

THE BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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STATEMENT FROM THE BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

January 10, 2012

The on going interest in the development of shale gas, industrial wind energy, and even junkyards brings to light the concerns that exist for property owners. The absence of any reasonable and prudent land management policy for Garrett County leaves the citizens, visitors, businesses, and property owners of Garrett County vulnerable to what many view as an exploitation of our lands.

The Commissioners have requested that a land use policy be explored, and drafted by staff, that can be shared with the planning commission, organizations and the general public. The direction will be to take into consideration the on going changes to land use in Garrett County and discussing potential reasonable standards for what are viewed as potential harmful effects of said usages. The continuing absence of a comprehensive approach, and the insistence of the State that we have statutory authority to enact regulations to help address basic issues affecting the County, have lead the County Commission to share the concern of many citizens. Citizens, organizations and stakeholders have also expressed apprehension about the lack of a responsible ability to manage areas of concerns regarding the potential for changing land uses on a large scale basis throughout the County.

Many feel the failure to act will only allow other institutions and entities to shape and control the future of Garrett County, which may not necessarily balance the interests of all of the stakeholders. The purpose is to have an open dialogue about land use and allow for input from all citizens through open forums and public meetings. Once the draft proposal is complete, the document will be shared on the County website, at public libraries, and citizens who desire a print copy will have one made available.