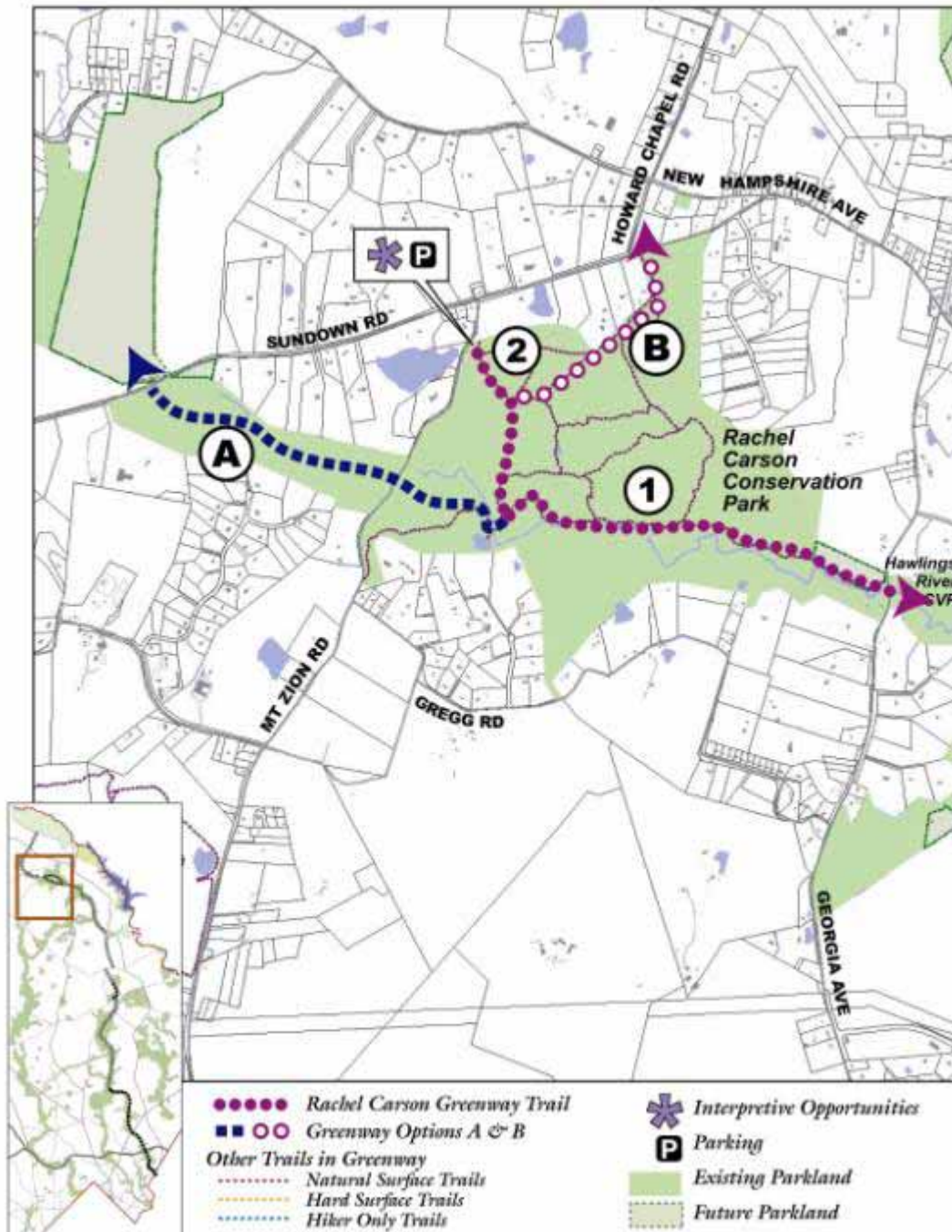


*If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years.*

## Segment 7: A Sense of Wonder

### Description

This segment of the trail is located in the 650 acres Rachel Carson Conservation Park.



The Planning Board named the park in honor of Rachel Carson in 1977, stating:

*“The Planning Board hopes... that present and future generations will be reminded of the great debt we owe Rachel Carson for her efforts to preserve the values which will be demonstrated in the park, and of our continuing responsibilities towards conservation of our natural environment.”*

The park includes the best know examples of a mature chestnut oak forest in the middle Atlantic states and contains rare orchids and other unusual plants. The Rachel Carson Conservation Park Master Plan (June 2000) includes a trail component. Almost 10 miles of trail are proposed.

### **Trail Planning Recommendations**

1. Designate one trail as the Rachel Carson Greenway trail. Options for Greenway alignments that connect to segment 8 are discussed in that segment.
2. Provide a “welcome area” for those starting and ending hikes along the Rachel Carson Greenway Trail.

### **Interpretive Opportunities:**

*Role of the Rachel Carson Greenway in natural environment.* How do greenways help plants and animals?

*Chestnut oak forest:* large tracts of the park are covered with Chestnut oak and/or mixed oak forest. Interpret what this means, what these trees look like, the part they play in the life cycle of the many animals that live in or pass through the park.

*Deer:* what happens when deer populations get too high

*Plants:* Park features larges areas of lush fern growth; explain difference from trees and flowers. There are extensive Mountain Laurel thickets; talk about the plant, where it lives, its beauty throughout the year, its bloom, how “old” a relatively small plant actual is.

*Pond Area:* Discuss natural vs. man-made pond; value and attractiveness to wildlife: mink, river otter, muskrat, beaver and great blue heron.

*Greenwood Mill:* Remains of the head race and dam at

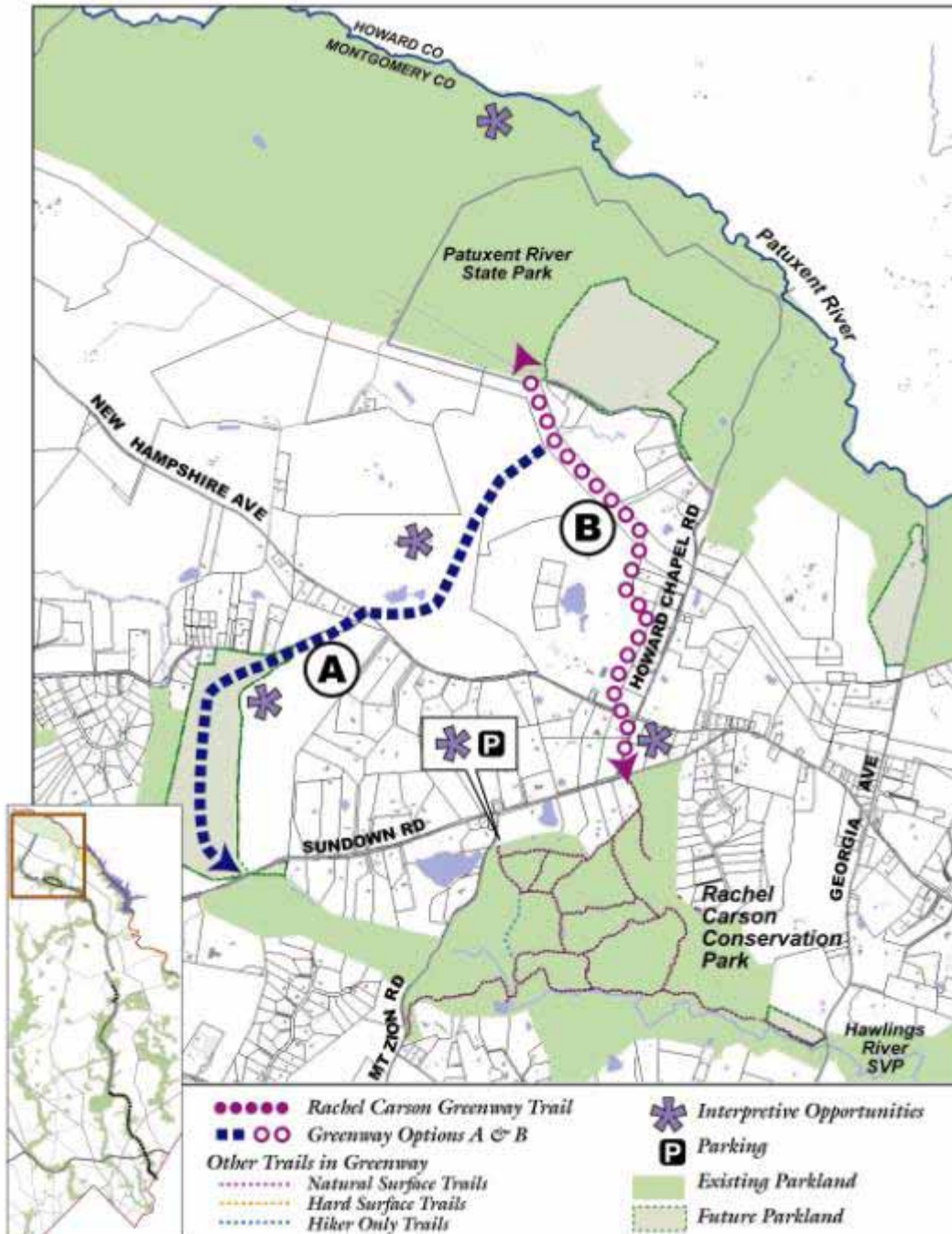
*Large White Oak:* Estimate age; how to identify white oaks, importance of acorns to wildlife and Native Americans.

*Awareness of ecological relationships is—or should be—the basis of modern conservation programs...*

## Segment 8: Watershed Protection & Agriculture Heritage

### Description

The greenway traverses an area that is part of the County's Agricultural Reserve. Farming is the preferred land use and the development density has been substantially reduced to preserve farmland. At the same time, this area lies within the Patuxent River watershed where protection



of water quality is a significant concern. This is because the Patuxent River is an important tributary of the Chesapeake Bay and because the watershed in Montgomery County drains into two drinking water reservoirs that serve Montgomery, Howard and Prince George's Counties.

The Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed establishes policy recommendations to restore and maintain water quality and proposes management practices for farmers to reduce sources of pollution from agricultural operations. This understanding of the critical relation between human activities and environmental quality is what Rachel Carson meant when she wrote: *Awareness of ecological relationships is—or should be—the basis of modern conservation programs...*

**Trail Planning Recommendations:**

See the *Making the Greenway Continuous* sections for discussion of options and related recommendations.

**Interpretive Opportunities**

*Farming Heritage.* This segment of the trail offers an opportunity to feature the importance of farming to Montgomery County, to explain how the county's agricultural preservation program has helped protect agricultural land and to highlight how modern farming practices and environmental policies have helped address Rachel Carson's concerns about over-use of pesticides.

Trails in Segment 8 could one day link to the trail system of the Agricultural History Farm. The Rock Creek Trail Corridor Plan, now in the Trails Work Program for completion in FY07, will address this connection.

## *Implementation Issues*

These issues will be addressed in more detail as the greenway trail system is implemented. Every other year the Planning Board establishes trail work program priorities. As part of this effort, the following implementation issues related to the Rachel Carson Greenway will be addressed:

### **Recommended Trail Implementation Priorities**

**Issue:** What trail recommendations and trail segments should receive the highest priority?

The Rachel Greenway is a 25-mile corridor that will take many years to implement. Trail priorities need to be established. The Trails Work Program, which is reviewed by the Planning Board every two years, will be the vehicle for establishing these priorities.

### **Managing the Greenway**

**Issue:** What is the best strategy for assuring the most effective management of the Rachel Carson Greenway?

### **Funding the Greenway**

**Issue:** How can public/private partnerships help implement the vision for the greenway?

### **Providing Safe Road Crossings**

**Issue:** How can safe crossings of roadways be provided?

The Rachel Carson Greenway crosses numerous roads. Providing safe crossings of these roads is a major issue. As stated in the Countywide Park Trails Plan, “assessing trail-road intersections during the trail planning and development process is needed to assure safe road crossings.” As more detailed planning occurs for each of the trail segments, the issue of how to provide safe road crossing will be discussed.