

ALAMANCE COUNTY SCENARIO PLANNING

Introduction to Scenario Planning

As part of the development of the Alamance County Land Development Plan three alternative land use scenarios have been developed to frame potential policy changes. The Steering Committee and the public will provide input to determine what components of these scenarios make it into a preferred scenario for the County that will inform policy recommendations. For more information on the project and process visit www.alamancecountyplan.com.

- *Performance Measure Table Key**
- + No Change from Current Policies
 - ++ Improvement from Current Policies
 - +++ Significant Improvement

Draft Performance Measures Table*

Measure	BAU	MG	ARC
Amount of Residential	+++	++	+
Predominant Residential Type	Large scale conventional subdivisions in rural area.	Focused growth near activity areas. Lower density areas in rural areas away from towns.	Very large lots or farmhouse clusters (small, very low-density subdivisions) only.
Defined Edges	+	++	++
Agricultural Protection	+	++	+++
Environmental Protection	+	+++	++
Non-Residential	Mostly strip commercial along major roads	Commercial in Rural Centers and reservation of Employment Areas	Mix of uses in Mill Villages and some Employment Areas

BAU

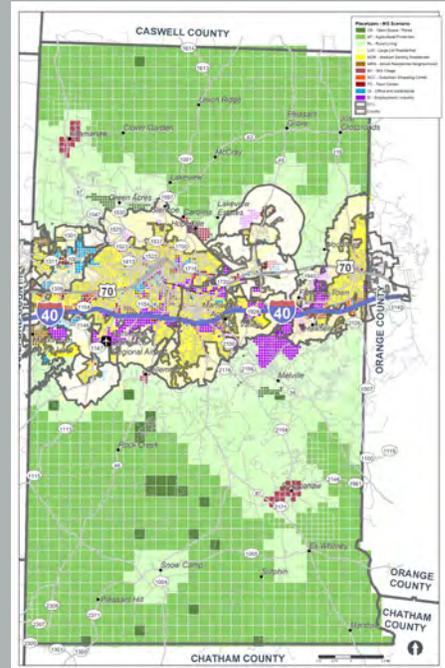
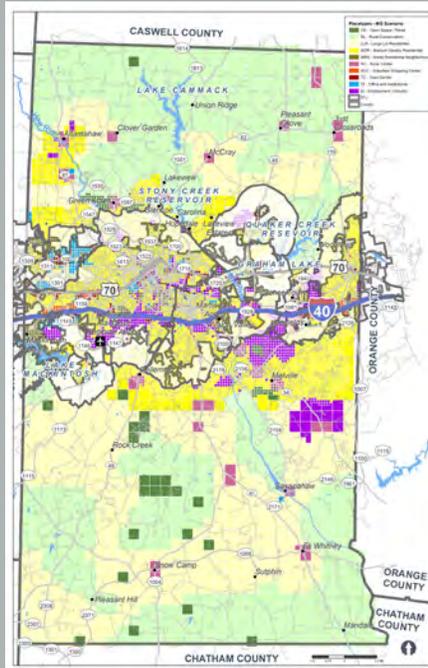
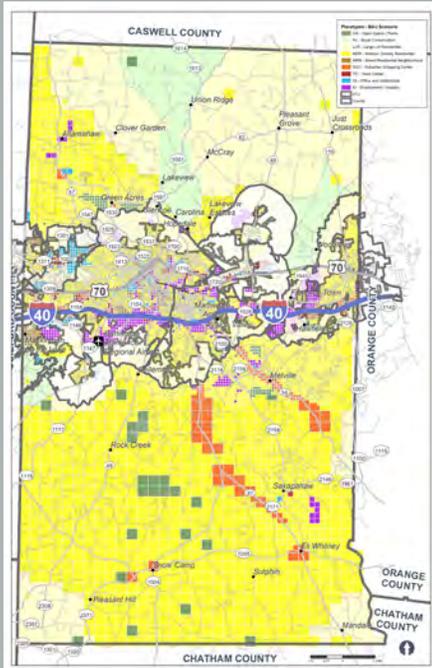
BUSINESS AS USUAL SCENARIO

MG

MANAGED GROWTH SCENARIO

ARC

AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL CHARACTER SCENARIO



The maps above show different colors for "placetypes" that could be encouraged through land use policies in the county. The placetypes and assumptions for the scenarios are described in subsequent pages.

SCENARIO 1: BUSINESS AS USUAL (BAU)

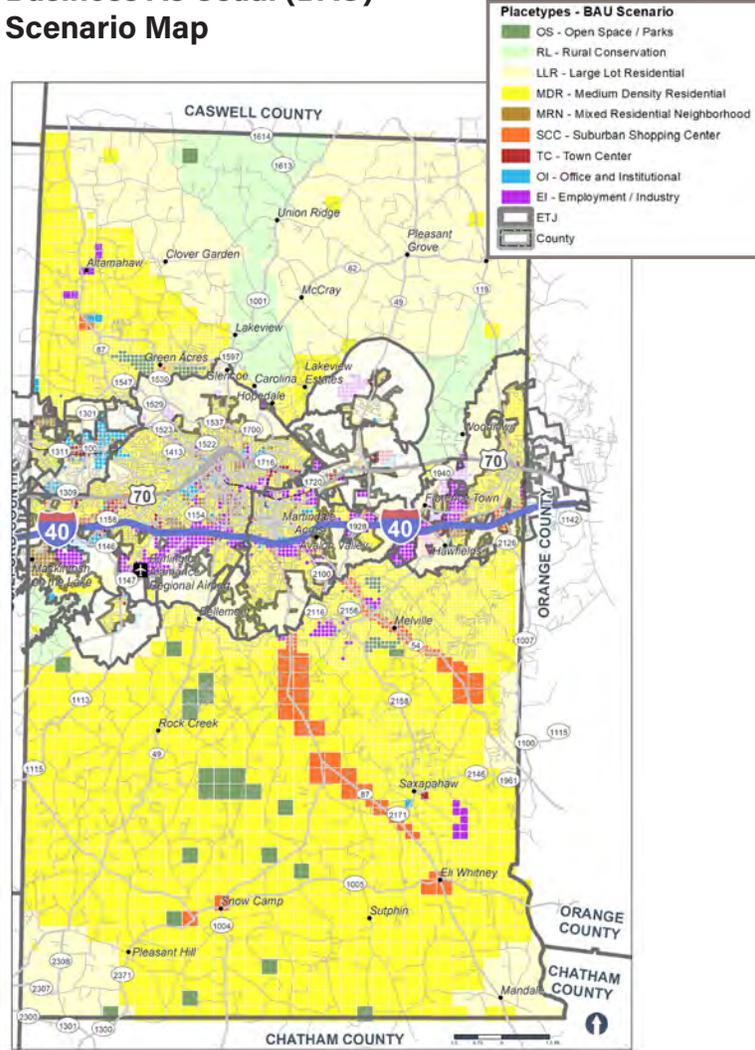
Assumptions

This scenario assumes that current land use policies and practices remain constant through 2040, the plan horizon year. There would be no County-wide zoning. New development of varying types and intensity is generally permitted if it meets basic standards.

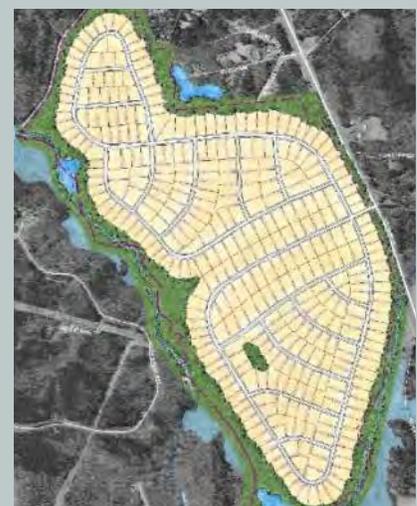
Outcomes

- ▶ Large-scale subdivisions with ~1/2 acre lots and smaller would proliferate in rural areas and may impact agriculture.
- ▶ Land values would largely dictate growth patterns throughout the County.
- ▶ Growth in the County jurisdiction would be widespread as property values are low, and proximity to amenities, goods, and services in the towns is high.
- ▶ Existing watershed protections are limited. Without expanding the scope of the regulations, the watersheds could be compromised over time.
- ▶ The Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) program would continue, but competition for land could increase between homes and farmland.
- ▶ Strip commercial development likely along corridors, including NC 87 and NC 54
- ▶ High-impact development would be permitted throughout the County jurisdiction provided that the sites comply with the Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance (HIDO).

Business As Usual (BAU) Scenario Map



Precedent Imagery



SCENARIO 2: MANAGED GROWTH (MG)

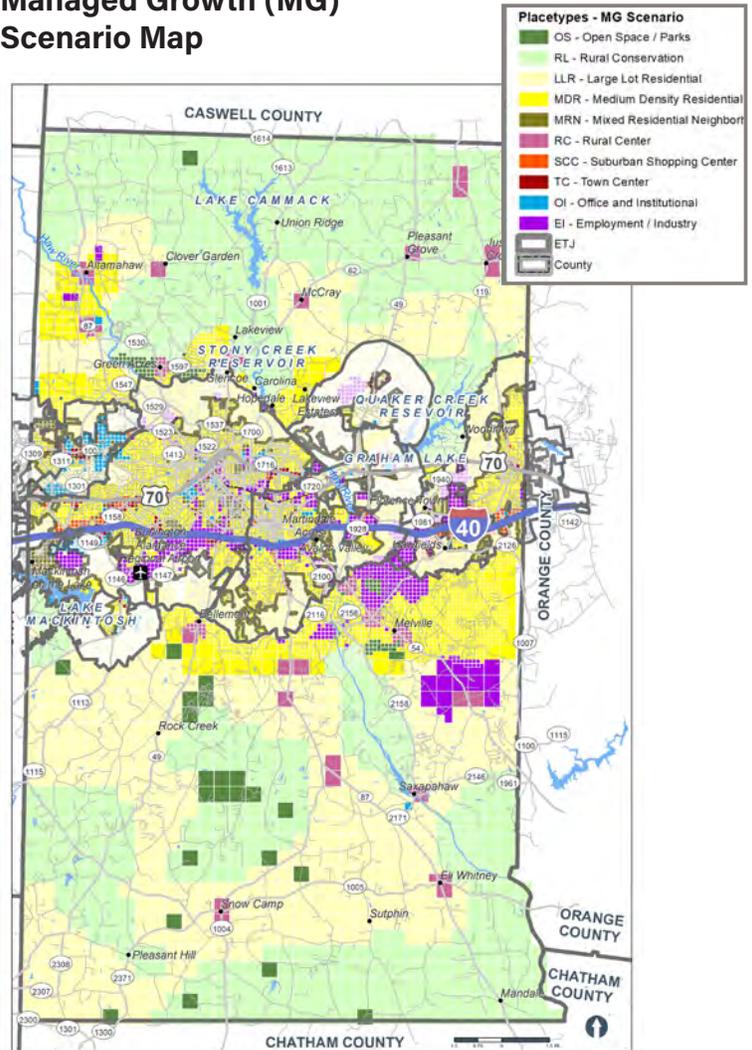
Assumptions

This scenario assumes that Alamance County implements a defined growth strategy by refining the recommendations in the 2007 Land Development Plan. The refinements would allow non-residential and new employment areas in key areas in the County. This plan also reduces development density in prime agricultural areas and areas with natural resources.

Outcomes

- ▶ Reinforced cities and towns and existing crossroads communities.
- ▶ Commercial and industrial is encouraged in key areas of the County, limited in others.
- ▶ Open space would be encouraged. Conservation subdivisions, developments with more open space would be encouraged in the County.
- ▶ This plan would protect the edges more than the BUA, incentivizing growth to locate in the ETJ and reducing development pressure in agricultural lands but not as much as the ARC Scenario.
- ▶ Density would be reduced in environmentally-sensitive areas like the Haw River corridor and the Cane Creek Mountains.
- ▶ Enhanced regulations to limit high-intensity land uses (i.e. heavy industrial, mining, etc.) through a Special Use Permit process.

Managed Growth (MG) Scenario Map



Precedent Imagery



SCENARIO 3: AGRICULTURAL & RURAL CHARACTER (ARC)

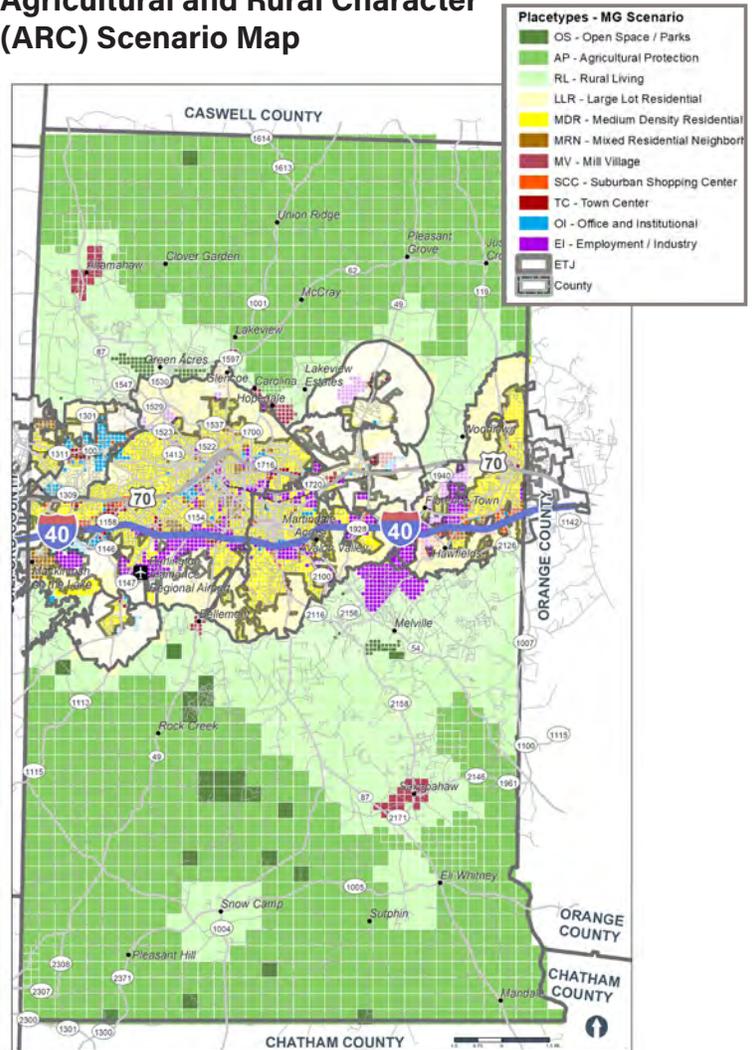
Assumptions

This scenario prioritizes the need for protection of agricultural lands and rural character in the county. There would be a reduction in allowable density in the County and increased design standards. Only small-scale, very low-density residential would be allowed in prime farmland areas. Non-residential development would be allowed if it meets performance-based criteria including design, scale, and minimum lot size requirements. Watershed regulations and the HIDO would remain the same.

Outcomes

- ▶ Residential density restrictions in the County jurisdiction would preserve the distinction between the urban and rural areas.
- ▶ Protecting prime agricultural areas would achieve a major goal of the Alamance County Strategic Plan.
- ▶ Performance-based design criteria for residential and non-residential development would ensure compatibility of these uses with the rural character of the County.
- ▶ Mix of uses in Mill Villages (i.e. Saxapahaw)
- ▶ High-impact development would be restricted in Agricultural Protection Areas in the County.

Agricultural and Rural Character (ARC) Scenario Map



Precedent Imagery



ALAMANCE COUNTY SCENARIO PLANNING

Placetype Descriptions

The Placetypes in each of the scenarios are described below. Many of these placetypes are present in Alamance County or towns in the county. Others would require the establishment of new policies and/or development standards.

Open Space / Parks
Land restricted from development including parks and conservation easements.

Agricultural Protection
Prime agricultural lands comprised mostly of working farms and timberlands. Some agriculture supporting commercial uses. Only very low-density, small-scale residential development allowed. Density typically less than 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.

Rural Conservation
Very low-density residential with larger lots and environmental features preserved. Density typically less than 1 dwelling per 2 acres. Some working agriculture and timber operations. Some agriculture supporting commercial uses.

Large-Lot Residential
Low-density residential in the form of larger lots or conservation subdivisions, with larger amounts of open space and some smaller lots. Gross density around 1 dwelling unit per acre.

Medium Density Residential
Conventional single family neighborhoods with medium sized lots between 1/4 and 1/2 an acre.

Mixed Residential Neighborhood
Mix of small-lots and some attached residential including townhomes and apartments.

Suburban Shopping Center
Commercial uses such as retail, restaurants, offices and services. In the Business As Usual Scenario there is expansion of this use as strip commercial development along major corridors due to the lack of zoning or other restrictions on land use.

Office & Institutional
Offices, health care, and institutional uses such as schools, government buildings and large churches.

Town Center
Downtowns with a mix of uses including office, commercial and residential uses. These placetypes are only located in towns and not in the county jurisdiction.

Employment / Industry
These areas contain employment-generating industrial uses such as warehouses, light manufacturing, and multi-tenant flex spaces and should be located in areas with highway access.

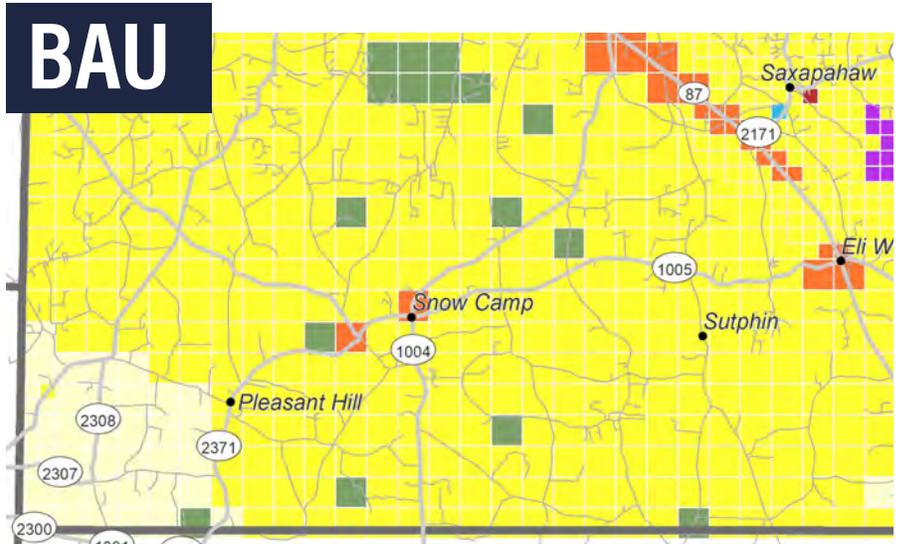
Rural Center
These areas are comprised of small-scale commercial, office and flex uses and are typically located at historic crossroads communities where there is a history of commercial and/or civic uses.

Mill Village
A mix of residential and non-residential uses concentrated in historic mill villages. New development should mimic the scale and design of historic buildings.

SNOW CAMP FOCUS AREA: SCENARIO PLANNING

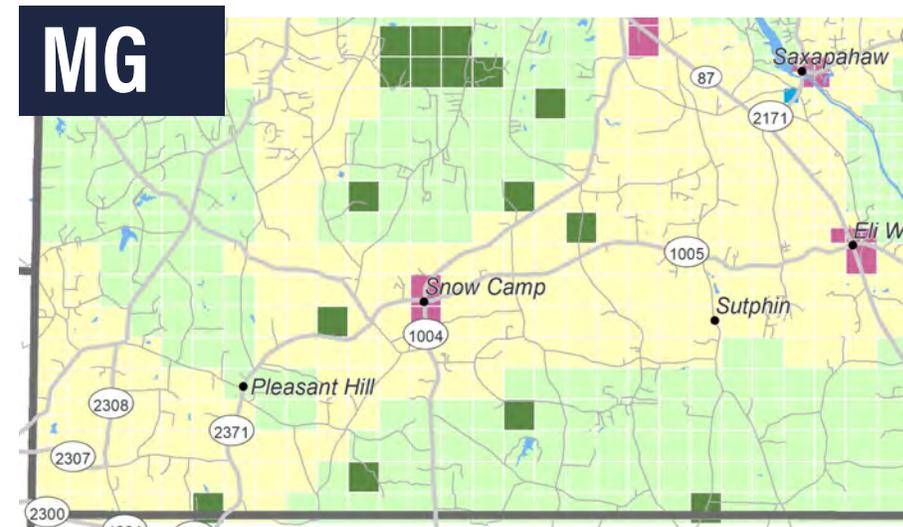
Business As Usual

This scenario shows no change in policies in Snow Camp. Residential can occur in large scale subdivisions with 1/2 acre lots or smaller. Density is only limited by availability of utilities and quality of soils. Some commercial is likely along major roads. High impact land uses like industrial or mining could occur anywhere as long as properties meet basic standards.



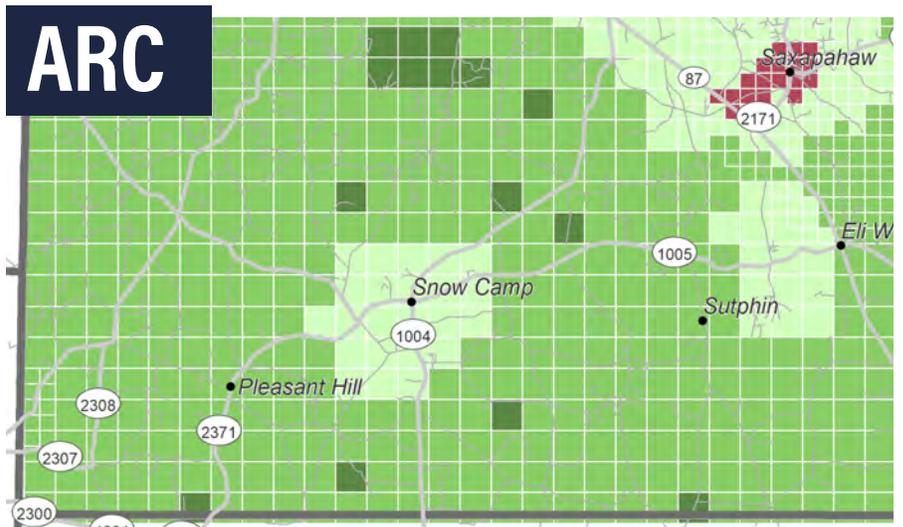
Managed Growth

This scenario shows a minor reduction in allowable residential densities around Snow Camp. Average residential density is one house per 1-2 acres in new development or clustered to protect views or natural resources. Some small-scale commercial development occurs at key intersections. High impact uses are limited in sensitive areas (green on map) and require a Special Use Permit in large lot residential areas (light yellow on map).



Agriculture and Rural Character

This scenario shows a significant reduction in allowable residential intensity in Snow Camp and other rural parts of the county. Average densities of new development more closely match existing properties. Most residential uses range between one house per 2-5 acres*. Small-scale commercial development occurs with some design criteria and size limitations. High impact uses are restricted in key agricultural areas.



Character Areas

- OS - Open Space / Parks
- AP - Agricultural Protection
- RL - Rural Living
- LLR - Large Lot Residential
- MDR - Medium Density Residential
- MRN - Mixed Residential Neighbor
- MV - Mill Village
- RC - Rural Center
- SCC - Suburban Shopping Center
- TC - Town Center
- OI - Office and Institutional
- EI - Employment / Industry

*For reference in the Snow Camp Study Area average parcel size is 40 acres and average residential parcel size is 5 acres.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following definitions are provided for your convenience. For additional resources, please visit www.alamancecountyplan.com.

Density, gross – Gross density is the total number of dwelling units divided by the total project area.

Density, net – Net density is the total number of dwelling units divided by the remainder of the project area after certain exclusions are deducted. Excluded areas may include areas reserved for utilities, open space, sidewalks, and street rights-of-way.

High-impact development – Industrial land uses which may produce objectionable secondary effects including aesthetic impact, traffic, noise, odors, vibrations, fumes, light, smoke, and/or other impacts upon adjacent lands.

Performance-based design criteria – Performance-based design criteria are standards which allow multiple land uses provided they achieve certain outcomes and minimize negative impacts. Specified criteria might include lot sizing, building scale, and structure design.

Scenario planning – Scenario planning is a practice through which planners use current realities to model and anticipate future impacts on a community.

Subdivision, conservation – Conservation subdivisions are developments that aim to preserve large areas of open space. These developments conserve natural resources, reduce infrastructure needs, and protect rural character.



Subdivision, conventional – Conventional subdivisions are developments typified by smaller lots and lack of open space. They inhibit connectivity and have intense environmental impacts.



Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) – Voluntary Agricultural Districts encourage the preservation and protection of farmland. Farmers may join a Voluntary Agricultural District to receive special benefits and recognition from the State of North Carolina.

Watershed – A watershed is a region or area of land where streams and rivers drain to a common water body.