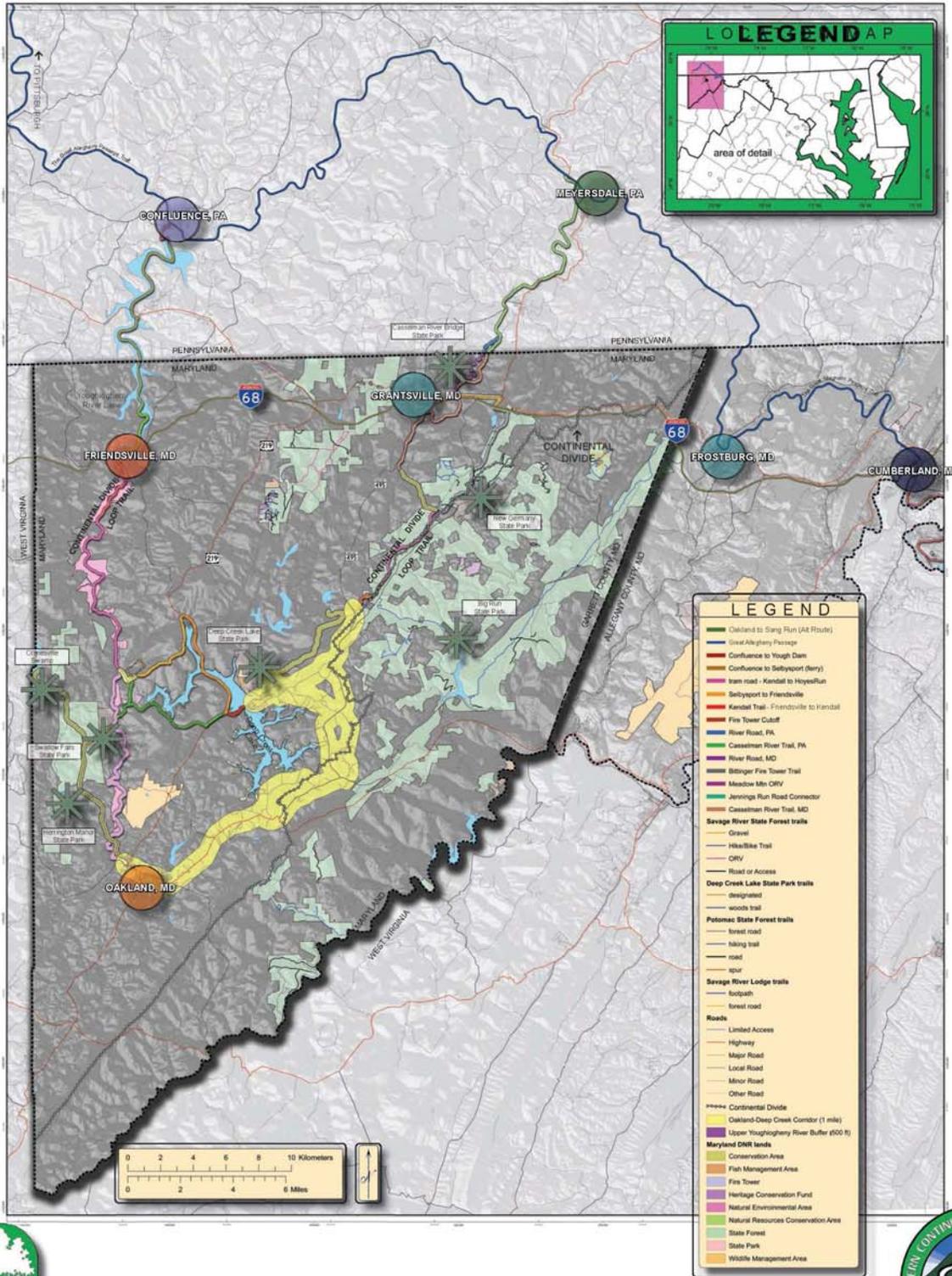


Source: Garrett County Recreational Trails Plan Update 2003

Figure III-4 Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail

2011

ECDL



EASTERN CONTINENTAL DIVIDE LOOP

Overall Master Plan



Source: Garrett Trails

2012 LPPRP

This 2012 LPPRP undertook two trail planning efforts, an inventory update and an update of the 1986 Winter Trails Plan in relation to the 2003 Trails Plan update and the Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail.

Inventory update

As part of the LPPRP inventory update a careful effort was made to identify existing trails of all kinds but to avoid double counting of trails that can be used by different recreationists. The inventory (presented in Appendix A) identifies miles of skiing, hiking, biking, off road vehicle, equestrian, and snow mobile trails in different locations in the County.

Trails update

One of the limitations to trail planning in the County has been that to date there has been no comprehensive countywide map that shows all existing and potential trails at a single, comparable scale. To help overcome this limitation, a trail planning workshop was held on October 5, 2011 in Oakland with key stakeholders with an interest in trails⁹. ERM prepared a map for the meeting showing a compilation of trails from the 1986 Winter Trails Plan, the Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail and trails from the Department of Natural Resources' trails database¹⁰. MDNR brought a map of the trails in Savage River State Forest, reproduced below as Figure III-5.

At the meeting participants reviewed the various trails and trail connections and made recommendations for which trails/trail connections from prior trail plans should be retained for future planning purposes. The meeting resulted in a map showing the existing trail network as well as proposed and desired trails. This map is reproduced below as Figure III-6, but has been prepared in a GIS format to facilitate future planning and editing. The map shows the following:

Existing Trails. The existing trail network includes all of the different types of existing trails in the County: hiking, skiing, biking, snowmobile, off road vehicle, and equestrian. This map layer is partially from the MD DNR database and partially from trails added by ERM based on input at the workshop, for example trails in Savage River State Forest, Potomac State Forest and Garrett State Forest. All the trails are not suitable for all types of user. For example some trails in Deep Creek Lake State Park are suitable only for hikers. The GIS database identifies some trails that are available for off road vehicle use, snowmobiling and mountain biking. The Fork Run Recreation Area is identified on the map; however, the trails in this area are still being developed.

Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail. The Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail (ECDL) is also shown on Figure III-6, and integrated with the existing trail network. Two proposed sections of the ECDL have defined alignments and these sections are labeled as "Proposed"; the portion of the ECDL linking the Town of Friendsville to the Town of Oakland, and the portion linking Grantsville to the Savage River State Forest trail system to the south. The County will work with the State on the section linking Friendsville to the Town of Oakland through the Youghiogheny River Valley to ensure that the alignment addresses concerns regarding the integrity of the Youghiogheny Scenic and Wild River.

Specific alignments for other sections of the ECDL have not yet been determined. For these sections the general location of the desired trail is shown on Figure III-6 as "Desired". Examples include the sections linking Mountain Lake Park to the existing trail network in Savage River State Forest and a trail from Wisp through Fork Run to trails north of Oakland in Swallow Falls State Park.

Figure III-6 shows a desired ECDL connection between Fork Run and the Deep Creek Lake State Park-Margraff Plantation desired snowmobile trail system. This is a variation of the connection shown in the 2011 ECDL plan.

⁹ Organizations in attendance included: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Garrett Trails, Snowdrifters, Garrett County Chamber of Commerce, Savage River Lodge, Adventure Sports Center International, Garrett County Health Department, and Garrett County Government.

¹⁰ http://dnr.maryland.gov/land/md_trails/trails_in_md.asp

Figure III-5 Savage River State Forest Trails

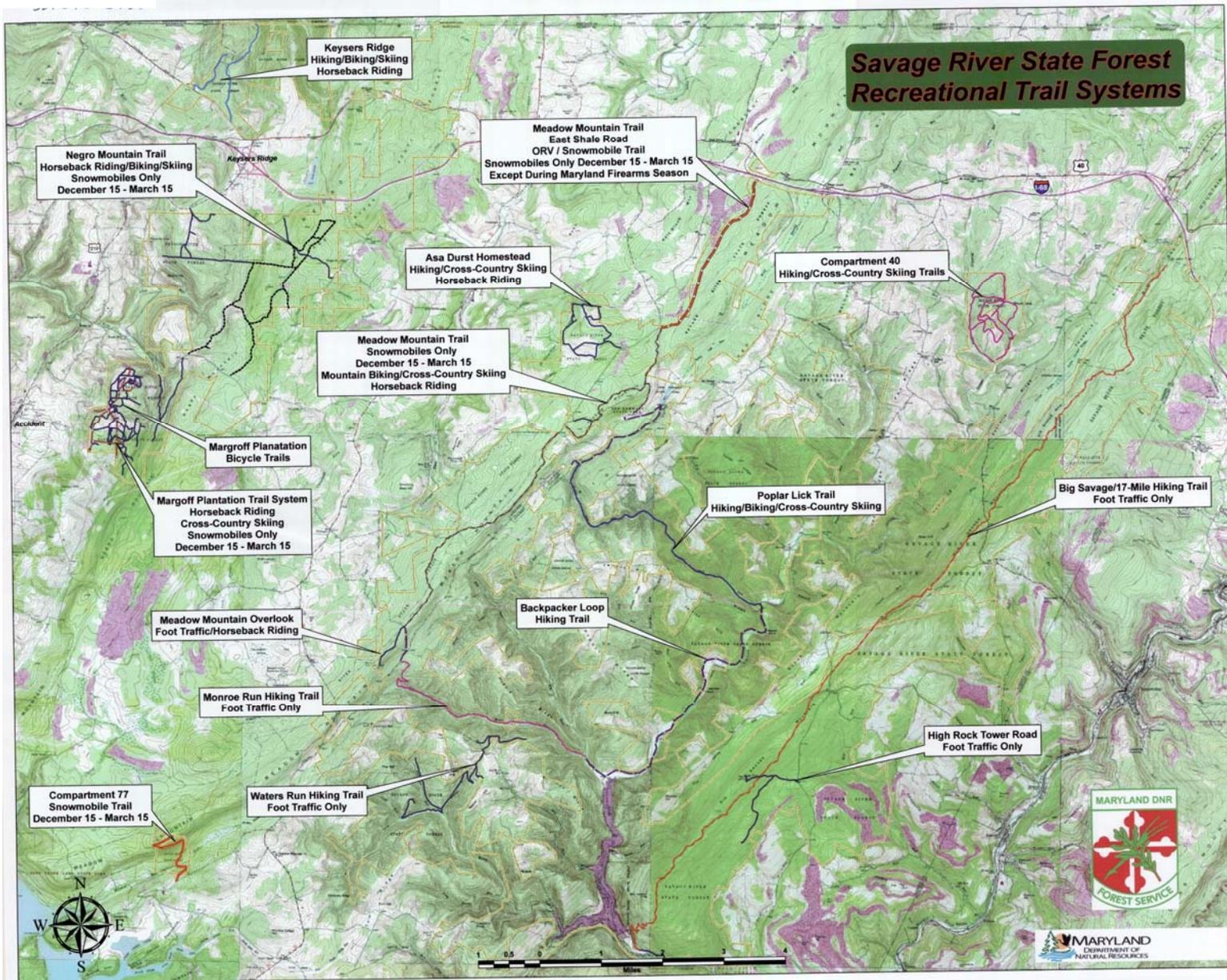
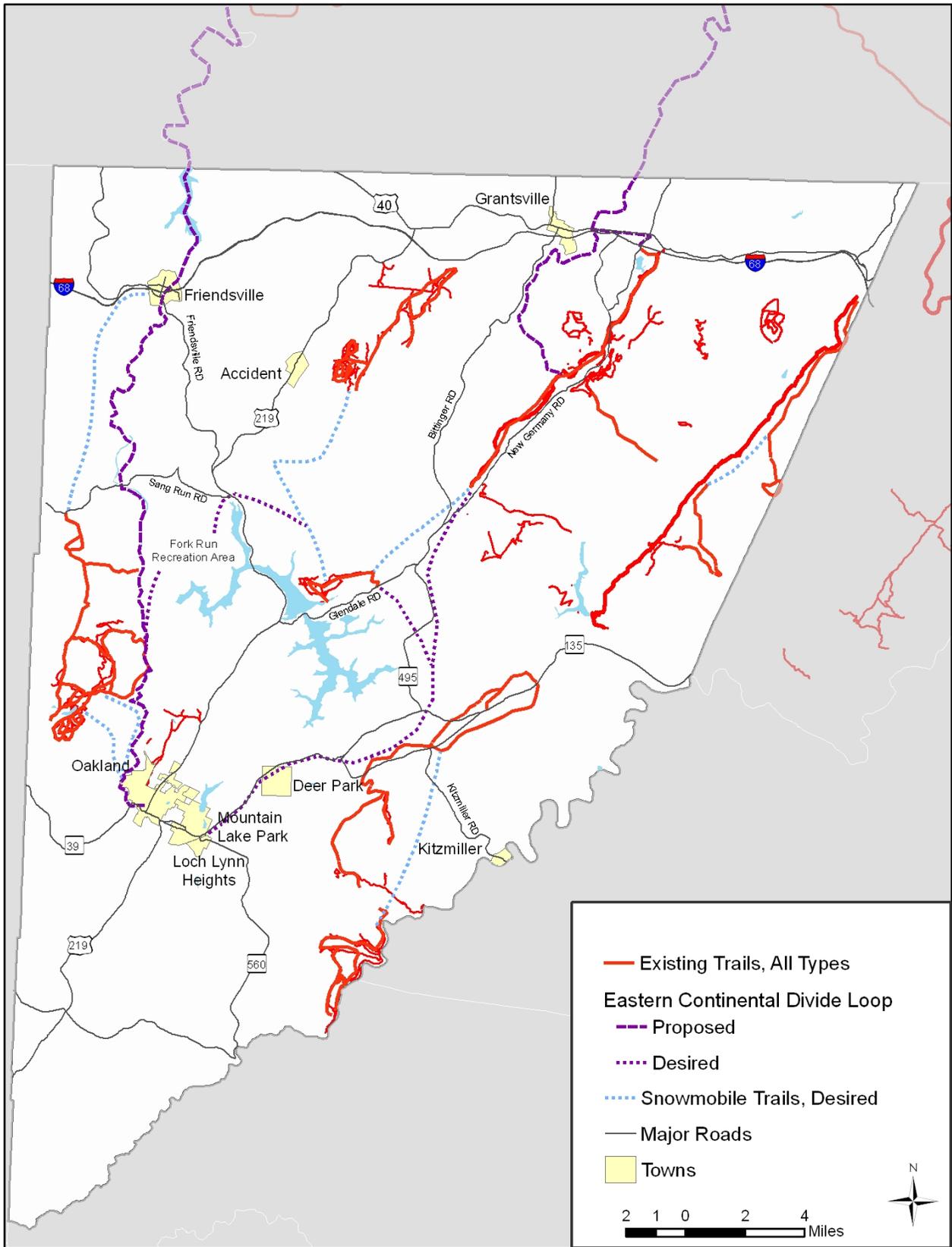


Figure III-6 Garrett County Trail Network



Snowmobile trails. Workshop participants reviewed snowmobile trails from the 1986 Plan based on terrain, feasibility, and desired connectivity with the existing trail system, and identified trails that should be carried forward for future planning purposes. These snowmobile trails are depicted on Figure III-5 as “Snowmobile Trails, Desired”. Trails in the 1986 Plan that now cross lands where snowmobiling is not permitted, such as the Youghiogheny Scenic and Wild River, were not carried forward. Figure 3-5 does however show a desired trail connection to the west of the Youghiogheny River linking the Town of Friendsville to a network of snowmobile trails north of Oakland. This route predominantly follows existing roads. However, snowmobiles are not currently permitted on public roads, so this route could not be implemented as depicted without a change in this regulation. Discussed at the workshop but not depicted on the map is the idea of incorporating rights of way associated with power transmission lines as part of the trail network. This idea would need to be discussed with the owners of these rights of way.

Chapter IV Agricultural and Natural Resource Lands

This chapter discusses the extent to which progress has been made toward achievement of the agricultural land preservation and natural resource land conservation goals and objectives identified in the 2009 State LPPRP and the 2005 County LPPRP.

A. Agricultural Land Preservation

1. Introduction

Garrett County has a long tradition of agriculture dating from before the County’s creation in 1872 from Allegany County. Agricultural land is scattered throughout the County but there are six main concentrations:

- 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;
- Northeast part of the County near Finzel;
- Southern Youghiogheny watershed, and parts of the Little Youghiogheny River watershed, surrounding the Oakland, Mountain Lake Park, and Deer Park area,
- North and west of Gorman

The 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture defines a farm as “any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, in the census year.” Using this definition, in 2007 Garrett County had 95,514 acres of farmland on 677 farms, which is a decrease of approximately 16,300 acres from 1997 (Table IV-1). As described in Chapter II, there are approximately 89,100 acres of land in agricultural land use/land cover in Garrett County, approximately 21% of the total land area¹¹.

Approximately 75% of the agricultural product market value in Garrett County is from livestock, poultry and related products compared to 25% from crops. The share of value from crops has doubled since 1997 (12% to 25%), (Table IV-1).

Table IV-1 Farmland and Agricultural Product Value

	2007		2002		1997		Change 1997-2007	
	Number	Acres	Number	Acres	Number	Acres	Number	Acres
Farms	677	95,514	634	101,444	718	111,829	-41	-16,315
Average Farm Size (Acres)		141		160		156		-15
Total Cropland		46,019		50,876		56,013		-9,994
Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold (\$ thousands)								
All Agricultural Products		25,726 (100%)		\$20,857 (100%)		\$20,887 (100%)		\$4,839
Crops		6,465 (25%)		\$3,748 (18%)		\$2,424 (12%)		\$4,041
Livestock, Poultry, Related Products		19,261 (75%)		\$17,109 (82%)		\$18,463 (88%)		\$798
Average Age of Principal Operator		55		53		53		2

Note: The Agricultural Census reports the number of acres in farms, (including land in farms that is not suitable for agricultural activity), whereas MDP’s Land Use/Land Cover dataset, used in this LPPRP shows approximately 89,100--the acreage that is actually used for agricultural activity.

Sources: 1997, 2002, 2007 Agricultural Censuses (U.S. Dept of Agriculture).

¹¹ The acreage numbers in the Census are based on reports by farmers and are different from the numbers in MDP’s land use/land cover which are from satellite imagery.

2. Goals

The County's 2008 Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives for agricultural and forest land intended for resource protection or conservation are (page 3-1 and page 7-1):

1. Conserve agricultural and forest resource land.
2. Preserve 20,000 acres of farmland by 2020.

The County's water and sewer policies that support these goals are stated on pages 3-12 and 3-16 of the Comprehensive Plan:

Within the Rural Resource and Agricultural Resource areas (see Figure II-3 above)

- 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.

The State's goals for agricultural land preservation statewide are shown in the box below.

State of Maryland Goals for Agricultural Land Preservation

1. Permanently preserve agricultural land capable of supporting a reasonable diversity of agricultural production.
2. Protect natural, forestry, and historic resources and the rural character of the landscape associated with Maryland's farmland.
3. To the greatest degree possible, concentrate preserved land in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource-based industries
4. Limit the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource based industries.
5. Preserve approximately 1,030,000 acres of productive agricultural land by 2020.
6. Ensure good return on public investment by concentrating State agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by both local investment and land use management programs.
7. Work with local governments to:
 - Establish preservation areas, goals, and strategies through local comprehensive planning processes that address and complement State goals;
 - In each area designated for preservation, develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public at large, and State and local government officials;
 - Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs;
 - Use local land use management authority effectively to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas; and
 - Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and the public at large.

3. 2005 LPPRP Recommendations. 2008 Comprehensive Plan

The 2005 LPPRP recommended program development strategy (page IV-11) included the following:

- Continue to support the purchase of agricultural easements.
- Explore use of Installment Purchase Agreements (IPAs) as a means of acquiring easements on a greater number of acres of farmland in a shorter period of time.
- Encourage development to occur in designated Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) and clustering of new housing development in locations outside designated PFAs.
- Encourage farmers who must sell their farms to sell to other farmers.
- Continue to avoid extension of public water and sewer facilities into prime agricultural areas.
- Continue to participate in the Rural Legacy program to extend the resources available through MALPF to purchase easements on farmland.
- Continue to utilize the County Tax Credit Program to provide incentive to farmers to maintain Agricultural Preservation Program Districts and to encourage formation of additional designated Agricultural Preservation Districts.
- Encourage formation of a private, non-profit Local Land Trust to support current efforts to protect farmland.

4. Progress

4.1. Purchase of agricultural easements

In Garrett County agricultural easements are acquired under three programs/organizations: Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF); Rural Legacy; and the Maryland Environmental Trust (Figure IV-1). As of late 2011 there were a total of 76 agricultural easements in Garrett County, covering approximately 9,310 acres (Table IV-2).

Table IV-2 Agricultural Easements, 2011

	Easements	Acres
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation	52	6,557
Rural Legacy	11	1,392
Maryland Environmental Trust	13	1,361
Total	76	9,310

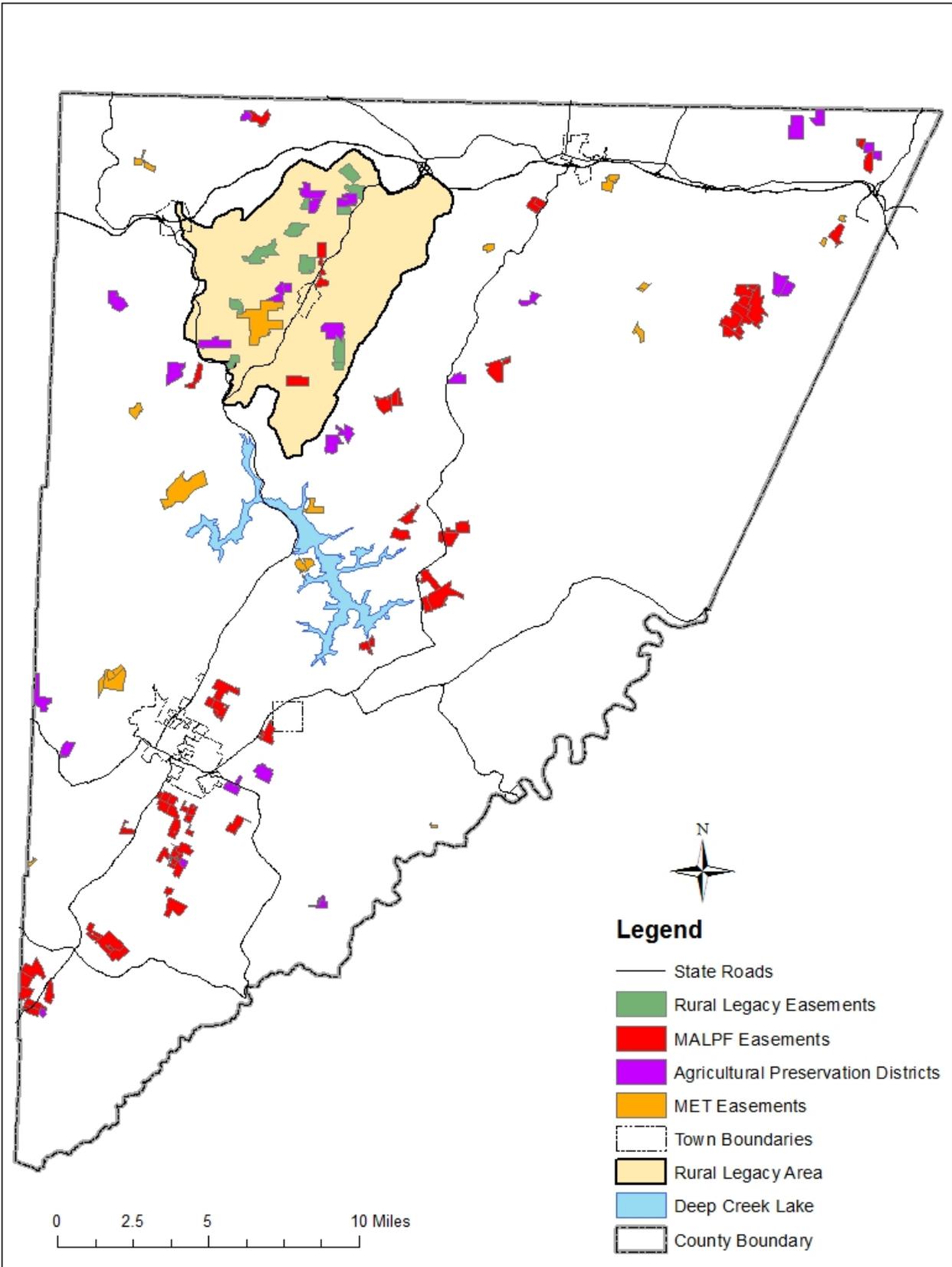
Notes: 1. Includes one approximately 95 acre MALPF easement pending as of late 2011
 2. MET easements in this table represent agricultural easements only, not MET easements on natural resource land.

Garrett County has participated in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) program since 1983. This program preserves agricultural land by working with private landowners to sell their development rights to MALPF while retaining the right to continue to use the land for farming.

Maryland’s Rural Legacy (RL) program was created in 1997 to protect large, contiguous tracts of Maryland’s most precious cultural and natural resource lands through grants made to local applicants for land and easement acquisitions. Garrett County’s 31,000-acre Rural Legacy (RL) Area covers the Bear Creek watershed.

The Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) is a land trust that acquires easements (by purchase or donation) on agricultural and natural resource lands throughout the state. MET holds approximately 30 easements in the County covering approximately 2,400 acres. Of these, MET estimates that approximately 1,360 acres are on agricultural lands, that is lands that can be farmed or timbered. MET co-holds nine of its easements with a Garrett County land trust, the Allegheny Highlands Conservancy.

Figure IV-1 Preservation Easements in Garrett County



In the six years between 2006 and 2011 a total of 1,575 acres were preserved under MALPF, an average of 262 acres per year and above the 234-acre average between 1983 and 2011 (28 years). Counting both MALPF, Rural Legacy, and MET, between 2006 and 2011 a total of 3,423 acres were preserved, an average of 571 acres per year. Figure IV-2 shows permanently protected agricultural lands in relation to targeted agricultural areas in AgPrint, the State's mapping tool that targets certain areas for preservation and set priorities among them.

The 2006 – 2011 period included the last years of the economic boom when unusually large amounts of funding were available for preservation as well as the first years of the recession when funding began to slow. If the 2006 – 2011 average pace were to continue for the 10 years through 2020, an additional 5,710 acres would be preserved for a total of 15,020 acres (9,310+5,710), still well short of the 20,000-acre by 2020 goal adopted in 2005.

The average easement cost per acre between 2005 and 2007 was \$3,152, ranking 16th in the State and, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, higher than the average cost in seven counties including Kent, Worcester, and Dorchester¹². The economic downturn which began in 2008 has changed many dynamics including real estate development, agricultural economics, and agricultural land preservation. Development pressure is less than it was during the 1990s and early 2000s, but funding for preservation is also reduced. The County Department of Planning and Land Development observes that since 2008 there have been more applicants to sell easements than the funds available to purchase them and this has discouraged some. The average age of farmers continues to increase (from 53 to 55 between 1997 and 2007), though this is still younger than the statewide average of 59. At the same time there is new interest in alternative agriculture including specialty, high value agricultural products. The next few years will be telling for agricultural land preservation progress in Garrett County.

4.2. *Explore use of Installment Purchase Agreements (IPAs)*

- Installment Purchase Agreements (IPA) purchase easements in installments over time rather than in a one-time payment. IPAs can stretch easement acquisition funds by using bonds for purchases and can have tax advantages for easement sellers. Garrett County has not yet used IPAs, but could do so in the future.

4.3. *Encourage development to occur in designated Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) and clustering of new housing development in locations outside designated PFAs*

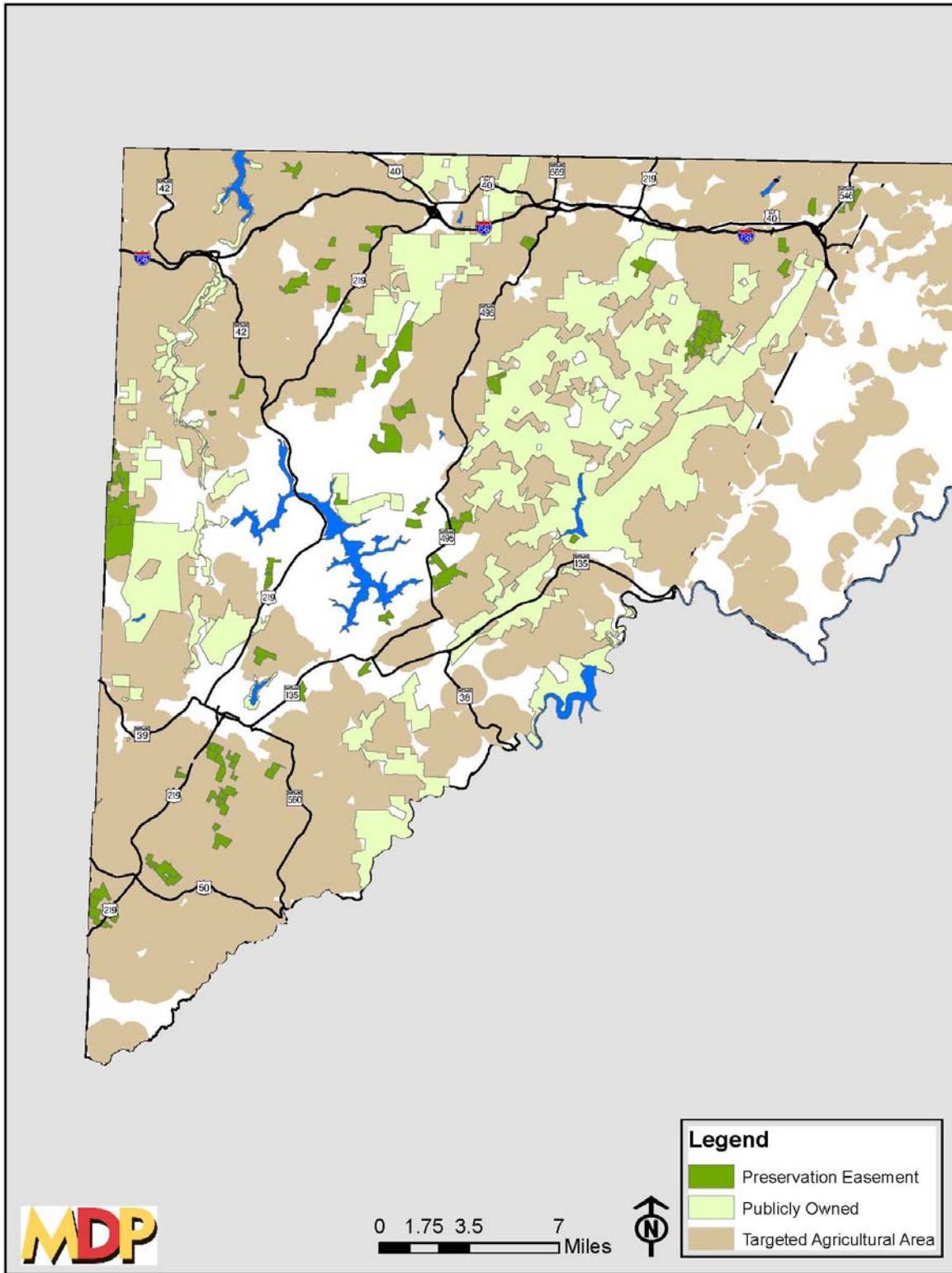
The 2008 Comprehensive Plan included an aggressive land use plan designed to retain land for forest and agricultural activities and to preserve rural character. A key requirement was for residential development in rural areas to protect a minimum share between 66 and 80 percent of the land to be subdivided for forest and agricultural activities. Within the 20 percent developable area, the Plan encouraged clustering through a maximum residential lot size of 1.5 acres. To help implement these requirements, the Land Use Plan map significantly expanded the Rural Resource (forest) areas and Agricultural Resource areas.

During Plan implementation through the zoning, subdivision, and sensitive area ordinance revisions several of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations were opposed by many rural landowners. The final ordinances adopted in 2010 did not include the mandatory clustering requirements though they remain optional with density incentives.

The economic slowdown since 2008 has likely reduced development pressure in rural areas of the County. During the next six-year Comprehensive Plan review in 2014, development patterns and trends should be reviewed in relation to the Plan's findings (page 3-6), and ordinance changes should be considered if warranted .

¹² 2009 State LPPRP page II-55.

Figure IV-2 Maryland's AgPrint Map for Garrett County



Sources: <http://www.agprint.maryland.gov/background.html>; Custom map generated by Maryland Department of Planning, January 2012. Some easements on Figure IV-1 may not show on Figure IV-2.

4.4. Encourage farmers who must sell their farms to sell to other farmers

This recommendation would establish a farm brokerage program matching older farmers with younger ones and sellers with prospective farmer buyers, including an incubation program that would link new farmers with established farmers who might assist in transitioning ownership or purchase of farm equipment over an extended period of time.

This recommendation has not been implemented. Garrett County's farm turn over rate is low and usually involves family transfers obviating the current need for a farm brokerage program. MALPF has a Critical Farms Fund and Program (HB 214 approved in 2011) that provides interim or emergency financing for easement acquisition or fee simple acquisition and resale with easement to permanently protect critical farms otherwise likely to be sold for nonagricultural uses. This program has not been used in Garrett County but could in the future be a solution for critical farms under certain circumstances.

4.5. Continue to avoid extension of public water and sewer facilities into prime agricultural areas

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan clarified and helped implement this recommendation by including the following policies for land designated AR and RR: (pages 3-12 and 3-13)

- 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.

These policies should be incorporated into the County Water and Sewer Plan update.

4.6. Continue to participate in the Rural Legacy program to extend the resources available through MALPF to purchase easements on farmland

As discussed above the County has continued to participate in the Rural Legacy program and has preserved 1,392 acres in the Bear Creek RL area including 940 acres between 2006 and 2011.

As a result of potential development of Marcellus Shale natural gas reserves in Garrett County, the Rural Legacy Board is not currently allowing the County to move forward with any more Rural Legacy easements in the Bear Creek area. The Board is apprehensive about purchasing easements in this area due to gas rights interests being separated from surface interests on most properties within the watershed. These interests were leased or purchased from the surface owners in the 1950s and 1960s for the purpose of storing natural gas in the innate storage field that exists in the Accident anticline. However, these leases also provide opportunities for the lease holder to drill on the surface of the property and the State is concerned about potential environmental impacts¹³.

The State has not yet developed an energy policy with regard to Marcellus Shale natural gas reserves, however, the County is hopeful that once such a policy is developed, the Rural Legacy program will be allowed to proceed¹⁴.

4.7. Continue to utilize the County Tax Credit Program to provide incentive to farmers to maintain Agricultural Preservation Program Districts and to encourage formation of additional designated Agricultural Preservation Districts

Until 2008 the MALPF preservation program was a two-step process involving the creation of temporary (5-year renewable) Agricultural Preservation Districts followed by sale of permanent easements. Garrett County helped administer the Agricultural Preservation District program. MALPF now uses a one-step easement process with no district program but counties are permitted to maintain their own Agricultural Preservation District programs.

¹³ Report on Implications of Marcellus Shale Gas Drilling on Conserved Land (MDNR December 2010).

¹⁴ In June 2011 Governor Martin O'Malley signed an Executive Order (Order) establishing a Marcellus Shale Safe Drilling Initiative. The Order requires the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), in consultation with an advisory commission made up of a broad array of stakeholders, to undertake a study of drilling for natural gas from the Marcellus Shale in Western Maryland. A final report is due in 2014.

Garrett's program is voluntary on the part of landowners and starts with a District Agreement, which, is in effect for a minimum of 3 years. The District Agreement provides the security of knowing that the land is protected from development and is a valuable first step in securing more permanent protection. Approved District properties are eligible for a County Tax Credit on all agricultural lands and woodlands. Taxes continue to be assessed on all residential and agricultural structures, however, the property tax on all real estate is 100% rebated under the program.

As of late 2011 the County had a total of 28 Districts containing approximately 3,174 acres¹⁵. Subtracting a pending 95 acre MALPF easement (see Table IV-2) results in a total of 27 Districts totaling approximately 3,078 acres.

4.8. *Encourage formation of a private, non-profit local land trust to support current efforts to protect farmland*

The Allegheny Highlands Conservancy (AHC) was formed in 2004. Its mission is to "To conserve the natural resources, scenic beauty, and rural character of the Allegheny Highlands of Maryland" www.alleghenyhighlandsconservancy.org/.

In partnership with the Maryland Environmental Trust, AHC currently holds nine easements in Garrett County covering 1,180 acres.

B. Natural Resource Lands

1. Introduction

Garrett County has abundant natural resource lands. As noted in Chapter 2, of the County's approximately 420,000 acres over 90% are resource lands including over 285,500 acres of forest. These resources are not only environmentally sensitive but are also scenic and recreational resources for the County's residents and visitors.

2. Goals

The Sensitive Areas chapter of the County's 2008 Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 7) contains the County's objectives for achieving its overall sensitive areas goal which is to: **Continue to protect Garrett County's sensitive environmental resources and natural features.** The objectives are:

1. Limit development in and near sensitive environmental areas, including steep slopes, streams, wetlands, 100-year floodplains, and the habitats of threatened or endangered species.
2. Conserve agricultural and forest resource land.
3. Protect scenic resources.
4. Support increased use of soil and water conservation practices.
5. Preserve 20,000 acres of farmland by 2020.
6. Protect public wellhead resource areas.

The State's goals for natural resource lands conservation preservation are shown in the box on the following page.

¹⁵ These lands are in addition to the lands permanently preserved under MALPF or Rural Legacy.

State of Maryland Goals for Natural Resource Land Conservation

1. Identify, protect and restore lands and waterways in Maryland that support important aquatic and terrestrial natural resources and ecological functions, through combined use of the following techniques:
 - Public land acquisition and stewardship;
 - Private land conservation easements and stewardship practices through purchased or donated easement programs;
 - Local land use management plans and procedures that conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and minimize impacts to resource lands when development occurs.
 - Support and incentives for resource-based economies that increase retention of forests, wetlands, or agricultural lands;
 - Avoid and minimize impacts of publicly funded infrastructure development on natural resources; and
2. Focus conservation and restoration activities on priority areas, according to a strategic framework such as GreenPrint.
3. Conserve and restore species of concern and important habitat types that fall outside the green infrastructure: rock outcrops, karst systems, caves, shale barren communities, grasslands, shoreline beach and dune systems, mud flats, non-forested islands, etc.
4. Develop a more comprehensive inventory of natural resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas to assist State and local implementation programs.
5. Assess the combined ability of State and local programs to:
 - Expand and connect forests, farmlands, and other natural lands as a network of contiguous green infrastructure.
 - Protect critical terrestrial and aquatic habitats, biological communities, and populations.
 - Manage watersheds in ways that protect conserve, and restore stream corridors, riparian forest buffers, wetlands, floodplains, and aquifer recharge areas and their associated hydrologic and water quality functions.
 - Adopt coordinated land and watershed management strategies that recognize the critical links between growth management and aquatic biodiversity and fisheries production; and
 - Support a productive forestland base and forest resource industry, emphasizing the economic viability of privately owned forestland.
6. Establish measurable objectives for natural resource conservation and an integrated State/local strategy to achieve them through State and local implementation programs.

3. Local Priorities for Natural Lands and Resources

3.1 Priority preservation and conservation areas for natural resources

Conservation of the County's abundant and extensive natural and agricultural resources, over 90% of the County's land cover, is an overarching County goal. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan and the implementation program are geared to achieving this goal on a countywide basis (see discussion of Rural Resource (forest) areas and Agricultural Resource areas above under Agricultural Land Preservation). These areas contain nearly all the environmentally sensitive areas in the County: steep slopes; stream buffers; wetlands; floodplains; and habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species.

Within this framework the only area specifically designated as a conservation priority in the Comprehensive Plan is the Bear Creek Rural Legacy Area.

The Comprehensive Plan also includes a discussion of ridge tops in response to participants in the Comprehensive Plan process who regard the widespread use of ridge tops for wind power generation as an industrial use, incompatible with the aesthetics, scenic quality, and rural character of the County. The Plan identifies portions of the County potentially suitable for wind power (page 7-14), but does not designate specific areas for conservation.

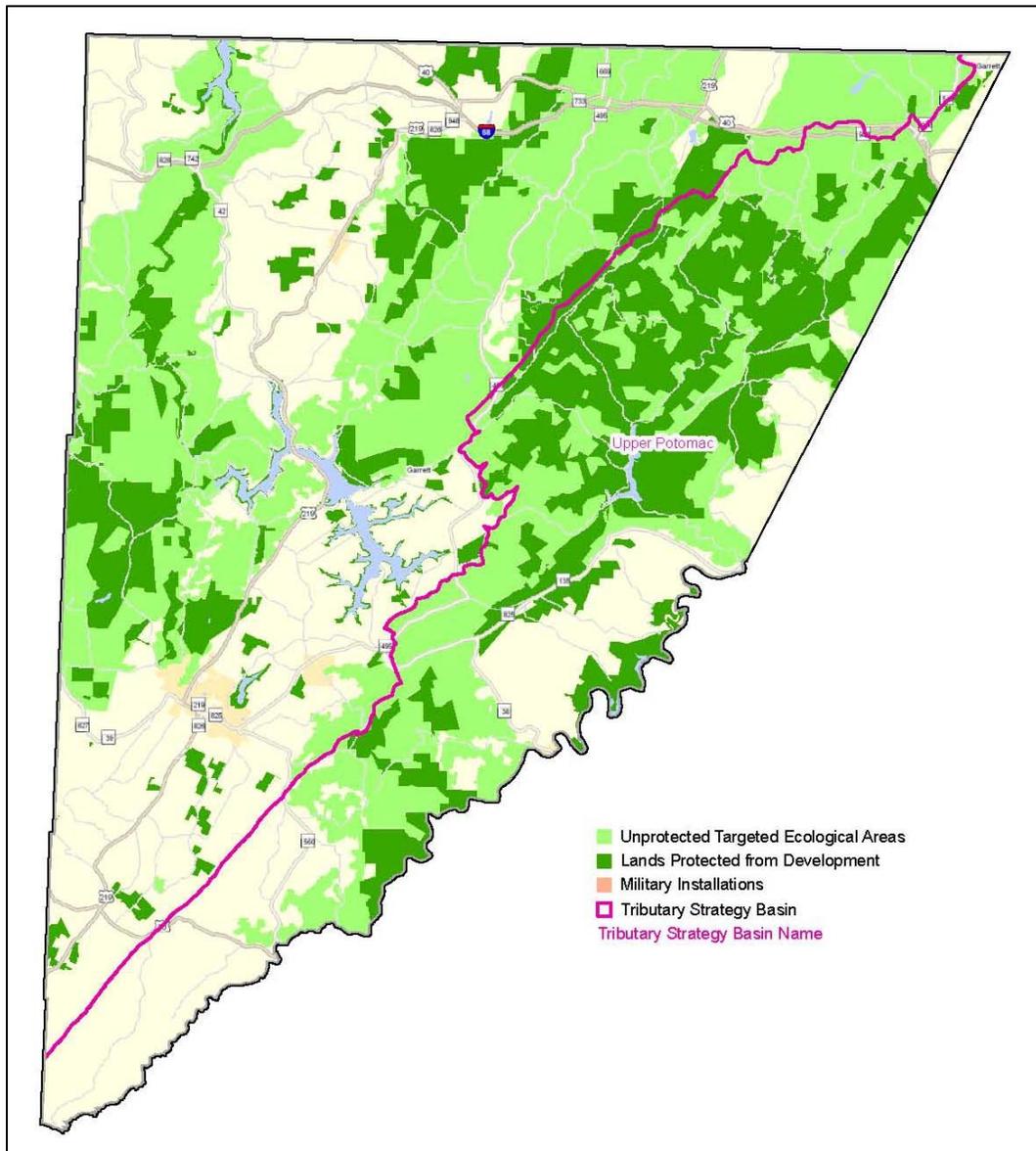
The boundaries of these areas are generally consistent with GreenPrint, the State's mapping tool that shows how Maryland's land conservation programs are meeting their goals (Figure IV-3). The major difference is that GreenPrint identifies only portions of the Bear Creek watershed as Unprotected Targeted Ecological Areas; the remaining areas are agricultural and are shown on Maryland's AgPrint mapping (Figure IV-2).

3.2 Principal implementing ordinances and programs

Implementation of the County's goals is through the County's functional plans such as this LPPRP and the Water and Sewer Plan, the Capital Improvements Program, as well as ordinances especially the Subdivision Ordinance, Sensitive Areas Ordinance, and the Deep Creek Watershed Zoning Ordinance (Chapters 159, 156, 157 respectively of the County Code).

The Sensitive Areas Ordinance covers steep slopes; stream buffers; rare, threatened or endangered species; wetlands, and source water protection areas. Other important ordinances are those covering floodplain management, erosion and sediment control, and stormwater management.

Figure IV-3 Maryland's GreenPrint Map for Garrett County



Source: <http://www.greenprint.maryland.gov/countymaps.asp> (11-26-11)

4. 2006 LPPRP Evaluation and Recommendations

The 2005 LPPRP (pages 5-16 to 5-23) identified a number of recommendations under the following headings as the needed improvements in the implementation program.

- Waterway and Floodplain Protection Policies
- Wetlands Protection Policies
- Steep Slopes Protection Policies
- Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat Protection Policies
- Forest and Woodlands Protection Policies

The LPPRP recommended these be considered in an update of the comprehensive plan and sensitive areas ordinance

5. Progress

5.1 Natural Resource Conservation Lands

Garrett County’s Recreation and Open Space inventory now includes approximately 9,600 acres of publicly accessible federal, state, local, and private/ quasi-public natural resource lands (see Table IV-3).

The largest sites are Youghiogheny River Lake and Mt. Nebo Wildlife Management Area. The private/ quasi-public category includes lands owned by the Nature Conservancy and Piney Reservoir which is owned by the City of Frostburg.

A number of other properties are protected natural resource lands but are not included on the inventory because they are private. These include approximately 1,050 acres in easements owned by the Maryland Environmental Trust which are, in some cases, co-held by the Allegheny Highlands Conservancy. MET holds an additional 1,360 acres in agricultural easements as described in Section A, Table IV-2.

Table IV-3 Natural Resource Lands

Site	Federal State, Local	Private/ quasi- public
Youghiogheny River Lake, Mill Run Recreation Area	3,897	
Mt. Nebo Wildlife Management Area	1,854	
Savage River Reservoir	360	
North Branch Potomac Fish Management Area	273	
Bear Pen Headwaters	241	
Bear Creek Hatchery Fish Management Area	113	
Lower Deep Creek Heritage Conservation Fund	108	
Fulcher P. Smith Conservation Area	70	
Grantsville Town Park	2	
Cranesville Swamp		1,023
Finzel Swamp (Cranberry Swamp)		326
Piney Reservoir		1,371
Total	6,918	2,720
Combined Total		9,638

Source: Appendix A.

5.2 Regulations

Garrett County adopted new zoning, subdivision and sensitive areas ordinances with extensive revisions in 2010. These revisions implemented policies in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan.

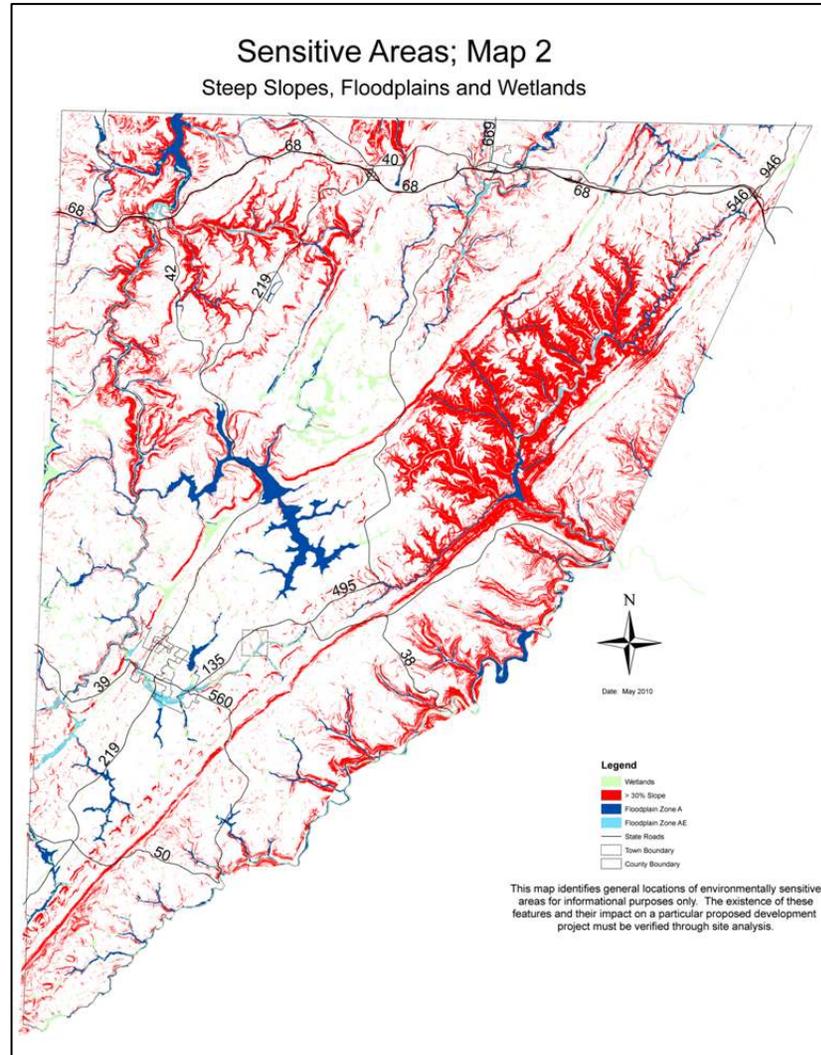
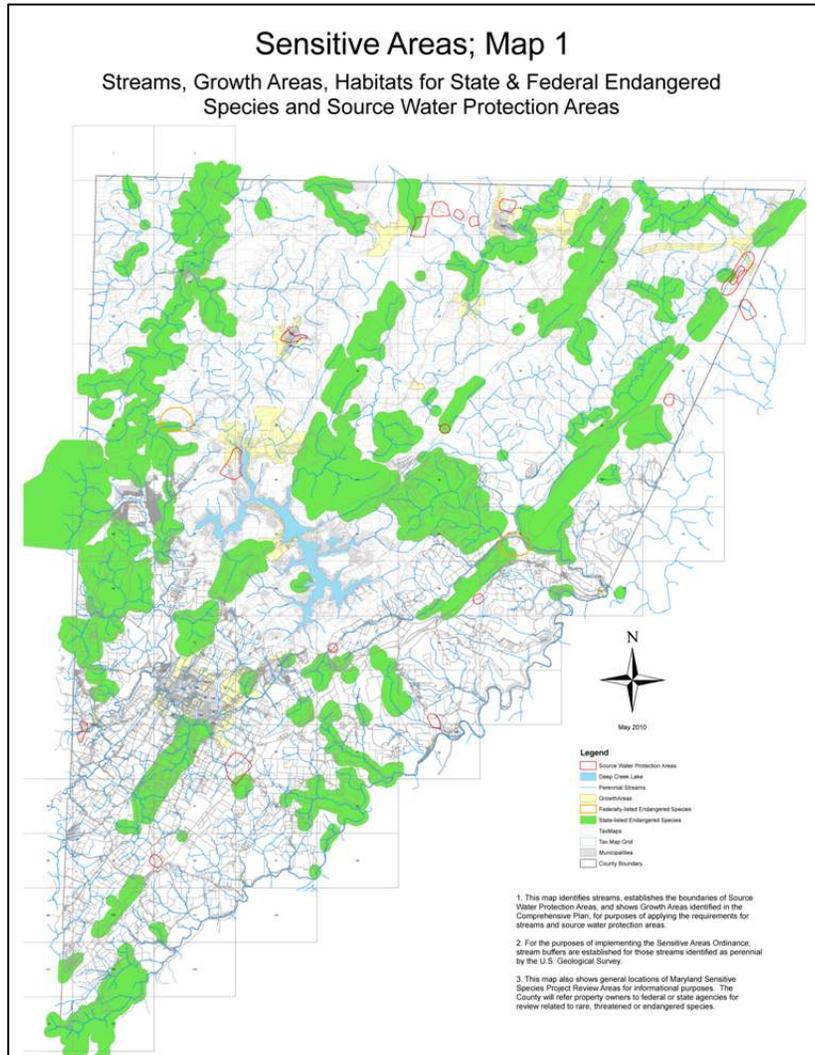
A number of changes were made to the sensitive areas ordinance including the following provisions:

- Steep slopes: reducing the amount of impervious surface permitted on steep slopes; not permitting fill; grandfathering; exemptions; and creation of man made slopes
- Stream buffers: allowing incursion into buffers only if an effective vegetative buffer is provided
- Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species: notification and documentation procedures
- Wetlands; new section added requiring development to comply with the Maryland Non-Tidal Wetlands act
- Source Water Protection Areas– new section added to protect areas that provide water recharge for public drinking water systems

New Generalized Sensitive Areas Maps were created for use in implementing the ordinance (Figure IV-4).

Figure IV-4 Generalized Sensitive Areas Maps

Note: these maps are reproduced here for purposes of illustration. The actual maps are at <http://www.garrettcountry.org/PlanningLand/PlanningZoning/Sensitive.aspx> and can be downloaded and viewed in greater detail.



Appendices

Appendix B Recreational Facilities Needs Analysis Tables (Supply, Demand, Needs)

All counties are required to complete a needs analysis for recreational facilities based on a common methodology prescribed by the state. The analysis is required to estimate needs for current, 2012, 2017, and 2022 and beyond. The county is given flexibility to measure its own facility and activity needs, season length for an activity, daily carrying capacity or participation rates at a facility and acreage required for facilities. The analysis is based on results from two statewide recreational use surveys¹, county specific information or trends, population and demographic projections and other local experience or insights into facility use experience. Mandatory activities common to all counties must be evaluated; baseball/softball diamonds, basketball and tennis courts, and multi-purpose fields. In addition the county evaluated the other activities identified in the tables as need or interest has been expressed for such recreational facilities or activities.

Private or quasi-public facilities have been included in the facility supply analysis because they help satisfy the demand for recreation facilities. However, they are excluded from the acreage inventory analysis because they are not in public ownership. Likewise, most state and federal facilities are included for purposes of calculating facility supply, but are excluded from the acreage analysis.

The analysis consists of three tables: supply, demand and needs. The supply report lists 14 recreational activities. Four were required to be analyzed by the State, the other 10 were selected by the County. The result of the analysis is an expression of the surplus or deficit of facilities to support the particular recreational activity in 2012 based on the 2010 population, and in 2012, 2017, and 2022 based on projected population. The results are shown on the needs table and summarized in Chapter 3.

Notes following the three tables explain how the various demand and supply factors were derived.

¹ 2003 Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland and State Parks and Natural Resource Areas in Maryland: A Survey of Public Opinion. These scientific surveys accessed a total of 400 households Garrett, Allegany, Washington and Frederick counties that were drawn at random to reflect the distribution of households among these counties.

SUPPLY REPORT - GARRETT COUNTY						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Activity	Facility type	Number of facilities 2011	Season length	Daily carrying capacity per facility	Annual carrying capacity	Total supply of all facilities
Baseball/Softball	Diamonds	38	150	54	8,100	307,800
Basketball	Courts	51	160	40	6,400	326,400
Tennis	Courts	22	220	32	7,040	154,880
Soccer	Fields	10	180	60	10,800	108,000
Football	Fields	4	180	60	10,800	43,200
Walking/Hiking	Miles	121	300	80	24,000	2,910,480
Biking (mountain)	Miles	83	150	16	2,400	200,040
Snowmobiling	Miles	57	90	2	180	10,242
X-Country Skiing	Miles	27	90	30	2,700	72,225
Swimming (indoor/outdoor)	Pools	3	335	400	134,000	402,000
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	31	200	80	16,000	496,000
Picnic Pavilions	Shelters	38	200	72	14,400	547,200
Public Boat Ramp/Launch Areas	Ramps	15	185	50	9,250	138,750
Golf (18 hole)	Courses	4.5	180	360	64,800	291,600
Notes:						
Column 2 is from the Recreation Inventory.						
Columns 3 and 4 are defined by the County based on past experience and examples from other towns/counties. Notes in the electronic version of the spreadsheet explain the assumption for each capacity. Carrying capacity means the number of users the facility can support in a day.						
Column 5 Annual Carrying Capacity is derived by multiplying Columns 3 and 4.						
Column 6 Total supply (derived by multiplying Columns 2 and 5) represents the total number of occasions/users per year that a facility is used by all participants.						

DEMAND REPORT - GARRETT COUNTY		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Activity	Facility type	2010 Population	Individual Participation Rate (%)	Frequency of Participation Rate	2010 Demand	2012 Population	2012 Demand	2017 Population	2017 Demand	2022 Population	2022 Demand
Baseball/Softball	Diamonds	30,097	0.151	22.28	101,255	30,178	101,528	30,620	103,014	31,280	105,235
Basketball	Courts	30,097	0.124	21.84	81,507	30,178	81,727	30,620	82,924	31,280	84,711
Tennis	Courts	30,097	0.096	17.05	49,263	30,178	49,396	30,620	50,119	31,280	51,199
Soccer	Fields	30,097	0.089	16.61	44,492	30,178	44,612	30,620	45,265	31,280	46,241
Football	Fields	30,097	0.066	17.13	34,027	30,178	34,119	30,620	34,618	31,280	35,365
Walking/Hiking	Miles	120,388	0.785	25.99	2,456,174	120,713	2,462,801	122,480	2,498,855	125,120	2,552,717
Biking (mountain)	Miles	120,388	0.119	10.57	151,428	120,713	151,836	122,480	154,059	125,120	157,380
Snowmobiling	Miles	150,485	0.006	14.00	12,641	150,891	12,675	153,100	12,860	156,400	13,138
X-Country Skiing	Miles	150,485	0.011	8.64	14,302	150,891	14,341	153,100	14,551	156,400	14,864
Swimming (indoor/outdoor)	Pools	30,097	0.298	10.22	91,662	30,178	91,910	30,620	93,255	31,280	95,265
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	30,097	0.341	7.80	80,052	30,178	80,268	30,620	81,443	31,280	83,199
Picnicking	Shelters	120,388	0.678	3.96	323,227	120,713	324,099	122,480	328,844	125,120	335,932
Public Boat Ramp/Launch Areas	Ramps	48,155	0.386	6.31	117,290	48,285	117,606	48,992	119,328	50,048	121,900
Golf (18 hole)	Courses	120,388	0.133	14.62	234,090	120,713	234,721	122,480	238,157	125,120	243,291

Note:

2010 Population from US Census. Projections prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning Data Services, November 2010

Columns 2 and 3 derived from "Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland; A Survey of Households in Maryland and Seven Sub-State Regions", Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, May 2003. Adjusted on an activity by a

(2) Demand for 2010 (Column 4) is derived by multiplying Columns 1, 2 and 3. Demand for 2012, 2017 and 2022 is derived by multiplying respectively Columns 5, 7 and 9 by Columns 2 and 3.

NEEDS REPORT - GARRETT COUNTY		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Activity	Facility type	2010 Supply	Annual Carrying Capacity	2010 Demand	2010 Unmet Need (1)	2012 Demand	2012 Unmet Demand (2)	2012 Unmet Need (3)	2017 Demand	2017 Unmet Demand (4)	2017 Unmet Need (5)	2022 Demand	2022 Unmet Demand (4)	2022 Unmet Need (5)
Baseball/Softball	Diamonds	307,800	8,100	101,255	25	101,528	206,272	25	103,014	204,786	25	105,235	202,565	25
Basketball	Courts	326,400	6,400	81,507	38	81,727	244,673	38	82,924	243,476	38	84,711	241,689	38
Tennis	Courts	154,880	7,040	49,263	15	49,396	105,484	15	50,119	104,761	15	51,199	103,681	15
Soccer	Fields	108,000	10,800	44,492	6	44,612	63,388	6	45,265	62,735	6	46,241	61,759	6
Football	Fields	43,200	10,800	34,027	1	34,119	9,081	1	34,618	8,582	1	35,365	7,835	1
Walking/Hiking	Miles	2,910,480	24,000	2,456,174	19	2,462,801	447,679	18.65	2,498,855	411,625	17	2,552,717	357,763	14.9
Biking (mountain)	Miles	200,040	2,400	151,428	20	151,836	48,204	20	154,059	45,981	19	157,380	42,660	18
Snowmobiling	Miles	10,242	180	12,641	(13)	12,675	(2,433)	(14)	12,860	(2,618)	(15)	13,138	(2,896)	(16)
X-Country Skiing	Miles	72,225	2,700	14,302	21	14,341	57,884	21	14,551	57,674	21	14,864	57,361	21
Swimming (indoor/outdoor)	Pools	402,000	134,000	91,662	2	91,910	310,090	2	93,255	308,745	2.3	95,265	306,735	2.3
Playgrounds	Playgrounds	496,000	16,000	80,052	26	80,268	415,732	26	81,443	414,557	26	83,199	412,801	26
Picnicking	Shelters	547,200	14,400	323,227	16	324,099	223,101	15	328,844	218,356	15	335,932	211,268	15
Public Boat Ramp/Launch Areas	Ramps	138,750	9,250	117,290	2	117,606	21,144	2	119,328	19,422	2	121,900	16,850	2
Golf (18 hole)	Courses	291,600	64,800	234,090	1	234,721	56,879	1	238,157	53,443	1	243,291	48,309	1

Notes:

(1) 2010 Unmet Need derived by subtracting Column 3 from Column 1 and dividing by Column 2. Parenthesis indicates a facility/activity deficit. A number without parenthesis indicates a facility surplus (e.g., 2010 unmet need indicates a 25 baseball/softball diamond surplus and a 13 mile deficit for snowmobile trails.

(2) 2012 Unmet Demand derived by subtracting Column 5 from Column 1.

(3) 2012 Unmet Need derived from subtracting Column 5 from Column 1 and dividing by Column 2.

(4) 2017 and 2022 Unmet Demand derived from subtracting respectively Column 8 and Column 11 from Column 1.

(5) 2017 and 2022 Unmet Need derived from subtracting respectively Column 8 and Column 11 from Column 1 and dividing by Column 2.