

Comprehensive Plan

2008

Dickenson County, Virginia

Prepared by: The Dickenson County Planning Commission

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INTRODUCTION

The Code of Virginia section 15.2-2223 grants the county Planning Commission in Dickenson County the authority to undertake a planning program that includes the preparation of a county comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan is an important step in the growth and development of a county. Implementation of a long-range plan aids in the practice of good public management and provides a framework for orderly development in terms of land use and facilities.

The officials of Dickenson County intend that the comprehensive plan serve as a broad policy guide to assist in the decisions necessary for future development and redevelopment in Dickenson County. The comprehensive plan provides an analysis of present conditions and trends in areas such as population and the local economy. Plans for capital improvements, community facilities, and future land use can be based on this analysis. By nature, the comprehensive plan is a general document, and to be useful in the long-range management of the county it should be updated and revised as changing conditions warrant.

Every effort was made to use the most current data available.

LOCATION AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dickenson County lies in the Appalachian Plateau, along the crest of the Cumberland Mountains. It is located in the north-central section of Southwest Virginia and is one of four counties in the Cumberland Plateau Planning District. Dickenson County contains 331.7 square miles covering some of the richest coalfields in the United States. Buchanan, Russell and Tazewell Counties join with Dickenson County to form the planning district; Dickenson County comprises 18.1 percent of the district's total land.

Dickenson County, named for W.J. Dickenson, a prominent citizen, was formed in 1880 from portions of Russell, Wise and Buchanan Counties. The county seat is Clintwood, Virginia. Dickenson County is bordered in the north by Pike County, Kentucky; in the south by Russell County, Virginia; in the west by Wise County, Virginia; and in the east by Buchanan County, Virginia. Major access to Dickenson County from an east-west direction is State Highway 83. State Highway 63, State Highway 80, and State Highway 72 provide access from a north-south direction.

The rough mountainous terrain, characteristic of the Appalachian Plateau, forced the early settlers to locate along the county's streambeds. The best farmland was to be found along the flat bottomlands, and the streams provided a good water supply. The first settlements in Dickenson County were Sandlick, Holly Creek (Clintwood) and Nora, all of which are located along the streams of the area. Other major settlements in the county, including Haysi, Clinchco, McClure and Trammel are also located along streams and rivers.

As the bottomlands of the county became occupied, more settlers began locating on the numerous ridges in the county. The settlers built homes on the broad ridge tops and began to farm the fertile land. Some of the ridge communities include Big Ridge, Omaha, Herald and Caney Ridge. This pattern is still evident today in Dickenson County.

The valley floors and ridge tops are the only lands suitable for development. This fact brings to the forefront Dickenson County's developmental problems. The lowlands offer problems concerning susceptibility to flooding, and the ridge tops limit the availability of site development.

Prior to the 1900's the people of Dickenson County lived under pioneer conditions, with self-sufficiency type farming being the chief occupation. In the late 1800's when attention focused on the county's valuable coal and timber reserves, several companies moved into the county. These companies bought timber and mineral rights, but the resources were not developed because of a lack of any means of transporting the end products to Eastern markets. Upon completion of the Caroline, Clinchfield and Ohio Railroad, the coalmines and hardwood forests became accessible to the markets of the nation and the world. The population of the county nearly doubled between 1910 and 1920, as young men came with their families to live and work.

The county continued to grow until the 1950's. By this time, most of the lumber companies had exhausted their timber, and the mines began to increase mechanization, thus requiring fewer workers. As the coal industry continued to decline during the 1960's, so did Dickenson County's population. Since the county's economy is so closely tied to the coal industry, it can be expected that it will rise and fall at a pace concurrent with the rises and declines in the coal industry. The "energy crisis" and Arab oil embargo of the early seventies signaled the beginning of prosperity once again for Dickenson County, but the 1977 Federal Mine Reclamation Act dampened this renewed vigor of the coal industry and out-of-state as well as international competition has had a negative effect.

In the 1980's a "bust" period was again upon the area, as the boom of the 1970's quickly dwindled. The 1980's also saw a "second generation" of mechanization in the coal industry, increasing coal production but further reducing the manpower needs. Population declined once again and over the next decade employment reached double

digits and the County's population was reflective of employment. The transition of the 1990's saw dramatic shifts in the County's local economy with the world economy changing and throughout this decade. Pittston Coal Corporation owned the largest mineral reserves; their announcement of its intent to sell its holdings in mineral resources spurred the formation of and a new company, Alpha Natural Resources. They acquired all mineral rights from Pittston while Forestland Group acquired the majority of surface property owned by Pittston. These acquisitions coupled with two specific events in history, the Iraq War and Hurricane Katrina, drove crude oil prices to record highs in turn driving the cost of coal and natural gas to market highs also. This coupled with the world demand for fossil energy fuels has seen the resurgence of the coal, natural gas, and even the timber industry. By the 2003/2004 period the expansion of new mining activity, coupled with trucking and vendor activity revitalized the coal economy and unemployment is currently under 5%.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The physical characteristics of an area such as topography, climate and soils contribute to the type, location and nature of development in that area. In Dickenson County, the physiographic conditions are highly restrictive towards development. The cost of development is often beyond the range of economic feasibility excluding previously stripped mining property, which establishes its own unique constraints.

TOPOGRAPHY

In this mountainous region, flat land even a few acres in extent are rare, and valley slopes are very steep. The surface is deeply and maturely dissected by streams, with the water courses being only a few miles apart but separated by ridges that rise 500 to 1,000 feet above them. The valleys are deep, narrow and V-shaped, with little or no flat bottomlands.

The highest point in the county is an elevation of 3,120. This high point is on Pine Mountain, which constitutes the boundary between Virginia and Kentucky. The lowest point, 904 feet above sea level, is found where the Russell Fork crosses the state boundary into Kentucky. Dickenson County has a maximum relief of 2,233. The southern slopes of Pine Mountain are long and comparatively gentle, but the northern slopes are very steep and descend a vertical distance of nearly 2,000 feet between the mountain crest and Elkhorn Creek, Kentucky, a distance of only 1.5 miles.

Several ridges in Dickenson County deserve special mention. Sandy Ridge is a conspicuous feature that forms the divide on the north side of the Clinch River drainage basin, closely paralleling or actually forming the Dickenson-Russell County boundary. Big Ridge extends from Sandy Ridge northeastward to the mouth of the Pound River, forming the divide between the McClure and Cranesnest Rivers. The Breaks Canyon, a gorge carved by the Russell Fork through Pine Mountain, is visited by thousands of tourists and campers due to spectacular views of the defining terrain.

CLIMATE

The climate of Dickenson County is continental. Temperatures average 37 degrees in January and 74 degrees in July, with the average annual temperature being a mild 54 degrees. Average annual rainfall is 45 inches; average annual snowfall is 15 inches. The prevailing winds are usually from the west with more northerly flows in winter months. Dickenson County is considered to be an attainment area for all national air quality standards.

SOILS

Soil properties exert a strong influence on the manner in which land is used. Soils are an irreplaceable resource and mounting pressures continue to make soil more valuable. The Cooperative Extension Service of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University has done some on-site survey work in Dickenson County in order to compile information on the county's soils, since soil capabilities influence development.

The flatter ridge tops offer soils of sufficient thickness of developable terrain. On these uplands, where soils are found in place from residual rock materials, the only two series suitable for development are the Hartsells and Enders. The Hartsells is developed in sandstone and the Enders in micaceous shale. Both, the soils average less than three feet to bedrock, but both are sometimes found to range up to five and one-half feet in depth. The Coeburn, which is associated with the Enders, is also present on the ridge tops but its depth (0 to 30") is insufficient for development. Areas that are located at the mouths of hollows may support very limited development. Most of the soils in these areas are colluvial; they were formed from materials accumulated from the adjacent higher upland slopes. The two most prevalent soils in these colluvial lands, the Leadvale and the Jefferson, were formed from areas of Coeburn soils. These soils are usually thicker than the upland soils, but they are subject to considerable seepage from high lying areas, making them unsuitable for any use except agriculture.

On the terrace lands, those bench like areas bordering, but higher than stream bottoms, the chief soils suitable for development are the Holston and portions of the Monongahela. These soils, which were deposited by streams at a time when their channels were higher, range in thickness from three feet to 30 feet, averaging about seven feet.

Areas along the streams contain alluvial soils washed away from areas underlain by sandstone and shale. These soils are very sandy and gravelly, and the depth to water level of these soils is usually 0 to 20 inches during wet periods. They are also subject to flooding.

The areas along the streambeds are unsuited for development because of flooding problems. Aside from some terrace land, ridge tops and the hollow mouths, the remaining portions of the county, are of steep terrain, and thus unsuitable for development.

ROCK CLASSIFICATIONS

Seven classifications of rocks have been identified in the Dickenson County studies. Four of these- the Lee Formation, the Norton Formation, the Gladville sandstone and the Wise Formation- belong to the Pennsylvanian series, in which the commercially important coal beds in the area are located. The other three- the Grainger shale, the Newman limestone and the Pennington shale belongs to the Mississippian series.

The Lee Formation is exposed along the upper slopes of Pine Mountain and in the middle and left forks of Cane Creek in the extreme southeastern part of the county. A nearly complete section is exposed in the Breaks and one drill hole on the Cranesnest River passes through the whole formation.

In the Cranesnest boring, the Lee Formation is 830 feet thick and consists largely of sandstone, relatively thin beds of shale and several coal beds. These coal beds found throughout the Lee Formation, however, are thin and are not economically important.

The Norton Formation forms the greater part of the surface of Dickenson County. The thickness of the Norton Formation ranges from 920 feet in the northwestern part of the county to approximately 1,460 feet in the southeastern part of the county. The formation consists chiefly of alternating beds of sandstone and shale, with a number of coal beds, some of which have thin layers of clay beneath them. The Norton Formation includes several of the most important coal beds in Dickenson County, including the Tiller, Jawbone, Raven, Aily, Kennedy, Lower and Upper Banner, Splash Dam, Hagy and Norton. The Gladville sandstone is 60 to 110 feet thick, is stained brownish by iron and contains considerable mica and other minerals. It lies between the Norton and Wise Formations and is found throughout the coalfields. The Wise Formation differs little from the Norton Formation. It is very thick in Wise County, but only the lower 750 feet exposed are in Dickenson County. Except near Clintwood and in the western part of the county, the Wise Formation is confined to the upper parts of the ridges. The lower 200 feet of the Wise Formation contain five coal beds including the Dorchester, Lyons, Blair, Eagle, Clintwood, Campbell Creek (Lower Bolling) and Upper Bolling. Although rocks from the Mississippian series are also present, none actually come to the surface anywhere in the county. Well drillings have revealed its presence beneath the coal bearing rocks in so many places that it seems to be located under the entire county. The thickness of the series, which includes the Grainger shale at the bottom, the Newman limestone in the middle and the Pennington shale at the top, is 1,700 to 1,800 feet in Pine Mountain.

The Grainger here is composed chiefly of green shale and brownish sandstone with considerable red sandstone in the upper 50 feet, and is from 400 to 500 feet thick. The Newman limestone is about 500 feet thick and is fossiliferous, bluish gray to dark gray, firm, compact limestone. It weathers to a dull gray color, becomes cavernous and yields typical karst topography.

The Pennington shale is about 800 feet thick and is composed of red, green and drab shale, green sandstone and a 100 feet thick layer of siliceous sandstone. The formation is thicker in the southeastern part of the county than in Pine Mountain.

FAULTS

The only fault of any importance concerning development in Dickenson County is the Russell Fork Fault. The Russell Fork Fault closely follows the Russell Fork of the Big Sandy River, leaving it at only a few places. The main line of the fault in Dickenson County begins at Bee, passes somewhat north of Abners Gap and northwestward through Haysi to a point where the river turns eastward above Bartlick. Here the fault continues northwestward and ends at Skegg's Gap at the Pine Mountain Fault. All along the fault evidence of vertical movement is apparent and crumbling has been a problem, especially around Haysi. Heavy construction should be avoided in the area of the fault. There are two other faults in Dickenson County- one along Pine Mountain and the other along Big A Mountain (Hunter Valley Fault). These faults should not have any direct effect on development in Dickenson County.

GROUND AND SURFACE WATER

Water is a very important natural resource, necessary to maintain human life itself. Additionally, a safe, clean and dependable water supply is required for many commercial, industrial, agricultural and recreational purposes. The availability and quality of water is therefore an important consideration in assessing the development potential of Dickenson County.

Water resources exist as surface water and as ground water, also. Streams, rivers and lakes compromise our surface water, since they occur on the surface of the earth. Ground water is stored in open spaces underneath the surface of the earth. Coal mining operations have seriously damaged the supply of groundwater in Dickenson County. Underground aquifers have been depleted and only a small amount of groundwater is still available.

Surface water can be found in the three major rivers and many smaller streams, but the largest supplier of surface water is the John Flannagan Reservoir. The John Flannagan Reservoir provides much of Dickenson and Buchanan Counties with fresh water.

Dickenson County lies in the Big Sandy River Basin. The principal streams of the county are Pound River, Cranesnest River, Caney Creek, McClure River, Lick Creek and Russell Fork. These are headwater streams, and the area drained is not sufficiently large to provide other moderate supplies of surface water.

The streams in Dickenson County are tributaries to two great drainage systems. Those on the south side of Sandy Ridge flow into the Clinch River, which joins the Tennessee, a river that flows as far south as Alabama before turning west and north to the Ohio River. Streams north of Sandy Ridge are tributaries to Russell Fork of the Big Sandy River and reach the Ohio by a direct northerly route.

Although even small tributaries contain some running water during most of the year, none of the streams has a very large flow. The rainfall of the region is moderate. The sandy soil, dense growth of trees and brush, and high stream gradients all work to prevent serious flooding.

In 1966, the John W. Flannagan Dam was completed, a recreation project constructed under the supervision of the District Engineer, Huntington District, Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army. The project provides for a flood control pool of 95,000 acre-feet, and a minimum pool (winter) of 12,000 acre-feet. At minimum pool elevation 1,315, the project will have 310 surface acres extending six miles upstream from the dam.

Since 1946, stream-gauging stations have been maintained on Russell Fork at Haysi and Pound River near Haysi. The water is moderately hard with comparatively high sulfate content owing to drainage from coalmines. Records of temperatures and water quality data are available for these gauges. Flow duration and high and low flow sequence data are also available for these gauges. With the anticipated increase in coal production in Dickenson County, greater demands have been placed on the water supply.

Presently, there appears to be sufficient ground water to fulfill the needs of users with deep wells, however, increasing population, mining activities, and gas exploration has lowered the water table and placed stress on the more shallow wells.

DRAINAGE

The streams in Dickenson County are tributary to two great drainage systems. Those on the south side of Sandy Ridge flow into the Clinch River, which joins the Tennessee, a river that flows as far south as Alabama before turning west and north to the Ohio River. Streams north of Sandy Ridge are tributary to Russell Fork of the Big Sandy River and reach the Ohio by a direct northerly route.

The largest tributaries of Russell Fork are the Pound, Cranesnest and McClure Rivers. Although even small tributaries contain some running water during most of the year, none of the streams has a very large flow. The rainfall of the region is high, but the sandy soil, dense growth of trees and brush and the high stream gradients all work to prevent serious flooding. The town of Haysi, which lies at the confluence of the Russell Fork and McClure Rivers, is the area most subject to periodic flooding in Dickenson County.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The chief mineral resources in Dickenson County are coal and natural gas. The Southwest Virginia Coalfield is part of the larger Central Appalachian coal region, which also includes parts of Southern West Virginia and Eastern Kentucky.

COAL

One measure of coal's significance is the economic value of its production. The dramatic increase in coal's price in 1974 caused coal's value to more than double, but as prices declined throughout the decade of the eighties, so did the value of production. That reduction in price had forced coal companies to increase productivity (tonnage mined per miner) in order to be profitable. The U.S. Department of Energy has estimated that there are 1,609 million tons of recoverable reserves in Virginia at present. Based on

the Static Reserve Index (Reserves current annual production) the mineable reserves may be depleted in 36 years. According to the Virginia Center for Coal and Energy Research, there are 2,160 million tons, which would be mined out in 48 years. The Virginia Division of Mineral Resources gives a range of recoverable reserves of 1,995 to 4,393 million tons, which would last 44 to 98 years. Whether the coal resources will be depleted in 36 or 98 years, coal mining will remain a major economic activity for the near future. Dickenson County was the third largest producer in 1999 with 4,284,833 tons produced from 55 mines compared to a state total of 32,253,994 tons from 361 mines.

NATURAL GAS

Of the known natural gas fields in Virginia, major portions are located in the Cumberland Plateau Planning District. Most of the area is either covered by, or suitable for hardwood forest growth.

It is important to distinguish between reserves and resources. Reserves include those known deposits that are recoverable at today's prices using today's technology. In addition to reserves, resources also include unknown deposits, as well as those known but not developable profitably at today's prices. According to recent government estimates, the nation's natural gas reserve and resource base is weak. This weakness will increase the importance of Southwestern Virginia and is one of Dickenson County's strengths.

Dickenson County is the second leading county in the state in the production of natural gas. Natural gas demands have increased and will continue to increase into the next century due to the development of new southern markets. Equitable Resources, (formerly Philadelphia Oil Company, a subsidiary of PECO Resources, Inc.), dominates natural gas development in Dickenson County. Other gas operators are Columbia Natural Gas, Pine Mountain, and Virginia Gas Company.

Explorations that resulted in increases in Dickenson reserves in 1986 anticipated the development of a new East Tennessee Natural Gas Company pipeline spur from Philadelphia Oil's Nora gas field to the main ETNG pipeline in Abingdon. The new

ETNG pipeline has made available new markets in Southwest Virginia between Bristol and Roanoke and as far south as Atlanta. Very little is being used locally except for landowners that own reserves and have wells on their property. Natural gas is unavailable to industries in most in areas of the county. Appalachian Natural Gas Distribution Company is the licensed distributor for the region.

According to the Virginia Division of Oil and Gas, 1987, Dickenson County has 118.5 million cubic feet of natural gas reserves, the most in the state. In 1999, Dickenson County had a total of five gas operators producing 8,138,874 million cubic feet (mcf) from 436 conventional gas wells; 9,526,242 mcf from 373 coal bed methane (cbm) wells; and 139,375 mcf from five dual completion wells. (Dual completions wells produce both cbm and conventional natural gas.) Columbia Natural Gas acquired permit rights to a gas gathering system formerly operated by Virginia gas Company in the Haysi area of Dickenson County. The newly acquired system is complementary to Columbia's current area of production and drilling activity. Dickenson County had 53 cbm wells drilled, one dual completion and 4 conventional wells totaling 58 wells during 1999. A total of 55 wells were completed (made ready for production) during the year. A total of 144,129 feet was drilled in Dickenson County in 1999.

In Virginia in 1989, natural gas provided about 10 percent the primary energy and 14 percent to the end-use energy. Because of concerns about oil imports and the air emissions from coal burning, many look to natural gas as an increasing source of energy for Virginia and throughout the nation. Natural gas has been produced from the natural gas fields in Southwest Virginia since the 1930's. Production doubled in the mid-to-late eighties and the development of unconventional coal seam gas has improved the continued increase in natural gas production through the 1990's and has steadily increased through 2000.

In 2007, the County secured a regional operational headquarters established in the Dickenson County Technology Park. This announcement will create approximately a 100 + new jobs and annual schedule of 300 new wells over a period of 5 years. Over this

5-year period it is forecasted that 300-500m of new infrastructure will occur nearly doubling the County's current natural gas service. In Virginia in 1990, Dickenson County ranked number one in natural gas production and contains the second largest reserve in the state, closely following Wise County, which currently has the largest natural gas reserve in the state. Reserve additions are expected with further discoveries, improved economic conditions (higher prices), and new technology.

Substantial increases in Dickenson County's natural gas activities led to a near quintupling of production between 1983 and 1988, with levels slightly dropping since then due partly to the poor market conditions in the north brought on by mild winter weather. Three major companies in Virginia produced more than 90 percent of the state's 1990 production. One of these companies, Equitable Production Company, Inc., produces primarily in Dickenson County. Equitable's completion of the East Tennessee Natural Gas (ETNG) pipeline spur into Dickenson County facilitated production increases.

Coal bed methane found in the coal seams offers an opportunity for production of unconventional gas. A long-time hazard of underground mining, this gas has had to be vented from mines to insure safe mining conditions. After successful commercial development in Alabama and New Mexico, this methane is now seen as a valuable resource. The greatest potential coal-bed methane resources are in the coal seams of Dickenson and Buchanan Counties.

NATURAL GAS RESERVES & PRODUCTION BY COUNTY

Natural Gas Productions by County

Year	Buchanan	Dickenson	Russell	Tazewell	CPPD	Virginia
1990	20,833,537	6,772,408	708,459	3,241,722	31,556,176	46,500,106
1991	18,023,461	6,283,745	898,515	3,090,052	28,295,773	42,336,136
1992	17,541,828	6,986,663	744,364	2,846,126	28,118,981	42,563,520
1993	13,964,187	6,117,093	1,305,355	2,911,719	24,298,354	40,090,647
1994	14,549,280	4,459,504	1,190,568	2,495,777	22,695,129	38,728,610
1995	14,055,640	2,816,862	1,505,289	2,521,619	20,899,410	35,917,208
1996	14,701,024	2,873,504	1,174,959	2,442,678	21,192,165	36,782,065
1997	13,974,831	3,360,165	1,009,029	2,285,455	20,629,480	36,889,166
1998	12,095,911	3,675,106	1,243,296	2,081,917	19,096,230	34,011,244
1999	10,084,364	4,284,833	1,301,532	1,930,922	17,574,701	32,253,994

Gas Production by County (Thousands of Cubic Feet)

County	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Total	88,893,179	85,800,555	81,085,896	76,914,535	71,542,817	71,545,334	71,825,640
Buchanan	49,989,439	50,637,115	49,487,021	45,389,410	44,479,589	44,384,057	41,916,758
Dickenson	20,192,044	17,475,252	15,734,527	16,480,236	14,877,235	14,859,535	17,665,116
Russell	6,422,942	5,901,345	4,876,771	3,500,511	2,075,174	491,297	615,795
Tazewell	3,886,336	3,153,322	2,485,299	2,563,883	1,846,158	1,912,571	1,604,506

Conventional Gas Production by County (Thousands of Cubic Feet)

County	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Total	19,541,986	18,814,071	18,237,107	18,025,790	16,903,098	18,369,768	20,497,378
Buchanan	4,988,187	4,064,642	4,204,559	3,152,952	2,939,488	2,651,146	2,769,705
Dickenson	7,072,100	6,751,203	6,239,374	6,549,414	6,234,050	6,451,725	8,138,874
Russell	67,816	80,682	13,810	14,264	13,679	6,810	3,797
Tazewell	331,312	380,839	446,407	505,777	576,537	621,464	675,935

Source: DMME

Coal Bed Methane Production by County (Thousands of Cubic Feet)

County	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Total	69,067,538	66,694,059	62,558,476	58,584,411	54,364,189	52,870,607	51,328,262
Buchanan	44,053,374	46,548,902	45,255,875	42,205,506	41,513,823	41,705,538	39,147,053
Dickenson	6,355,126	10,650,467	9,402,443	9,821,619	8,540,781	8,298,209	9,526,242
Russell	6,355,024	5,820,663	4,862,961	3,486,247	2,061,495	484,487	611,998
Tazewell	3,555,024	2,772,483	2,038,892	2,058,106	1,269,621	1,291,107	928,571

Gas wells and anything connected with gas wells have to be taxed at real estate tax levy.

Total assessed value of all gas wells for 2007: \$146,729,800.00

Total Taxes on all gas wells for 2007: \$764,915.40

Total assessed value of all pipelines for 2007: \$52,163,005.00

Total tax of all pipelines for 2007: \$285,664.20

Gas total in general	2005-2006	\$4,926,370.02
	2006-2007	\$4,121,798.04
Coal total in general	2005-2006	\$8,938,819.43
	2006-2007	\$8,856,999.95
County General Fund	2005-2006	\$4,469,409.72
	2006-2007	\$4,035,786.86

The following is a list of gas companies and number of gas wells that each gas companies have operating in Dickenson County as of February 20, 2008.

Equitable Production Company.....	1729 wells
Chesapeake Appalachia LLC	47 wells
Appalachian Energy INC	26 wells
Range Resources-Pine Mountain INC.....	14 wells
Elliott Productions	2 wells
Blue Flame Energy Corporation.....	1 well
Total Wells	1805

RENEWABLE RESOURCES

Commercial forestland occupies 182,045 (86%) of the total land area of 212,077 acres. Most forestlands are owned by private individuals or by corporations. Non-industrial landowners own approximately 167,718 acres (92%) while 1,279 acres (8%) are publicly owned. The forest has approximately 218,974,000 cubic feet of growing stock (standing trees). About 92% of this consists of hardwoods and the remainder softwoods. A large percentage of the hardwoods are red and white oaks and yellow poplar. Small amounts of hickory, red maple, beech and ash can be found. The softwoods are mostly hemlock and white pine with some yellow pine species scattered throughout the county. Almost 70% of the timber is classified as saw timber size (11.0 DBH for hardwoods; 9.0 DBH for softwoods). This indicates that a large percentage of the timber is nearing maturity. On an annual basis the forest is growing four times the amount that is harvested. Growth is 8,618,000 cubic feet with removals being 2,148,000 cubic feet. Recent forest surveys for Southwest Virginia indicate more timber is being added each year. Most of the forestland is privately owned and the timber is only harvested on a demand basis.

Timber is an abundant natural resource in Dickenson County. The 2006 Forest Inventory Data by the United States Forest Service, part of the Department of Agriculture, estimates the amount of timber resources, as well as the condition and types available. The Virginia Department of Forestry assists landowners in the management of forest resources.

Saw timber size trees must have a diameter of at least 9 inches for softwoods, 11 inches for hardwoods. The diameter is measured outside the bark at breast height, 4.5 feet above the ground. Growing stock trees are commercial trees having a diameter of 5 inches or larger at breast height, with saw timber sized trees included. A growing stock tree must have the potential to contain at least a 12-foot log, or have two noncontiguous saw logs each eight feet or longer. Grade requirements, a classification based on external characteristics, which indicate value, must also be met.

Softwood trees are gymnosperms, usually evergreen trees, having needles or scale-like leaves. Pine is softwood; other softwoods in the region are cedar, hemlock and spruce. Hardwood trees are angiosperms, and typically are broad leaved and deciduous. Hard wood trees can be either soft or hard textured, therefore are listed as soft hardwood or hard hardwood.

Hard textured hardwoods include sugar maple, birch, hickory, dogwood, beech, ash, black walnut and oak. Red and silver maple, sycamore, willow and elm are examples of soft textured hardwood. Yellow Poplar, which is a significant component of Dickenson County forests, is also a soft textured hardwood.

Due to past harvesting methods, the quality of timberland in Dickenson County and the surrounding counties has steadily declined. Traditionally, the forests of these counties have been selectively cut or “high-grades”, where the best timber is removed, leaving the less desirable timber to become dominant. The result is a species conversion from the preferred yellow poplar and upland oak to beech, maple and lower quality oak.

Although the potential exists for Dickenson County to maintain and improve the high quality timber market, development of additional markets such as pulpwood and low-grade timber should also be considered.

Through better management techniques, such as proper pre-harvest, harvest, and post-harvest practices, the quality of this renewable resource will be improved. In addition, proper management will protect soil and water quality and enhance wildlife.

SENSITIVE HABITATS

The Department of Conservation and Recreation's Divisions of State Parks and Natural Areas has set aside locations within each state park that represent the natural diversity of that area. The Breaks Interstate Park includes a protected natural area. The title "natural area", as stated in the 1989 Virginia Outdoors Plan, is as follows; "An area of land, wetland, or water which manifests a natural character, although it need not be completely undisturbed, and/or which sustains rare or exemplary natural features characteristic of Virginia's natural heritage and which has scientific or education value."

Beginning with the Open Space Land Act in 1966, the General Assembly authorized local governments and park authorities to acquire land/or certain rights in order to preserve open space. According to this law, land may qualify for protection if it displays significant natural features or historic, scenic, or scientific qualities.

Article XI, Section 1 of the Virginia Constitution, which states in relevant part, "Further it shall be the Commonwealth's policy to protect its atmosphere, lands, and waters from pollution impairment, or destruction for the benefit, employment, and general welfare of the people of the Commonwealth" Is the legal foundation for resource preservation of this type.

If an adequate example of each of Virginia's natural community types are protected, then the majority of the species native to the state will be preserved because they are the usual components of those communities. A list is compiled of exceedingly rare plants and animals, and those with very uncommon habitat types, in order to carefully monitor them. The following page contains the inhabitants of Dickenson County that are cited in *Virginia's Endangered Species* as being either endangered, threatened, or of special concern.

Virginia Endangered

Virginia Spiraea, Spiraea Virginian, Federal Threatened

Bewick's Wren, *Thryomanes bewickii* (recommended)

Virginia Threatened

Brown supercoil (snail) *Paravitrea septadens* (recommended)

Swainson's Warbler, *Limnothlypis swainsonii* (recommended)

Virginia Special Concern

Carey saxifrage, *Saxifraga careyana*

Dwarf anemone, *Anemone minima*

Nodding mandarin, *Disporum maculatum*

Drooping Trillium, *Trillium flexipes*

Nodding pogonia, *Triphora trianthophora*

Large-flowered heatleaf, *Hexastylis shuttleworthii*

Round-leaved catchfly, *Silene rotundifolia*

Mountain bitter-cress, *Cardamine clematitidis*

Little-leaved alum-root, *Heuchera parviflora*

Large-fruited sanicle, *Sanicula trifoliata*

Box huckleberry, *Gaylussacia brachucera*

Baker's rhododendron, *Rhododendron cumberlandense*

Great Indian-plantain, *Cacalia muhlenbergii*

Glossy supercoil (snail), *Ventridens lawae*

Balsam globe (snail), *Mesodon andrewsae*

Buttress threetooth (snail), *Triodopsis rugosa*

By using traditional land acquisition techniques along with administrative and voluntary protection by landowners, the components of Virginia's natural diversity and the natural habitats of Dickenson County can be safeguarded in ways that best fit each particular situation.

POPULATION TRENDS

DENSITY

Approximately 90 percent of Dickenson County's population resides outside the Counties incorporated towns, while 9 percent reside in the town of Clintwood and the remaining 1 percent lives in the town of Haysi. These two towns account for 1,764 of the count's residents, or 10 percent of the county's total population. Dickenson County has a density of 59 people per square mile. The density per square mile for the town of Clintwood is much larger, almost 750 people per square mile, and although Haysi contains less than a square mile of land area, its density is 252 people per square mile.

DISTRIBUTION

The distribution pattern of Dickenson County's population is linear, with development following the major streams, ridge tops and highways. This linear growth is likely to continue, given the limited amount of developable land.

RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS

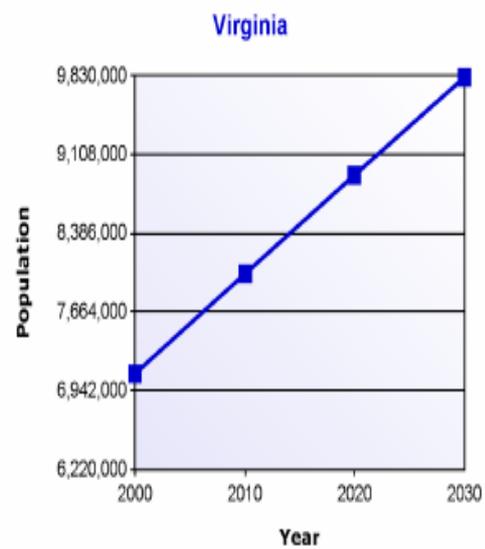
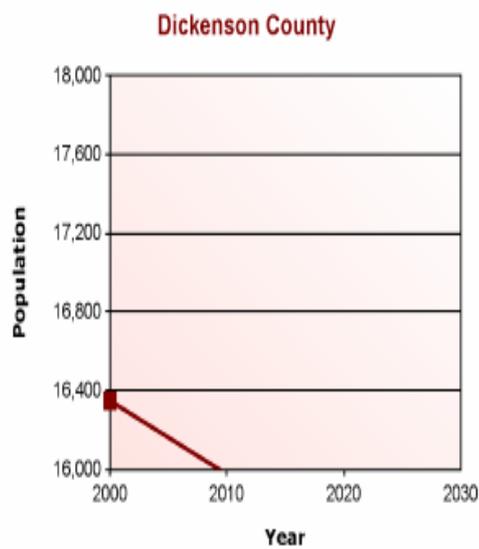
Dickenson County has a primarily white population, with minority groups totaling approximately 101 persons in 1990, which is less than one percent of the county.

POPULATION TRENDS

	1994 Population	2004 Population	% Changes
Dickenson County	17,525	16,212	-7.5%
Tazewell County	46,283	44,634	-3.6%
Russell County	29,557	28,857	-2.4%
Buchanan County	30,275	25,143	-17.0%
Virginia Statewide	6,593,139	7,472,448	13.3%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Population Change



	Dickenson County	(% change)	Virginia	(% change)
1990	17,552		6,216,884	
2000	16,351	-6.84 %	7,104,078	14.27 %
2010	15,975	-2.30 %	8,010,342	12.76 %
2020	15,868	-0.67 %	8,917,575	11.33 %
2030	15,863	-0.03 %	9,825,288	10.18 %

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Virginia Employment Commission.

AGE CHARACTERISTICS

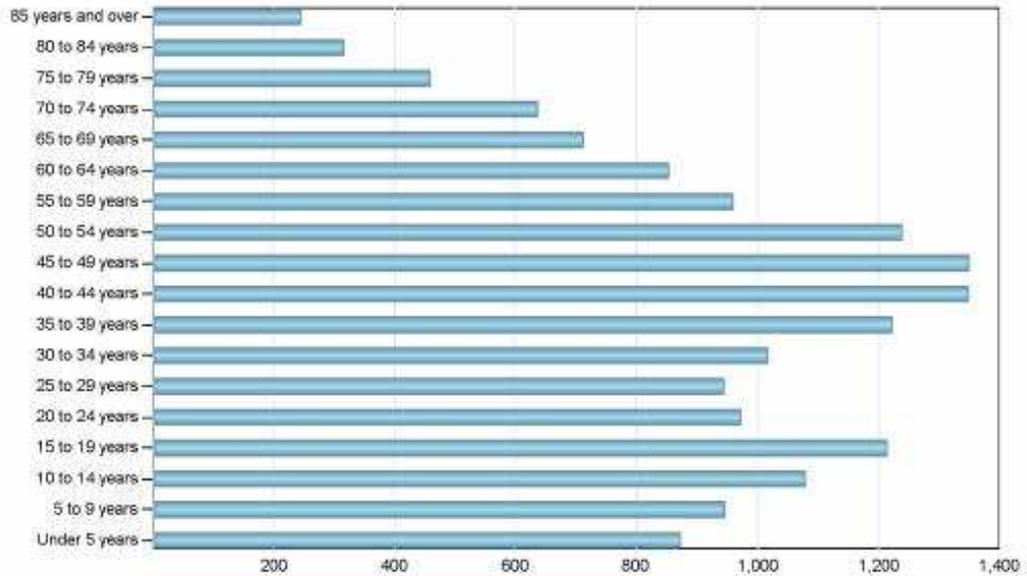
The age of populations can be used as a rough indicator of the level and type services, which are needed and desired in an area. Each age group generally possesses certain needs and desires which are quite different from those of the other age groups. The obvious trend is that the population of Dickenson County is growing older.

The median age of all the counties within the Cumberland Plateau Planning District is increasing, and currently Dickenson County's median age is 39.7 years old. This median age is expected to increase, due to several factors such as a lack of job opportunities for young adults and the resulting outward migration as graduates leave and do not return. Also contributing to the aging population is the influence of the nationwide group known as baby boomers. As this segment of the nation's population grows old, no county will be left unaffected and many adjustments will need to be made to support their needs.

MEDIAN AGES: 1970-2000

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Dickenson	28.50	28.0	34.0	39.7
Buchanan	21.50	25.9	32.2	38.8
Russell	27.30	29.3	34.6	38.7
Tazewell	28.10	29.6	35.4	40.7
CPPD	26.35	28.2	34.1	n/a
Virginia	26.80	29.80	32.6	35.7

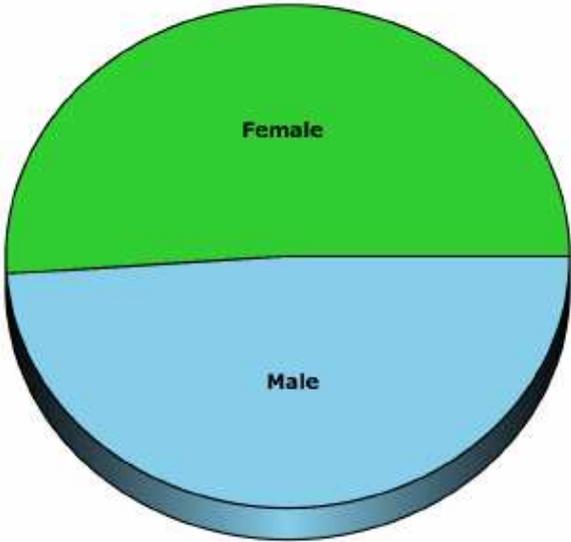
Population by Age



	Dickenson County	Virginia	United States
Under 5 years	875	461,982	19,175,798
5 to 9 years	945	495,084	20,549,505
10 to 14 years	1,079	495,955	20,528,072
15 to 19 years	1,215	484,065	20,219,890
20 to 24 years	971	480,574	18,964,001
25 to 29 years	944	497,172	19,381,336
30 to 34 years	1,017	539,793	20,510,388
35 to 39 years	1,223	610,810	22,706,664
40 to 44 years	1,349	589,880	22,441,863
45 to 49 years	1,350	526,221	20,092,404
50 to 54 years	1,239	473,035	17,585,548
55 to 59 years	959	358,442	13,469,237
60 to 64 years	856	273,169	10,805,447
65 to 69 years	714	229,553	9,533,545
70 to 74 years	638	202,903	8,857,441
75 to 79 years	460	166,178	7,415,813
80 to 84 years	316	106,433	4,945,367
85 years and over	245	87,266	4,239,587
	16,395	7,078,515	281,421,906

Source: 2000 Census.

Population by Gender



	Dickenson County	Virginia	United States
Male	8,017	3,471,895	138,053,563
Female	8,378	3,606,620	143,368,343
	16,395	7,078,515	281,421,906

Source: 2000 Census.

FORECASTS

According to Virginia Population 2020 Projections, the populations of Dickenson County were forecasted to continue dropping slightly over the next twenty years. Although, recent indicators reflect an approximate 2% increase annually. The Virginia Employment Commission produces both long and short population projects to serve as common reference points in the planning and development of programs and facilities. The projections are to be used as guidelines by all agencies, boards, and commissions in preparing required plans, programs, and budget requests.

Population Projections by Age and Gender

	2010		2020		2030	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Under 5 years	373	377	362	366	309	315
5 to 9 years	398	376	394	382	378	372
10 to 14 years	433	438	415	405	418	414
15 to 19 years	415	435	369	364	381	388
20 to 24 years	344	401	285	306	287	297
25 to 29 years	507	572	326	341	299	293
30 to 34 years	544	583	368	413	316	331
35 to 39 years	480	437	537	583	362	375
40 to 44 years	518	457	566	590	399	440
45 to 49 years	621	590	495	457	578	635
50 to 54 years	752	655	583	484	654	660
55 to 59 years	687	692	701	612	576	499
60 to 64 years	563	634	756	688	608	522
65 to 69 years	421	433	648	673	686	608
70 to 74 years	327	268	433	484	604	546
75 to 79 years	251	198	277	285	447	462
80 to 84 years	218	150	219	154	299	288
85 years and over	333	94	449	98	700	117
	8,185	7,790	8,183	7,685	8,301	7,562
	15,975		15,868		15,863	

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity

	2010	2020	2030
Total			
Total Population	15,975	15,868	15,863
Race			
White	15,742	15,543	15,415
Black or African American	96	116	132
American Indian or Alaska Native	13	14	9
Asian	17	26	29
Ethnicity			
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	107	169	278

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Population Projections by Age and Gender

	2010		2020		2030	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Under 5 years	533	570	471	503	433	459
5 to 9 years	561	601	520	558	506	541
10 to 14 years	572	615	543	606	549	600
15 to 19 years	589	677	482	545	513	572
20 to 24 years	475	521	334	391	361	442
25 to 29 years	621	761	411	461	354	418
30 to 34 years	665	871	459	492	375	413
35 to 39 years	667	762	615	755	478	511
40 to 44 years	760	874	651	867	520	566
45 to 49 years	981	1,033	672	759	700	846
50 to 54 years	982	1,151	767	874	745	982
55 to 59 years	912	930	924	945	721	796
60 to 64 years	872	769	883	961	787	844
65 to 69 years	640	628	770	784	876	910
70 to 74 years	545	440	702	535	811	762
75 to 79 years	334	204	462	269	624	379
80 to 84 years	242	123	315	168	456	227
85 years and over	316	69	453	66	815	75
	11,267	11,599	10,434	10,539	10,624	10,343
	22,866		20,973		20,967	

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity

	2010	2020	2030
Total			
Total Population	22,866	20,973	20,967
Race			
White	21,853	19,722	19,295
Black or African American	785	879	1,068
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	8	7
Asian	54	95	166
Ethnicity			
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	166	269	431

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Population Projections by Age and Gender

	2010		2020		2030	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Under 5 years	777	837	851	910	828	880
5 to 9 years	844	850	895	969	932	1,006
10 to 14 years	907	831	895	959	1,000	1,070
15 to 19 years	880	799	847	811	926	946
20 to 24 years	710	710	724	643	729	752
25 to 29 years	890	1,091	802	756	783	779
30 to 34 years	1,007	1,125	817	839	865	782
35 to 39 years	1,027	973	1,002	1,183	931	857
40 to 44 years	998	970	1,089	1,195	905	918
45 to 49 years	1,190	1,058	1,133	1,001	1,120	1,241
50 to 54 years	1,310	1,174	1,092	973	1,216	1,239
55 to 59 years	1,181	1,123	1,233	1,033	1,207	1,014
60 to 64 years	1,000	1,047	1,301	1,130	1,112	961
65 to 69 years	830	688	1,090	953	1,171	889
70 to 74 years	670	533	860	796	1,152	881
75 to 79 years	567	394	681	461	914	645
80 to 84 years	306	231	393	271	510	425
85 years and over	432	140	524	130	720	133
	15,526	14,574	16,229	15,013	17,021	15,418
	30,100		31,242		32,439	

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity

	2010	2020	2030
Total			
Total Population	30,100	31,242	32,439
Race			
White	29,509	30,448	31,332
Black or African American	287	312	328
American Indian or Alaska Native	27	26	23
Asian	18	30	84
Ethnicity			
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	259	426	672

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Population Projections by Age and Gender

	2010		2020		2030	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Under 5 years	1,093	1,140	1,184	1,238	1,100	1,150
5 to 9 years	1,157	1,182	1,250	1,295	1,286	1,332
10 to 14 years	1,248	1,341	1,223	1,331	1,362	1,475
15 to 19 years	1,247	1,457	1,116	1,285	1,250	1,444
20 to 24 years	1,021	1,056	932	1,007	939	1,018
25 to 29 years	1,472	1,366	1,091	1,143	1,004	1,047
30 to 34 years	1,537	1,674	1,202	1,148	1,134	1,141
35 to 39 years	1,440	1,459	1,657	1,501	1,265	1,303
40 to 44 years	1,345	1,273	1,696	1,864	1,380	1,317
45 to 49 years	1,686	1,511	1,529	1,552	1,813	1,635
50 to 54 years	1,994	1,817	1,415	1,354	1,852	2,051
55 to 59 years	1,962	1,826	1,775	1,572	1,665	1,662
60 to 64 years	1,759	1,603	2,028	1,762	1,480	1,351
65 to 69 years	1,349	1,225	1,942	1,754	1,817	1,556
70 to 74 years	1,084	879	1,618	1,354	1,931	1,518
75 to 79 years	839	570	1,083	807	1,602	1,181
80 to 84 years	688	390	731	469	1,120	739
85 years and over	809	260	1,021	297	1,467	385
	23,730	22,029	24,493	22,733	25,467	23,305
	45,759		47,226		48,772	

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity

	2010	2020	2030
Total			
Total Population	45,759	47,226	48,772
Race			
White	43,780	44,632	45,305
Black or African American	1,075	1,187	1,351
American Indian or Alaska Native	71	69	65
Asian	462	737	1,114
Ethnicity			
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	371	601	937

Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

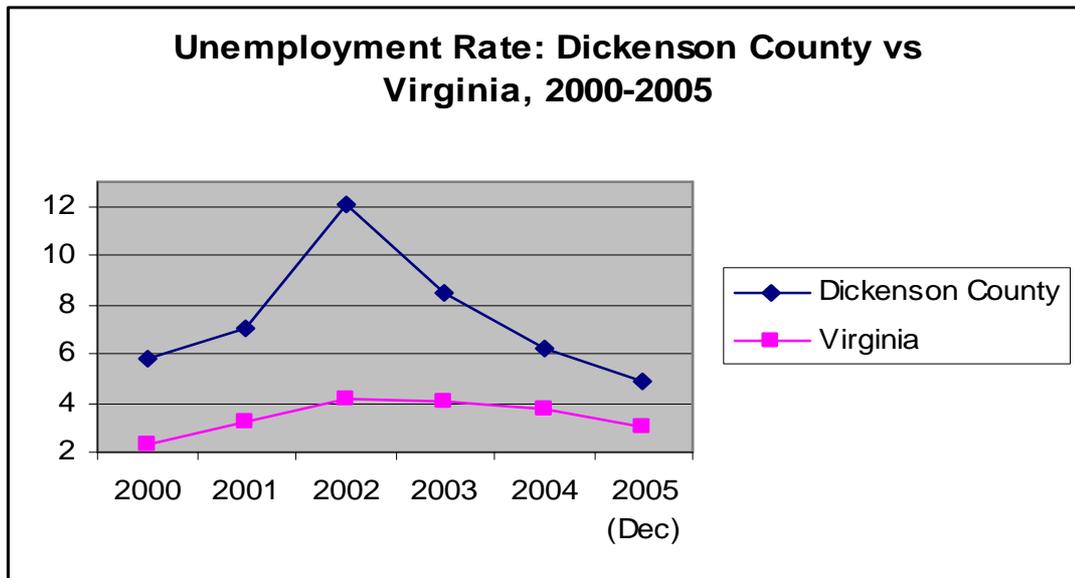
The coal mining and natural gas industry represent the County of Dickenson's major employment, while basic employment is defined as the employment in industries, which sell most of their goods and services outside of the area. Governmental services represent a large sector of employment. Emphasis is always placed on the basic employment sector because it is the primary sources of area growth. An economy based on a single industry, such as coal or natural gas is subjected to the global/national economy. Dependence on one basic industry makes the economy of an area highly susceptible to changes in that industry. Industries, which sell most of their goods to outside areas, depend on national or regional demand rather than on local demand.

The national demand for coal during the 1960's decreased, as oil and natural gas moved into coal's major markets as home and industrial heating fuel. Stricter environmental controls added to the diminishing demand for coal, and mechanization within the industry further eliminated the need for larger workforces. Many of the smaller mining establishments were unable to afford the costs of updating to a long wall system and could not absorb the short-term losses that the larger companies could, so they closed down entirely. The economy of Dickenson County suffered during this time and population declined. The coal upturn of the 1970's brought a short-lived boost to the area's economy, but during the 1980's, economic decline became apparent by the high rates of unemployment and the low levels of family income for Dickenson County.

UNEMPLOYMENT

A commonly cited statistic for economic health is the unemployment rate and Dickenson County has historically lagged far behind both the region and the state. In the late 80s and early 90s as well as in 2002, double-digit unemployment rates in Dickenson County were common during the last major downturn of the coal industry. This was likely a result of a major job loss at a county-based call center, Travelocity.com, in addition to the sale of holdings by Pittston Coal Corporation and the period of uncertainty and the transition of ownership to Alpha Natural Resources and their implementation of

production). As the following chart shows, current rates are more reasonable and show a general downward turn and a more equitable standing with the statewide average reasoning.

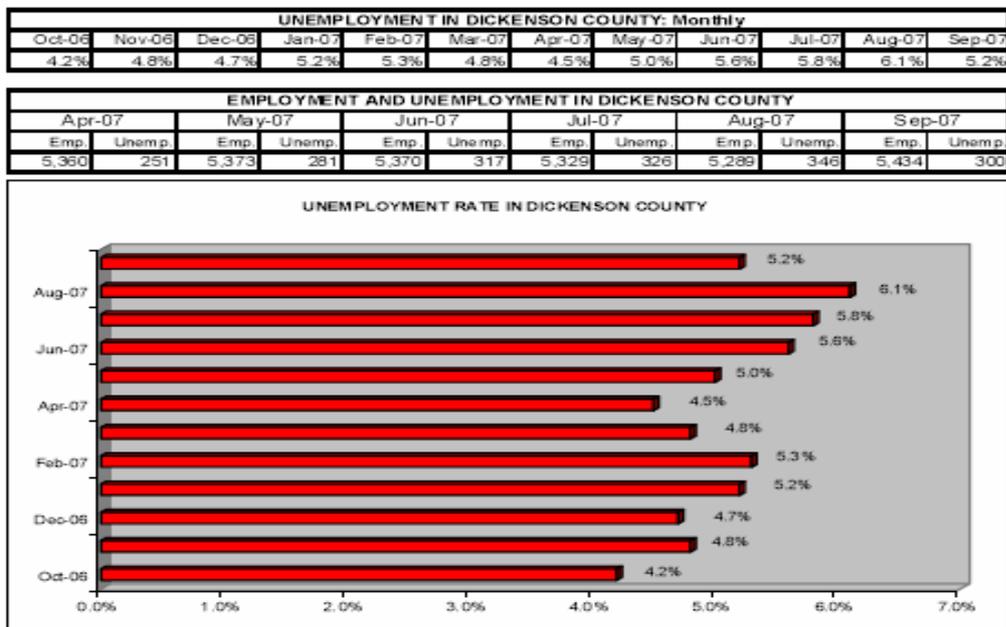


Still the data indicates that Dickenson County faces many challenges in the foreseeable future. Through the 1990's coal production and sales were moderate to low retaining little growth through the transition of Pittston Coal selling its holdings to Alpha Natural Resources. The transition and implementation of production of mining occurred in 2002. The economy shifted with emphasis and demand for coal due to oil prices and global unrest creating a strong and vibrant market for natural resources. This demand has placed an emphasis on the need for experienced miners and the development of training a new generation of coal miners. Markets are currently stable with long-term contracts for purchase of coal and the potential for the development of a new coal fired plant in a neighboring locality could assist with stabilization of the coal industry for decades to come. One area of concern is that of new federal and state regulations for mining search and rescue requirements to all coal operators. This regulation will force a financial burden to coal companies and the potential for smaller operations to cease due to the financial burdens.

Other concerns includes: retired persons; seasonal workers not employed and not actively seeking employment during the week census information is collected.

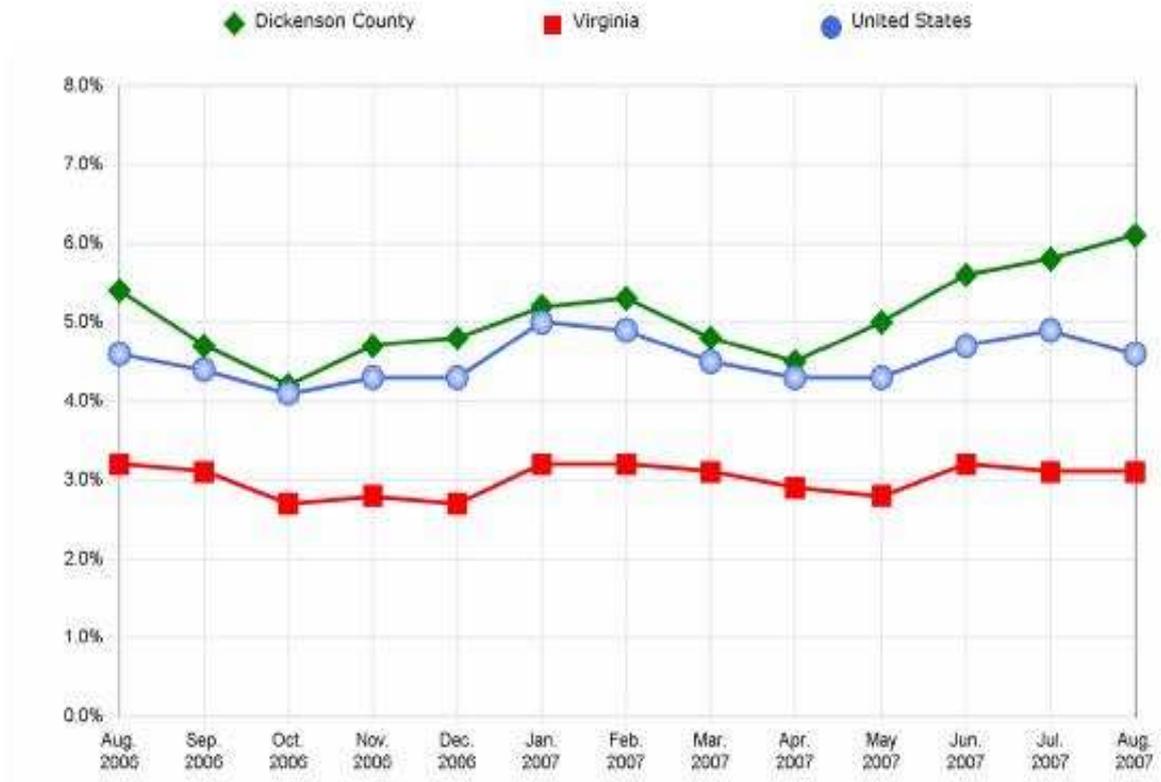
Temporarily ill or disabled persons; voluntarily idle persons; persons working unpaid in a family business less than 15 hours per week; and discouraged workers who have given up looking for work because they do not believe they can find a job.

Potential workers at some point join the ranks of discouraged workers due to a lack of opportunities in the county, sometimes called a “job famine”. One way to compare the availability of employment in Dickenson County to the availability of employment in the State of Virginia is to calculate the number of people employed as a percentage of the working age population. The number of discouraged workers suffering from “job famine” is found by subtracting Dickenson County’s work force participation rate from the participation rate average for the State of Virginia, which is 68.9 percent. That difference, 25 percent, is equal to 3,365 workers. These discouraged workers are added to the number of unemployed workers in Dickenson County (815 in 1990) and together total 4,619 persons, 32.7 percent of Dickenson County’s working age population.



Source: Virginia Employment Commission

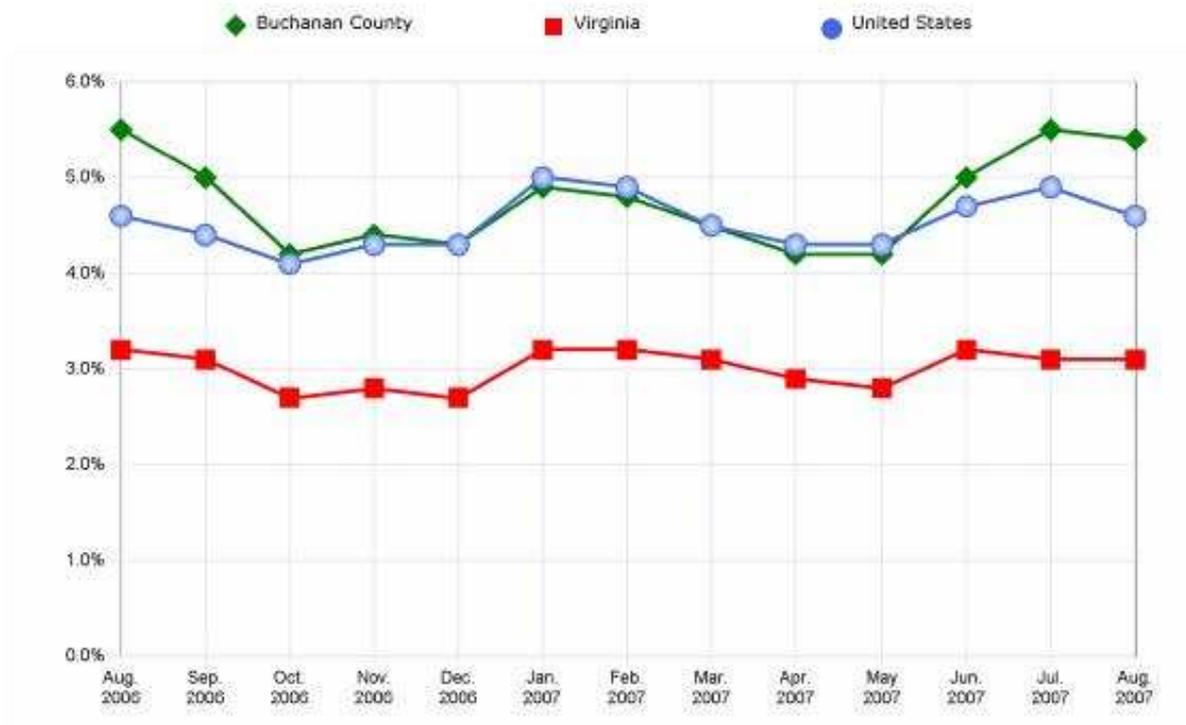
Unemployment Rates Past 12 Months



	Dickenson County	Virginia	United States
Aug. 2006	5.4%	3.2%	4.6%
Sep. 2006	4.7%	3.1%	4.4%
Oct. 2006	4.2%	2.7%	4.1%
Nov. 2006	4.7%	2.8%	4.3%
Dec. 2006	4.8%	2.7%	4.3%
Jan. 2007	5.2%	3.2%	5.0%
Feb. 2007	5.3%	3.2%	4.9%
Mar. 2007	4.8%	3.1%	4.5%
Apr. 2007	4.5%	2.9%	4.3%
May 2007	5.0%	2.8%	4.3%
Jun. 2007	5.6%	3.2%	4.7%
Jul. 2007	5.8%	3.1%	4.9%
Aug. 2007	6.1%	3.1%	4.6%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission,
Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

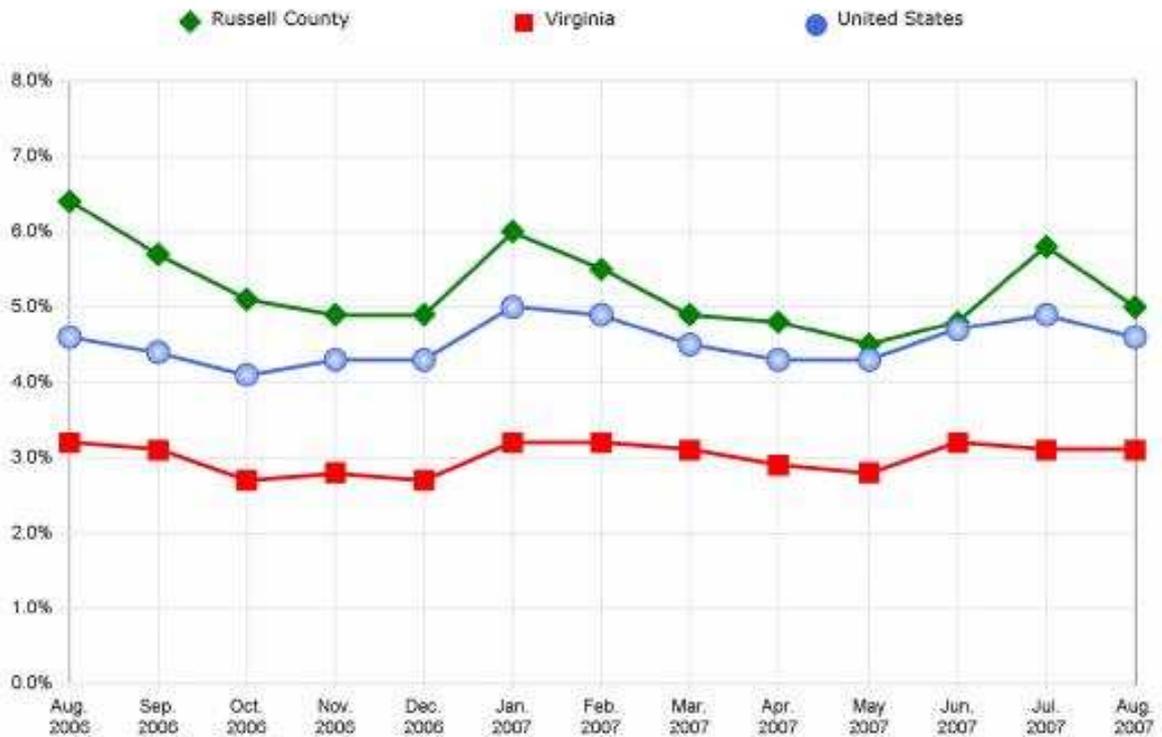
Unemployment Rates Past 12 Months



	Buchanan County	Virginia	United States
Aug. 2006	5.5%	3.2%	4.6%
Sep. 2006	5.0%	3.1%	4.4%
Oct. 2006	4.2%	2.7%	4.1%
Nov. 2006	4.4%	2.8%	4.3%
Dec. 2006	4.3%	2.7%	4.3%
Jan. 2007	4.9%	3.2%	5.0%
Feb. 2007	4.8%	3.2%	4.9%
Mar. 2007	4.5%	3.1%	4.5%
Apr. 2007	4.2%	2.9%	4.3%
May 2007	4.2%	2.8%	4.3%
Jun. 2007	5.0%	3.2%	4.7%
Jul. 2007	5.5%	3.1%	4.9%
Aug. 2007	5.4%	3.1%	4.6%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission,
Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

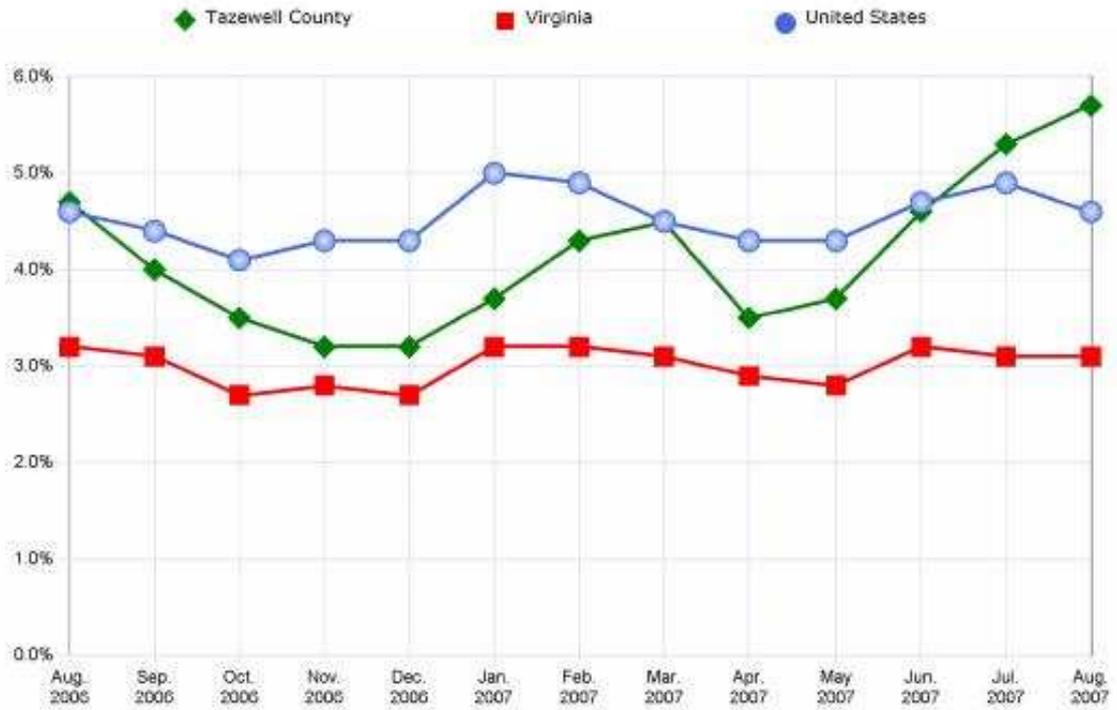
Unemployment Rates Past 12 Months



	Russell County	Virginia	United States
Aug. 2006	6.4%	3.2%	4.6%
Sep. 2006	5.7%	3.1%	4.4%
Oct. 2006	5.1%	2.7%	4.1%
Nov. 2006	4.9%	2.8%	4.3%
Dec. 2006	4.9%	2.7%	4.3%
Jan. 2007	6.0%	3.2%	5.0%
Feb. 2007	5.5%	3.2%	4.9%
Mar. 2007	4.9%	3.1%	4.5%
Apr. 2007	4.8%	2.9%	4.3%
May 2007	4.5%	2.8%	4.3%
Jun. 2007	4.8%	3.2%	4.7%
Jul. 2007	5.8%	3.1%	4.9%
Aug. 2007	5.0%	3.1%	4.6%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission,
Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

Unemployment Rates Past 12 Months



	Tazewell County	Virginia	United States
Aug. 2006	4.7%	3.2%	4.6%
Sep. 2006	4.0%	3.1%	4.4%
Oct. 2006	3.5%	2.7%	4.1%
Nov. 2006	3.2%	2.8%	4.3%
Dec. 2006	3.2%	2.7%	4.3%
Jan. 2007	3.7%	3.2%	5.0%
Feb. 2007	4.3%	3.2%	4.9%
Mar. 2007	4.5%	3.1%	4.5%
Apr. 2007	3.5%	2.9%	4.3%
May 2007	3.7%	2.8%	4.3%
Jun. 2007	4.6%	3.2%	4.7%
Jul. 2007	5.3%	3.1%	4.9%
Aug. 2007	5.7%	3.1%	4.6%

Source: Virginia Employment Commission,
Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

INCOME

Dickenson County has the lowest per capita income and the lowest median family income, when compared to the counties in the Cumberland Plateau Planning District. All counties within the district have below average incomes for the state of Virginia. Income disparity is expected to remain constant without addressing availability of jobs and increasing educational attainment.

PER CAPITA INCOME: 1994-2004

DICKENSON COUNTY	
2004	\$19,391
2003	\$18,454
2002	\$18,247
2001	\$17,858
2000	\$17,230
1999	\$16,716
1998	\$16,265
1997	\$15,087
1996	\$13,790
1995	\$13,452
1994	\$13,548

BUCHANAN COUNTY	
2004	\$22,960
2003	\$21,612
2002	\$20,879
2001	\$20,519
2000	\$19,475
1999	\$18,528
1998	\$17,957
1997	\$17,711
1996	\$16,424
1995	\$15,539
1994	\$15,164

RUSSELL COUNTY	
2004	\$21,311
2003	\$20,215
2002	\$19,857
2001	\$19,661
2000	\$18,514
1999	\$17,302
1998	\$16,686
1997	\$16,314
1996	\$15,202
1995	\$14,428
1994	\$13,880

TAZEWELL COUNTY	
2004	\$23,787
2003	\$22,529
2002	\$22,232
2001	\$21,647
2000	\$20,325
1999	\$19,151
1998	\$18,715
1997	\$18,105
1996	\$16,966
1995	\$16,232
1994	\$15,863

Source: VA Employment Commission

MEDIUM FAMILY INCOME: 1995 - 2003

DICKENSON COUNTY	
2003	\$25,378
2002	\$24,922
2001	\$24,138
2000	\$24,716
1999	\$23,968
1998	\$23,653
1997	\$22,941
1995	\$21,806

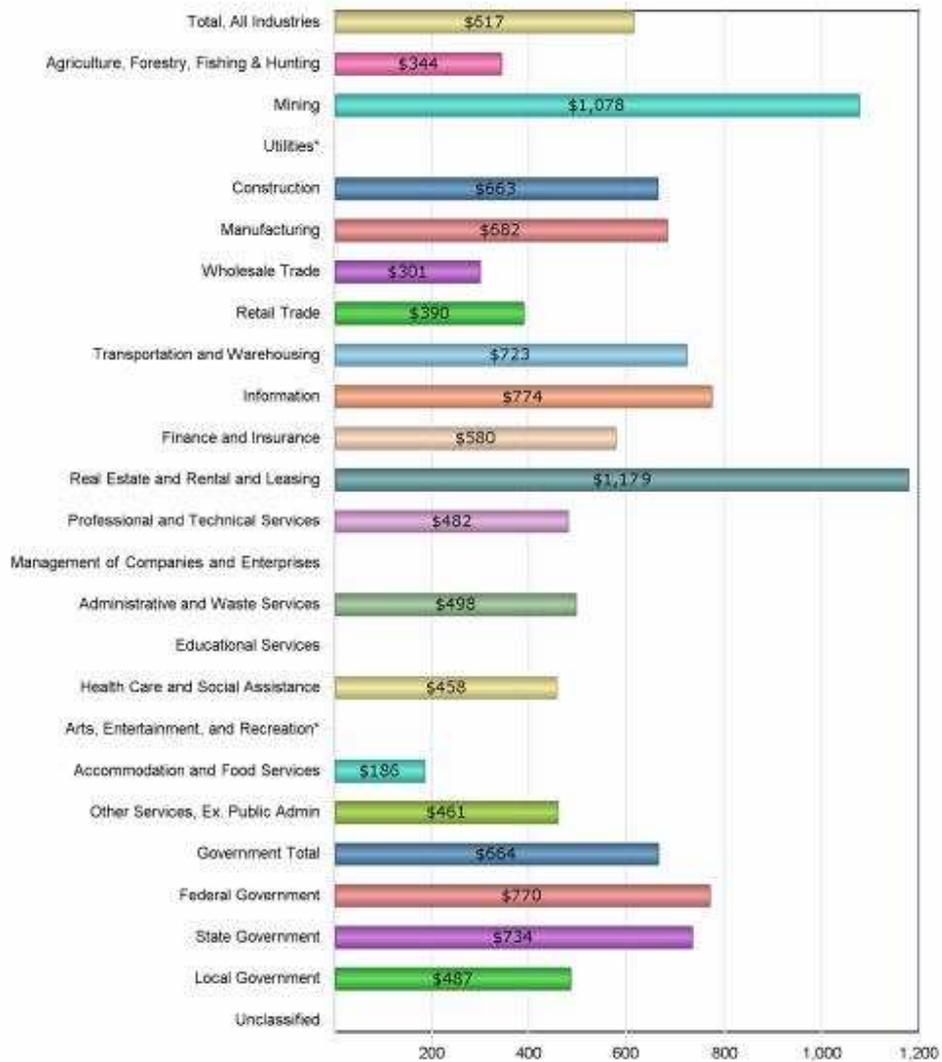
Decreases in weekly wage rates are likely to continue as productivity increases even further and competition necessitates more cutbacks in employment and/or wages. While the average weekly wage rates are slightly lower in Russell and Tazewell, a wider variety of jobs provide the wages. These lower wage earners may be more secure than those earning higher wages in Dickenson and Buchanan Counties, since the high earners are dependent upon the fluctuating mining sector.

AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE PER EMPLOYEE: 2006			
<i>As of December 2006</i>			
	<i>Avg. Establishments</i>	<i>Avg. Employment</i>	<i>Avg. Weekly Wage</i>
Dickenson	297	3,241	\$617.00
Buchanan	537	7,465	\$740.00
Russell	530	8,139	\$538.00
Tazewell	1,189	16,794	\$560.00
Virginia Statewide	209,455	3,576,716	\$887.00

Source: Virginia Employment Commission-velma

As this data shows, Dickenson County falls far below the state average weekly wage with \$617.00 compared to statewide average of \$887.00. The average weekly wage for Dickenson County in 4th Quarter 2006 was \$617. This would be equivalent to \$15.43 per hour or \$32,084 per year, assuming a 40-hour week worked the year around. The average weekly wage for Tazewell County in 4th Quarter 2006 was \$560. This would be equivalent to \$18.50 per hour or \$38,480 per year, assuming a 40-hour week worked the year around. The average weekly wage for Russell County in 4th Quarter 2006 was \$560. This would be equivalent to \$14.00 per hour or \$29,120 per year, assuming a 40-hour week worked the year around.

Average Weekly Wage by Industry



Note: Asterisk (*) indicates non-disclosable data.

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 4th Quarter (October, November, December) 2005.

POVERTY

In Dickenson County, 21.1 percent of the population lives below poverty level. When female householder families are singled out, the rate increases to 42.5% living below poverty level. 68.1% of these women have children under age five.

ALL AGES IN POVERTY STATUS 2004				
<i>State and County</i>	<i>90% Confidence Interval</i>		<i>Percent</i>	<i>90% Confidence Interval</i>
Dickenson	2,972	3,782-6,199	21.1	13.9 to 22.8
Russell	4,762	3,612-5,912	16.5	12.5 to 20.5
Buchanan	4,990	3,782-6,199	21.1	16.0 to 26.3
Tazewell	6,960	5,357-8,564	15.7	12.1 to 19.3
Virginia	705,037	647,429 to 762,645	9.5	8.8 to 10.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau March 2007

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

In 1950, 56.2 percent of the employed labor force in Dickenson County was engaged in mining. By 1978 mining as a percentage of the labor force had grown to 64 percent. The number has now dropped to 32.71 percent. Agricultural employment has also dropped tremendously. Increases in wholesale and retail trade somewhat lessened the blow of declines in mining and agriculture, but offer lower salaries than mining did. Even if all of the laid-off miners could find another source of employment (which has not been the case), loss in the community's overall cash flow is still substantial.

By 1970 employment in the trade sector represented 17.2 percent of the employed work force in Dickenson County, the second largest employer. In 1987, the number of retail sales establishments had reached 80, with 603 paid employees. Of these establishments, 29 were individual proprietorships, 12 were partnerships. There were 11 wholesale establishments with 30 paid employees.

The distribution of employment for 1992 shows that trade had dropped to 15.9 percent and the government now holds second place with 21.17 percent of the work force. The expanding service industry now comprises 13.45 percent of total employment.

Between 1986 and 1992, Dickenson County lost approximately 1,035 jobs within the mining industry. Seven hundred and fifty (750) jobs were lost in the county over the six-year time span. Buchanan County had 371 fewer jobs in 1992 than in 1986, while Russell County gained 839 jobs, and Tazewell County gained 1,278 jobs. Growth of the manufacturing industry is primarily responsible for employment gains in Russell and Tazewell Counties.

Total Employment by Industry

	Employment			Percent	
	Estimated 2004	Projected 2014	Change	Total	Annual
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	241	206	-35	-14.52%	-1.56%
Mining	5,396	4,920	-476	-8.82%	-.92%
Utilities	***	***	***	***	***
Construction	3,149	3,536	387	12.29%	1.17%
Manufacturing	4,936	5,001	65	1.32%	.13%
Wholesale Trade	1,681	1,848	167	9.93%	.95%
Retail Trade	9,576	10,610	1,034	10.8%	1.03%
Transportation and Warehousing	1,668	1,889	221	13.25%	1.25%
Information	1,247	1,353	106	8.5%	.82%
Finance and Insurance	1,488	1,420	-68	-4.57%	-.47%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	527	609	82	15.56%	1.46%
Professional and Technical Services	1,657	2,273	616	37.18%	3.21%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	534	651	117	21.91%	2%
Administrative and Waste Services	1,508	1,929	421	27.92%	2.49%
Educational Services	7,702	9,172	1,470	19.09%	1.76%
Health Care and Social Assistance	8,036	10,477	2,441	30.38%	2.69%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	***	***	***	***	***
Accommodation and Food Services	3,874	4,815	941	24.29%	2.2%
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	1,406	1,375	-31	-2.2%	-.22%

Note: Asterisks (***) indicate non-disclosable data. Projections data is for Southwestern Virginia (LWIA I). No data available for Dickenson County.

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Industry and Occupational Projections, 2004-2014.

TOP 20 EMPLOYERS IN DICKENSON COUNTY

- 1. Dickenson County School Board**
- 2. Paramount Coal Company Virginia**
- 3. Dickenson -Russell County Company**
- 4. County of Dickenson**
- 5. Food City**
- 6. Laurel Meadows**
- 7. Southwest Virginia Regional Jail Authority**
- 8. Rapoca Energy Company**
- 9. J.W.T. Well Services**
- 10. Homemakers, LLC**
- 11. Mountain Forest Products, LLC**
- 12. Barnette's Kwik Shop**
- 13. Roth, LLC**
- 14. Dickenson County Community Services**
- 15. Dickenson County Department of Public Welfare**
- 16. Thomas Construction Company**
- 17. Ramey Enterprises**
- 18. American Plus**
- 19. Johnson Chevrolet**
- 20. Kwikway Market/Crossroads Market**

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Economic growth taking place in Dickenson County can be witnessed by an increase in the number of housing permits issued. The largest numbers of permits were issued in 1983, directly proceeding the two years, which had the highest (nominal) taxable sales. The gradual decline in building permits reflects pessimistic expectations about the future, in an area, which has experienced such severe economic dislocations.

Another indication of the growth-taking place in an area is an increase in the number of new automobiles. This indicator can be obtained by analyzing the county's vehicle registration trends. The coal "boom" year of 1970 to 1975 created an increase in the number of registered vehicles, but the trend leveled off and has proceeded at a steady rate.

TOTAL RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS BY COUNTY/CITY

<i>County/City</i>	<i>2001</i>		<i>2002</i>		<i>2003</i>		<i>2004</i>		<i>2005</i>		<i>2006</i>	
Buchanan	22	\$1,728,460	24	\$1,909,400	25	\$2,065,340	34	\$1,263,000	97	\$5,793,025		
Dickenson	15	\$878,916	25	\$1,753,043	29	\$2,367,000	23	\$1,814,000	18	\$1,574,000	18	\$2,349,000
Russell	64	\$5,288,850	71	\$5,533,122	70	\$6,534,480	81	\$8,050,434	79	\$8,329,948	121	\$32,626,842
Tazewell	73	\$7,125,077	83	\$9,467,416	100	\$9,395,354	82	\$9,107,342	85	\$9,472,543	130	\$10,734,583

FORECASTS

The different segments of the economy are interrelated. If employment is to increase, sales and production must expand. If sales and production are to expand, there must be an increase in demand. If demand is to increase, there must be an increase in income, in the size of the economic base, or both.

Like all economic and demographic forecasts, analyze historical data to make estimates of future data. One limitation is that the future is never known with any certainty. There is always the possibility of an unprecedented shock to the economy, or of some other event that could not be foreseen based on analysis of historical data. Small

area forecasts are subject to more error because of the small sample size. The larger the area, the more reliable the model will be.

Employment growth for Dickenson County is likely to occur in the areas of state and local government, services, manufacturing, retail trade and specifically the natural resources industry. Current economic development through the natural gas industry and ongoing growth with the coal industry will bolster economic growth. The County, prior to the 2010 census has already seen population growth and the new creation of 500+ jobs in the natural resource industry will see emerging up street development of new businesses opportunities such as subcontractors. These components combined will have a dramatic positive input on the stabilization and growth of county population and substantial employment growth. When the forecasted population growth is compared to the forecasted growth in employment, the result is an expected 830 more jobs, and an expected 410 more people. This indicates that the unemployment rate will decline.

As the population ages and people begin to leave the labor force, labor market pressures will be eased further, with the changes most keenly felt in 2015 when the bulk of the baby-boom generation enters retirement.

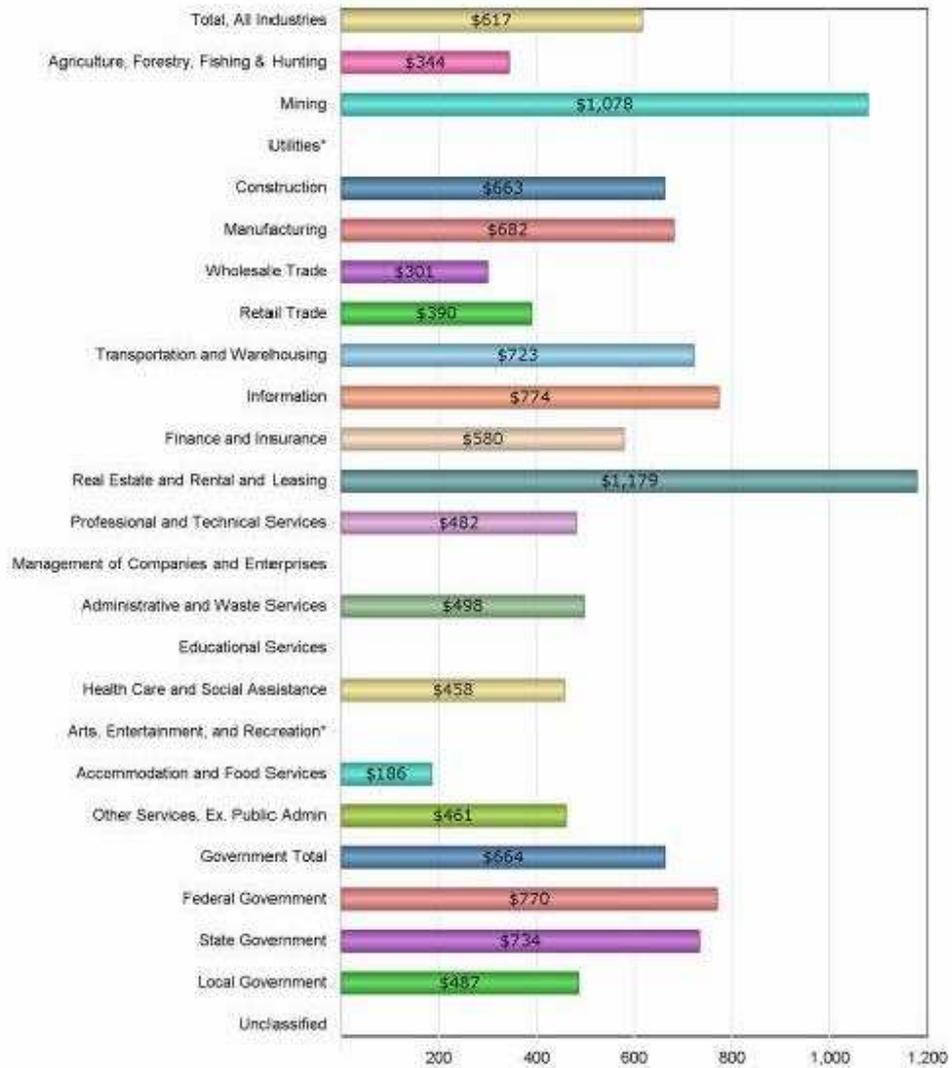
Dickenson County has the institutional, locational, and human resources necessary to plan and successfully stimulate a recovery in the local economy. Efforts must be made to allow the residents to fully satisfy their demands for consumer goods, locally by encouraging expansion and revitalization of the retail sector. Since the county does not contain any large towns or urban centers with which to attract business and secure economic diversification, local government must be very attentive to existing business's needs and preparation for new service industry such as tourism development.

Age of Workers by Industry

	14 - 18	19 - 21	22 - 24	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65+
Total, All Industries	121	170	165	669	691	808	338	71
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting			4	10	5	10		
Mining		10	27	126	176	358	118	5
Utilities								
Construction	11	20	18	74	47	41	9	4
Manufacturing		3		35	20	14	7	
Wholesale Trade								
Retail Trade	31	49	35	103	108	92	63	15
Transportation and Warehousing			5	29	45	31	9	4
Information	3			6	6	6	7	
Finance and Insurance			7	22	20	19	10	3
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing				2				
Professional and Technical Services				11	5	8	9	
Management of Companies and Enterprises								
Administrative and Waste Services			6	15	14	10	6	
Educational Services								
Health Care and Social Assistance	5	18	18	84	76	86	31	13
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation		4			7			
Accommodation and Food Services	28	27	18	31	27	15	11	4
Other Services, Ex. Public Admin				11	18	14	15	7
Public Administration	32	23	21	98	104	90	40	10

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Program, 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2006, all ownerships.

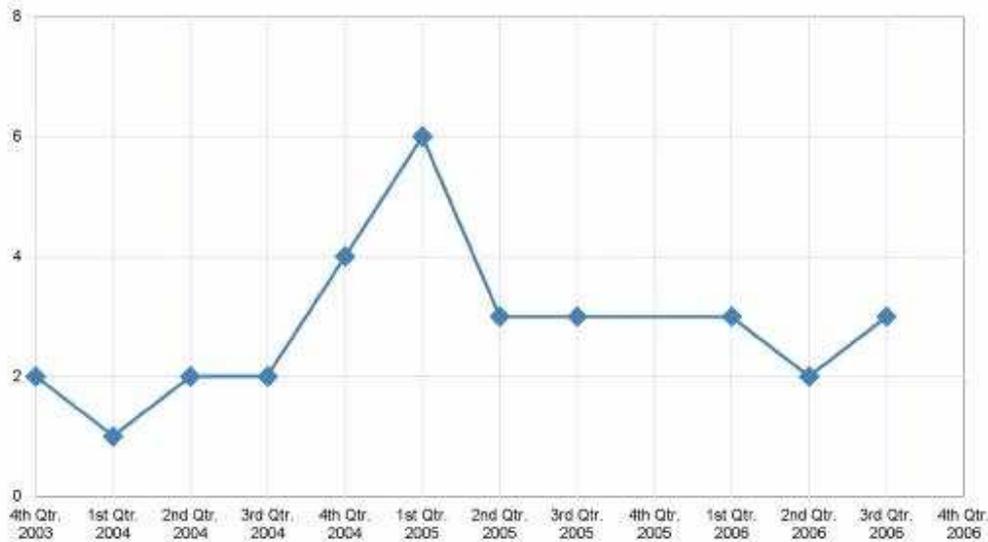
Average Weekly Wage by Industry



Note: Asterisk (*) Indicates non-disclosable data.

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 4th Quarter (October, November, December) 2005.

New Startup Firms



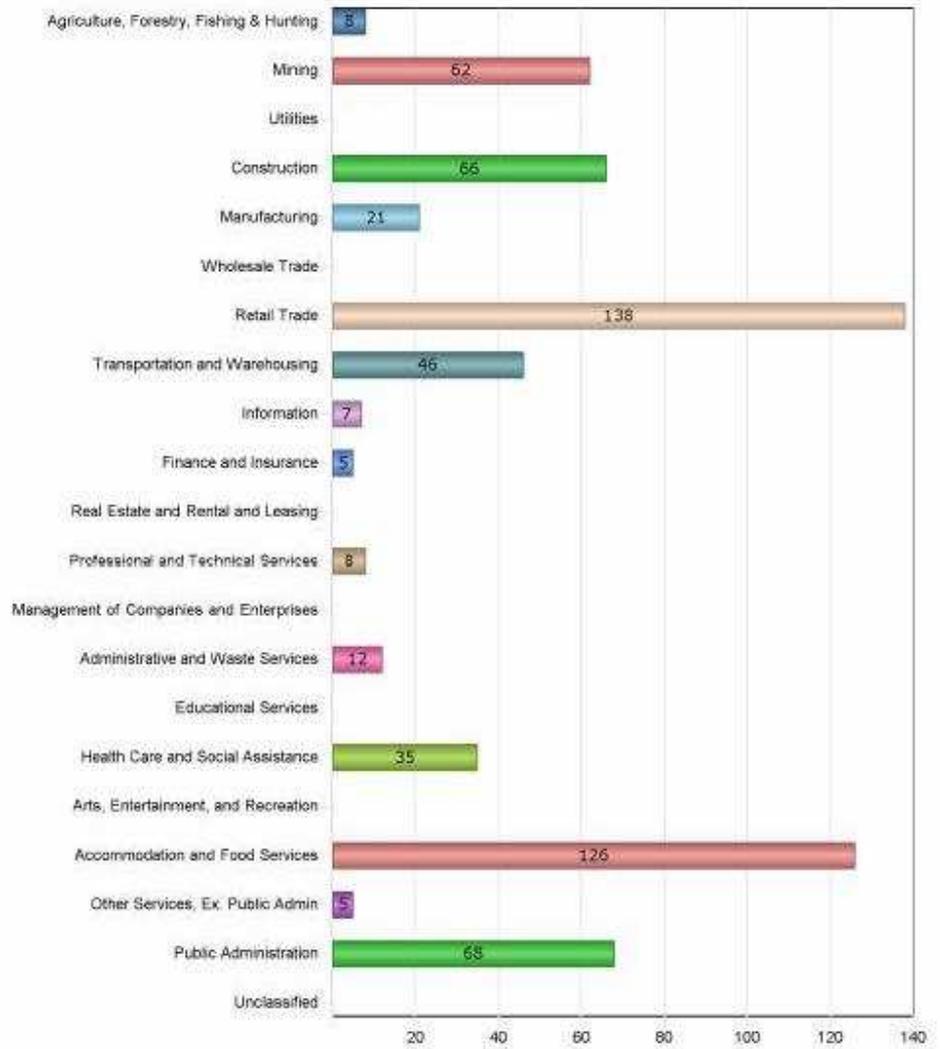
	Dickenson County	Virginia
4th Qtr. 2003	2	1,418
1st Qtr. 2004	1	1,909
2nd Qtr. 2004	2	1,921
3rd Qtr. 2004	2	1,678
4th Qtr. 2004	4	1,886
1st Qtr. 2005	6	4,154
2nd Qtr. 2005	3	2,008
3rd Qtr. 2005	3	2,678
4th Qtr. 2005		2,525
1st Qtr. 2006	3	3,106
2nd Qtr. 2006	2	2,935
3rd Qtr. 2006	3	2,119
4th Qtr. 2006		1,301

Note: The following criteria was used to define new startup firms:

- 1.) Setup and liability date both occurred during 4th Quarter (October, November, December) 2006
- 2.) Establishment had no predecessor UI Account Number
- 3.) Private Ownership
- 4.) Average employment is less than 250
- 5.) For multi-unit establishments, the parent company must also meet the above criteria.

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 4th Quarter (October, November, December) 2006.

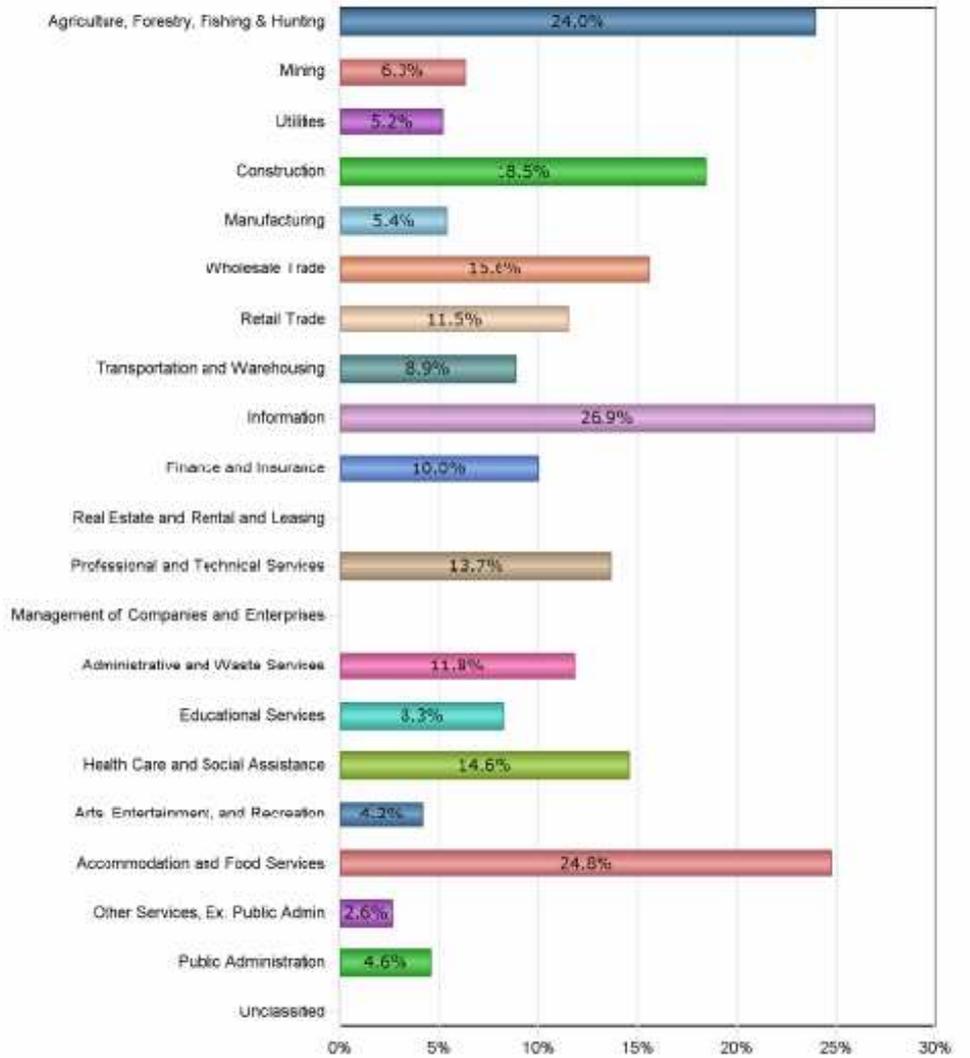
New Hires by Industry



Total: 612

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Program, 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2006, all ownerships.

Turnover by Industry



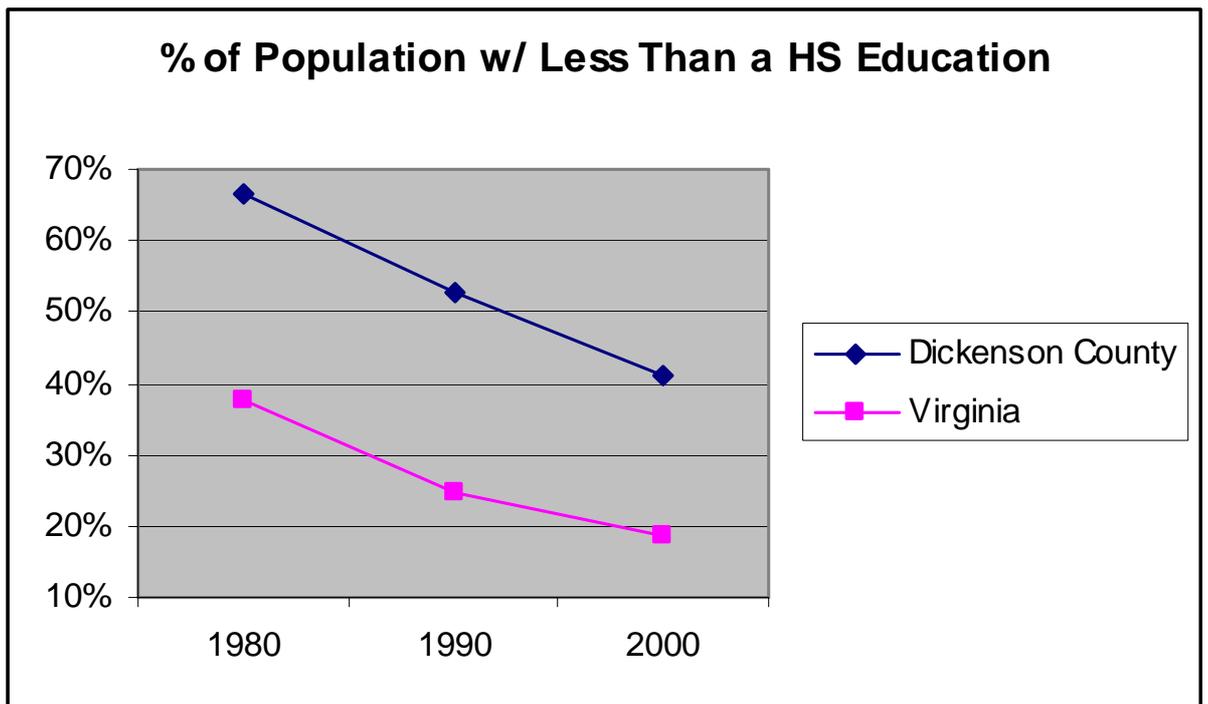
Average: 10.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Program, 2nd Quarter (April, May, June) 2000, all ownerships.

EDUCATION

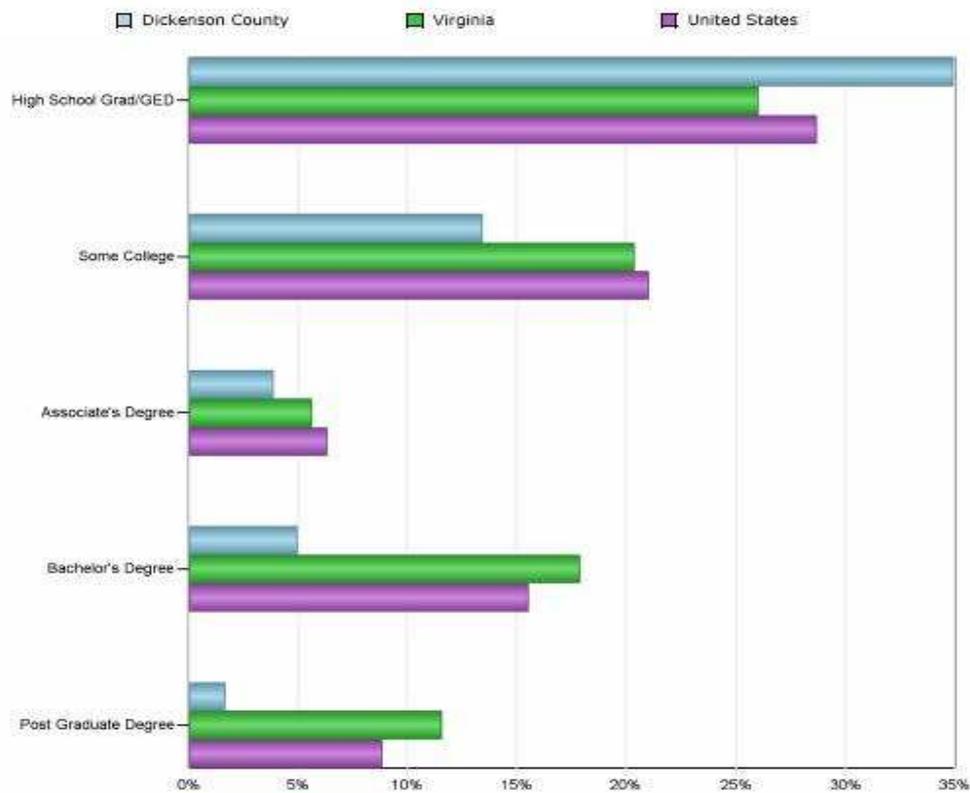
EDUCATION

Lack of educational attainment has been and is still a serious detriment to future development. Average grade completion level for the county lags far behind the state average. Low educational attainment of residents of the county is indicative of a labor market that emphasizes blue-collar skills and does not encourage young people to return to or remain in the area once they have received their college education. Education is an important channel for individuals to progress upwards in society, and it increases socio-economic status as well as income.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Education Level
(Population 25 years and over)



	Dickenson County	Virginia	United States
High School Grad/GED	3,951	1,212,463	52,168,981
Some College	1,523	951,700	38,351,595
Associate's Degree	438	262,813	11,512,833
Bachelor's Degree	564	835,011	28,317,792
Post Graduate Degree	189	539,977	16,144,813

Source: 2000 Census.

Educational Attainment

Interest in developing an education center in Dickenson originated, albeit perhaps in an indirect manner from the educational attainment levels in the county. Lagging behind the state and the region in this critical data set has left the county in a difficult situation in terms of economic development at large and personal income levels on a more individualized basis. Fighting the stigma of a workforce that is not as “highly educated” as others is a detriment to locating industry and jobs in the county and also

makes local entrepreneurship more difficult. As such, talented citizens of the county may choose, or even be forced, to relocate for professional reasons. When compared to statewide data, Dickenson County seems to lag approximately twenty years behind in educational attainment statistics. While progress is being made, it is a slow, gradual improvement as shown in the nearly parallel lines of the following graph. For example, in 1980, 66.5% of the citizens of Dickenson County had less than a high school diploma. By 2000, that number had dropped to 41.0% a sizeable improvement. However, the Virginia average *in 1980* was 37.6% and by 2000, had dropped to 18.5%.

<i>Percentage of population 25 and older who have earned:</i>				
No diploma Degree	High School Diploma	Some College	Associates Degree	Bachelor's
41%	34.9%	13.5%	3.9%	6.7%

Percentage of population 25 years of age and older who are high school graduates is 58.9%. Percentage of population 25 years of age and older who have earned a Bachelor's Degree 6.7%.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Virginia Employment Commission.

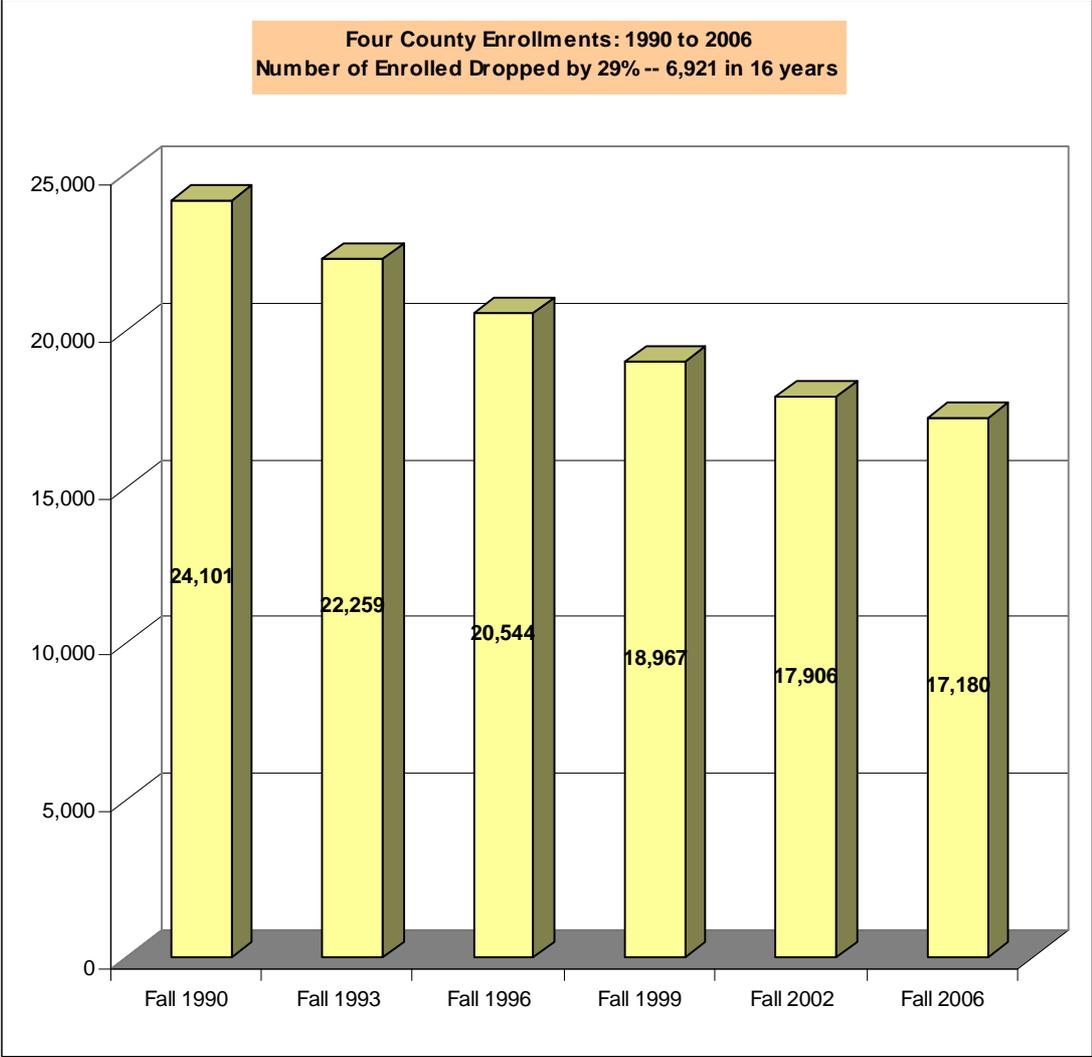
When comparing the counties within Cumberland Plateau Planning District, Dickenson County has the largest percentage of high school graduates for the 2005-2006 school years, an above average rate in the state of Virginia. The percentage of graduates is based on the number of ninth grade students, four years earlier.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES 2005-2006	
<u>Graduates</u>	
Dickenson	231
Buchanan	306
Russell	331
Tazewell	542

Enrollments in Region										
Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell & Tazewell Counties										
Chg. 1989 to 2006	Buchanan County	-49.1%	Dickenson County*	-32.8%	Russell County	-21.7%	Tazewell County	-23.3%	SwVCC Service Region	-31.3%
Fall	Buchanan County	Buchanan Co. Percent Change From Prior Yr.	Dickenson County*	Dickenson Co. Percent Change From Prior Yr.	Russell County	Russell Co. Percent Change From Prior Yr.	Tazewell County	Tazewell Co. Percent Change From Prior Yr.	SwVCC Service Region	SwVCC Region Percent Change From Prior Yr.
1989	6,744		3,669		5,464		9,129		25,006	
1990	6,407	-5.0%	3,611	-1.6%	5,271	-3.5%	8,812	-3.5%	24,101	-3.6%
1991	6,168	-3.7%	3,515	-2.7%	5,092	-3.4%	8,760	-0.6%	23,535	-2.3%
1992	5,913	-4.1%	3,372	-4.1%	4,986	-2.1%	8,615	-1.7%	22,886	-2.8%
1993	5,729	-3.1%	3,301	-2.1%	4,799	-3.8%	8,430	-2.1%	22,259	-2.7%
1994	5,427	-5.3%	3,292	-0.3%	4,737	-1.3%	8,288	-1.7%	21,744	-2.3%
1995	5,210	-4.0%	3,181	-3.4%	4,713	-0.5%	8,033	-3.1%	21,137	-2.8%
1996	4,969	-4.6%	3,092	-2.8%	4,616	-2.1%	7,867	-2.1%	20,544	-2.8%
1997	4,711	-5.2%	3,030	-2.0%	4,494	-2.6%	7,793	-0.9%	20,028	-2.5%
1998	4,487	-4.8%	2,971	-1.9%	4,410	-1.9%	7,738	-0.7%	19,606	-2.1%
1999	4,293	-4.3%	2,844	-4.3%	4,355	-1.2%	7,475	-3.4%	18,967	-3.3%
2000	4,063	-5.4%	2,712	-4.6%	4,263	-2.1%	7,116	-4.8%	18,154	-4.3%
2001	3,979	-2.1%	2,720	0.3%	4,260	-0.1%	6,987	-1.8%	17,946	-1.1%
2002	4,029	1.3%	2,719	0.0%	4,156	-2.4%	7,002	0.2%	17,906	-0.2%
2003	3,649	-9.4%	2,601	-4.3%	4,077	-1.9%	6,982	-0.3%	17,309	-3.3%
2004	3,570	-2.2%	2,538	-2.4%	4,260	4.5%	6,876	-1.5%	17,244	-0.4%
2005	3,500	-2.0%	2,494	-1.7%	4,271	0.3%	6,846	-0.4%	17,111	-0.8%
2006	3,436	-1.8%	2,464	-1.2%	4,281	0.2%	6,999	2.2%	17,180	0.4%

Fall	Fall 1990	Fall 1993	Fall 1996	Fall 1999	Fall 2002	Fall 2006
Enrolled	24,101	22,259	20,544	18,967	17,906	17,180

Source: SWVCC Institutional Research



Source: Annual Fall Membership Reports Virginia Department of Education

TRAINING PROVIDERS

Southwest Virginia Community College

369 College Road Us Rt. 19, 6
Richland, VA 24641-1101
Phone: (276) 696-2555 ext. 7338
www.sw.edu

Number of 2005 graduates: 603

Mountain Empire Community College

3441 Mountain Empire Road
Big Stone Gap, VA 24219
Phone: (276)523-2400
www.mecc.edu

Number of 2005 graduates: 351

The University of VA's College at Wise

One College Avenue
Wise, VA 24293-4400
Phone: (276) 632-0100
www.uvawise.edu

Number of 2005 graduates: 252

Appalachia School of Law

1 Slate Creek Road
Grundy, VA 24614-2825
Phone (276) 693-4349 ext 1203
www.asl.edu

Number of 2005 graduates 108

University of Appalachia College of Pharmacy

1060 Dragon Road
Oakwood, VA 24631
Phone: (276) 498-4190
www.uacp.org

(3 year program with first graduates from 2006 graduating in 2009)

Dickenson County Career Center

325 Vocational Drive
Clinchco, VA 24226
Phone: (276) 835-9384
www.dickenson.k12.va.us/dccc

*Source: U.S. Department of Education,
Institute of Education Sciences (IES), 2005.*

TRANSPORTATION

The effects of a community's transportation system upon the community are vital. A transportation plan must take into consideration topography, population density and distribution, land development policies and the overall planning objectives of the community. Four County Transit, operated by the Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens, is the public transportation provider for Virginia Planning District 2. They have been providing public transportation since 1998. Four County Transit serves the residents of Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell counties. Four County Transit is a fully funded public transportation system made possible by Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation. Four County Transit offers public transportation on each of our college routes. Public transportation is available throughout the day and with convenient fixed routes and demand responses. Four County Transit provides a variety of services to complement the need for public transportation service in Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell Counties. Service hours range from 5:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, depending upon the type of transit service.

HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Dickenson County is a part of the Bristol District of the Virginia Department of Transportation, which includes eight other districts, each divided into five sections: interstate, primary, urban, public transit and secondary systems. The Bristol District covers a 12 county area consisting of 126 miles of interstate highways and 1,182 miles of primary system highways. Dickenson County has three major primary roads and many secondary roads, which are an important part of the infrastructure. Dickenson County has a total of 475.63 miles of highway, 79.70 miles of primary roads and 393.93 miles of secondary roads.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The Six Year Improvements Program is the Commonwealth Transportation Board's plan for identifying funds anticipated to be available for highway construction, ports, airports and public transit, for distribution in the 2006-2007 fiscal year, as well as

those funds planned for the next five fiscal years through 2011-2012. Public hearings were held in each of the nine construction districts in the state as part of the development of this program. These hearings are held to seek input and advice from members of the county boards of supervisors, city council members, other public officials, and the general public.

Included in the Six Year Improvement Program are the following projects:

1. The reconstruction and surface treatment of non-hard surfaced roads on State Routes 656 (Roaring Fork) and 644 (Caney Creek);
2. The widening of curves and stabilization of guardrails on State Route 627 (Long Ridge);
3. The spot widening of curves on State Routes 607 (Rakes Ridge), 658 (Flat Spurs), 611 (South of the Mountain Road), 649 (DC Caney Ridge Road), and 652 (Nealy Ridge);
4. The widening of the existing roadways on State Routes 649 (Rush Creek), 754 (Pound River), 621 (Longs Fork), 663 (Hale Gap), and 631;
5. The replacement of bridges on State Routes 604 (Lick Creek) and 625 (Frying Pan); and
6. The installation of flashing lights and short arm gates on State Routes 651 (Brushy Ridge) and 665 (Lick Fork), where the CSX Railroad crosses those roads.
7. The construction of the Pound Bypass, connecting State Route 83 with US Highway 23 near Pound.

In addition to the Six-Year Plan

1. The need for improvements and widening of the existing Lake Road to the John W. Flanagan Reservoir.
2. The widening and improvement of Rt. 80 from the Breaks Interstate Park to the Town of Haysi, and widening and improvement of St. Rt. 80 from Haysi to Honaker.

For a detailed listing of primary highway improvement projects in Dickenson County, please refer to the Six Year Improvement Program for fiscal year 2006-2007 through 2011-2012, and the Secondary System Construction Program for 2009 through 2014.

DISTANCES TO NEARBY AREAS

The distance from Clintwood, the county seat of Dickenson County, to nearby metropolitan areas, makes the county seem somewhat remote. These distances can be used partially to demonstrate the value of a well-developed transportation system; one that will counteract the problems created by isolation.

DISTANCES TO NEARBY AREAS:	
Bristol, VA/TN	68 miles
Blacksburg, VA	175 miles
Knoxville, TN	154 miles
Roanoke, VA	200 miles
Richmond, VA	385 miles

AIRPORTS

Lonesome Pine Airport, which is located in Wise County, is less than 30 miles from Clintwood. It is equipped with a 5,400 foot long lighted runway. Most general aviation aircraft, including small jet-powered aircraft can be accommodated there. The Tazewell County Airport located on Kent's Ridge in Tazewell County also has a runway suitable for small aircraft. Tri-City Regional Airport (Bristol, Kingsport, Johnson City) provides commercial air transportation and is approximately two hours from the center of Dickenson County.

RAILROADS

CSX Transportation provides rail service to most of Dickenson County. Norfolk Southern Railway serves a small portion of the county. Piggyback service is available in Bluefield, West Virginia and in Kingsport, Tennessee. Norfolk Southern and CSX offer direct connections to the rail lines that provide rail service to the entire United States.

HOUSING

HOUSING

Physically, socially and economically, housing is one of the most important elements in our lives. Unsafe, unsanitary and inadequate housing can affect the resident's physical and mental health. Government has long recognized the importance of housing, and many goals have been set to meet the needs of low-income households and to eliminate inadequate housing.

HOUSING DEMAND

Housing is a factor in the national economy, and increased building is a sign of economic growth, as well as an economic stimulator. Nationally, growth in housing is primarily determined by government decisions such as interest rates, the tax codes, and regulation of financial institutions. Local and state governments have attempted to encourage housing production by providing financial incentives. Since investment in housing is so highly leveraged, the availability of money has the most significant impact on construction. The relatively low median family income of Dickenson County residents has prompted a shift in demand away from site-built homes towards the less expensive alternative of a mobile home. The price difference between a mobile home and a site-built home makes the former the only affordable choice for many residents. While mobile homes have solved the short-term problem of housing, they have a much shorter life span than do site-built homes, so the need for adequate housing in the future should not be forgotten.

HOUSING GROWTH

The real estate market has markedly declined due to the current lack of quality employment, and housing density per unit is decreasing at a slower pace. This is a common trend in times of unfavorable economic conditions, one reason being that grown children are often forced to live with their parents longer, or return to their former home.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

In 1990, only 480 housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities. Although this number should be decreased further, improvements have been made since 1970, when the number of units lacking complete facilities was 2,319.

Sewage disposal in Dickenson County housing units is predominately provided by septic tanks or cesspools 5,180 units use this method of disposal. Public sewer is available to 1,58 (check this number) units, while 874 units use “other” means.

A public water system or private company provided 3,152 housing units with water in Dickenson County in 1990. Individual wells provided almost as many units with water – 2,590 units used drilled wells, 232 units used dug wells. “Other sources” provided 1,136 housing units with water.

HOUSING VALUE

Between 1980 and 1987, housing values declined substantially in Dickenson County, with houses dropping 25 to 30 percent in value. The same was true for Buchanan County, while in Russell and Tazewell Counties, housing values increased slightly. In 1980, the time a house stayed on the market in Dickenson County before being sold averaged three to four months. In 1987, the average was from seven months to one year.

The median value for housing units in Dickenson County in \$39,300, compared to Buchanan County’s \$41,700; Russell County’s \$45,000; and Tazewell County’s at \$48,600. This indicates that while the housing market may be weak in Dickenson County, housing is more affordable.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Centennial Heights contains 91 living units and is located off State Route 63, northwest of Haysi. This complex was financed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and is managed by the Cumberland Plateau Regional

Housing Authority. The Farmers Home Administration in Dickenson County provides FmHA subsidized loans to qualified applicants to be used for the purchasing or refinancing of homes. FmHA also sponsors a housing rehabilitation program, which provides low-income loans up to \$15,000 and grants of \$5,000. In addition, the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) provides low interest loans to persons of low to moderate incomes so that they may purchase homes.

FUTURE HOUSING

Housing should be designed to accommodate household needs, optimize the quality of life, use land resources efficiently, and create minimal adverse impact on the natural environment. Certain segments of the housing market, such as elderly or handicapped individuals, require specially designed units that provide certain amenities and physical features adapted to their needs. Communities can encourage sufficient upgrading of existing properties to prevent further loss of tax revenues, since the tax base has declined and poor economic conditions have led to property neglect. Housing and building codes should be carefully enforced, to preserve housing stock in as sound a state as possible. Policies aimed at providing affordable housing must use a combination of strategies, including new construction, subsidy programs, and preservation of the existing housing stock through rehabilitation programs.

LAND USE

LAND USE

The factors influencing the past and present development of Dickenson County have been presented in the preceding chapters of this report. The land use section of the comprehensive plan includes a summary of the county's residential, commercial, industrial, public and semi-public, and open space uses. An analysis of existing land use development patterns can be used to determine implications for future land use planning.

The land use plan is a design by which the future development of Dickenson County and the surrounding area may be guided. By considering the spatial relationship of the various land use activities from a physical as well as socio-economic standpoint, the Land Use Plan provides a sound basis for both the public and private decisions concerning future development. The land use plan is presented in three successive steps. The first step consists of a discussion of principles and standards for land development. The second step is the determination of future land needs. The final step is the presentation of the actual design or plan for future growth.

The land use plan, along with the land use plan map, reflects the existing land use, and in part, the anticipated growth that will take place during the next twenty years. The plan is sufficiently generalized so as to permit flexibility in selecting development alternatives yet specific enough to give proper direction to future growth. The following sections present a generalized form of the principles and standards that should be considered in guiding the growth of Dickenson County.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

Residential land use encompasses the entire mix of dwelling unit types and densities. The location, character and intensity of residential development should be linked to natural characteristics of the land, such as topography, soils, existing vegetation and water flow.

When decentralized, uncoordinated development occurs, many years may pass before the provision of some services becomes feasible. Uncontrolled, random patterns of residential development would be contrary to the goal of providing services to the residents in a timely and efficient manner.

Residential Land Use Guidelines:

1. Future residential development should take place on land having stable, well-drained soils and land that is free from the danger of flooding. Moderately level topography is desirable for most residential development; however, some areas with steep terrain can be used, but it should be developed only as low density residential development.
2. Residential densities should be determined on the basis of topography; proximity to major access streets and highways; proximity to work areas; and the availability of utilities and other community facilities.
3. There should be a range of choice in residential densities located on or near the areas of intensive activities. However, there should be adequate, permanent open space made available in high-density areas. Lower densities should occupy the steeper portions of Dickenson County.
4. Residential development should preserve or create a neighborhood unit free from the influence and encroachment of incompatible uses.
5. Each residential area should contain or have readily accessible all the facilities, both public and private, that are necessary for convenient, modern living.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE

Commercial land use includes all activities, which are predominantly connected with the sale of products or the performance of services. This includes retail trade, office space, personal and professional services, and entertainment facilities. Retail establishments can be classified according to the type of market that they serve, such as regional, community, or neighborhood scales. Convenience, neighborhood and

community scale retail provide every day, immediate goods, while regional and sub-regional retail provide more specialized goods.

Commercial Land Use Guidelines:

1. Provisions should be made for two principal types of commercial areas: neighborhood shopping and community shopping.
2. New commercial developments should be in the form of unified and concentrated planned developments. Spot commercial development in residential neighborhoods and the stringing out of commercial development along streets, or what has been referred to as a strip commercial development. Due to physical constraints of properly strip commercial development is avitagious for immediate development of commercial property.
3. Commercial areas should not detract from residential and industrial development nor should residential and industrial development adversely affect commercial areas.
4. The protection of pedestrian traffic should be given adequate consideration to insure the safety and flow of pedestrians in new commercial development areas without unnecessary interruption of automobile traffic.

Existing commercial establishments should be encouraged and assisted to the fullest extent possible in correcting any deficiencies, to improve traffic safety and convenience.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USE

Activities predominantly connected with the manufacturing, assembly, processing, storage and distribution of products are considered industrial. Industrial facilities place a heavy demand on local resources, and have the greatest impact on the surrounding environment. Land use policies that promote the efficient utilization of

industrial development is to be realized. The location must respect air and water flows and the more visible environmental features.

In general, "cleaner" industries are preferred over those that employ heavily impactive processes. Any new industrial activity should not impede the county's efforts to meet established environmental quality standards. In order to attract desired industries, it is necessary to reserve enough suitable land as is deemed necessary for future growth. Industrial activities should be located where land use buffers can be established to separate and protect non-industrial uses, and where natural land characteristics are conducive to high site development intensities.

Industrial Land Use Guidelines:

1. Industrial development should take place on land having stable, well-drained soils. Topography should be reasonably level and free from flooding and grading problems. Climatic factors such as prevailing wind speed and directions should be considered in potential industrial locations.
2. Basic utilities such as water, sewer, electricity, and gas should be available in adequate capacities to industrial areas.
3. Appropriate transportation facilities with good access to highways, and where possible rail facilities, should be available to industrial areas. Industrial plants which generate large volumes of traffic should be located on major streets so as not to encourage traffic through residential areas; and, where possible, industrial areas should be buffered by major highways, railroads, and greenbelt areas, greater set-back depth or natural topographic features.
4. Site size requirements for different types of industrial usage vary widely as does the locational requirements. Therefore, there should be provided a range of choice in site sizes and location with sufficient flexibility to meet the need of a wide variety of industries.
5. Land set aside for industrial use should not overshadow other community needs nor be arranged as to hinder proper residential or commercial growth. At the

same time, it is equally important that residences and commercial establishments not be allowed to encroach upon land planned for industrial use.

RECREATIONAL AND OPEN SPACES

The recreational and open space areas are ordinarily included in a larger category "public and semi-public lands" which includes areas containing schools, churches, police protection and other necessary lands. Although recreation will be dealt with in the community facilities category, recreational space and open space land use guidelines are presented in the land use plan.

Recreational and open space land use guidelines:

1. Appropriately located community recreation facilities should be provided to serve the residents. These facilities should be adequate in terms of size, number and variety. The facilities should serve the needs of the total population.
2. Whenever possible, natural boundaries such as steeply sloping ridges, sinkable areas, areas of exposed bedrocks, stream flood plains, and the areas unsuitable for urban development should be used as natural dividers between neighborhoods and retained as recreation and for open spaces.
3. Places of historical significance, as well as areas having rare natural beauty should be preserved and well maintained.
4. Areas designated in the land use plan as intended for permanent open space or recreation should be reserved as such.
5. Agricultural uses should be retained in areas subject to periodic flooding and in outlying areas where premature urbanization would be detrimental to the community.
6. Where feasible, land use for the production or extraction of natural resources should be isolated in compact areas so as not to detract from the beauty and integrity of the community.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING LAND USE

A comprehensive view of the existing land use composition in Dickenson County was determined approximately fifteen years ago. Recent field studies indicate changes in land use acreage since the original calculations were compiled.

Slight growth since 1978 has occurred in all areas of developed land, with residential land use showing the largest increases. More land is being used for residential purposes because of two reasons, the population increases that took place during the seventies and a decrease in the number of persons living in each housing unit.

Land used for mining and quarrying has dropped tremendously, with reclaimed land adding to Dickenson County's forest areas. Mining and mining related industries are expected to continue to decrease. Land used for agriculture has decreased slightly, while the amount of acreage covered by water remains unchanged.

FUTURE LAND USE

Future residential development should take place in areas where public water and sewer service is available and the continued expansion of those services. The development will occur mainly on ridge tops and as in filling in semi-developed areas where topography is suitable. Recreational and second homes are a likely growth possibility if efforts to promote the scenic beauty of Dickenson County are successful.

Commercial development of gas well, coal, timber and service support will occur primarily as small service oriented business in a random pattern related to population density and location. The major commercial developments will likely occur in and around Clintwood and Haysi. Development of the tourism industry will provide opportunities for further commercial development along Rt. 83, the

development of the proposed coalfield expressway, and in the vicinity of the Breaks Park.

The Dickenson County Technology Park can no longer provide for industrial development in Dickenson County due to the recent location of the regional operational headquarters of Equitable Resources. Additional sites suitable for industrial development should be analyzed and optioned for future use.

Dickenson County's scenic beauty and opportunities for various types of outdoor recreation could make the county a potential tourist attraction. A specific and comprehensive tourism/recreation plan for the county should be developed.

The Breaks Park should be the focal point of all tourism efforts and should be expanded in size and facilities in order to attract more visitors. Improved access to the park should be provided by a scenic parkway.

SUITABILITY

The ability of soil to support various land uses effects suitability. Soil properties such as percolation, compaction, shrink-swell potential, density, slope, depth to bedrock, underlying material, location, water table and composition are factors considered in determining the suitability and limitations that soil may possess for different land uses. The County is currently assisting with a countywide soil analysis to record all soils and their properties.

Areas with slopes in excess of 20 percent are generally considered unsuitable for urban type development. This presents severe development problems, and a suitability analysis should be performed before any land is developed in Dickenson County.

Caution should be exercised when considering, the use of surface mined land for development purposes. Strip mined land has been used for a number of urban type uses including residential development, mobile home parks, school sites, commercial development and industrial sites. The development of strip-mined lands should be approached with caution. Subsurface conditions are often unstable and there have been many problems with subsidence and settling after these areas have been developed. Anytime a void is created below the surface, the possibility of subsidence is present.

This problem has grown in recent years with the widespread use of "long wall" mining. In conventional "room and pillar" mining, only 50-60 percent of the coal is actually moved, with the remainder left in place to provide surface support. Only in undeveloped areas where surface disturbances would not be harmful are these pillars usually removed.

In long wall mining, the extraction rate is nearly 100 percent. This mining technique is basically a controlled subsidence, as the long wall panel moves through the seam; the mountain is allowed to cave in behind it. The extent of surface damage due to subsidence depends on many factors, including geology and seam depth.

In order to prevent costly and deadly destruction from the ravages of floods, areas known as floodways should be reserved for the un-obstructive flow of floodwaters. In the adjacent flood plains, new structures should be elevated above the level of the hundred-year flood. The County is currently participating in a U.S. Corps of Engineers project to evaluate all structures in the flood plain/zoned to remove all these structures and implement a flood warning system.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities and services include those government and quasi-public improvements that benefit and serve the general public. Community facilities include buildings, lands, and improvements that provide utilities, schools, health care, public safety and recreation. These facilities are among the basic necessities needed for a community's growth and development.

WATER

As stated in the survey of Dickenson County's natural resources, a safe, clean and dependable water supply is required for many commercial, industrial, agricultural and recreational purposes. Coal mining operations have seriously damaged the supply of groundwater in Dickenson County. Underground aquifers have been depleted and only a small amount of groundwater is still available.

Lack of water is a slight problem for some residents. Projects are currently underway to provide adequate water services for all of Dickenson County. Upcoming and ongoing water projects are; Tom Bottom which will serve 32 customers, Multi-Community water projects 125 customers, Sullivan Branch water project 25-30 customers, Rt. 80 water project 20-25 customers and Tempest Branch which will serve 46 customers. The Dickenson County PSA presently serves 4,221 customers. The major provider of water is the John Flannagan Water Authority, which is authorized to draw 2.75 million gallons of water per day from the John Flannagan Lake. The Buchanan County Public Service Authority and the Dickenson County Public Service Authority also receives water from John Flannagan Water Authority.

The Dickenson County Public Service Authority has experienced unprecedented growth since its entry into public water in 1990. The number of customers has increased almost a hundredfold to the current level of approximately 4,000. A concentrated effort has been made to establish a new service in all areas of the county, thereby creating a springboard for additional extensions in the future.

Dickenson County is somewhat unique in that it has four (4) providers of public water, two (2) of which are other counties. In addition to the Dickenson County Public Service Authority and the Town of Clintwood, water is also provided to portions of Dickenson County by Buchanan and Wise Counties. The geographic locations of these various providers has dictated that the Dickenson County Public Service Authority development be a system of sub-systems, many times relying on the other providers for the water source. While this arrangement is complex it has worked extremely well.

Public water availability has increased from 35% in 1990 to approximately 85% presently. Although our bulk water suppliers are separate government entities they have their own budgets and capital improvement plans, the Public Service Authority communicates regularly to ensure that sufficient water is available to provide a water source for projects for Dickenson County.

Dickenson County is predominately a residential and agriculture community with very limited industrial development. Thus, there are some areas within the County, which will be very difficult to provide with public water when financial feasibility is considered. The Dickenson County Public Service Authority is very dedicated to exhausting every effort to provide clean and safe drinking water to Dickenson County homes and has been able to extend service to areas which were considered unfeasible a decade ago. At present there are 3,941 water customers served by the Public Service Authority. The authority maintains 230 miles of line four inches in diameter and larger, 31 pump stations and 23 storage tanks. Since 1992, a total of 33 projects have been completed or are funded and in progress.

SEWAGE

The Town of Clintwood Sewage Treatment Facility has a treatment capacity of 500,000 gallons per day with average daily use of 240,000 gallons per day. Available capacity is 260,000 gallons per day with the capacity to readily expand to 1,000,000 gallons per day. The Dickenson County Public Service Authority Sewage Treatment Facility, located in Haysi, has a treatment capacity of 100,000 gallons per day. Average

daily use is 30,000 gallons per day. A smaller plant located in Trammel has a capacity of 20,000 gallons per day; average daily use is currently 7,500 gallons per day. Public sewer in Service for the Town of Clintwood serves 799 customers, while Town of Clinchco serves 366 customers; Town of Haysi 110 customers; and Trammel 60 customers.

Public Sewer in Service	Water Projects On-going or Up-coming
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Clintwood - 799 customers • Town of Clinchco - 366 customers • Town of Haysi - 110 customers • Trammel - 60 customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Bottom Water Project- 32 customers • Multi-Community Water Project - 126 customers • Sullivan Branch Water Project - 25 to 30 customers • Rt.80 Water Project - 20 to 25 customers • Tempest Branch Water Project - 46 customers
Public water in service - 4221 customers served by the Dickenson County PSA	

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Solid Waste is defined as any type of garbage or refuse including solid, liquid, semisolid or contained gaseous material. This includes industrial, hazardous, medical and municipal waste, each of which requires different treatment. Most of these waste types are strictly regulated by federal agencies, but several aspects of their collection, processing, and disposal are local planning issues. Solid Waste collection and disposal is a growing responsibility for county, city and town governments. This service is a fundamental part of each resident's daily life.

Once refuse has been collected, there are two main methods of preparing it for final disposal, incineration and compacting. Both methods are aimed at reducing the mass and volume of waste, the former by burning and the latter by compression. Incineration, although sometimes believed to be more cost effective and efficient, may produce gaseous pollutants, which can be removed from the exhaust gases only by stack scrubbing. However, wet scrubbers produce liquid effluent, creating a trade off between polluted air and polluted water. The heat generated by combustion can be

recovered for beneficial uses such as the generation of steam, chilled water or electricity. Compacted waste is placed in a sanitary landfill, where fresh waste is covered with clean fill.

There are a number of ways to limit the need for disposal, including recycling, source reduction, and composting and energy reclamation. All of these methods are elements of the comprehensive solid waste management program operated through the Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Authority.

A regional approach to solid waste management is offered by the Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority, which includes Dickenson, Buchanan and Russell Counties. The authority has signed a five-year option with BFI, Inc., to dispose of solid waste at a facility outside the three-county area and the consideration of Russell to participate.

Three transfer stations have been constructed, one in each county. Dickenson County sends its waste to the county transfer station, where the waste becomes property of the authority and transferred to a landfill located in Tennessee.

Jurisdictions using their existing landfills after October 1993 faced new and expensive regulations taking effect at that time. In order to avoid additional expenses, the authority elected to transport its waste at this time. Although the costs of establishing a regional landfill are not currently in the best interest of the authority, it is recommended that future consideration of a regional landfill.

The Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority has compiled a regional waste management plan and are reviewing waste management options being operated successfully in other regions, in order to provide the three-county area with safe and adequate disposal in the future.

If needed by the county and if suitable areas of the county can be based on state and county regulations and/or law areas may be designated for the establishment of landfills, and/or incinerators. No areas of the county are currently designated for the development of landfills and/or incinerators.

ELECTRICITY

American Electric Power supplies most of Dickenson County with electricity. Old Dominion Power Company serves the Sandy Ridge area. Six coal burning generator plants and two hydroelectric plants provide power.

PUBLIC SAFETY

29 law enforcement officers, and 3 school resource officers provide public safety in the county. The County has 5 State Police officers that are also assigned to the county. The town of Clintwood has two policemen, the town of Haysi has two, and Clinchco has one.

There are four fire departments in Dickenson County with 75 volunteers serving the county residents with fire protection. Clintwood's fire insurance rating is a five, Haysi rates a seven, and the rest of the county receives an ISO rating of either a 9 or 10.

The County also has a 911 office centrally located in the Town of Clintwood that assist local residents as well as local law enforcement agencies in emergency situations. The 911 offices also provide a mapping department that provides residents with a needed physical address.

Four squads provide rescue service in the county with 75 volunteers, each has training in general emergency service and a variety of industrial accident situations including hazardous materials and heavy equipment.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Dickenson Community Hospital (Mountain States Health Alliance), located in Clintwood, Virginia opened in November 2003. It is a 25-bed not-for-profit Critical Access Hospital owned by Norton Community Hospital. 24-hr. Emergency Care, 3-D Ultrasound, Bone Densitometry, CT Scan, EKG, Geriatric Care, Holter Monitoring, Intensive Care Unit (3-bed), Laboratory Services, Medical Unit (22 bed), Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Radiology Services, Respiratory Services, Speech Therapy, and Telemetry are some of the services provided.

Dickenson County also contains six community medical clinics, and long term care in the county is provided by Heritage Hall Health Care nursing home in Clintwood. Three dentists and 19 physicians attend to the medical needs of Dickenson County residents.

Regional Hospitals include:

Dickenson Community Hospital	Clintwood, VA
Norton Community Hospital	Norton, VA
Mountain View Regional	Norton, VA
Johnson Memorial Hospital	Abingdon, VA
Bristol Regional Medical Center	Bristol, TN
Indian Path Pavilion	Kingsport, TN
Holston Valley Medical Center	Kingsport, TN

EDUCATION

The Dickenson County public education system is composed of five elementary Schools, three high schools and one career and technical center. (See table p. 83) Over the last eighteen years, the enrollment in Dickenson County Schools has dropped substantially from 3,467 students to 2,464 students. Haysi High School built in 1953 and located in Haysi houses ninth through twelfth grade students. Haysi has a total enrollment of 284 students. Clintwood High School, located in the town of Clintwood, was built in

1954 and houses ninth through twelfth grade student. Clintwood's total enrollment is 344 students. The smallest high school, Ervinton, is located at Nora Virginia, was built in 1955. Ervinton's present enrollment is 216 and includes eight through twelfth grade students. Taking into account the age of our three high schools along with the declining enrollment and staff, it is obvious that the students in Dickenson County are not only trapped in mid- 20th Century buildings but cannot be exposed to a broad based curriculum needed to compete in the 21st century workforce and higher education. A study of the available staff and course offerings at each school makes it obvious that the Dickenson County School curriculum offerings are at a very minimum as required by State and Federal regulations. The goal of Dickenson County should be to meet the needs of the children and to prepare them for real world experiences.

Dickenson County School System

Schools	Year	Grades	Enrollment	# of	# of
	Built			Teachers	Support
Clintwood High School	1954	9-12	344	30	9
Ervinton High School	1955	8-12	216	25	11
Haysi High School	1953	9-12	284	28	9
Dickenson County Career Center	1968			17	11
Total High School:			844	100	40
Clinchco Elementary School	1978	K-7	173	24	24
Clintwood Elementary School	1977	K-8	372	34	15
Ervinton Elementary School	1935	K-7	209	24	20
Longs Fork Elementary School	1967	K-8	329	27	18
Sandlick Elementary School	1970	K-8	532	40	25
Total Elementary:			1615	149	102

***District**

Total: 2459 249 142

**Enrollment as of December 2007*

An analysis of data including enrollment numbers, staff and class schedules indicate that the School System does not presently have the enrollment or staff at each school to support a broad range of curriculum offerings in order to meet the 21st Century needs of the students. Because students are obviously deprived of opportunities that would more effectively assure their success in the real world, Dickenson County has the obligation to the students and their future to develop short and long-range plans that will move our education system into the 21st Century.

Two Community Colleges serve Dickenson County - Southwest Virginia Community College in Richlands and Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap. Both colleges offer two-year programs in technical/occupational fields as well as transfer programs for students planning to attend a four-year school.

Four-year colleges, universities and professional schools in the region, within three hours driving time, are:

UVA-Wise	Wise, VA
Emory and Henry College	Emory, VA
Virginia Polytechnic Institute	Blacksburg, VA
Radford University	Radford, VA
East Tennessee State Univ.	Johnson City, TN
King College	Bristol, TN
Lincoln Memorial University	Harrogate, TN
Pikeville College	Pikeville, KY

Public responsibility for education does not stop at the provision of schools and libraries; it extends to such diverse areas as public television and radio, adult literacy, and job training. Educational television and radio provide ways of making specialized information available to the majority of the population.

Colleges and universities are often the best providers of higher education for nontraditional students in this region, and these institutions may require local government assistance in performing this function. Community-based educational programs or extension services sometimes need the part-time use of public facilities to hold weekend and evening programs. Schools, libraries, and other public structures should be made available for this purpose.

COMMUNICATIONS

Verizon provides telephone service. Long distance suppliers include AT&T, MCI, U.S. Sprint, Telecom USA, Pectec Communications and Mid Atlantic Delecom. Wireless internet access is provided through DCWIN. Alltel, Verizon, and Appalachian Wireless provide cellular service. Telegraphs can be sent by Western Union. Seven U.S. Post Offices serve the county. UPS, Federal Express, RPS, and Purolator Courier provide express delivery. Fiber Opti Broadband service is provided by BVU Optinet through the Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission. The network provides a diverse loop of high capacity fiber, assuring continuous broadband service to the customers along the route.

Dickenson County is served with one weekly newspaper- The Dickenson Star. The Coalfield Progress from adjoining Wise County is received biweekly. Newspapers received daily in Dickenson County include the Bristol Herald Courier, the Roanoke Times, the Kingsport Times-News, the Richmond Times Dispatch, USA Today, and the Bluefield Daily News.

COMMERCE

There are three motels in Dickenson County with a total of 64 rooms, seven banks, approximately two apparel stores and approximately 20 grocery stores.

INDUSTRIAL PARKS

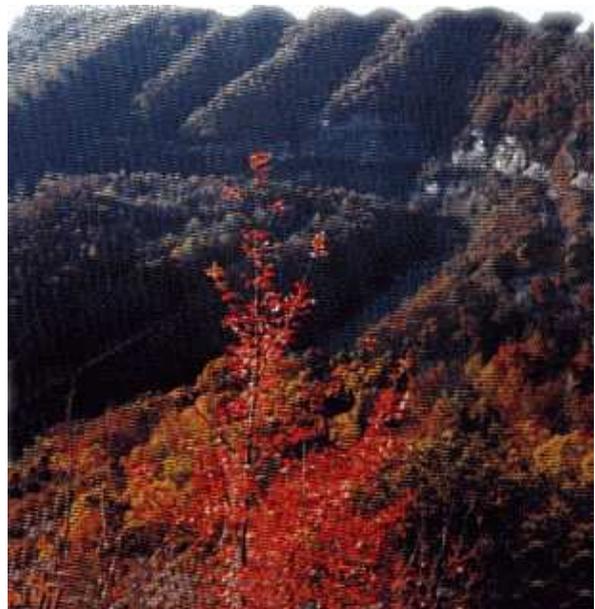
Dickenson County Technology Park, which is adjacent to Clintwood's town limits, is a 125 acre site with an access road to state route 83. Natural gas, electrical and water services are available on-site and sewer lines are in place to the site's property boundaries.

The Dickenson County Technology Park is currently the home of the following companies: Appalachian Power, S.I. International, and is the future site of the Dickenson Center for Education and Research and Equitable Resources.

The Dickenson County Childcare Center, also resides inside the Technology Park. The Childcare Center offers licensed childcare, with open enrollment and fee subsidy for eligible families.

RECREATION

The *Breaks Interstate Park* is one of two interstate parks in America and encompasses 4,500 acres of woodland. The Breaks, home of the deepest gorge east of the Mississippi River, also rises to lofty heights where golden eagles make their home. The Towers and other rock formations, caves, flora and wildlife make the Breaks Park a unique tourist destination. History, legend and lore combine with the scenic beauty of the Park, which was the reported destination of several trips by Daniel Boone. It is the home of Pow-Wow Cave, used by the Shawnee Indians and those who love mystery and adventure can search for the buried silver treasure of John Swift. For active visitors, the park also offers



hiking, bike and driving trails, picnic and recreation areas, a lake with pedal boats, a swimming pool, horseback riding and an amphitheater. A rustic lodge, cottages and a large campground are available for extended visits. The Breaks Park also has a modern conference center, restaurant, gift shop and visitor's center. The folks in Eastern Kentucky and Southwest Virginia welcome you to the Breaks Interstate Park!

Breaks Interstate Park is often called "The Grand Canyon of the South." Perhaps the scale of the 5-mile-long, .25-mile-deep gorge that forms the park's centerpiece cannot rival that of the Grand Canyon, but the canyon is among the longest and deepest east of the Mississippi River. A better title might be "The Grand Canyon with Clothes On." Where the raging Russell Fork of the Big Sandy River has carved the solid sandstone over millions of years to break through Pine Mountain, nature has dressed the canyon walls in some of Virginia's most spectacular scenery.

Today, 4,500-acre Breaks Interstate Park, so called because it sits astride the state line shared by both Kentucky and Virginia, attracts more than a third of a million visitors annually. They come to fish the still pools, to raft the Class IV rapids of the Russell Fork River, to stand at panoramic overlooks, to camp in the park's wooded campsites, to walk the miles of meandering hiking trails, and to see the beauty of Catawba rhododendron in lavender bloom in early May.

Flannagan Dam is located in Dickenson County, Virginia, and stores the waters of the Cranesnest and Pound Rivers. The dam was built as an element in the Comprehensive Flood Control Plan for the Ohio River Basin.

Flannagan is located in the Pound River Valley only 12 miles south of the Breaks Interstate Park. The dam is operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and it provides



flood protection and water supply for areas downstream along Pound River, Russell Fork, Levisa Fork, and Big Sandy River.

Construction of the dam, spillway, and outlet works began in 1960, and was completed by 1964. The dam was named in honor of the late Ninth Virginia District Congressman, John Williams Flannagan, Jr., who was from the highlands of Southwest Virginia and provided much assistance in creating the flood control project. The earth-filled dam is 250 feet high and 916 feet long, and is constructed of rock with a central clay core, which prevents water from passing through the dam. A 1,145-acre lake is formed behind the dam with almost 40 miles of shoreline.

During the first four full weekends in October Flannagan has whitewater releases to achieve winter pool. From the dam, the first two miles are class II rapids that progresses downstream reaching Class V + rapids. Some of the most challenging rapids in the eastern



U.S. can be found while traveling through Breaks Interstate Park with names like 20 Stitches, Broken Nose and Triple Drop.

Flannagan is well known as fisherman's paradise with many secluded coves of deep, clean, cool water well stocked with bass, bream, walleye, and trout. The dam also provides a wide range of other outdoor recreational experiences as outlined below:

Bicycling:

Bicycles are permitted on main roads and campground areas.

Boating:

Launch ramps for boating enthusiasts and fishermen are located at the Spillway Launch Area, Lower Twin Area, Junction Area, Cranesnest Area, and the Pound River Area. Fees are charged at the Junction, Lower Twin, and Pound River.

Camping:

Camping at John W. Flannagan Lake is restricted to developed camping areas only and is prohibited outside of the campgrounds. John W. Flannagan Reservoir has three campgrounds, Lower Twin, Cranesnest Areas #1, #2, and #3 and Pound River Area all operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The three campgrounds combined have a total of 93 sites. Fifteen of these sites have electrical hookups and are located at Lower Twin Campground. Camping fees are charged from mid May through Labor Day.

Fishing:

Fishing and hunting regulations may be obtained from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' regional office in Marion, Virginia by calling (540) 783-4860.

Handicapped Access:

Universally Accessible Facilities are provided at the Project Office and all of the recreation areas.

Hunting:

Fishing and hunting regulations may be obtained from the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' regional office in Marion, Virginia by calling (540) 783-4860.

Horseback Riding:

John W. Flannagan Pound River Area offers a horse show ring which is managed by the Cumberland Mountain Trail Riders. Shows are scheduled the second of the month, June – August. Trail Ride outings are in May and September.

Marina:

John W. Flannagan Boat Dock is located at the Junction Area and provides visitors with docking facilities, a gas station, fishing supplies, and a snack bar.

Picnicking:

Picnic shelters are located at the Below Dam Area and Cranesnest Area #2. All shelters are available on a first come - first served basis EXCEPT WHEN RESERVED IN ADVANCE (a fee is required for reserving a shelter). Picnic shelters may be reserved by calling the project office at (540) 835-9544. There are also picnic tables at all recreation areas, except the Junction Area.

Swimming:

John W. Flannagan Reservoir has no developed swimming area and swimming around the lake is at your own risk. Dickenson County offers a pool with lifeguard at Bearpen, which is located just outside the Town of Clintwood. The pool is open Memorial Day through Labor Day and a fee is charged through Friday.

TOURISM

Opportunities to enhance revenue from tourism lie in the development of programs for which Virginians normally travel out-of-state. The scenic beauty of Dickenson County, as stated in the future land use section, could make the county a tourist attraction. Many types of outdoor recreation activities can exist in Dickenson County.

With Dickenson County lying in the Heart of Appalachia, the outdoor and cultural opportunities abound-- from the Ralph Stanley Museum to the "Grand Canyon of the South" in the Breaks Interstate Park. With potential tourist looking for their next new playground, Dickenson County seeks to provide information through a unique Brochure, magazine publications and web advertisement that will not only promote Dickenson County as an outdoor haven, but the place to find the Heart of Appalachia!

With many new trails being developed through Dickenson County, it is a must that Tourism be added in the Dickenson County Comprehensive Plan. The *Virginia Coal Heritage Trail* established in July 2007 as a State Byway, is now being promoted to become a National Byway. Along this trail that attaches to the West Virginia Coal Heritage Trail, you will find a 325-mile route that goes through the heart of Virginia's

Coalfield Region including: Tazewell, Buchanan, Dickenson, Wise, Russell, Lee, Scott and the City of Norton. *The Crooked Road, Virginia's Music Trail* comes through Dickenson County and ends (or begins) at the Breaks Interstate Park. *The Ralph Stanley Museum, The Jettie Baker Center, Mountain Art Works* and *The Breaks Interstate Park* are all venues on the Crooked Road Music Trail. *Round the Mountain Artisan Trails* are now being developed in Dickenson County. The new *Heartwood Artisan Center*, under construction in Abingdon, will house local artisans work throughout the Southwest Virginia counties.

Another aspect of tourism promotion in Dickenson County will be the hiking, biking and horseback trails at Cranenest (now under construction), the proposed Haysi/Breaks Hiking Trail, all the hiking trails in the Breaks Park, Birch Knob, John Flannagan and others. A new Multi-Use ATV Trail is being investigated and meetings are being held regionally. This trail will attach to the Hatfield McCoy Trail in West Virginia and travel through Dickenson County as well as the other Coalfield Counties in Southwest Virginia.

We have many birdwatching trails now being developed and soon will be listed in a new trail brochure being developed on Trails in Dickenson County. White water rafting is another outdoor recreation that brings in many tourists to our county each year.

A combined recreation and tourism strategy for southwestern Virginia is emphasizing the interrelationship of the forest with other attractions in the region. This program should do much to encourage tourism and recreational use of public and private parks and attractions. The development of tourism is expected to bring many jobs to Dickenson County and the entire district both directly and through indirect supporting businesses, as tourists buy gas and food, stay overnight and visit other attractions in the surrounding areas.

Fishing is a popular activity in southwestern Virginia, and the many rivers in Dickenson County provide opportunities for the development of additional access for

canoe and bank fishing. Through close cooperation of state, planning district, county, local and federal agencies, it would be possible to develop a system of access points with some sites being set aside for picnicking, parking and camping.

Hunting opportunities are ample in Dickenson County. Small game, including rabbit, squirrel, ruffed grouse, fox and raccoon are numerous. Big game in Dickenson County includes wild turkey, deer, and black bear.

U.S. Bike Route 76, also called the Transamerica Bicycle Route, begins in Yorktown, Virginia and crosses the country, ending in Astoria, Oregon. This bike route travels through Russell and Dickenson Counties before exiting the state at Breaks Interstate Park on the Virginia/Kentucky line in Buchanan County.

Abandoned railroad corridors, such as the 2.9 mile N&W Hurricane Junction - Clinchfield line and the 3.3 mile N&W Duty-Clinchfield Coal line, make interesting linear parks and greenways with many opportunities for linking outdoor recreational, historical, and cultural areas. These two lines were both abandoned in August of 1990. Once the right-of-way is acquired, costs associated with converting to a trail are minimized because the grading, draining, and stabilizing has already been done.

Much of the reclaimed mine land is suitable for recreational use and consideration should be given to converting some of it for this purpose. Off-road, 4-wheel drive and motorcycle riding are popular sports in the region, and a deficiency of suitable places to ride exists. Constructing a challenging off-road course could be one form of strip mine reclamation that would help to satisfy this demand.

FINANCE, TAXES & BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

FINANCE

The Comprehensive Plan is only a plan and cannot be implemented unless the revenue needed for infrastructure and capital projects can be generated. A financial analysis of Dickenson County's tax base, revenues, expenditures and indebtedness in addition to a long range plan for development will be required for planning activities to be implemented. The county audit is available for all financial information to include historic, statistical data to assist governing body for planning

TAX RATES

Dickenson County's tax rates for personal property, machinery, and tools next to Tazewell County are in line with adjoining counties, while real estate taxes are closer to the district's average. While raising taxes is not politically popular, the long-term benefits of increased public investment in education, transportation and public utilities can be substantial.

TAX RATES PER \$100 ASSESSED VALUE:				
	2005 Real		Tangible Personal	
<u>County</u>	<u>Estate</u>	<u>Property (effective)</u>	<u>Tools (effective)</u>	<u>Capital (nominal)</u>
Buchanan	\$0.49	\$1.95	\$1.95	\$2.00
Dickenson	\$0.60	\$1.69	\$1.69	\$10.50*
Russell	\$0.60	\$1.65	\$1.65	\$0.65
Tazewell	\$0.60	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$4.30

Virginia Department of Taxation

Local Tax Rates: Tax Year 2007. Richmond, Virginia. Annual.

***Based on 10% of value**

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Business and industrial financial assistance is available through the Dickenson County Industrial Development Authority. This Authority is empowered to issue Industrial Revenue Bonds and can act as the recipient of Virginia Revolving Loan Funds.

The Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority (VCEDA) derives its funding from a portion of the coal severance tax and has funds available for new and existing industrial projects.

SI International, a telecommunications firm, has located in the Dickenson County Technology Park as a result of VCEDA's marketing efforts. Dickenson County constructed a shell building in 1993 in an effort to attract business to the county. When efforts failed to find a tenant to occupy the facility, the county decided to establish a higher education center in order to provide citizenry with higher educational opportunities closer to home and establish an energy research center for carbon capture and storage. The Dickenson Center for Education and Research was funded in part by a \$4 million grant from VCEDA, as well.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

In order to formulate a plan for Dickenson County, goals, objectives and policies must be developed in regard to concerns, which were outlined in the background material. These goals will provide a framework for the comprehensive plan. A goal is a statement of something, which the community wishes to achieve, and an end to which actions are aimed. An objective states the way in which a goal is to be achieved and refers to some specific idea that can be reasonably attained. A policy prescribes the course of action needed to fulfill that objective. Goals, objectives and policies have been developed for each of the areas covered in the background information. The goals aim to improve the quality of life and the economy of Dickenson County.

I. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: To promote the development of Dickenson County to the greatest benefit of its citizens within the physical constraints nature imposed.

Objective: Identify areas to be developed and those to be preserved.

Strategies:

1. Encourage natural resource development that will create the most jobs while protecting the natural environment.
2. Promote the use of reclamation methods that will restore an environmental balance in conjunction with the natural resource development.
3. Decrease the pollution of streambeds and preserve the quality of surface water in Dickenson County.

GOAL: To promote the development of fish and wildlife populations in conjunction with federal and state agencies, for commerce and tourism.

Objective: Encourage hunting and fishing activities.

Strategies:

1. Promote programs that capitalize on various species of game/non-game for commercial use or tourism.
2. Protect species which are endangered or of special concern.

II. POPULATION

GOAL: To encourage a population level and balance commensurate with employment, water and sewer facilities, housing construction, acceptable traffic volumes and community services.

Objective: Promote a population increase and a balanced population structure.

Strategies:

1. The construction of water and sanitary sewer facilities and improvement/expansion of existing systems.
2. New housing construction and existing housing rehabilitation in compliance with building codes and development regulations in those areas most amenable to development.
3. Maintenance of acceptable traffic volumes, safety, and road conditions.
4. An improved system of community services (police, fire protection, emergency medical services, etc.) and facilities (schools, libraries) while simultaneously recognizing the suitability of development that would adversely affect floodplains, agriculture, and forest lands, and Dickenson County's scenic areas and wildlife.

III. ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

GOAL: To strengthen Dickenson County's economy by diversifying its economic base.

Objective: Foster new or expanding local business by creating the necessary incentives and creating emerging business environment.

Strategies:

1. Work with financial institutions to improve the availability of venture capital for existing and new local industries.
2. Provide a highly trained and motivated work force by using job-training programs to improve the skills of unemployed and underemployed workers.
3. Provide opportunities for higher education closer to home by constructing the Dickenson Center for Education and Research.

4. Increase inventory of industrial buildings and developed land.
5. Commit resources into market research and technical assistance for local businesspersons and local developers.
6. Increase amount of Revolving Loan Fund monies available for existing and small start-up businesses

GOAL: To reduce the number of persons and families living below poverty level.

Objective: Strengthen Dickenson County's economy so that all residents will have access to suitable employment and education.

Strategies:

1. Establishment of long-range plan for commercial industrial site development by the County, IDA, Planning Commission and Planning Districts.
2. Increase per capita income through economic development, education and workforce development.
3. Improve access to skill training programs and enhance the programs linkages with industry.
4. Provide access to educational opportunities closer to home with the development of the Dickenson Center for Education and Research.

GOAL: To promote tourism.

Objective: Development of a comprehensive plan to incorporate tourism and recreational opportunities for the County.

Strategies:

1. Continue to encourage scenic development and enhancement.
2. Continue to encourage the preservation of arts, crafts, and traditional music activities.
3. Continue to implement a tourism marketing strategy.
4. Promote bed and breakfast inns.
5. Promote Group Tours, Host Travel Writers, develop press kits, promote festivals, horse shows,
6. Develop "Round the Mountain Artisan Trail", ATV Multi-Use Trail
7. Promote and Market Virginia Coal Heritage Trail, Bird Watching Trail, White Water Rafting; Crooked Road Music Trail, develop horse trails, and Birch Knob

8. Encourage Start-Up Tourism Businesses, continue workshops on Hospitality Training, Starting Tourism Businesses, etc..
9. Work regionally and statewide to promote/market the area.
10. Keep Website Updated
11. Develop more historical information on the county by working with the Historical Society, develop historical marketing materials
12. Research grants opportunities to promote tourism, write grants.

IV. TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: To promote feasible solutions to relieve current traffic problems and support future land use objectives.

Objective: Provide a street and highway system that is compatible with residential, commercial and industrial uses.

Strategies:

1. Encourage improvement in the primary and secondary road system.
2. Improve traffic flow and circulation in the commercial areas.
3. Develop a system of highway and street signs.
4. Establish the Coalfields Expressway.
5. Upgrade primary and secondary roads leading to tourism destinations, i.e. Breaks Park, Flanagan Dam, Birch Knob.

GOAL: To encourage the development of a transportation network that will provide better access to industrial sites and to major trade markets.

Objective: Support the proposed transportation corridors.

Strategies:

1. Pursue the feasibility of rail transportation for commercial use.
2. Make recommendations concerning future highway routes, airways, and rail transportation facilities that will support and maintain present and future development of the area.
3. Promote and encourage Pound By-Pass

V. HOUSING

GOAL: To expand the range of housing opportunities for all county citizens.

Objective: Define and implement a residential development policy, which will protect and enhance the right of citizens of modest means to acquire housing.

Strategies:

1. Develop programs to construct affordable housing in conjunction with the Dickenson County Career Center.
2. Support the development of housing for citizens who are handicapped.

Objective: Provide for safe and attractive housing and housing areas.

Strategies:

1. Encourage property owners to maintain their dwelling units.
2. Promote rehabilitation of existing housing units which are below standards, where possible seek federal and state funding to assist in making the renovations.
3. Encourage cleaning and fix-up campaigns, calling upon the civic and church groups within the community.
4. Sponsor a housing maintenance/housekeeping educational training program.
5. Seek to modify existing Sub Division Ordinance to fit the topographic challenges of the county.

VI. LAND USE

GOAL: To encourage harmonious and wise use of land through future developmental decisions.

Objective: Implement a land use plans that will be used to guide and control future development.

Strategies:

1. Limit non-residential encroachment on residential areas, where feasible and in the best interest of the area.

GOAL: To encourage development to occur in a manner, which will, best utilize the natural characteristics of the land by delineating those areas, which limit development.

Objective: Implement a plan to serve as a guide to control development.

Strategies: Seek professional planning assistance from Cumberland Plateau and other qualified planners.

VII. WATER, SEWAGE AND SOLID WASTE SYSTEMS

GOAL: To provide public water and sewer service in existing areas of population concentration and in areas targeted for residential, commercial and industrial development.

Objective: Continue to work with federal and state agencies to plan and develop water and sewer projects.

Strategies:

1. Complete current water and sewer projects.
2. Promote the growth of the Public Service Authority.
3. Obtain a water source from the John Flanagan Water Authority.

VIII. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

GOAL: Improve the quality of education for all students.

Objective: To provide a 21st century high school facility for students of Dickenson County

Strategies:

1. Carefully monitor population and enrollment trends to accurately project educational needs.
2. Carefully study the impact of maintaining three high schools.
3. Seek funding sources to consolidate high school by coordinating efforts of the Board of Supervisors and school systems.
4. Establish the Dickenson Center for Education and Research.

GOAL: To encourage an acceptable level of community facilities to be located in areas throughout Dickenson County where they will be most efficiently and effectively utilized.

Objective: Provide recreational opportunities to all citizens.

Strategies:

1. Support the development of the Breaks Interstate Park and surrounding areas as a major tourist destination area.
2. Continue to lease recreational facilities from the Corp of Engineers.
3. Obtain other leases from the corps of Engineers and develop recreation areas in the John Flannagan Dam vicinity.
4. Promote outdoor activities such as white water rafting and hiking.

IX. FINANCE

GOAL: To implement a Capital Improvements Program.

Objective: Improve the scheduling, financing and location of proposed projects.

Strategies:

1. Balance competing pressures for limited funds.
2. Insure that money is spent wisely.
3. Minimize the impact of improvements on the local tax rate.
4. Seek services of professional governmental financial planners.

GOAL: To provide the needed funding for county improvements and expansions.

Objective: Maintain an adequate tax base and expand county revenues.

Strategies:

1. Consider the development of retirement facilities as a potential foundation for diversified future growth and revenue.
2. Consider long-term gains from increased public investment in education, transportation, and public utilities.