

Garrett County Heritage Plan

Forest Resources

Forests encompass approximately 300,000 acres of land in Garrett County--70 percent of the county's total land area. The Garrett, Potomac, and Savage River State Forests cover more than 70,000 acres and represent nearly 25 percent of all the forest land in Garrett County. In addition to being scenic natural areas and wildlife habitats, forests contribute to the local economy through timber harvesting. Forests also provide recreational opportunities, including picnicking, primitive camping, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road vehicle use, hiking, nature walking, and others.

Greenways

Greenways are linear natural areas that often connect recreation sites and other areas of interest. Greenways can provide watershed protection, recreation, environmental protection, and connections to county activity centers, including heritage sites and areas. The Maryland Greenways Commission is working to establish an interconnected network of greenways throughout the state. The following existing and proposed greenways are designated in the Maryland Greenway Atlas:

- *Garrett State Forest Greenway* connects Garrett State Forest, Herrington Manor State Park, and Swallow Falls State Park.
- *Savage River State Forest Greenway* connects portions of the Savage River State Forest, Big Run State Park, New Germany State Park, and Potomac State Forest.

- *Potomac River Greenway* is a proposed greenway that would include the entire southern side of the county along the northern bank of the Potomac River.

- *Youghiogheny Scenic and Wild River Greenway* is a proposed greenway that would follow the Youghiogheny River from Friendsville south to Miller's Run.

Other Significant Natural Features and Areas

- *Cranesville Subarctic Swamp* is a peatland bog—a permanently wet area where partially decomposed plant debris has collected and compacted into peat. The swamp was formed during the last ice age—15,000 years ago. Cranesville Swamp was one of the first National Natural Landmarks to be designated by the National Park Service. The swamp is home to plants and animals indigenous to the northern United States.

- *Finzel Swamp* is a "frost pocket"—a term given to the geologic condition where hills do not allow normal daytime heating, producing a prolonged period of cool air over the area. The condition has allowed the continued existence of subarctic flora in the Cranesville Swamp and Finzel Swamp.

- *Backbone Mountain*, part of the Allegheny range which marks the Eastern Continental Divide, starts near Savage River and extends into West Virginia.