LAND PRESERVATION AND RECREATION PLAN

Talbot County Maryland

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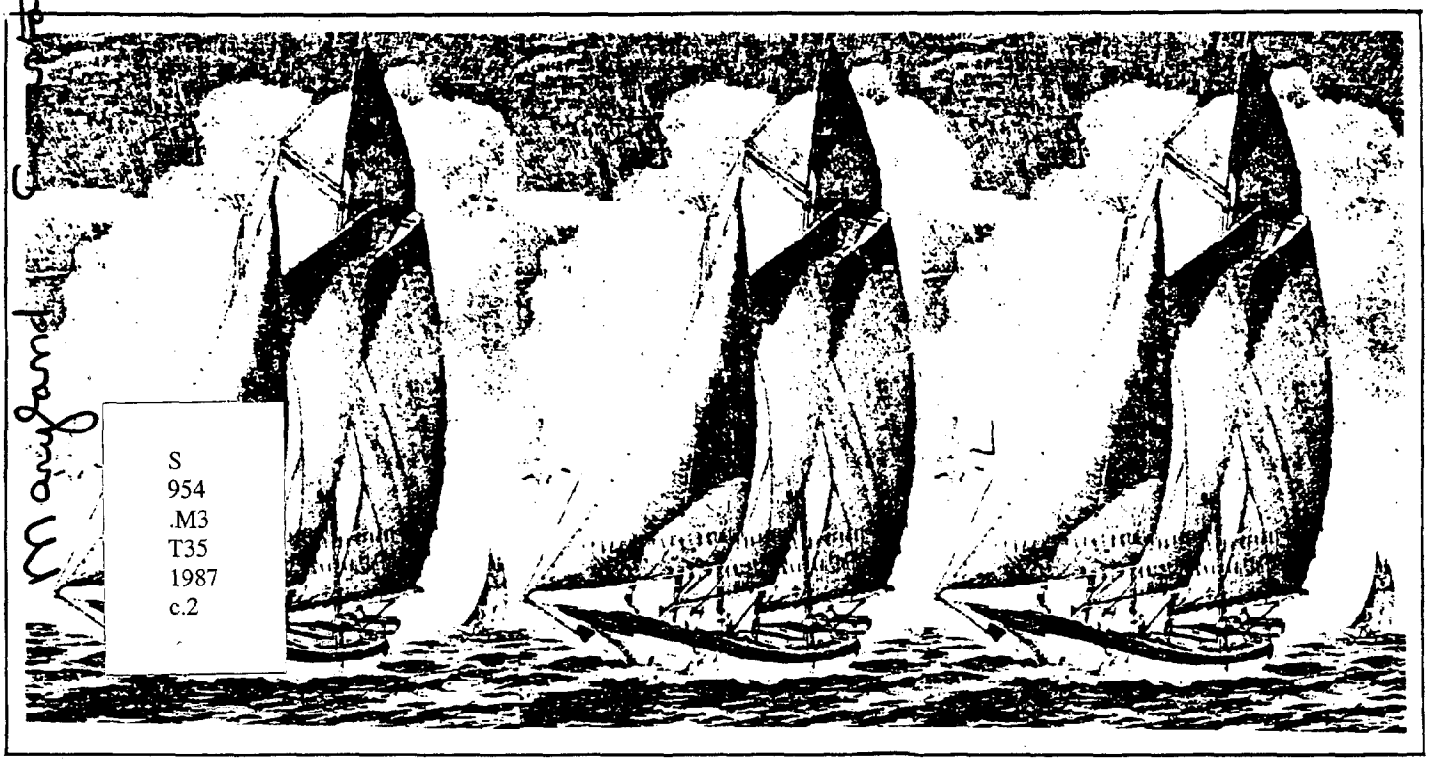

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TALBOT COUNTY
LAND PRESERVATION AND RECREATION PLAN
An Element of The Comprehensive Plan

JULY 1987

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
I INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	
Introduction	1
Purpose	2
Background of County	3
Summary of Past Planning Activities	5
Political, Administrative and Advisory Bodies	8
II RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND STANDARDS	
Introduction	10
Sources	11
Overall Recreation Acreage Goals	12
Local Standards and Classification	12
Classification of State Parks	18
Facility Development Guidelines	20
III INVENTORY OF EXISTING PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	
Introduction	24
Mini-Parks	26
Neighborhood Parks	26
Community Parks	33
County Parks	38
Waterfront Parks and Public Landings	41
Special Parks	45
State Parks	51
Private Recreational Facilities	53

	Summary of Recreation Facilities in Local and State Parks	58
IV	DEMAND ANALYSIS	
	Introduction	59
	Demographics	60
	Participation and Facility Demand	68
	Evaluation of Existing Parks, Recreation Areas and Open Spaces	79
	Demand for Natural Open Space	89
V.	Plan	
	Introduction	93
	Summary of Problems, Issues and Opportunities	93
	Recommendations for Active Parks and Recreational Facilities	96
	Goals and Objectives	99
	Recommendations for Natural Parks and Recreational Open Space	105
	Summary	124
VI	Implementation	
	Introduction	125
	Project Selection	125
	Methods for Land Acquisition	126
	Methods for Facility Development	128
	Preservation and Conservation Programs	128

TABLES

Table	Title	Page
II-1	Recommended Classifications and Standards	13
II-2	Facility Development Standards of the National Recreation and Park Association	22
III-1	Mini-Parks	26
III-2	Neighborhood Park Facilities	32
III-3	Neighborhood Parks	28
III-4	Community Parks	34
III-5	Community Park Facilities	37
III-6	County Parks	38
III-7	County Park Facilities	40
III-8	Waterfront Parks and Public Landings	42
III-9	Special Park Areas	48
III-10	State Parks	51
III-11	Private Parks and Recreation Areas	53
III-12	Facility Summary	58
IV-1	Population Trends	61
IV-2	Population Distribution by Age	65
IV-3	Age Distribution Trends 1970-1984	66
IV-4	Age Distribution Forecasts 1984-2007	67
IV-5	Household Income Distribution	68
IV-6	County-Oriented Recreation Activities	73
IV-7	Activities Ranked by Popularity Tidewater Region	74
IV-8	Indications of Recreation Facility Demand	75

TABLES CONTINUED

Table	Title	Page
IV-9	Talbot County Recreation Demand of In-County Residents for County-Oriented Facilities (1985, 1990 & 1995)	77
IV-10	Comparision of Existing Inventory to Established Standards	80
V-1	List of Potential Sites for Recreational Open Space or Natural Parks	119

MAPS

Map	Title	Page
III-1	Existing Mini-Park Locations	25
III-2	Existing Neighborhood Park Locations	31
III-3	Existing Community Park Locations	36
III-4	Existing County Park Locations	39
III-5	Existing Waterfront Parks, Beaches and Landings	44
III-6	Existing Special Park Locations	50
III-7	Existing State and Federal Park Locations	52
IV-1	Locations of Towns and Villages	62
IV-2	Population Distribution	63
IV-3	Service Area of Neighborhood Parks	82
IV-4	Potential Service Areass for Neighborhood and Community Parks	83
IV-5	Service Area of Community Parks	84
IV-6	Service Area of Neighborhood and Community Parks	85
V-1	Potential Recreational Open Space and Natural Park Sites	106

I INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

The Talbot County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan will be an important element in the County's growth management program, The Comprehensive Plan, and the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Protection Program. The Plan continues the long standing tradition of environmental protection and enhancement of natural resources that has characterized previous planning efforts in the County. The recreation element of the Plan also assures that an appropriate level of parks and recreational facilities are provided for present and future county residents.

The Land Preservation and Recreation Plan will serve as the basis for the Parks and Open Space element of the County's Comprehensive Plan and will be integrated into the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program. In addition, the Plan will update and succeed The 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan. The Plan will also coordinate County plans and programs with State programs and procedures and will provide the basic framework for coordination of preservation and recreation efforts within the incorporated areas of Talbot County.

It was not surprising, upon review of previous planning documents and through meetings with citizen groups in the County, to find a strong commitment to the protection of natural resources. The open land, extensive waterways, bays and rivers have long been important to Talbot County. Lying between the Chesapeake Bay and the Choptank River, the County has historically relied upon its natural resources to provide economic opportunities and a unique quality of life. Over the years the tradition of the people of Talbot County has been to treasure the environment. This philosophy has been retained in the formation of the 1987 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan.

Talbot County has provided a significant amount of active park acreage and recreational facilities for its residents. The Plan addresses the open space and recreation needs of the County by recommending park and facility standards, evaluating the existing facilities and suggesting methods to correct present and future deficiencies. The park and recreation standards have been derived from national and State guidelines but have been modified to reflect the characteristics and goals of Talbot County. The Land Preservation and Recreation Plan has also been coordinated with the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Protection Program which will be an important element of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to satisfying requirements for funding at the State level, the Talbot County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan will help coordinate plans and programs between the County and its towns.

PURPOSE

There are several purposes and objectives that have guided the preparation of the Land Preservation and Recreation Plan. Most are in response to legislative and administrative requirements of governmental agencies, yet all spring from the long-standing traditions of the County. These major aims and objectives of the Plan are:

1. To meet the preservation and recreation needs of the people of the County thereby maintaining and enhancing the quality of life.

2. To be an integral part of the new County Comprehensive Plan which is being updated.

3. To respond to the Statewide mandate to protect and improve the environment of the Chesapeake Bay.

4. To guide future public and private actions, including Program Open Space acquisition and development activities, which will increase opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.

5. To provide guidance and input to the Maryland State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan and establish consistency with State objectives.

6. To establish the basis for funding and technical assistance from State and federal sources which will help implement the Land Preservation and Recreation Plan.

7. To provide a framework and basis for cooperation between the County and its incorporated towns and neighboring counties.

8. To provide appropriate standards for the planning, acquisition and programming of open space and recreational facilities.

Numerous sources have been consulted in the preparation of the 1987 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan. Previous plans and documents have provided important insight into the open space, recreation and preservation needs of the County. Meetings with citizen groups and County officials have provided further information and understanding. State plans, activities and requirements have also been important guidelines for the formulation of this Plan.

BACKGROUND OF COUNTY

Talbot County is predominantly agricultural with low density residential areas scattered throughout. Most agricultural production is devoted to corn and soybeans, but the broiler (chicken) industry is important and pasture occurs in small blocks scattered along the coastline.

The County has over 600 miles of shoreline which is generally low (less than 20 ft. msl) rolling land with sandy and silty soils. In this Critical Area, much of the land has poorly drained soils with severe development constraints. These areas are in the more upland areas in the central parts of the peninsulas. Soils more suitable for development often are concentrated adjacent to the shoreline. As a result of this, development and residential areas have been able to be concentrated along the shoreline where residents prefer to live. Inland areas of most peninsulas, other than in the immediate vicinity of Easton and St. Michaels, are largely undeveloped.

Major population centers include Easton, St. Michaels, Tilghman, Oxford, Trappe, and Queen Ann. Outside of the limits of these areas, land is rural with average densities of less than one unit per twenty-five acres.

Forests and wetlands constitute the bulk of the non-agricultural open land. These resources occur where steep slopes or poor drainage has restricted use. Most wetlands in the Critical Area are either tidal marshes or seasonally flooded bottom land forests. Most tidal marshes are brackish to fresh, dominated by common reed in coves and along creeks. These marshes help to prevent shoreline erosion and maintain water quality, and provide habitat for waterfowl, wading birds, fish, and mammals such as raccoons and muskrats.

The primary forested wetlands are seasonally or irregularly flooded forests with loblolly pine, red maple , sweet gum, basket oak, willow oak, and tulip poplar. Wetlands comprise about 20 to 25 percent of the forests in the Critical Area and generally are scattered throughout all large forests. White-tailed deer, gray squirrel, Delmarva fox squirrel, and several species of breeding

birds constitute the main wildlife in these areas.
Major marsh systems are found along the Choptank River basin and Tuckahoe Creek. Other significant, though generally smaller, marshes occur on the Wye East River, upper Miles River, Potts Mill Creek, Goldsborough and Glebe Creeks, and in the Wades Point, Ferry Cove, and Back Creek sections of the Chesapeake Bay shoreline.

Major bottom land forests and swamps are found on the tributaries of the Wye East River, Mill Creek, Norwich Creek, and in the north part of the county. In the south part, forested wetlands are usually restricted to narrow bands along the tributaries of Tuckahoe Creek and the Choptank River such as Beaverdam Creek, Miles Creek, Kings Creek, and Williams Creek.

Shorelines

In Talbot County, natural beaches are usually narrow (less than 20 to 40 ft.) and small in extent. They are most common on Chesapeake Bay, Eastern Bay, and the lower portions of major creeks and rivers. In the protected coves and along the upper reaches of the creeks and rivers, marshes and forests generally fringe the shore. Bluffs to 40 ft. are common along Tuckahoe Creek and the Wye East River.

Shoreline erosion is slight to low in most parts of the county. Only in Eastern Bay, the lower Miles and Choptank Rivers, and along the Chesapeake Bay is erosion generally so high that vegetative or non-structural stabilization methods are inadequate.

Forested Areas

Most of the forests are mixtures of loblolly or shortleaf pine with hardwoods such as basket oak, white oak, northern red oak, red maple, and sweet gum. Many of the mixed forests originated as planted pine plantations which were not managed, and into which hardwoods invaded. Although this type of forest offers good habitat for many cosmopolitan or widespread species, they offer little in the form of unique features.

The more natural forests occur in the poorly drained soils of the necks and along the more steeply incised valleys of the tributaries of the upper Choptank River.

Major forest stands on the necks of west Talbot County are generally poorly drained, although good quality upland. Oak and mixed hardwood stands occur on points and headlands along Mill

Creek, on an unnamed tributary of the upper Wye East River, and on Miles River neck. High quality bottomland or riverine forests are found in the Kings Creek, Miles Creek, and Raccoon Creek drainages. The bluffs along the upper Wye East River also constitute a high quality system.

SUMMARY OF PAST PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Talbot County has been actively involved in land preservation and recreation planning for many years. The land preservation and recreation planning activities include a variety of plans, documents, programs as well as political, administrative or advisory bodies. All of these activities have reflected the common goal of protecting the natural assets of Talbot County for the enjoyment of the citizens.

In the early seventies, land preservation and open space planning was officially incorporated into the local governmental process. In 1973, the County's Comprehensive Plan was adopted to guide all future development. Talbot County's Department of Parks and Recreation was created in 1975 in response to the needs perceived by the community to strengthen efforts in the provision of recreational space and activities for County residents. In 1982 the County's Recreation and Open Space Plan was passed. In 1986, the County initiated an update of these two plans and began the preparation of a Critical Areas Plan and Program to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Act.

The County Council has also appointed a Planning Commission, an Open Space & Recreation Advisory Council, and created the Park Board. These agencies and advisory boards have all assisted the County's professional staff and citizen groups in the implementation of the goals, objectives and programs set forth in these two plans.

The two main documents important to the history of land preservation and recreation planning in the County are the 1973 Comprehensive Plan and the 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan. Although there have been a variety of public and private efforts related to land preservation and recreation planning, these two documents reflect the official position of Talbot County. The Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan guided the planning and development of recreation facilities for almost a decade and, in 1982, was supplemented by the Recreation and Open Space Plan.

1973 Comprehensive Plan

In response to increasing pressures for urban and suburban development, Talbot County embarked on a Comprehensive Planning Program in August of 1972.

The County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1973 and includes recommended actions, policies and standards to guide future development through the year 2000. The plan, which is currently being updated, includes goals and objectives as well as specific recommendations for implementation. The Comprehensive Plan and its various recommendations are organized around the following categories: natural resources; public services; land use; cultural; aesthetics; fiscal and intergovernmental cooperation.

A major concern of the plan was the protection of the County's natural resources which were viewed as highly vulnerable to development pressures. The following issues and recommendations pertinent to open space and recreation were included in the Plan:

1. Natural Resources: The Plan suggests coordination with the State Department of Natural Resources regarding actions affecting state or private wetlands, wildlife habitats and reforestation programs. This was noted as a major issue.

2. Standards and Services: The Plan recommends the establishment of standards for recreational facilities, such as requiring 10 acres of outdoor recreation land for every 1000 residents, and the improvement of some public boat landings.

3. Land Use: The Plan identifies the zoning and subdivision regulations as important implementation mechanisms and focuses on several major concepts including waterfront protection, preservation and maintaining the open character of the County. The Plan also recommended that sufficient open space should be provided to accommodate localized recreational and institutional needs for all subdivisions.

4. Cultural: The Plan includes the charge that the County undertake a study to provide a mechanism for insuring the preservation of historic features which include places as well as structures.

5. Fiscal: The Plan suggested funding for the acquisition and upgrading of certain public boat landings. The purchase of additional land for outdoor recreation uses was also among the recommendations. The possibility of private donations, bequests of land for preservation and recreation, the use of Seth State Forest, and the purchase of scenic easements or property are also included as methods for funding and implementation.

The Open Space element of the 1973 Comprehensive Plan reflected a strong commitment to safeguarding the natural assets of the County and providing for an adequate level of recreational activities. Specific recommendations and implementation procedures for land preservation and open space appeared in several sections of the Plan consistent with this intent. However, the full weight of recreation and open space planning was realized nine years later when The Recreation and Open Space Plan was adopted.

The Recreation and Open Space Plan of 1982

The Recreation and Open Space Plan of 1982 had several purposes. One was to establish appropriate local consistency with guidelines and objectives contained in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan (S.C.O.R.P.). Other aims were to identify and reflect the needs of county residents as they pertain to the future provision of park sites and the improvement and development of existing and proposed parks; to formulate standards for acquiring land; and to establish a stronger framework for the recreational activities program.

Significant emphasis was given to locally perceived needs and a random survey was conducted of County households to determine participation rates in various recreation activities. The 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan also contained an inventory and analysis of existing parks and recreation facilities; identified recreation and open space needs based on recreation area classifications and standards; and recommended a plan framework and implementation techniques. Consistent with the desires of County residents, this Plan also emphasized the unique nature of Talbot County and the importance of utilizing local objectives to guide park and recreation development.

POLITICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE & ADVISORY BODIES

The County Comprehensive Plan and The 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan have provided the framework for parks and open space planning in Talbot County for almost two decades. Elected and appointed citizens have also played a key role. In addition to local and County bodies, many quasi-public groups have assisted in providing parks, recreational facilities and programs for the residents of the County. The Neighborhood Service Center, the Talbot Y.M.C.A., the Izaak Walton League, service clubs and a variety of athletic leagues are but a few examples. Following are some of the political, administrative and advisory bodies which are important to the land preservation and recreation planning activities of Talbot County.

County Council

The County Council's primary responsibility is the governance of all unincorporated areas of the County. Among their charges are the appointment of representatives to the Planning Commission and the Open Space and Recreation Advisory Council, funding of the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Planning, and formulation of policies for the growth and development of the County. The Council is the approving body for plans and programs including the County Comprehensive and Recreation Plans. They also approve all planning and zoning activities with advise from the Planning Commission. The Council also provides approval for the Capital Improvement Program and authorizes grant applications such as those required for Program Open Space funding.

Planning and Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission is an advisory body to the County Council on planning, zoning and development matters. The Commissioners are appointed by the elected County Council and work closely with the Department of Planning to produce plans, programs and other recommendations to implement County policies. Evaluations and recommendations are provided to the Council by the Planning Commission for all appropriate matters.

Department of Parks and Recreation

Created in 1975, the Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for the administration and programming of recreational space and activities for Talbot County. Until 1975, community groups and organizations had been the primary providers of programmed activities at park and recreation sites.

Since its creation, The Department "...has made substantial progress in the acquisition and development of park sites throughout the Talbot County. The Department has also improved the maintenance and scheduling of active recreation facilities and participates in the preparation of a five year acquisition and development plan which is required by the State of Maryland as a basis for Program Open Space grants. Other responsibilities include the scheduling of ball fields for various leagues and oversight of the state funded School-Community Centers Program.

The County Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for coordinating park, open space and recreational activities between the County and the incorporated towns. The Department provides technical and limited financial assistance while encouraging the towns to actively participate in the local programming, acquisition and development of recreation sites."[1]

Park and Recreation Advisory Board

The Park and Recreation Advisory Board provides citizen input and recommendations to the County Council relating to recreation programs, land acquisition, open space policies, and organization of recreational councils. It includes appointees from both the County and the incorporated towns. The Advisory Council also provides guidance and recommendations to the Talbot County Department of Parks and Recreation.

Department Of Planning

The County Planning Department is also an important part of the open space and park planning activities of Talbot County. The Planning Department is involved in the preparation, administration and maintenance of the County's Comprehensive Plan, the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan and other plans, programs and regulations related to the growth and development of the County.

County Park Board

The Park Board is involved with the administration, long range planning and policy direction for the Talbot County Community Center and Hog Neck Golf Course. They are appointed by the County Council and recommend policies and administrative guidelines, prepare annual reports and submit budget requests for these self-sustaining facilities.

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1. Talbot County, Recreation and Open Space Plan, p. 57, 1982.

II RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND STANDARDS

II. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND STANDARDS

INTRODUCTION

The classification system and recreation standards recommended in this chapter are intended to provide guidelines for planning, acquisition, and development of park, recreation, and open space lands in Talbot County. The classification and standards system, which will also be useful in evaluating the adequacy of existing parks and recreation facilities, should be viewed as a guide for planning purposes. The standards are not absolute rules and should be used with local judgment, citizen preferences, and common sense when evaluating the need and adequacy of park and recreational facilities. The importance of establishing and using a classification and standards system at the local level has been summarized by The National Recreation and Park Association as:

1. an expression of the minimum acceptable facilities for the citizens of an area.
2. a guideline to determine land requirements for various kinds of parks and recreation areas or facilities.
3. a basis for relating recreational needs to geographic areas within a community wide park and open space system.
4. a framework and structure that can be used to guide and assist development patterns.
5. a means to justify the need for parks and open space within the overall land-use pattern of the county.

The Maryland Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan felt that..."outdoor recreation and open space acreage for any area may be calculated using...standards if the population of an area is known. It should be noted , however, that for certain types of outdoor recreation areas and open spaces there are no acreage standards. Acreage for historic/cultural areas, natural areas, wilderness areas, natural resource management areas and...similar types of areas can not be standardized....land for these types of areas should be acquired to meet the prevailing conditions and needs." The Talbot County system acknowledges this conclusion and those type of parks and recreation lands are classified under Special Parks.

The following sections outline the sources for the Talbot County Classification and Standards Systems and explains the different levels of the recommended guidelines.

SOURCES

A number of sources were utilized in developing the recommended classification and standards system. National guidelines (as published by the National Recreation and Park Association), standards used in other counties, guidelines published by the State of Maryland, and standards previously used in Talbot County were analyzed, modified and incorporated into the proposed system. Most importantly, the results and preferences derived from meetings with citizen groups and County officials were incorporated into the system.

The recommended classification system and development standards have been modified to reflect the large percentage of Talbot County's population which live in rural areas, small villages or outside urban towns. Consequently, the classification system and recreational standards can be used as guidelines for evaluating present facilities and satisfying future demand and growth. Although the original Open Space Plan for the County states that "rural areas do not generally have the range or intensity of recreation demand found in urbanized areas," there is a clear and practical demand for standards to be used as guidelines in the planning process. It is again emphasized that the recommended standards which follow are <u>guidelines</u> that can be used to evaluate Talbot County's Park System - not mandates for public acquisition.

Another important factor that was considered in the development of the classification and standards system was the role of public schools. The Talbot County's schools function not only as educational facilities but are also a recreational resource and facility for their students and nearby residents. It is obvious that joint use and cooperative programs between the Talbot County Parks and Recreation Department and the School Board is necessary to make school recreational facilities available to the community.

The Land Preservation and Recreation Plan encompasses the entire County and to be effective requires coordination with the plans and wishes of the incorporated areas. Local needs and standards were considered in the development of the system and municipal recreation facilities are incorporated into the classifications. The need for a view that "crosses over" political boundaries is particularly essential for recreation and should be considered one of the County's highest priorities.

The classifications and guidelines contained in the Maryland State Open Space and Recreation Plan were also reviewed to assure local and State coordination. In fact, the Talbot County System incorporates the classification of State lands.

The Talbot County Recreation Classification and Standards System is organized into four parts. The first part addresses the overall recreation acreage goals that are recommended by the Maryland Department of State Planning in The State Recreation and Open Space Plan. The second part of the system provides standards and classifications for local parks which serve the neighborhood, community, county and some parts of the region. Part three incorporates the Maryland Classification system for state owned acreage and facilities. The final part of the system recommends facility standards and guidelines which are also coordinated with State estimates of facility demand.

These standards were developed to provide sufficient land or recreational space for the full range of facilities and activities needed for the community. In addition to the analysis of available State and County information, discussions with County officials and comments made by County residents, helped to formulate criteria by which the standards:

- Reflect the needs of the people/users
- Are realistic and attainable
- Are in harmony with Talbot County's rural character
- Correlate with results of questionnaires mailed by the County to a sample of County residents to identify facility needs.

OVERALL RECREATION ACREAGE GOALS

The overall recreation and open space acreage goals for Talbot County are derived from The Maryland State Recreation and Open Space Plan. The State Plan specifies recreation acreage needs for each county. These needs are based on participation ratios and reflect estimates of the amount of land needed to support projected facility needs. The acreage needs and standards are subdivided among local, State and federal jurisdictions and are expressed in acres per 1000 population. The overall acreage standards for Talbot County are:

1. Local Recreation Acreage .....30 acres per 1000 persons
2. State Recreation Acreage.....25 acres per 1000 persons
3. Overall Recreation Acreage.....55 acres per 1000 persons

The above standards indicate that Talbot County and the incorporated municipalities should provide 30 acres for every 1000 persons residing in the County.

LOCAL STANDARDS AND CLASSIFICATION

The local park standards and classification system is intended to serve as a guide for planning and evaluation of municipal and

County open space and recreation facilities. As stated previously the overall acreage standards suggest that Talbot County provide 30 acres of local parks per 1000 persons.
It is recommended that Talbot County's parks and open space system be organized into seven (7) classifications. One of the classifications, Special Parks, contains sub-categories such as natural parks, quasi-public parks and historic-cultural areas. As noted earlier, a specific acreage standard is not possible for these areas since the amount of land reserved for these types of parks depend upon the availability of natural resources, the size of the natural system , intended use and available financial support. An overall goal of 7.0 acres per 1000 persons is suggested for the collective category of Special Parks. It is recommended that locally oriented parks be classified in the following manner.

The following table II-1 classifies recreation areas by their function and suggests an acreage standard for each type of local park

TABLE II-1

RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS

Classification	Acres/1000 Population
1. Mini-Parks	0.25 to 0.50
2. Neighborhood Parks	1.00 to 2.50
3. Community Parks	5.00 to 8.00
4. County Parks	5.00 to 10.00
5. Waterfront Parks and Public Landings	1.00 to 2.00
6. Special Parks	5.00 to 7.00
a. natural parks	
b. quasi-public parks	
c. historic and cultural areas	
d. linear parks	
e. wayside or service parks	
f. highly specialized facilities	
g. destination parks and open spaces	
7. Private Parks and Recreation Facilities	N/A
TOTALS:	17.25 to 30.00

The following is a description of the above classification system. The various standards and guidelines are also presented in the description including a "Modification Rational" factor tailored to the rural character of Talbot County. The guidelines and standards also address function, intended design, resource characteristics, service radius and preferred location. As with any classification and standards system, some overlap between types of parks is inevitable and, quite often, more than one type of facility is found within a park. It is for these reason that the system should be viewed as a guide and not as an absolute mandate. This is especially true in Talbot County where the overlap between neighborhood and community parks is frequent.

Mini-Park

Description: A small specialized facility that serves a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as small children or senior citizens. It can be in the form of active or passive (landscaped area with few benches) recreation and should be located in close proximity to the user.

Acres/1000 Population: 0.25 to 0.50

Size/Range: From 1,000 S.F. to less than 1.0 acre. Desirable size should be determined by local experience relating to maintenance costs.

Service Area: Sub-neighborhood level, serving 500 to 2,500 persons within a 1/4 mile walking distance.

Typical Facilities: Play apparatus (slides, swings and sandboxes) for active recreation, benches, sitting and landscaped areas for passive recreation and sometimes a combination of both.

Rationale: This type of park should be located in the more urban areas of the County and planned in conjunction with subdivision development. Actual needs will be influenced by factors such as land availability, population characteristics, proximity to other types of parks and citizen preference.

Neighborhood Park

Description: Intended to provide active recreational activities such as playgrounds, playing fields and organized games as well as the passive or cultural activities of the surrounding neighborhood. Use of these parks are normally characterized as short-term (1-3 hours) and typically associated with elementary school areas.

Acres/1000 Population: 1.0 to 2.5 Acres.

Average Size/Range: 3.0 to 7.0 acres. If active playing fields and playgrounds, the target size should be 10.0 acres. If the primary function is oriented to playgrounds, the target size should be 3.5 acres.

Service Area: A typical neighborhood, with up to 2500 persons with a walking radius of 1/2 mile and a travel time of 5 minutes - a radius of approximately 3.5 miles.

Typical Facilities: Play apparatus, distinct play areas for different age groups, open space for spontaneous play, multiple use paved areas, sports fields, limited seats for spectators, senior citizen area, picnic area, drinking fountains, landscaped perimeter buffers, some off-street parking, lighting. Actual facilities will depend on demand and user characteristics.

Rationale: The target park size is based on historical experience relating to maintenance costs compared to public recreational benefits. Actual size should be determined by specific plans and local maintenance guidelines. However, research indicates that ten acres appears to be the minimum size for economic maintenance of an active playing field. The 1/2 mile walking distance and 3.5 mile driving distance radii are extensive for an urban area but are compatible with the County's rural character. The 2,500 people per neighborhood park is an estimate.

Community Parks

Description: A recreation area which is suited for intense recreational facilities such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus and special facilities. It can include an athletic complex. It may include a large natural or landscaped area to provide citizens with the opportunity for walking, sitting, picnics or similar passive recreational needs. Provides for active and passive uses and may be developed as a school-park facility.

Acres/1000 Population: 5.0 to 8.0 Acres

Size/Range: 10 to 25.0 Acres. The target size is 15.0 acres with actual size dependent on facilities and park design.

Service Area: A typical community encompassing several neighborhoods or villages with a population of 2,500 to 10,000 people within a 1 1/2 to 5 mile radius. Community parks should be within a 15 minute travel distance of the intended user and be accessible by walking, bike paths or driving.

Typical Facilities: Community parks provide a range of active and passive facilities to serve all age groups. These parks may contain softball or baseball fields, football and soccer fields, tennis and basketball courts,swimming pools, picnic areas, multipurpose hard courts, ice rinks, community centers or indoor recreational facilities, sanitary facilities, spectator seating, off street parking, and bicycle paths. Community parks should be capable of accommodating the majority of the recreational program needs for the surrounding neighborhoods and, if lighted facilities for night time recreation are provided, they should be included at this type of park.

Rationale: A community park may be larger than 15.0 acres if it is designed for some type of special recreation use or facility for the surrounding neighborhoods. These parks may also include special areas such as wetlands, beaches, fishing piers, or boat landings. The recommended service radius of 5 miles is justified due to the rural character of Talbot County and could be extended assuming that the park could be reached within 15-20 minutes average travel time.

County Parks

Description: County parks are regional in both character and service area. They usually are large areas such as golf courses, natural parks or other specialized facilities that serve the entire County. Their location is variable.

Acres/1000 Population: 5.0 to 10.0

Size/Range: 50 to 200+ but highly dependent upon the use and facility being provided.

Service Area: County wide and sub-regional. Travel time is normally within 30 minutes to 1.0 hour.

Typical Facilities: Nature centers, trail systems, some play facilities, campground, golf course, botanical gardens, major sport areas, bridle paths, areas for swimming and boating, picnicking and parking.

Waterfront Parks and Public Landings

Description: These parks include public boat landings, boat ramps, slips, marinas, and passive parks oriented to bays, rivers and streams. They also include areas for the temporary parking of motor vehicles and boat trailers, beaches and water access points.

Acres/1000 population: 2.0

Size Range: As existing and appropriate to the intended use of the facility.

Service Area: County-wide.

Typical Facilities: In addition to landings, ramps and slips, these areas normally provide parking, rest room facilities, picnic areas and, in some cases, adjacent park facilities. Since much of Talbot County's recreational activities are water-oriented, some of these parks actually function as neighborhood or community parks.

Rationale: Talbot County is a water oriented community. The Chesapeake Bay, four major rivers, streams and numerous tributaries, coves,or inlets provide over 600 miles of shoreline. In a sense, the County is an island since it is almost 99% surrounded by water. Therefore waterfront parks and public boat landings are a very valuable recreational asset. The standard of 2.0 acres per 1000 persons is derived from the existing status of this type of park. In the future, additional landings and ramps should be related to boat registrations or similar measures of demand.

Special Parks

Description: Special parks, as mentioned previously, are places, areas and other open space that are unique or do not fit in any one of the other classifications. These parks, open spaces and natural areas are a very important part of Talbot County's preservation and recreation assets and include natural parks and preservation areas, quasi-public facilities, historic-cultural areas and places, linear parks, wayside and service parks, highly specialized facilities such as arenas and destination parks.

The 1982 Open Space and Recreation Plan recognized the important role of these special facilities.For example, this Plan found that from a recreational perspective the most notable resource of western Talbot County is its relationship to the Chesapeake Bay. These waters provide opportunities for a major component of the County's recreational boating activity. The Plan also noted the importance of historic-cultural activities and stated that Talbot County is rich in historic structures and sites. They constitute a large part of an important historical resource that is essential to the County's travel economy.

Acres/1000 population: No specific acreage standard is recommended for the individual sub- categories. The overall standard for the entire Special Park classification is 7.0 acres per 1000 persons.
Size Range: As existing.

Service Area: As existing, but normally these areas serve the entire County. The service area will be dependent upon the type of special park. For example, a natural park could serve the entire region and a quasi-public park could function as a neighborhood facility.

Typical Facilities: As provided and dependent upon the type of special park.

Rationale: The overall standard of 7.0 acres/1000 persons reflects the importance of the Special Park Classification in Talbot County. Although it is not possible to establish standards for each of the sub-classifications,an overall acreage goal is desirable.

Private Parks and Recreation Facilities.

Description: Historically, private organizations and groups have provided a significant amount of park area and recreational facilities in Talbot County. Playgrounds and fields of private schools, service club facilities such as the Elk and Moose Clubs and private golf courses are but a few examples.

Acres/1000 population: As existing.

Size range: As existing and dependent upon the intended function.

Service Area: Dependent upon the facility but normally serve neighborhood and community areas.

Typical Facilities: Play apparatus, playgrounds and athletic fields, basketball and tennis courts, golf courses, swimming pools, riding stables, and natural areas.

CLASSIFICATION OF STATE PARKS

State parks are designed to serve all residents of Maryland but occasionally they contain facilities that serve a regional or county function. The State park system also utilizes open space and natural areas as a means of conservation and preservation or protection and management of endangered resources. The size of these parks vary, depending on their function, and serve county, regional, state and out of state users.

It is recommended that Talbot County adopt the Maryland classification and acreage standard for state owned facilities. This will help achieve the goal of integrating local plans with The State Open Space and Recreation Plan. An acreage goal of 25 acres per 1000 persons and the following classification system is suggested for state facilities.

State Parks

State parks are areas with natural resources or physiographic characteristics which are suitable for recreation development and use. These areas are managed by the Maryland Park Service with the primary objective of providing outdoor recreation opportunities for the public in a natural setting. The density of development and management objectives may vary from park to park in an effort to protect or enhance natural resources for a variety of recreation uses.

State Forests

State forests are tracts of public land whose dominant forms of vegetation are trees, shrubs, and associated plants, which are managed and used for public open space, low density dispersed recreation, watershed management, timber production and wildlife habitat.

State Wildlife Management Areas

State Wildlife Management Areas are lands acquired and managed by the State with the primary objective of protecting, propagating and managing wildlife populations. Some of these areas also provide recreational opportunities for sportsmen and other wildlife enthusiasts.

State Fish Management Areas

State Fish Management Areas are acquired and managed by the State with the primary objective of propagating, protecting and maintaining fish populations. There are 1,091 acres of State Fish Management Areas, which are located in all regions except the Baltimore Metropolitan and Lower Eastern Shore Regions.

State Natural Resource Management Areas

These lands are acquired by the State for a variety of potential natural resource uses. They are not committed to specific uses until resource management plans are developed. Interim uses are allowed, including recreation , provided these activities do not conflict with the area's natural resources.

State Natural Environmental Areas

State Natural Environmental Areas are areas with significant natural attraction because of their geological, biological, or botanical resources. These areas are acquired and managed by the State to preserve and protect significant natural resources while providing low intensity recreation opportunities. Development is usually minimal.

State Roadside Picnic Areas

Roadside picnic areas are acquired, developed and managed by the State along many of the major highways and roads. Although these areas are developed for picnicking only, parking, water and sanitary facilities may also be provided.

State Historic or Scenic Areas

Historic or Scenic Areas are areas of special or unique Statewide historic or scenic interest which are acquired and managed by the State. They are developed to provide recreation opportunities which complement the historic or scenic features of the area without damaging or intruding upon those unique features. State Scenic Areas and State Historic Areas are contained within existing State lands.

State Wilderness Areas

Lands which have retained their wilderness character, have rare or vanishing species of plants or animals,and contain unique ecological, geological, or environmental value fall into this classification. Scenic or contemplative recreation areas are also included in this group when they are deemed worthy of preservation for present and future residents of the State. These areas are not developed or modified for use and are normally left in their natural state.

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

There are numerous guidelines and standards for the provision of recreational facilities such as fields, courts and pools. Factors such as population ratios, participation rates, citizen preference, carrying capacity, attraction capability and quality are all used in the development of facility standards.

However,past experience has proven that the best standard is local criteria and resources. Therefore, it is recommended that the facility standards for Talbot County be developed by the Department of Parks and Recreation on a case by case basis and in light of available financial resources. Table II-2 contains

suggested facility development standards which are published by the National Recreation and Park Association. These standards, which reflect dimensions, space requirements, orientation, unit guidelines and location notes for a specific recreational facility (i.e. tennis courts, softball, etc.) are included as additional guidelines for the County.

Table II-2

SUGGESTED FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

ACTIVITY/ FACILITY	RECOMMENDED SPACE REQUIREMENTS	RECOMMENDED SIZE AND DIMENSIONS	RECOMMENDED ORIENTATION	NO. OF UNITS PER POPULATION	SERVICE RADIUS	LOCATION NOTES
Badminton	1620 sq. ft.	*Singles* – 17' x 44' Doubles – 20' x 44' with 5' unobstructed area on all sides	Long axis north-south	1 per 5000	¼-½ mile	Usually in school, recreation center, or church facility. Safe walking or bike access.
Basketball 1. Youth 2. High School 3. Collegiate	 2400-3036 sq. ft. 5040-7280 sq. ft. 5600-7980 sq. ft.	 46'-50' x 84' 50' x 84' 50 x 94' with 5' unobstructed space on all sides	Long axis north-south	1 per 5000	¼-½ mile	Same as badminton. Outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings.
Handball (3-4 wall)	800 sq. ft. for 4-wall, 1000 for 3-wall	20' x 40' – Minimum of 10' to rear of 3-wall court. Minimum 20' overhead clearance.	Long axis north-south. Front wall at north end.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minute travel time	4-wall usually indoor as part of multi-purpose facility. 3-wall usually outdoor in park or school setting.
Ice Hockey	22,000 sq. ft. including support area.	Rink 85' x 200' (minimum 85' x 185'). Additional 5000 sq. ft. support area.	Long axis north-south if outdoor	Indoor–1 per 100,000. Outdoor–depends on climate.	½-1 hour travel time	Climate important consideration affecting no. of units. Best as part of multi-purpose facility.
Tennis	Minimum of 7,200 sq. ft. single court. (2 acres for complex.)	36' x 78'. 12' clearance on both sides; 21' clearance on both ends.	Long axis north-south.	1 court per 2000.	¼-½ mile	Best in batteries of 2-4. Located in neighborhood/community park or adjacent to school site.
Volleyball	Minimum of 4,000 sq. ft.	30' x 60'. Minimum 6' clearance on all sides.	Long axis north-south	1 court per 5000.	¼-½ mile	Same as other court activities (e.g., badminton, basketball, etc.)
Baseball 1. Official 2. Little League	 3.0-3.85 A minimum 1.2 A minimum	 • Baselines–90' Pitching distance–60 ½' Foul lines–min. 320' Center field–400'+ • Baselines–60' Pitching distance–46' Foul lines–200' Center field–200'-250'	Locate home plate so pitcher throwing across sun and batter not facing it. Line from home plate through pitcher's mound run east-north-east.	1 per 5000 Lighted–1 per 30,000	¼-½ mile	Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields part of community complex.
Field Hockey	Minimum 1.5A	180' x 300' with a minimum of 10' clearance on all sides.	Fall season–long axis northwest to southeast. For longer periods, north to south.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Usually part of baseball, football, soccer complex in community park or adjacent to high school.
Football	Minimum 1.5A	160' x 360' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides.	Same as field hockey.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Same as field hockey.
Soccer	1.7 to 2.1A	195' to 225' x 330' to 360' with a 10' minimum clearance on all sides.	Same as field hockey.	1 per 10,000	1-2 miles	Number of units depends on popularity. Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to schools or neighborhood parks.
Golf–Driving Range	13.5A for minimum of 26 tees	900' x 690' wide. Add 12' width for each additional tee.	Long axis south-west-northeast with golfer driving toward north-east.	1 per 50,000	30 minutes travel time	Part of golf course complex. As a separate unit, may be privately operated.
¼-Mile Running Track	4.3A	Overall width–276' length–600.02' Track width for 8 to 4 lanes is 32'.	Long axis in sector from north to south to north-west-south-east with finish line at northerly end.	1 per 20,000	15-30 minutes travel time	Usually part of high school, or in community park complex in combination with football, soccer, etc.

Table continues on Next Page

Table II-2 Continued

ACTIVITY/ FACILITY	RECOMMENDED SPACE REQUIREMENTS	RECOMMENDED SIZE AND DIMENSIONS	RECOMMENDED ORIENTATION	NO. OF UNITS PER POPULATION	SERVICE RADIUS	LOCATION NOTES
Softball	1.5 to 2.0A	Baselines—60' Pitching distance—46' min. 40'—women. Fast pitch field radius from plate—225' between foul lines. Slow pitch—275' (men) 250' (women)	Same as baseball.	1 per 5,000 (if also used for youth baseball)	¼-½ mile	Slight difference in dimensions for 16" slow pitch. May also be used for youth baseball.
Multiple Recreation Court (basketball, volleyball, tennis)	9,840 sq. ft.	120' x 80'	Long axis of courts with *primary* use is north-south.	1 per 10,000	1-2 miles.	
Trails	N/A	Well defined head maximum 10' width, maximum average grade 5% not to exceed 15%. Capacity rural trails—40 hikers/day/mile. Urban trails—90 hikers/day/mile.	N/A	1 system per region	N/A	
Archery Range	Minimum 0.65A	300' length x minimum 10' wide between targets. Roped clear space on sides of range minimum of 30', clear space behind targets minimum of 90' x 45' with bunker.	Archer facing north + or - 45°.	1 per 50,000	30 minutes travel time	Part of a regional/metro park complex.
Combination Skeet and Trap Field (8 station)	Minimum 30A	All walks and structures occur within an area approximately 130' wide by 115' deep. Minimum cleared area is contained within two superimposed segments with 100-yard radii (4 acres). Shot-fall danger zone is contained within two superimposed segments with 300-yard radii (36 acres).	Center line of length runs northeast-southwest with shooter facing northeast.	1 per 50,000	30 minutes travel time	Part of a regional/metro park complex.
Golf 1. Par 3 (18-Hole) 2. 9-hole standard 3. 18-hole standard	• 50-60A • Minimum 50A • Minimum 110A	• Average length-very 600-2700 yards • Average length—2250 yards • Average length—6500 yards	Majority of holes on north-south axis.	— • 1/25,000 • 1/50,000	½ to 1 hour travel time	• 9-hole course can accommodate 350 people/day. • 18-hole course can accommodate 500-550 people a day. Course may be located in community or district park, but should not be over 20 miles from population center.
Swimming Pools	Varies on size of pool and amenities. Usually ½ to 2A site.	*Teaching*—minimum of 25 yards x 45' even depth of 3 to 4 feet. *Competitive*—minimum of 25m x 16m. Minimum of 27 square feet of water surface per swimmer. Ratios of 2:1 deck vs. water.	None—although care must be taken in siting of lifeguard stations in relation to afternoon sun.	1 per 20,000 (Pools should accommodate 3 to 5% of total population at a time.)	15 to 30 minutes travel time	Pools for general community use should be planned for teaching, competitive, and recreational purposes with enough depth (3.4m) to accommodate 1m and 3m diving boards. Located in community park or school site.
Beach Areas	N/A	Beach area should have 50 sq. ft. of land and 50 sq. ft. of water per user. Turnover rate is 3. There should be 3-4A supporting land per A of beach.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Should have sand bottom with slope a maximum of 5% (flat preferable). Boating areas completely segregated from swimming areas.

III INVENTORY OF EXISTING PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

III. INVENTORY OF EXISTING PARKS OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

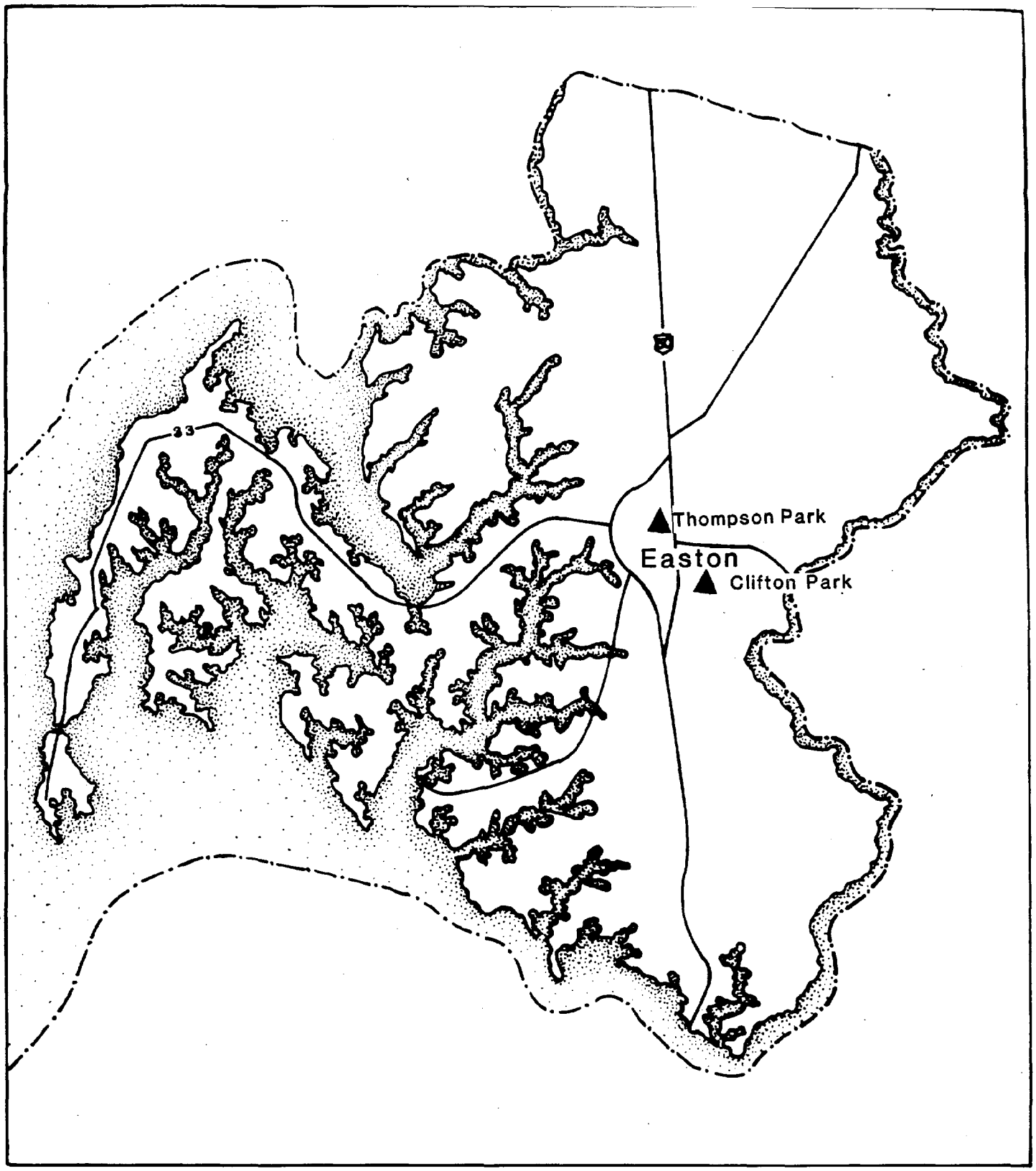
Talbot County contains 6456.90 acres of parks, open spaces and natural areas. The majority of this acreage (4367.70 acres) is in private ownership due to the extensive amount of land which is designated as hunting areas. Local parks and open space comprise 1598.20 acres and the State of Maryland provides 491 acres. The amount of local parks and open space exceeds the overall goal of 30 acres per 1000 persons by a substantial amount. The County and towns, with an estimated 1987 population of 27,700, is presently providing 57.69 acres per 1000 persons which is 767 acres above the goal.

This chapter presents an inventory of the areas within Talbot County that provide passive and active recreation opportunities for local, regional and state residents. The inventory is organized in accordance with the classification system contained in Chapter II. A number of sources were used to compile the information, including: the State's computerized inventory, County and town records, the County Department of Parks and Recreation and local interviews and meetings.

The inventory will assist in the update of the State Recreation and Open Space Plan and help coordinate local and state efforts to provide adequate open space for present and future residents. The State, in the foreword section of their 1984 inventory report, noted that inventory information provides a basis for assessing the current capacities and capabilities of the State's recreational opportunities so that needs and requirements may be determined. The information will be analyzed and compared with recreation demand information to determine the land and facilities needed to provide adequate outdoor recreation opportunities now and in the future.

The inventory will, more importantly, enable Talbot County and its respective towns, to evaluate the adequacy of the amount of parks, open space and recreation facilities that is presently available to their residents. The future needs of the County can also be analyzed on an area by area basis by using the inventory and the previously noted standards.

The 1987 inventory of existing parks and recreational facilities in Talbot County provides: the name of the individual parks or recreation areas, defines their jurisdiction and ownership, lists their size, describes their facilities and keys each of the sites to the State's computerized inventory.



EXISTING MINI-PARK LOCATIONS

Talbot County, Maryland (as of 1987)

Map No III-1

N

miles

2 1 0 2 4 6

Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

MINI-PARKS

Talbot County has only two areas - Clifton and Thompson Parks - which are classified as mini-parks. Both are located in Easton and provide a total of 3.25 acres. Clifton Park is large enough to be classified as a neighborhood park but, since it is presently undeveloped, it was listed in this category. Neither of these parks provide facilities for active recreation. Table III-1 lists the existing Mini-Parks in Talbot County and their location is noted on Map III-1.

TABLE III-1

MINI PARKS

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
1. Clifton Park	Easton/ Municipal	3.0	Undeveloped	139
2. Thompson Park	Easton/ Municipal	0.25	Passive	143
TOTAL		3.25 Acres		

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Twenty sites - comprising 127 acres of open space and recreation area - were classified as neighborhood parks. These parks, which are shown on Map III-2 and listed in Table III-3, are located in close proximity to the towns and villages of the County. A range of recreation facilities are provided in the neighborhood park system including ball fields, tennis and basketball courts, picnic areas, playgrounds, play apparatus, multi-purpose fields and passive areas.

The inventory of neighborhood parks has been organized into a matrix with criteria (see Table III-2) which enables a variety of evaluations related to jurisdiction, function, facilities and size. Some of the conclusions from the matrix are:

1. The jurisdiction of neighborhood parks is almost evenly divided between the County, towns and the school system. Of the 20 sites classified as Neighborhood Parks, 35% (7) are under County jurisdiction; 30% (6) are under municipal jurisdiction and the remaining 35% (7) are recreational areas associated with schools.

2. The majority of neighborhood parks (55% or 11 sites) provide playfields for baseball, softball, soccer, hockey, and football. In addition to playing fields, 9 of the parks offer courts for games such as basketball and tennis. Most of the parks (15) have playgrounds equipped with play apparatus and picnic areas are provided at 6 neighborhood parks.

3. Only two neighborhood parks - Muskrat Park in St. Michaels and Tilghman Park on Tilghman Island - are in close proximity to the waterfront. Muskrat Park is a small area with 100 feet of waterfront while Tilghman is an 11 acre area with a playground and passive recreation facilities.

4. It is conceivable that two of the sites - Muskrat Park and Mill Street Park - located in St. Michaels, could be classified as mini-parks due to their size. They were placed in this classification since they appear to provide a passive recreation function for the neighborhoods of St. Michaels.

5. The majority of neighborhood parks have been developed with some type of recreation facilities. Only four of the sites do not contain some type of active recreation facility. A ten acre site in Easton (S. Clifton Park) is totally undeveloped, a five acre site (Lakeside Park) in Trappe has only a picnic area, and the previously mentioned parks in St. Michaels have only landscaping and picnic facilities.

6. The majority of the parks (16) provide one or more support facilities, such as parking, spectator seating, sanitary facilities, or drinking fountains.

7. Neighborhood parks range in size from 4 to 11 acres, excluding the two passive sites in St. Michaels and the Cordova Elementary School playground. Only two of the parks exceed 10.0 acres and the majority are between 4.0 and 8.0 acres in size.

8. Neighborhood parks are definitely oriented to younger age groups as evidenced by the type of recreation facilities found in these areas. The inventory indicates that very few facilities for adult type games are provided. Passive facilities such as picnic areas and benches are provided for older age groups.

Table III-3 contains the complete inventory of neighborhood parks, their size and the type of facilities found in each park.

TABLE III-3

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

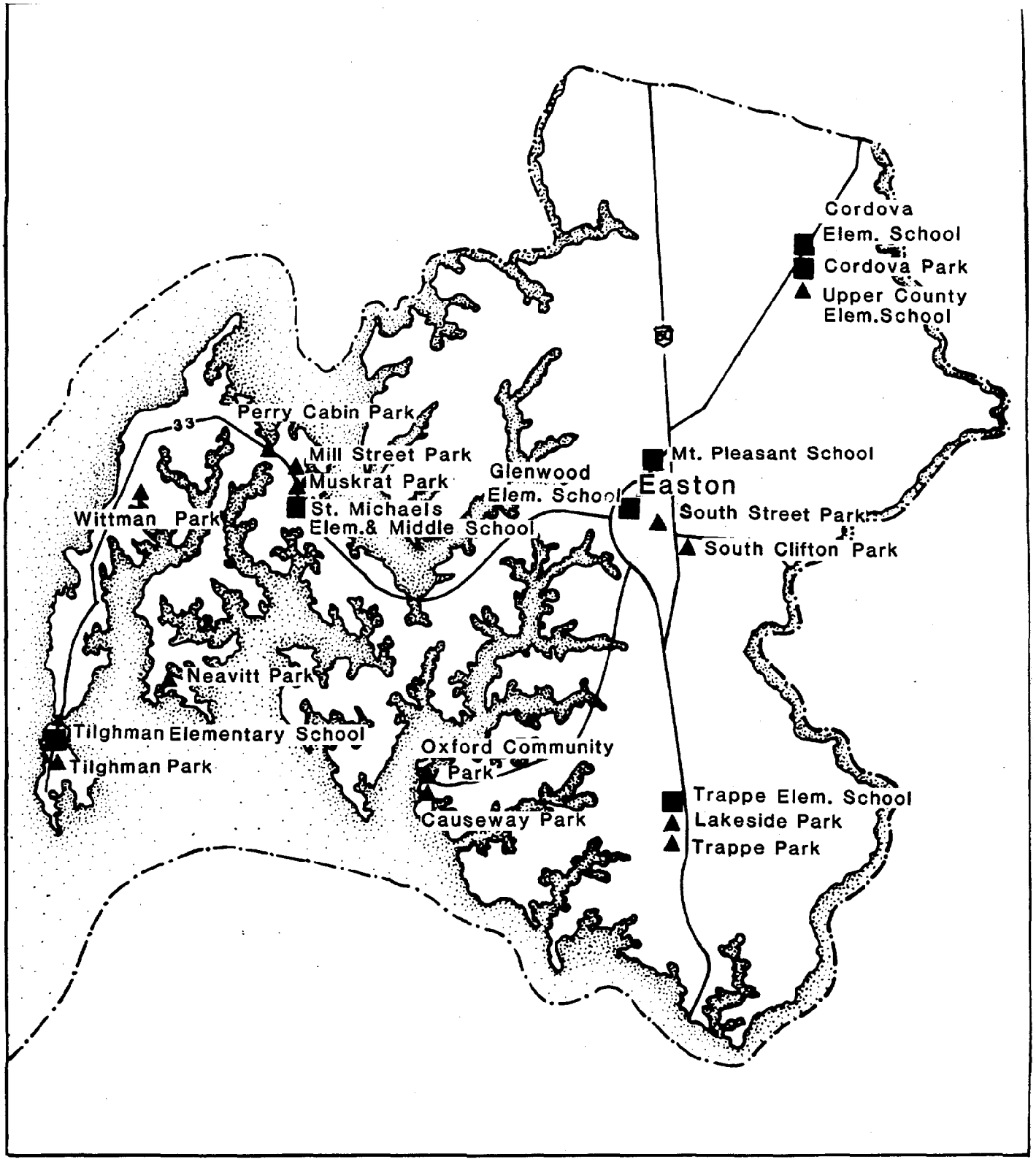
NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
1. Causeway Park	Oxford/Municipal	8.0	4 Tennis Courts 2 Basketball Courts 1 Playground	124
2. Cordova Park	Cordova/County	4.0	2 Tennis Courts 1 Youth Basketball Field 2 Picnic Tables 2 Horseshoe Pits	126
3. Lakeside Park	Trappe/Municipal	5.0	Picnicking	137
4. Mill Street Park	St. Michaels/ Municipal	0.1	Landscaping 2 Benches	127
5. Muskrat Park	St. Michaels/ Municipal	0.75	100' Waterfront Picnic Area	125
6. Neavitt Park (Broad Creek landing)	Neavitt/County	5.0	1 Playground 1 Baseball/Softball Field 1 Volleyball Court 1 Basketball Court 2 Picnic Tables (30 Stadium Seats)	91
7. Oxford Community Park	Oxford/ Municipal	5.0	1 Playground 1 Ball Field	105
8. Perry Cabin Park	County	11.0	3 youth ball fields 2 soccer fields 1 basketball court 1 volleyball court	130
9. South Street Park	Easton/ Municipal	5.0	Playground	142
10. Tilghman Park	Tilghman/ County	11.0	8 Picnic Tables 1 Observation Deck 4 Cooking Grills 1 Playground (8 Group Picnic Areas)	149

Table III-3 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
11. Trappe Park	Trappe/ County	7.0	2 Youth Baseball Fields 1 Multi-purpose Field (Soccer/Hockey) 1 Play Area	89
12. Wittman Park	Wittman / County	7.0	1 Softball Field 1 Soccer Field 1 Playground 1 Picnic Shelter (See Wittman Wharf)	90
13. S. Clifton Park	Easton/ Municipal	10.0	Undeveloped	140
14. Cordova Elementary	Cordova/ County	2.0	1 Playground 1 Basketball Court	99
15. Glenwood Elementary/ Vo-Tech	Easton/ County	10.0	1 Playground 1 Baseball Field 1 Basketball Court 1 Softball Field	93
16. Mt. Pleasant Elementary	Mt. Pleasant/ County	5.0	1 Playground 1 Soccer Field	110
17. St. Michaels Elementary/ Middle School	St. Michaels/ County	7.0	2 Playgrounds 1 Soccer Field 2 Softball Fields	114
18. Tilghman Elementary	Tilghman/ County	7.0	2 Softball Fields 1 Playground 2 Tennis Courts 1 Basketball Court	100
19. Upper County Elementary	Cordova/ County	10.0	1 Playground 2 Baseball Fields 1 Soccer Field 1 Basketball Court	97

Table III-3 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
20. White Marsh/ Trappe Elementary	Trappe/ County	6.0	1 Playground 2 Tennis Courts 1 Basketball Court 1 Softball Field 1 Soccer Field	95
TOTAL		125.8 Acres		



EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD PARK LOCATIONS

▲ PARKS

■ SCHOOLS

Map No III-2

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Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

Talbot County, Maryland

(as of 1987)

TABLE III-2 Neighborhood Park Facilities

FACILITY \ CRITERIA	COUNTY CONTROL	MUNICIPAL CONTROL	SCHOOL-PARK FACILITY 1	FIELD GAMES	COURT GAMES	BEACH AREA	PLAYGROUND	PLAY APPARATUS	PICNIC AREA	UNDEVELOPED AREA	Sr. ADULT GAMES	LANDSCAPED AREA	PASSIVE REC. AREA	SUPPORT FACILITIES	WATERFRONT PROXIMITY	SITE SIZE (Acres) 2	ACRES Per 1000 POPULATION
1. Causeway Park - Oxford		x			x		x	x		x		x		x		8.0	
2. Cordova Park	x				x				x		x	x		x		4.0	
3. Lakeside Park		x							x	x			x	x		5.0	
4. Mill Street Park		x										x	x			0.1	
5. Muskrat Park		x							x					x	x	0.75	
6. Neavitt Park	x			x	x		x	x	x					x		5.0	
7. Oxford Community Park		x		x			x	x						x		5.0	
8. Perry Cabin Park	x			x	x		x							x		11.0	
9. South Street Park		x					x	x		x						5.0	
10. Tilghman Park	x						x		x			x	x	x	x	11.0	
11. Trappe Park	x			x			x	x				x		x		7.0	
12. Wittman Park	x			x			x	x	x			x	x	x		7.0	
13. South Clifton Park	x									x						10.0	
14. Cordova Elementary			x		x		x	x								2.0	
15. Glenwood Elementary/ Vo-Technical			x	x	x		x	x				x		x		10.0	
16. Mount Pleasant Elementary			x	x			x	x						x		5.0	
17. St. Michaels Elementary/ Middle School			x	x			x	x						x		7.0	
18. Tilghman Elementary			x	x	x		x	x						x		7.0	
19. Upper County Elementary			x	x	x		x	x						x		10.0	
20. White Marsh/ Trappe Elementary			x	x	x		x	x						x		6.0	
TOTAL	7	6	7	11	9		15	13	6	4	1	7	4	16	2	125.8	4.5 3

1. In school/park facility acreage presented reflects estimation of park area only.
2. Established optimum size: 10.0 acres
3. Based on Estimated July 1987 population of 27,700

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks are found near concentrations of population or within middle and high school complexes (see Map III-3). Eight sites, listed in Table III-4, have been classified as Community Parks and contain a total of 107.5 acres. Five of the community parks are located in Easton area with the remaining three at Bellevue, Oxford, and St. Michaels. The evaluation matrix contained in Table III-5 indicates the following.

1. The incorporated towns provide the majority of community parks. Easton, Oxford and St.Michaels provide four of the eight parks in this classification. Only one of the sites (Bellevue Park) is under county jurisdiction. The remaining three parks (37.5%) are under the jurisdiction of the school system and are located at Easton High School, Easton Middle School and St. Michaels High School.

2. Community parks are primarily designed for active recreation use. Playfields for baseball, softball, soccer, hockey, and football are provided at Idlewild, Easton High, St. Michaels High and Easton Middle School parks. In addition, three of the parks offer track facilities. Basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts are found at four of the parks. Other facilities found within the community park system include playgrounds, picnic areas, and passive recreation areas.

3. One site - Oxford Town Park - provides 200 feet of beach area while Bellevue Park has 200 feet of waterfront. Bellevue also provides a boat ramp and 26 boat slips.

4. Two of the areas - Moton and Stoney Ridge Parks - within Easton were undeveloped at the time of the inventory. The remaining six parks are developed with passive and active recreation facilities.

5. Community parks, excluding the Oxford Town Park of two acres, range between 7.0 and 20.0 acres in size. Stoney Ridge Park is the largest area but is undeveloped.

6. All of the developed parks contain support facilities. The three school-community park areas provide 4000 seats for spectator viewing.

7. Community parks also appear to be oriented to younger and more active age groups.

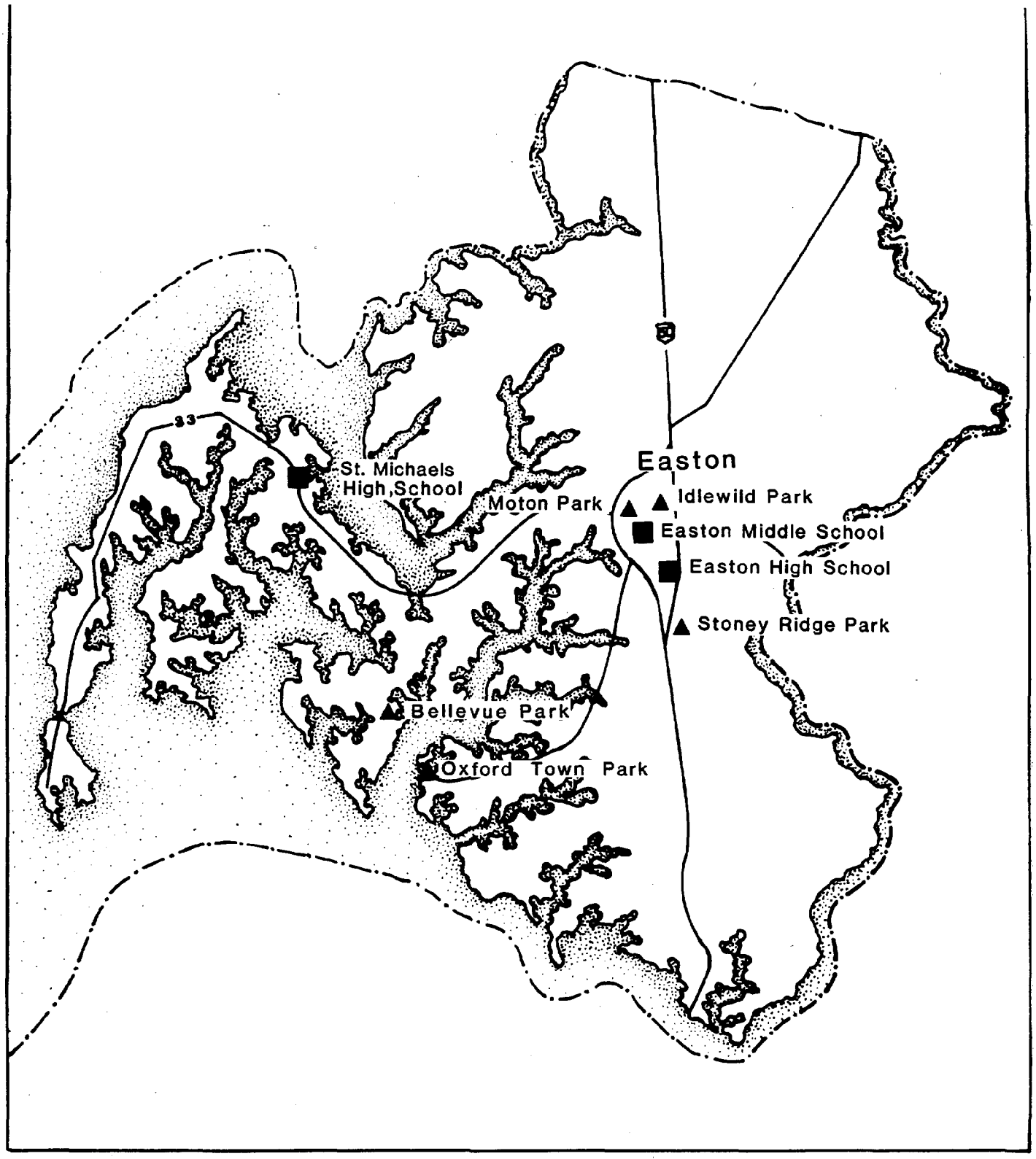
TABLE III-4

COMMUNITY PARKS

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
1. Bellevue Park	Bellevue/ County	7.0	200' waterfront 1 playground 1 basketball court 1 volleyball court 1 comfort station 1 picnic shelter 26 boat slips 1 boat ramp	122
2. Idlewild	Easton/ Municipal	15.0	2 Softball Fields 1 Track 1 Picnic Area 8 Tennis Courts 1 Basketball Court 1 Football Field (12 Picnic Tables)	78
3. Moton Park	Easton/ Municipal	15.0	Undeveloped	128 & 141
4. Oxford Town Park (Waterfront)	Oxford/Municipal	2.0	Picnic Area Playground 200' Beach	104
5. Easton High School	Easton/ County	18.0	1 football field 1 soccer field 1 field hockey field 1 lacrosse field 3 ball fields 1 track	106
6. Easton Middle School	Easton/ County	12.5	3 youth ball fields 1 football field 1 field hockey field 1 lacrosse field	96

Table III-4 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
7. St. Michaels High School	St. Michaels/ County	18.0	6 tennis courts 2 ball fields 2 soccer fields 1 field hockey field 1 track 1 exercise trail	11
8. Stoney Ridge Park	Easton/ Municipal	20.0	Undeveloped	138
TOTAL		107.5 Acres		



EXISTING COMMUNITY PARK LOCATIONS

▲ PARKS

■ SCHOOLS-MIDDLE &SECONDARY

(as of 1987)

Talbot County, Maryland

Map No III-3

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Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

TABLE III-5 Community Park Facilities

FACILITY \ CRITERIA	COUNTY CONTROL	MUNICIPAL CONTROL	SCHOOL-PARK FACILITY [1]	FIELD GAMES	TRACK AND FIELD	COURT GAMES	LIGHTED COURTS	PLAYGROUND APPARATUS	INDOOR FACILITIES	SWIMMING POOL	SPECIAL FACILITIES	PICNIC AREA	OTHER AMENITIES	NATURAL AREAS	WATERFRONT PROXIMITY	BEACH AREA	WATER-ORIENTED RECREATION	LANDSCAPING	UNDEVELOPED AREA	SUPPORT FACILITIES	SITE SIZE (ACRES) [2]	ACRES PER 1000 POPULATION
1. Bellevue Park	x					x		x				x			x		x	x		x	7.0	
2. Idlewild Park		x		x	x	x		x				x						x		x	15.0	
3. Moton Park		x																	x		15.0	
4. Oxford Town Park		x						x				x			x	x					2.0	
5. Easton High School			x	x	x	x														x	18.0	
6. Easton Middle School			x	x																x	12.5	
7. St. Michaels High School			x	x	x	x														x	18.0	
8. Stoney Ridge Park		x																	x		20.0	
TOTAL	1	4	3	4	3	4	-	3	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	1	1	2	2	5	107.5	3.9 [3]

1. In school/park facility acreage presented, reflects estimation of park area only.
2. Established optimum size: 30.0 acres.
3. Based on estimated July 1987 population of 27,700.

COUNTY PARKS

There are two sites totaling 310.0 acres which have been classified as county parks. They include the Hog Neck Golf Course and The Talbot County Community Center - Hog Neck Arena.

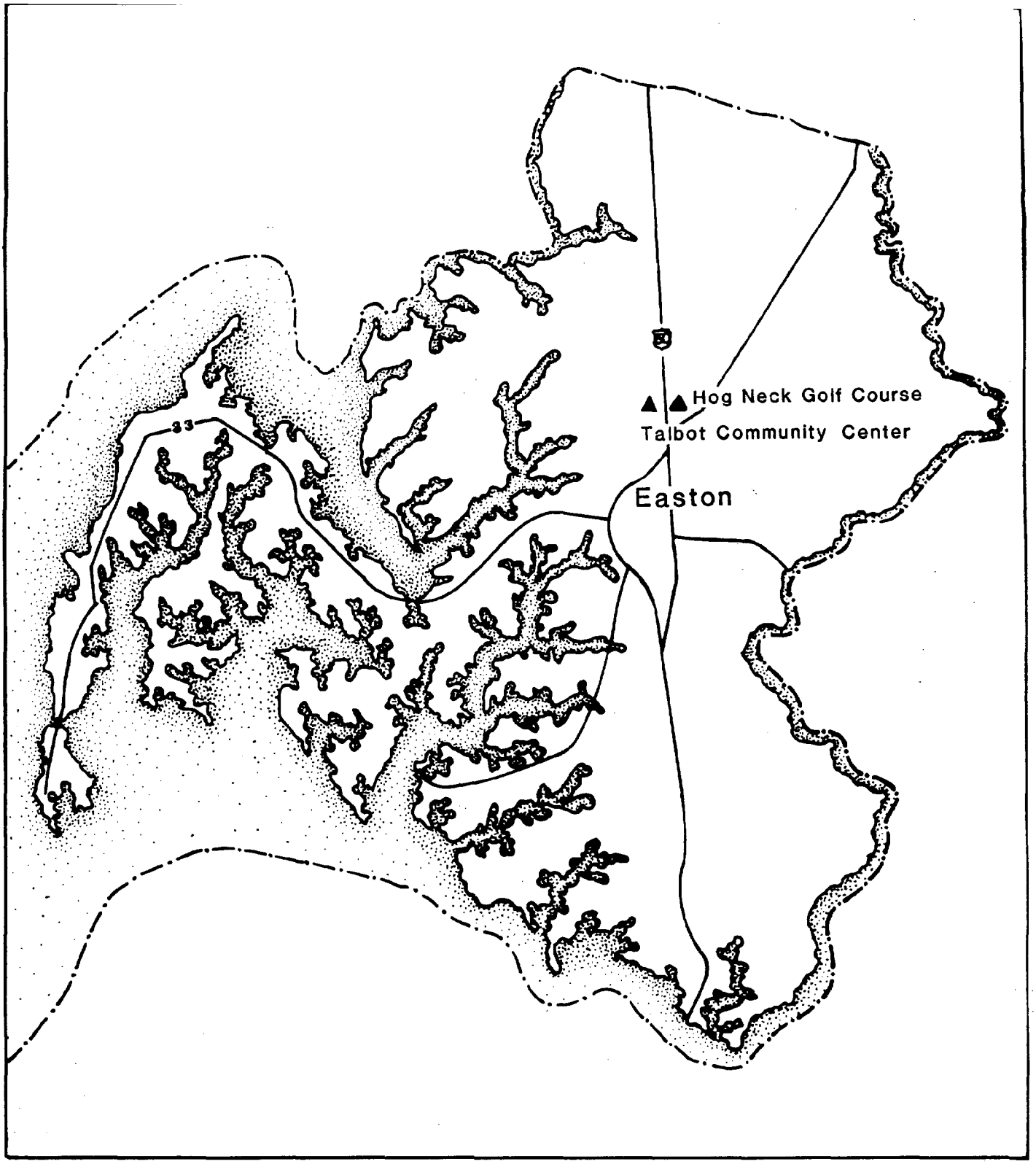
These parks, listed in Table III-6, provide a 27 hole golf course and driving range, an indoor ice rink and soccer area, playfields, picnic areas, horse riding ring and shooting range. They range in size from 50.0 to 260 acres. These parks, located north of Easton along Route 50, are shown on Map III-4.

TABLE III-6

COUNTY PARKS

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
1. Hog Neck Golf Course	County	260.0	27 holes driving range club house picnic area	32
2. Talbot Community Center - Hog Neck Arena	County	50.0	ice skating rink/curling indoor soccer picnic area 1 soccer/lacrosse field 3 softball fields 3 meeting rooms	136
TOTAL		310.0 Acres		

All of the above parks have facilities that serve the entire county. In fact, the public golf course probably serves the entire region. As noted in the 1982 Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Hog Neck complex has sufficient land to expand recreational facilities. The evaluation matrix of county parks is contained in Table III-7.



EXISTING COUNTY PARK LOCATIONS

▲ PUBLIC SPECIAL PURPOSE AREAS

Talbot County, Maryland

(as of 1987)

Map No III-4

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Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

TABLE III-7 County Park Facilities

FACILITY \ CRITERIA →	NATURAL RESOURCE/SETTING	PICNICING	CAMPING	HIKING TRAILS	RIDING TRAILS	FISHING	BOATING	BEACH SWIMMING	SWIMMING IN POOL	PLAYFIELDS	PLAYGROUNDS	PLAY COURTS	SPECIAL FACILITIES	INDOOR FACILITIES	SUPPORT FACILITIES	SITE SIZE [2]	ACRES Per 1000 POPULATION
1. Hog Neck Golf Course		x											x	x	x	260	
2. Hog Neck Arena	x	x									x		x	x[1]	x[1]	50	
Total																310	11.19[3]

1. Includes: Ice Skating Rink, Indoor Soccer

2. Established optimum size: None, usually over 35.0 acres

3. Based on estimated July, 1987 population of 27,770

WATERFRONT PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDINGS

Table III-8 contains the inventory of waterfront parks and public landings that are in Talbot County. There are 20 sites with a total of 61.18 acres which fall into this classification. Since Talbot County has such an extensive amount of shoreline and 99% of its boundaries are comprised of water, these are important areas.

The total acreage of these parks, when compared to the estimated July 1987 population of 27,700, indicates that 2.21 acres of waterfront parks and public landings are provided per 1,000 persons. This finding has been modified to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people and used as the standard in the classifications and standards system recommended in Chapter II.

The majority of these parks are located in the western part of Talbot County on or near coves, inlets, bays and streams which provide easy access to the Chesapeake Bay. Three parks - Windyhill Landing, Kingston Landing, New Bridge Landing, Reese's Landing and Covey's Landing - are located on the eastern part of the County on the Choptank and Tuchahoe rivers. Map III-5 shows the location of these parks.

It is estimated that these parks provide 114 boat slips. Slips are located at Bellevue Landing (30), Claiborne Landing (10), Dogwood Harbor (31), Oak Creek Landing (12), St. Michaels Public Wharf (25), Trappe Landing (4) and Windyhill Landing (2).

The majority (11) of these sites have some type of pier and boat ramp.Boat ramps only are provided at five additional parks. Other facilities include picnic areas, support facilities such as parking and comfort stations, and bulkhead areas.

Almost all of the waterfront parks and public landings are under the jurisdiction of Talbot County. Exceptions are the Oxford Municipal Wharf and the St. Michaels Public Wharf.

These parks range in size from 4000 square feet to the 27.0 acre Dogwood Harbor waterfront park on Tilghman Island. The majority of the parks (15) are less than two acres in size which indicate that their primary function is to provide public access to the waterways of the County.

To fully understand the importance and significance of water-oriented parks and recreation facilities, one must review the inventory of waterfront parks and public landings in conjunction with the inventory of private recreation facilities. This inventory, which indicates a substantial amount of private landings, slips and boat ramps, is in a later section of this

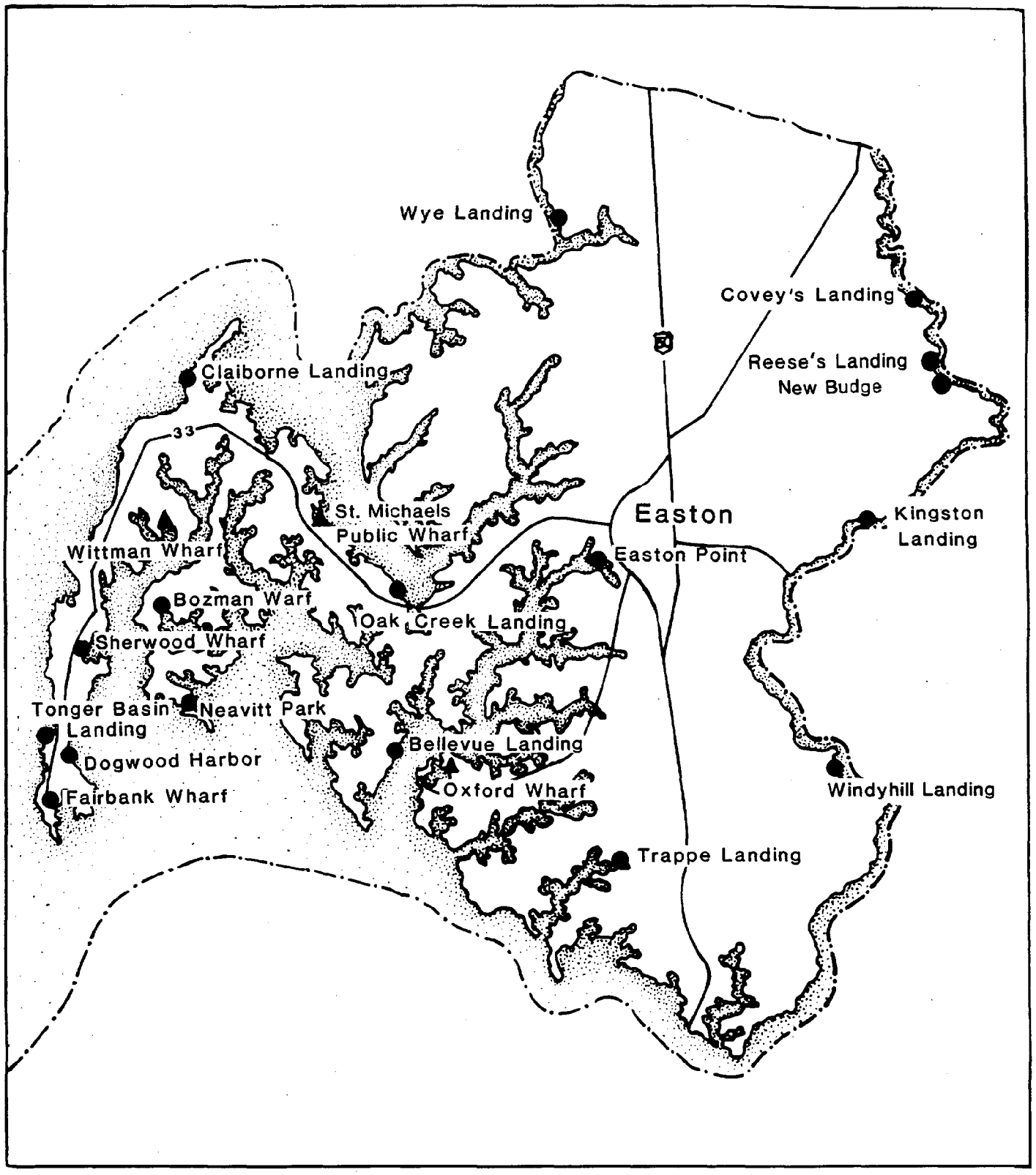
TABLE III-8

WATERFRONT PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDINGS

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
1. Bellevue Landing	Bellevue/ County	1.5	30 boat slips ramp pier picnic area comfort station	122
2. Claiborne Landing	Claiborne/ County	7.0	ramp pier (.15 miles of shore 10 slips 1 ramp)	15
3. Covey's Landing	County	0.1	1 ramp	26
4. Dogwood Harbor	Tilghman Island/ County	27.0	2 ramps pier (31 slips .25 miles of shore)	17
5. Easton Point	Easton/ County	2.0	ramp pier	13
6. Fairbank Wharf	Fairbank/ County	1.0	60' bulkhead/dock	21
7. Grace Creek Landing (Bozman Wharf)	Bozman/ County	.19	ramp pier	16
8. Kingston Landing-Choptank	Kingston Landing/ County	1.3	ramp	31
9.Neavitt Park-Broad Creek Landing	Neavitt/ County	7.2	ramp pier comfort station (.1 miles of shore)	11

Table III-8 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
10.New Bridge Landing	County	1.0	ramp pier	24
11.Oak Creek Landing Rt. 33 at Oak Creek	Newcomb/ County	1.5	ramp pier (12 slips) (1 boat ramp)	20
12.Oxford Wharf	Oxford/ Municipal	1.0	.01 miles of shore	12
13.Reeses Landing -	County	0.1	ramp	27
14.Sherwood Wharf	Sherwood/ County	0.1	pier	18
15.St. Michaels Public Wharf	Town of St. Michaels	1.5	25 boat slips	
16.Tonger Basin	County	1.39	1 boat ramp	103
17.Wittman Wharf- Cummings Creek	Wittman/ County	0.1	1 boat ramp	14
18.Trappe Landing - Trappe Landing Road	Trappe/ County	1.2	pier 4 boat slips 1 ramp	7
19.Windyhill Landing Choptank River	Windyhill/ County	3.0	ramp pier 2 boat slips	8
20.Wye Landing - Wye East River	County	3.0	ramp pier picnic area comfort station (2 picnic tables) beach	19
TOTAL		61.18 Acres		



EXISTING WATERFRONT PARKS, BEACHES & LANDINGS

▲ PUBLIC SPECIAL PURPOSE AREAS

● BOAT LAUNCHES

Talbot County, Maryland

(as of 1987)

Map No III-5

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SPECIAL PARKS

Special parks include natural areas, quasi-public parks, historic and cultural areas, linear parks, wayside parks such as local picnic areas, highly specialized facilities and destination parks. The inventory of special parks in Talbot County indicated some natural areas, quasi-public facilities and historic/cultural areas. None of the other types of special parks were identified.

In addition to those special park areas contained in various state or county files, and formally listed in the inventory, there are a number of major open spaces and natural areas which could be considered as part of the inventory of natural parks. They are described in the following paragraphs.

Unique Natural Areas: Talbot County is blessed with an abundance of natural areas and resources. Since a major portion of the county is not heavily developed, these natural areas and resources are still found in relative abundance. Some of these areas may be described as unique since they are among the last remaining sites in the region. There are approximately 915 acres of land or unique areas in the County which should be considered as part of the inventory of natural areas. Although very few of these areas are in public or quasi-public ownership, they should be viewed as part of the open space and recreational resources of the County. Unique natural areas include the following:

1. Upper Choptank River Basin - The Choptank River drainage basin, from Bow Knee Point upstream and including the tidal portion of Tuckahoe Creek, is one of the most productive striped bass spawning areas on the Bay. Spawning waters probably extend downstream to the Highway 50 bridge, and some clam and oyster beds also occur in this reach. Large tidal marshes occur in the Bolingbroke Creek basin, on the Choptank River at Jamaica and Bow Knee points, Raccoon Creek, Miles Creek, Lloyd Landing, Williams Creek, the Easton landfill, Kings Creek, the mouth of Tuckahoe Creek, Tuckahoe bridge, Cowards Point, Wayman Wharf, and Rolph Landing.

2. Riverine Forests on Choptank River Tributaries - Many of the tributaries that flow through the higher and more rolling portions of east and south Talbot County have rather steep and well defined valleys. Bottomland forests and swamps in the valleys transition into diverse upland hardwood forests at the top of the slopes. Differences in slope, elevation, and aspect

along the gradients result in increased diversity. The rough terrain has restricted access and development potential and is worthy of being preserved in its natural condition. Significant sites include Norwich Creek downstream of Highway 309, an unnamed creek north of Trappers Corners, Kings Creek system including Beaverdam Branch and Wootenaux Creek, Miles Creek, and the upper reaches of Peachblossum Creek.

3. Riverine Forests of Western Talbot County - A few examples of this occur in western Talbot County, but quality habitats are found along the upper Wye East River, Skipton Creek, Potts Mill Creek, and Mill Creek.

4. Flatland Forests of Western Talbot County - These forests occur on the poorly drained soils of the necks of peninsulas and along the edges of the lower reaches of large tidal creeks. Many are very large (over 500 acres) and offer moderate diversity and habitat. These forests also are prime habitat for many migratory and forest dwelling birds and the Delmarva fox squirrel. Fringes of these forests offer bald eagle nesting habitat. Third Haven Woods is an excellent protected area. Other high quality stands are on an unnamed tributary of Wye East River, between Longwoods and Skipton Creek, three major expanses on Miles River and Pickering Creek, south of Kirkham off Highway 33, near Royal Oak, and on Island and Grubin Necks.

5. Coastal Forests - Undeveloped forest stands adjacent to the bay or estuaries are few in Talbot County, but such areas are important to shoreline stabilization and can provide both natural area and shoreline recreation. Such forests, even if small, may provide important resting areas for migratory birds. Examples of such areas occur on Tilghman Point; the mouth of Woodland Creek; the upper end of the Northwest Branch of Harris Creek; the upper end of Broad Creek; Mulberry Point; Edgar Cove, Hambleton Island, Balls Creek, Deep Neck on Harris Creek, Barneys Cove and Blackwalnut Point on Tilghman Island; Back Creek, Green Marsh Point, Cabin Cove, Lowes Point, and the Poplar Islands on Chesapeake Bay; near Fairview Point, Deepwater Point, and Long Point on the Miles River; Irish Creek and Trippe Creek; Grubin Neck; and Howell Point on the Choptank River.

6. Beaches and Shorelines - Due to the lack of sandy sources, beaches in Talbot County are few and narrow. There are small areas of coastal beach or berm that occur on the Wye River north of Wyetown Point, at the mouth of

Woodland Creek, off Spencer Creek and Deepwater and Hambleton Points near St. Michaels, on Seth and Tilghman Points on the mouth of the Miles River, at Pawpaw Cove on Tilghman Island, near Benoni Point and Boone Creek near the mouth of Island Creek, and on Chlora, Martin, Chancellor, and Goose Points on the Choptank River. A concentration of several areas also occurs on the Choptank River near the mouth of Bolingbroke Creek and the Highway 50 bridge.

There are additional natural areas within the County which are devoted to nature conservancy and listed in the formal inventory (see Table III-9). These areas total 822.6 acres and are private or quasi-public lands. They, along with other special parks, are shown in Map III-6.

Quasi-public areas provide an additional 168 acres of parks and open space. These parks include the Izaak Walton Park (35.0 acres) with an archery range and picnic facilities, Martingham Golf Course which also contains a pool and tennis courts, the Moose Club and VFW Club which provide playfields, the Talbot County YMCA and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. The latter contains five acres and houses examples of shipbuilding, an original Chesapeake Bay lighthouse and several restored homes.

The historic-cultural portion of the special park inventory notes only the Talbot County Historical Society structure in Easton. The size and extent of this portion of the inventory is vastly understated when the historic nature of the County is considered. As noted in the 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan. "...The Maryland Historic Trust has identified 298 buildings in the County which are eligible for National Register of Historic Sites. Currently (1982), the County has 21 sites with National Register designation." There are numerous other historic buildings and places within the County which should eventually be incorporated into this inventory. Unfortunately, a complete listing with acreage, facilities and location was not readily available.

The total land classified as special parks in Talbot County totals 990.6 acres. This does not include the potential natural areas which are discussed earlier in this section.

When compared to the estimated 1987 population of 27,700, special parks are being provided at the ratio of 35.76 acres per 1,000 persons. This ratio is much higher than the recommended standard of 7.0 acres per 1,000 people and underscores the importance of open, natural areas within the overall park system.

TABLE III-9

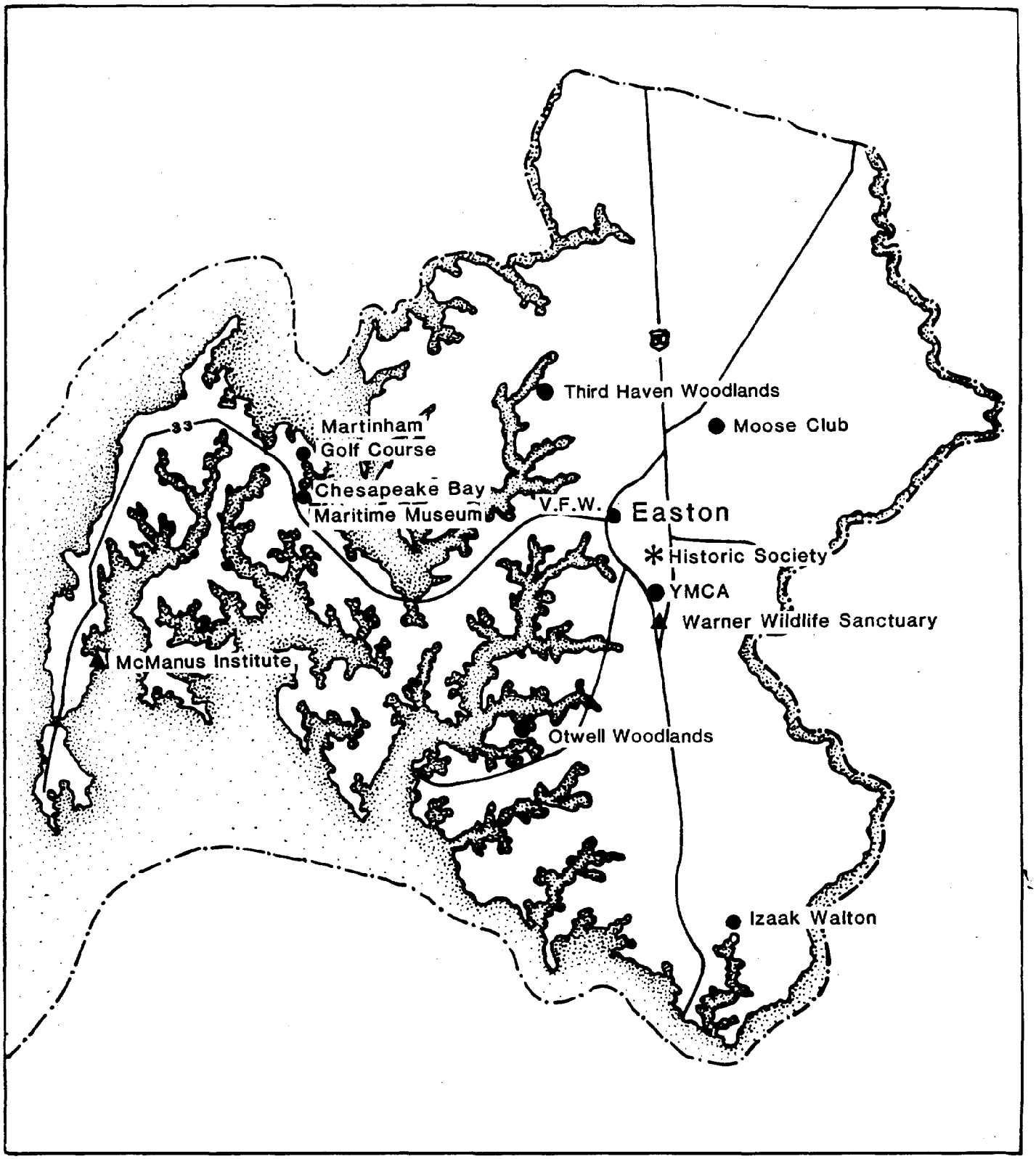
SPECIAL PARK AREAS

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
A. NATURAL AREAS				
1. Warner Wildlife Sanctuary	Easton/ Quasi Public	8.0	Nature Conservancy	52
2. Otwell Woodlands	Easton/ Private	100.0	Nature Conservancy	134
3. Third Haven Woodland	Easton/ Private	310.0	Nature Conservancy	135
4. Choptank Wetlands Preserve	County/ Quasi Public	277.6	Nature Conservancy	148
5. McManus Inst. Nature Preserve	County/ Private	127.0	Nature Conservancy	150
Subtotal		822.6		
B. QUASI-PUBLIC				
6. Izaak Walton	Trappe/ Quasi-Public	35.0	Archery Range Picnic Area Trails - 2 mi. 15 Picnic Tables	121
7. Martingham Golf Course	St.Michaels/ Quasi-Public	106.0	18 Holes Driving Range 4 Tennis Courts 1 Swimming Pool 1 Pro Shop	40
8. Moose Club	County/ Quasi-Public	7.0	1 Softball Field 1 Club House	120
9. Talbot County YMCA	Easton/ Quasi-Public	10.0		51

Table III-9 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
10. VFW Club	Easton/ Quasi-Public	5.0	1 Softball Field 1 Club House	118
11. Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum	St. Michaels/ Quasi-Public	5.0	Museum	41
Subtotal		168.0		
TOTAL		990.6 Acres		
C. HISTORIC				
12. Talbot County Historical Society	Easton/ Quasi-Public	1.0*	Historic Structure	79

* Due to the fact that this facility is basically a building, its acreage is not included in the total.



EXISTING SPECIAL PARK LOCATIONS

△ NATURAL AREAS

✳ QUASI PUBLIC AREAS

HISTORIC AREAS

Talbot County, Maryland

Map No III-6

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STATE PARKS

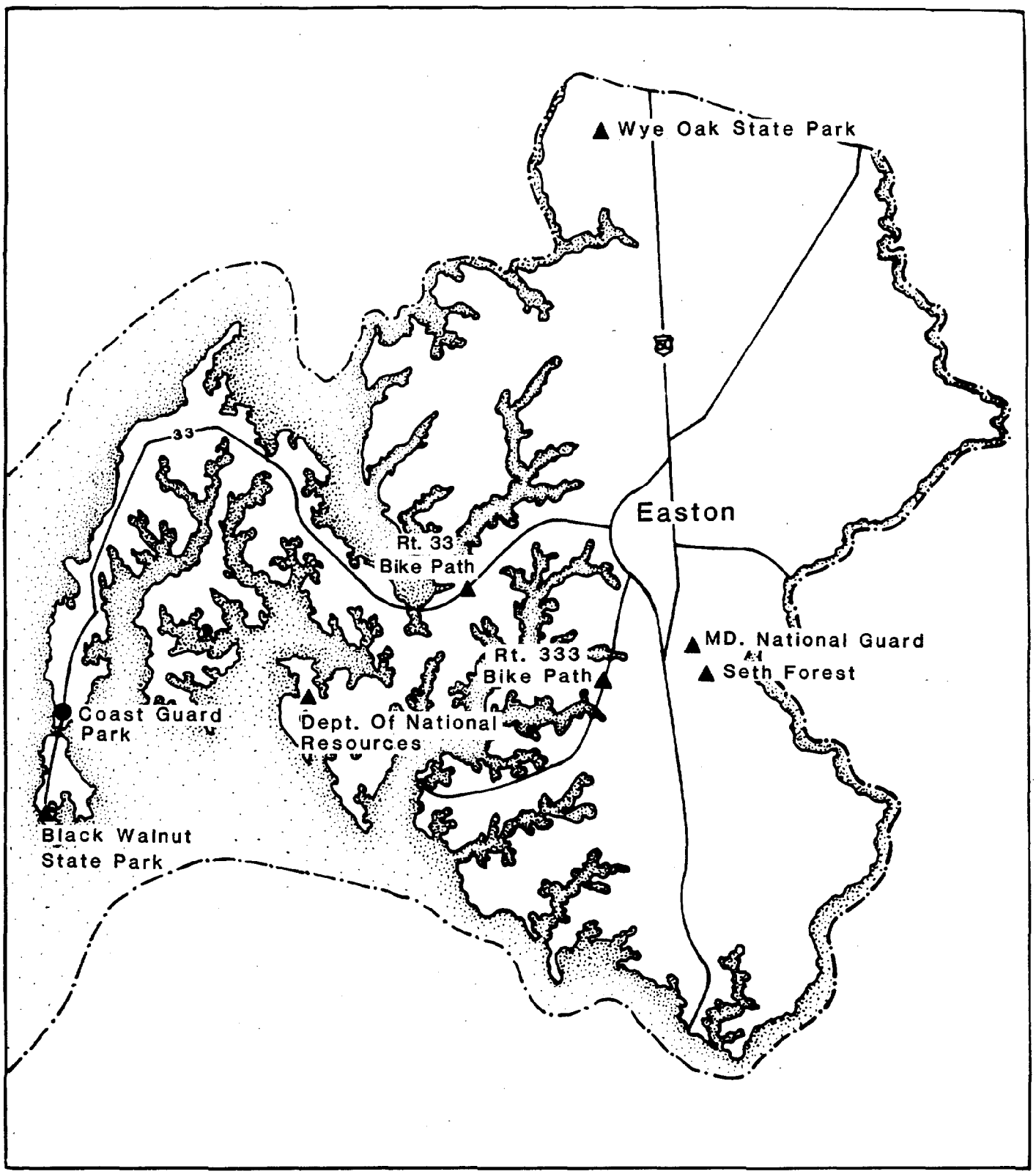
The inventory identified seven state parks within Talbot County. These areas contain 491 acres and include Black Walnut State Park, Wye Oak State Park, and Seth State Forest.Table III-10 lists these areas with a brief description of their facilities. Map III-7 shows their location.

TABLE III-10

STATE PARKS

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
1. Black Walnut State Park	Fairbank/ State	58.0	undeveloped planned wildlife observation area	
2. Dept. of Natural Resources	County/ State	75.0	10 firearm target ranges	146
3. Maryland National Guard	Easton/ State	147.0	19 firearm target ranges	147
4. Route 333 Bike Path	Oxford to Easton/ State	14.0*	bike path	131
5. Rt. 33 Bike Path	Easton to St. Michaels/ State	13.0*	bike path	133
6. Seth State Forest	County/ State	125.0	forest	1
7. Wye Oak State Park	Wye Mills/ State	59.0	historic/special	2
	TOTAL	491 Acres		

*The acreage is estimated from the length of the bike paths assuming an average width of 10 feet.



EXISTING STATE AND FEDERAL PARK LOCATIONS

Talbot County, Maryland

▲ STATE

● FEDERAL

(as of 1987)

Map No III-7

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Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The public and quasi-public parks of Talbot County are supplemented by 4361.75 acres of private parks and recreation areas. Private parks contain a full range of passive and active recreational facilities and range in size from small boat landings to hunting areas of 1500 acres.

Although private parks are not used to evaluate the adequacy of open space acreage and facilities, they are so extensive in Talbot County that they must be included in any inventory. While privately provided recreation should not be overlooked, public parks and recreation facilities are the primary source of satisfying citizen demand.

Table III-11 lists the private parks and recreation facilities inventoried in Talbot County.

TABLE III-11

PRIVATE PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
1. Bethany House	Chapel District	97.5	1 soccer/lacrosse field	
2. Cross Court Tennis Club	private	5.0	4 indoor tennis courts 1 nautilus weight room	53
3. Calhoun MEBA Engineering School	Easton/ private	166.0	4 sports fields 3 tennis courts 2 basketball courts 3 racquetball courts 1 swimming pool 1 mile of shoreline 1 mile of trail	
4. Country School	Easton/ private	8.5	2 playgrounds 1 soccer/lacrosse field 1 baseball field	
5. Elk Club	Easton/ private	11.0	swimming pool club house	117
6. Kronesbury-Tilghman Park	Tilghman/ private	5.0	passive 4 picnic tables	98

Table III-11 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
7. Miles River Riding School	County/ private	10.0	riding stables	107
8. St. Peter and Paul School	Easton/ private	10.0	1 soccer/lacrosse field 1 field hockey field 1 playground 1 softball field 2 basketball courts	115
9. Talbot Country Club	Canterbury/ private	114.0	4 tennis courts 1 swimming pool 18 holes of golf driving range - 10 positions	61
10. Talbot Rod and Gun Club	County/ private	25.0	trap and skeet range (club house)	144
11. Abbott's Boatyard	Oxford/ Private	-	12 slips	71
12. Applegarths Marine Yard	Oxford/ Private	-	17 slips	66
13. Bates Marine Yard	Oxford/ Private	-	50 slips	70
14. Charles F. Novak's	County/ Private	250.0	Hunting	39
15. Chesapeake Shellfish Co.	County/ Private	-	9 Slips 1 Ramp	47
16. Clarence CDX's	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	63
17. Crockett Bros. Inc.	Oxford/ Private	-	35 Slips	64

Table III-11 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
18. Cutts & Case Inc.	Oxford/ Private	-	39 Slips	92
19. Dickerson Boat Builders	Trappe/ Private	-	15 Slips 1 Ramp	75
20. Easton Point Marina	County/ Private	2.0	26 Slips	29
21. Easton Point Marina	Easton/ Private	1.0	23 Slips 1 Ramp	50
22. Tred-Avon Yacht Club	Oxford/ Private	2.75	Boat Ramp Club House	94
23. Edward Garvin	County/ Private	1.0	6 Charter Boats	87
24. E.Otis Bridges	County/ Private	100.0	Hunting	38
25. Gateway Marina	County/ Private	-	60 Slips	77
26. James Spurry	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	86
27. Herbert Harrison	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	82
28. Higgins Marine	St. Michaels/ Private	-	Commercial Marine	44
29. Hinkle & Garvin	County/ Private	1.0	15 Slips	56
30. Jay Tarman	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	88
31. John Larrimore	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	83

Table III-11 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
32.Knapps Narrows Marina	County/ Private	1.0	50 Slips 1 Ramp	54
33.Locust Hill Boat Works	County/ Private	-	22 Slips	35
34.Nathan Parks	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	80
35.Okie Powell's	County/ Private	1,000.0	Hunting	76
36.Oxford Boatyard	Oxford/ Private	-	Charter Boat Area 45 Slips	68
37.Patriot Cruises	St. Michaels/ Private	-	Sightseeing	42
38.Pier St. Marina	Oxford/ Private	6.0	89 Slips	30
39.Pier St. Marina	County/ Private	1.0	35 Slips	67
40.Severn Marina	County/ Private	1.0	48 Slips	59
41.Samuel Leonard's	County/ Private	400.0	Hunting	60
42.Snows Landing	County/ Private	1.0	43 Slips 1 Ramp	62
43.St.Michaels Marina/ Hotel	St. Michaels/ Private	-	40 Slips	46
44.Thomas Conley	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	81
45.Thompson Boat Service	County/ Private	1.0	18 Slips	48

Table III-11 (continued)

NAME	LOCATION/ OWNERSHIP	SIZE (acres)	FACILITIES	INVENTORY KEY
46. William Meyers	County/ Private	475.0	Hunting	69
47. P.T. Hambleton	County/ Private	1.0	7 Slips	49
48. Reeser's	County/ Private	-	14 Slips	55
49. Richard Higgins	County/ Private	150.0	Hunting	36
50. Robert Frampton	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	84
51. Robert Marshall	County/ Private	1.0	Charter Boat Area	85
52. Sam McQuay's	County/ Private	-	6 Slips	43
53. Samuel W. Delahay	County/ Private	1,500.0	Hunting	73
54. Talbot Agriculture Center	County	18.5	1 horse riding ring 6 cottages 1 shooting range 1 activity center	108
55. Miles River Yacht Club	St. Michaels/ Private	12.0	Swimming Pool Boat Slips 4 Tennis Courts 18 Holes of Golf	113
TOTAL		4,367.7 Acres		

SUMMARY OF RECREATION FACILITIES IN LOCAL AND STATE PARKS

In addition to the inventory of local and state parks by location, jurisdiction, ownership, size and facilties, the following table summarizes existing recreation facilities in accordance with the State's Program Open Space (POS) facility classifications.

TABLE III-12
FACILITY SUMMARY

STATE DEFINED ACTIVITY	MINI-PARKS	NEIGHBOR-HOOD PARKS	COMM-UNITY PARKS	COUNTY PARKS	STATE PARKS	PRIVATE/ OTHER PARKS *	TOTAL
No. of Acres	3.25	127.00	107.50	328.50	491.00	5414.03	6471.28
No. of Baseball/ Softball Fields	0	17	10	3	0	4	34
No. of Basketball Courts	0	10	2	0	0	4	16
No. of Bicycle Trails	0	0	0	0	21	0	21
No. of Football/ Soccer Fields	0	8	6	1	0	7	22
No. of Ice Skating Rinks	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Mi. of Nature Trails	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Mi. of Sledding Trials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No. of Spectator Seats	0	3530	4000	0	0	500	8030
No. of Swimming Pools	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
No. of Tennis/ Racquet Courts	0	10	14	0	0	22	46

* Includes private parks, waterfront parks and public landings and special park areas.

IV DEMAND ANALYSIS

IV DEMAND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Demand for land preservation, open space and recreation facilities is influenced by many factors. Demographic conditions such as population, employment and income may have a direct or indirect impact on how an individual participates in recreation activities and can also impact the type, size, location and design of individual parks. The extent to which people participate in recreation and the type of facilities provided in an area may also influence park, open space and facility demand. Therefore, participation surveys can provide important information on both the use and demand of existing facilities. The attitude of local residents toward natural resources will certainly influence the demand for land preservation and conservation activities.

Program development, such as the number and quality of programs provided at existing park and recreation areas, can also influence demand. A well organized, properly funded, and highly publicized program will normally attract a lot of users. Conversely, an obscure and poorly funded program will probably fail. Local concerns and issues will also influence present and future demand for park and recreation facilities. Demand can also be measured by comparing existing park acreage and recreation facilities against established standards.

The National Recreation and Park Association, The Maryland Department of State Planning and other research organizations have noted some significant trends that will influence park and open space demand in the future. The national population is aging which may cause a major change in the type and potential demand for park use. People's attitudes are changing toward recreation and open space. Many view recreation not just as a leisure activity, but as an important factor in maintaining physical and mental health - an attitude that could increase participation rates in certain types of recreation activities. Trends in the economic sector - such as shorter work weeks, longer vacations, flexible hours and effective income may alter the pattern and times of recreation activity. Land use regulations, housing trends, and growth management legislation such as the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Act can also be factors effecting the size, location and use of parks and recreation facilities.

This chapter examines the factors important to recreation demand in Talbot County. Demographic conditions and locally perceived needs are analyzed; demand for facilities, as determined by participation ratios, are measured; and the recommended standards system is used to evaluate the adequacy of existing parks.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic factors such as population trends and characteristics, household composition, economic patterns and work places, income and similar socioeconomic characteristics can be important considerations in evaluating park and recreation demand. Where people live and the density of population can provide insight into the need for and location of specific types of facilities and parks. Age characteristics - such as the number of children, middle aged or elderly persons - can provide information about the demand for tot lots, senior citizen programs or active playing fields and playgrounds.

Economic profiles and employment characteristics can reveal whether an area is a retirement or resort oriented community filled with demand for boating, golfing and fishing or an urban center with younger workers who need active facilities such as playgrounds and playing fields. A review of income profiles can indicate the number of residents who may be dependent on publicly provided facilities.

Population trends, in conjunction with acreage standards, can also be a helpful tool in the evaluation of present and future demand for different types of parks and recreational facilities. Specific demographic conditions are discussed in the following sections.

Population Growth

Population growth is not expected to place any significant pressure or demand for additional parks and recreation facilities in Talbot County. The County is expected to grow slowly in the coming years and past population increases have not been dramatic. For example, population increased 12.5 percent between 1970 and 1984, an increase of less than one percent a year.

Table IV-1 contains population trend information for Talbot County as derived from the U.S. Census Reports and projections by the Maryland Department of State Planning and Hammer, Siler George Associates. In addition, the Maryland Department of Health has estimated the 1987 population at 27,700 persons. Although there are slight differences in the projection years used, the results are similar. Talbot County is expected to grow slowly. As

population statistics are used in this report, the source will be noted since different sources may be necessary for different demand evaluations.

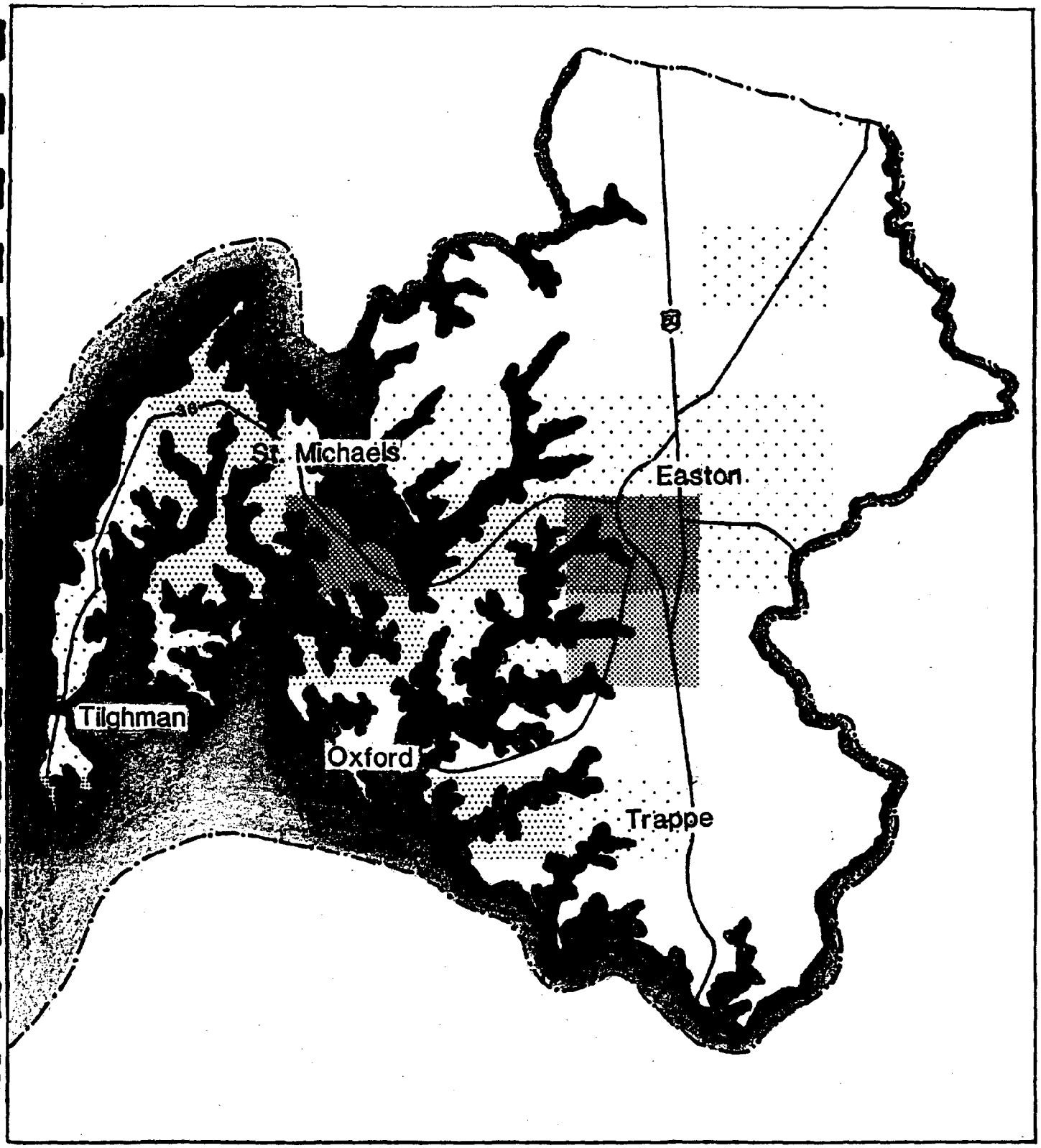
TABLE IV-1

POPULATION TRENDS

YEAR	NUMBER OF PERSONS (DSP)	(HSG)
1970	23,682	23,682*
1980	25,604	25,604*
1984	N.A.	26,644
1985	26,101	N.A
1990	26,500	N.A
1992	N.A.	27,940
1995	26,801	28,305
1995	N.A.	N.A
2002	N.A.	28,780
2005	N.A.	28,896
CHANGE	700 1985 -1995	2,756 1984-2005

Sources: Census of Population *, Hammer Siler George (HSG) and Maryland Department of State Planning (DSP).

The State projects that the County will only add 700 persons between 1985 and 1995. They estimate the 1995 population at 26,801 persons. However, Hammer Siler George has estimated that the County population reached 26,644 in 1984. Regardless of these statistical discrepancies, both forecasts indicate a continuation of the 1970 to 1980 trend of slow growth. Talbot County, according to Hammer Siler George, is expected to add another 2,756 residents by the year 2007, an increase of 10.3 percent over their 1984 estimated population.



POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

(taken from 1984 aerial photo)

Talbot County, Maryland

PEOPLE / ACRE

0–.4	
.4–.8	
.8–1.2	
1.2–1.6	
1.6–	

Map No IV–2

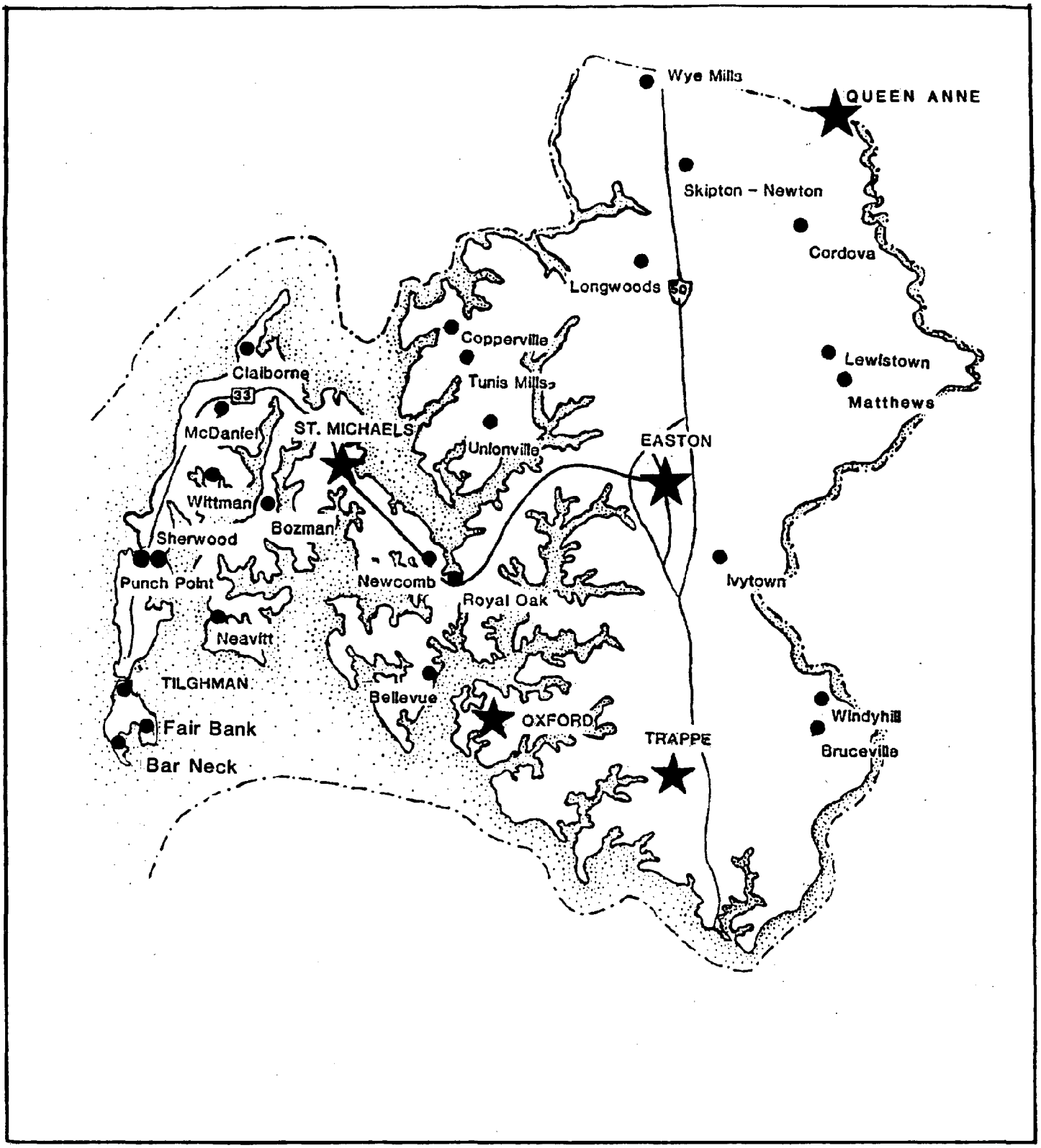
N

miles

2 1 0 2 4 6

Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.



LOCATIONS OF TOWNS AND VILLAGES

★ INCORPORATED TOWNS

● VILLAGES

Map No IV-1

N

miles

2 1 0 2 4 6

Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

Talbot County, Maryland

Migration into the County is expected to account for the majority of future population growth. Net natural increase or births minus deaths is not expected to be a significant factor. The influx of people purchasing second homes for retirement or seasonal use is the primary reason for past and anticipated population increases. This trend could have the effect of creating a greater need for leisure facilities for vacationers and retirees than for young families with small children. Since many of these people are likely to seek water-oriented home sites, pressure will be placed on the natural resources of the County regardless of the rate of population increase.

Population Distribution

Talbot is primarily a rural county with an overall population density of approximately 95 persons per square mile. The majority of population is contained in the five incorporated towns and a number of small villages and communities. The towns Oxford, St. Michaels, Trappe, Easton and Queen Anne hold over forty percent of the present population. The principal villages and communities are listed below. Their locations are shown on Map IV-1.

Tilghman	Royal Oak	Skipton-Newtown
Claiborne	Bozman	McDaniel
Cordova	Bellevue	Tunis Mills
Wittman	Newcomb	Wye Mills
Neavitt	Unionville	Fairbank
Longwoods	Ivytown	Bruceville
New Bridge	Windy Hill	Matthews
Copperville	Sherwood	Punch Point
Bar Neck	Lewistown	

As noted above, the majority of the County's present population is located in or near these towns and villages. The towns and villages are also the areas of highest population density, as shown on Map IV-2, and are the primary demand areas for park and recreation facilities. Since the County is expected to have only a modest population increase in future years, it is reasonable to believe that the towns and villages will remain the focal points for park and recreation demand.

Age

Talbot County, like the rest of the nation, is characterized by a maturing population. Local surveys and interviews indicate that present recreation demand is not significantly influenced by age characteristics, but an older population could affect future recreation demand. Current residents emphasize active playing fields and playgrounds in the local parks. As the population

matures, there may be additional demand for more passive recreation facilities or programs in the park system.

The inventory of existing parks and open spaces indicates that most of the facilities are oriented to active recreation. The developed park sites typically contain playgrounds, playing fields and court games, activities which are normally oriented to a younger population. However, the above statistics may impact this trend in the future.

Although there is a spread of age groups in the County, adults prevail. More than 75% of the present population are over the age of 19. Almost 5,000 people, or 18.5 percent of the total population, are past the age of 64. Only 4.5% of the population are under five years of age. The age distribution of the estimated 1984 population is shown in Table IV-2.

TABLE IV-2

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

AGE GROUP	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Preschool (under 5)	1,199	4.5
School (age 5 to 19)	5,196	19.5
Adults (age 19 to 64)	15,320	57.3
Retirement (age-over 64)	4,929	18.5
TOTALS	26,644	100.0

Source: Hammer Siler George, U.S. Census

The high percentage of "adults" indicates that the greatest recreational demand will come from this age group. However, since 1970, the over 64 age group has continually increased. This trend reflects the fact that many people are retiring to the County and the overall population is aging. However, those purchasing second homes in the County - persons who are not reflected in the County's census data - are typically in the 45-65 year age group.

Those agencies responsible for recreation planning and programming should be aware of the maturing population since this group will constitute a major portion of future recreation

demand. The school age children of the County, although not large in number, will continue to constitute a particularly active group for park and recreation demand.

Table IV-3 presents the age distribution trends that occurred between 1970 and 1984. As noted above, the over 64 age group grew dramatically and experienced a 41.6 percent change. The 19-64 age group experienced a more modest but sizable change of 24.6 percent. In clear contrast, the under 5 age group decreased by 26.3 percent and the 5-19 age group experienced a decline of 17.3 percent.

TABLE IV-3

AGE DISTRIBUTION TRENDS
1970-1984

AGE GROUP	1970 POPULATION	1984 POPULATION	CHANGE NUMBER	CHANGE PER CENT
Preschool	1,628	1,199	-429	-26.3
School	6,279	5,196	-1,083	-17.3
Adults	12,295	15,320	3,025	24.6
Retirement	3,480	4,929	1,449	41.6
Totals	23,682	26,644	2,962	12.5

Existing age distribution trends are expected to continue into the future. Population forecasts indicate a 22.9% decrease in the number of preschool and school aged children. There will be 427 fewer children (persons under 19 years of age) in the County by the year 2007. The retirement age group, those over 64, will increase by 1304 persons or 26.5 percent. The adult population (19-64 years) is expected to increase by 12.3 percent or 1,879 persons.

Table IV-4 presents the 1984-2007 age distribution forecasts for Talbot County .

TABLE IV-4

AGE DISTRIBUTION FORECASTS- 1984-2007

AGE GROUP	1984 POPULATION	2007 POPULATION	CHANGE NUMBER	CHANGE PERCENT
Preschool	1,199	970	-229	-19.1
School	5,196	4,998	-198	-3.8
Adults	15,320	17,199	1,879	12.3
Retirement	4,929	6,233	1,304	26.5
TOTALS	26,644	29,400	2,756	10.3

Source: Hammer Siler George and U.S. Census.

Income

The 1986 household income distribution for Talbot County has been estimated and the ranges are listed in Table IV-5. Nearly 50 percent of the County's households make less than $25,000 with 17 percent of the total households having an income of below $10,000. Only 16.6 percent of the County households have incomes in excess of $50,000.

This type of income distribution suggests that a large number of County households will be dependent on local government for the provision of recreation opportunities. Those households within the higher income brackets are fairly self-sufficient in terms of their leisure activities. They have the means to join private facilities such as golf, swimming, tennis, boating and riding clubs and, typically, have access to a wide array of recreational opportunities. Low to moderate income households tend to depend more on local and State parks or natural areas for their recreational activities.

Income distribution may also effect demand for the type of recreation facilities provided in the County. A large number of moderate income households tend to support a wide range of active recreation facilities and programs.

TABLE IV-5

HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION

INCOME RANGE	NUMBER	PERCENT
Under $9,999	1,705	17.1
$10,000-$14,999	1,097	11.0
$15,000-$19,999	1,094	10.9
$20,000-$24,999	1,068	10.7
$25,000-$29,999	1,064	10.6
$30,000-$34,999	685	6.9
$35,000-$39,999	657	6.6
$40,000-$49,999	966	9.7
$50,000-$74,999	1,020	10.2
$75,000 or more	639	6.4
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	9,995	100.0%

Source: Hammer Siler George

PARTICIPATION AND FACILITY DEMAND

Demand for recreation facilities can be estimated by a variety of measures. Participation ratios, i.e. the percentage of the total population that takes part in a particular recreation activity, can be useful in estimating the peak demand for different types of facilities. State guidelines require that existing ratios of participation in recreation activities be correlated with demand and existing facilities. Information regarding facility demand can also be derived from surveys, user interviews and a common sense assessment of the popularity of local programs and activities. This section examines the demand for recreation facilities and programs as determined by surveys and interviews at the local and State level.

County Surveys And Interviews

Various surveys and interviews indicate that Talbot County residents are involved in a broad spectrum of recreation activities. A 1982 survey of Talbot County residents, which was undertaken to obtain a better understanding of their attitude toward recreation activities, indicated the following:

1. Talbot County residents are active participants in recreational activities. The survey indicated that almost 50 percent of the respondents spent between 0-4 hours a week in active recreation; almost 30 percent devoted 4-8 hours to active recreation and over 13% of the residents spent more than 8 hours a week in active recreation.

2. Over 46% of the residents belong to a swim club, tennis club, YMCA, or similar club that provides recreation facilities.

3. A number of residents spend a significant portion of their vacation time in the county. Slightly over 24% of the respondents spend 1/2 of their vacation time in Talbot County and 14.6% indicated they spend all of their vacation time in the county.

4. The most popular recreation activities and their participation percentages were:

a.	Swimming	40.1%
b.	Boating	40.1%
c.	Fishing/Hunting	34.3%
d.	Golf	17.5%
e.	Camping	13.8%
f.	Snow Skiing	6.6%
g.	Ice Skating	5.8%
h.	Water Skiing	5.1%

5. More than half of the respondents participated in recreation programs which were sponsored by the Department of Parks and Recreations. The majority - 41.6 percent - selected the evening as the most convenient time of day for recreation activities.

6. Over 66% of the residents live within five miles of a public park, a service radius of less than 10 minutes.

Over 75% of the respondents were satisfied with the location of existing public parks.

7. An overwhelming majority of those surveyed - 89% - felt that public parks should be used for active and passive recreation activities.

8. 63.5% of the respondents felt developers should provide park space in new developments. Over 56% felt that the County should acquire additional open space for park and recreation use.

9. Picnic tables, softball fields and tennis courts were the recreation facilities preferred in public parks. Nature trails, jogging paths, volleyball and basketball courts and hiking trails were also facilities that were considered desirable.

10. The rural nature of Talbot County was reflected in the survey and 81% of the respondents felt their homes provided a suitable play area for children. This attitude correlates with the sparse number of mini-parks (tot lots and small play areas)that are found in the County.

In 1986, a series of citizen meetings were held throughout the County to discuss future issues and needs. The discussions included park and recreation needs. The results of these meetings, along with interviews of County personnel, are helpful in evaluating recreation demand, especially since the results of the previous survey are almost five years old. The following are the key conclusions from the meetings and interviews regarding park and recreation demand:

1. The residents felt that the natural environment fulfills the need for passive recreation areas. Public acquisition of land for passive recreation facilities was not a high priority. The residents also felt the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Program will result in the development of the coastal zone area for public areas and public landings. Residents are concerned that if such development of the coastal zone areas for public access does occur it will be detrimental to the natural environment, will attract non-county residents and result in a number of problems for local residents.

2. There is a need for improved maintenance at existing parks and recreation areas. This citizen concern was confirmed by county personnel who agree that a number of facilities suffer from lack of adequate maintenance.

Maintenance problems at existing parks are related to budget constraints and the present level of funding for park maintenance.

3. Many residents feel there is a need for additional playgrounds and playing fields in the county. A strong emphasis was placed on providing active recreation facilities in public parks. There was only a limited amount of interest in providing additional passive facilities. Active, team oriented recreation and the School Community Centers Programs are the focal points of citizen interest. Although Talbot County has a large number of playing fields, the citizen meetings indicated they are inadequate to meet the present level of demand.

4. Little interest or concern was expressed for additional cultural activities. Residents felt that private programs, such as the privately funded Academy of Arts, private concerts, theater events, and regional facilities satisfied local demand.

5. There was an expressed need and desire for additional indoor recreation facilities such as an aquatic center, indoor soccer, and indoor court areas for basketball and volleyball. Presently, residents feel the YMCA is the focus and major source of these indoor activities. The YMCA programs were described as very good, but are considered to be expensive.

6. There is a need for indoor programs for children of working parents. Many of the present programs are scheduled for mid-week or mid-day and there is a need for more week end and evening programs.

7. There is a need, and opportunity, to expand the programs provided at the Talbot County Community Center. It was felt that this facility has the potential of accommodating more indoor programs during the non-ice season. Currently, most of its winter use is directed to ice skating and curling activities.

8. The Chesapeake Bay, and its tributaries, was emphasized as the major recreational resource of Talbot County. The majority of residents felt that development pressures will impact the County's natural resources.

9. Residents felt the County should be encouraged to facilitate the use of school sites for recreation

activities and programs. The importance of the School Community Centers program is also emphasized by recent participation rates. In fiscal year 1986, the program had 5000 attendants with 4250 "drop-ins". Since the population in the 5-19 year age group is estimated at only 5,196 persons, the participation rate is very high.

In fiscal year 1987, The School Community Centers Program proposes to establish recreation centers in six elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools. The objective is to provide recreation and supplementary educational activities for 750 youths in the 5-12 year age group; 425 teenagers and young adults in the 13-20 year age group; and 150 adults over the age of 21.

State Surveys and Participation Ratios

The State of Maryland has conducted several surveys to determine state, regional and local participation ratios for recreation facilities. The 1984 Facility and Acreage Requirements Report of the Maryland Recreation and Open Space Plan estimated participation rates for county-oriented facilities. According to this report, county-oriented activities take place close to home and are usually provided by local governments at neighborhood, community and school park sites.

Table IV-6 lists county-oriented recreational activities by rates of participation and is abstracted from the 1984 State Survey. The ranking in the table is indicative of the popularity and demand for different types of recreation facilities and indicates that swimming in pools and baseball/softball are the most frequent recreation activities in Talbot County. Only one passive recreation activity - nature walks - ranked high in the recreation demand analysis. This finding is consistent with the results of citizen interviews and local surveys which consistently emphasize the importance of active recreation facilities in the local park system. Other popular activities, as measured by participation ratios, were tennis, sledding, ice skating, and football/soccer/lacrosse.

TABLE IV-6

COUNTY-ORIENTED RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

RANK	ACTIVITY	PARTICIPATION RATIO
1.	Swimming	35.0%
2.	Baseball/Softball	29.3%
3.	Nature Walks	23.3%
4.	Tennis/Racket Sports	19.0%
5.	Sledding/Tobogganing	16.0%
6.	Ice Skating	15.0%
7.	Football/Soccer/Lacrosse	12.3%
8.	Basketball	9.0%
9.	Bicycling Trips	8.7%

Table IV-7 presents the results of a 1986 Maryland Outdoor and Leisure Survey which was conducted in the Tidewater Region and lists participation rates for recreation activities. This survey contains a more extensive list of recreation activities and indicates that swimming, baseball/softball, basketball and tennis are the most popular active recreation endeavors. The regional survey also ranked a number of passive activities such as picnics, fishing and nature walks high in popularity.

Comparison of the 1984 survey and the 1986 regional survey suggests that active recreation is more popular in Talbot than in other Tidewater Counties. The regional survey also indicated a higher participation ratio for some recreation activities than were indicated in the 1984 survey. For example, in 1984, 35% of the Talbot population was estimated to participate in swimming. In 1986, almost 47% of the regional respondents indicate they swim in pools. Participation ratios for baseball/softball and tennis are similar in both surveys. Basketball is far more popular in the region (20.5% participation ratio) than in Talbot County with a 9.0% participation ratio.

The 1986 survey is also reflective of the natural resources and conditions of the various regions of the State. In the Tidewater region certain activities such as fishing, motorboating,

canoeing, rafting and kayaking have above average participation. Those activities with below average participation are camping and downhill skiing.

TABLE IV-7

ACTIVITIES RANKED BY POPULARITY
TIDEWATER REGION[1]

RANK	ACTIVITY	PARTICIPATION RATIO
1.	Concerts, fairs or festivals	55.1%
2.	Swimming (pool)	46.9%
3.	Swimming (beach)	42.9%
4.	Picnicking	42.5%
5.	Fishing	39.0%
6.	Baseball/softball	31.5%
7.	Motorboating	28.7%
8.	Nature walks	24.4%
9.	Basketball	20.5%
10.	Tennis	17.8%
11.	Football/soccer/lacrosse	17.3%
12.	Hunting	16.1%
13.	Hiking	14.6%
14.	Canoeing, rafting, kayaking	13.0%
15.	Camping	12.6%
16.	Off-road vehicles	11.4%
17.	Water-Skiing	11.4%
18.	Sailing	9.8%
19.	Golf	9.4%
20.	Ice skating	9.1%
21.	Horseback riding	9.1%
22.	Target/skeet shooting at range	8.3%
23.	Other racquet sports	8.3%
24.	Bicycle trips over 10 miles	7.5%
25.	Downhill skiing	6.7%
26.	Archery	5.9%
27.	Cross country skiing	1.2%

Although all of the previously cited surveys have a slightly different focus, each pertains to participation ratios in recreation activities. The participation ratios are important components in the State formula which estimates peak facility demand for different types of recreation activity. As stated earlier, the 1982 County survey indicates popular vacation

recreation activities among a sample of Talbot County residents. The 1984 State survey is of county-oriented activities only and reflects the response of a sample taken from the Upper Eastern Shore. The 1986 survey is oriented to the Tidewater region and also focuses on county oriented activities.

Each of the surveys reveal certain activities to be highly popular. The following table IV-8 lists the top ranked activities from each survey and is indicative of the type of recreation facilities that are frequently used in Talbot County.

TABLE IV-8

INDICATIONS OF
RECREATION FACILITY DEMAND

RANK	1982 COUNTY SURVEY	1984 STATE SURVEY	1986 REGIONAL SURVEY
1.	Swimming	Swimming	Swimming (pool)
2.	Boating	Baseball/ Softball	Swimming(beach)
3.	Fishing/ Hunting	Nature Walks	Picnicking
4.	Golf	Tennis	Fishing
5.	Camping	Sledding/ Tobogganing	Baseball/ softball
6.	Snow Ski	Ice Skate	Motorboating
7	Ice Skate	Football/ soccer/ lacrosse	Nature walks
8.	Water Ski	Basketball	Basketball
9.	n.a.	Bicycling	Tennis
10.	n.a.	n.a.	Football/ soccer

Certain recreation activities such as swimming, boating, baseball/softball, tennis, nature walks, football/soccer and basketball are consistently popular based on the three surveys.

The results of the three surveys are fairly broad and must be used in combination with other sources to obtain a true reflection of the recreation interests of County residents. The more popular activities do correlate with the information obtained from citizen and agency interviews.

The 1984 Facility and Acreage Requirements, as contained in the Maryland Recreation And Open Space Plan, were used to evaluate the adequacy of existing recreation facilities with peak facility demand. Although the facility estimates are three years old, they are a reliable source since the population of Talbot County has not increased significantly and the participation ratios are the most accurate available. Table IV-9 indicates recreation demand for county-oriented facilities in 1985, 1990 and 1995. The following conclusions can be drawn from the 1995 peak facility demands and the inventory of existing recreation facilities.

1. There will be a need for additional swimming pools in Talbot County in the coming decade.

2. Although the analysis indicates an additional demand of 3.3 miles of nature trails and walks, these types of facilities occur in private and quasi-public areas. In addition, the provision of natural parks may satisfy this type of demand. Nature walks occur in places that are accessible but are not publicly owned. It is highly unlikely that all the routes for nature walks in Talbot County are inventoried. The official walks amount to a total of 3 miles in a combined hiking/nature walk category. Although there may be need for more trails or a more accessible system, the popularity of nature walks reflects that people hike on their land or other private property.

3. Extensive facility demands are not expected between 1985 and 1995 due to the slow rate of projected population growth.

4. The County owns and operates the Hog Neck Arena at the Talbot County Community Center which accommodates ice skating, curling, and roller skating. This facility is not considered in the State evaluation and, by State standards, meets the peak facility demand for ice skating. It should be noted that recent meetings and

TABLE IV-9

TALBOT COUNTY RECREATION DEMAND OF IN-COUNTY RESIDENTS
FOR COUNTY-ORIENTED FACILITIES (1985, 1990, & 1995)

	PARTICI PATION RATE(%)	NUMBER OF PARTICI-PANTS	INDIV. YEARLY OCCUR-RENCES	OCCASIONS DEMANDED PER YEAR	ADJUSTED OCCASIONS DEMANDED PER YEAR	LENGTH OF SEASON	FACILITY CAPACITY PER DAY	MINIMUM FACILITIES DEMANDED	PEAK FACILITIES DEMANDED
1985 POPULATION: 26101									
BASEBALL/SOFTBALL	29.3	7648.	22.8	174345.	173521.	220	80 /FIELD	10 FIELDS	15 FIELDS
BASKETBALL	9.0	2349.	30.4	71412.	69794.	235	80 /COURT	4 COURTS	6 COURTS
BICYCLING TRIPS	8.7	2271.	22.2	50411.	50445.	260	200 /MILE	1 MILES	1 MILES
FOOTBALL/SOCCER/LACROSSE	12.3	3210.	24.6	78976.	76422.	260	80 /FIELD	4 FIELDS	6 FIELDS
ICE SKATING	15.0	3915.	6.1	23882.	23672.	30	1500 /ACRE	1 ACRES	1 ACRES
NATURE WALKS	23.3	6082.	28.7	174540.	176498.	270	196 /MILE	3 MILES	5 MILES
SLEDDING/TOBOGGANING	16.0	4176.	8.1	33827.	33648.	10	2000 /MILE	2 MILES	3 MILES
SPECTATOR SPORTS	45.0	11745.	11.4	133898.	133898.	240	1 /SEAT	558 SEATS	837 SEATS
SWIMMING IN POOLS	35.0	9135.	25.3	231124.	232294.	115	5000 /ACRE	0 ACRES	1 ACRES
TENNIS/RACKET SPORTS	19.0	4959.	16.9	83810.	83405.	220	32 /COURT	12 COURTS	18 COURTS
1990 POPULATION: 26500									
BASEBALL/SOFTBALL	29.3	7764.	22.8	177031.	174811.	220	80 /FIELD	10 FIELDS	15 FIELDS
BASKETBALL	9.0	2385.	30.4	72504.	68247.	235	80 /COURT	4 COURTS	5 COURTS
BICYCLING TRIPS	8.7	2306.	22.2	51182.	51270.	260	200 /MILE	1 MILES	1 MILES
FOOTBALL/SOCCER/LACROSSE	12.3	3259.	24.6	80184.	73465.	260	80 /FIELD	4 FIELDS	5 FIELDS
ICE SKATING	15.0	3975.	6.1	24247.	23695.	30	1500 /ACRE	1 ACRES	1 ACRES
NATURE WALKS	23.3	6174.	28.7	177208.	182360.	270	196 /MILE	3 MILES	5 MILES
SLEDDING/TOBOGGANING	16.0	4240.	8.1	34344.	33874.	10	2000 /MILE	2 MILES	3 MILES
SPECTATOR SPORTS	45.0	11925.	11.4	135945.	135945.	240	1 /SEAT	566 SEATS	850 SEATS
SWIMMING IN POOLS	35.0	9275.	25.3	234657.	237734.	115	5000 /ACRE	0 ACRES	1 ACRES
TENNIS/RACKET SPORTS	19.0	5035.	16.9	85091.	84024.	220	32 /COURT	12 COURTS	18 COURTS
1995 POPULATION: 26801									
BASEBALL/SOFTBALL	29.3	7853.	22.8	179041.	175299.	220	80 /FIELD	10 FIELDS	15 FIELDS
BASKETBALL	9.0	2412.	30.4	73328.	66152.	235	80 /COURT	4 COURTS	5 COURTS
BICYCLING TRIPS	8.7	2332.	22.2	51763.	51911.	260	200 /MILE	1 MILES	1 MILES
FOOTBALL/SOCCER/LACROSSE	12.3	3297.	24.6	81094.	69770.	260	80 /FIELD	3 FIELDS	5 FIELDS
ICE SKATING	15.0	4020.	6.1	24523.	23591.	30	1500 /ACRE	1 ACRES	1 ACRES
NATURE WALKS	23.3	6245.	28.7	179221.	187904.	270	196 /MILE	4 MILES	5 MILES
SLEDDING/TOBOGGANING	16.0	4288.	8.1	34734.	33942.	10	2000 /MILE	2 MILES	3 MILES
SPECTATOR SPORTS	45.0	12060.	11.4	137489.	137489.	240	1 /SEAT	573 SEATS	859 SEATS
SWIMMING IN POOLS	35.0	9380.	25.3	237323.	242508.	115	5000 /ACRE	0 ACRES	1 ACRES
TENNIS/RACKET SPORTS	19.0	5092.	16.9	86058.	84259.	220	32 /COURT	12 COURTS	18 COURTS

Source: "Maryland Recreation and Open Space Plan: 1984 Facility and Acreage Requirements", June 1984 Report by the Maryland Department of State Planning

interviews in the County revealed a resident need for additional indoor recreation facilities and a desire to expand the programmed activities at the Community Center.

5. The State indicated that a total of fifteen baseball/softball fields would be needed by 1995. However, the 1986 inventory indicates that Talbot County already has 34 fields. Regardless, local residents have indicated a need for additional playing fields.

6. Six basketball courts will be needed by 1995 and the inventory indicates sixteen existing courts. Although the survey would indicate an adequate number of basketball courts, additional indoor courts for basketball and volleyball were among the needs noted in the citizen meetings.

7. The State forecasts indicate a need for 12.5 miles of bicycling trails by 1995. There are already more than 20 miles of bike trails in the County.

8. The County also appears to have an adequate number of football, soccer and lacrosse fields. Five fields are demanded by 1995 and 22 fields are currently available. The existing number of football/soccer fields would indicate a higher rate of participation than estimated in the State survey. Field sports such as soccer and lacrosse are growing in popularity and facility demands for these activities should be closely examined.

9. The State Survey estimates 860 seats for spectator sports will be demanded by 1995. The inventory indicates the County seating capacity is well in excess of this requirement.

10. Courts for tennis and racquet sports, especially tennis, are popular facilities in Talbot County. According to the State estimates eighteen courts will be the peak demand in 1995. The inventory listed 40 courts in 1987. Again, in light of the extensive number of existing facilities, the participation ratio for this activity should be carefully analyzed.

There are currently more recreation facilities in Talbot County than the State indicates will be needed, at peak times, in 1995. The participation ratios used for Talbot County appear to be understated since all of the current facilities are used on a frequent basis. Furthermore, meetings and interviews with residents indicate a desire for additional facilities. There are several demand estimates that correlate with local perceptions of need: additional indoor facilities and programs and the need for additional swimming pools are clearly needed by 1995.

The above analysis focuses on county-oriented facilities as defined by the State. Many regional activities and the use of natural resources such as the Chesapeake Bay, are also enjoyed by County residents. These other activities are categorized as regional and State and attract participants from beyond the county boundaries.

A common sense evaluation of the existing inventory of recreation facilities provides insight into both facility demand and those activities with very high or low participation rates. The facilities inventory indicates there are 34 baseball and softball fields, 16 basketball courts, 46 tennis courts and 22 football or soccer fields. In all of the above cases, the current numbers of facilities far exceed the projections for peak demand in 1995. There are also over 800 boat slips, over 8,000 stadiums seats and numerous private and quasi-public facilities. When compared to standards for the population of Talbot, these might seem like unusually high numbers. The conclusion is that baseball and softball, basketball, spectator sports, tennis, boating and football or soccer are highly popular in the County.

EVALUATION OF EXISTING PARKS,RECREATION AREAS AND OPEN SPACES

The preceding analysis examined the adequacy of specific recreation facilities in comparison to estimates of peak demand. This section examines, analyzes and evaluates existing parks, recreation areas and open spaces in relation to the standards and criteria which were established in Chapter II. The local parks and recreation areas are analyzed as to their adequacy in satisfying acreage requirements, availability of facilities, recreational opportunities and serviceability to the people of Talbot County. The analysis will show that Talbot County provides lands for park and recreation areas in excess of the recommended acreage standards and, with a few exceptions, the service radius of the local park system is excellent.

TABLE IV-10
COMPARISON OF EXISTING INVENTORY TO ESTABLISHED STANDARDS

TYPE OF FACILITY	ACREAGE STANDARDS PER 1000 PEOPLE		EXISTING ACREAGE PER 1000 PEOPLE	MAXIMUM ACRES NEEDED[1]	EXISTING INVENTORY ACREAGE	DIFFERENCE
	LOW	HIGH				
1. Mini Parks	0.25	0.50	0.12	13.85	3.25	(-10.60)[2]
2. Neighborhood Parks	1.00	2.50	4.58	69.25	127.00	57.75
3. Community Parks	5.00	8.00	3.88	221.60	107.50	(-114.60)
4. County Parks	5.00	10.00	11.86	277.00	328.50	+51.50
5. Waterfront Parks & Public Landings	1.00	2.00	2.20	55.40	61.70	+6.30
6. Special Parks	5.00	7.00	35.76	193.90	990.60	+796.70
SUB-TOTAL LOCAL	17.25	30.00	58.40	831.00	1,618.55	+787.55
7. State Parks	25.00[3]	25.00[3]	17.72	692.50	491.00	(-201.50)
TOTAL ACREAGE	42.25	55.00	76.12	1,523.50	2,109.55	+586.05

1. Based on Estimated July 1987 Population of 27,700 for Talbot County as given in the "Maryland Population Report", December 1984, by "Maryland Center for Health Statistics, Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene".

2. Number in parenthesis indicates additional acreage needed to satisfy demand per established standards.

3. From "Maryland Recreation and Open Space Plan: 1984 Facility and Acreage Requirements" report.

Overall Acreage Standards

An overall acreage goal of 55 acres per 1000 persons was established for Talbot County in the State Recreation and Open Space Plan. Local parks were to provide 30 acres/1000 persons and the remaining 25 acres/1000 persons were to be regional and state lands. The following sections indicate that Talbot County provides land for park and recreation use far in excess of the recommended standards.

According to the standard for locally oriented parks, Talbot County should provide 831 acres of land based on an estimated 1987 population of 27,700 persons. The inventory reveals that Talbot actually provides 1,618.55 acres, an excess of 787.55 acres. This equates to a ratio of 58.4 acres/1000 persons which is almost twice as much as the recommended standard of 30 acres/1000 persons. The analysis of land for local parks also does not include over 4300 acres of private parkland.

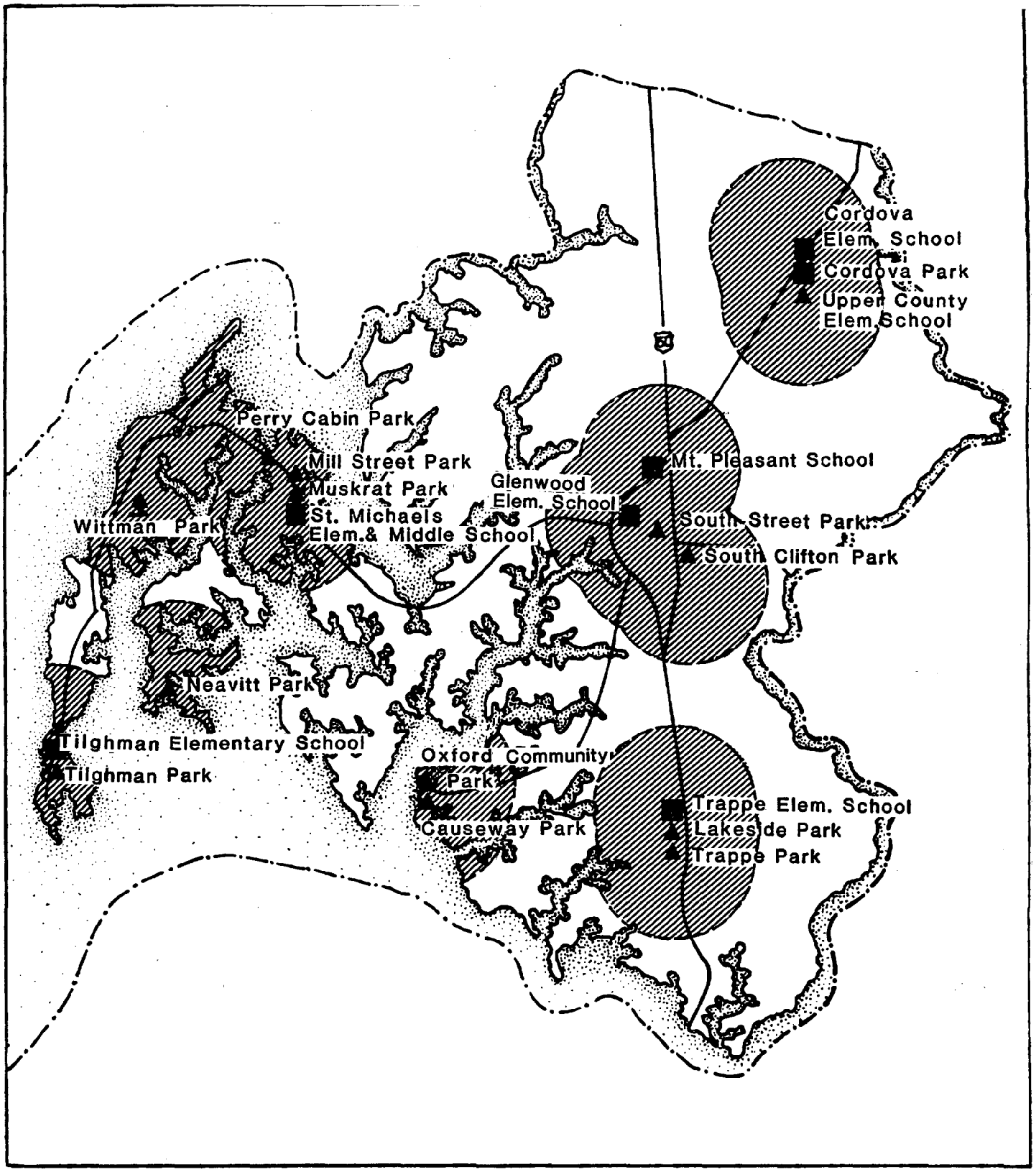
The State presently provides 491 acres of park and recreation land in the County-a deficiency of 201.5 acres when compared to the 25 acres/1000 persons standard. Overall, the area of local and State parks within Talbot County totals 2,109.55 acres which provides a county-wide ratio of 76.15 acres/1000 persons. The existing ratio exceeds the recommended standard by over 21 acres per 1000 persons. Table IV-10 compares existing park and recreation land with the recommended standards outlined in Chapter II.

Evaluation of Mini-Parks

Talbot County does not provide an adequate level of mini-parks according to the recommended standards. The current inventory indicates 3.25 acres devoted to this classification which is 10.6 acres short of the recommended acreage.

Mini-parks are usually devoted to tot lots and/or passive recreation facilities and are typically found in densely populated areas. Both of the existing facilities are located within the incorporated areas of Easton.

The absence of mini-parks in Talbot County is not surprising when you consider that the unincorporated areas are sparsely populated and the need for such facilities is minimal. Surveys of Talbot residents have also revealed that a vast majority of people believe their yards are adequate play areas for children. The School-Community Centers Program is also a substitute for the more traditional mini-park and a portion of this demand is being met through these activities.



SERVICE AREA OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

▲ PARKS
■ SCHOOLS

Map No IV-3

N

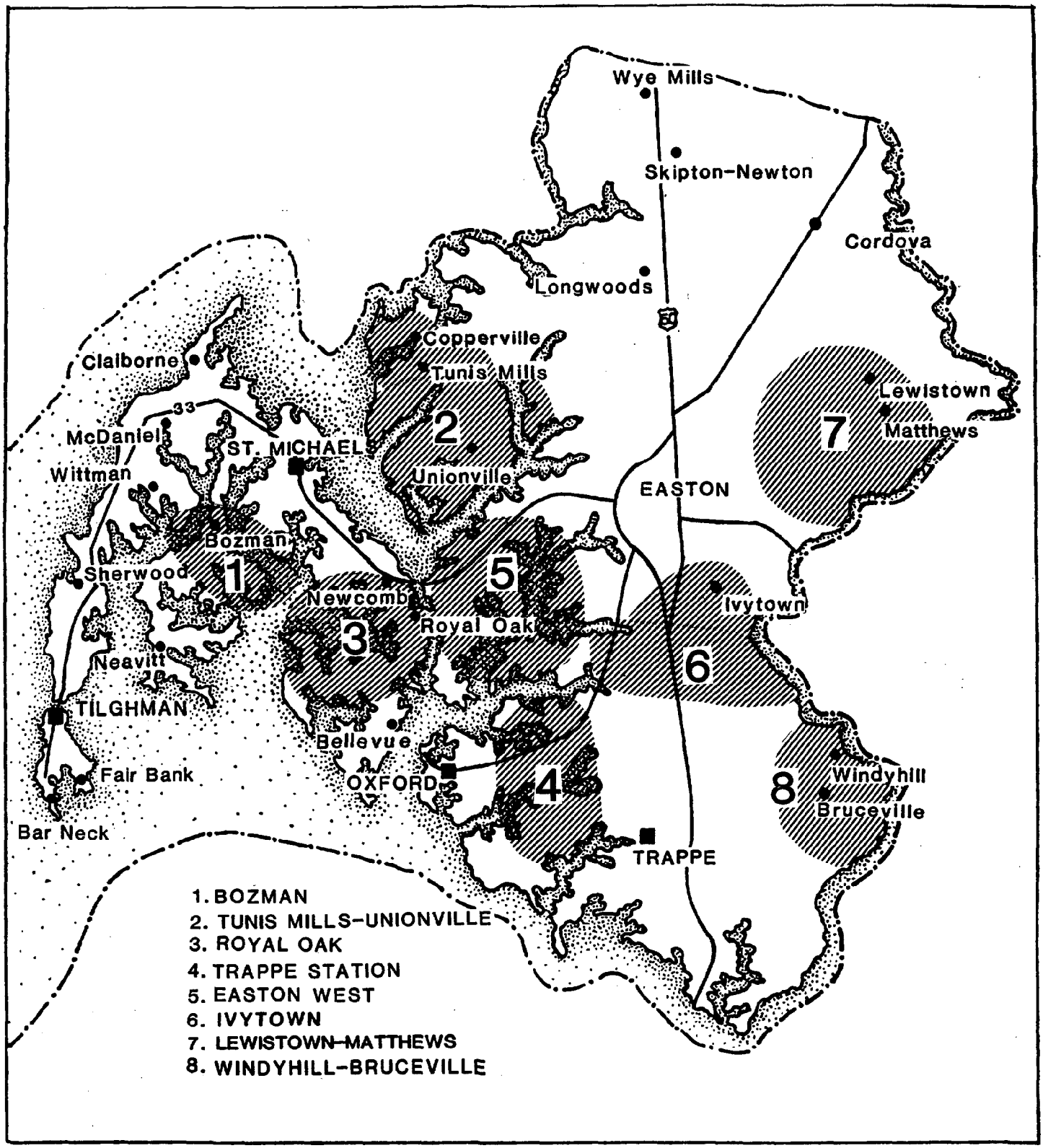
miles

2 1 0 2 4 6

Wiles Dailey Kane
Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

Talbot County, Maryland

(as of 1987)



POTENTIAL SERVICE AREAS
NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY PARKS

Map No IV-4

N

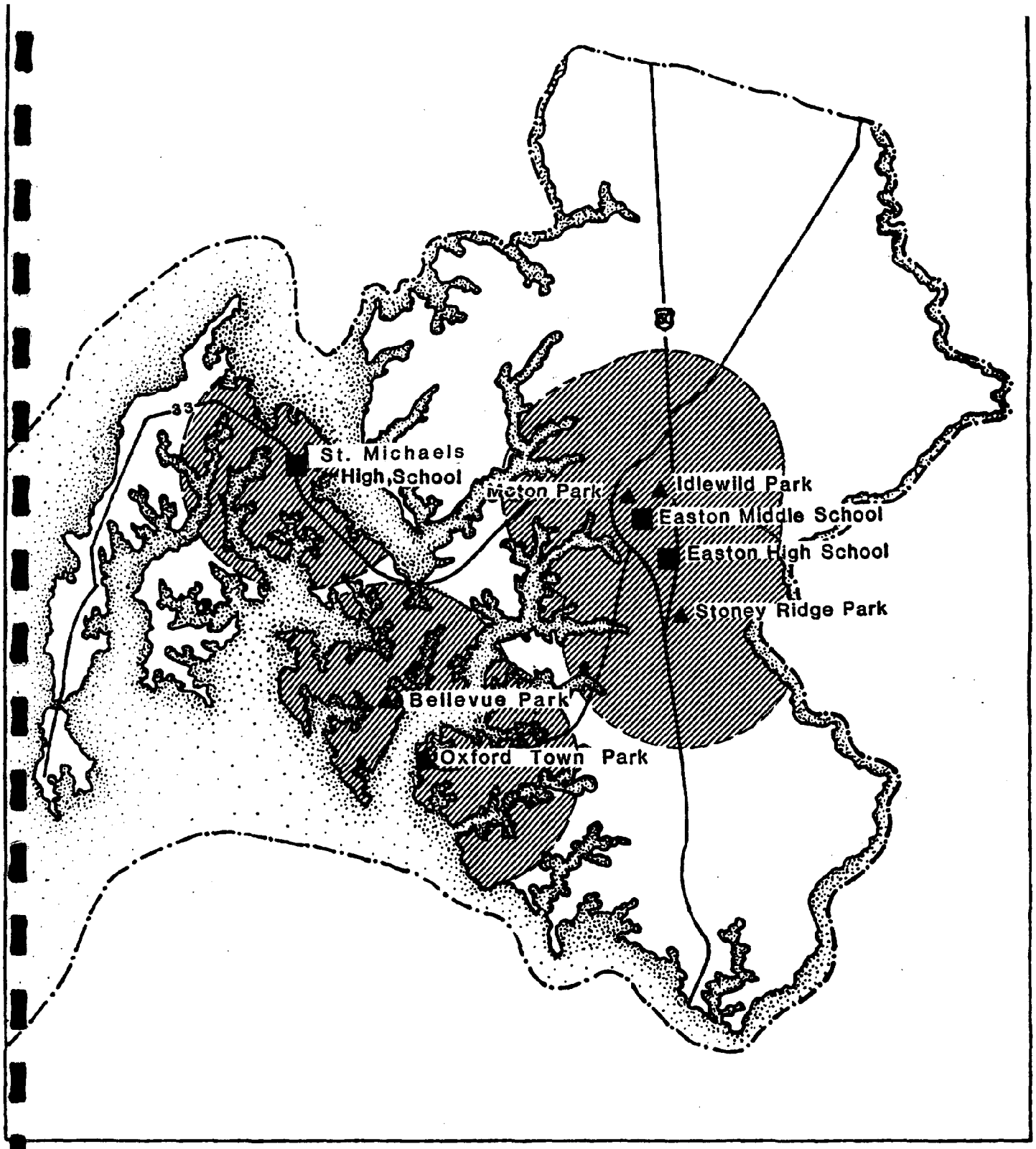
miles

2 1 0 2 4 6

Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

Talbot County, Maryland (as of 1987)



SERVICE AREA OF COMMUNITY PARKS

▲ PARKS

■ SCHOOLS-MIDDLE &SECONDARY

Talbot County, Maryland

(as of 1987)

Map No IV-5

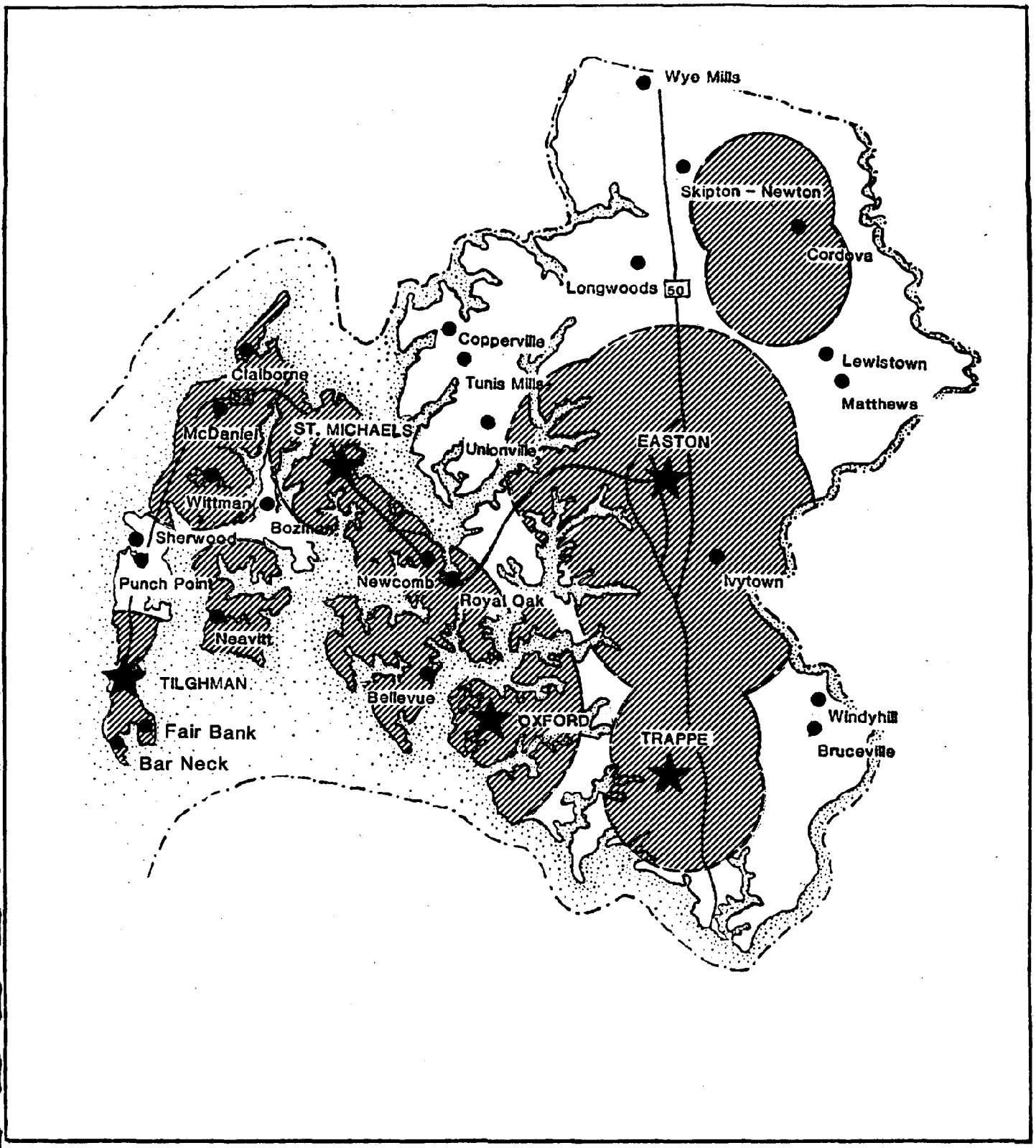
N

miles

2 1 0 2 4 6

Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.



SERVICE AREA OF NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS

Talbot County, Maryland (as of 1987)

Map No IV-6

N

miles

2 1 0 2 4 6

Wilks Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

Evaluation of Neighborhood Parks

There are 20 neighborhood parks in Talbot County comprising 127 acres. This equates to 4.58 acres/1000 persons which is well above the recommended standard of 2.5 acres/1000 persons. Table IV-10 shows an acreage surplus of 57.75 acres in the Neighborhood Parks classification while a deficiency of 114.1 acres is shown in the Community Park category. However, these findings may be an indication of the difficulty in distinguishing between neighborhood and community parks in the classification system rather than a deficiency in the number of facilities provided. The two classifications should be merged when making a judgment as to present and future demand.

The geographic distribution and service area of neighborhood parks is shown on Map IV-3. The map indicates a concentration of neighborhood parks near Cordova, Easton, Trappe,Oxford, Neavitt, Tilghman Island and St. Michaels.

Several of the villages and population concentrations within the County such as Windyhill, Bruceville, Bozman, Tunis Mills, Unionville, Royal Oak, Trappe Station, Lewistown, Matthews and south Easton are not within the recommended service area for existing neighborhood and community parks. These potential service areas are shown on Map IV-4 and indicate areas of the County which may need future neighborhood or community park facilities.

Evaluation of Community Parks

The service areas and geographic distribution of Community Parks are shown on Map IV-5. Community parks are closely related to the more urban areas of the County and are in proximity to middle or high school facilities. The Easton, Oxford and St. Michaels areas are well served by the existing community park system.

The combined service area and geographic distribution of neighborhood and community parks provide a reasonable opportunity for most of the County residents to participate in recreational activities. The rural character of the County, and existing population distributions, make the conventional or more urban standards of service area difficult to meet. However, the service radius used for Map IV-6 has been adjusted to meet the local conditions in Talbot County and the above geographic coverage is reflective of existing service and future need.

Based on the recommended standard of 8 acres/1000 persons, it would appear that the County needs to add 114.1 acres to the community park system. The standards indicate a demand of 221.6 acres and the inventory shows only 107.5 acres of community

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parkland. Again, the significance of this deficiency should be evaluated in conjunction with acreage within the neighborhood park classification. It should also be noted that a special classification - waterfront parks and public landings - is part of the County classification system. These water-oriented parks, with boat landings, ramps, slips and picnic facilities, provide many of the functions found within a typical community park. There are 21 waterfront parks which contain 61.7 acres. The special park classification also provides land and facilities for community park functions. There are 12 special parks with over 990 acres located within the County.

When all of the park classifications are considered, it is doubtful whether there is any acreage deficiency within the neighborhood and community park system. The apparent need or demand is for a better service area for those villages and locations shown on Map IV-4.

County Parks

Talbot County currently provides 310.0 acres of County parkland at Hog Neck Golf Course and Talbot County Community Center. Based on a standard of 10 acres per 1000 persons, the County should provide 277 acres. The present inventory exceeds the acreage standard by more than 33 acres.

It is interesting to note that when the acreage of neighborhood, community and county parks are combined and compared to the collective standard of 20.5 acres/1000 persons, there is almost a balance between acreage demand and existing inventory. An overall deficiency of less than 5 acres results from such a combined analysis. Again, this indicates a locational need as opposed to demand for additional acreage.

Summary

The overall conclusion of the analysis and evaluation of existing parks, in relation to acreage standards, is that the County exceeds the suggested State guideline of 30 acres of local parks per 1000 population and presently provides 58.4 acres/1000 persons.

The acreage evaluation was based on the assumption that the 1987 population of Talbot County was 27,700 persons, as estimated by the Maryland Department of Health. Future estimates by other State agencies indicate a 1995 population of less than 27,000 persons. Therefore, unless future population estimates change dramatically, the demand evaluation represents both present and future acreage needs of Talbot County.

The analysis of recreation facilities - i.e. fields, courts,etc.- indicates that demand for the majority of locally oriented activities is being met by the County and/or towns and the estimated peak facilities for 1995 are presently available to the residents of Talbot County. Further, the facility analysis shows that some of the existing facilities substantially exceed the State's current and projected peak demands. There are some facilities, such as swimming pools and nature trails, which are not adequate to meet future demand.

The unusual popularity and demand for some activities (such as softball and tennis), are expressed in surveys and questionnaires conducted in the County. These local preferences partially explain the apparent oversupply of these facilities, as measured by State and regional participation ratios. Indeed, local surveys and questionnaires indicate a desire for additional facilities such as baseball/softball fields, tennis courts,indoor play areas and other active games. This indicates either a deficiency in the current participation rates or a problem of geographic distribution and convenience.

An evaluation of the geographic location of neighborhood and community parks does identify certain small urban areas and villages within Talbot County which are not readily accessible to the existing parks and recreational facilities.

DEMAND FOR NATURAL OPEN SPACE

The demand for natural open space and unique natural parks has been measured differently than the active park and recreation facilities of the County. Demand for natural open space is evaluated in terms of critical environmental areas which may be endangered by urban development. This section contains a brief examination of some of the County's natural open space areas, their sensitivities and protection needs. The section also identifies natural areas which provide opportunities for possible recreational use. A summary of the sensitivities and protection needs of some of the more significant resources are also outlined herein and are discussed in detail in the Critical Areas Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Forest Land

Forest land is defined as those areas of 5 acres or more which are dominated by trees or other woody plants. This includes land that has been cut, but not cleared.

Many of the higher quality forest sites in the county have little development pressure because of their location away from the

shoreline, steepness or poor drainage. Primary stresses on these sites includes timber harvesting, clearing for agriculture, and clearing for individual residences. Although many of these stands can be harvested for timber with proper management, the more sensitive stands with high diversity of habitats or species, wetlands, or steep slopes should be further identified and inventoried. High quality areas that might be subjected to clearing or development could be suitable for protection by acquisition. Joint use of forested areas, such as conservation/preservation areas and recreational facilities, may afford adequate protection.

The smaller forest sites along shorelines, particularly areas without steep slopes or wetlands, are highly vulnerable to development pressure, in addition to the above pressures. Such areas are currently protected only through the desires of the landowner. The Critical Area Plan, however, will require a 100 foot buffer for their protection. Preservation incentives such as easements or acquisition as natural parks or recreation areas would be an additional means of long-term preservation or conservation.

Beaches, Sandy Shores, and Bluffs

The small extent of these resources makes them vulnerable to endangerment by development pressure, as does their location. The main pressure on these areas is from development for residential or commercial use, bulkheading, removal of natural vegetation and forestland above the shore, and restriction of access. Other potential threats include blockage of shoreline transport of sand materials by jetties. Jetties can reduce the amount of sand deposited on beaches and lead to erosion and loss of beach. Control of development through acquisition as recreational areas is a feasible alternative. Another benefit would be the transfer of the costs to stabilize and control the shoreline zone to a wider user base.

Threatened and Endangered Species Habitats

The primary species of concern in Talbot County are the Delmarva fox squirrel and the bald eagle. Eagles usually nest near the shore within line of sight distance of the water. Much of their feeding is done in the shore or along the bay. Threats to the bald eagle include contamination of the food chain and disruption of nesting activities. Activities resulting in discharge of pesticides and metals into natural waters are a threat to the eagle. To prevent disruption of nesting, no development or clearing should take place within 660 feet of a nest. No development or clearing should take place within 1/2 mile during nesting season, and no disturbance should take place within 330

feet during nesting season.

The clearing of mixed pine-hardwood or hardwood forests over five acres may result in loss of Delmarva fox squirrel populations, if the animals are present. Any forested area or forest margin should be examined for their presence before development. Minimum areas of five acres or a minimum marginal zone should be left intact. Delmarva fox squirrel habitat is generally compatible with low intensity recreational activities such as camping, where the tree canopy is left largely intact. Thus such areas may be suitable for use as parks or recreational facilities.

Wetlands

Filling, clearing of timber, and alterations to hydrologic conditions constitute major wetland stresses. Protective needs may include restriction of timber harvest, enforcement of setback lines for construction and filling, and development of criteria for prevention of hydrologic disruptions of freshwater subsidies, hydroperiod, and salinity. Recreational facilities are generally compatible with wetlands. Acquisition for recreational purposes of land with wetlands could afford a secondary tier of protection in addition to regulatory implementation. However, boat and marina facilities are not compatible uses within tidal wetlands.

Choptank River System

Due to the presence of significant shellfish beds, anadromous fish spawning areas, aquatic nursery areas, and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) beds, special protection needs should be afforded to this basin. Erosion and runoff need to be minimized to prevent sedimentation, nutrient loading, and pesticide release. Maintenance of buffer zones and the acquisition of land adjacent to the river and tributaries to be used for low intensity recreational use can be major protection elements. Special attention must also be paid to siting of water-related facilities. These should be located near deep water with the minimum possible dredging or disturbance of shallow zones. The shortest possible access line for boats to the bay and mainstem of the river should be provided.

Public Access to the Bay

As indicated in the inventory section of this report, public access to the Bay comes in many forms. The Chesapeake Bay is considered to be the major recreation resource of Talbot County and access to the bay is provided by landings, wharfs, piers, marinas, boat slips as well as through private yacht clubs.

Surveys indicate that Talbot County residents consider the public access to the Bay as adequate. However, the Bay is a regional and State wide resource and demand for additional access will be made in the future. Potential access includes more water-oriented facilities such as swimming beaches and improved facilities at existing public landings and ramps.

The Preservation Needs as described above are discussed in further detail in the Critical Areas Plan.

1. Maryland Land Preservation and Recreation, Outdoor Recreation and Leisure Survey, 1986.

V PLAN

V PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Talbot County and the incorporated towns have an extensive park system for an area of their size. Not only does the County provide land in excess of contemporary acreage standards, a large majority of the local parks are extensively developed with a variety of recreation facilities. Future need for park acquisition and development for active facilities stems from locational criteria and locally perceived needs as opposed to any overall deficiencies in existing acreage and facilities.

Population growth is also not expected to place any significant pressure on the park and open space system of the county except in that it may stress natural areas. The changing composition of the County's population - a maturing population - may eventually effect facility development within the park system. However, this trend has no discernible impact on park needs at the present time.

The County's concern for the natural environment and the local perception that the Chesapeake Bay, and its adjoining waters, provides the residents with their most valuable recreation facility, is also a major factor in developing recommendations for land preservation and recreation. A number of the County's significant natural resources occur at sites where recreational use and natural parks may be desirable. Several of these resource areas have environmental characteristics which are generally compatible with recreation and conservation use and could be incorporated into the Land Preservation and Recreation Plan. These areas, and their environmental functions and recreational potential, are described herein.

The recommendations contained in the 1982 Talbot County Recreation and Open Space Plan were also reviewed and compared to this report's findings and suggestions. The original recommendations, findings and suggestions of that Plan have been updated and incorporated into the 1987 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan.

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS, ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The preceding chapters of this report have discussed a number of problems, issues and opportunities relative to parks, open space and recreation facilities. In addition, the 1982 Plan outlined certain key issues which effect parks and open space. The following is a brief summary of these issues and opportunities. It is intended that the specific

recommendations for active parks, recreation facilities and programs and natural parks will alleviate these issues and problems.

1. There are certain areas of the County which lack adequate provision of recreational facilities. For the most part, these areas are located outside the recommended service radius of existing neighborhood or community parks. These areas should be provided with at least a minimum of recreational services despite their lack of a supporting population base. The Plan should address this deficiency and recommend alternative solutions to this problem.

2. The County should continue to be sensitive to the people's needs, as they are expressed at public forums, and review recreational services on an "as needed" level in addition to the park and facility standards.

3. The recommended standards provide a generalized framework and guidelines for accomplishing the satisfactory provision of recreational needs to all the County's residents. The standards may, however, be customized to accommodate a special situation or an area's varying development conditions. These matters should be left to the judgment of the County recreation staff.

4. Facilities provided within an active park should respond to the prospective user characteristics and be sensitive to general requirements such as "... the parks should provide for both passive and active recreation", as nearly 90% of the respondents to the County's recreation questionnaire felt. However, people attending meetings and interviews regarding future issues felt the natural environment should provide for the majority of passive recreation .

5. The public information program should be continued. People should be continuously informed as to where parks are located, the type and range of facilities provided and the recreational programs offered.

6. Joint use planning and programming efforts with the schools and incorporated towns should be emphasized. Whenever possible, school sites

should be developed to meet the social, educational and recreational needs of the County.

7. Public access to the Bay and waterfront recreation areas and facilities should be improved in coordination with the "Critical Areas Plan".

8. A special effort should be made to integrate Historic Preservation into the land preservation and recreation process. Talbot County is rich with historic structures and sites and, in some cases, recreational activities could be provided within such sites. At a minimum, these historic structures and places fulfill an important cultural need of the County, State and region. The feasibility of such a combination should be examined on a case by case basis.

9. Although there are many opportunities for outdoor recreational activities, there is need for additional indoor recreational facilities. There is an expressed need for an indoor aquatic center and many feel the programs at the Community Center should be expanded.

10. The evaluation of existing park and recreation areas revealed that these facilities generally satisfy the needs of County residents. With the exception of the previously mentioned urban pockets, the County provides adequate public recreational and open space opportunities within its political boundaries. The County's long range plan, goals and objectives are attainable with the addition of a few properly distributed recreational facilities.

11. The County should continue to coordinate recreation planning and programming with the incorporated areas. The County and the towns should also evaluate the possibility of park and recreational space when planning for other local public facilities.

12. The County should carefully evaluate the "Critical Areas Plan" which will provide opportunities for open space, preservation, conservation and recreation facilities. Natural parks and recreational open spaces could:

provide additional acreage for satisfying overall State Standards; maintain and improve the water quality of the County's most important recreation resource - the Bay; be an important asset for preserving the rural character of the County; provide opportunities for public access to the waterfront; and protect unique natural areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan listed, in its acquisition program, a need for additional active parks and recreation facilities. That program listed eight sites associated with particular communities, two waterfront locations, and public landings in general. These sites have been further evaluated in this Plan and still are the areas in need of additional open space in Talbot County. The following active parks are recommended for acquisition and development by the County and towns.

Mini Parks

Mini parks should be provided in conjunction with future urban development. Developers should be encouraged to provide land for mini parks within the immediate area of their subdivisions. Facility development should be tailored to the needs of the immediate users.

It is recommended that future major developments or subdivisions, provide mini park space at the ratio of 400 square feet per lot. The location of the mini park should be designated on the subdivision plat and either dedicated to the town or an approved homeowners association formed for that development. Subdivisions or developments of less than 25 lots should be encouraged to contribute funds for use at the surrounding neighborhood and community park system. Large lot subdivisions, should be excluded from this provision since these areas will have private play space for children and residents.

Neighborhood and Community Parks

The following neighborhood and/or community parks should be considered. The need for these parks comes from expressed community desires and an inadequate service radius of the existing park system, as measured by the standards and criteria in Chapter II of this Plan. As noted above, many of these areas were also recommended in the 1982 Recreation and Open Space

Plan. It should be clearly understood that the herein recommendations relate to the park area. Although the facilities that were recommended in the 1982 Plan are noted, it is our recommendation that the facilities that are ultimately developed in these parks be determined by the Parks and Recreation Department in connection with area residents.

1. Claiborne/McDaniel: Although these communities are within the service of existing neighborhood parks (See Map IV-3), the residents have continually requested a park in the area.

   The 1982 Plan noted that since the creation of the Department of Parks & Recreation these communities have requested a park which both communities could share. The Plan indicated that active recreational facilities, such as tennis courts, playing fields and playgrounds, should be contained within these park areas.

   A community park is recommended for this area since it could also serve the residents from Claiborne to Tilghman Island- an area which is not within the service radius of an existing community park.

2. Bozman: A neighborhood park is recommended for this area. The 1982 Plan noted that "requests from the community for a Park in Bozman began in 1977. Bozman will require a park of 4 to 6 acres which would provide space for a Softball Field, Tennis Courts, Football /Soccer Field, Picnic Area and Playground Equipment."

3. Tunis Mills and Unionville: A neighborhood park is recommended for the area of Tunis Mills, Unionville and Copperville. Map IV-4 indicates that this area is not presently served by either a neighborhood or community park. The 1982 Plan stated that "this community will require a minimum four acre site to provide a Softball Field, Tennis Courts and Playground Equipment. Early stages of planning have identified a need in Unionville for the young adults in the community."

4. Lewistown and Matthews: A small neighborhood park of four to six acres is needed in this area. Ac-

cording to the results of a resident survey, the facilities should include a Softball Field, Football/Soccer Field, Tennis Courts, Picnic and Play Equipment. The area is not within the recommended service radius of either a neighborhood or community park.

5. Windyhill and Bruceville: These communities are also outside the recommended service radius of existing neighborhood and community parks. Therefore, a neighborhood park in the range of four to six acres is recommended. The 1982 Plan indicated that "these communities have been identified as a service area which will require a minimum four acre park containing softball, Little League, Basketball Courts, Playground and Picnic Area."

6. Ivytown: An additional neighborhood park at Ivytown will help fulfill some of the unmet recreation needs of the Easton area. Although this area is within the service radius of neighborhood and community parks, it is included due to citizen request. A park at Ivytown was also recommended in the 1982 Plan which stated that "open Space needs from Ivytown can be met with a 3 to 5 acre site. Ivytown is recommended to have a smaller site because of its relative size. The Park should contain Softball/Little League, Basketball Courts, Picnic and Playground Equipment."

7. Royal Oak and Easton West: Map IV-4 indicates several additional areas of the County which need to be monitored for neighborhood park need. Although these areas are within the service radius of existing parks, the density of population indicates a potential future park need. Later recommendations for natural parks and/or recreational open spaces may fulfill this pending need. Therefore, no specific parks or facilities are recommended but the needs of these areas should be further evaluated.

Waterfront Parks and Public Landings

The recommendations for recreational open space , which were compiled from the natural resources inventory, indicate a number of sites with potential for public landings and waterfront parks. As the need for additional waterfront parks and public landings is determined, these sites should be considered. A standard of one public landing per 1000 persons, as suggested in the 1982 Plan, indicates that additional waterfront and landing sites will be needed.

It is also recommended that the site of the Old Choptank River Bridge be maintained as a waterfront recreation area. The Old Bridge , if feasible,should be utilized as a fishing pier and public access for swimming and boating should be maintained.

The County Department of Parks and Recreation should continue their efforts to expand one of the Choptank River Boat Landings. The recreational open space opportunities, described hereafter, may provide some guidance for this effort. If one of those sites could be expanded to include active recreation facilities, it may also meet the needs of either the Windy Hill/Bruceville Communities or Lewistown/Matthews Community.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives for the 1987 Talbot County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan are very similar to those contained in the 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan. The 1982 goals and objectives were updated and additional goals have been derived from the County Comprehensive Plan, the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Program,and meetings with citizen groups and public officials. However, the basic concept and design of the 1987 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan is consistent with the earlier plan-to provide an adequate level of parks and recreation facilities for the residents of the County and to protect and enhance the valuable natural resources of the area.

This section summarizes the major goals for the preservation, open space and recreation activities of Talbot County. Specific objectives are outlined for each of the goals and are intended to provide both qualitative and quantitative measures for the assessment of goal achievement. All references to the County are intended to include both the County government and the incorporated towns within Talbot County.

Goal One: **The County should Provide Public Parks, Recreation Facilities and Open Space Areas to Meet the Psychological, Social, and Physical needs of all the County residents.**

Objectives

1. Provide open spaces, parks, playgrounds, and recreational areas that are readily accessible to the majority of County residents.

2. Provide the type of active and passive recreation facilities and opportunities that will meet locally perceived recreational needs.

3. Develop and maintain an information program to insure that as many citizens as possible are aware of the recreation and open space opportunities that exist in the County, as well as the region.

4. Utilize the standards and classification system outlined in this Plan for guidance in determining the amount, location and size of future recreation areas. The use of these standards should be tempered by local perceptions of need and the recreation needs of the prospective users of the planned facilities and/or sites.

5. Develop recreation facilities in public parks that meet the expressed needs of the users of the service area.

6. Provide recreation space, facilities and programs that will meet the needs of special user groups - senior citizens, young people and the physically disabled.

7. Estimate the demand for parks, open space, recreation facilities, and programs on a periodic basis - at least every five years - to assure that the system continually meets the needs of County residents.

8. Give priority to the acquisition and development of neighborhood and community parks since these type of parks are directly related to locally oriented recreation needs.

9. Encourage the acquisition and development of waterfront parks in the County for the use and enjoyment of County residents.

10. Assist local civic organizations by providing equipment to community parks used for organized activities.

11. Encourage private individuals,organizations and quasi-public groups to maintain and enlarge the present level of non-publicly owned parks, open space and recreation facilities.

12. Encourage the development of active recreation facilities in public parks and utilize natural parks and/or the natural environment to provide the majority of passive recreation activities.

Goal Two: **The County Should Provide a Balanced, Diversified Flexible Park and Recreation Program.**

Objectives

1. Maximize efforts to develop a large regional park at the Community Center site. Additional acreage may be needed at this site to meet the County's future needs for youth sports and other active recreational activities.

2. Continue the policy of joint education-recreation use of school facilities and, whenever possible, expand recreation programming and activities at educational (school) sites.

3. Encourage joint sponsorship and planning of recreation programs between the Department of Parks and Recreation, the County's towns and quasi-public agencies.

4. Amend the County and Town subdivision regulations to require the provision of land for recreation in new developments. New developments should be encouraged to provide mini-parks and sites for neighborhood parks. In addition, the County

should provide incentives to developers for the provision of recreational facilities at these sites.

5. Maintain an active working relationship with all private and public organizations that provide recreation opportunities to insure that all available recreational resources are effectively and broadly used by County residents.
6. Provide a climate which encourages the private sector to produce appropriate recreational programs.

7. Establish a user fee policy for special activities which are sponsored for a limited number of participants.+

8. Initiate studies to determine the feasibility of providing additional indoor recreation facilities such as an aquatic center.

9. Expand the indoor programs, during non-ice seasons, that are provided at the Talbot County Community Center.

Goal Three: Integrate Recreation Planning Policies with other County Development Goals and Objectives.

Objectives

1. Provide a balanced and coordinated system of parks, open spaces and recreation facilities which will interconnect County villages and towns. Assist the towns in the creation of additional parks and recreation space.

2. Balance County fiscal allocations for parks, open space and recreational programs in relationship to other public programs.

3. Emphasize the preservation and improvement of public areas providing access to the County's water resources, its major rivers, particularly the

County's Scenic Rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay.

4. Use the land use regulations of the County to protect natural resources and provide, when reasonable, additional sites for park and open space use.

5. Attempt, wherever possible, to investigate and utilize alternative opportunities for recreation lands and or uses, such as abandoned rights-of-way, closed schools, and tax sale properties.

6. Incorporate historic buildings and sites into the inventory of park and recreation areas. These areas are major assets and fulfill an important cultural, leisure and recreation function.

7. Recognize that land preservation and recreation planning is an important mechanism for maintaining the rural character of Talbot county.

Goal Four: **Incorporate Land Preservation, Natural Resource Management and the Protection of the County's Natural and Cultural Environment into the Park and Recreation Planning Process.**

Objectives

1. Strive to integrate recreational planning and programming with the preservation of the County's natural and cultural environment. Develop management and regulatory techniques which will conserve and/or preserve such assets as farmland, wetlands, floodplains, upland natural areas, scenic vistas, historical sites, unique natural open spaces and shorelines.

2. Coordinate County and town efforts with the State of Maryland in developing and implementing a Critical Areas Management Program. The Program shall include the designation of areas for conservation, preservation, and development in accordance with the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Act.

3. Utilize critical areas and natural resources which are identified in the Critical Areas Program and the Comprehensive Plan Update to select new recreation and open space sites.

4. Emphasize conservation and passive activities at the majority of natural parks and resource areas.

5. Preserve, protect and enhance the coastal areas of Talbot County while acknowledging the economic significance of such areas. Develop techniques and programs which will preserve the natural beauty of the County's waterfront.

6. Encourage the creation, preservation and restoration of marine grass beds, tidal marshes, and upland forests.

7. Protect and restrict the use of flood plains for active development and create a system of linear parks along the streams, creeks and tributaries of the County.

8. Preserve the County's wetland areas and otherwildlife habitats. Provide incentives to establish and maintain wildlife management areas.

9. Protect the quantity and quality of ground and surface waters. Maintain and improve water quality at a level suitable for human contact, shellfish production, and harvesting.

10. Protect potable water supplies and develop measures which will prevent saltwater intrusions into freshwater sources of potable water.

Many of the goals and objectives from the 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan are still relevant to the needs of Talbot County. These have been integrated with a number of pertinent goals and objectives from the Comprehensive and Critical Area Plans and are intended to guide the County's policies and actions for the coming decade.

For many years, the County has made progress in implementing the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and the Recreation and Open Space Plan. These efforts have established a basis and direction for the future development of the County. The goals, objectives and recommendations of the 1987 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan should be in accordance with the direction established in those plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATURAL PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

The natural resources inventory, which was conducted as part of the Critical Areas Program, has identified a number of large sites with special features and characteristics. Since one of the goals of The Land Preservation and Recreation Plan is to integrate land preservation and natural resource protection into the park and recreation planning process, this section recommends a number of areas for consideration as natural or unique parks.

Many of these sites contain features which provide significant environmental functions and values; are representative of the natural resources of Talbot County; are unique areas or simply are outstanding examples of the County's natural features. Some of these natural areas may be compatible with low intensity recreational or educational use, but in the majority of instances, they need to be preserved in an unaltered state. These areas are candidates for the Natural Parks designation as defined in the Critical Area Plan legislation.

Other large areas may provide a rural or natural character, but are less environmentally sensitive or threatened. Although these areas are worthy of conservation, they may be suitable for high intensity recreational uses and a multi-use recreational environment may afford the best means of conservation.

A total of thirty-six sites or areas have been identified which have characteristics potentially suitable for a natural park or open space area. Suitability was evaluated only in an environmental capacity with no regard to ownership, current land use, accessibility, method of acquisition or preservation, existing programs, or similar factors.

Natural Parks

The Critical Area Plan legislation defines natural parks as areas of natural habitat that provide opportunities for those recreational activities that are compatible with the maintenance of natural conditions. The legislation encourages

local jurisdictions to identify areas where natural parks could be established and to consider conserving these features. Park boundaries should be based on biological or environmental criteria rather than administrative convenience.

A total of twenty-five areas have been identified in Talbot County and are proposed for screening as natural park areas. Most of these areas are, at least partially, within the Critical Area. The sites were selected on several factors. The primary consideration was that the areas had to be in a relatively natural state with intact biological and geological resources.

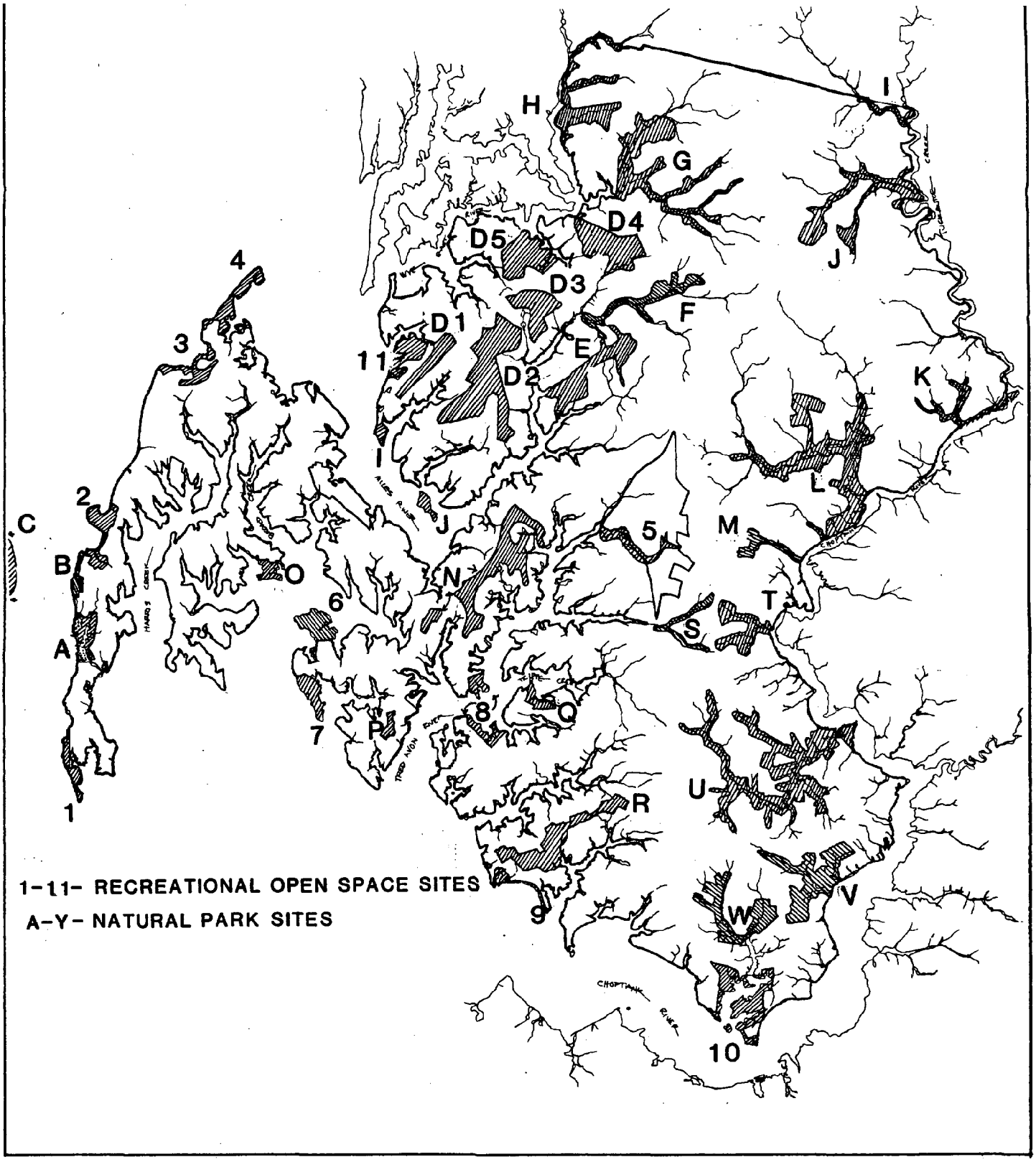
Other criteria included whether the site would be large enough to retain the natural character and, where several areas had similar character, priority was given to the larger sites. The natural condition of the areas was also considered and included criteria such as the absence of buildings or roads, presence of large areas not actively managed for timber production or agriculture, and the extent of natural shoreline. Age and size of trees and vegetation was important and the length of time since last major disturbance was also considered to be important. Areas which are typical of coastal or other natural systems are also included.

Many of the proposed areas are sensitive to development or disturbance, provide important environmental functions and act as a natural buffer thus helping to maintain water quality in the Chesapeake Bay system. Preservation of these areas in their natural state would be a significant factor in the preservation of the water quality of the bay. Recreational uses which would generally be compatible with such areas would include canoeing, hiking, bicycle or bridle paths, fishing, birdwatching, other nature observation, and primitive camping.

A list of potential sites for natural parks and recreational open spaces are contained in Table V-1. Their locations are noted on Map V-1. The following describes the potential natural park sites. The letter preceding the description keys the natural park site to Map V-1.

A. Amy's Point Marsh - Front Creek - Back Creek

This site includes the area north of Knapps Narrows and Tilghman Island and west of Highway 33 north to the upper ends of Back Creek and Front Creek. The area consists of an estuary , brackish marsh, and mixed and hardwood forests, as well as the island and marsh at the mouth of Back Creek.



POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE and NATURAL PARK SITES

Map No V-1

miles

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Wiles Dailey Kane

Reston, Va. Sarasota, Fla.

Talbot County, Maryland

This site constitutes one of the largest marsh areas fronting directly on Chesapeake Bay in Talbot County. The creeks are probably valuable nursery areas in a section of coast where nurseries may be sparse. The shrub communities on the island and along the coast have potential as a rookery or roosting areas for wading birds and the creeks are moderately important waterfowl areas. Agricultural land between the creeks also has potential as feeding grounds for species such as the Canada goose.

This area could be vulnerable to increased sediments and pollutants if development of the upland portions, bordering the creek, is allowed. Development could also contribute to shoreline erosion which, in turn, could result in malfunction or damage from the adjacent Tilghman sewage treatment facility. The marshes of this reach serve as an important buffer in stabilizing the shore.

B. Goat Island - Green Marsh Point

Goat Island has largely disappeared due to shoreline erosion and the remaining part is primarily marshy in character. This site includes the island, the marsh-beach-berm system behind it, and approximately 100 acres of forest on the inland side of the marsh. The forest is moderately diverse and is an older mixed forest stand with pockets of swamp and bottomland hardwood or hydric forest vegetation.

The area is a representative example of the coastal systems of the region and also is a keystone area for shoreline stabilization efforts along the Chesapeake Bay shoreline. The forest has some potential as habitat for the Delmarva fox squirrel and the bald eagle, although their presence has not been documented. Wading bird, waterfowl, and forest interior dwelling bird habitat also exists in this site.

C. Poplar Island Group

These offshore islands in the Chesapeake Bay are accessible only by boat. At least part of the area is owned or controlled by a conservation group. Islands included in this site are Poplar, Jefferson, Coaches, and North Point.

Forests, tidal marshes, and beaches comprise the natural communities, submerged aquatic vegetation(SAV) and aquatic nursery areas which are located throughout the central portion known as Poplar Harbor. A jetty or breakwater on Jefferson Island may allow boat access without extensive disturbance of the aquatic beds.

Poplar Island contains one of the largest wading bird rookeries in the entire Chesapeake Bay. It is probably the largest bird colony in the upper portion of the bay. The primary species utilizing this rookery has been the great blue heron, although cattle egrets are beginning to occur. More than 450 active nests have been reported from this site (U.S. Fish and Wildlife service, 1978). Bald eagle and osprey nests also occur on Jefferson and Poplar Islands. Potentially valuable oyster beds occur south of Coaches Island.

Shoreline erosion is the major natural stress on these islands, with development only a minor consideration.

D. Miles River Neck Area Interior Forests

Several large forested tracts occur in the region between the Miles and and Wye East Rivers. Some of these areas are similar in composition, physiognomy, and habitat characteristics to Third Haven Woods (Site E). In general, these areas are less mature and have somewhat lower diversity than Third Haven Woods.

Stands D2 and D3 appear to have slightly greater topographic relief that the other stands in this group. As a result, these stands have greater community and species diversity. Beech-oak-holly associations found at the top of the slopes grade into red maple-black gum-willow associations at the bases of some slopes.

These large and undeveloped forests range in size from 330 to 1,500+ acres. They constitute the largest forested stands, and some of the largest natural areas, in Talbot County. They are significant habitat for the Delmarva fox squirrel as well as many forest dwelling birds and other species requiring undisturbed habitats.

Due to their locations in the centers of the necks,their potential of direct impacts to water quality in the Bay is somewhat low. These areas do serve as headwaters for many of the intermittent and perennial streams that contribute freshwater flow to the Wye East and Miles Rivers and to Leeds and Woodland Creeks.

E. Third Haven Woods

This 325-acre forest, owned by the Nature Conservancy, is north of Goldsborough Neck Road between Goldsborough Creek and Potts Mill Creek. The area shown on the Map V-1 contains other natural forests adjacent to this nature preserve. Third Haven Woods is a mature upland forest dominated by beech, oaks and

loblolly pine. Several small drainage areas, bordered by swamps and bottomlands, run through the area. This old age stand offers excellent Delmarva fox squirrel habitat and good plant diversity.

Current management practices of the Nature Conservancy, including a lack of publicity and lack of access, probably represent the best management alternative. Development of the adjacent forested areas for residential or other urban uses presents the greatest potential stress or peril to this area.

F. Potts Mill Creek

Below Highway 662, Potts Mill Creek flows downstream to the beginning of the Miles River. In this location, it meanders through a brackish/fresh marsh complex and averages about 500 feet in width. Above Highway 662, the creek ranges in width from 200 to 700 feet and flows through bottomland forests and swamps. Mixed loblolly pine,oak and yellow poplar forest is prevalent on the north side of the upstream part of the creek. Potts Mill Creek is a significant tributary which forms the headwater of the Miles River. As such, it is a major source of freshwater flow in the area. Anadromous fish have been recorded from this creek and, historically, this region has been considered as a bald eagle nesting area.

The upland natural areas along this stream are relatively narrow which limits recreation potential. However, the extensive swamps and marshes, significant water quality maintenance functions, and aquatic habitat values warrant conservation. The area is also a good representative example of the transitional freshwater/brackish marshes and wetlands forests.

G. Skipton Creek - Mill Creek

Skipton and Mill Creeks are major tributaries of the Wye East River and contribute a significant portion of its freshwater flow. Anadromous fish have been recorded as far upstream as Highways 50 and 662. Both Skipton Creek, and the greater portion of Mill Creek, contain significant brackish/freshwater marshes. THe upper portion of Mill Creek, west of Highway 50, is a wooded basin designated as a nature sanctuary.

Most of the shores of these creeks are forested and the dominant species are oak, sycamore, yellow poplar, loblolly pine, and red maple. The creek banks are fairly steep and highly erodible. In the upper portions of the creeks, swamps and bottomland forests are important features.

Preservation of these creeks - in a natural state - is important for prevention of erosion and sedimentation, water quality maintenance, and flood control. Protection of water quality and freshwater flow in this drainage area will assist in maintaining the potential of downstream wetlands, preserving nursery areas for anadromous fish spawning and providing support of the shell fisheries of Eastern Bay.

Compatible recreation and educational opportunities may include hiking or bridle trails, bicycle trails, canoeing, and nature interpretation in the sensitive zones.

H. Wye East River Bluffs

The western shore of the Wye East River, for about 3 miles downstream from Wye Mills, has a buffer strip of forests ranging from 300 to 1,000 feet in width. The first 100 to 200 feet of the bluffs are generally steep lands. The forests are good quality, moderate to old age stands and overlook a river channel which meanders through extensive marshes. Two unnamed and perennial tributaries flow through valleys into the Wye River. These valleys contain swamp and bottomland forests and are bordered by extensive mixed upland forests.

This area offers good habitat for the Delmarva fox squirrel, osprey, bald eagle, and forest dwelling birds. The marsh and forested wetlands are also extensive and significant. The surrounding steep slopes and poorly drained agricultural lands have a potential for erosion and subsequent degradation of water quality.

Utilization of the existing forested areas for conservation practices and incorporation into a natural parks setting would be an important factor in maintaining water quality in the lower Wye East River. Compatible uses would include hiking and bicycle trails, picnicking, canoeing and fishing. Nature observation and educational trails would be suitable in this setting. Wye Oak State Park adjoins the north end of this strip and could possibly be integrated into this area.

I. Norwich Creek

The Talbot County portion of Norwich Creek is approximately one mile in length and is located near Queen Anne. The natural area consists of a creek flowing through bottomland forests and swamps. It is surrounded by a band of mixed forest with a width of about 600 to 1,200 feet.

Although the creek is crossed by several bridges and is near a developed area, it is one of the most accessible and representative wetland forest systems in the County. Although its proximity to developed areas has resulted in some disturbance, the educational and demonstration value of the area may be high. The system appears to be excellent habitat for many bird, reptile, and small mammal species. Marshes, tidally influenced swamps and shrub stands near the mouth of the creek have potential as wading bird habitat. Anadromous fish have also been reported from this creek as well as Tuckahoe Creek which is near the mouth of this tributary.

J. Unnamed Creek Near Tappers Corners

This creek originates as several small tributaries which join near Cordova and flow into Tuckahoe Creek east of Tappers Corners. This system is similar to Norwich Creek although it has a larger drainage area. The limits of the natural area include about one mile of the contiguous shoreline of Tuckahoe Creek south of Rolph's Landing.

Several hundred acres of riverine marshes, up to 1,200 feet in width, occur along Tuckahoe Creek and near the mouth of this creek where they grade into bottomland forests. These bottomland forests extend up the creek before they grade into swamp and marsh communities north and east of Cordova. Upland forest borders the wetlands along steep slopes and bluffs.

Anadromous fish have been reported from Tuckahoe Creek and this tributary. The wetlands are good habitat for waterfowl, wading birds, and have potential roosting and rookery features. The forests offer breeding habitat for forest dwelling birds and potential habitat for bald eagles and Delmarva fox squirrels is also present.

This creek drains a large area of high quality farmland which is suitable for urban development. Thus, sediment and nutrient/pesticide loading from this basin is potentially high. Therefore, the wetlands of the tributary can be an important buffer in maintaining water quality in the highly productive Choptank River system.

The site is well-suited for many low intensity recreational and educational uses such as hiking, fishing, canoeing, bicycling, picnicking, bird watching, and nature interpretation. Adjacent open grounds, along the creek and near Tuckahoe Creek in the vicinity of Rolph's Landing, could be used for other activities such as camping and boat launching. This area is potentially suited for a regional or state park.

K. Turkey Creek

The drainage system south of Turkey Creek Road is suitable as a natural park with potential for educational and preservation uses. However, it is not particularly adaptable for general recreation purposes. The area includes a large riverine marsh system which extends from the confluence of Tuckahoe Creek and the Choptank River, south to the mouth of Turkey Creek. Turkey Creek contains two branches and meanders through a 600 foot wide marsh which extends about one mile upstream from the mouth. A narrow band of steep slopes, with mixed forest cover, borders the marsh and the bottomland forests.

The marshes are the most ecologically valuable resource in this system. Although the creek has suitable characteristics for anadromous fish spawning waters, there are no records of their presence in the creek. Because of the narrow width of the system and the presence of steep slopes, recreation activities should be limited to canoeing, fishing, hiking and nature trails. A subdivision is being developed on the south side of the creek which could increase the vulnerability of the system.

L. Kings Creek Drainage

The Kings Creek drainage area is one of the largest fluvial tributaries of the Choptank River to be found in Talbot County. This system consists of Kings Creek and several tributaries from which it is formed. Galloway Run and Wootenaux Creek join to form the headwaters of the system just east of Easton. Beaverdam Branch is the third major tributary and joins Kings Creek south of Mathews. Kings Creek has a width of 50 to 100 feet for a distance extending several miles upstream from the Choptank River. The first mile of the creek consists of a broad (1,000 foot) marsh grading into extensive bottomland forests and shrub swamps. Each of the major tributaries is reported to be without upstream obstacles at least to Highway 328. This provides for several miles of potential anadromous fish spawning waters. Extensive marshes border the Choptank River at the mouth of this creek in a reach noted for striped bass spawning.

This drainage system contains diverse and high quality habitat for many wildlife groups. It also may serve as a major natural corridor for wildlife movement across the county. It also provides forested corridors, in both an east-west and north-south direction. The corridors extend to Skipton and Potts Mill Creeks to the northwest, to an unnamed tributary of Tuckahoe Creek to the northeast, and to the Glebe Creek drainage north of Easton.

The headwaters of this system are near the limits of Easton. Therefore, the significance of the water quality maintenance, buffering, flood control, and wildlife corridor functions of this system are enhanced by the crucial location of the system.

The natural areas in this drainage are extensive and could offer numerous recreational activities including fishing, canoeing,and possible boat access sites for the Choptank River.

M. Williams Creek

This system is similar to Turkey Creek in that a marsh extends far up the creek and then grades into a bottomland forest. In the Williams Creek area, there is little marsh facing the Choptank River. The marsh found along the creek is a transitional form between brackish and freshwater types.

A sufficient expanse of hardwood and mixed upland forest borders the creek which provides an opportunity for Delmarva fox squirrel and forest dwelling bird habitat.

The headwaters of the creek border the Easton landfill and waste stabilization lagoons. Since publicly administered land is nearby, there is some possibility of joint use. However, due to the nature of the adjoining public lands, this possibility needs further investigation. The location of this drainage adjacent to the lagoons does increase the buffering value of the wetlands and emphasizes the importance of a natural park in this area.

N. Royal Oak Forests

Royal Oak Forests are generally located to the southeast of the Village of Royal Oak and Highway 33 between Pecks Point Road, the Tred Avon River and Bloomfield Road. This forested expanse of about 1,000 acres is broken only by roads and rights-of-ways. The forests are predominately moderate age upland and bottomland stands. Smaller high quality stands also occur south of Royal Oak. These forests offer good habitat for forest dwelling birds, raptors, Delmarva fox squirrel, and other species. The accessible location of these forests increase their potential for conservation and passive recreation uses but also makes them highly vulnerable to development pressure.

O. Mulberry Point

The mixed forests at the end of Mulberry Point are of relatively high quality and moderate age. The surrounding area

are experiencing moderate development pressure and therefore the ecosystems at Mulberry Point are threatened. Major ecological resources of the Point include the extensive SAV beds, nursery areas, shellfish harvest and seed beds. The resources which surround the Point are highly vulnerable to boat traffic, sedimentation, pollutant run-off, and septic tank failure. Since this is a point, the amount of shoreline relative to the acreage of the area, is relatively high. This site is representative of the coastal systems of the region and a natural parks designation would provide significant protection to the near-shore systems. The site would not be particularly compatible with many of the recreational uses normally associated with a shoreline area.

P. Ferry Neck Forest

This 150 acre area of mixed forest is similar to the fairly large stands throughout Ferry Neck. The primary reason for inclusion as a potential natural park is the documented presence of two bald eagle nesting sites and the presence of swamp stands in the forest. Existing development is light in the area, but Bellevue is less than a mile away and substantial development pressure is occurring on the north side of Edge Creek.

Q. Otwell Woodland Preserve

This preserve is approximately 200 acres of mixed forest stand on the south side of Trappe Creek and northwest of Trappe Station. The forest is representative of the region and has an approximately 1.5-mile reach of natural wooded shoreline. The area is currently managed as a natural area.

R. Island Neck Forests

The interior region of Island Neck contains over 1,500 acres of forests which are generally contiguous except for some breaks for roads and agricultural lands. This is one of the largest concentrations of forest in the southern portion of the county. The forest types include mixed upland forest, bottomland forests, and pine plantations. Diversity is fairly high, but much of the forest is fairly young and in early successional stages. A Delmarva fox squirrel population exists here and the forest is also good habitat for forest dwelling birds and other wildlife. There is relatively little drainage out of these forests so that water quality maintenance functions are relatively low.

S. Upper Peachblossom Creek

From Highway 50 east, Peachblossom Creek branches into two tributaries with narrow, well-defined valleys and narrow floodplains. ALthough they are narrow, both branches have well-developed and rather old-age forests throughout their lengths. The north branch originates in the Seth Demonstration Forests. Both branches are contiguous to other large upland forest stands at various points. The location of these branches provides corridors for the easterly movement of wildlife to the Choptank River via Barker and Williams Creeks and an unnamed tributary. Movement of wildlife to the north and south is possible through wooded connections to Skipton Creek and Miles Creek.

Due to the lack of significant wetlands in the lower Peachblossom basin and the proximity of Easton, the buffer effect of the forests and wetlands of upper Peachblossom Creek may have increasingly significant water quality importance.

T. Unnamed Choptank River Tributary

This tributary enters the Choptank River across from Frazier Neck. The system consists of tidal marsh in the lower reaches and narrow bottomland forest in the upper reaches. The two branches originate in upland forests with some habitat potential for Delmarva fox squirrel, forest dwelling birds, and other species. The creek has several thousand feet of potential anadromous fish spawning waters and wading bird and waterfowl habitat.

Low intensity recreational uses such as hiking and camping would be compatible in the upper reaches, while canoeing and fishing are possible activities in the lower reach.

U. Miles Creek

Miles Creek enters the Choptank River north of Windy Hill and south of Lloyd Landing. It is one of the largest tributaries of the Choptank River within Talbot County. The main branch originates northwest of Trappe and the drainage primarily flows through agricultural lands. The creek is comprised of over four miles of mainstream and two miles of tributaries. Its widths vary between 50 and 400 feet but it meanders through extensive marshes which are up to 1,000 feet in width. Almost 500 acres of marsh are associated with the creek and the adjacent shore of the Choptank River. The upstream portions flow through bottomland forests and swamps and upland forests line the slopes above the creek. In most places, these forests are over 600 feet in width.

Miles Creek appears to be an important anadromous fish spawning creek. Its extensive marshes with partial tidal influence are important as nursery areas and waterfowl/wading bird habitat. The forests are excellent habitat for forest dwelling birds and other species including the Delmarva fox squirrel. The forests, near the creek's mouth, harbor several active bald eagle nests, the largest concentration in the County. Another significant environmental value is the corridor function which allows wildlife movement to the interior of the county as well as to the north, west and south.

Diversity of both plant communities and plant species is high in this area due to varied terrain and the length of the drainage. Several areas of relatively old-age natural forests also occur.

Due to the overall length of this system, compatible locations for most outdoor recreational activities can be found. Within the immediate vicinity of the creeks, activities such as nature observation, hiking, bicycle trails and similar activities may be suitable as long as erosion is controlled.

V. Raccoon Creek - Kate's Point

Raccoon Creek is a 2-mile long tributary of the Choptank River located to the east of Barber and Bristolwood. For about one mile, the creek flows through a slightly brackish marsh. It then enters a narrow bottomland forest and upland forest system where wide expanses of upland forest are contiguous to the creek. This area includes a smaller unnamed creek entering the Choptank River from the north at Kate's Point. Vegetative diversity is also relatively high in this area.

W. Upper Bolingbroke Creek

This creek originates to the southeast of Trappe and then runs parallel to Route 50 about one mile east of the highway. Because of its proximity to the Route 50 highway corridor, this creek should be considered as under potential development pressure. In addition, the largest sand and gravel mining operations in the county are at the upper end of the creek. Otherwise, the basin is essentially agricultural with moderate sedimentation and run-off potential.
The portion of the Choptank River, at the mouth of Upper Bolingbroke Creek, is believed to be an area of concentration of larval striped bass and a nursery for many young fish. The maintenance and improvement of water quality in Bolingbroke Creek should have a significant effect on this fishery. Forests in the upper basin are somewhat disturbed, primarily due to mining, and are not extensive nor of especially high

quality. They do have some habitat value and function as the primary wildlife corridor in the southern part of the County.

Recreational Open Space

The natural resources inventory has also identified eleven sites which have potential as multi-use recreational areas in which some degree of conservation of natural resources would be enhanced. These areas are generally of a rural nature and are located in agricultural or natural settings, usually along the shore. However, the natural environment of the majority of these areas has been significantly altered by agriculture, timber production, or other uses.

These areas were selected on the basis of their location near some form of Bay and/or water access and their potential for providing different types of recreational activity. Many of the areas have open spaces - often agricultural fields - which have potential for development into playing fields, playgrounds, picnicking and campgrounds without major disturbance to important natural vegetation. Most sites also are characterized by forests or wetlands which offer opportunities for hiking, nature trails or nature observation. In addition, most of the sites have shoreline characteristics which may have potential for development as beaches, boat ramps or marinas.

Suitability for beaches was generally assessed by the presence of a sand or gravel berm or a beach with sufficient reach to allow natural replenishment of sand through longshore drift. These factors would minimize the cost of maintenance, but the nature of this drift may also cause currents which may prove too hazardous for swimming. Also considered were areas of high shoreline erosion where stabilization measures, such as revetments or beach nourishment, would help conserve the resource and provide recreational opportunities such as fishing or swimming.

The potential for boat ramp or launching facilities was also important factors in selecting these sites. A primary consideration was shoreline areas with proximity to deep water but, where boats would not have to pass through sensitive wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation or estuarine flats nursery areas to reach the deep waters. Locations near the mouths of creeks were emphasized to minimize potential boat traffic, wake and wave effects on the creeks and to avoid the disturbance to upstream waterfowl nesting areas.

TABLE V-1

List of Potential Sites for Recreational Open Space or Natural Parks

Recreational Open Space Sites

1. Blackwalnut Point - Tilghman Island
2. Lowes Point - Ferry Point - Harbor Cove
3. Wades Point - to Claiborne Shoreline
4. Rich Neck - Tilghman Point - Seth Point
5. Papermill Pond - Windmill Branch
6. Bridge Creek - Elberts Cove
7. Irish Creek Area
8. Peck's Point - Flatty Cove
9. Chlora Point - Martin Point Shoreline
10. Bolingbroke Creek - Chancellor Point
11. Woodland Creek

Natural Parks Sites

A. Amy's Point Marsh - Front Creek - Back Creek
B. Goat Island - Green Marsh Point
C. Poplar Island Group
D. Miles River Neck Area Interior Forests
E. Third Haven Woods
F. Potts Mill Creek
G. Skipton Creek - Mill Creek
H. Wye East River Bluffs
I. Norwich Creek
J. Unnamed Creek Near Tappers Corners
K. Turkey Creek
L. Kings Creek Drainage
M. Williams Creek
N. Royal Oak Forests
O. Mulberry Point
P. Ferry Neck Forest
Q. Otwell Woodland Preserve
R. Island Neck Woods
S. Upper Peachblossom Creek
T. Unnamed Choptank River Tributary
U. Miles Creek
V. Raccoon Creek - Kate's Point
W. Upper Bolingbroke Creek

The following section describes each identified site. It should be noted that the following sites are potential open space areas and should not be considered as a specific proposal for acquisition. The recreational open space sites are keyed to Map V-1 by numerical designations. Table V-1 lists the potential recreational open space sites as well as the potential natural park sites.

1. Blackwalnut Point-Tilghman Island

The Blackwalnut Point site is located at the southerly tip of Tilghman Island and extends from the tip of the point north to PawPaw Cove, It contains shoreline along the Chesapeake Bay, east of Blackwalnut Road, and shore frontage on Blackwalnut and Barney's Cove. The state has already purchased a portion of the site.

This site has forests for natural areas, camping, hiking, picnicking, and birdwatching. The Bay shore and the tip of the point have potential for boat ramps with direct access to deep water. Blackwalnut and Barney's Coves offer potential for crabbing, clamming, oystering and fishing. The rip rap or revetment on the western shore has potential for fishing which could be augmented by seasonal fishing piers. Paw Paw Cove has some beach which could have potential as a swimming beach.

Park and recreation uses could be compatible in this area provided they include some appropriate shoreline erosion controls. This area has one of the highest erosion rates in the county. User fees might represent a means of providing for maintenance of control measures. Present uses of this site include low density residential, a federal government facility, old planted pine forests, tidal marsh, beach, and agriculture.

2. Lowes Point - Ferry Point - Harbor Cove

This site is located on the west side of Tilghman Island Road (Highway 33) between Goat Island on the south and Harbor Cove on the north. It has extensive water access including Ferry Cove and Cabin Cove on the south side of Lowes Point, Harbor Cove on the north side, and the Chesapeake Bay to the east. Lowes Wharf is also located in this area.

This site contains a significant marsh-estuarine flat nursery area on the Chesapeake Bay shoreline. Lowes Point is an island connected to the mainland by brackish marsh. Harbor Cove has one of the few submerged aquatic vegetation stand along the

Chesapeake Bay shoreline of Talbot County. There are also forest stands east of Cabin Cove and Lowes Point which extend as far east as Highway 33.

Ferry Cove has a commercial fishing boat wharf with good deep water due to a dredged channel and a good access road. Possible areas for small beach occur north of the wharf.

Forests adjacent to the coastal marshes include an approximately 150-acre stand east of Lowes Point. These forests are not of exceptional age and contain large areas of planted pine undergoing succession to mixed forest. Thus, they have moderate habitat potential and may have potential as campground areas. Agricultural lands could be used for camping, picnicking, or playing fields.

3. Wades Point to Claiborne Shoreline

This site consists of coastal marshes located south of Claiborne to Wades Point. It also includes a large interior forest stand to the east of Wades Point and much of the forest is outside of the Critical Area.

The main problem in this area is the high degree of shoreline erosion adjacent to Wades Point, one of the historically high erosion areas in the county. Any use of the site must include conservation measures for erosion control and shoreline stabilization. Other conservation objectives include protection of the marshes south of Claiborne and protection of the submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) beds and waterfowl habitat which are located off-shore of this site.

The forest is primarily high quality hardwoods with over 250 acres with significant bottomland hardwoods and wooded swamp stands. The forest connects to, and presumably drains to, the shore in two places. Potential breeding habitat for forest dwelling birds, Delmarva fox squirrel, and the bald eagle exist in the area.

Recreational opportunities may be limited. There is a potential beach site on Wades Point as well as launch ramp facilities at Claiborne. Beachcombing, crabbing, fishing, birdwatching, hiking and possibly shellfishing are other possible activities. This area may also have potential as a natural park site.

4. Rich Neck - Tilghman Point - Seth Point

The Chesapeake Bay shoreline, north from Claiborne, around Tilghman Point and south along Tilghman Creek, and a part of

Seth Point across from Tilghman Point make up the functional part of this site. The fastland along the Chesapeake Bay side has characteristics suitable for beach areas, as do several smaller beach or berm areas on the eastern side of the neck. The area is generally open with only small wooded stands along the coast. Shellfish beds and SAV beds which occur off both coasts are significant resources in this northern part of the County. Possible launch/marine sites occur on the southeast side of Tilghman Creek behind Seth Point. Potential recreational activities include boating, beaches, swimming, fishing, and shellfishing. Open agricultural spaces could be developed for other recreation.

5. Papermill Pond - Windmill Branch

The primary attraction of this system is its proximity to Easton. The location near the County's largest urbanized area provides both environmental stresses and recreational open space opportunities. Windmill Branch is representative of the bottomland forest stream systems of the County, while Papermill Pond contains marsh and estuarine features. Both areas are near Easton Middle and High Schools with their existing school facilities and recreational complexes. The potential of joining this site with the existing public school lands and providing a joint use complex for educational and recreational purposes is very good. Because of the pressures of the urban area, the creation of a recreational or educational area conservation buffer along this drainage could be important in maintaining the water quality of the Tred Avon River.

6. Bridge Creek - Elberts Cove

This region on Deep Neck point is predominately agricultural but in the center of the point there is an approximately 100-acre young to moderate age mixed forest. There are also a relatively few marshes bordering Bridge Creek, Edge Creek, and Elberts Cove. The primary potential recreational resource of this site is an existing private mooring or marina with a channel through the SAV beds and a 600 foot pier. This site, and another developed docking area on Bridge Creek, offers a quality boat access point to lower Broad Creek and the Choptank River with the least disruption of the sensitive SAV beds and oyster beds of the area.

7. Irish Creek Area

This site is a peninsula on the west side of Irish Creek and is surrounded by Broad and Irish Creeks. It consists of a 150 acre forest with surrounding agricultural and residential areas. Possible ramp areas may be located in this otherwise

sensitive aquatic area. A residence near the point has a well-developed basin for small boats.

The forest has some habitat potential for the Delmarva fox squirrel and forest dwelling birds, but it is sufficiently disturbed so that additional development for camping or similar activities may be a compatible use.

8. Peck's Point - Flatty Cove

Peck's Point is on the north side of the Tred Avon River across from Oxford and Flatty Cove is about one mile east of Oxford on the Tred Avon. Both areas are largely agricultural with some scattered residences. Both areas offer partially protected coves with potential boat access to the Tred Avon and Choptank Rivers. The sites are in relatively deep water and boating will present few impacts to the SAV beds and nursery areas which are prevalent in much of this area. Several other boat launching sites are present in this area, but the above two sites probably have the best combinations of deep water access and proximity to the mouth of the Tred Avon River.

9. Chlora Point - Martin Point Shoreline

This site is located southwest of Trappe between Trappe Creek and Island Creek.The surrounding areas are agricultural and the offshore aquatic system has generally deep water and a low sensitivity. Therefore, this area is not particularly sensitive or vulnerable. The fastland along the coast is relatively sandy with good longshore drift, resulting in a wide beach or berm. This area, therefore, may have potential for beachfront recreation. The small bay at Chlora Point has a berm and marsh barrier across the mouth which leaves a protected interior area suitable for waterfowl and wading birds.

10. Bolingbroke Creek -Chancellor Point

This site is located on both sides of Bolingbroke Creek and extends from the vicinity of the Choptank River Bridge(Route 50) to Chancellor Point and about one mile upstream from the point on the Choptank River. Fishing, clamming, and crabbing are activities suitable for both the creek and the river.

Lower Bolingbroke Creek is an estuarine system with fairly large marshes and SAV beds interspersed with generally open shore. The area is a potential anadromous fish spawning and nursery area. Wooded areas around lower Bolingbroke Creek and Highway 50 offer potential camping sites as well as hiking areas, since the woods are presently somewhat disturbed. Potential campground and marina sites occur in this area.

11. Woodland Creek

Except for its isolated residential areas and agricultural nature, the south side and mouth of Woodland Creek has potential as a multi-use recreational or recreational /housing complex.

The Eastern Bay shore, south of Woodland Creek, and some areas at the mouth of the creek, indicate a degree of shoreline erosion. The same areas also have characteristics potentially suitable for beach development. Areas near the mouth of the creek offer sites for boat ramps and a small, seasonal marina or mooring sites. There is direct access or short routes to deep water and the open bay. Two islands and a beach area in the mouth of the creek also may be suitable for swimming, beachcombing or bird watching. The islands may also have nesting area potential for shore birds, wading birds, and the diamondback terrapin. Clams and blue crabs may also be caught here. A large estuarine pond and marsh south of the creek offers potential habitat and a potential site for nature study.

Interior areas adjacent to Copperville Road are suitable for recreation facilities such as a golf course. Lands midway between the shore and the road are suitable for dwellings.

SUMMARY

The evaluation in this report are based on general features and professional judgment. The thirty-six sites described have combinations of size, natural features, and natural functions which indicate that they should be considered in a screening of potential conservation/recreational sites in the County. Other sites may also have value for one or more of the features, but in general did not qualify in all three areas. For example, there are many smaller sites in the County which may be suitable as natural parks or as habitat for specific species. There may be sites which offer access to shorelines or water-based activities but do not have additional natural features which add to aesthetic or recreational diversity.

A more detailed analysis of each site may also indicate conditions which reduce the suitability of these sites for the stated use. Further study may also indicate that an alternate use is preferable. Therefore, these designations should be considered as preliminary although the areas described should be considered as valuable resources and treated as such in various planning activities .

VI IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Implementation of The 1987 Preservation and Recreation Plan will be dependent upon the availability of financial resources and programs and the growth management guidelines which emerge from the updated Comprehensive Plan. Capital budgets and the five year capital improvement program are also important to the realization of a plan. A full discussion of these factors will be contained in the update of the County's Comprehensive Plan and the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas Program.

This chapter contains information on the process of project selection and describes a number of programs which may have potential for implementing selected portions of the Plan. Political and administrative bodies which are important to the implementation process are described in the introduction of this report. This section also discusses land acquisition and facility development techniques that may assist in the implementation of the Plan.

PROJECT SELECTION

Parks, recreation and open space projects are selected in Talbot County by an open, citizen-oriented process. Basically, anyone can propose a project- private citizens, sports leagues, special interest groups, civic organizations as well as county staff-but the final decision and funding rests with the County Council. There are separate procedures for proposals for the Hog Neck Golf Course/Community Center and other recreation and open space facilities in the County.

Within the incorporated areas of Talbot County, The Town Councils are responsible for recreation and open space planning. Although The County Department of Recreation helps to coordinate plans and programs between the county and towns, the elected officials of each town have the responsibility to address their own parks and open space needs.

Program proposals for the Hog Neck Golf Course or Community Center are made primarily through the manager of each facility. The managers present proposals to the Park Board. The Board is comprised of three members who are appointed by the County Council. The public is able to attend any of the Park Board meetings. The Board reviews proposals and makes recommendations to the County Council. Determination of priorities is based on the Board's knowledge of the needs and interests of the community. These proposals are addressed by the County during the budget review and public hearing process.

A similar approval and funding process is used for all other recreation and open space projects in the County, except the majority of proposals come through the Parks and Recreation Department. Private citizens or recreation leagues normally bring a proposal to the Parks and Recreation Staff to obtain technical assistance and background information. Any other proposals are generated by the Department itself. The staff of the Parks and Recreation Department and others present all proposed plans and programs to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. This board is comprised of representatives from each incorporated town, each election district, and the Board of Education. The Advisory Board establishes its priorities based on knowledge of the community's needs and interests and forwards recommendations to the County Council for consideration in the budget process.

Successful implementation of this Plan will require the continual involvement of citizen and civic groups, the above Boards and their professional staff and other County bodies such as the County Planning and Zoning Commission.

METHODS FOR LAND ACQUISITION

The 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan described a number of methods by which park, recreation and open space land could be acquired. These methods of acquisition are discussed below and are largely derived from the 1982 Plan.

Outright purchase

Under normal circumstances this is a "fee simple" transaction of property. County funds, often supplemented by state or federal grant money, are used to purchase land which is clearly needed for parks and recreation development. This is the best method of securing property because it allows the county the greatest flexibility due to clear ownership.

Installment Purchase

This is an acquisition method by which the County negotiates a per-acre price with a landowner and a time schedule for acreage acquisition is agreed upon. If the development of a certain parcel is not an immediate priority , this method can offset the total acquisition cost over a number of years.

Long-Term Lease with Option to Buy

This method would involve the negotiation of a leasing price with the landowner for Parks and Recreation use of the property. Conditions of the lease would also provide for the eventual purchase of the land.

Recreation-Use Easements

These allow land to remain in private ownership while being used for recreation purposes. Only the rights necessary to restrict use to its intended purpose are purchased by the County. This is a good technique for obtaining the limited use of land for temporary ball fields , play areas, archery ranges, skeet ranges etc., while keeping the land on the tax rolls and in private ownership. This technique is best suited to the use of under-utilized land in less-intensively developed areas. As development pressures increase in an area, easements become less feasible. Easements can also be donated by recreation-minded landowners.

Donations

Donations by private owners or organizations can be encouraged by the County. In order to answer the specific needs of an apparent donor, the County can arrange lifetime or limited occupancy rights, tax advantages, access and agriculture-use agreements in consideration for land donations.

Program Open Space Funds

Program Open Space (POS) warrants further explanation as it is the principal grant program for open space acquisition and development. Program Open Space is administered by the Capital Programs Agency of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The program provides funding in the form of 100 percent grants to local governments for land acquisition for recreational purposes. This program also administers and funds state land acquisition including Bay Access funds and facility development. Allocation of Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds used for purchase and development of parks and natural areas is also administered with this program.

In addition to the above methods for acquisition and development of open space, the County and towns could potentially use bonds,user fees, other grants and aids, and special tax districts as implementation techniques.

METHODS FOR FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

Implementation techniques for facility development primarily fall into two categories: funding and land use regulations. Additional support for facility implementation may come from donations, bequests, private foundations and organizations,user fees and other secondary sources. However, the state and local governments, through their various funding programs and growth management legislation, are the primary sources for facility implementation.

Facility development concerns a wide spectrum of actions from installing sod on a playfield to building a swimming pool. Funding sources for facility development may include special taxing districts, general revenues, revenue bonds, grants and construction programs.

One example of a governmental program that provides a special opportunity for Talbot County is joint funding with schools through Program Open Space funds. The schools facility development concept provides Program Open Space funds for the joint development of school sites for educational and recreational purposes. With a projected reduction in the school age population and an established need for additional indoor recreation facilities, these funds could be directed at facility development rather than for acquisition.

Another approach to facility development is through land use regulations and guidelines. Possible means of implementing facility development include land use regulations such as the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and development guidelines that may be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Through these growth management techniques, developers, builders, and landowners can be encouraged or required to provide various recreation facilities. Facility development can include more than physical structures such as tennis courts and playgrounds.

PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

An additional and economical method by which the County can increase its total amount of preservation or recreation lands is through cooperative efforts with other groups. Additional land could be conserved or preserved in conjunction with some of the programs listed below.

These programs are designed to: acquire and preserve land through public agency or private ownership;provide research and inventory assistance to identify resources and determine sensitivities to various stresses; promote land use practices

and stewardship of resources, such as shoreline erosion cost-share programs, or agricultural management programs and others are laws which prohibit certain activities and provide regulatory protection .

These programs can be classified into three groups based on method. The groupings are: land acquisition for recreational open space or natural preservation;incentives to private landowners for preservation tied to commitments from the landowners and laws or programs which protect natural resources.

Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is a non-government organization supported by members and private sources and formed to conserve lands throughout the United States. The primary function of this group is natural area acquisition. Other programs include natural features inventories and the initiation of programs such as the Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program. In Talbot County, the Conservancy administers the Third Haven Woods nature preserve, a 320 acre high quality pine-hardwood forest east of the Miles River off Goldsborough Neck Road.

Maryland Environmental Trust

The Trust is an agency created to administer the Conservation Easement program and other lands donated for preservation purposes. A Conservation Easement is a voluntary program in which a land owner agrees to preserve some or all of the natural characteristics of their land by transferring development rights to another entity. Activities which may be restricted include construction and maintenance of roads, buildings, and billboards; dumping of trash or fill; mining and excavation; and removal of vegetation. Conservation Easements may also cover activities affecting drainage, flood control, soil conservation, or fish and wildlife habitat preservation. Local or State government agencies or private conservation organizations approved by the Environmental Trust may be recipients of the easements. As of December 1985, thirteen agreements, covering 2,399 acres were in effect in the county, fronting such waters as Leeds Creek, Tred Avon River, Choptank River, and Tuckahoe Creek.

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation

The foundation works with local authorities to establish Agricultural Preservation Districts in which landowners can sell perpetual development rights easements to the Foundation.

The concept is similar to that of the Conservation Easement except that the Foundation buys the rights under a complicated formula for determining assessed value of the rights. As of Fiscal Year 1985, there were 19 recorded districts in Talbot County totaling 4,121 acres. Districts may be established on several criteria relating principally to soils suitability for agriculture. Districts are 100 acres minimum size, usually outside of planned sewer and water service districts.

Natural Heritage Program

The Maryland Natural Heritage Program, established jointly by the Department of Natural Resources and the Nature Conservancy has an objective of identifying and preserving natural diversity through protection of habitats for rare species, unusual community types, and other significant natural areas. High priority sites may be protected in several ways, the strongest of which is designation as a Natural Heritage Area. Lesser levels of protection include acquisition by the state or a private organization, conservation easements, and voluntary landowner agreements. The program maintains a computerized data base detailing area characteristics and populations. The Natural Heritage Program also cooperates with the Nature Conservancy in maintaining a Maryland Natural Areas Registry of suitable sites. The Natural Heritage Program also manages the State's Endangered and Threatened Species Programs. No Natural Heritage Areas have been designated or proposed in Talbot County.

Maryland Acres for Wildlife

This program provides for wildlife management and provision of plants and seeds. The program is administered by the Department of Natural Resources- Maryland Wildlife Administration. It consists of voluntary enrollment for wildlife management of any rural non-residential or non- commercial area of over 1 acre for a two-year period. The plan may provide plants or seeds to create or enhance habitat.

Tree Farm Program

Administered by the Maryland Forest, Park, and Wildlife Service under sponsorship of the American Forest Institute, this program encourages owners to plant timber by offering management assistance and other incentives. Tree farms are privately owned woodlands of at least 10 acres dedicated to timber production.

Forest Conservation and Management Program

Under this program, the assessed value of forested land may be frozen for tax purposes for a period of at least 15 years if the landowner has prepared, and follows, an approved forest management plan.

Reforestation and Timberland Improvement Tax Deduction

This program currently applies to lands of 10 to 500 acres. It allows state tax incentives for reforestation and forest management. Current Critical Area Commission recommendations are that the qualifying size be reduced to 1 acre.

Woodlands Incentives Program

This is a new program to encourage reforestation. No acreage standard has yet been set, but a 1 acre minimum has been recommended by the Critical Area Commission. Cost sharing for replanting and improving stands is provided.

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program

This is a major legislative act which provides a coordinated framework for addressing the problems of the bay and other critical area concerns. The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission implements a cooperative program between state and local governments to foster more sensitive development and minimize damage to water quality and habitats. This act established the 1,000 foot zone in which local governments have primary responsibility for developing and implementing programs of resource inventory, comprehensive zoning, ordinances, regulatory limitations such as Best Management Practices, buffer zones, designation of shoreline areas for recreational and water-related activities, and timber harvest and management plans.

Maryland Seed Tree Law

This law requires that certain trees be left standing in areas otherwise cleared for timber harvest. It is intended to provide for natural re-seeding by loblolly, shortleaf, and pond pine trees.

Maryland Endangered Species Act

This 1971 act,as amended, and the Maryland Non-Game and Endangered Species Conservation Act of 1975 protect certain species of plants and animals which are in jeopardy of extinction. These acts protect listed species by various prohibi-

tions on the taking, possession, and sale without permits or permission. The 1987 pending revisions also require permits for "incidental taking", a term that refers to destruction or disruption of an organism during other activities such as land development.

Maryland Wetlands Act

This act establishes a permit program to regulate activities in wetlands. This law covers all tidal wetlands which are regularly or periodically covered by tidal waters. The law requires property owners to obtain a permit before altering tidal wetlands through filling, dredging, bulkheads, or other activities. In general, a license from the State Board of Public Works is required for activities in state wetlands (wetlands below the mean high water line), while a permit or notification approval from Department of Natural Resources is required for activities in private wetlands (above the mean high water line).

Anadromous Fisheries

The Fisheries Division of the Tidewater Administration maintains an Anadromous Fish Stream Investigation Project in cooperation with the National Marine Fisheries Service. Its purpose is to identify streams and reaches of streams used for spawning. Although the status of most Talbot County streams is not well documented, the Choptank River and all its tributaries has been designated as a Striped Bass Spawning River under Title 08.02.05 of the Natural Resources Articles. The reach from Bow Knee Point upstream, including the tidal portion of Tuckahoe Creek, has been designated as a Spawning Reach in which special seasons and harvest restrictions have been placed.

The above programs are presented as potential implementation tools for the preservation and conservation of land in Talbot County.. The effectiveness of each program may vary in accordance with the specific objectives of a particular County program.

There are a host of land acquisition, conservation and preservation programs available for use within the county that are sponsored by non-county bodies. As specific projects are delineated, the possibility of cooperative acquisition can be further investigated as a means for achieving county goals.

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