

CRAIG COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



November 7, 2013

Acknowledgements

Craig County Board of Supervisors

Honorable Millie Harrison, Chair
Honorable Fred Craft, Vice Chair
Honorable Carl Bailey
Honorable Keith Dunbar
Honorable Martha Murphy

Craig County Planning Commission

Norman Taylor, Chair
Barbara Davis, Vice Chair
George Field, Member
Michelle Klopfer, Member
John McClure, Member

Craig County Administration

Richard C. Flora, County Administrator

Roanoke Valley - Alleghany Regional Commission

Eddie Wells, AICP, CZA, Senior Planner

Table of Contents

Purpose of the Plan	1
Chapter 1 History	2
Historic and Cultural Landmarks.....	2
Local Natural, Scenic and Historical Areas	3
Chapter 2 Natural Environment.....	4
Topography	4
Geology.....	4
Soils	5
Climate	10
Groundwater.....	10
Surface Water	11
Flood Hazard.....	11
Forests	14
Chapter 3 Demographics	17
Population Trends	17
Population Projections.....	17
Migration and Natural Increase.....	18
Age Distribution	20
Household Characteristics.....	20
Income	21
Per Capita Personal Income.....	21
Poverty statistics	22
Chapter 4 Housing	23
Housing Units.....	23
Occupied Units.....	23
Housing Type	24
General Housing Characteristics	24
Residential Building Permits.....	25
Affordable Housing.....	26
Chapter 5 Recreation and Tourism	28
Craig County Tourism Commission	28
Regional Tourism Marketing.....	28
Virginia Western Highlands Artisan Trail.....	28
Tourism’s Economic Impact.....	30
Festivals	30
Historic Landmarks.....	31
Lodging	32
Campgrounds.....	33
USFS Recreation Resources.....	33
Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trails	34
Scenic Byways	34
Overlooks, Turnouts and Waysides	34
Trails and Greenways.....	36
Fishing.....	38

Hunting.....	38
Public Water Access.....	38
Private Recreation Facilities	38
Chapter 6 Community Facilities	40
Water and Sewer Systems	40
Solid Waste and Recycling.....	40
Law Enforcement	40
Emergency Services.....	41
Health Care Facilities	41
Craig County Public Library	42
Electric Utilities.....	43
Communication Services.....	43
Chapter 7 Education	44
Craig County Public Schools	44
Public School Statistics	45
Child Care	46
Chapter 8 Transportation	47
Highway Network	47
Federal Functional Classification	49
2035 rural Long Range Transportation Plan	51
Virginia Six-Year Improvement Program.....	53
Secondary Six-Year Plan.....	54
Public Transit.....	55
Rural Bikeway Plan	57
Greenways	58
Commuting Patterns.....	60
Rail Service	61
Private Bus Service	61
Air Service.....	61
Future Transportation Needs.....	62
Transportation Project Priorities.....	62
Chapter 9 Existing Land Use.....	65
Chapter 10 Future Land Use.....	68
Chapter 11 Goals and Objectives	71
Housing.....	71
Economy	72
Human Services.....	72
Natural Resources.....	73
Agriculture	73
Recreation and Tourism	74
Built Resources	75
Transportation	75

Tables

Table 1 Natural, Scenic and Historical Areas	3
Table 2 Private Forest Harvest Value.....	14
Table 3 Payment in Lieu of Taxes.....	15
Table 4 Population Change, 1900 - 2010.....	17
Table 5 Population Projections.....	17
Table 6 Migration in the Past Year	18
Table 7 Natural Population Increase	19
Table 8 Population Distribution by Age	20
Table 9 Household Characteristics.....	20
Table 10 Median Income Change	21
Table 11 Median Income Comparison.....	21
Table 12 Per Capita Personal Income Trend	21
Table 13 Poverty Statistics.....	22
Table 14 Housing Units.....	23
Table 15 Occupied Units by Type	23
Table 16 Housing Unit by Type	24
Table 17 Housing Characteristics	24
Table 18 Housing Units by Year Structure Built.....	25
Table 19 Residential Building Permits, 2000-2010.....	25
Table 20 Craig County Housing Deficiencies	26
Table 21 Gross Rent.....	26
Table 22 Median Owner Costs.....	27
Table 23 Craig County Tourism Impact.....	30
Table 24 Public School Statistics	45
Table 25 Students Continuing Education	46
Table 26 Principals and Assistant Principals, Teachers, Instructional Positions and Teacher Aides Average Annual Salaries.....	46
Table 27 Annual Average Daily Traffic Volumes	47
Table 28 VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program Projects.....	53
Table 29 Secondary System Allocations / Projects	54
Table 30 Rural Bikeway Plan Recommendations.....	57
Table 31 Means of Transportation to Work	60
Table 32 Place of Work.....	60
Table 33 Travel Time to Work.....	60
Table 34 Transportation Project Priorities	62
Table 35 Existing Land Use	65

Maps

Map 1 Prime Farmland.....	8
Map 2 Septic Suitability.....	9
Map 3 Flood Hazard	13
Map 4 Tourism and Recreation Resources	29
Map 5 Highway Network	48
Map 6 Highway Functional Classification	50
Map 7 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan	52
Map 8 Proposed Pedestrian Network Improvements.....	59
Map 9 Priority Transportation Projects	64
Map 10 Existing Land Use	67
Map 11 Future Land Use	70

Purpose of the Plan

The scope and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is summarized in the Code of Virginia, Title 15.2, Subtitle II, Chapter 22, Article 3, Section 15.2-2223:

In the preparation of a comprehensive plan, the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities.

The Code of Virginia mandates that every incorporated jurisdiction in the Commonwealth adopt a comprehensive plan. Furthermore, the Code mandates that each jurisdiction review/reassess their Plan every five years. This mandate supports the need for an on-going process of plan reassessment -- the plan should never be viewed as a "static" document. Over the years, the Virginia General Assembly has approved additional topics that must be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan including affordable housing, open space, and a detailed transportation element.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as a general guide for local officials in their decisions concerning land development, expansion (or development) of community facilities, and the establishment of community-related services. Since one major purpose of the Plan is to guide land use decisions, the Plan should be general in nature and should emphasize the long-range needs of the County. As such, the Plan can be utilized to examine trends in order to meet existing needs and respond to new opportunities. The Comprehensive Plan is meant to encourage coordinated and harmonious land use in the County and should be used in conjunction with the County's Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances as a guide for future development.

In December 1979 the Craig County Board of Supervisors adopted the County's first Comprehensive Plan entitled *Land Use Plan, Craig County, Virginia*. During the process of reviewing the 1979 document, the County Planning Commission proposed to expand the scope of the update to include a more detailed look at housing, economic development, recreation and human services. In 1989 a revised Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the County. In March 1998, Craig County adopted a number of amendments and revisions concerning the goals and objectives for commercial activity, education, facilities improvements economic development, transportation, housing and recreation. During the time period 2000 - 2002, the Planning Commission again undertook the task of revising the Comprehensive Plan with public hearings held in April and May of 2002. The previous Comprehensive Plan was formally adopted by the Craig County Board of Supervisors on August 20, 2002. In 2010 an update of the plan began. A draft of the updated Plan was completed in January 2013.

Chapter 1 History

Craig County is blessed with a beautiful physical environment that has fostered a rich and intriguing history of colorful characters, events, and places. Craig County was formed in 1851 from Botetourt, Roanoke, Giles and Monroe Counties. There were several additional annexations from Alleghany, Giles, Monroe, and Montgomery Counties after Craig County's formation. The County was named for Robert Craig, delegate from Roanoke County to the General Assembly, who was instrumental in the County's formation. Exploration of the area had begun about 1751 and by 1774 there were several permanent settlements. New Castle was established as the County seat when Craig County was formed and is the only incorporated town in the County. Arrival of the C&O Railroad's Craig Valley Branch in the 1890s brought on expansion plans for the County. The 1830s brought the Cumberland Turnpike which served as a major transportation corridor for southwestern Virginia.

Laid out in 1818 and formally established in 1819 New Castle was originally within the boundaries of Botetourt County. In 1849, more than 200 citizens in and around New Castle petitioned the Virginia General Assembly to form a new County with New Castle as its seat. The 1830s marked the arrival of the Cumberland Gap turnpike which served as a major transportation channel. New Castle continued to serve as a center for Craig County commerce and small-scale artisan manufacturing. The Craig County Court responded quickly to news of Civil War in the spring of 1861. The court passed special levies to raise troops for the confederacy and to provide support to the soldiers families. Although Federal troops moved through Craig County in 1863 and 1864, New Castle recovered quickly from the war and was incorporated in 1873.

Historic and Cultural Landmarks

The following sites have been listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

Craig Healing Springs - Craig Healing Springs is significant as a collection of nearly thirty well-preserved early Twentieth Century resort buildings. Developed as a resort between 1909 and 1920 by the Craig Healing Springs Company, the resort flourished with the advent of automobile travel in the years between the two world wars, but declined with changes in vacation and travel patterns of the 1950s. The Christian Church in Virginia purchased the property and has adapted the site for use as a conference center, carefully maintaining the original grounds and buildings as well as many of the furnishings.

Huffman House - The Huffman House site, also known as Huffman Farm, features six contributing buildings: an early nineteenth-century barn, a 1835 farmhouse, a corn crib, a wash house, a garage, and an early twentieth-century store. Located along Route 42, the complex developed over time and has had many commercial and travel related uses in addition to its primary purpose as a family farm. The main house now functions as a bed and breakfast.

New Castle Historic District - The New Castle Historic District encompasses nearly 70 acres of the downtown commercial center and adjacent residential areas. The original district, nominated in 1973, was expanded in 1993. The historic district formed around the Craig County Courthouse and the tavern which is now the core of the Central Hotel. From the 1890s through the 1920s the Bank Square subdivision lots along main street were sold and developed as commercial property. The typical New Castle building is two-story frame store with false front

parapet and large first floor display windows. Building types represented in the district include a courthouse, a sheriff's office/jail, a hotel, boarding houses, single-family dwellings, a church, stores, service stations, domestic and agricultural outbuildings, artisan workshops, offices and a bowling alley. Architectural classifications within the district include variations of the Greek Revival, Italiante, Beaux Arts, Eastlake, Queen Anne, and Classical Revival Styles. The period of significance for the district ranges from 1818, the date of the original town plat, to 1940, the construction date for the most recently contributing buildings in the commercial and residential areas.

Local Natural, Scenic and Historical Areas

Craig County is rich in historic buildings and cultural areas, unique scenic areas, and recreational spots. Historic buildings, rural historic districts, and historic cultural landscapes should be taken into account during planning for the County's future. Potential preservation sites are listed below.

Craig County features many historic churches. New Bethel Christian Church, 1912 is located on Route 42 along with five other lovely old churches. Hebron Church, located on Route 606, the oldest standing church in Craig County was built in the 1840's. There are 14 churches in Craig County built before 1900.

Table 1
Natural, Scenic and Historical Areas

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. The Stacks | 2. Pines Campground |
| 3. Fenwick Mines | 4. Hebron Church |
| 5. Sweet Springs Turnpike | 6. Scott Tavern |
| 7. Barbours Creek | 8. Botanical Area |
| 9. Bailey Tavern | 10. Virginia Mineral Springs |
| 11. Paint Bank | 12. Potts Creek |
| 13. Paint Bank Mill | 14. Shires Cave |
| 15. Potts Mountain | 16. Circle Gorge |
| 17. Town Hill | 18. New Castle Historic District |
| 19. Carper's Cave | 20. Civil War Grave |
| 21. Craig Healing Springs | 22. Johns Creek |
| 23. Buttermilk Falls | 24. Sinking Creek Church |
| 25. New River - James River Divide | 26. Meadow Creek |
| 27. Salem Methodist Church | 28. Murder Hole |
| 29. Craigs Creek | 30. Arnolds Knob |
| 31. Route 42 | 32. Bellview Farm |
| 33. Hall Road | 34. Webb's Mills |
| 35. Appalachian Trail | 36. Miller's Cove |
| 37. Waitville Road | 38. Blue Healing Springs |
| 39. Valley Roller Mill | 40. Watershed Dams |
| 41. Sinking Creek | 42. Mississippi Steamboat House |

Chapter 2 Natural Environment

The following information on Craig County's natural environment was obtained from numerous sources including: the Virginia Division of Mineral Resources, the Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Department of Forestry, U.S. Forest Service and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Topography

Craig County has a land area of 336 square miles. It lies in the south central portion of the Great Valley of Virginia and borders the State of West Virginia and the Virginia counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Giles, Montgomery and Roanoke. Several major ridges, running in a northeast-southeast direction reach altitudes of 3,000 to 3,900 feet. The highest peaks are Arnold's Knob at 3,939 feet and Peters Mountain at 3,886 feet. The County claims many fertile valleys, the largest of which is along Sinking Creek. Also within the County are several large streams: Barbours Creek, Craig Creek, John's Creek, Meadow Creek, Potts Creek and Sinking Creek.

Geology

Introduction

The Sinking Creek Valley is a unique geologic feature, one of two raised valleys in this geologic province. The other perched valley is Burke's Garden in Tazewell County, Virginia. There is a sign at the Great Eastern Continental Divide where the watershed divide crosses Route 42, Cumberland Gap Rd., just west of New Castle. The Sinking Creek flows from the Great Eastern Continental Divide on Sinking Creek Mountain in Craig County to the New River in Giles County. The high point on Sinking Creek Mountain marks the divide for three major creeks: Craig Creek, Sinking Creek and Meadow Creek. While Craig Creek and Meadow Creek flow to the James River and into the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean, only the Sinking Creek flows to the New River and on to the Gulf of Mexico. Johns Creek, Potts Creek, and Barbours Creek also all flow to the James River. Sandstones armor and cap the mountain ridges.

Importance

The location and orientation of Craig County's watersheds means that a lot of people's water resources begin in Craig County. The county should think "downstream" when making decisions about water protection. The county's water, which is filtered by trees and soils and channeled through our geology, is used by those that live downstream. Craig County also has natural wetlands due to the local geology. The entire Sinking Creek Valley is Karst, which makes it especially fragile and its water vulnerable to pollution. Caves, sinkholes and springs occur throughout the Valley.

Geological background

"The Saltville Fault is one of the major structures of the Valley and Ridge Belt as a whole, with its northeastern termination of the fault near the nose of Sinking Creek anticline near New Castle, Craig County, Virginia." The Sinking Creek Valley is a southwesterly dipping anticline, eroded to the Cambrian formations. The fault runs all the way down the Sinking Creek Valley through Saltville, Virginia and extends to Alabama. Generally, the Saltville Fault juxtaposes the Cambrian Honaker Dolomite in the hanging wall against Devonian and Mississippian units of the

Greendale Syncline in the footwall block. The Earthquake of 23 August 2012, centered in Louisa County, Virginia, was felt at the same time in New Castle as in Happy Hollow in the Sinking Creek Valley. The underlying geology carried the seismic wave to many of us.

Southeast of the Sinking Creek Mountain ridge, on the Craig Creek side of the mountain, are ancient, giant, rock block slides of shale. These lie mainly in the George Washington Jefferson National Forest. The geomorphology of the slides and the resultant flora and soils formations has been a topic for scientists of all degrees. This is protected land and is not to be disturbed nor the plants, animals, rocks or soils of any species to be taken. The same message of care applies to the entire County. Each of its natural resources is exactly what makes Craig County so healthy, beautiful, delicate, and clean, and makes it an effective filter. We have distinct ecosystems, each with its own biotic (soils, flora and fauna) and abiotic (rock) characteristics. This is what makes Craig County so beautiful.

Past Uses

In the past, Oriskany iron ore was produced by underground and surface mining in northeastern Craig County. The iron ore was used primarily in local iron ore furnaces. Mining operations for iron ore ceased about 1925. Manganese deposits occur at several locations and have been mined in the vicinity of Simmonsville, New Castle, Paint Bank and on Sinking Creek Mountain southwest of New Castle. Limestone and dolomite have been quarried near New Castle, Simmonsville and Huffman for road stone and other uses. Samples of clay and shale from selected localities in the County have been tested and found to be potentially suitable for brick, tile, drain tile, pottery and lightweight aggregate. Sandstone in the County offers a potential source of construction and industrial stone. The Castle Sand Plant northeast of New Castle is an active sand mining operation.

References

The information of Craig County's natural environment and natural resources was obtained from numerous sources including: the Virginia Division of Mineral Resources, the Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Department of Forestry, U.S. Forest Service and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and private Citizens of Craig County.

Geology of the Saltville and Pulaski Fault Blocks, Southwest Virginia, F. Webb, Jr., L.A. Raymond and W.W. Whitlock, 2008. 38th Annual Virginia Geological Field Conference

Soils

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service completed the *Soil Survey for Craig County, Virginia* in 2011. The soil survey is not designed for use as a primary regulatory tool in permitting or citing decisions, but may be used as a reference source. Readers should refer to the *Soil Survey for Craig County* for soil classification, soil characteristics and maps. Site specific soils need further, on-site evaluation (called ground-truthing).

The soils in a survey area occur in an orderly pattern that is related to the geology, organisms and natural vegetation, relief, climate and time. Soils of New Castle and surrounding areas on mountains and mountain foot slopes formed in residuum weathered from shale or sandstone or

in colluvial material weathered from shale or sandstone. Soils on mountain foot slopes formed in colluvium, alluvium on high terraces, or residuum weathered from limestone can be found in Sinking Creek Valley.

The geology of an area influences the soils. Craig County is entirely in the Valley and Ridge Province and does not extend to the Blue Ridge Mountains (which include metamorphic rocks). Our geology is all sedimentary (no igneous nor metamorphic geology). For Craig County, the mountains ridges are generally capped with sandstone and the lowlands are generally shale geology. The soils formed in transported material (colluvium) from the ridge tops have higher sand contents and the soils formed in limestone have more clay. The soils formed in shale have a higher silt content and may be shallower than the soils formed in colluvium of either sandstone or limestone, but not always. Soils are naturally variable. Climate characteristics effect soils and are used in the taxonomy of soils. Craig County has a mesic soil temperature range (470 to 590F) and udic soil moisture regime, where in most years, the soils are not dry as long as 90 cumulative days. Craig County has five of the twelve Soil Orders: Mollisols, Inceptisols, Entosols, Alfisols and Ultisols.

Planners, farmers and others using soil survey information can evaluate the effect of specific land uses on productivity and on the environment in all or part of the survey area. The survey can help planners to maintain, protect, preserve or create a land use pattern in harmony with the natural, non-renewable soil available.

Two topics of concern in planning for the future of Craig County are the availability of land for continued agricultural production and suitable areas for residential development utilizing septic system drainfields.

In an effort to identify the extent and location of important farmlands, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in cooperation with other interested Federal, State, and local government organizations, has inventoried land that can be used for the production of the Nation's food supply.

Map 1 illustrates the units in the survey area that are considered prime farmland.

Prime Farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas.

Farmland of Statewide Importance is land other than Prime Farmland which has a good combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of crops.

Much of the area within Craig County is considered *Prime Farmland* or *Farmland of Statewide Importance*. These areas should be considered, and avoided, when planning future residential, commercial or industrial development in Craig County. The availability of farmland plays an important role in maintaining the economy and rural character of the county.

Map 2 shows the degree and kind of soil limitations that affect septic tank absorption fields, sewage lagoons, sanitary landfills, and daily cover for landfill. Rating class terms indicate the extent to which the soils are limited by all of the soil features that affect these uses. Availability of land suitable for septic fields impacts residential development.

Not limited indicates that the soil has features that are very favorable for the specified use. *Good* performance and very low maintenance can be expected.

Somewhat limited indicates that the soil has features that are moderately favorable for the specified use. The limitations can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. Fair performance and moderate maintenance can be expected.

Very limited indicates that the soil has one or more features that are unfavorable for the specified use. The limitations generally cannot be overcome without major soil reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures.

Note that most of the area in Craig County excluding the U.S. Forest Service property is classified as *Very Limited* or *Somewhat Limited*. These soil characteristics will have to be taken into consideration when planning for future development in the county.

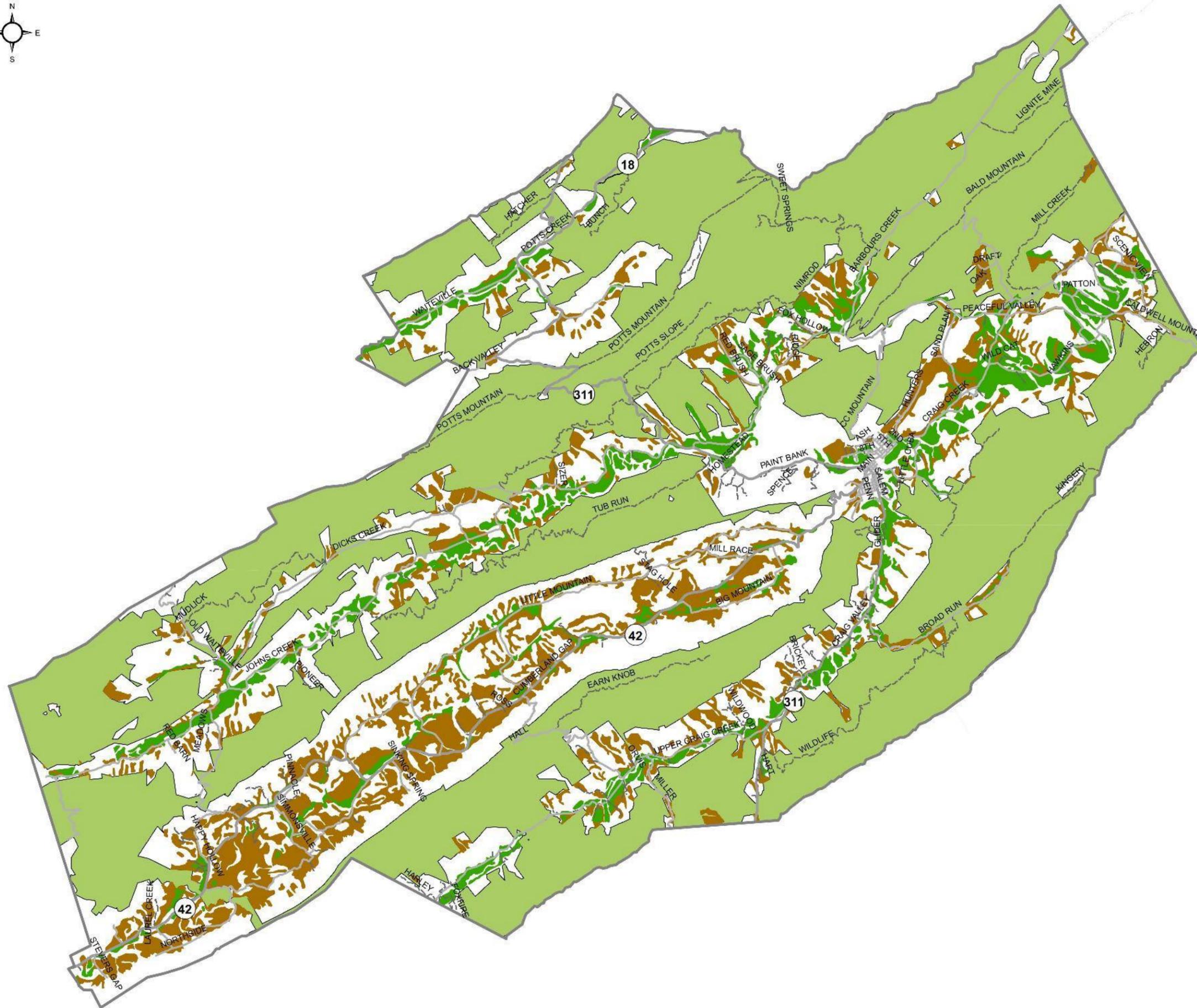
Soil References

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service completed the Soil Survey for Craig County, Virginia in 2011. Currently, the Soil Survey for Craig County, Virginia is only available on the Internet and may be cited as a source of soils data. The Web Soil Survey citation is: Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Web Soil Survey. Available online at: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.gov/>.

Damplands, Intermittently Wet Lands and Wetlands of the Valley and Ridge Province, Nan Gray and the Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists, 2002. Soil Science Field Excursion



Craig County Prime Farmland Map 1



Legend

- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000

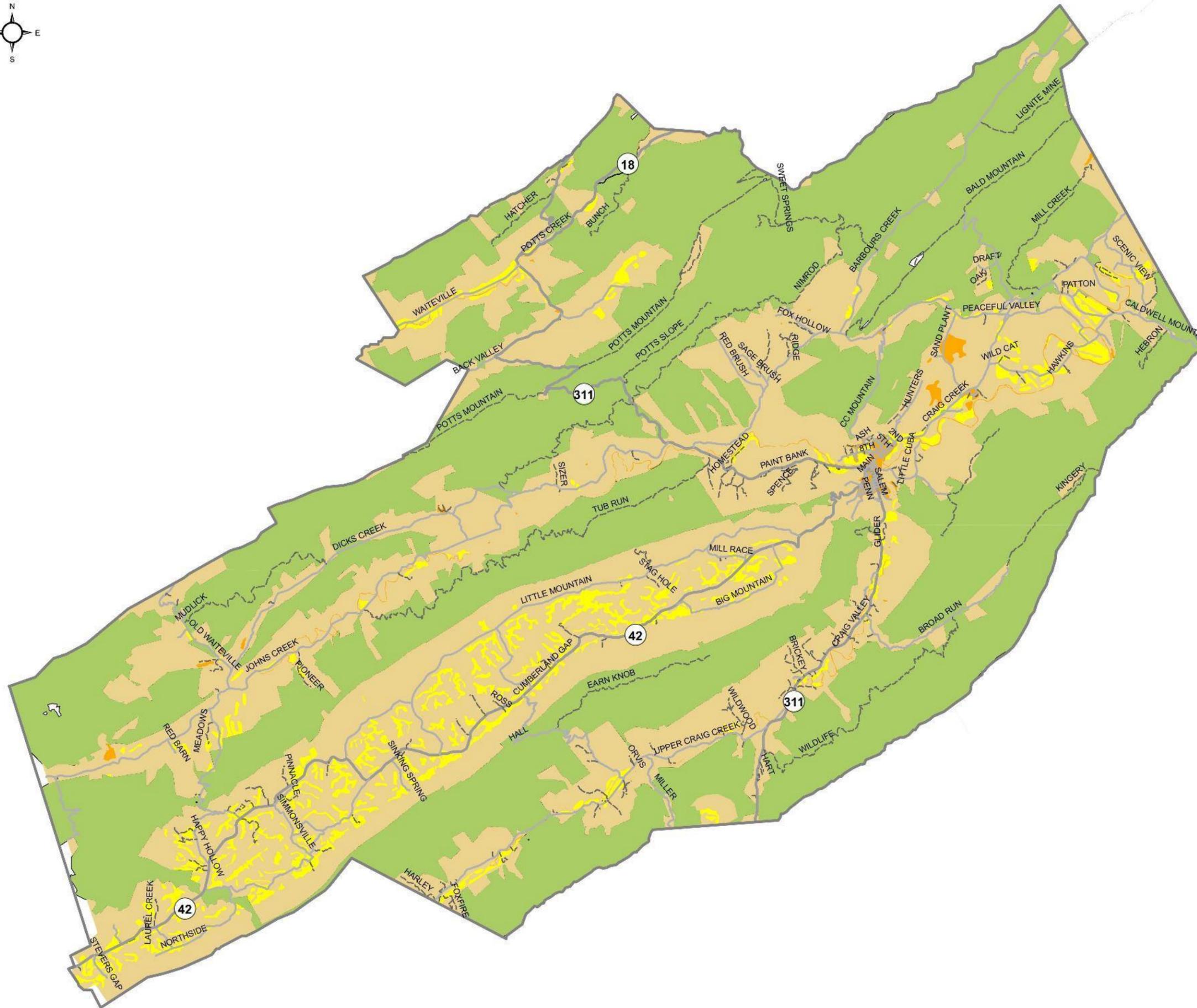


Roanoke Valley-Alleghany
REGIONAL
commission

Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany
Regional Commission, 2013.



Craig County Septic Suitability Map 2



Legend

- Very limited
- Somewhat Limited
- Not Rated
- US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2013.

Climate

The temperate climate of the region brings relatively cool summers and mild winters to the area. The winds through the region generally blow from the west/northwest at an average of 8-10 miles per hour. Yearly rainfall ranges in New Castle from 35" to 50" of rain/liquid precipitation and Happy Hollow of Sinking Creek Valley receives between 35" to 63" of liquid precipitation. Rainfall can come in high intensity short duration rains that amount to five inches in New Castle. However, many summers can be extremely hot and dry, causing drought to occur. When the rain returns in the fall (often as a result of a tropical depression or storm in the vicinity) flooding may occur in low-lying areas of the County because of poor soil permeability.

Temperatures in Craig County remain fairly mild year-round, with an average annual maximum temperature ranging in the low to mid 60s and the average minimum temperature ranging in the low to mid 40s.

Groundwater

Care should be taken when planning for development in the County in order to protect groundwater supplies. According to 1990 Census data (the most recent available), only 21 percent of the County's housing units are served by a public or private central water system. The remainder relies on groundwater or some other source of drinking water. Most wells in Craig County's mountainous areas are less than 300 feet deep and generally yield five to twenty gallons per minute. In the Potts Mountain area dry holes have been drilled as deep as 250 feet. Wells in the valleys are generally less than 200 feet deep and yield less than 40 gallons per minute.

One of the deepest and most productive wells in the County penetrates shale and limestone at the Paint Bank Fish Hatchery. This well is 400 feet deep and was test pumped for 24 hours at 323 gallons per minute with only 89 feet of drawdown. All but five gallons per minute were obtained from calcareous shale at depths of between 300 and 400 feet. Artesian wells located near Route 311 have also been located and found to produce 1200-1300 gallons per minute.

Craig County has a State Observation Well (SOW 232) maintained by Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and sited on Happy Hollow Road in Sinking Creek Valley. This well monitors the water table elevation. Current observations are available online at <http://groundwaterwatch.usgs.gov>. The landowners of Silver Lining Farm have a 100 year agreement with the DEQ that the agency may use the well. The well is located in Karst terrain and the current water table level is 40 feet below the surface of the ground (on 10 June 2013).

Alluvium in broad valleys may reach sufficient thickness to yield moderate supplies of water. A few perennial streams are present in the County and yield varying amounts of water. Several springs occur south of New Castle on the southeastern side of Sinking Creek Mountain.

The limestone and dolomite formations offer the best possibilities for future groundwater development in Craig County. However, the erratic nature of occurrence in this type of rock and the lack of well data makes reliable estimates of potential per unit area difficult. Adequate water supplies may be obtained from sandstone and shale if these types are sufficiently fractured to provide storage and movement of groundwater.

Wells in limestone may yield hard water and iron is frequently excessive. Sulfur occurs in some wells, particularly east and northeast of New Castle. Alum has been reported in water from the Craig Healing Springs area.

Sinking Creek Valley is in Karst, water soluble rock, in limestone. The caves and sinkholes drain surface water and take in underground. Some of the groundwater reemerges to daylight as cool, fresh, mountain spring water. The water in Karst is vulnerable to pollution and animals getting into it when it is on the surface. In Karst, surface water becomes ground water and then becomes surface water, again. This provides a Significant Nexus or justification for regulation for protecting the waters and wetlands of Craig County.

Surface Water

Craig County lies within the James River Basin and the New River Basin. The Great Eastern Continental Divide sheds surface and ground waters at the highpoint of Sinking Creek Mountain, splitting water between Sinking Creek, Craig Creek and Meadow Creek. Sinking Creek (and its tributaries) of Sinking Creek Valley drain to the New River. Meadow Creek, Craig Creek, Johns Creek, Barbours Creek and Potts Creek (and their tributaries) drain to the James River.

The quality of surface waters in the county is good but relatively hard. Large volumes are available during periods of normal flow, however, storage is necessary to provide continuous supplies during drought periods. Stream flow gauging stations have been maintained on Johns Creek at New Castle since 1926 and at Parr in Botetourt County since 1925. Records of temperature, water quality data, flow during duration and high- and low-flow sequence data are available for these gauging stations.

Craig County administers Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance designed to minimize the effects of erosion on creeks and streams from construction, timber harvesting operations, and other projects.

Flood Hazards

Craig County has adopted a Floodplain Management Ordinance (1996) as part of its Zoning Ordinance. The Town of New Castle has adopted a Floodplain Management Ordinance that requires new residential buildings to be elevated to or above the base flood elevation. Additional requirements prevent the obstruction of the floodway. A new Stormwater Management Ordinance, as required by recently adopted state regulations, is under development in 2013.

The County and Town of New Castle participate in, and are in good standing with, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) by enforcing floodplain management regulations that meet federal requirements. This program allows property owners to purchase flood insurance from NFIP. There were 57 NFIP policies in force in the County in 2012.

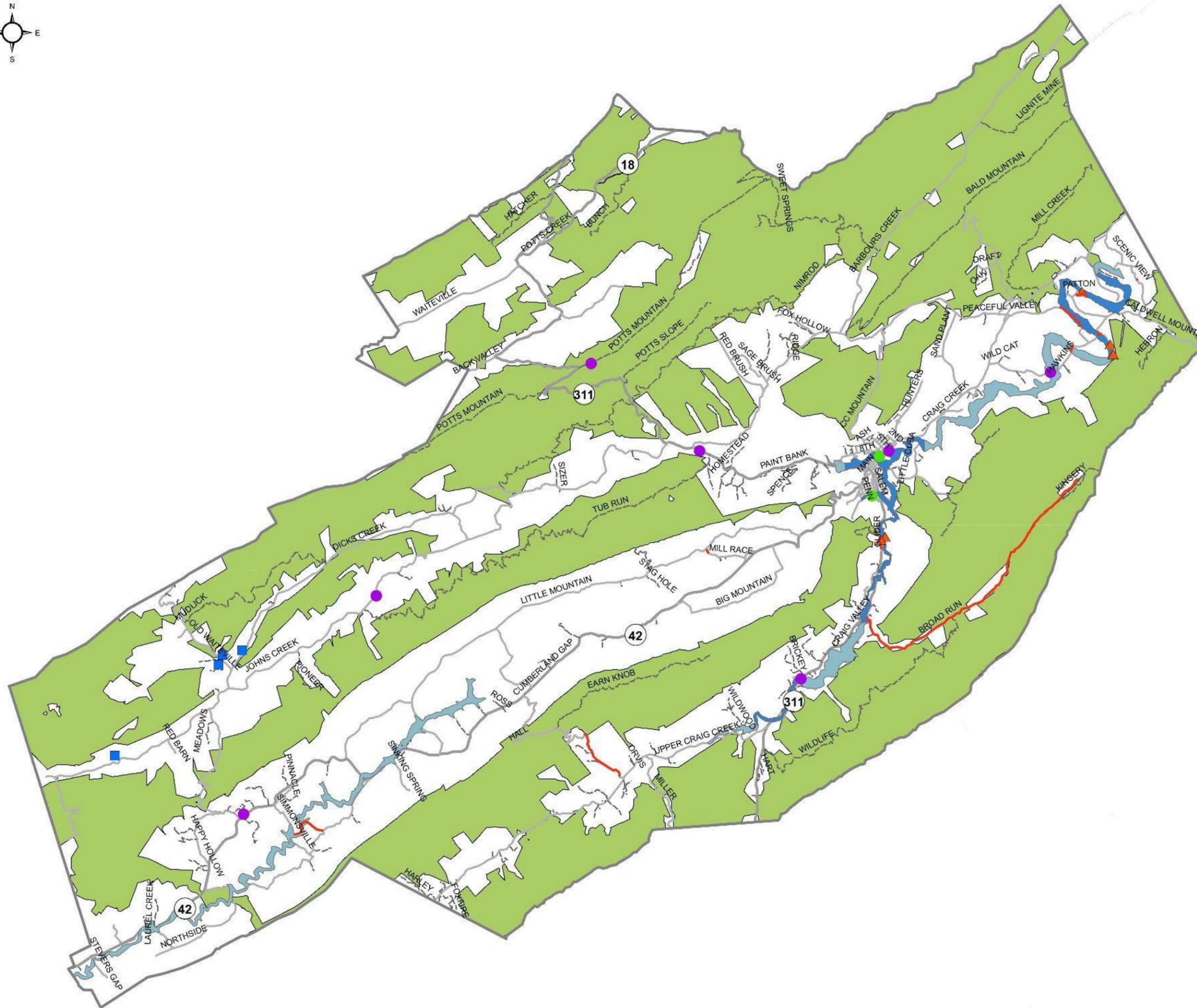
There are four dams in Craig County. The Mountain Castles Soil and Water Conservation District has responsibility for the operation and maintenance of these dams. The dams are located on Johns Creek, Little Oregon Creek, Mudlick Branch, and Dicks Creek. The dams were constructed during the period of 1966 to 1968 for the purpose of flood control in the Johns Creek watershed.

The County participates in a flood warning system developed by the National Weather Service called Integrated Flood Observing and Warning System (IFLOWS). Through the use of radio-transmitted information, this system provides advanced flood forecasting to the Craig County Emergency Operation Center. There is one IFLOW station located in the County.

A lack of countywide flood plain information studies for Craig County hampers flood prevention planning efforts at this time. The county should work with the Corps of Engineers, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, and FEMA to develop complete Flood Insurance Studies for the major watersheds of Johns Creek, Craig Creek, Potts Creek, Sinking Creek and Barbour's Creek. Existing flood hazard planning information is shown on Map 3.



Craig County Flood Hazard Map 3



Legend

-  Flood Prone Roadways
-  Dams
-  Craig Flood Loss Sites
-  IFLOWS Gages
-  USGS Stream Gages
-  100 Year Flood Zone - Approximate
-  100 Year Flood Zone
-  US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2013.

Forests

The forestland of Craig County has always played an important role in the lives of the County's residents. The oak-hickory forests provide recreation, clean water source, wildlife habitat, and raw material for the wood products industries.

Craig County contains 154,170 acres of forest land which covers 78 percent of the total land area. Most of the forestland, 118,550 acres, is owned by the U.S. Forest Service (see Map 9 Existing Land Use, p. 61).

The harvest or stumpage value in Craig County contributed on average, \$150,000 annually to private forest landowners from 2000 to 2007.

Table 2
Craig County Private Forest Harvest Value

Year	Pine Value	Hardwood Value	Total Value
2000	\$19,160	\$73,865	\$93,025
2001	\$18,391	\$48,276	\$66,667
2002	\$10,926	\$92,647	\$103,573
2003	\$10,062	\$53,873	\$63,935
2004	\$23,515	\$152,441	\$175,956
2005	\$148,176	\$250,213	\$398,389
2006	\$46,459	\$114,574	\$161,033
2007	\$27,438	\$170,535	\$197,973

Source: Virginia Department of Forestry, 2011.

While forestland provides many benefits to the county, federally owned land has an impact on the local government's tax collections and budget. Generally, federal lands may not be taxed by state or local governments unless the governments are authorized to do so by Congress. Because local governments are primarily financed by property and sales taxes, this inability to tax the property values or products derived from the federal lands affects the local tax base, sometimes significantly. Instead of authorizing taxation, Congress chose to create various payment programs designed to compensate for lost tax revenue. The most wide-ranging payment program is called "Payments in Lieu of Taxes" or PILT. It is administered by the Department of the Interior and affects most acreage under federal ownership including that of the U.S. Forest Service.

The Payments in Lieu of Taxes Act of 1976 was passed at a time when U.S. policy was shifting from one of disposal of federal lands to one of retention. The policy meant that the retained lands would no longer be expected to enter the local tax base at some later date. Because of that shift, Congress agreed with recommendations of a federal commission that if these federal lands were never to become part of the local tax base, then some compensation should be offered to local governments to make up for the presence of non-taxable land within their jurisdictions.

In some counties the PILT payment greatly exceeds the amount that the county would receive if the land were taxed at fair market value, while in others it is much, much less. Given such problems, and the complexity of federal land management policies, any change in the PILT law

has been difficult, particularly when Congress has a stated goal of reducing spending. The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 provided for mandatory spending of the full authorized PILT level for five years, FY2008-FY2012, however future allocations to the program were uncertain at the time this comprehensive plan was developed.

The formula used to compute the payments is contained in the PILT Act and is based on population, receipt sharing payments, and the amount of Federal land within an affected county. PILT payments are in addition to other Federal revenues (such as oil and gas leasing, livestock grazing, and timber harvesting) that the Federal Government transfers to the states. Table 3 illustrates the PILT paid to Craig County and the variability of the payment from year to year.

Table 3
Payment in Lieu of Taxes

Year	Payment	Acreage
2000	\$76,761	117,361
2001	\$100,361	117,203
2002	\$113,145	117,203
2003	\$117,367	117,203
2004	\$122,404	117,203
2005	\$125,259	117,240
2006	\$123,722	117,243
2007	\$120,017	117,283
2008	\$123,235	NA
2009	\$205,766	117,295
2010	\$65,393	117,295
2011	\$93,534	117,295
2012	\$110,743	117,295

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012.

Every National Forest has a Resource Management Plan that describes how the U.S. Forest Service will manage the national forest for the next 10 to 15 years. It explains what Forest Service managers plan to do and what public benefits are anticipated. Long-term planning of this kind is required by the National Forest Management Act of 1976. The Forest Plan provides broad guidance; it does not make decisions about particular sites, stands, roads, trails, etc. Those decisions are made in individual site-specific Project Plans in compliance with the goals, guidelines, and standards of the established Management Plan. The Jefferson National Forest Plan that covers Craig County was revised in 2004.

Officials of Craig County and its residents should work with the U.S. Forest Service to address uses in the national forest including recreation, timbering, and tourism.

Although the potential of increased forest production in the future is good, there has been rather strong opposition from some County residents about extensive timbering in the National Forest. The main concern of residents appears to be that increased timbering will force the Federal government to cut many new roads into the forest, possibly affecting the hunting and aesthetic qualities of the land.

The National Forest also serves as a draw for tourists to the county. Residents and visitors utilize U.S. Forest Service land for camping, horseback riding, fishing, hiking, hunting, and other forms of recreation. The county should continue to work with the USFS to maintain these uses.

Chapter 3 Demographics

Population Trends

Craig County's population has fluctuated over the past century with the greatest change occurring during the period of 1910-30 and 1940-60. From 1910 to 1930 there was a 24 percent decrease in population while during the decades of 1940-60 there was an 11 percent decrease. The County population has continued to increase since 1960, growing from 3,356 to 5,190 in a fifty year period. The tables below present the numerical and percentage changes in population.

Table 4
Population Change, 1900 - 2010

Year	Population	Change
1900	4,293	-
1910	4,711	13.0
1920	4,100	-9.7
1930	3,562	-13.1
1940	3,769	5.8
1950	3,452	-8.4
1960	3,356	-2.8
1970	3,524	5.0
1980	3,948	12.0
1990	4,372	10.7
2000	5,091	16.4
2010	5,190	1.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1900-2010.

Population Projections

Population projections through the year 2030 indicate that Craig County will continue to grow. The following table presents population projections from 2010 to 2030. Note that the actual Census count in Table 5 exceeded the projected population in 2010. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) will adjust its population projections to take into account new data from the 2010 Census.

Table 5
Population Projections

Year	Population	Change
2010	5,159	-
2020	5,238	1.5
2030	5,311	1.4

Source: Population Projections, Virginia Employment Commission, 2010.

Migration and Natural Increase

This table provides geographical mobility for persons relative to their residence at the time they were surveyed. The characteristics crossed by geographical mobility reflect the current survey year of 2010. According to information provided by the Census Bureau, 196 persons moved to Craig County in 2010. In addition, 229 residents of Craig County moved from one home to another within the county in 2010.

Table 6
Migration in the Past Year, 2010

Category	Persons
Total:	5,008
Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units	4,334
Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units	674
Same house 1 year ago:	4,583
Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units	4,044
Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units	539
Moved within same county:	229
Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units	133
Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units	96
Moved from different county within same state:	133
Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units	128
Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units	5
Moved from different state:	63
Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units	29
Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units	34
Moved from abroad:	0
Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units	0
Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units	0

Source: *Geographic Mobility 2006-2010, American Community Survey, 2012.*

Natural increase is a measure of the population change based on the number of births and deaths that have occurred in a locality over a period of time. Natural increase in Craig County from 1999 to 2009 was 5 persons.

Table 7
Natural Population Increase, 1999-2009

Year	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase
1999	54	38	16
2000	58	40	18
2001	61	41	20
2002	49	63	-14
2003	55	51	4
2004	43	52	-11
2005	46	52	-6
2006	48	49	-1
2007	40	48	-8
2008	38	44	-6
2009	50	57	-7

Source: Virginia Vital Statistics Annual Reports, Virginia Department of Health, 1999-2009.

Age Distribution

The age composition of the of the County remained relatively stable from 2000 to 2010. The percentage of population between the ages of 0 and 19 decreased by 5.8 percent from 1,301 to 1,226. The number of older citizens, age 65 and over, increased during that same period by 28.2 percent. The workforce population between the ages of 20 and 64 remained constant.

It should be noted that the median age in Craig County has been increasing over the last few decades, with a decreasing youth population. The median age statistics illustrate this point. In 1980 the median age was 33.1 years, while in 2010 the figure was 44.8.

Table 8
Population Distribution by Age

Age Group	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5	292	5.7	259	5.0
5 - 9	328	6.4	317	6.1
10 - 14	375	7.4	325	6.3
15 - 19	306	6.0	325	6.3
20 - 24	229	4.5	226	4.4
25 - 34	633	12.4	485	9.3
35 - 44	877	17.2	672	12.9
45 - 54	777	15.3	888	17.1
55 - 59	322	6.3	412	7.9
60 - 64	261	5.1	395	7.6
65 - 74	392	7.7	535	10.3
75 & Over	299	5.9	351	6.8
Total	5,091	100.0	5,190	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, 2000 and 2010.

Household Characteristics

While the County's population increased by 1.9% from 2000 to 2010, the number of households increased by 6.0 percent. Although there are more households, the average household size has decreased by 3.3 percent. This decline has taken place over the last few decades with a 33% decrease in the average household size from 3.5 persons in 1960 to 2.37 persons in 2010.

Table 9
Household Characteristics

Category	2000	2010	Change
Total Households	2,060	2,183	6.0%
Average Household Size	2.45	2.37	-3.3%

Source: U.S. Census, Census of Population, 2000 and 2010.

Income

Although the median household income in Craig County increased by almost 31% from 2000 to 2010, this amount was still equal to only 81% of the state median family income in 2010. Family median income was also only 78% of the state median family income. Per capita income in the County was approximately 76.5% of the state median per capita income.

Table 10
Median Income Change

Category	2000	2010	Change
Household	\$37,314	\$48,845	30.9%
Family	\$41,750	\$53,579	28.3%
Per Capita	\$17,322	\$22,642	30.7%

Source: Census of Population, U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau 2010.

Table 11
Median Income Comparison

Category	Craig County	Virginia
Household	\$48,845	\$60,316
Family	\$53,579	\$72,193
Per Capita	\$22,642	\$31,606

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau 2010.

Per Capita Personal Income

In 2009, Craig County had a per capita personal income (PCPI) of \$30,296. This was 68.7% of the state figure, \$44,057. In 2000, the PCPI of Craig County was \$21,955. The annual growth rate of PCPI over the past 10 years was 3.8 percent. The average annual growth rate for the state was 3.9 percent.

Table 12
Per Capita Personal Income Trend

Year	Craig County	Virginia
2000	\$21,955	\$31,640
2001	\$23,325	\$33,278
2002	\$24,097	\$33,753
2003	\$25,041	\$35,001
2004	\$25,688	\$36,902
2005	\$27,637	\$38,966
2006	\$28,955	\$41,362
2007	\$28,948	\$43,437
2008	\$30,448	\$44,676
2009	\$30,296	\$44,057

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2010.

Poverty Statistics

Craig County experienced a decrease in the percentage of persons below the poverty level between 2000 and 2010. However the percentage of persons age 65 and over, families, and female householder families below the poverty level all increased.

Table 13
Poverty Statistics, Craig County

Category	2000	2010
Persons	10.3%	9.5%
Persons Age 65 and Over	10.5%	12.6%
Families	6.6%	9.3%
Female Householder Families	12.0%	13.7%

Source: Census of Population, U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau 2010.

Chapter 4 Housing

Housing Units

There was a small increase in the number of housing units in Craig County for the period 2000 to 2010. The number of vacant housing units increased by almost 27 percent during the same period. Vacant housing units include cottages and cabins used on a seasonal basis.

Table 14
Housing Units

Housing Occupancy	2000	2010
Total housing units	2,554	2,809
Occupied housing units	2,060	2,183
Vacant housing units	494	626
For rent	NA	38
Rented, not occupied	NA	5
For sale only	NA	30
Sold, not occupied	NA	9
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	329	364
All other vacant units	NA	180
Homeowner vacancy rate	1.6%	1.7%
Rental vacancy rate	6.1%	7.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Housing, 2000 and 2010.

Occupied Units

The percentage of owner-occupied housing remained steady from 2000 to 2010. The number of owner-occupied units has increased by 73 units from 2000 to 2010. The number of renter occupied units increased by 50 units during the 10 year period.

Table 15
Occupied Units by Type

Category	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Owner-Occupied	1,672	81.2	1,745	79.9
Renter-Occupied	388	18.8	438	20.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Housing, 2000 and 2010.

Housing Type

Single-family units have remained the dominant type of housing in Craig County. The number of mobile homes has decreased by 20.1 percent.

Table 16
Housing Unit by Type

Type	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single-Family	1,829	72.2	2,016	78.1
Multi-Family	105	4.1	89	3.4
Mobile homes	599	23.7	477	18.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Housing, 2000 and American Community Survey, 2010.

General Housing Characteristics

The median house value increased by almost 73 percent from 2000 to 2010. The median rent increased 35.4 percent. The amount of housing stock 30 or more years old increased to more than 56 percent.

The census figures which best reflect the condition of housing units in the County are percent of occupied units with more than 1.01 persons per room and percent of occupied units lacking complete plumbing for exclusive use. The percent of overcrowded units decreased and the percent of units lacking complete plumbing decreased from 2000 to 2010.

Table 17
Housing Characteristics

Characteristic	2000	2010
Median Value	\$85,400	\$147,500
Median Contract Rent	\$404	\$547
Percent of Housing 30 Years or Older	52.5	56.2
Percent of Occupied Units with More than 1.01 Persons / Room (overcrowded)	2.8	0.0
Percent of Occupied Units Lacking Complete Plumbing for Exclusive Use	6.5	1.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Housing, 2000 and American Community Survey, 2010.

Table 18
Housing Units by Year Structure Built, 2010

Time Period	Number	Percent
Built 2005 or later	42	1.6
Built 2000 to 2004	86	3.3
Built 1990 to 1999	561	21.7
Built 1980 to 1989	441	17.1
Built 1970 to 1979	415	16.1
Built 1960 to 1969	189	7.3
Built 1950 to 1959	289	11.2
Built 1940 to 1949	152	5.9
Built 1939 or earlier	407	15.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

Residential Building Permits

Based on data provided by the Center for Public Service, the number building permits authorized has averaged approximately 33 units per year since 2000. There has been a decline in the number of building permits since 2007.

The information excludes permits issued for mobile homes, garages and other out-buildings, additions and renovations, and commercial construction. The Census Bureau used to collect data on commercial construction, demolitions, and mobile homes. They have discontinued these surveys and these data are no longer available.

Table 19
Residential Building Permits, 2000-2010

Year	Units
2000	42
2001	31
2002	38
2003	36
2004	30
2005	48
2006	NA
2007	42
2008	23
2009	17
2010	19

Source: Cooper Center for Public Service, 2010.

Affordable Housing

The Code of Virginia, Sec. 15.2-2223, under the scope and purpose of the comprehensive plan, states that “The plan shall include: the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.” Housing affordability should be monitored by local governments to ensure that all citizens are capable of meeting this basic need.

Summary of Affordable Housing Needs

The Census Bureau’s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy database definition of housing problems includes the following criteria “any occupied units lacking a complete kitchen, lacking complete plumbing, having more than 1.01 persons per room, or costing more than 30 percent of the occupant households (monthly) income.”

Table 20
Craig County Housing Deficiencies

Criteria	2000	2010
Units Lacking Complete Kitchen	1.0%	0.6
Units Lacking Complete Plumbing	1.8%	1.1
Units With More Than 1.01 Persons Per Room	2.8%	0.0
Renters Paying More Than 30% of the Occupant Households Income	19.1%	25.3%
Owners Paying More Than 30% of the Occupant Households Income	17.7%	35.2%

Source: *Virginia Housing Atlas 2000, Virginia Center for Housing Research and American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.*

In 2010 the Craig County median rent was 59 percent of the statewide median rent. Approximately 5.2% of renters in Craig County were paying less than \$300 per month. Fewer than 39% of renters were paying above \$750 per month compared to 66.4% of renters statewide.

Table 21
Gross Rent, 2010

Category	Craig County	Virginia
Median	\$547	\$931
Below \$300	5.2%	5.4%
\$750 or More	38.4%	66.4%
No Cash Rent	29.4%	6.6%

Source: *American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.*

Craig County median owner costs with a mortgage were 54 percent of the statewide median while median owner costs without a mortgage were 73.6 percent of the state median. The lower monthly mortgages may be attributed to lower house values, yet similar costs for utilities, maintenance and taxes. The percentage of owners with a mortgage in Craig County was lower than the percentage for the state. This is possibly due to lower median house value and a long term ownership trend in the County creating an opportunity for owners to pay off a mortgage.

Table 22
Median Owner Costs, 2010

	Craig County	Virginia
Median Costs with a Mortgage	\$897	\$1,668
Median Costs without a Mortgage	\$276	\$375
Owners with a Mortgage	51.9%	72.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010.

A standard measure of affordability for both owner and renter is the percentage of income being applied toward housing costs. This cost includes rent or mortgage, utilities, maintenance and taxes. An acceptable rate is 30 percent of the household's income.

In 2010, 245 (26.3%) home owners with a mortgage in Craig County were applying more than thirty percent or more of their income toward housing costs and 73 (19.5%) renters were applying 30 percent or more of their income toward housing costs.

Resources and Strategies

Local housing programs can help residents access safe affordable housing by addressing the needs of specific clients, improving existing housing and assisting in financing. In addition, programs for the elderly and handicapped, energy efficiency and weatherization, water and sewer system programs and local regulations such as the building code and zoning, all play a role in providing affordable housing.

Additional housing resources are available from the following agencies for financial and technical assistance: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's Division of Community Development, Virginia Housing Development Authority, USDA Rural Development, and Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project.

Chapter 5 Recreation and Tourism

Craig County offers a rich historical heritage, a small-town country atmosphere, and rolling mountain vistas. With over 150,000 acres of National Forest land, recreational opportunities include hunting, birding, fishing, primitive camping, horse-back riding, and world-class hiking. Outdoor Recreation Resources are illustrated on Map 4.

Craig County Tourism Commission

The Craig County Tourism Commission currently has ten members appointed by the Craig County Board of Supervisors. The mission statement of the commission is: To maximize economic development by promoting tourism, and to enhance quality of life, while retaining the culture and natural beauty of the area.

Regional Tourism Marketing

Craig County is an active member in the following regional tourism organizations: Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau, Fish Virginia First, Virginia's Western Highlands and the Artisans Center of Virginia. The County is working with Virginia's Western Highlands on multiple brochures and a web site to market the areas opportunities for hiking, birding, wildflowers, and driving tours.

Virginia's Western Highlands Artisan Trail

In 2012 the Artisans Center of Virginia, in partnership with the Virginia's Western Highlands Tourism Council, announced the initiation of the development of the Artisan Trail Network program in the region of the Virginia's Western Highlands (Alleghany Highlands, Bath County, Craig County and Highland County, VA). Virginia's Western Highlands Artisan Trail will link the member localities together using sites highlighting artists, crafters and agri-businesses. The first Craig County members signed up to participate in the program in April 2012. A total of 14 members have signed up since then. They are: Black Diamond Ranch, Craig County Artisan Center & Farmers Market, Depot Lodge, Huffman House B & B, Joe's Trees - Next Generation Farm, Joes Trees Artisan Store, Locust Mountain Grill, Art by Momet, Old Brick Hotel, the Sublett Place, Swinging Bridge Restaurant, Tingler's Mill, Wilderness Adventure and the Craig County Public Library & Visitor's Center.

The Artisans Center of Virginia (ACV) develops and implements systems and strategies to improve economic outcomes for Virginia artisans and their communities while assisting them in promoting their local artisan culture. The ACV, a state-designated nonprofit dedicated to enhancing the economic opportunities of small business artisans and the communities in which they reside, is implementing a defined plan of strategic initiatives to quantify the artisan industry's economic impact, strengthen rural economies through regional network marketing, enhance statewide tourism marketing initiatives, develop small businesses, create jobs, and open and expand markets for Virginia exports.



Craig County Outdoor Recreation Resources Map 4



Legend

- AT Parking
- AT Shelter
- Appalachian Trail
- Bicycle Routes (proposed)
- Birding & Wildlife Trail Sites
- Greenway Project Area
- Field of Dreams
- DGIF Fish Hatchery
- Trout Streams
- Overlook
- Wayside
- USFS Sites
- US Forest Service Trails
- US Forest Service



Tourism's Economic Impact

While tourism and recreation provide quality of life benefits to residents and visitors, consideration must also be given to the economic impact of these activities. The latest data available from the Virginia Division of Tourism is for 2011. The tourism payroll for Craig County was \$755,801 for 46 employees. Virginia travel expenditures increased by 9.2% during the period of 2007 to 2011, while Craig County expenditures increased by 13.1 percent.

Table 23
Craig County Tourism Impact

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Expenditures	\$3,381,629	\$ 3,458,634	\$3,431,468	\$3,583,110	\$3,823,818
Payroll	\$720,398	\$733,993	\$733,715	\$742,415	\$755,801
Employment	47	47	47	46	46
State Tax Receipts	\$141,365	\$141,107	\$149,608	\$151,567	\$154,410
Local Tax Receipts	\$122,960	\$126,952	\$127,393	\$129,745	\$132,001
Lodging Excise Tax Collected	\$7,634	\$12,196	\$12,116	\$10,705	\$12,487
Food Service Excise Tax Collected	\$54,662	\$54,424	\$64,022	\$68,897	\$68,565
Admissions Excise Tax Collected	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0

Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation, 2012.

Tourism Expenditures in Table 23 represent the direct spending by domestic travelers including meals, lodging, public transportation, auto transportation, shopping, admissions and entertainment. Payroll represents the direct wages, salaries and tips corresponding to the direct travel-related employment. Employment represents the estimates of direct travel-related employment in the locality. State Tax Receipts represents the estimates of direct travel-related state taxes generated within the locality. These taxes would include the state sales-and-use tax, gasoline excise taxes, corporate income tax and the personal income tax.

Local Travel Receipts represents the estimates of direct travel-related local taxes generated within the locality. These taxes would include the local sales-and-use tax, local excise taxes and property taxes. Lodging Excise Tax Collected, Food Service Excise Tax Collected, and Admissions Excise Tax Collected represent the local excise tax collections for lodging, meals and admissions, respectively, if applicable in the locality. Incorporated towns within a county may also impose a separate excise tax. Excise tax collections from incorporated towns are included in this data. Localities imposing a local lodging excise tax may impose the tax on any or all classes of lodging such as hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, cabins, and campgrounds.

Festivals

Craig County Fall Festival

The Fall Festival is held on the second Saturday in October. For 30 years it has been sponsored by the Craig County Historical Society as their major fundraiser and provides fundraising opportunities for the entire community. The festival includes a street fair, antique car show, live

entertainment and horse rides. Demonstrations and exhibits showcase the history of Craig County at the Old Brick Hotel and two restored cabins.

Historic Landmarks

The following land marks are listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places.

New Castle Historic District

The New Castle Historic District encompasses nearly 70 acres of the downtown commercial center and adjacent residential areas. The historic district formed around the Craig County Courthouse and the tavern which is now the core of the Old Brick Hotel. From the 1890s through the 1920s the Bank Square subdivision lots along Main Street were sold and developed as commercial property. Building types represented in the district include a courthouse, a sheriff's office/jail, a hotel, boarding houses, single-family dwellings, a church, stores, service stations, domestic and agricultural outbuildings, artisan workshops, offices and a bowling alley. Architectural classifications within the district include variations of the Greek Revival, Italiante, Beaux Arts, Eastlake, Queen Anne, and Classical Revival Styles.

Since 1983, the Craig County Historical Society has restored and maintained the Old Brick Hotel in New Castle. In 2012 an addition was added to the back of the building to provide a ground level facility for the Genealogy Library. Past boarders include lawyers and judges, hot springs visitors, and maybe Jesse James. The three-story brick building was built in three stages beginning in 1840. Right across the street from the Craig County Courthouse, it was the center of town through the boom times of the early 1900 s.

The Hotel now showcases local antiques, a genealogy library and a lot of history. The dining room can be rented for meetings and dinners. The Hawkins cabin is adjacent to the hotel and the two-story Keffer log house is next door to Mick or Mack IGA. The hotel is open every Friday afternoon April through November, or visitors may call for an appointment to view the facility.

Two log homes are located in the historic district. The Keffer Log House was rebuilt during the summer of 1999 by Roger Davis of Montana and Robert Echols of Happy Hollow. The lot on which this cabin is located was the horse corral used by men coming to court in New Castle. The adjacent property has a clause in its deed stating "there shall always be a path to the creek to water the horses." The path and John's Creek are behind the cabin.

The Hawkins-Brizendine Cabin was built in 2000 of logs from the funeral home given by Buddy Boitnott and from the Hawkins homeplace on Rt. 614 given by Ashby & Flo Eakin. The cabins can be visited Fridays 1 to 4 PM April thru November or by appointment.

Craig Healing Springs

Craig Healing Springs is significant as a collection of nearly thirty well-preserved early Twentieth Century resort buildings. Developed as a resort between 1909 and 1920 by the Craig Healing Springs Company, the resort flourished with the advent of automobile travel in the years between the two world wars, but declined with changes in vacation and travel patterns of the 1950s. The Christian Church in Virginia purchased the property and has adapted the site for use as a conference center, carefully maintaining the original grounds and buildings as well as many of the furnishings.

Huffman House

The Huffman House site, also known as Huffman Farm, features an early nineteenth-century barn, a 1835 farmhouse, a corn crib, a wash house, a garage, and an early twentieth-century store. Located along Route 42, the complex developed over time and has had many commercial and travel related uses in addition to its primary purpose as a family farm. The main house now functions as a bed and breakfast.

Lodging

Big Pine Trout Farm

Big Pine Trout Farm located in historic New Castle has a farmhouse and a cottage. The farmhouse is a comfortable and upscale contemporary 3-bedroom house. The cottage sleeps 5 to 6 people and has a full kitchen. The site has amenities such as a private spring fed trout stream, beautiful views of the Virginia mountains, nature trails, blackberry picking (June-August), fully furnished. Running through Big Pine is Meadow Creek, a well-managed stream with rainbow trout. A limited number of anglers are permitted on the stream at a time, therefore, reservations are required.

Country Squires Inn

Country Squires Inn is an elegant Victorian inn located in the middle of historic, downtown New Castle. The park-like gardens, antiques and original artwork are the perfect setting for a weekend getaway, weddings, receptions and corporate events. The whole house is available for rent for weddings or parties or lodging.

The Depot Lodge

The Depot Lodge is located in Paint Bank. The Lodge is part of a major economic investment which includes the renovation of Tingle's Mill to include a craft shop, the expansion of Paint Bank General Store to include the Swinging Bridge Restaurant and shop, Hollow Hill Buffalo Farm and Potts Mountain Outfitters. The train depot dates back to 1909, when Paint Bank was the final stop of the Potts Valley Branch line of the Norfolk & Western Railway. The depot and our other historic buildings have been renovated and converted into charming lodging, while maintaining much of the original architecture. The main section of the depot lodge features 4 rooms upstairs, each with private bath, a gas fireplace, and the soothing sounds of flowing water from nearby Potts Creek. The lodge also offers a master suite with private bath, living room, and a deck overlooking the water. Choose from a variety of accommodations including an actual restored train caboose, one of many lodge rooms, one of two cottages, or a private cabin by Pott's Creek.

The Huffman House

The Huffman House at Creekside Farm in the western part of Craig County is a meticulously restored historic four bedroom bed and breakfast. The Huffman property features three historic buildings that comprise the Virginia country inn, an early nineteenth century barn, a farmhouse built circa 1835 with an addition and remodeling in 1906, and an early twentieth century store.

Campgrounds

The Pines Campground

The Pines Campground is a U.S. Forest Service managed recreation area located next to Barbour's Creek with 2 picnic sites, 17 campsites, a horse corral and trails, water and bathroom facilities.

Steel Bridge Campground

Steel Bridge Campground is a U.S. Forest Service managed recreation area adjacent to Potts Creek and near the community of Paint Bank, has 20 campsites, water and restroom facilities.

Country Campground

Country Campground has primitive camping on Craig Creek south of New Castle. The campground has several pull-through sites. An enclosed pavilion is available for small fee. The family-operated campground has 20 campsites with electric and water hookups and 30 with no hook-ups.

USFS Recreation Resources

Craig County is served by the New Castle Ranger District and Blacksburg Ranger District of the Jefferson and George Washington National Forest. The United States Forest Service (USFS) manages approximately 154,170 acres of land in Craig County as well as several recreation facilities and 200 miles of roads and trails. The USFS works in cooperation with the Virginia Division of Game and Inland Fisheries to manage the wildlife habitat in the County. The lands of the USFS provide residents and tourists with many opportunities for fishing, camping, hiking, hunting and nature study.

Fenwick Mines Recreational Area

Fenwick Mines Recreational Area is a day use facility offering recreation opportunities for the naturalist, historian, and angler. The facility is managed and maintained by the U.S. Forest Service. The created wetlands, boasting an accessible boardwalk interpretive trail, are the remnants of a late nineteenth century iron mining and manufacturing center that once was the location of a community of over 200 individuals. The site is ADA accessible. The Fenwick Mining Complex, consisting of 3,000 acres, was operated primarily between 1899 and 1924. Eight mines in the proximity of the wetlands produced high grade ore which was shipped by the C&O Railroad to furnace locations for smelting. The reclaimed area now boasts waterfowl habitat, native wetland flora habitat, a warm water fishing area, casual sports openings, a picnic shelter, and group and family picnic sites. Adjacent trails offer waterfalls, hunting, upland hardwood and mixed pine forests, and a glimpse into the history of the iron industry.

Patterson Mountain Off-Road Vehicle Trail

The Patterson Mountain Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Trail is designed for all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and dirt bike enthusiasts. Approximately 15 miles of trail contain challenges for users with different levels of skills. The trail is managed by the United States Forest Service and was closed indefinitely in 2010 due to misuse and erosion problems.

Potts Slope Shooting Range

This range is for rifle and pistol practice only. The lanes are sheltered from the sun and each one has a shooting bench that accommodates left and right-handed shooters. This range is designed for firing at stationary targets at 25, 50 & 100 yards. Shooters must bring their own paper targets. The range is handicapped-accessible. Parking and a restroom are available at the site.

Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trails

Within Virginia's 43,000 square miles of diverse natural habitat, can be found some 400 species of birds, 250 species of fish, 150 species of terrestrial and marine mammals, 150 species of amphibians and reptiles, and a wide variety of aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates. The Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail celebrates this diversity. In fact, it is the first statewide program of its kind in the United States.

Craig County is part of the Iron Ore Loop Trail in the state's Mountain Trail area. It includes the following six Birding and Wildlife Trails located within the county:

- Fenwick Mines
- Lions Park
- Hall Road Raptor Viewing Area
- Paint Bank Trout Hatchery
- Paint Bank General Store/Depot Lodge/Hollow Hill Farm
- Sweet Road (FDR-350)

Scenic Byways

Three roads in Craig County have been designated Scenic Byways by the State of Virginia: Route 311, Route 42 and Route 615. Each of these driving routes was selected based on scenes of natural beauty and places of historical and social significance. In addition, the Virginia Outdoors Plan recommended the inclusion of Route 606 from Fincastle to its intersection with 612 in Craig County in the list of scenic byways. The U.S. Forest Service is working with the states of Virginia and West Virginia to develop the "Whistle Stop Byway" (Rt. 600) which will extend from Glen Alton, in Giles County, Virginia to Paint Bank. Portions of routes 311, 42, 600, and 18 (the road passing Steel Bridge Day Use Area and Steel Bridge Campground) are part of the Iron Ore Loop of the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail.

Overlooks, Turnouts and Waysides

Driving through Craig County, one would be hard pressed not to notice the magnificent views From Pott's and Peter's Mountains. Unfortunately, the facilities discourage travelers from stopping and enjoying the scenery. First developed in the 1930s, the waysides and overlooks in Craig County have fallen into disrepair. Expanding the tourism industry and encouraging private enterprise depends on creating an inviting sense of place. Well tended turnouts increase the perception of safety. Nothing in the roadside facilities invites visitors to stop or to explore Craig County. The air of neglect at many of the facilities in the Route 311 Corridor discourages rather than encourages local tourism, precisely because they are the most visible of facilities. By upgrading the waysides and overlooks, utilizing the same or similar design features prevalent along the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Route 311 corridor, potentially, can become the primary tourism route between two significant tourism destinations: the Roanoke Valley in Virginia and

the Greenbrier Valley in West Virginia. As the local tourism industry expands and matures, Craig County, like points along the Parkway, may become a primary destination as well.

Originally proposed as part of a Federal transportation grant application in 2010, the *Virginia Route 311 Visitor Facilities Renovation and Upgrade project* is designed to create a visitor-oriented scenic corridor through Craig County and encourage the expansion of the local tourism economy. The project has three distinct elements: 1) Overlooks, Turnouts and Waysides; 2) Day Trip and Overnight Destinations; and 3) Tourism Kiosk Initiative. Each element contributes to the re-establishment of Route 311 as visitor-based scenic corridor, one that provides tourists, whether local, regional, or out of state, with a unique tourism experience.

Broad Run/Craig Creek Wayside Park& Welcome Center

The development of a new wayside park will provide travelers with needed services, including restroom facilities, and will provide Craig County with a much needed welcome center and community park adjacent to Route 311. The rehabilitation of the property will add to the scenic quality of southern Craig County.

Craig Creek Valley Overlook (Route 42)

The Craig Creek Valley Overlook is located on Route 42, just west of the junction of Route 42 and 311. This site, due to the efforts of the Boy Scouts and Craig County, is in significantly better condition than the other three overlooks in the county. The stone seat wall has been rebuilt; however pavement, sidewalk, curbing, and small picnic patio have been left untouched, as has the landscaped island. The project work completes the rehabilitation of the site. Craig County is proposing to work with the industrial arts program through Craig County High School and a master carpenter to construct the information kiosk.

John's Creek Wayside

The John's Creek Wayside is an adaptive reuse of an abandoned roadway left over after the construction of a new bridge across John's Creek on the west side of Rt. 311. Currently, the site is being used as an informal fishing access point. The parking portion of the site is in reasonably good condition. A proposed stone patio and picnic area will provide visitors with fishing access to John's Creek without having to trespass on private property. Landscaping, created in partnership with the Craig County Chapter of the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs and local landscape firms, will help mitigate any run-off from the site. The stone wall flanking the fishing platform and patio area will replace the existing metal bar and will provide visual continuity.

Pott's Mountain East CCC Era Overlook

The Pott's Mountain East Overlook is one of the "broken windows" along the Rt. 311 Corridor. The stone wall has all but disappeared, leaving large gaps. Stones have been removed as souvenirs or as building material by others. An old, concrete picnic table sits at an angle in the center island and the grown up weeds suggest that no one stops, despite the magnificent view, for a picnic or to spend time. The proposed renovation of the site, with significant landscaping, will do much to change the perception of the area.

Pott's Mountain West CCC Era Overlook

The Pott's Mountain East Overlook is in moderate condition. While it does not have the same level of deterioration as the overlook on Peter's Mountain, the facilities are overgrown or buried, sections of the stone seat wall have long since disappeared, and overall the site looks neglected. Route 311 over both Pott's and Peter's Mountains is curvy and provides a challenge for even the best of mountain drivers. Overlooks and waysides, in addition to promoting an appreciation for the area by providing direct access to scenic views, also provide drivers with safe places to pull off the main road in order to rest and stretch. On winding roads, this is especially important, given the lack of safe places to pull off the main highway. The proposed improvements and information kiosk will provide visitors with information about the area and a scenic view.

Peter's Mountain West CCC Era Overlook

The Peter's Mountain overlook is divided by the Virginia / West Virginia border. Due to its location, the overlook has not been maintained on either side of the border. The stone walls have crumbled, with only short sections obscured by overgrowth providing any evidence that the site is an official pullover. The only evidence of official use is the two-sided historic highway marker in the island separating the overlook drive and the main highway. The deterioration at this site is far greater than the other sites in Craig County, yet the site is the entry point not only for Craig County, but also for Virginia. Given the importance of waysides, overlooks, and turnouts in mountainous areas, the site should be one of the first to be completed.

Trails and Greenways

The Department of Conservation and Recreation recommends that each locality develop a trail and greenway plan as part of its comprehensive plan. The plan should link existing and proposed trails into the regional trail and greenway network by connecting existing recreational, natural, cultural, water, education, commercial and other resources. The plan should identify opportunity areas, such as river corridors and abandoned railways, for future use as trail or greenway locations.

Craig County Greenway

The Craig County Greenway was designed to be constructed in three sections and will connect Downtown New Castle, the Craig County schools campus, and the Field of Dreams recreation complex. Section one will connect Downtown New Castle to the trailhead at 3rd Street via a pedestrian bridge across Johns Creek. The central, or second section, of the greenway was completed in 2012 and connects the Craig County schools campus to a trailhead near the Virginia Department of Transportation garage at 3rd Street. The third and final section of the greenway will connect the Craig County school campus to the recreation facilities at the Field of Dreams. Potential funding sources for this trail include Virginia Department of Transportation Enhancement Program and the Virginia Recreational Trails program.

Appalachian Trail

The Appalachian Trail passes through the southern corner of Craig County with several access points, shelters and camping facilities and is an important recreation and tourism resource for the region. Almost 30 miles of the famed Maine-to-Georgia trail is located in Craig County with several shelters and camping facilities along the way.

Dragon's Tooth Trail

Dragon's Tooth Trail, located on Cove Mountain at the Craig County / Roanoke County line, is a popular hiking trail for residents and tourists. Dragon's Tooth provides hikers with views of nearby and distant mountain peaks. The trailhead located on Route 311 has parking and restroom facilities.

Ferrier and Lick Branch Trail

The Ferrier and Lick Branch Trails located just south of New Castle off of Route 690 provide good views of Craig Creek Valley and Potts Mountain. The trails eventually connect to the Price Mountain trails in Botetourt County. There are no water or restroom facilities. Limited trailhead parking is available on US Forest Service road 5026.

Finwick Mines Trail

Two short hiking trails are available at the Fenwick Mines Day Use Area in Jefferson National Forest. The recreation area is located on the former site of Fenwick, a prosperous mining town which played an important role in early Craig County history. In addition to hiking trails, there are picnic tables, horse shoe pits and a fine fishing hole. Fenwick Wetlands Trail is an easy one-mile hike through a hardwood forest and an Appalachian swamp, and ends at a picnic area. Fenwick Nature Trail, also one mile long, passes through forest, crosses Mill Creek, and ends at the overlook of a waterfall. Both trails are wheelchair accessible. Restroom facilities are available.

Hanging Rock Trail

Hanging Rock Trail is located in Shawvers Run Wilderness Area on Forest Road 177.1. The approximately half mile trail leads to an expansive view of Hanging Rock Valley and into West Virginia. The trail has limited parking and no restroom facilities.

Lipes Branch Trail

The Lipes Branch Trail is a 2.5 mile trail that passes through the Barbours Creek Wilderness Area. The trail is located near the Pines Campground on Route 617.

North Mountain Trail

The North Mountain Trail System includes a 13.2-mile trail system on the ridge top of North Mountain plus three 1½-mile trails that climb the north face of the mountain to the ridge. Trails are rocky, steep and difficult, making them popular with mountain bikers. Hikers and bikers can combine any of the three ascending trails with Wildlife Road and North Mountain Trail to create different sized loops to suit their abilities. The trail system is well-signed and blazed. Located along the crest of North Mountain, this trail offers good views into both Catawba and Craig Creek Valleys. McAfee Knob and Tinker Cliffs which are located along the AT are also visible. There are no facilities on the North Mountain Trail system.

Sevenmile Trail

Sevenmile Trail covers 5 miles going over Sevenmile Mountain. Parking is located Route 658 and limited parking on Route 632. No facilities are available.

Sulphur Springs Ridge and Price Mountain Trail

The Sulphur Springs and Price Mountain Trails for a five mile loop trail that ties into the Patterson Mountain Trail system in Botetourt County and combine for a 5-mile loop. A trailhead is located along Route 606 near the Botetourt County line.

Fishing

Stocked Trout Streams in Craig County are Barbour's Creek, Potts Creek and the Montgomery County section of Craig Creek. Meadow Creek and portions of Barbour's Creek are considered to be Wild Trout Streams by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Paint Bank Trout Hatchery is located on Route 311 near Paint Bank. The Fisheries Division of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries operates nine fish cultural stations around the state. The Paint Bank Trout Hatchery is another station that was taken over from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It hatches and rears all three species of trout for stocking in Virginia waters, and it is a participating hatchery in the National Broodstock Program. Paint Bank fish are stocked throughout the region, from Craig to Henry counties. A fishing license is required.

Hunting

Craig County's abundant forestlands make it a prime location for hunters during specified seasons. A hunting license is required. U.S. Forest Service land is open to the public for hunting and requires a National Forest stamp. The area provides good hunting opportunities for bear, deer, grouse, rabbit, raccoon, squirrel and turkey.

Public Water Access

Craig County does not have any publicly owned water access site for boaters. The Virginia Outdoors Plan recommends development of public water access sites on Johns Creek above New Castle and on Craig Creek between New Castle and Strom. Specific sites for access points were not identified in the Outdoors Plan. In the past, a majority of public access has been informal, consisting of right of ways at bridge crossings and from private land. The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries works with the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Department of Transportation to determine appropriate locations for constructing public access points. Public access sites provided by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries can provide residents and tourists with well designed and maintained public water access.

Private Recreation Facilities

Craig County Fairgrounds

Craig County Fairgrounds is a 5 acre site south of New Castle that has been developed and maintained by community volunteers. The site has horse rings, a demolition derby pit, a ball diamond, concession stands and a small performance stage with concrete pad. The facility can be rented from the Fairground Association for events.

Field of Dreams

The Field of Dreams recreation facility is an 18-acre site approximately one mile east of the Craig County Schools Campus. The property was originally purchased by the Craig County Youth and Community Services Board, a private nonprofit along with its branch group Craig County Recreation and Conservation Association through private donations from the community. The site, currently under construction, will be developed into a recreational complex with facilities for baseball, softball, football, soccer, ADA accessible trails, picnics, and passive recreation.

Mountain Shepherd Wilderness Survival School

Mountain Shepherd Wilderness Survival School is an internationally known facility that provides training in outdoor and survival skills. Mountain Shepherd offers professional instruction in wilderness survival, map & compass navigation, escape & evasion, wilderness leadership & teambuilding and survival & empowering for women. The school has opportunities for individual instruction as well as larger corporate group events for private, business and government sectors.

Wilderness Adventure at Eagle Landing

Since 1990, Col. Gene Norvo has offered a unique outdoor adventure facility. Today it offers summer youth camps, corporate retreats, weddings, mountain bike racing and a wide variety of recreational opportunities to clients from all over the world. Through primitive camping and outdoor adventure activities, programs offer challenges and opportunities that people seldom experience. The wilderness experience and the adventure activities help participants build confidence, character, self-esteem, and leadership while developing skills.

Chapter 6 Community Facilities

Water and Sewer Systems

Water supply and sewage treatment are provided by the Craig-New Castle Public Service Authority (PSA). The PSA service area is comprised of the Town of New Castle and the area immediately adjacent to the town. The remainder of the county is dependent on private wells, springs and septic systems.

Solid Waste Management and Recycling

The localities of Craig County and the Town of New Castle adopted a Solid Waste Management Plan in 1991. The plan, entitled Solid Waste Management Plan for Craig County and the Town of New Castle focused on two main objectives: 1) effectively managing solid waste through the 6-step waste management hierarchy; and 2) implementation of a recycling program to reduce the solid waste stream by 10% by 1991, 15% by 1993 and 25% by 1995. The waste management plan was a response to legislation adopted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1989 which required every city, county and town to develop a solid waste management plan for submission to the Virginia Department of Waste Management by July 1, 1991. The Plan also addressed the anticipated closure of the county's landfill, waste collection options, and transferring waste to a landfill outside the county.

In 2006 the General Assembly revised the Code of Virginia to provide for a two-tiered recycling mandate for the Commonwealth's solid waste planning units. All units must meet the minimum recycling rate of 25% unless their population density is less than 100 persons per square mile or if their civilian unemployment rate is 50% above the statewide average. Those units meeting these criteria must meet a minimum recycling rate of 15%. Craig County qualified for the 15% rate based on population density. Craig County's most recently reported recycling rate for the 2012 reporting year was 19.85 percent.

The Craig County Board of Supervisors adopted an updated plan in 2011. The plan addresses all requirements of the Regulations for the Development of Solid Waste Management Plans. The Plan is designed serve as a guidance document for Craig County and the Town of New Castle as they continue to strive to provide the most economical, safe, environmentally responsible waste management system for their citizens. The plan contains a detailed description of the solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling operations within Craig County.

Law Enforcement

Craig County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement services for the County. Personnel include the Sheriff, five full-time Deputy Sheriffs, one part-time Deputy Sheriff, five full-time dispatchers, three part-time dispatchers. The department has eight marked vehicles that are used for patrol. Craig County is a participating member of the New River Valley Drug Task Force. Additional law enforcement is provided by four Virginia State Troopers assigned to the area and one US Forest Service law enforcement patrolman.

Emergency Services

Three volunteer rescue squads serve the County: Craig County First Aid and Life Saving Crew, Craig County EMS, and Paint Bank Volunteer Rescue Squad.

There are five volunteer fire departments that serve Craig County: Craig County VFD, Johns Creek VFD, Paint Bank VFD, Simonsville VFD, and Upper Craig Creek VFD.

Craig County employs a fulltime Emergency Services Coordinator that works with the volunteer fire and rescue squads as well as the Sheriff's Office, State Police, FEMA and U.S. Forest Service to manage emergencies in the county. The Craig County Emergency Operations Center is located at the Courthouse. Craig County operates a centralized emergency dispatch system utilizing an Enhanced 911 system.

Health Care Facilities

Craig County Health Department

The Craig County Health Department provides health care services to County residents. The department's staff consists of an office manager, environmental specialist, clerical support and a public health nurse. Clinic services are provided based on family income and a sliding fee scale and/or at no cost to customers. Programs offered by the health department include Family Planning, Pregnancy Testing, Pediatric and Adult Immunization, Sexually Transmitted Disease/HIV Testing, WIC/Nutrition, Resource Mothers, BabyCare, Car Seat Program, Vital Statistics, and Environmental Health.

Craig County Health Center

The Craig County Health Center is operated as a satellite office of the Monroe Health Center. The center has one full-time family practitioner, a physician's assistant, registered nurses, and administrative staff. The center provides a sliding fee schedule for all patients who are deemed financially eligible (who fall at or below the 200% poverty level). The mission of Monroe Health Center is to increase access to comprehensive primary, preventative, public health services, eliminate health disparities, and to improve the healthcare status of underserved and vulnerable populations.

The Health Center offers the following services:

- Routine Physical Examinations
- Laboratory Services
- Radiology Services
- EKG Examinations
- Mental Health Services
- Specialty Referral and Follow-up
- Home Health Care Referrals
- Acute Care
- Osteopathic Manipulative Therapy
- Hearing and Vision Screening
- Allergy Treatment
- Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening
- Minor Office Procedures

Environmental Health
Screening and Treatment of TB and STDs
Family Planning
Immunizations
Medication Assistance Program

The Monroe Health Center has recently expanded services to include family dentistry at the Craig County Dental Center. Professional staff consists of a full-time board certified dentist, a full-time dental hygienist, and two full-time dental assistants.

School Wellness Program

Craig County Public Schools operates a school wellness program in cooperation with the Craig County Health Center. The Wellness Center gives students a convenient opportunity to be seen by a licensed health care provider. In addition to examinations and routine medical care, the Wellness Center can also provide vaccinations and counseling. Parents must give prior written consent before services are provided to their children. There is no cost for services for families without medical insurance.

Private Dental and Medical Services

There is one private part-time dentist with an office in the Town of new Castle. There are no private doctors offices in Craig County.

Craig County Public Library

The Craig County Public Library, located in downtown New Castle, was established in 2003. The current library facility opened in 2004. The library is organized as a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, Craig County Public Library, Inc. and is dependent on donations, grants and Craig County for funding.

Craig County Public Library has a small collection that focuses on popular materials of interest to readers of all ages. The library's collection includes books for adults, young adults, and children, large print books, audiobooks, videos for adults and children, local history materials, magazines and newspapers, and more. The library has an interlibrary loan program to allow patrons to use materials from other libraries. Residents with a Craig County Library card may also utilize the libraries in Roanoke County, and the cities of Roanoke and Salem.

The library has three Public Access Computers available on a first-come, first-served basis, plus two Public Access Laptops that can be reserved in advance for use by adults. One computer that functions as an Express Internet (15-minute limit) and OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) station. Wireless access is available in the library for personal laptops. In addition to online resources (including the Find It Virginia databases), the library has a full suite of Microsoft Office productivity software on all public access computers.

In the children's area, there is an Early Literacy Computer that is loaded with fun and educational software for younger patrons. Children under 10 must be accompanied by a responsible adult while in the library. With the help of dedicated volunteers, the library provides Storytimes for Preschoolers and participates in special reading programs for children, including

the annual Summer Reading Program (for all ages) and the Winter Reading Program (for ages two through five).

Electric Utilities

Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative

Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative distributes electricity to portions of the county and is headquartered in New Castle, Virginia. The cooperative serves portions of seven counties in southwest Virginia and West Virginia. The Cooperative was formed in 1936 and serves approximately 6,000 customers in six counties. The Cooperative employs approximately 21 employees full time.

American Electric Power

American Electric Power serves portions of Craig County and other areas in southwestern Virginia. Existing transmission capabilities include a 138 kV line and the ability to upgrade for industries locating in the area.

Communication Services

TDS Telecommunications provides local residential and business communications services to Craig County. Services include: VoIP & Voice, Internet, security, digital TV, managed business services, data networking and phone systems.

Pembroke Telephone Cooperative, commonly known as PemTel, provides communications service on the western portion of the county including phone, internet and digital cable television.

Cellular service is provided in portions of the county by nTelos Wireless, US Cellular and Verizon Wireless.

New fiber optic line is being installed in 2013 by Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative (MBC) as part of a project with Virginia Tech to connect existing fiber lines in Bedford to Blacksburg. The line will extend from Bedford to Botetourt County, then enter Craig County along Caldwell Mountain Road, then travel along Route 615 to New Castle and west on Route 42 to Giles County before connecting to the Virginia Tech campus via Route 460. MBC will build and operate as an extension of their network. The network will allow wholesale open access to all providers.

Chapter 7 Education

Craig County Public Schools

The Craig County School Division consists of McCleary Elementary, Craig County Middle School, and Craig County High School. The elementary school, Kindergarten through fifth grade, serves approximately 300 students. The middle and high school, sixth through twelfth grades, serves approximately 400 students. The schools share a school nurse, cafeteria, two gymnasiums, and auditorium facilities. The Craig County Schools are housed on one campus located on Route 615, Craigs Creek Road, two miles northeast of New Castle.

McCleary Elementary School was constructed in 1969. There have been two additions added and the multi-purpose area has been repurposed to serve as the library, nurse facilities, and classroom. There is a computer lab with approximately 25 computers, two 30 laptop mobile carts, and 2-4 computers per classroom. Each classroom is equipped with Promethian ActiveBoards, document cameras, and speakers. Individual student responsive systems are available in all grades K-5. There are 19 classrooms and 4 resource rooms serving the pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. The average pupil teacher ratio is 17:1. Generally, there are 3 teachers per grade level and 1 teacher in the pre-kindergarten special education room. Instruction is provided in all four core content areas according to the Virginia Standards of Learning. A balanced literacy approach is utilized to teach reading, language arts and writing. The Concrete, Representational, Abstract approach is utilized in the area of mathematics. McCleary Elementary School was the recipient of the 2012 Board of Education Competence to Excellence Award. In addition to a rigorous academic program, students receive instruction in art, music, guidance, and physical education.

McCleary Elementary School is a Title I School and provides targeted assistance in the area of reading to eligible students in grades kindergarten through third. There is a Title I teacher for direct instruction to small groups of students in the area of reading. In addition, there are two Title I Instructional Assistants to assist in the kindergarten through third classrooms. The primary focus of this program is to ensure all students are reading on grade level by the end of third grade. This program also offers two family reading nights each year and a summer reading program.

McCleary Elementary School offers a special education program in accordance with federal regulations. Currently the school employs three special education teachers and three program assistants that offer support in the general education classroom. Speech services, occupational therapy, and physical therapy are provided on-site for specific students. McCleary also participates in a regional special education program that provides one-to-one support for two eligible students. The Early Childhood Preschool Special Education program serves eligible students between the ages of two and four. This program has a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:8 and includes an instructional assistant.

The Craig County Middle / High School encompasses grades six through twelve. The high school wing was built in 1989 and the middle school wing opened in 2003. These schools function separately with individual teaching staffs serving under one principal and assistant-principal.

Craig County Middle School serves grades six through eight and offers a six-period daily schedule with year-long classes in Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science. Daily

Physical Education and exploratory classes in art, music, computers, and agriculture are offered. Eighth grade students have the opportunity to enroll in Spanish 1, Foundations of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, and/or Algebra 1 classes to earn high school credits. In terms of technological availability, the middle school has three computer labs. Athletically, students of Craig Middle can participate in Junior Varsity sports in the eighth grade.

Craig County High School students are on a 4x4 block schedule. Over 70 core and elective classes are offered on a cyclical basis. Online classes in Advanced Placement and other subjects are offered through Virtual Virginia, the Virginia Department of Education's online learning management system. For those students who qualify academically, Craig High participates in the Roanoke Valley Governor's School.

On the campus of Craig High, the following career, vocational, and technical classes are offered: carpentry, cabinet making, marketing, accounting, economics and personal finance, computer information systems, leadership and development, Jobs for Virginia Graduates, small engine repair, forestry and wildlife, introduction to natural resources, greenhouse management, agricultural foundations, and introduction to plant systems. Craig students can attend the Botetourt Technical Center and enroll in the following programs: auto service, building and trades, welding, drafting, criminal justice, cosmetology, and nursing. In terms of technology, Craig County High School has two computer labs with at least 26 computers in each, with an additional 14 computers in the library/media center. The high school has a 4:1 student to computer ratio. Athletically, Craig High is a Group A member of the Virginia High School League and competes in the Pioneer District. The following sports programs are offered for students in grades eight through twelve: football, cheerleading, volleyball, cross-country, boys and girls basketball, scholastic bowl, baseball, softball and track. Among extra-curricular activities are drama, music, Skills USA, FFA, FCA, FBLA, Book Club, Spanish Club, and Political Club.

Public School Statistics

Public school statistics for Craig County are compared in Tables 24, 25, and 26 for school years 2001-02 and 2010-11. Total end of year membership increased by 1.6 percent during the ten-year period. End of year membership in grades K-7 decreased while end of year membership in grades 8-12 increased by 2.8 percent. Pupil/Teacher ratios decreased in grades K-7 and increased by almost 16% in grades 8-12. Statewide, the pupil teacher ratio for grades K-7 was 13.2 and the grade 8-12 ratio was 12.1 in 2010-11.

Table 24
Public School Statistics

Category	2001-02	2010-11	Change
End of Year Membership	701	712	1.6%
End of Year Membership K-7	447	434	-2.9%
End of Year Membership 8-12	254	261	2.8%
Pupil/Teacher Ratio K-7	15.5	14.48	-6.6%
Pupil/Teacher Ratio 8-12	7.9	9.16	15.9%
Dropouts	1	5	400.0%
Total Graduates	44	55	25.0%

Source: Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia, Virginia Department of Education, 2001-02 and 2010-11.

Total number of dropouts in Craig County increased from 1 in 2001-02 to 5 in 2010-11. The total number of graduates in Craig County increased by 25 percent. The percent of graduates continuing their education is shown in Table 25.

Table 25
Students Continuing Education, 2010-2011

Type of Institution	Craig County	Virginia
2 Year College	36.51%	30.60%
4 Year College	30.16%	47.20%
Employment	11.11%	10.50%
Military	3.17%	4.00%
Other	11.11%	4.00%
Not Continuing	7.94%	3.70%

Source: Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia, Virginia Department of Education, 2010-11.

Total school expenditures per student for Craig County increased by 28.4% from \$7,190 in 2001-02 to \$9,231 in 2010-11 compared to the statewide average of \$10,205 in 2010-11. Annual average salaries for Principals and Assistant Principals, Teachers, Instructional Positions and Teacher Aides are lower than the statewide averages.

Table 26
Principals and Assistant Principals, Teachers,
Instructional Positions and Teacher Aides Average Annual Salaries

Position	Craig County	Virginia Average
Principal	\$62,458.98	\$90,873.54
Assistant Principal	\$54,710.04	\$75,183.18
Teaching Positions	\$40,556.74	\$51,478.28
Instructional Positions	\$41,440.79	\$52,767.22

Source: Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia, Virginia Department of Education, 2010-11.

Child Care

The Craig County Child Care Center in New Castle is a licensed child care center providing weekday child care for children ages infant to 12 years 11 months. It has a maximum capacity of 90 children.

New Castle Christian Church is a Religious Exempt Child Day Center in New Castle. It has maximum capacity of 16 children. The center accepts children ages of 4 years to 5 years 11 months.

Chapter 8 Transportation

The predominant mode of transportation in Craig County is the automobile. The County maintains a close working relationship with the Virginia Department of Transportation on all road and vehicular related issues. The State of Virginia owns, constructs and maintains all public roads, both primary and secondary systems, in the County.

Highway Network

Route 311 is the main north-south transportation route and connects the county to the Roanoke Valley and Interstate 81. Virginia Route 42 is the main westward route leading to the Town of Newport in Giles County. Route 621 connects Route 311 to U.S. Route 460 in Montgomery County. Virginia Route 18 in the northern part of the county connects Paint Bank to Interstate 64 in the City of Covington and Alleghany County. Secondary Routes 615 and 606 serve as the main connections to Route 220 in Botetourt County. The highway network is made up of both Virginia Primary and Secondary System routes (see Map 4 Highway Network).

Table 27
Annual Average Daily Traffic Volume Estimates

Highway	From	To	2010
Rt. 18	Rt. 311 Paint Bank	Alleghany Co Line	150
Rt. 42	Giles Co Line	629 Lugar Hill Rd	900
Rt. 42	629 Lugar Hill Road	626 Bethel Church Road	370
Rt. 42	626 Bethel Church Road	645 Looney School Road	410
Rt. 42	645 Looney School Road	New Castle Town Limit	700
Rt. 42	New Castle Town Limit	Rt 311	700
Rt. 311	Roanoke County Line	New Castle Town Limit	3,900
Rt. 311	New Castle Town Limit	Rt. 42	3,900
Rt. 311	Rt. 42	New Castle Town Limit	1,600
Rt. 311	New Castle Town Limit	Rt. 658 Johns Creek Road	1,600
Rt. 311	Rt. 658 Johns Creek Road	602 Back Valley Road	310
Rt. 311	602 Back Valley Road	Rt. 18 Potts Creek Road	350
Rt. 311	Rt. 18 Potts Creek Road	West Virginia State Line	210
Rt. 42/615	New Castle Town Limit	Rt. 638 6 th Street	4,300
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 638 6 th Street	Rt. 653 5 th Street	3,700
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 653 5 th Street	Rt. 649 2 nd Street	3,100
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 649 2 nd Street	Rt. 689 Camp Mitchell Road	3,000
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 689 Camp Mitchell Road	Rt. 686 Alleghany Circle	2,600
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 686 Alleghany Circle	Rt. 609 Sand Plant Road	2,100
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 609 Sand Plant Road	Rt. 614 Hawkins Lane	1,000
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 614 Hawkins Lane	Rt. 610 Crossroads Boulevard	620
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 610 Crossroads Boulevard	Rt. 606 Caldwell Mountain Road	570
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 606 Caldwell Mountain Road	Rt. 643 Howard Hannah Road	320
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 643 Howard Hannah Road	Rt. 612 Scenic View Lane	150
Rt. 42/615	Rt. 612 Scenic View Lane	Botetourt County Line	140

Source: *Average Daily Traffic Volumes 2010, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), 2001 and 2010.*



Craig County Highway Network Map 5



Legend

- Other
- Virginia Primary
- Secondary System
- US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany
Regional Commission, 2013.

Federal Functional Classification

Functional usage of a roadway is based upon its mobility and accessibility. Choice of a travel route can be logically related to the roadway's ability to access land and the mobility through an area. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has set up functional classification guidelines. The Federal Functional Classification Guidelines contain a list of classifications and descriptions given for each class of roadway. Roads may be classified as local, collector or arterial roads. Urban or rural U.S. Census designations also have importance because design features are based on these designations. For example, in urban areas, the streets and roads may require a curb and gutter design while the rural roads will normally feature shoulders and ditches in the design.

Briefly, for each of three areas (rural, urbanized and smaller urban areas):

Local roads function to provide a higher degree of access but lower travel mobility-flow,
Collectors provide a mixture of access and mobility, for through movement and access,
and
Arterials, with two sub-classes, minor and principal, provide a lower level of access and
higher mobility with the functional standards for minor and principal arterials being
relatively high for through traffic.

Functional classes for the highway network in Craig County are shown on Map 6.



Craig County Highway Functional Class Map 6



Legend

- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Unclassified
- US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2013.

2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan

The Rural Long Range Transportation Plan is one piece of VDOT's 2035 Surface Transportation Plan. The transportation system within the rural areas for each region was evaluated, and a range of transportation improvements - roadway, rail, transit, air, bicycle, and pedestrian - are recommended that can best satisfy existing and future needs. Each rural regional plan has a horizon year of 2035 and addresses the anticipated impacts of population and employment changes upon the transportation system. Each rural plan was developed as a vision plan, addressing all needs of the transportation system studied regardless of anticipated funding availability. It is envisioned that each regional plan will be used as a basis to identify transportation funding priorities. Each Rural Long Range Transportation Plan will be reviewed every five years.

Listed below are projects from the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan that are located in Craig County. Project numbers correspond to those in the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan and item shown on Map 7.

Recommendations

1. VA 311 (Salem Avenue)/VA 42/VA 615 (Main Street)
Mid-term improve pedestrian access and monitor for signal warrants or the need for turn lanes; long-term add curb and gutter access management.
2. VA 615/VA 609
Short-term install stop sign on VA 609; long-term install turn lanes and reconfigure intersection to address geometric issues.
3. VA 42/VA 645
Short-term improve pavement markings.
4. VA 311 from Roanoke County Line to VA 621
Long-term upgrade lane and shoulder widths to current VDOT design standards.
5. VA 311 from VA 621 to VA 678 near New Castle own limit
Long-term upgrade to current VDOT standards to address safety and geometric issues.
6. VA 42 from 0.38 miles West of VA 658 to VA 667
Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).
7. VA 18 from VA 311 to 1.92 miles South of Alleghany County Line
Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).
8. VA 18 from 1.26 miles South of Alleghany County line to the Alleghany County Line
Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).
9. VA 606 from VA 614 to the Botetourt County Line
Long-term reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (11 foot lanes).



Craig County Rural Long Range Transportation Plan Map 7



Legend

VDOT Rural Long Range Plan Segment Deficiency

- Geometric
- Safety

Intersection Deficiency

- Safety
- US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany
Regional Commission, 2013.

Virginia Six-Year Improvement Program

The Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) is the Commonwealth Transportation Board's (CTB) program for allocating funding for rail, public transportation, commuter assistance, bicycle, pedestrian, interstate and primary highway transportation projects over the next six years.

The program is updated annually. Typically, the CTB conducts hearings in the fall of each year to gather public and local government input on priorities for transportation funding. These meetings provide local governments with an opportunity to have input on priorities for the Interstate and Primary systems.

The CTB and VDOT make a concerted effort to assemble projects in the SYIP so they can move through the development process in an orderly fashion. As projects are being developed, many issues arise that must be addressed, such as citizen concerns, project development, or environmental issues. Projects must also be fully funded to move to construction. Most projects require multiple years of funding. Projects are removed from the SYIP once they are completed. Projects are also taken out of the SYIP if there is not enough funding to finance them or if preliminary engineering determines that the project is not feasible.

Two projects for Craig County are listed in the FY 13-18 SYIP. The recently constructed greenway is listed and has a balance remaining of \$29,000 that can be used for the project. The second project is replacement of the Route 311 bridge over Meadow Creek that is programmed for funding from 2014 to 2018.

Table 28
VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program Projects

Description	System	Estimate	Previous	FY13	FY14-18	Balance
Craig County Trail - FY07 SAFETEALU* Earmark Project	Primary	\$153,000	\$182,000	\$0	\$0	(\$29,000)
Rte 311 Meadow Creek - Bridge Replacement	Primary	\$1,426,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,426,000	\$0

Source: FY13-18 Six-Year Improvement Program, Virginia Department of Transportation, 2012.

* Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Public Law 109-59)

Secondary Six Year Plan

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Six Year Secondary Construction Program is based on the County's Priority List and is reflective of available State road funding allocated to the County.

The Secondary System programming process is coordinated between the local Board of Supervisors and VDOT's Residency Administrator. The Residency Administrator works with the Board of Supervisors to establish or reconfirm their priorities for the Secondary Six-Year Plan. Each year the VDOT Residency Administrator attends a meeting of the Board of Supervisors for the purpose of preparing a budget for the expenditure of secondary road improvement funds for the next fiscal year.

VDOT has provided the following projected funding allocations for Craig County for fiscal years 2013 to 2018.

Table 29
Secondary System Allocations / Projects

Description	Estimated Cost	Previous Funding	Additional Funding Required	FY13	FY14-18	Balance to Complete
Northside Road Rt. 629 Resurfacing	\$527,900	\$535,485	\$7,585	\$7,585	\$0	(\$15,170)
Rt. 620 Bridge and Approaches	\$931,338	\$550,672	\$380,666	\$8,093	\$86,780	\$285,793
Rt. 694 Reconstruction	\$200,000	\$16,677	\$183,323	\$0	\$0	\$183,323
Secondary Project Closeout	\$0	\$1,379,028	(\$1,379,028)	\$0	\$0	(\$1,379,028)
Countywide Engineering and Surveying	\$250,000	\$2,819	\$247,181	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$241,181
Countywide Fertilization and Seeding to Improve Slope Stabilization	\$250,000	\$2,136	\$247,864	\$0	\$0	\$247,864
Countywide Right-of-Way Engineering	\$250,000	\$2,250	\$247,750	\$0	\$0	\$247,750

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation, 2012.

Public Transit

Craig County does not have any public transit service. In order to address this need, the *Craig County Transit Service Study* was completed in 2012. The study was funded by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and completed by a consultant.

The initial steps in the study included interviewing local stakeholders and conducting a peer review to determine the appropriate type of transit services for the county.

Four rural peer examples were studied and documented in detail by the consultants. Topics reviewed were transit service type, schedules, characteristics (ridership, revenue miles, etc.), operating budgets, funding sources, and operators (public or private).

The stakeholder interviews identified access to medical facilities, community services, healthcare, grocery stores and pharmacies as unmet transportation needs, especially for the elderly and disabled. Stakeholders also provided a list of destinations for consideration in the study.

Three types of service were proposed in the study to meet the needs of Craig County residents:

1. Out of County service to Salem and Roanoke
2. Intra County, zone based limited demand response service for trips within the county
3. Enhanced Ridesharing service (carpooling and vanpooling)

The study takes into account the need for local guidance and transit expertise in establishing and maintaining a successful transit system. To address these needs, the study also proposed:

1. A volunteer Transportation Commission for the County; and
2. A Mobility Manager serving Craig County and other rural areas.

The Out of County service was proposed to provide access to medical, shopping and other destinations in Salem and Roanoke. The bus service as proposed would operate once a week in the beginning, with the option, if financially feasible, for additional days of service.

The need for an Intra County service was also identified in the study. Transportation to the Town of New Castle for shopping, medical services and business services is a need. A zone based intra county service was proposed to operate three days per week with each of the three proposed zones served on one specific day of the week.

Ridesharing (carpooling and vanpooling) can provide an economical mode of transportation for residents traveling to the same destination point. The enhanced ridesharing recommendation in the study recommends that Craig County work more closely with the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission's RIDE Solutions staff to provide more information and opportunities for carpooling and vanpooling between Craig County and other parts of the region. Increased carpooling and awareness of the transportation option could result in a new regional public vanpool program. Increasing Ridesharing in Craig County would require establishing new park and ride locations since it currently does not have any designated park and rides within its boundaries.

The study recommends creation of an all volunteer Craig County Transportation Commission that would be comprised of a variety of community stakeholders, elected officials, local organizations and citizen representatives who would receive periodic information on the performance of the transit service, work with the transit provider to improve service, and help disseminate information about the service.

The study also proposes the hiring of a Mobility Manager that would serve as the local point of contact for individuals needing assistance, as well as oversee and manage day to day transit operations. This person would work closely with the Transportation Commission and have a strong presence in the community. The study recommends that the Mobility Manager be housed at the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission and provide service to other rural counties, in addition to Craig.

The study provides alternatives for implementing the transit program as well as funding strategies. Detailed costs and steps for implementation can be found in the study.

Implementing the proposed transit service will be a multi step process that will require an investment of the time and expertise of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Craig County staff, Regional Commission staff, and Craig elected officials and residents if it is to be successful.

Rural Bikeway Plan

The Rural Bikeway Plan (2006) is an update to the Rural Bikeway Plan for the Fifth Planning District Commission, completed in 1997. The Rural Bikeway Plan covers the rural portions of the Regional Commission's service area. The purpose of the Rural Bikeway Plan is to provide information and guidance on the planning and provision of bicycle accommodations at the local and regional level, which enhance and encourage bicycling, thereby better enabling citizens to enjoy the transportation, health, and economic benefits of a bicycle-friendly environment. Consideration is given to both utilitarian (i.e., bike commuting, running errands) and recreational uses of the transportation infrastructure.

Craig County is the most rural and less-densely populated locality in the study area. There are numerous roadways in Craig County that are popular with cyclists. Moreover, there are miles of biking and hiking trails in the Jefferson and George Washington National Forest and other outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the county.

The list of roadways for bicycle accommodation was developed based on review of demographic and spatial data, fieldwork, and local staff and citizen input. Accessibility and connectivity between activity centers and tourism/outdoor recreation opportunities were also considered in developing these tables. The 2004 VDOT Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations improved the ability of a locality to use its secondary roads allocation to plan, design, and construct bicycle facilities. This policy eliminates the past VDOT policy requiring that a roadway be included in an adopted bikeway plan in order for bicycle accommodations to be considered as part of roadway improvements using Federal and State funding.

It should be noted that all VDOT maintained roads, in addition to the recommended corridors, are covered by the *VDOT Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations*. As such, Table 30 presents a listing of corridors the Rural Bikeway Plan recommends be considered for bicycle accommodation.

Detailed planning would be required, at the local and regional levels, to develop and implement a bicycling network and realize the benefits of bicycling.

Table 30
Rural Bikeway Plan Recommendations

Roadway	From	To
Route 18	Route 311	Alleghany County CL
Route 42	Route 311	Giles County CL
Route 311	Roanoke County CL	West Virginia State Line
Route 615/Market Street	Route 311	Botetourt County CL
Route 621	Route 311	Montgomery County CL
Route 632	North Route 658	South Route 658 at Maggie
Route 658	Route 311	Route 632
Route 658	Route 632	Route 42

Source: *Rural Bikeway Plan, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2006.*

Greenways

Craig County completed the first phase of the Craig County Greenway in 2012. The project was funded by a special allocation in the Federal transportation budget. The greenway is constructed on a former C&O railroad right of way. The 1.2 mile greenway begins at Third Street just outside of New Castle and connects to the Craig County school campus. The trailhead at Third Street has a shelter designed to look like train depot along with interpretive signage about the history of the C&O railroad, a picnic table and parking. Parking is also available at the school campus trailhead.

Planning is underway to connect the greenway to downtown New Castle and to the new Field of Dreams recreation area. The connection to downtown would create additional opportunities for residents and tourists to use the greenway. Extending the greenway into downtown will require the construction of a pedestrian/cyclist bridge across Johns Creek. It is recommended that the bridge be designed to fit in with the rural character of the county. The bridge could be a swinging bridge similar to the ones still in use around the county or constructed with a timber frame and wood decking.

Completion of the greenway to the Field of Dreams site would create a connection to the school campus and to downtown New Castle. Possible sources of funding for the project are the VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program, Safe Routes to School grant program and the Virginia Recreational Trails Program.



Craig County Proposed Pedestrian Network Improvements Map 8



Legend

- Bicycle Routes (proposed)
- Greenway Project Area
- US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2013.

Commuting Patterns

According to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, almost 82.5% of workers living in the Craig County drove to their place of employment. Only 15% carpooled to work. Less than 5 percent walked or commuted to work by public transit, bicycle or other means. The percentage of those that worked at home was 12.6 percent. Almost 71% of workers are employed outside of Craig County. Over 70% of commuters had a travel time to work of more than 30 minutes.

Table 31
Means of Transportation to Work, Craig County Residents

Subject	
Workers 16 years and over	2,632
Car, truck, or van	2,489
Drove alone	2,172
Carpooled	317
In 2-person carpool	317
In 3-person carpool	0
In 4-or-more person carpool	0
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0
Walked	27
Bicycle	13
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	0
Worked at home	103

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey.

Table 32
Place of Work, Craig County Residents

Place	Percentage
Worked in state of residence	97.0
Worked in county of residence	26.3
Worked outside county of residence	70.6
Worked outside state of residence	3.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey.

Table 33
Travel Time to Work, Craig County Residents

Time	Percentage
Less than 10 minutes	12.4
10 to 14 minutes	2.3
15 to 19 minutes	5.8
20 to 24 minutes	4.8
25 to 29 minutes	4.4
30 to 34 minutes	18.5
35 to 44 minutes	20.6
45 to 59 minutes	19.5
60 or more minutes	11.8
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	38.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey.

Rail Service

Craig County does not have any active railroad service. The closest rail service is in Clifton Forge and Roanoke. The nearest Amtrak service is in Clifton Forge.

Private Bus Service

There are no national commercial bus service stops in Craig County.

Air Service

Commercial air passenger service is offered at the Roanoke Regional Airport located 30 miles south of New Castle in Roanoke, Virginia. The Roanoke Regional Airport is served by four commercial carriers - Allegiant Air, Delta, United Airlines, and US Airways - which offer service to several domestic hubs. Commuter air services are also offered at the Roanoke Regional Airport.

Future Transportation Needs

Craig County is a rural locality with low density residential and agricultural development. The County's topography of steep slopes, streams and National Forest land has determined where past development could occur and will impact the location of future development. The County is not anticipating any substantial new growth for the 5-year planning period that would impact the highway system.

The overall transportation priorities discussed in this chapter were selected following review of existing planning documents and gathering of public input. Existing VDOT plans (Six Year Improvement Plan, 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan) were used as the basis for development of the priority listing. Local plans including the Craig County Transit Study and the Craig County Greenway Plan were taken into consideration.

Projects were initially reviewed by the Craig County Planning Commission and County staff. Projects were further reviewed with VDOT staff during meetings and a field trip before creating the priority project list. All projects were reviewed based on need, impact on the transportation network, construction time required and cost.

Transportation Project Priorities

The overall transportation priorities discussed in this chapter were selected following review of existing planning documents and gathering of public input. Existing VDOT plans (Six Year Improvement Plan, 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation) were used as the basis for development of the priority listing.

Projects were initially reviewed by the Craig County staff and Planning Commission. Projects were further reviewed with VDOT staff before creating the priority project list. All projects were reviewed based on need, impact on the transportation network, construction time required and cost.

Table 34
Transportation Project Priorities

Priority	Project Description	Estimated Cost
1	VA 311 (Catawba Valley Drive) from Roanoke County Line to VA 621 (Upper Craig Creek Road)	
2	VA 311 (Catawba Valley Drive) curve near Maple Lane	

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation, 2013.

Priority 1 - VA 311 (Catawba Valley Drive) from Roanoke County Line to VA 621 (Craig Creek Road)

Reference:

Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 12, #4 VA 311 (Catawba Valley Dr.)/Roanoke Co. Line to VA 621 – Long-term upgrade lane and shoulder widths to current VDOT design standards.

Project Description:

In this section of VA 311 (Catawba Valley Drive), there are several driveways. Vehicles turning from the driveways onto VA 311 are presented with sight distance challenges. Likewise, through vehicles often need to slow down to allow vehicles to turn into the driveways. There is a bus stop at Carroll Lane. Overall, this road could be improved significantly by adding shoulders on both sides of the road.

Recommendations:

Add shoulders on both sides of the road.

Priority 2 - VA 311 (Catawba Valley Drive) curve near Maple Lane

Reference:

This project is not in the Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Project Description:

This particular curve along VA 311 (Catawba Valley Drive) near Maple Lane has been the location of several vehicles running off the road due to excess vehicle speed. The curve is near Mountain View Church and it is 5.4 miles south of New Castle. Guardrail is needed along the side of the road. Rumble strips on the shoulder as well as on the road may be considered to warn vehicles to slow down.

Recommendations:

Add shoulders on both sides of the road.

Add guardrail on the east side.

Consider other preventive measures to help people reduce speed through the curve.



Craig County Priority Transportation Projects Map 9



Legend

-  Priority Transportation Projects
-  US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany
Regional Commission, 2013.

Chapter 9 Existing Land Use

During the 1980s and early 1990s, land use patterns in the County changed very little. Forested and agricultural land remains the dominant land use, with small areas in the County devoted to residential commercial and industrial activities.

Acreage estimates in the following table is based on estimates from the Craig County Zoning Map.

Table 35
Existing Land Use

	Acres	Percent
Agricultural, Limited A-1	90,053.99	41.21%
Rural Residential RR	8,710.14	3.99%
Residential R-1	645.47	0.30%
Residential R-2	5.80	0.00%
Residential RM	13.37	0.01%
Business, B-1	53.05	0.02%
Industrial, M-1	390.94	0.18%
Historic H	0.00	0.00%
Mining and Mineral Extraction MME	0.00	0.00%
US Forest Service	118,570.00	54.25%
Town of New Castle	105.18	0.05%
Total	218,547.94	100.00%

Sources: US Forest Service, 2011 and Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2012.

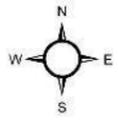
Beginning in the mid-1990s Craig County began seeing an increase in the amount of agricultural and rural land subdivisions for residential housing. The rural aesthetic character of the County's agricultural land is a very important resource that should be conserved and maintained for future generations. Past Comprehensive Plans stressed the importance of preserving agricultural land and goals/objectives were formulated in a manner that would help preserve farmland. Unfortunately, previous efforts have not been succeeding. The mass residential exodus from the urban areas to rural communities like Craig County has consumed much productive acreage and residents are beginning to awaken to the loss of prime farmland. It will be important for the County to find ways of assisting farmers to retain their farmland and resist development pressures.

Recent information on land development within the County indicates that residential construction accounts for the largest percentage of new construction. The County has averaged 40 new building permits per year for the period 1990 – 2000. In addition, the County has begun to see an increase in large subdivisions. In 2001, at least 58 new lots were recorded as a result of major plats (greater than 3 lots per plat).

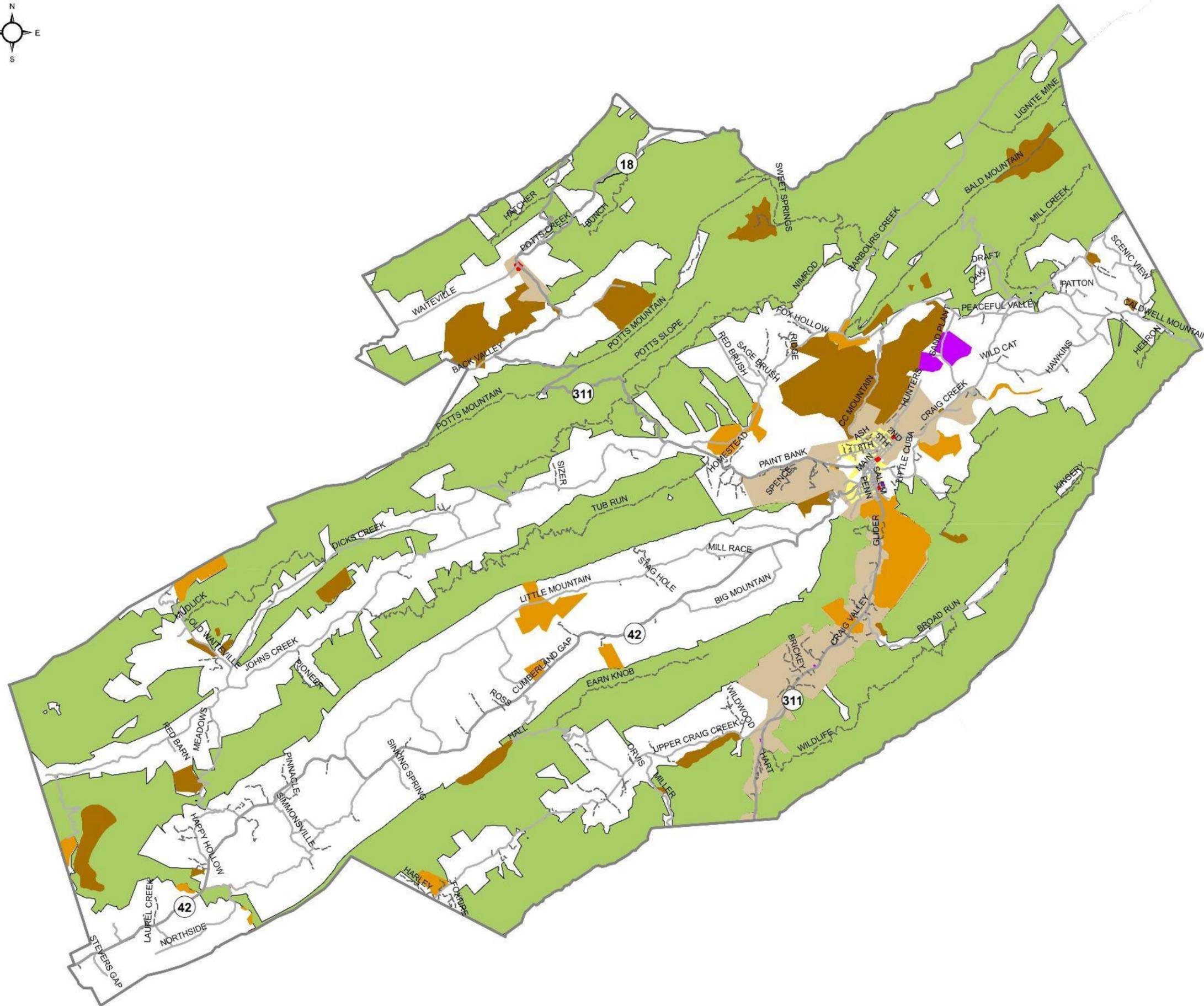
New Castle continues to be the commercial center of the County with most commercial activities concentrated along Route 311 and Main Street. The Route 311 Corridor from the Roanoke

County line to Paint Bank has seen a great deal of development in recent years. Not only have a large number of large residential subdivisions been developed, but low-impact business is also beginning to develop along the corridor. Existing businesses located on the Route 311 Corridor include a machine shop, natural gas filling station, an excavation company, hunting supply store, an auto repair station, restaurants, a lodge and a number of gas station and convenience stores which have been in operation for years.

Although lack of public water and sewer along Route 311, as well as existing traffic concerns, do not support the development of the corridor for intensive industrial uses, the corridor does offer the potential for commercial and light industrial development. It is important too that caution be taken to guarantee protection of the Route 311 Corridor from intensive uses which could contaminate the creeks and floodplain areas along the corridor.



Craig County Existing Land Use Map 10



Legend

-  A-1 Agriculture, Limited
-  B-1 Business
-  R-1 Residential
-  R-2 Residential
-  RM Residential
-  RR Rural Residential
-  M-1 Industrial
-  Conservation Lands
-  Private Easement
-  US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2013.

Chapter 10 Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map is intended to serve as a guide for future development to promote orderly growth within the County. The map is to be used in conjunction with local zoning and subdivision ordinances in guiding future growth to desired areas. The land use plan is composed of a map and written elements. The map shows proposed future land uses for Craig County but it does not supersede the existing zoning ordinance. It is intended as a general guide for future changes to the zoning ordinance and other related land use ordinances. The essential features of the map are discussed below.

Agricultural and Rural

Agricultural and rural areas of the County include farmlands, private forestlands, open space and low-density residential development. Encouraging good stewardship of these areas will serve various purposes. First, it will ensure that agriculture remains a viable element in the County's economic structure. Agriculture is an important part of the County's heritage and way of life. Second, it will help preserve important watersheds. Third, it will help maintain low density settlement of these areas. Fourth, it will preserve open land to accommodate future county needs.

Strip development along highways in areas designated as agricultural and rural on the Future Land Use map should be discouraged. The County should also encourage the development of low impact agri-business operations as a means of preserving farmland and open space, while at the same time expanding the local tax base and creating job opportunities.

Industrial

Industrial areas on the Future Land Use map are comprised of existing and former industrial sites. There are several specific areas near New Castle which would be appropriate sites for future industry. These areas, because of the existing uses at the sites, make them candidates for future industrial prospects. These sites include but are not limited to the area around Castle Sands plant, the former fairground site, and the area around the old sawmill/sand plant site on Route 311 south of New Castle.

Current industrial zoned areas within Craig County include the Castle Sands property, the old sawmill sand plant site (5 acres) on Route 311 south of New Castle, 108 acres owned by the Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative in the Scratch Ankle area of the County, an approximately 17 acre site owned by William J Oliver in the Scratch Ankle area, the former Abbott Lumber site on Route 615, the former Crown building, the former Halmode building, and the former Craig Printing site on Route 311.

Multipurpose

The New Castle area and Route 311 corridor from the Roanoke County line to New Castle are the prime site for future residential, commercial and light industrial activities in the county. It has

the greatest potential to accommodate future growth. The timing and location of water and sewer lines, and other public services, will affect the orderly development of this area.

Development in and around New Castle will provide for an efficient, high density community that will help to reduce local government expenditures for public services and utilities, and generate the necessary market and labor force for future commercial and light industrial development. Since growth will be channeled to this area, protection will be provided to agricultural and rural conservation areas. By encouraging the clustering of housing and commercial activities in the multi-purpose growth area, the potential for strip development along rural highways can be better controlled.

There are several good sites within the New Castle growth area that have potential for commercial and light industrial development. However, this development must not infringe upon the quality of waterways and floodplain areas, or the historic site potential of the Town of New Castle. Instead, commercial and light industrial development should be designed and located in such a way as to compliment the historic character of the area.

US Forest Service

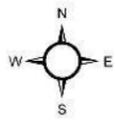
The US forest Service owned land in Craig County is not regulated by the local government. USFS lands play a major role in the Craig County economy by providing opportunities for the timber and tourism sectors. The County should work closely with the USFS to maximize local benefits from the National Forest while also preserving the land for future generations.

Village

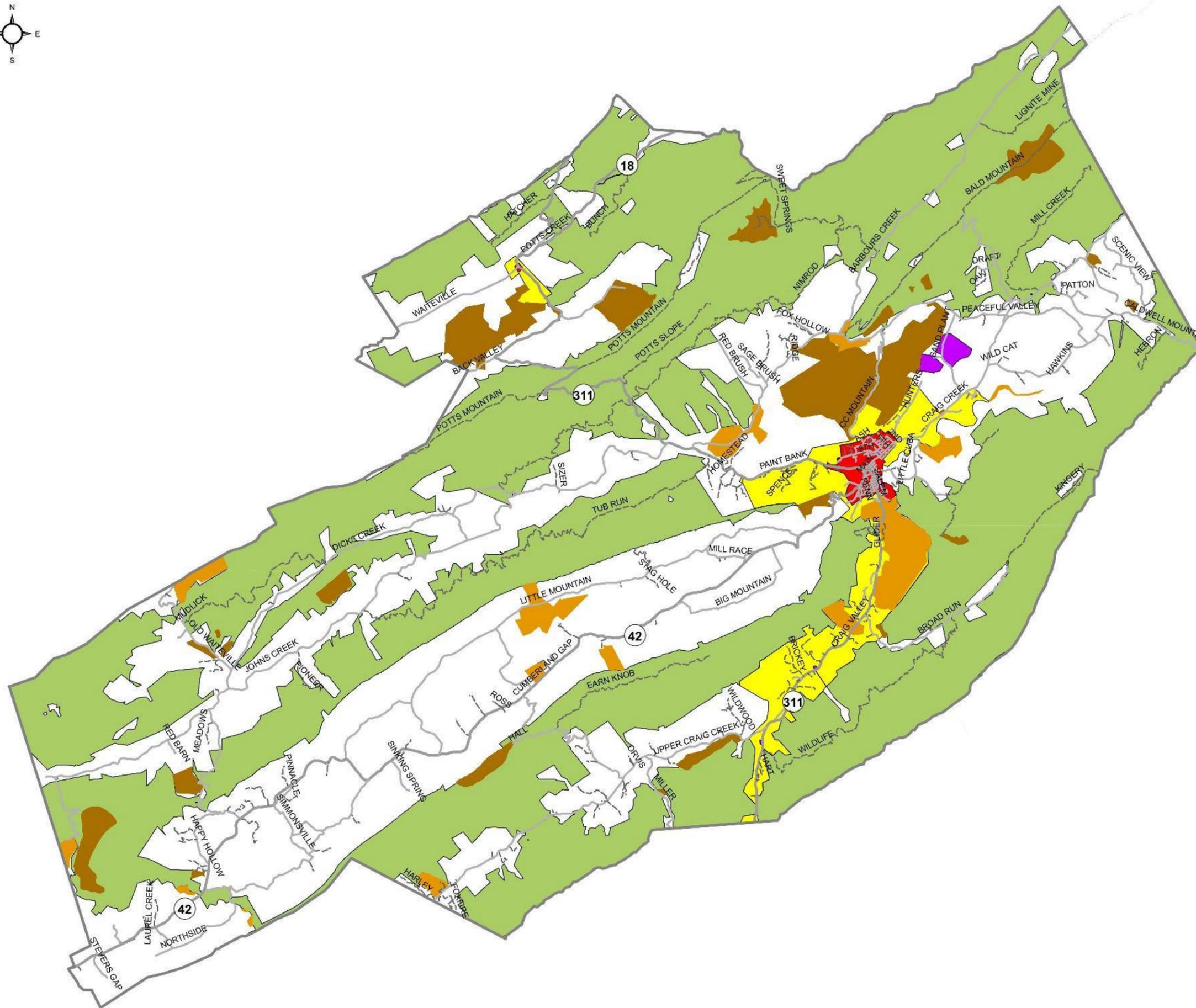
Village classification is designed to serve as an area for medium-density commercial and residential development that is not appropriate for the rural areas of the County. It can be thought of as typical rural small town development. Only two village areas are shown on the Future Land Use map.

The first is in the commercially developed area of Paint Bank. This area takes in the Paint Bank General Store, Swinging Bridge Restaurant, the Depot Inn, the Paint Bank Post Office and Paint Bank Volunteer Fire Department. The village designation for Paint Bank serves two purposes. The first is to allow the existing commercial and service oriented uses to continue into the future. The second is to allow for development of future compatible uses in the community such as an outdoors outfitter, craft shop, or other tourism related business.

The second village area includes the Town of New Castle and areas adjacent to town that are served by the Craig-New Castle Public Service Authority. The village designation will preserve the small town character of New Castle while allowing for appropriate commercial, residential and service related uses. Commercial and small lot residential development should be directed to this area in order to provide adequate water and sewer service for these uses.



Craig County Future Land Use Map 11



Legend

- Agriculture / Rural
- Industrial
- Multipurpose
- Village
- Conservation Lands
- Private Easement
- US Forest Service

Scale 1:150,000



Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2013.

Chapter 11 Goals and Objectives

Craig County values its unique and irreplaceable status as a rural community with clean air and water, an uncluttered environment, attractive views, clean and safe industry and economic assets, and an excellent quality of life. Our overall goal is to be a county that is environmentally responsible and economically sustainable with a size, density, and diversity that encourages interaction, involvement and vitality among our people. It is also of the utmost importance that we obtain and develop a balanced harmony between the economic needs and fiscal capabilities of the County.

Housing

Goal: Craig County desires for its citizens to have opportunities for safe convenient and affordable housing, in such a way as to preserve the rural amenities that are the County's hallmark.

Objectives and Recommendations:

1. Housing for the County's large and growing elderly population is a priority. The County should encourage funding for the development of additional facilities for housing the elderly to include working with private/non-profit organizations in the development of a combination assisted living/nursing home facility. The County should consider the cost impact of such a facility. These facilities often require additional services and unanticipated costs. Therefore, the option to grant possible tax breaks to such facilities should be weighed carefully.
2. The County should pursue the option of working with developers in creating affordable housing projects.
3. Additional handicapped-accessible rental housing should be developed – possibly through the Blue Ridge Community Housing Agency. The County should consider the cost impact of such a facility. These facilities often require additional services and unanticipated costs. Therefore, the option to grant possible tax breaks to such facilities should be weighed carefully.
4. The County should encourage residential development along the Route 311 corridor between the Roanoke County line and New Castle, around New Castle and any areas served by public water and sewer.
5. The County should consider allowing private communities well systems in subdivisions that are large enough for the system to be economically feasible and that have soils suitable for individual septic systems. Private community well systems could allow for enhanced aquifer protection by reducing the number of aquifer punctures.
6. The County should encourage high quality mobile home parks in the area of New Castle to discourage the random placement of mobile homes throughout the County.

Economy

Goal: Craig County wishes to promote a healthy and diverse economic base which balances the need for increased economic opportunities with the need to protect and preserve the County's quality of life and environment.

Objectives and Recommendations:

1. The County, working with the Craig County Industrial Development Authority and an economic development consultant, should identify lands appropriate for commercial development and study the feasibility of developing a small commercial park.
2. Recreation and Tourism represents a significant economic development potential for the County. Facilities to accommodate dispersed recreation and tourism activities should be encouraged to locate at appropriate sites within the County.
3. The County, working with the Craig County Tourism Committee, state and federal agencies should explore continued development of the old C&O railbed from New Castle to Eagle Rock into a multi-use trail facility.
4. The County should continue its participation in the Commonwealth of Virginia's Scenic Byway Program in order to attract tourism traffic and spending to the County.
5. Development of overnight or weekly accommodations should be encouraged throughout the County in the form of bed & breakfasts, inns, hotels/motels, lodges, and cabins/cottages. Without more overnight accommodations it will be difficult to effectively tap the tourism market.
6. The County should encourage forms of economic development which do not rely heavily on public infrastructure. These include but are not limited to agriculture, agri-business, tourism, internet based business, and biotechnology.
7. The County should take advantage of the fiber optic infrastructure installed through Craig County and recruit businesses that require high speed internet.

Human Services

Goal: The strength and success of a community begins with the welfare of its children, families and senior adults. It is the goal of the County to empower families to care for their children, as well as the elderly and to involve faith-based organizations, community groups and government to help make this happen.

Objectives and Recommendations:

1. The County should work with developers and non-profit organizations toward the development of a combination assisted living/nursing home facility.
2. County Fire and EMS organizations should continue to provide basic first aid and fire protection/prevention training at the schools and for community groups to help increase interest in volunteering and for the general welfare of County residents.

3. Craig County should continue to support the public library. Craig County should pursue funding of a multi-function facility to serve as a library/meeting/technology facility.
4. The County should continue to provide facilities for the Craig County Child Care Center, the New Castle Commons, and the Women's Resource Center.
5. The County should encourage the development of programs for youth and seniors.

Natural Resources

Goal: Preservation and protection of the County's natural resources is vital to the County's high quality of life and efforts toward such preservation and protection are of primary importance.

Objectives and Recommendations:

1. Groundwater and surface water quality and quantity in Craig County are currently very good. The County should consider allowing private communities well systems in subdivisions that are large enough for the system to be economically feasible and that have soils suitable for individual septic systems. Private community well systems could allow for enhanced aquifer protection by reducing the number of aquifer punctures.
2. The County should discourage development in the 100-year flood hazard area with the exception of seasonal dwellings.
3. The County should continue working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to update countywide soil mapping.
4. The County should utilize its natural resource base to create jobs through low-impact nature based tourism development.
5. The County should encourage the U.S. Forest Service to study the feasibility of developing recreational opportunities in Craig County.
6. The County should review the U.S. Forest Service slow but steady increase in ownership of the County's total acreage. In 1985 the Forest Service owned 53.3% of the acreage. Today that figure is approximately 55 percent. Therefore, the County has less land in its tax base.

Agriculture

Goal: As an important part of Craig County's heritage and current way of life, in addition to the economic benefit it represents, agriculture in the County should remain an important element in its future.

Objectives and Recommendations:

1. In order to maintain the rural character of the County, the current five-acre minimum lot size for selected agricultural areas should be maintained.

2. Preservation of agricultural lands is an important objective. Alternative methods of ensuring this preservation may be investigated, such as new agricultural techniques for smaller farms, development of agri-business and special method farming, which may include biotechnology.
3. The County should study development of an Open Air Market as an economic resource for local farmers.
4. The County should explore an Agricultural & Forestal District Ordinance or a Land Use Assessment Ordinance as a means of assisting farmers to afford to stay in business.
5. In conjunction with the school system, and other interested parties, students should be given the opportunity to explore opportunities for agriculture and viticulture as a vocation.

Recreation and Tourism

Goal: To improve the economy of Craig County, provide local job opportunities, and improve the quality of life in Craig County through tourism development and use of our recreational resources.

Objectives and Recommendations:

1. Encourage better marketing and servicing of established recreational activities, such as hunting and fishing to improve the income of local businesses and the County government. One option is to use the Craig Electronic Village as a resource in marketing the County.
2. The County should explore the possibility of having some coordinate recreation, tourism, and event-development activities and solicit grant funding for tourism/recreation projects.
3. The County needs more annual or semi-annual events to draw visitors, increase community spirit, and boost retail sales.
4. The County, working with the Craig County Tourism Committee, state and federal agencies should explore expanded development of the old C&O railbed from New Castle to Eagle Rock into a multi-use trail facility.
5. The County should continue its participation in the Commonwealth of Virginia's Scenic Byway Program in order to attract tourism traffic and spending to the County.
6. Development of overnight or weekly accommodations should be encouraged throughout the County in the form of bed & breakfasts, inns, hotels/motels, lodges, and cabins/cottages. Without more overnight accommodations it will be difficult to effectively tap the tourism market.
7. Promote recreation related businesses such as pick your own crops and fishing ponds. Provide liaison with companies and agencies to obtain financing and encourage operation of schools and activities with Craig such as the Orvis Company Fishing and Hunting Schools and Virginia Game Commission's hunting safety schools, bicycling tours, mountain bike races, and corporate sponsored bikes and retreats.
8. The County should study development of an Open Air Market as an economic resource for local farmers.

9. The County should continue to maintain and improve Camp Mitchell through civic group, government and business cooperation.

10. The County should work with other organizations in locating or developing age appropriate leisure activities for our youth, such as roller skating, bowling, and skateboard facilities.

11. Development of visitor center with restroom facilities and community bulletin board should be pursued by local organizations to include the County.

Built Resources

Goal: To provide a quality and stable infrastructure base upon which to build Craig County.

Objectives and Recommendations

1. The Craig-New Castle Public Service Authority should continue implementing its plan to upgrade existing sewer infrastructure to decrease the inflow and infiltration problems and increase the amount of usable capacity at the wastewater plant.

2. The County should work with other organizations to study expansion of the Craig County Public Library, conversion of the C&O railbed to a multi-use trail, and construction of a combination assisted living/nursing home facility.

4. Route 311 should be upgraded to allow for more passing areas and wider shoulders.

Transportation

Goal: The Transportation System in Craig County should provide safe, efficient and convenient modes of transportation. Improvements to the transportation system should be sensitive to the County's environmental, social, land use and economic resources and concerns.

Objectives and Recommendations:

1. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) should make substantial improvements to Route 311 from the Roanoke County line to New Castle by straightening the severe curves, providing more areas to pass, providing more turn-offs for slow moving vehicles and school buses, and providing more shoulder area where possible.

2. Pursue development of an in-county transit system utilizing VDOT grants and volunteers.