

# Proposed Comprehensive Plan Changes Charles County

Presentation to the  
Maryland Smart Growth Subcabinet  
September 18, 2013

# Changes from 2006 to 2012 Proposed Plan

- Agriculture Conservation district eliminated
- Former Agriculture Conservation district is converted to Rural Residential district
- Rural Conservation district reduced to Zekiah Watershed Rural Legacy Area only
- Policy change would be **supportive** of future upzonings and density increases



# A Change of Intent: Policy Shift



## 2006 Land Use Plan

### Agricultural Conservation District

*“The Agricultural District satisfies some limited rural housing need or demand, but **the prime objective is not to accommodate development, and to prevent scattered uncontrolled development over areas of open countryside.**”*



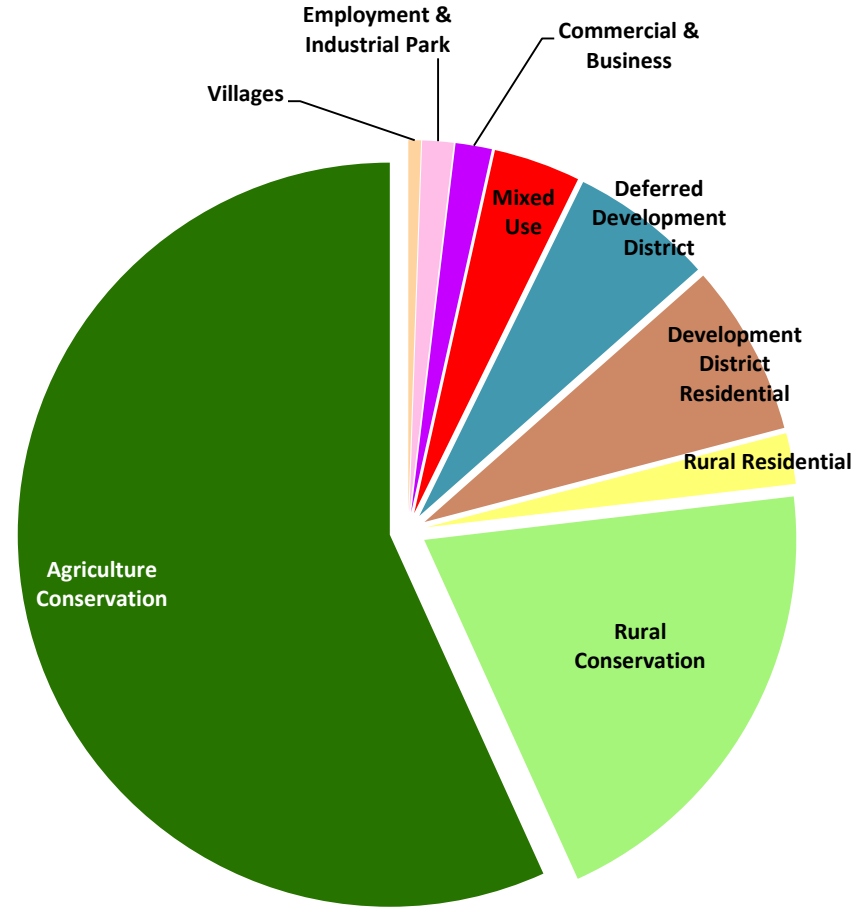
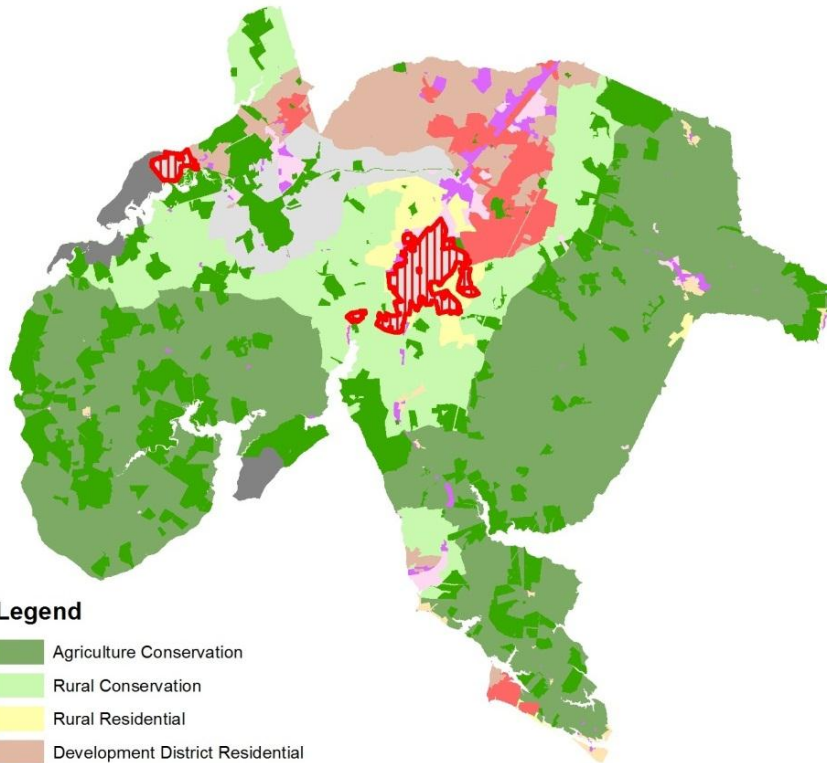
## 2012 Proposed Land Use Plan

### Rural Residential District

*“While farming can and is expected to continue in the near future, the long-range land use over time can be replaced by rural residential housing on large lots as the dominant use.”*

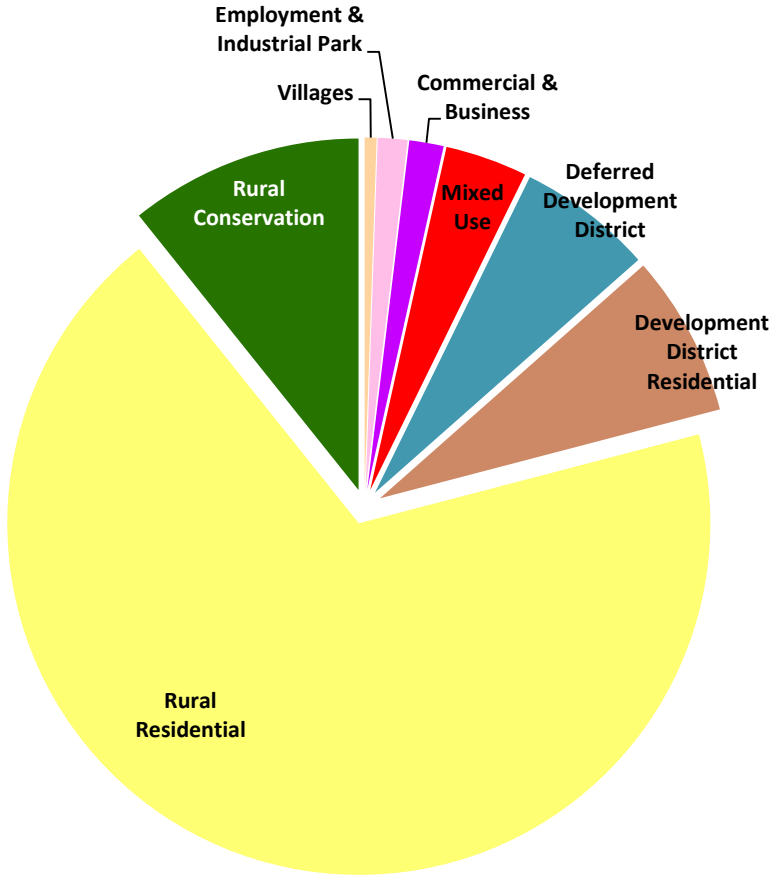
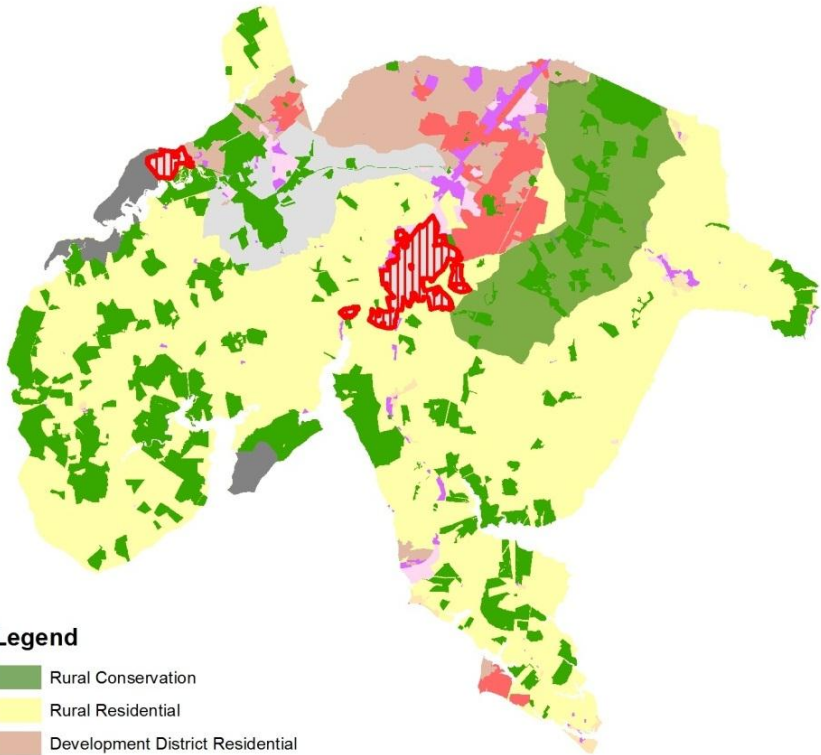


# 2006 Comprehensive Plan



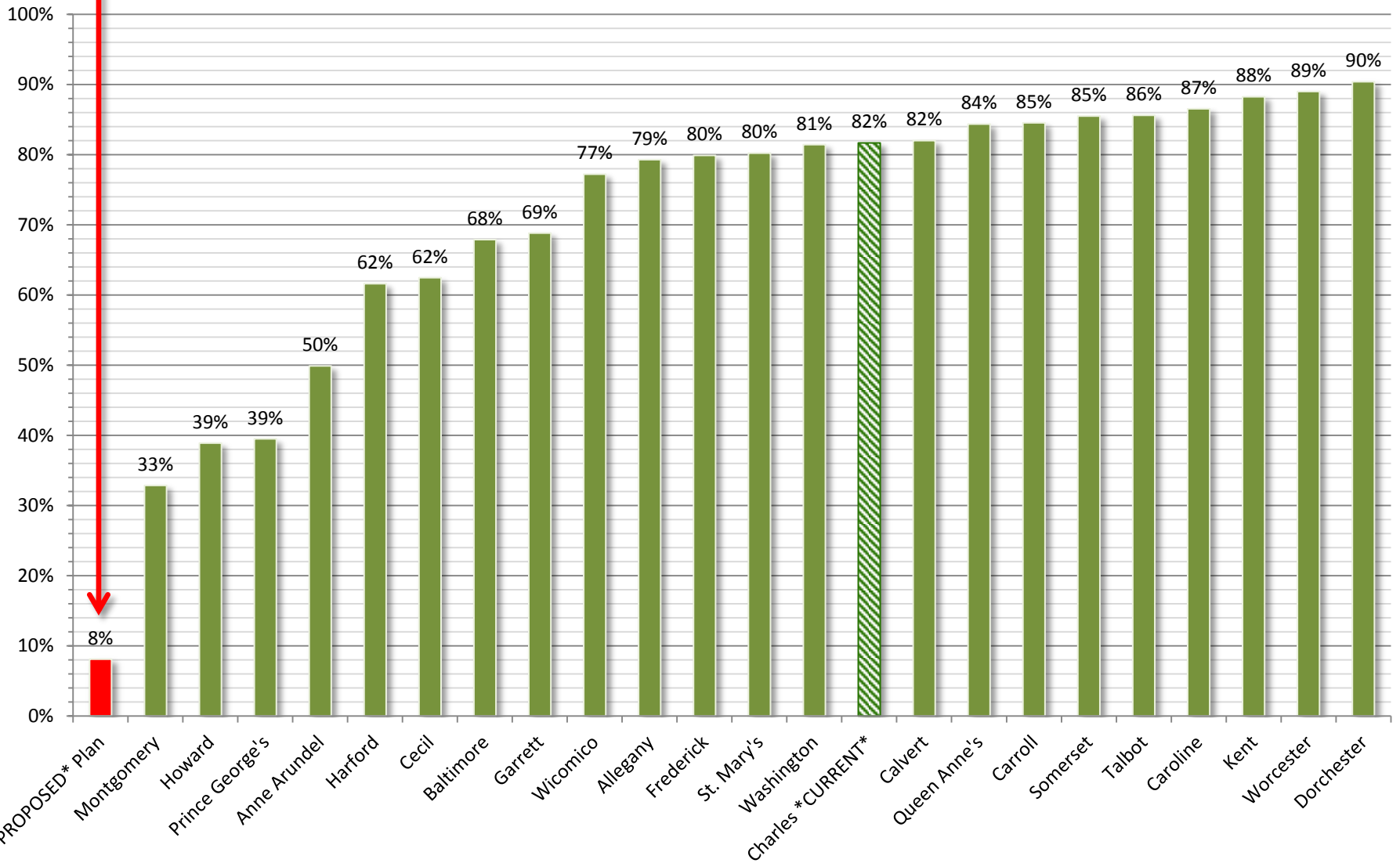


# 2012 Proposed Comprehensive Plan



# Comparing Charles County to other Maryland Counties

## Percent of County Lands Planned/Zoned for Resource Conservation



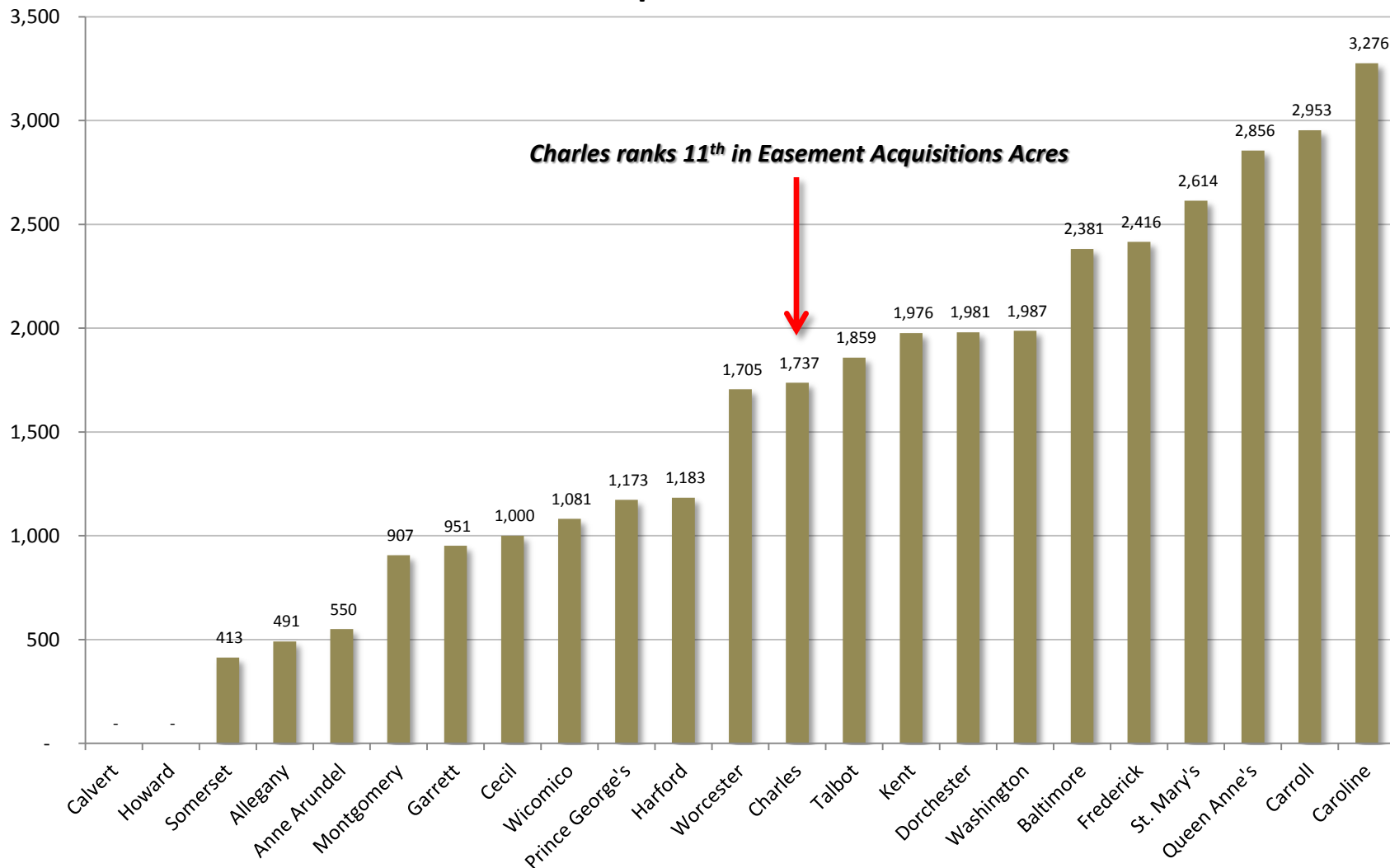
# State Investments: Agricultural Productivity and Land Preservation

- Agricultural products sold in Charles County valued at \$9,000,000
- Corn, Soybeans and Floriculture/Nuseries are the primary ag products
- 6,000 acres of farmland has been placed under easement by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation
- 38,000 Acres of High Priority Targeted AgPrint areas would be designated Rural Residential under the proposed plan



# State Investments: Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Acquisitions

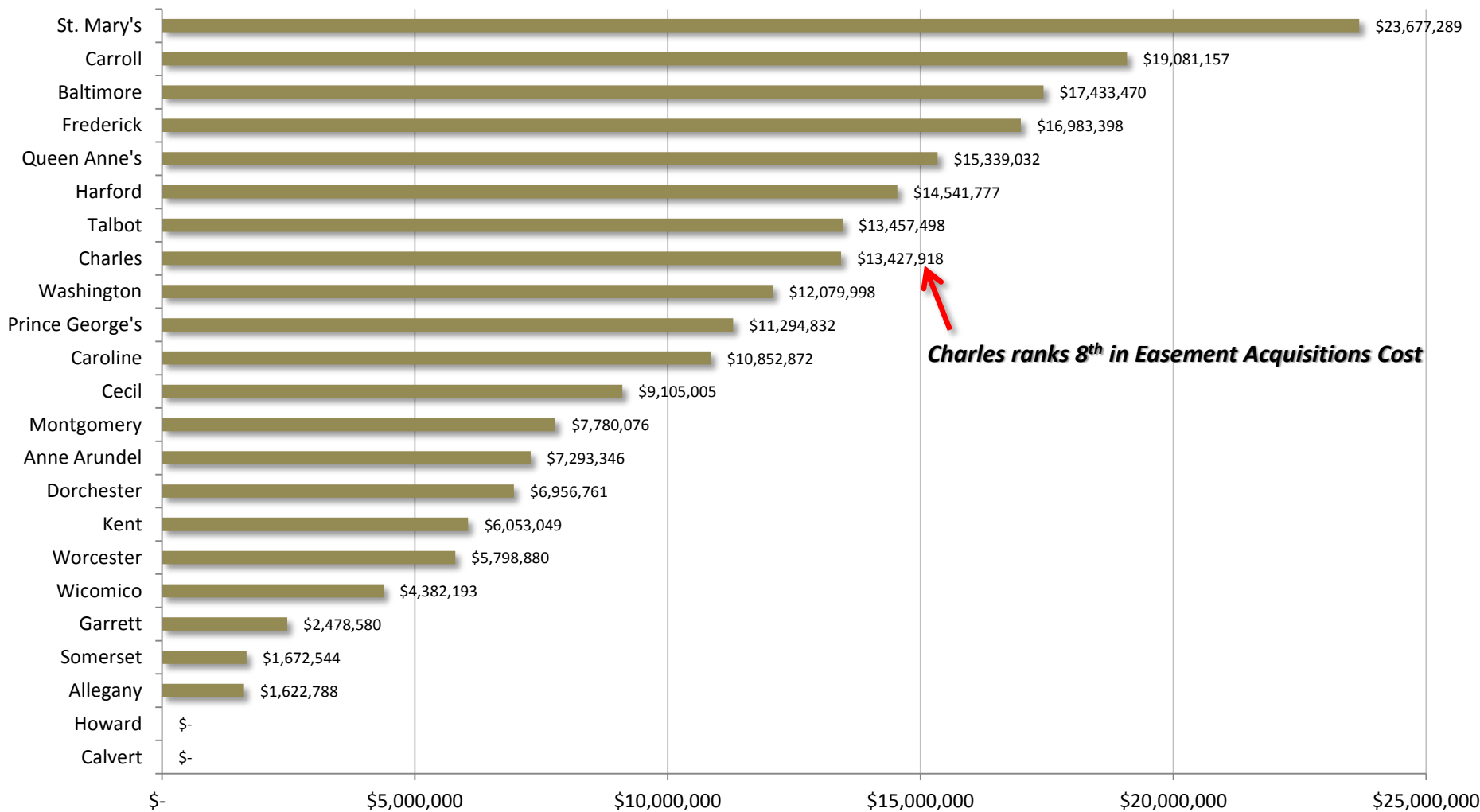
## Total MALPF Easement Acquisition Acres, FY2008 to FY2012





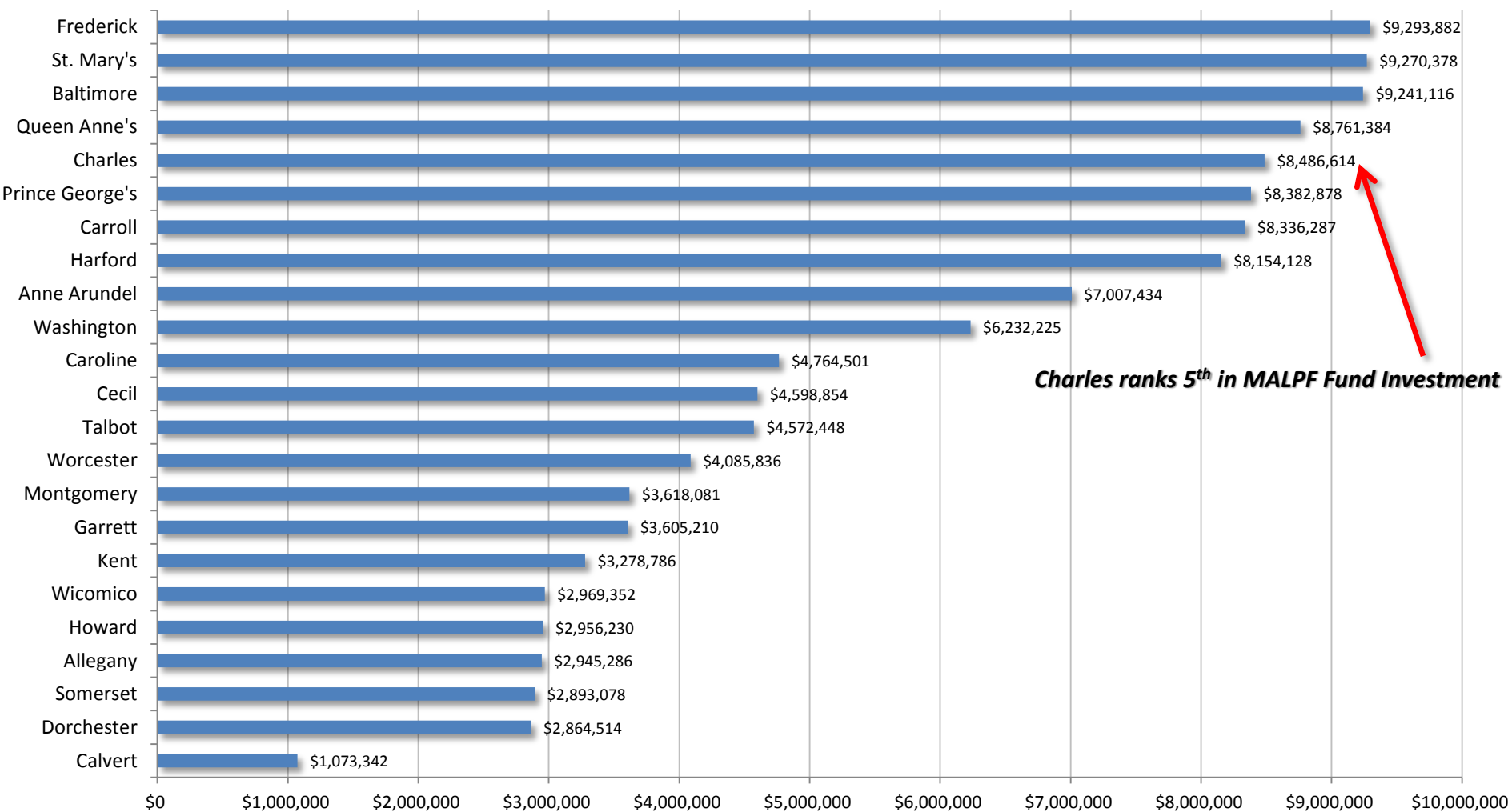
# State Investments: Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Acquisitions

## Total MALPF Easement Acquisition Costs, FY2008 to FY2012



# State Investments: Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Acquisitions

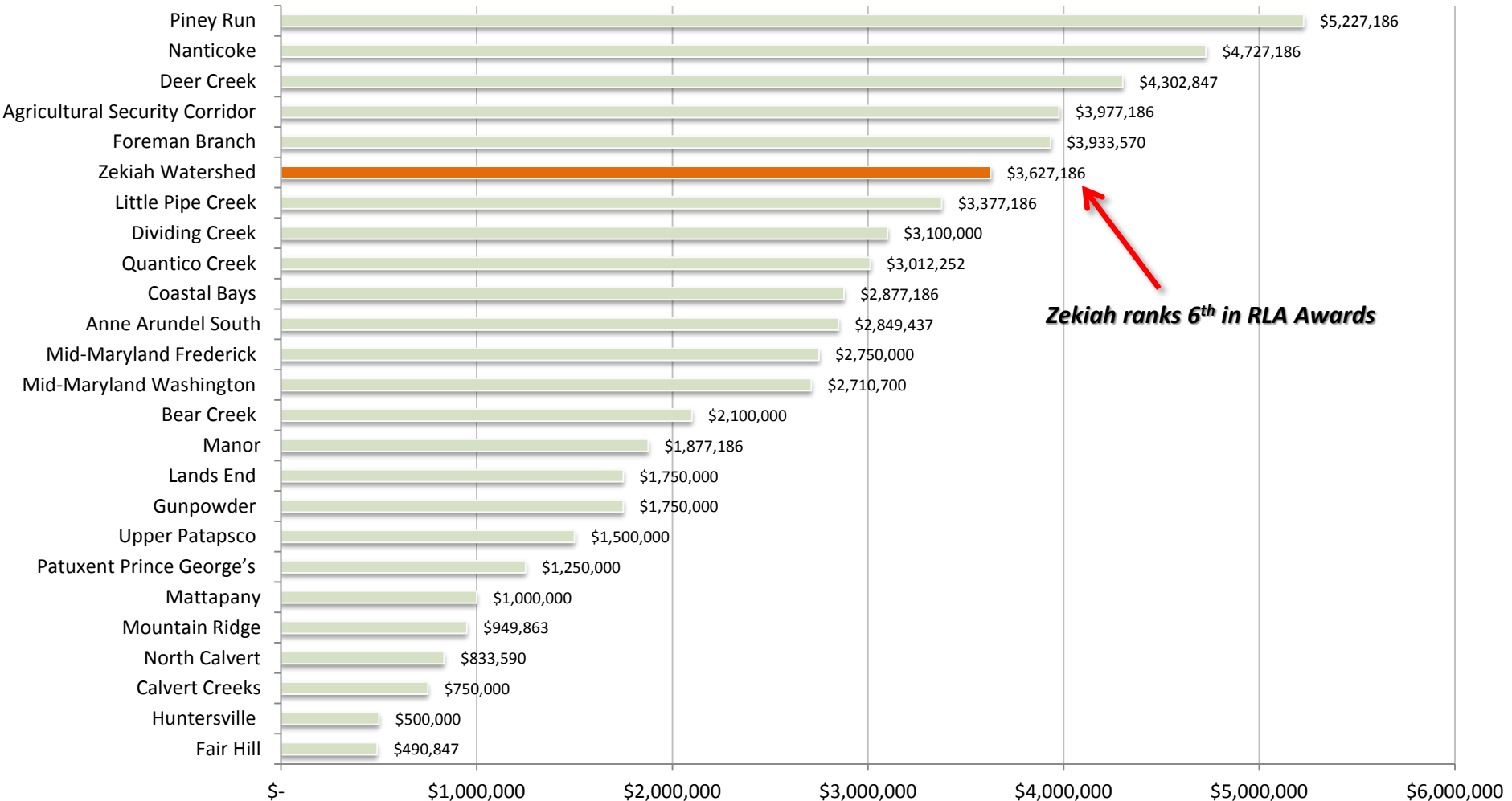
## Total MALPF Fund Investment, FY2008-FY2013



**Charles ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in MALPF Fund Investment**

# State Investments: Dept. of Natural Resources Rural Legacy Program Investments

## Rural Legacy Program Funding Awards, FY2008 to FY2013



# State Targeting: Dept. of Natural Resources GreenPrint

- Charles County ranks third among Maryland counties for overall ecological value
- 88,000 acres of GreenPrint Targeted Ecological Areas (the best of the best) in Charles County would be designated Rural Residential under the 2012 Proposed Plan



<http://gratitude2013.blogspot.com/2013/05/cedarville-state-forest.html>



# State Investments: Dept. of the Environment WWTP Upgrades

- \$61,000,000 has been provided in grants and loans by the state to upgrade Mattawoman, Indian Head and LaPlata WWTPs
- These plants have immediate capacity to accommodate 19,000 sewer households
- Opening large areas to septic development will inhibit utilization of these upgrades



<http://www.kci.com/projects/portfolio/environmental/mattawoman-wastewater-treatment-plant/mattawoman-001-big.jpg>



<http://www.waterdesignbuild.com/water-design-build-projects/indian-head-wastewater-treatment-plant/>



# State Targeting: Tier II Watersheds and the Chesapeake Bay

- 66% of Tier II High Quality Watersheds in Charles County would be designated Rural Residential
- Rural Residential designations across the county will proliferate low-density septic development, increasing nitrogen pollution to the bay



# State Investments:

## MDOT: Southern Maryland Transit Study

- High frequency transit service requires high density and mixed use development
- Such development will compete with low-density residential under the proposed plan
- The proposed plan will hinder necessary development to support such infrastructure investments; possibly making the project less competitive for Federal funding

