

WATERSHED DESCRIPTION

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General Location and Description:

The Big Scrubgrass Creek Watershed drains an area of 25,610 acres (40.02 square miles) in southwest Venango and northern Butler Counties, Pennsylvania. Nearly 98 percent of the watershed lies in Venango County with only 560 acres in Butler County. Beginning in farmland near the Village of Wesley in Irwin Township, Venango County, the main stream flows in a gentle curve, first southeast and then turning northeast, traveling approximately 11.9 miles to its confluence with the Allegheny River just across from the Village of Kennerdell. The main stream drops approximately 630 feet from the headwaters to the mouth or approximately 53 feet per mile. The highest point in the watershed is found in the headwaters of Bullion Run, the largest tributary which drains 7.33 square miles along the northern edge of the watershed. This point is 1600 feet MSL elevation. The lowest point in the watershed is 920 feet MSL elevation and is found at the confluence with the Allegheny River. Other major tributary streams are South Branch which drains 6.29 square miles, Gilmore Run which drains 3.26 square miles, Surrena Run, the largest stream in the East Tributaries sub-watershed which drains 2.81 square miles, and Trout Run which drains 1.36 square miles. Figure 2 is a stream map of Venango County showing the Big Scrubgrass Creek Watershed. Figure 3 shows the detail of topography and the stream channel system with the key for published USGS 7½ minute Quadrangle Map coverage.

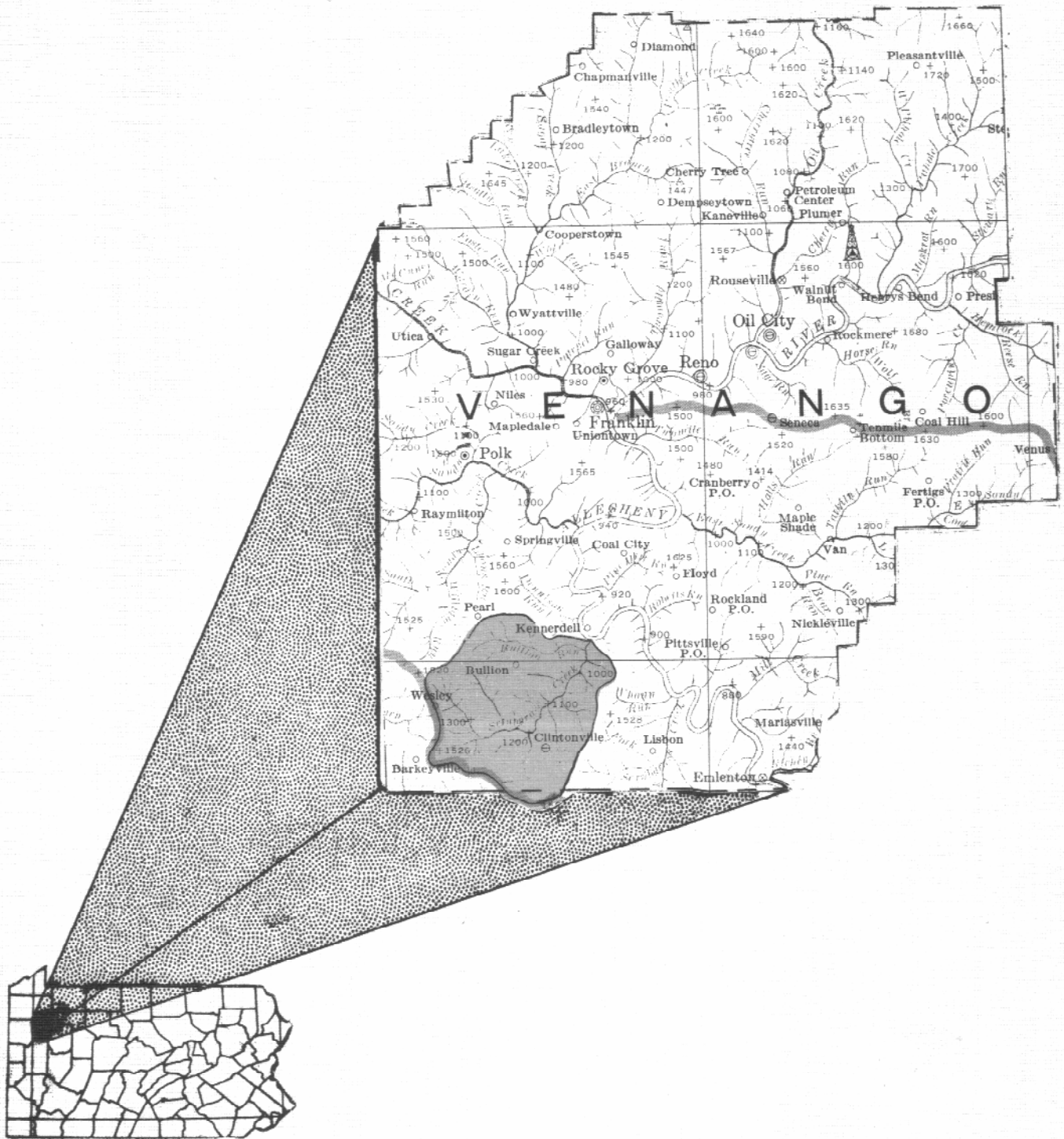


FIGURE 2 Stream Map of Venango County showing the location of the Big Scrubgrass Creek Watershed.

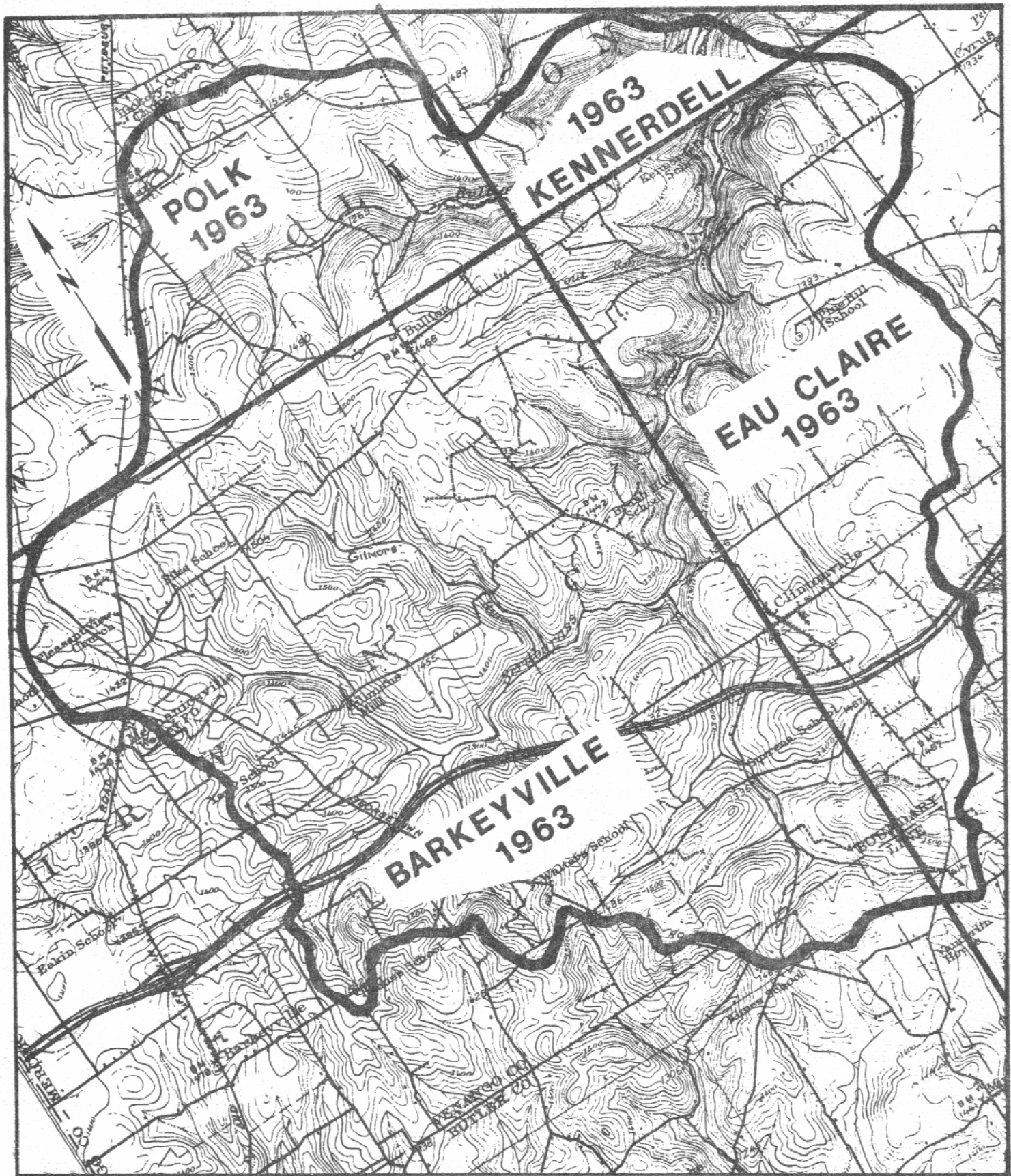


Figure 3. BIG SCRUBGRASS CREEK WATERSHED showing the coverage on published 7½ minute Quadrangle Maps from the U. S. Geological Survey.

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From the center of the watershed, it is about 12 air miles to Franklin, 25 miles to Butler and Clarion, 50 miles to Pittsburgh and Youngstown, and 70 miles to Erie. There are interchanges on Interstate 80 at Barkeyville, Clintonville (See Figure 4) and Emlenton that furnish an excellent access to the area. State Routes 8, 208 and 308 complete the highway network within the watershed. (See inside front cover) In addition, Interstate 79 to Pittsburgh and Erie passes within 11 miles of the watershed.

Population and Economic Background

The watershed includes parts of Victory, Scrubgrass, Clinton, and Irwin Townships in Venango County and small portions of Marion and Venango Townships in Butler County. The area is entirely rural with a total population in 1970 of approximately 1500. The largest population concentration is in the Borough of Clintonville. Most of the people work outside the watershed area in industries in Franklin, Grove City and Butler, however, there is some employment within the watershed in agriculture, oil, coal and service industries.

Big Scrubgrass Creek Watershed, along with the whole of Venango County is in a period of economic decline. The population of Venango County decreased about 4.5% between 1960 and 1970 from 65,295 to 62,353. Clintonville and Clinton and Irwin Townships which contain most of the watershed, experienced less than a one-percent drop during the same period of time, from 2340 in 1960 to 2328 in 1970. The Borough of Clintonville actually had an increase in population during the period from 311 to 321.