

SECTION 5

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.1 RECREATION

Outdoor recreation has long been a vital quality of life issue to watershed residents. Historically, these issues were primarily associated with fishing and hunting opportunities. Most forest and farmland areas, as well as extensive sections of the Buffalo Creek valley, were typically available for these activities. In 1942, Todd Sanctuary was established as one of the state's first privately-owned natural areas and introduced formal public access for hiking, birding and other outdoor pursuits.

With the growth of local and regional populations in recent decades, the need for increased recreational opportunities has increased substantially. This pressure has increased further by the broader recognition of the watershed as a regional resource. At the same time, private lands have increasingly excluded recreational use as tracts are divided into increasingly smaller parcels and residential and other non-compatible development increases. As a result, the development of publicly-owned or accessible facilities has become an issue of local as well as regional importance.

Popular activities within the watershed today include hiking, fishing, hunting, bird watching, bicycling, canoeing, and golfing.

5.1.1 Public Parks

There are five community parks within the watershed, as identified in Table 5-1 and shown on Figure 5-1.

The Butler-Freeport Community Trail is the largest public park facility in the watershed. This rail-trail provides hiking, biking, and horseback riding opportunities. The trail follows the former Pennsylvania Railroad Butler Branch line and is owned by local government. The trail is being developed and maintained by the townships and the non-profit Butler Freeport Trail Council after extensive legal battles with some landowners. When completed, the trail will extend 20 miles from Freeport to Butler, primarily along Buffalo and Little Buffalo Creeks. At Freeport, plans are being developed to connect with the larger regional trail network, including the Armstrong Trail, Baker Trail, and Rachel Carson Trail. Currently, 16 miles of the trail are completed, including the entire length within the watershed.

The Freeport Community Park is located in part within the watershed. Operated by the Freeport Community Park Association, the park contains ballfields, playgrounds, and Laube Hall (a reception and meeting venue). The park also contains the now-closed Freeport Community Pool. This facility was closed in 2005 due to lack of funds needed to repair the 43-year old facility.

Harrison Hills County Park is an Allegheny County facility that is also located in part within the watershed. The park includes approximately 500 acres and contains 15 picnic areas and shelters, playgrounds, 14 miles of hiking and horseback trails, three soccer fields, and an overlook of the Allegheny River (and mouth of Buffalo Creek).

Laura J. Doerr Memorial Park is owned and operated by Jefferson Township. Facilities include the watershed's only municipal public pool, ballfields, and playgrounds.

**Table 5-1
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

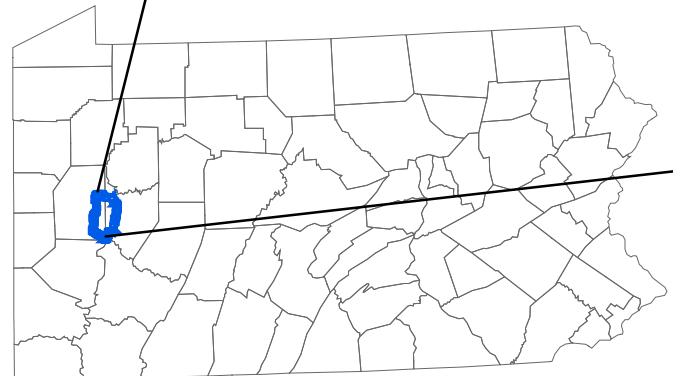
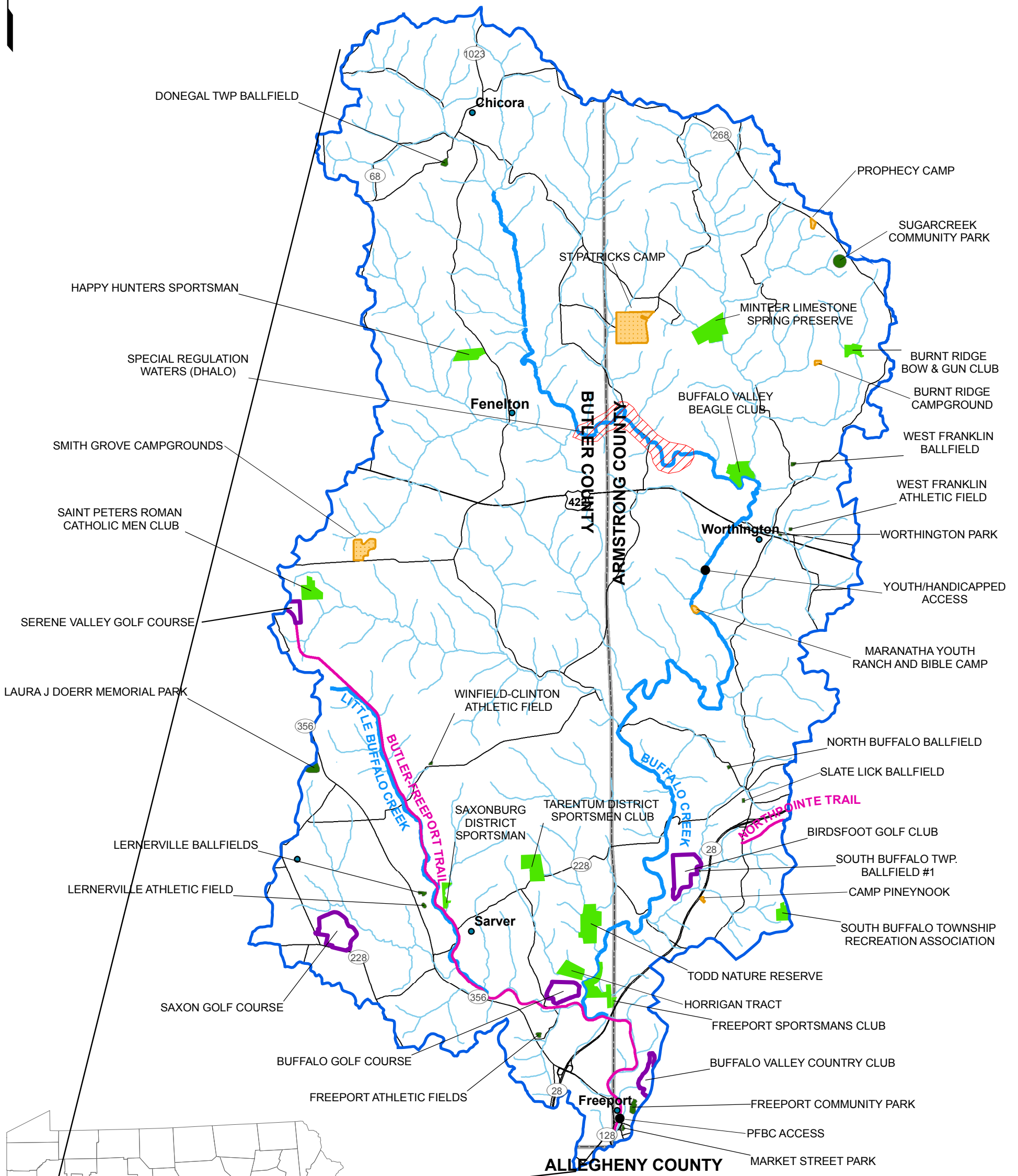
Facility	Location	Amenities
Community Parks		
Butler Freeport Community Trail	Buffalo, Winfield, Summit Townships	Hiking – biking – horseback trail
Freeport Community Park	South Buffalo Township	Ballfields, playgrounds, picnic shelters
Harrison Hills Park	Harrison Township	Ballfields, hiking-horseback trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, overlook
Laura J. Doerr Memorial Park	Jefferson Township	Ballfields, playgrounds, pool
Worthington Park	Worthington Borough	Ballfields, playground
Sugarcreek Township Community Park	Sugarcreek Township	Ballfields, picnic shelters
Athletic Facilities		
South Buffalo Township Recreation Association	South Buffalo Township	Ballfields
Lernerville Athletic Fields	Buffalo Township	Ballfields
Lernerville Ballfields	Buffalo Township	Ballfields
Winfield-Clinton Athletic Field	Winfield Township	Ballfields
Donegal Township Ballfield	Donegal Township	Ballfields
West Franklin Athletic Field	West Franklin Township	Ballfields
West Franklin Ballfield	West Franklin Township	Ballfields
Slate Lick Ballfield	South Buffalo Township	Ballfields
North-South Buffalo Recreation Ballfield	North Buffalo Township	Ballfields
Golf Courses		
Buffalo Valley Country Club	South Buffalo Township	Golf course
Buffalo Golf Course	Buffalo Township	Golf course
Birdsfoot Golf Course	South Buffalo Township	Golf course
Saxon Golf Course	Clinton Township	Golf course
Reserves		
Todd Nature Reserve	Buffalo Township	Hiking, birding
Armstrong County Conservancy	West Franklin Township	Hiking, birding, fishing

Source: GAI 2008.

Worthington Park contains ballfields and playground facilities.

5.1.2 Recreation Facilities

There are nine association-owned athletic field/ballfield facilities located within the watershed as identified in Table 5-1. These are typically baseball and/or soccer fields. These do not include facilities operated by school districts.



LEGEND

BUFFALO CREEK WATERSHED BOUNDARY	GOLF COURSE
MAJOR TOWNS	CAMPGROUND
MAJOR STREAMS	PARK
MAJOR ROADS	OPEN SPACE
TRAIL	
SPECIAL REGULATION WATERS	
ACCESS POINTS	

0 10,000 20,000 Feet

FIGURE 5-1
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
BUFFALO CREEK WATERSHED



DRAWN BY: AML
 CHECKED: AJB
 DATE: 07/11/2008
 APPROVED: GTR

Four public golf courses are located in the watershed (Table 5-1). All are in the southern portion of the drainage and are 18-hole facilities.

5.1.3 Reserves

Todd Nature Reserve is a 325-acre reservation on two tracts in Buffalo Township. The reserve was established by the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania in 1942, making it one of Pennsylvania’s oldest private nature preserves. The main preserve (formerly known as Todd Sanctuary) contains five miles of hiking trails that are open to the public. Environmental education activities are provided by a staff naturalist during the summer months. A second tract (Horigan Tract) is currently under development and is not open to the public. Todd Nature Reserve is a well-known regional birding site and attracts bird watchers from throughout the tri-state area.

The Armstrong County Conservancy owns a 100-acre property on Patterson Creek in West Franklin Township (Minteer Limestone Spring Preserve). No developed facilities exist. However, the property is open to the public for hiking, bird watching, and fishing.

5.1.4 Camping

There are no public campgrounds within the watershed. There are six private facilities as identified in Table 5-2. Four of these are retreats associated with religious organizations, and two are open to the general public. There is a great demand for camping facilities, particularly during the early weeks of trout season. Large numbers of campers presently utilize private lands along Buffalo Creek at these times. No water or sewage facilities are available to these users, thereby creating health and pollution concerns.

**Table 5-2
CAMPGROUNDS**

Facility	Location
Saint Patrick’s Church Campground	Sugarcreek Township
Church of God Prophecy Camp	Sugarcreek, West Franklin Townships
Burnt Ridge Campground	West Franklin Township
Smith Grove Campground	Clearfield Township
Maranatha Youth Ranch and Bible Conference Center	West Franklin Township
Camp Pineynook	South Buffalo Township

Source: Southwest Pennsylvania Commission 2007.

5.1.5 Fishing

Fishing is an important recreational and economic activity in the watershed. The upper and central portions of the watershed are variously classified by PaDEP as High Quality Cold Water Fishery and High Quality Trout Stocked Fishery waters. Brook Trout, Brown Trout, and Rainbow Trout occur in the main stem and larger tributaries throughout this area. Native populations of Brook Trout occur in some smaller tributaries as well. The Pennsylvania Trout and Salmon Fishing Guide (Sajna 1988) refers to the main stem as “A pretty, surprisingly isolated stream, considering its proximity to Pittsburgh. Buffalo Creek is stocked for 7.2 miles in Butler County and 17.9 in Armstrong County. It is the heaviest stocked stream in Armstrong

County and among the heaviest in Butler.” Little Buffalo Run and Patterson Creek are stocked for a total of about eight miles, and portions of Cornplanter Run are stocked.

A 3.7-mile section of Buffalo Creek from Little Buffalo Run downstream to 0.6 mile above S.R. 4035 in Craigsville is regulated as a delayed harvest artificial lure only (DHALO) area by the PFBC. As such, it is open to fishing year-round (no closed season), and fishing may be done with artificial lures only constructed of metal, plastic, rubber, or wood, or with flies and streamers constructed of natural or synthetic materials.

The lower portion of the watershed is listed as a Trout Stocked Fishery. Sections of Cornplanter Run are currently stocked with both Brook Trout and Brown Trout. The lower reach of the main stem and Little Buffalo Creek provide a regionally notable Smallmouth Bass fishery. This area is considered to be one of the region's premier Smallmouth resources, but fishing opportunities are severely limited due to lack of public access. Subjective evidence suggests that this fishery has been declining over the past few decades. Research is warranted to determine the current status and trend of the Smallmouth Bass population and identify appropriate management measures. Channel Catfish and Largemouth Bass provide an important recreational fishery resource in the inundated portions of Buffalo Creek near Freeport, as do Walleye to a more limited extent.

Public stream access is generally available throughout the upper subwatersheds through the generosity and cooperation of landowners. Four areas in these subwatersheds are particularly well developed for public access as identified in Table 5-3. These include the following:

- The Arrowhead Chapter of Trout Unlimited has adopted the DHALO section of Buffalo Creek and has implemented a number of stream enhancement initiatives. Numerous deflectors and mud sills have been installed at a cost of approaching \$500,000. These efforts have been funded through both federal and state grants. Currently, a \$43,000 Growing Greener grant is in place for additional enhancements over the next two years. Chapter members also assist in stocking of trout reared by the PFBC.
- The Armstrong County Conservancy owns approximately 0.25 mile of Patterson Creek in West Franklin Township. A number of stream enhancement initiatives have been implemented in this area as well, and the stream is stocked by the PFBC.
- The Buffalo Valley Sportsmens Association, in cooperation with Snyder Holdings, Inc., has developed a handicapped accessible youth fishing area on Buffalo Creek at Shadyside Village. This is the only facility of its kind in the watershed area (and one of only four in Armstrong County) and receives very heavy use during trout season.
- State Game Lands 304 includes 1.0 mile of the Buffalo Creek main stem that is open to hike-in fishing.

Public stream access is essentially unavailable downstream of Boggsville. There is also essentially no public access to Little Buffalo Creek, except hike-in availability from the rail-trail. Private lands throughout these areas are generally posted for no trespassing and the PFBC does not undertake any stocking efforts for this reason. The PFBC maintains a boat launch on Buffalo Creek at Freeport. This facility provides boat access to the inundated portion of the creek near its mouth, but is primarily intended to provide access to the Allegheny River. Bank fishing is available within the launch facility property.

**Table 5-3
FISHING ACCESS**

Facility	Location	Sponsor
Buffalo Creek DHALO	West Franklin, Clearfield	Arrowhead Chapter Trout Unlimited
Armstrong Conservancy Property	West Franklin	Armstrong Conservancy
Buffalo Creek Youth and Handicapped Access	West Franklin	Buffalo Valley Sportsmens Club
State Game Lands 304	Clearfield	Pennsylvania Game Commission
Buffalo Creek Boat Launch	Freeport	PA Fish and Boat Commission

SIDEBAR:

Recommended Flies For Buffalo Creek:

- Adams
- Quill Gordon
- Hendrickson
- Black Gnat
- Muddler Minnow
- Hares Ear



Boggsville

5.1.6 Hunting

Three State Game Lands totaling approximately 1,080 acres provide public hunting opportunities in the watershed (Table 5-4). Important game species in these areas include White-tailed Deer, Eastern Cottontail, squirrels, and Wild Turkey.

Hunting is also available to a limited extent on private lands, with landowner permission. Seven sportsmen’s organizations own land within the watershed, including Freeport Sportsmens Club, Saxonburg District Sportsmen, Tarentum District Sportsmens Club, Happy Hunters Sportsmen, Burnt Ridge Bow and Gun Club, Buffalo Valley Sportsmen, and the Buffalo Valley Beagle Club. These properties may be available for hunting access by members. ASWP has made its land available to deer hunting by permit-only. Permits are distributed through a lottery system at no cost to applicants.



Boggsville - opening day 2007

**Table 5-4
PUBLIC HUNTING**

Facility	Location	Acres
SGL 105	Clearfield, Donegal	262
SGL 259	Sugarcreek, West Franklin	358
SGL 304	Clearfield	459

5.1.7 Canoeing

The canoeing guidebook *Appalachian Waters V* (Burmeister 1978) says of Buffalo Creek: “*Buffalo Creek is a small, somewhat inconspicuous Allegheny River tributary notable for excellent scenery and interesting whitewater. Proximity to Pittsburgh makes it a fine target for regional canoeists. It can also be considered as an exceptional side excursion for paddlers on an Allegheny River trip who find that Buffalo Creek happens to carry the requisite water level. The contracted valley trench, fascinating gorges, remote passages, and fine hiking targets make it an outstanding selection.*”

The approximately 21-mile long reach between Worthington and Freeport is generally considered to be canoeable in late winter and spring. Except for road crossings, there are no public access points on Buffalo Creek, with the exception of the PFBC launch at Freeport. However, this facility provides access only to the short inundated section of the creek within the pool of the Allegheny River. As an added note of caution, canoeists warn that special care should be taken near the damn at Shadyside Village, and the “chute” below Anthony’s Bridge.

The Three Rivers Water Trail follows the lower Allegheny River from Freeport to Pittsburgh and passes the mouth of Buffalo Creek.

5.1.8 Greenways

There are no formally designated greenways in the watershed at present.

Buffalo and Clinton Townships are currently preparing a Joint Greenway Plan for their communities.

The Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Greenway Project is an initiative organized within the historic landscape of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal, which passed through Freeport. This greenway is visualized as a region-wide system of recreational options that would include a system of riverfront parks, with canoe/kayak landing sites that would run along the flat water from Johnstown or Connellsville to Pittsburgh. Behind the parks would be communities with aesthetic districts offering dining, lodging, arts and entertainment. These communities could become 'Trail Ports'. Day trips, long weekends and extended vacations would find people paddling, hiking, and biking from port to port. This effort is currently in the development stage.

5.2 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

5.2.1 Historical Background - Native American Occupation

During the 17th century the Buffalo Creek watershed appears to have been largely uninhabited. Wars among the Native American tribes in the regions had left the Iroquois confederacy, with its major settlements in New York State, in possession of western

Pennsylvania. This vast area was essentially an uninhabited buffer against hostile neighbors (Buck 1979). By the early 18th century, small numbers of Indian refugees had begun to settle in western Pennsylvania in response to being displaced by Europeans in the east.

At this time, the major Native American settlement in the vicinity was located at Kittanning, about five miles east of the watershed along the Allegheny River. Kittanning was principally a Delaware settlement that was established around 1723 (Wallace 1981). Members of the Shawnee nation also joined the settlement at Kittanning somewhat later. The village was located at the western terminus of the Frankstown Path, an important trail across the Alleghenies between the Allegheny River and the Susquehanna River at Paxtang (Harrisburg). In fact, the Frankstown Path was the most important pre-European route across Pennsylvania (Wallace 1971). From Kittanning, the Kuskusky–Kittanning Path proceeded westward to the Delaware settlement at Kuskusky (New Castle, Lawrence County), and bisected the watershed along the approximate alignment of U.S. Route 422. Kittanning is thought to have been the largest settlement on the western side of the Alleghenies at the time, having an estimated 300 to 400 residents in 1756.

A much smaller Shawnee settlement was also located along the Allegheny about five miles to the south of the watershed. This was referred to Chartiers Old Town and was located near the mouth of Bull Creek at Tarentum. It was abandoned about 1745.

During the French and Indian War, Kittanning was used as a staging point for raids by the Delaware and Shawnee against British colonists in the Juniata River valley in central Pennsylvania (Wikipedia 2007). In response, Lieutenant Colonel John Armstrong led Pennsylvania militiamen on the Kittanning Expedition, which destroyed the village in September 1756.

5.2.2 Historical Background - Rural Agricultural Community

European settlement of the watershed was enabled by the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, which eliminated Indian claim to the land northwest of the Allegheny River. Even before the lands west of the Allegheny became available for settlement, the state of Pennsylvania had designated much of the Buffalo Creek watershed as “depreciation lands”, to be made available to veterans of the Revolutionary War in payment for their military service. Settlement did not begin in earnest until after 1796 due to unstable political climate, contested land titles, and the continued potential for violence.

The well-known saga of the kidnap and escape of Massa Harbison in May 1792 provides a detailed example of the perils of farming on the frontier. The Harbison family occupied a small farm plot on the east bank of the Allegheny slightly below the mouth of Buffalo Creek. The story of the capture of Mrs. Harbison and her three children, two of whom were subsequently murdered, is well told in a variety of sources. During her five day ordeal, Mrs. Harbison was taken up the Buffalo and Little Buffalo valleys on the way to the present site of Butler, where she effected an escape.

Settlement developed first along and near the Allegheny River and proceeded inland. The town of Freeport was established in 1796. By 1805 at least eight log structures were present. George Bell is credited with being among the earliest permanent inland settlers in Buffalo Township. His farm above Little Buffalo Creek was present as early as 1795. Benjamin Sarver constructed a grist mill along Sarver’s Run in the same vicinity in 1796, indicating the rapidity with which farming was becoming established. A mill was present on Buffalo Creek at

Chicora in 1804, and by 1812, settlement had progressed up the Little Buffalo valley to warrant construction of a mill at Marwood.

Throughout the period from 1796 to 1871, farming was the principal economic activity in the watershed. Roads were few and generally in poor condition, limiting commerce within the area. Two major improved roads were developed in the middle of this timeframe. A turnpike was completed from Butler to Kittanning in 1828 (now U.S. Route 422), and the Freeport–Butler Turnpike (State Route 356) was built in 1839. Towns were generally small and developed towards providing goods and services to the surrounding farming community. Often this consisted simply of a few stores or small shops, a blacksmith, and in some cases a tavern or hotel. The major communities in the watershed during this period were Freeport, Saxonburg, and Millerstown (Chicora).

Freeport was established as a “free port” on the Allegheny in 1796. It grew in this capacity by serving as a transportation hub for the surrounding region, but boomed following the completion of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal in 1834. The canal provided service between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and provided the primary transportation connection across the state at the time. The canal proceeded down the Kiskiminetas River, crossed the Allegheny on a massive aqueduct just above Freeport, and followed the west bank of the river downstream to Pittsburgh. Buffalo Creek was crossed with an aqueduct. Freeport, incorporated as a borough in 1832, grew with the importance of the canal as a shipping center. For a brief period between 1834 and the completion of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1852, the way west passed through Freeport. Numerous structures supporting the canal and the many associated commercial opportunities were built at this time in the lower portions of town along the river and Buffalo Creek.

Sidebar:

Charles Dickens passes through Freeport in 1842 (Dickens 2001).

On the Monday evening, furnace fires and clanking hammers on the banks of the canal, warned us that we approached the termination of this part of our journey. After going through another dreamy place – a long aqueduct across the Allegheny River, which was stranger than the bridge at Harrisburg, being a vast low wooden chamber full of water – we emerged upon the ugly confusion of backs of buildings and crazy galleries and stairs, which always abuts on water, be it river, sea, canal, or ditch: and were at Pittsburgh.

Saxonburg was founded in 1831 by brothers Charles and John Roebling, who were representing a large group of farmers and merchants in Muhlhausen Germany. This group directed the Roeblings to find and purchase land for settlement in the United States, after which the other member of the group would follow. The land selected was on the divide between Buffalo Creek and Thorn Creek. Thirty-two families arrived from Germany in 1832. John Roebling is internationally recognized for his engineering skills. In 1842 in a workshop on the edge of Saxonburg and in the Buffalo Creek Watershed, he invented and perfected a process for making wire cables, thus enabling the development of suspension bridges. The world’s first suspension bridge was a Roebling designed and constructed aqueduct carrying the Main Line Canal across the Allegheny at Pittsburgh. In 1848, Roebling moved his wire cable business, to Trenton, New Jersey. Later successes for the company included the Brooklyn Bridge.

Chicora, established as Millerstown, was the primary town in the northern watershed. Millerstown was established in 1839 around an earlier grist mill. Among the earliest commercial establishments were a store, tavern, and the Hoch and Reiber Brewery.

Early industries in the watershed, in addition to those mentioned previously, included the Guckenheimer Distillery in Freeport (1861), Buffalo Woolen Mills in Worthington (1865), and the Winfield Iron Furnace on Rough Run (1847). The furnace had a cut sandstone stack 33 feet high and about 20 feet square at the base and utilized locally available iron ore and limestone. The 1883 History of Butler County notes that at its peak it was capable of producing 25 to 40 tons of iron per week.

5.2.3 Historical Background - Railroads, Oil and Industry

Life in the watershed took on a decidedly greater worldview in 1871. On January 12 of that year, the Western Pennsylvania Railroad opened for operation, providing the first connection between Butler and the outside world. Originating at a connection with the Pennsylvania Railroad at Butler Junction (located at the mouth of Buffalo Creek), the railroad proceeded up Buffalo Creek, then along Little Buffalo Creek to its source, and then cross-country to Butler. Efforts to construct this railroad, seen as vital in the growth and survival of the burgeoning City of Butler and the surrounding agricultural region, began in 1853. As discussed in the *1883 History of Butler County*, the opening of the railroad was a momentous event (see sidebar).

SIDEBAR:

The coming of the railroad.

As discussed in the 1883 History of Butler County, the opening of the railroad was a momentous event. An excursion was organized from Butler to Pittsburgh to celebrate the long-hoped-for and finally consummated connection of Butler with Pittsburgh and the outer world by rail...Some three hundred invitations were sent out to people to be present and engage in this excursion. The train left Butler at 7 o'clock A. M., passed over the branch to Freeport, and thence to Pittsburgh. At the union depot in that city, a splendid repast was served and a number of speeches made in response to toasts. In the afternoon, the excursionists, joined by a number of Pittsburghers, returned to Butler. At the various stations along the new line, the people turned out en masse to greet them, and at Saxon Station a cannon was fired in honor of the event. In the evening occurred the "funeral" of the old stage coach which had been superseded by the iron horse. The huge vehicle was draped in black, and hauled by horses decorated with crape, up the hill to the cemetery. It was not actually buried, although its days of usefulness (in this field) were practically over, but a travesty of the funeral service was gone through with, and then the jovial throng who had attended the "funeral," a number of Pittsburghers and citizens of Butler, among them the stage proprietor D. S. Walker, returned to the village, and marched through the streets blowing tin whistles and penny trumpets."

Access to the railroad created sudden economic growth in the southern and western portions of the watershed. Saxon City (later renamed as Cabot), grew around a factory producing lamp black, a pigment produced from natural gas. In 1883, Cabot contained a railroad station, one church, two stores, one hotel, one shoemaker's shop, one wagon and blacksmith shop, and one wagon shop. Just upstream along Little Buffalo Creek was another railroad station named Delano (now Marwood). The first store was started here in 1870, soon followed by the railroad station and a hotel. The railroad quickly became a center of life for the region. Eventually the West Penn was subsumed by the mighty Pennsylvania Railroad. A spur

line, the Winfield Railroad, was built in 1890 between the mouth of Little Buffalo Creek (Buffalo Junction) and West Winfield to serve the concentration of industry at that location.

Sidebar:

**PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD
BUTLER BRANCH PASSENGER SCHEDULE
EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 1914**

EASTWARD	Distance	WEEKDAYS						SUNDAYS	
		430 AM	470 AM	458 AM	472 AM	434 PM	436 PM	498 AM	496 PM
Butler Junction	-	7.37	9.35	11.40	12.32	3.58	7.27	8.53	10.51
Lane	0.5	7.39	9.37	11.42	12.34	4.01	7.29	8.55	10.54
Harbison	3.1	--	f9.43	f11.48	f12.40	f4.08	--	f9.01	f11.00
Monroe	4.5	f7.49	f9.47	f11.52	f12.44	f4.17	f7.44	f9.04	f11.04
Sandy Lick	5.5	f7.51	f9.49	f11.54	f12.46	f4.20	f7.46	f9.06	f11.05
Sarver	7.5	7.56	9.54	11.59	12.51	4.26	7.52	9.11	11.11
Cabot	10.4	8.03	10.00	12.06	12.57	4.34	8.00	9.17	11.18
Marwood	11.4	8.07	10.04	12.08	1.00	4.38	8.03	9.21	11.22
Great Belt	14.2	8.13	10.11	12.14	1.08	4.45	8.09	9.28	11.30
Herman	15.7	8.17	10.14	12.17	1.12	4.48	8.12	9.31	11.34
Brinker	17.0	f8.20	f10.17	f12.20	f1.16	f4.51	f8.15	f9.34	f11.37
Butler	20.9	8.29	10.28	12.30	1.25	5.00	8.25	9.43	11.45

f = Stops only on signal or notice to Agent or Conductor to receive or discharge passengers.

A concurrent and even more dramatic development was the initiation of the oil boom in the upper watershed in 1871. Initial oil strikes just north of the watershed occurred in the vicinity of Karns City and Petrolia. By 1872 oil operations had moved southward to the Chicora vicinity. From a town of slightly more than two hundred in 1870, Chicora's population had increased by several thousand by 1876.

Among the notable wells drilled during this period was the Hemphill No. 4 (1873) that produced 1,600 barrels in its first 24 hours. Its total production as of 1883 was about 200,000 barrels. The Divener No. 1 (1874) started at about 1,000 barrels in its first day, and had also produced at least 200,000 barrels by 1883. The oil field was eventually found to extend to the vicinity of Great Belt in the headwaters of the Little Buffalo valley.

Chicora Trestle - Glenn Kohlhepp photograph



SIDEBAR:**The oil boom.**

As noted in the 1883 History of Butler County: *As fast as pioneer operations revealed the extension of the belt to the southward, the territory added was made the scene of operations, and hundreds of wells were put down. By 1875, the country from Parker to a point several miles south of Millerstown fairly bristled with derricks, and a torrent of wealth flowed into the hands of producers and land-owners. Oil men at this time readily gave \$100, \$200 and even \$250 per acre, with an eighth royalty of all production for land, which, prior to the excitement, was not worth more than \$30 to \$40 per acre. Millerstown had its full share of benefit from the oil development. An oil exchange was organized there to meet the demands of speculators, who, as is always the case in a great field of production, were numerous. Some idea of the amount of business transacted during the palmy days of exchange, may be conceived from the statement that the receipts of the telegraph office during that time were from \$4,000 to \$5,000 per month, the office ranking as the third largest in the State.*

The 1883 History of Butler County reported that *“The area of the (oil) developed territory in Butler County is about 25,000 acres. According to the most trustworthy statistics, the total production in the county has, up to January 1, 1882, amounted to the enormous quantity of 33,750,000 barrels, more than one-sixth of the total production in Pennsylvania from 1859 to 1882, which was 186,502,798 barrels. A large amount of this was sold at \$4 per barrel and some for only 40 cents. It has been estimated that the development of the Butler oil region has brought in an immigration which has increased by 10,000 the population of the county, and it has added untold millions to its wealth.”*

A 250 barrel per day well was drilled on the Graham farm in Donegal Township in July 1874. By the middle of September, it was reported that in the new town of Saint Joe boasted a population of over 1,000, with more than 250 houses, three hotels, numerous grocery and dry good stores, restaurants, two drug stores, two doctors, a telegraph office, and an opera house.

Dilks, located on the West Penn Railroad north of Marwood, was one of the primary pipeline and rail terminals of the oil boom. A number of 25,000 barrel oil storage tanks were located here, for loading into up to 50 tank cars per day in the 1870s.

Most of the boom towns were ravaged by fire at various points in their existence. On April 1, 1874, most of the Chicora business district was destroyed by fire. Rebuilt, it again burned on April 11, 1875, and December 6, 1877. The entire town of Saint Joe burned in November 1874, just months after it was founded. Rebuilt, it gradually declined over the next five years. A lightning strike burned three storage tanks at Dilks on July 20, 1876, burning nearly 65,000 barrels of oil.

SIDEBAR:

Boom Towns

Although referring to the town of Petrolia, just west of the watershed divide, the following description from the 1883 History of Butler County would have certainly applied to the many boom towns that arose in the Buffalo Creek Watershed as well.

“Like all oil towns springing quickly into existence through the pressure of a suddenly developed need, Petrolia consisted entirely of light and flimsily constructed wooden buildings. They were put up hastily to meet the demands of the strange heterogeneous population which poured into the county. Hotel followed hotel, and all were crowded to their utmost capacity as soon as completed. The town quickly leaped to a population of 3,000, and ultimately to 5,000. The lucky strikes in the 22-degree belt, and the rapid development of the territory, brought in all classes of people. The heavy capitalist, the experienced operator, the shrewd speculator, the penniless adventurer, the “man who had seen better days,” the green novice, the curious tourist, the honest citizen, the common laborer, the tramp, beggar, gambler, sharper, thief, the courtesan, all were there, and jostled each other on the narrow sidewalks. The sodden, aimless, broken-down wretches who form the human flotsam and jetsam of the ocean of life, depraved characters of every type and every degree of degradation, came upon the heels of the pushing men of business as a horde of camp followers straggling on after an army. Petrolia afforded a marked illustration of condensed and intense life. Five thousand people--a constantly changing population, made up of all grades and classes, good and bad, lived in a town which at a casual glance appeared scarcely large enough to hold as many hundred, and the majority of them crowded ten years of action into one of actual time. Business and pleasure and dissipation were carried on during the height of the great oil excitement with a rush, which is never equaled outside of a great center of oil production and oil speculation. The better elements of society, however, were always dominant in Petrolia, and it never had as bad a reputation as some of the

Around 1880 the oil production began to fall rapidly as pools were depleted. Just as rapidly as they developed, the boom towns began to contract and disappear. Chicora’s population peaked at about 6,000, but had declined to 1,500 in 1880. However, for Chicora all was not lost. In 1883 the town still contained three churches, three hotels, two dry goods houses, seven groceries, two banks, one jeweler, two merchant tailors, one grist mill, two hardware stores, one hardware and oil well supplies, one news and stationery store, two machinists and four boiler makers, two harness shops, one shoe store and two shoe shops, two furniture warerooms, one tea and sewing machine store, one tin shop, three wagon shops, two livery stables, two blacksmith shops, two meat markets, two oil offices, an opera house, two public halls, one English and one German school, one pump station, four junk shops, two barber and three milliner shops, two billiard rooms, and among the last, but not least, one printing office (the *Herald* office) six dress-making establishments, three carpenters and builders, one surveyor, three music teachers, one dentist, one lawyer, and four doctors.

Saint Joe, in contrast, declined rapidly after about 1880. In 1883, it was noted that “...it contains but two stores...and one hotel. The land once covered with stores and houses is now used for agricultural purposes” (1883 History of Butler County).

Other industries in the watershed also faded gradually. The Cabot Lamp Black Works closed in the 1920s. Two sandstone quarries, operated by Ford Motor Company and Standard Plate Glass Company, located along Little Buffalo Creek south of Cabot were closed by 1931.

Limestone mining, sandstone quarrying, and refractory manufacturing at West Winfield, Craigs ville and Lairds had largely ended by the mid-20th century.

5.2.4 Archaeological Sites

Review of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Pennsylvania Archaeological Site Survey files indicates that there are 177 previously recorded archaeological resources in the watershed. These include prehistoric rock shelters and open habitations, prehistoric lithic scatters, historic domestic and industrial sites, and one historic shipwreck. The majority of these are prehistoric sites from the Archaic Period (8000-1000 B.C.) or Woodland Period (1000-1500 A.D.). Historic Period sites date primarily from 1800 A.D. to the present.

5.2.5 Historical Sites And Structures

Three museum facilities are devoted to preservation and interpretation of historic resources in the watershed. The Cooper Cabin Pioneer Homestead in Cabot is operated by the Butler County Historical Society. The site contains an intact 1810 log cabin and associated outbuildings that are used to interpret life during the early settlement period. Valley Mills in Laneville is operated by the Freeport Historical Society. This circa 1890 grist mill is being renovated for use as a museum and interpretive resource. Roebling Park in Saxonburg preserves the original John Roebling workshop of 1840, and also contains the Saxonburg Historical Museum that provides exhibits on life and culture of the town.

The Butler County Historical Society publishes a driving tour of the capture and escape of Massa Harbison in 1972, portions of which are located in the lower watershed.

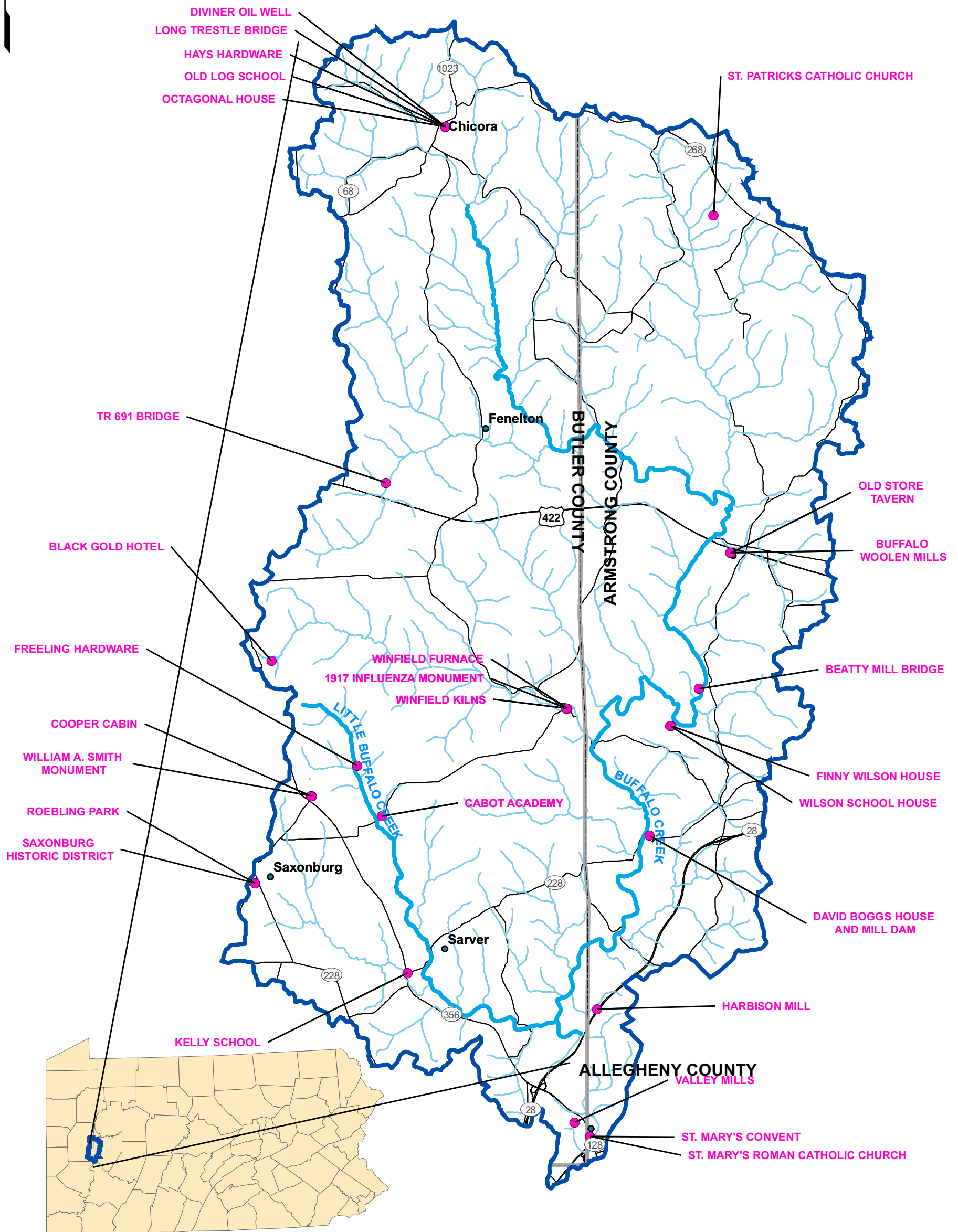
A comprehensive survey of historical sites or structures in the watershed does not appear to exist. Table 5-5 lists major resources identified in the course of the preparation of this plan. These are shown on Figure 5-2. Appendix F lists sites identified in the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's files.








**Table 5-5
MAJOR HISTORIC RESOURCES**

Resource	Location	Description
Rural Agricultural Heritage		
Old Stone Tavern	Worthington	Circa 1820 tavern
Buffalo Woolen Mills	Worthington	Brick factory structure circa 1865 and 1897. Reputed to have been constructed to employ widows of Union war dead.
Saint Patrick's Sugar Creek Roman Catholic Church	Sugar Creek Township	NRHP listed Circa 1805 log church. Reportedly oldest Catholic church in western Pennsylvania.
Saint Mary's Convent	Freeport	Circa 1822 brick structure
Saint Mary's Roman Catholic Church	Freeport	Circa 1849
Winfield Furnace	West Winfield	Circa 1847 iron furnace
Harbison Mill	South Buffalo Township	Remains of 1809 grist mill. Site of 19th century railroad station.
David Boggs House and dam remains	Boggsville	Circa 1880 frame home and remains of mill dam on Buffalo Creek
Saxonburg Historic District	Saxonburg	NRHP listed district with structures dating from 132 to 1940. Important structures in the watershed include the 1840 Roebling workshop and the 1832 German Evangelical Lutheran Church
Old Log School	Chicora	Reportedly oldest remaining school structure in Butler County
Kelly School	Sarver	Circa 1867 brick schoolhouse
Finney Wilson House	North Buffalo Township	NRHP eligible 1882 farmhouse
Wilson School House	North Buffalo Township	NRHP eligible 1840 school
Railroads, Oil and Industrial Heritage		
Winfield Kilns	West Winfield	19th century lime kilns
Black Gold Hotel	Great Belt	1871 railroad and stage coach hotel
Cabot Academy	Cabot	1903 private school
Hays Hardware	Chicora	1892 frame store still operates as hardware store
Octagonal House	Chicora	Farm residence
Long Trestle Bridge	Chicora	1876 wooden railroad trestle
Diviner Oil Well	Chicora	Producing since 1874
William A Smith Monument	Winfield Township	Grave of the driller of the first oil well (Drake's Well) – erected by the American Petroleum Institute
Valley Mills	Laneville	Circa 1879 grist mill – NRHP eligible
1917 Influenza Monument	West Winfield	Monument marking the mass grave of unidentified victims of the 1917 influenza pandemic.
Freehling Hardware	Marwood	1897 Kraus and Freehling Hardware still in operation.
Beatty Mill Bridge	North Buffalo Township	1875 wrought iron bowstring truss bridge
TR 691 Bridge	Clearfield Township	1907 NRHP eligible steel bridge
Clark Coal Company/Harbison Brickyard	Buffalo Township	Remains of early 20th century industry.

Source: GAI 2008.



LEGEND

-  BUFFALO CREEK WATERSHED BOUNDARY
-  MAJOR HISTORIC RESOURCES
-  MAJOR TOWNS
-  MAJOR STREAMS
-  MAJOR ROADS

0 10,000 20,000 Feet

FIGURE 5-2
MAJOR HISTORIC RESOURCES
BUFFALO CREEK WATERSHED



DRAWN BY: AML
CHECKED: AJB

DATE: 07/21/2007
APPROVED: GTR