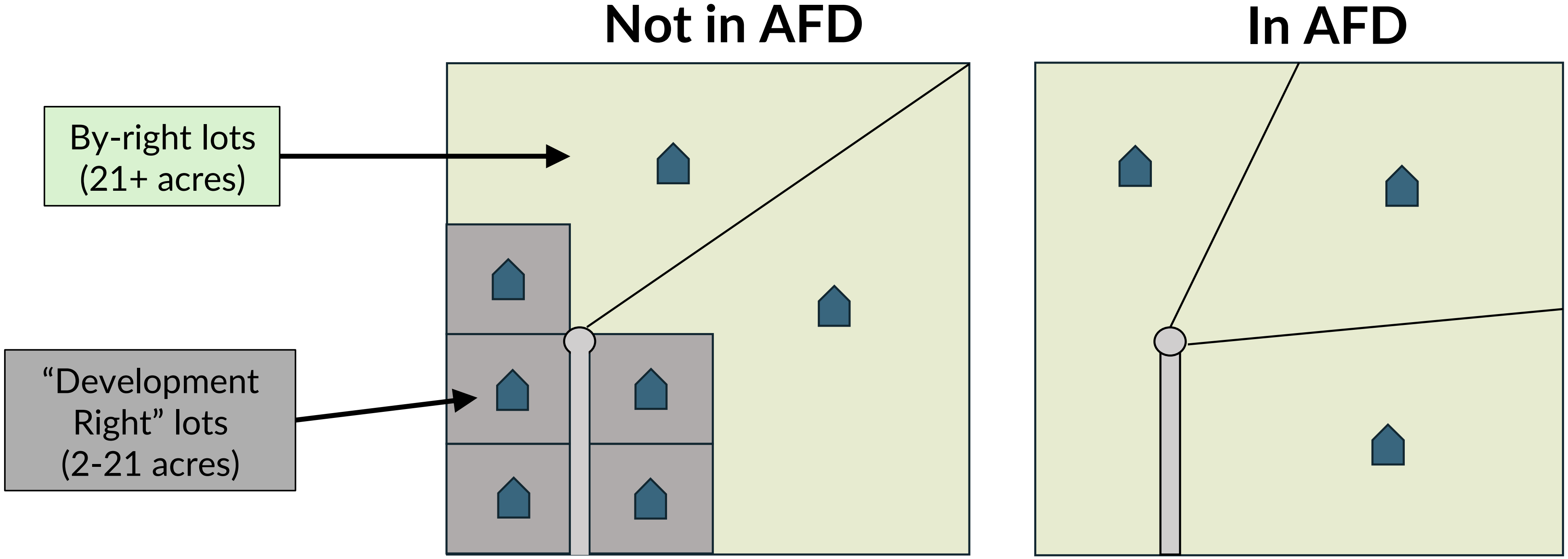
Agricultural and Forestal Districts: Additions and Withdrawal

Board of Supervisors
June 17, 2026

What is the AFD Program?

- Voluntary land conservation
- Benefits to landowners:
  - Sets higher review standards for land-use decisions
  - Some parcels can qualify for land-use tax rates
- Benefits to the community:
  - Prohibition on small-lot subdivisions

Rural Area Development



Maximum development

AFD-2026-00001 Lanark Withdrawal

Board of Supervisors
June 17, 2026

Opportunities for Withdrawal

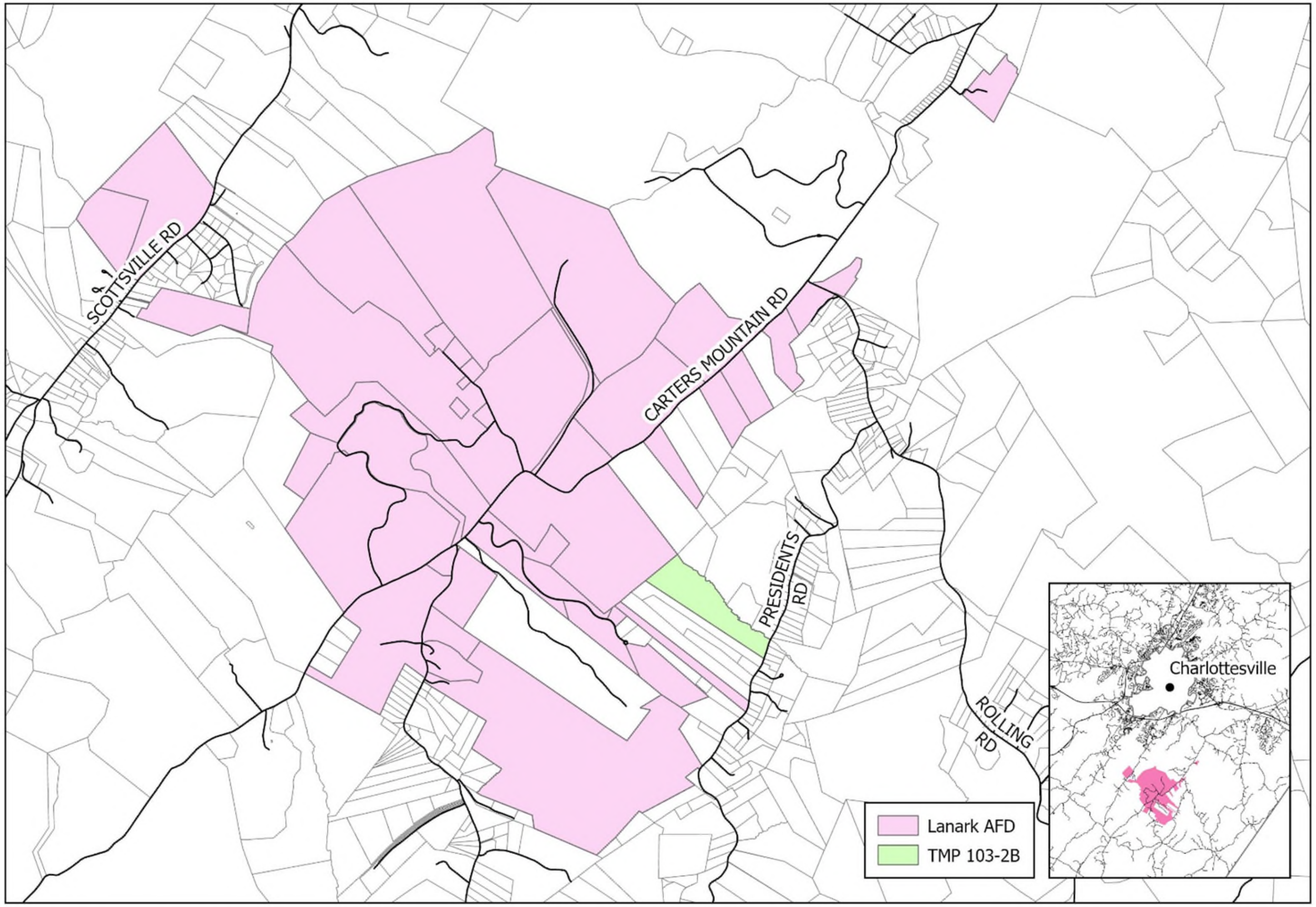
Land may be withdrawn from an AFD as follows:

A. Withdrawal by right **before district is created**.

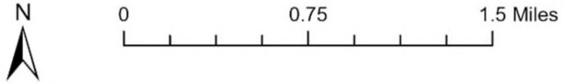
B. Withdrawal by right **during district review**.

C. Withdrawal by right **by certain heirs to the deceased owner**.

D. Withdrawal in the **discretion of the Board of Supervisors**.



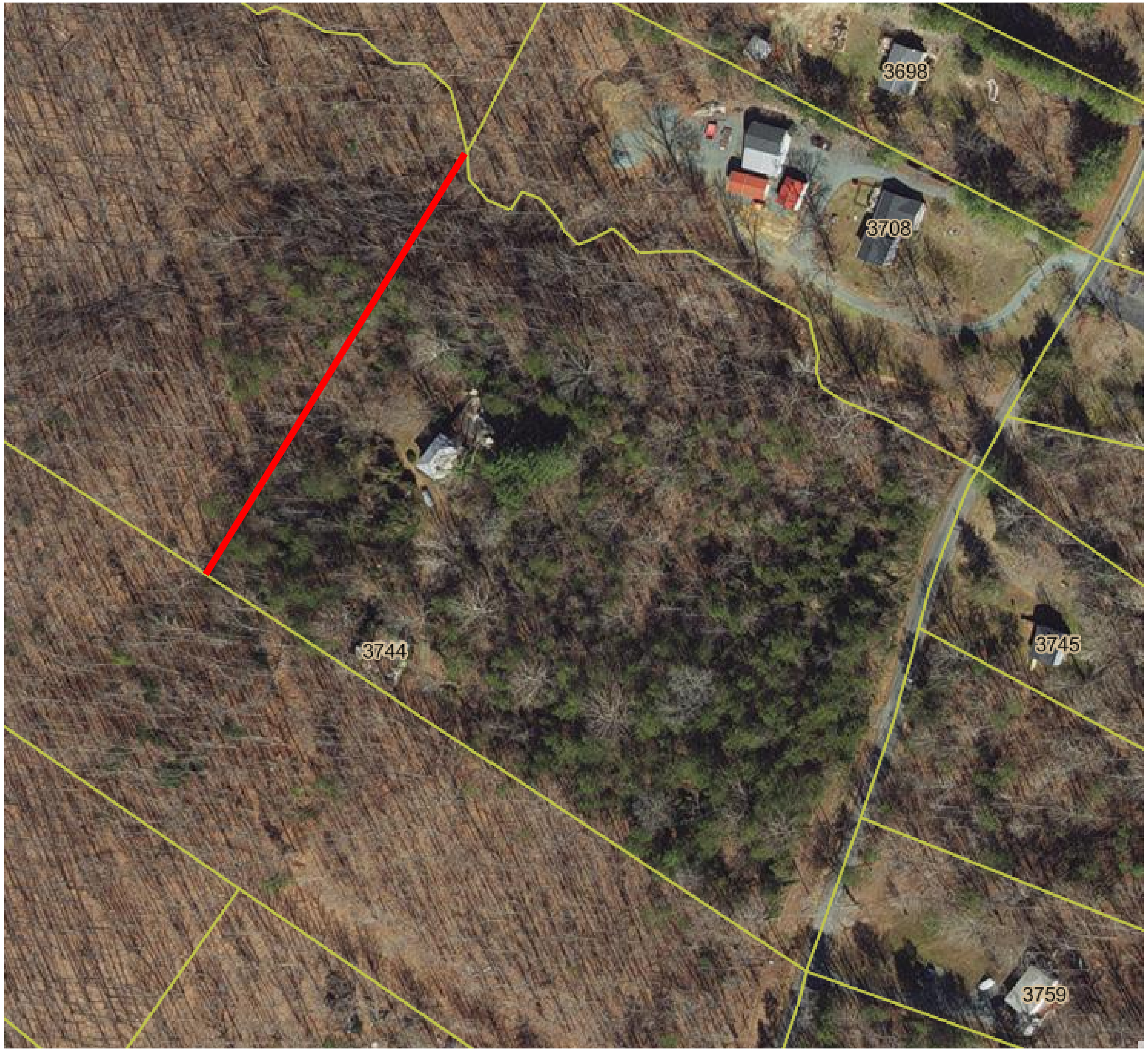
AFD202600001 Lanark Withdrawal



AFD202600001 Lanark Withdrawal

N

0 500 1,000 Feet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Criteria for Withdrawal

2. *Criteria for review*. A request to withdraw land from a district may be approved only for good and reasonable cause, based on the following criteria:

   a. No significant adverse impact on agriculture or forestry in the District.

   b. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

   c. Consistent with the public interest.

   d. Changed circumstances.

Recommendation

Factors Favorable

1. No new land use is being proposed.
2. There is no identified adverse impact to agriculture or forestry in the District.

Factors Unfavorable

1. The withdrawal is in the proprietary interest of the landowner.
2. There is no legal mechanism preventing a different allocation of development rights after withdrawal, which could result in additional development inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

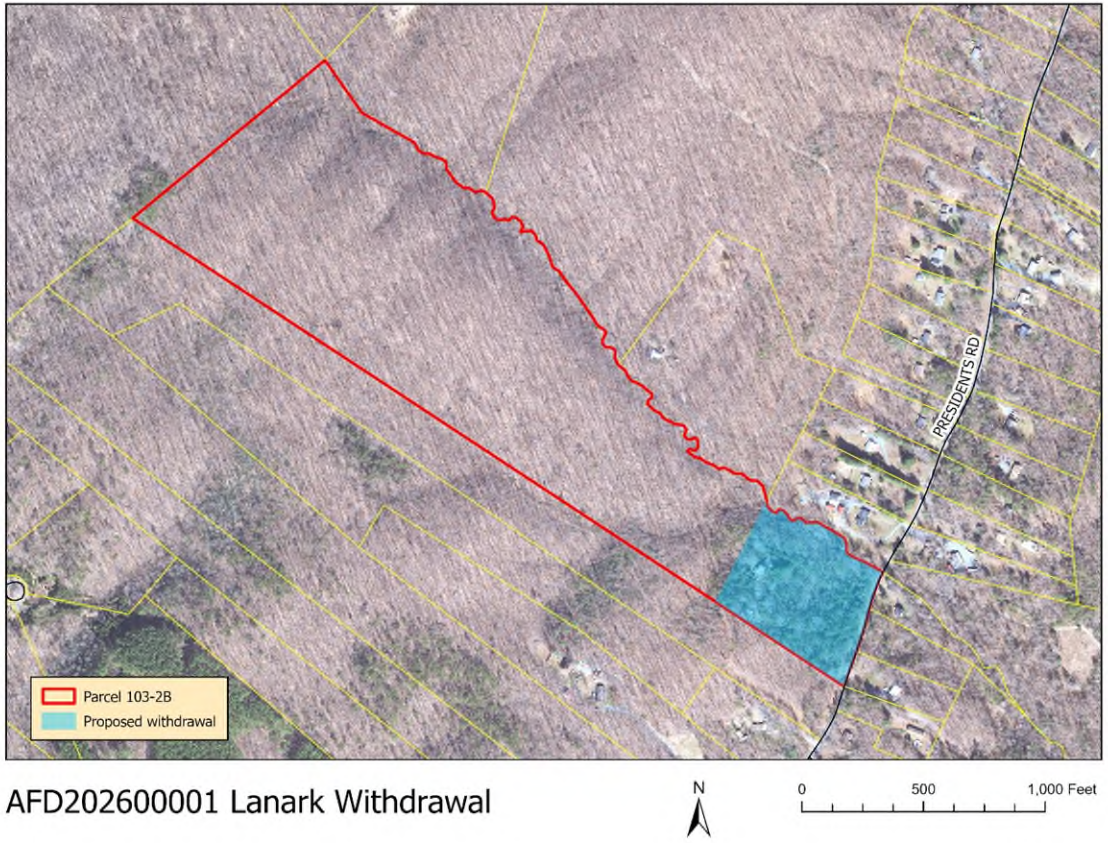
The AFD Committee (6:1) and the Planning Commission (6:0) recommend that the Board approve the proposed withdrawal.

Questions

Public Hearing

Recommended Motion

I move to adopt the ordinance attached to the staff report as Attachment A.



AFD202600001 Lanark Withdrawal

AFD-2026-00002 & AFD-2026-00003 Additions

Board of Supervisors
June 17, 2026

Green Mountain

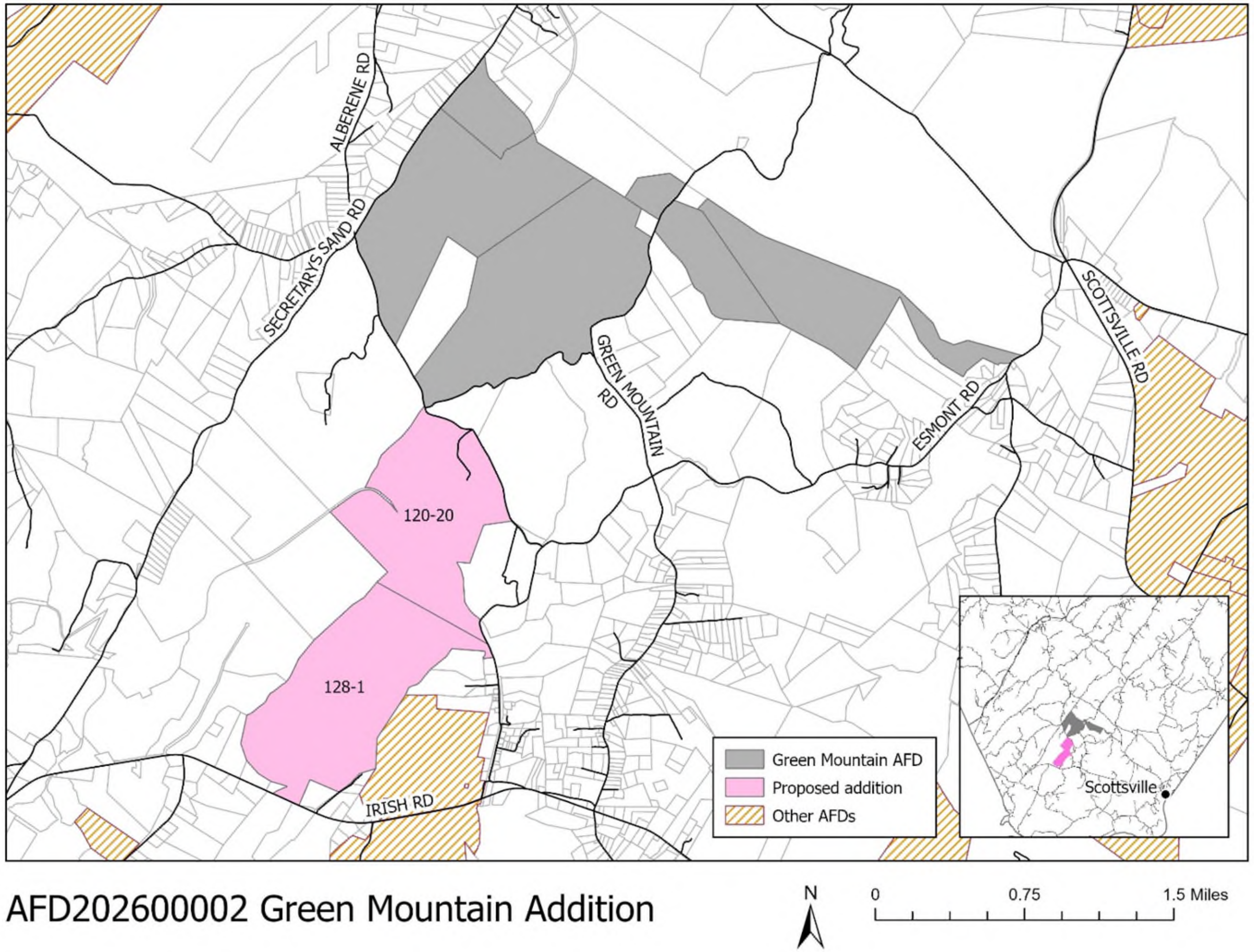
6 parcels = 1,248 acres

Addition
2 parcels = 753 acres

Soils
Important for Agriculture = 591 acres

Development Potential
Both parcels are under conservation easement.

Recommendation
The AFD Committee (7:0) and the Planning Commission (6:0) recommend approval of the proposed addition.



AFD202600002 Green Mountain Addition

Chalk Mountain

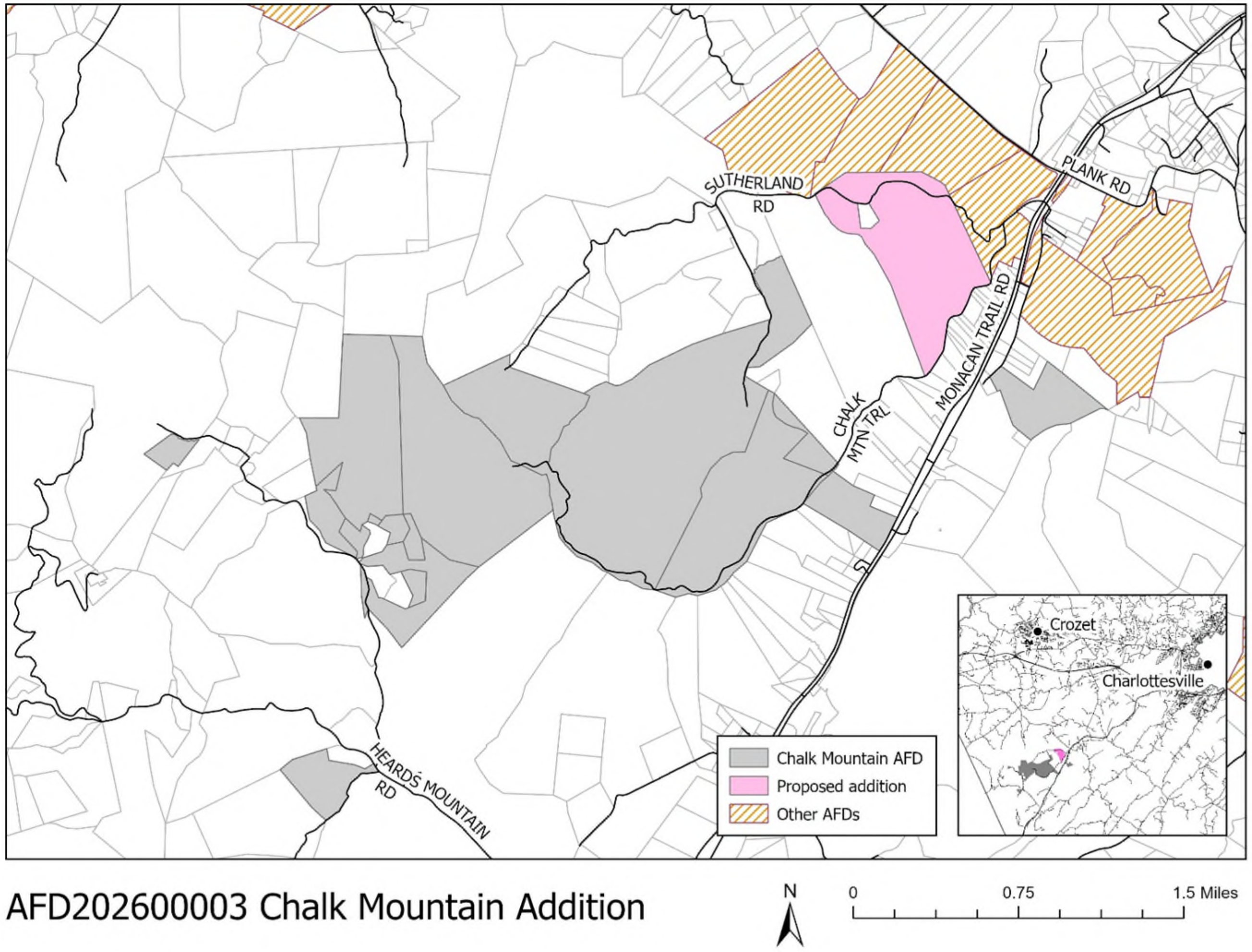
16 parcels = 1,395 acres

Addition
1 parcel = 234 acres

Soils
Important for Agriculture = 183 acres

Development Potential
1 unused development right.

Recommendation
The AFD Committee (7:0) and the Planning Commission (6:0) recommend approval of the proposed addition.



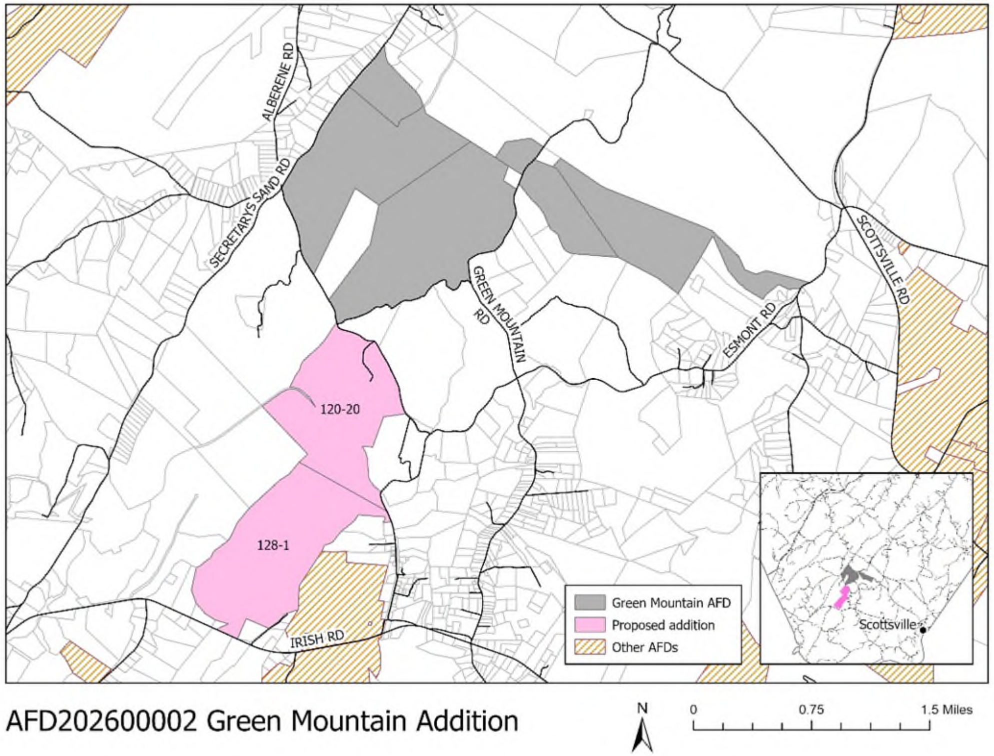
AFD202600003 Chalk Mountain Addition

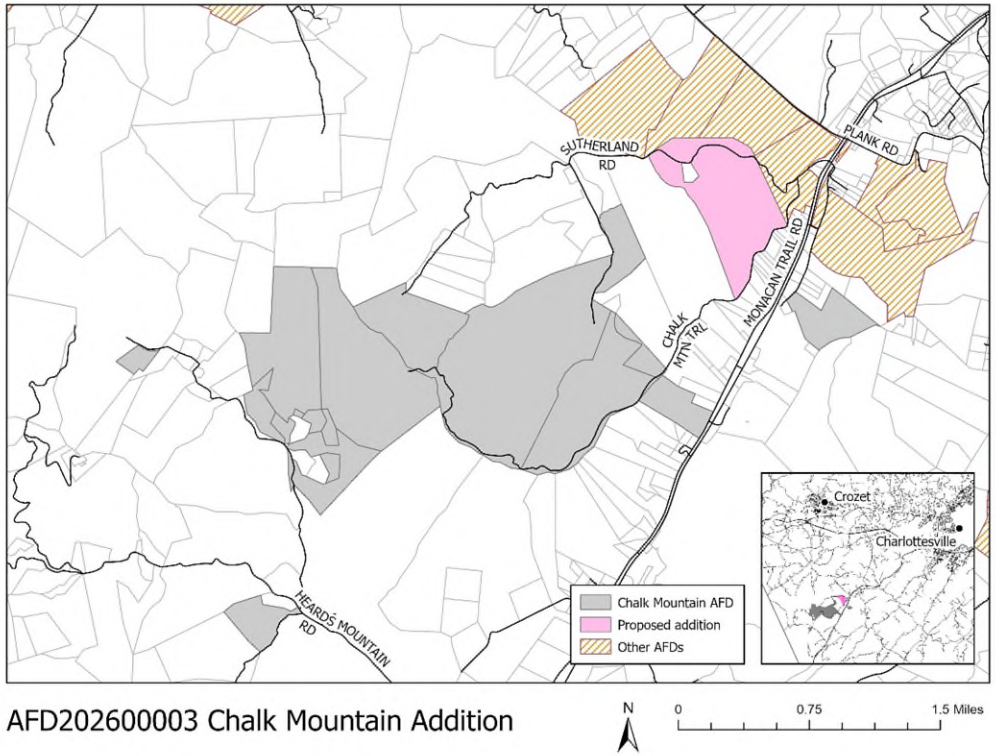
Questions

Public Hearing

AFD-2026-00002 & AFD-2026-00003

I move to adopt the ordinance attached to the staff report as Attachment A.





COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE

FOUNDED AD 1744

VIRGINIA

Criteria for Withdrawal

a. No significant adverse impact.

No new land use is being proposed.

b. Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The proposal, as written, is consistent with the Comp Plan.

c. Consistent with the public interest.

The proposal is not in the public interest.

d. Changed circumstances.

This criterion is not applicable.

Criteria for Withdrawal

a. *No significant adverse impact*. The proposed new land use will not have a significant adverse impact on agricultural or forestal operations on land within the district; in considering this criterion, the land proposed to be withdrawn may be reevaluated through the Virginia Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System;

b. *Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan*. The proposed new land use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan;

c. *Consistent with the public interest*. The proposed land use is consistent with the public interest of the County in that it promotes the health, safety, or general welfare of the County, rather than only the proprietary interest of the landowner; and

d. *Changed circumstances*. The proposed land use was not anticipated by the landowner at the time the land was placed in the district, and there has been a change in circumstances since that time.

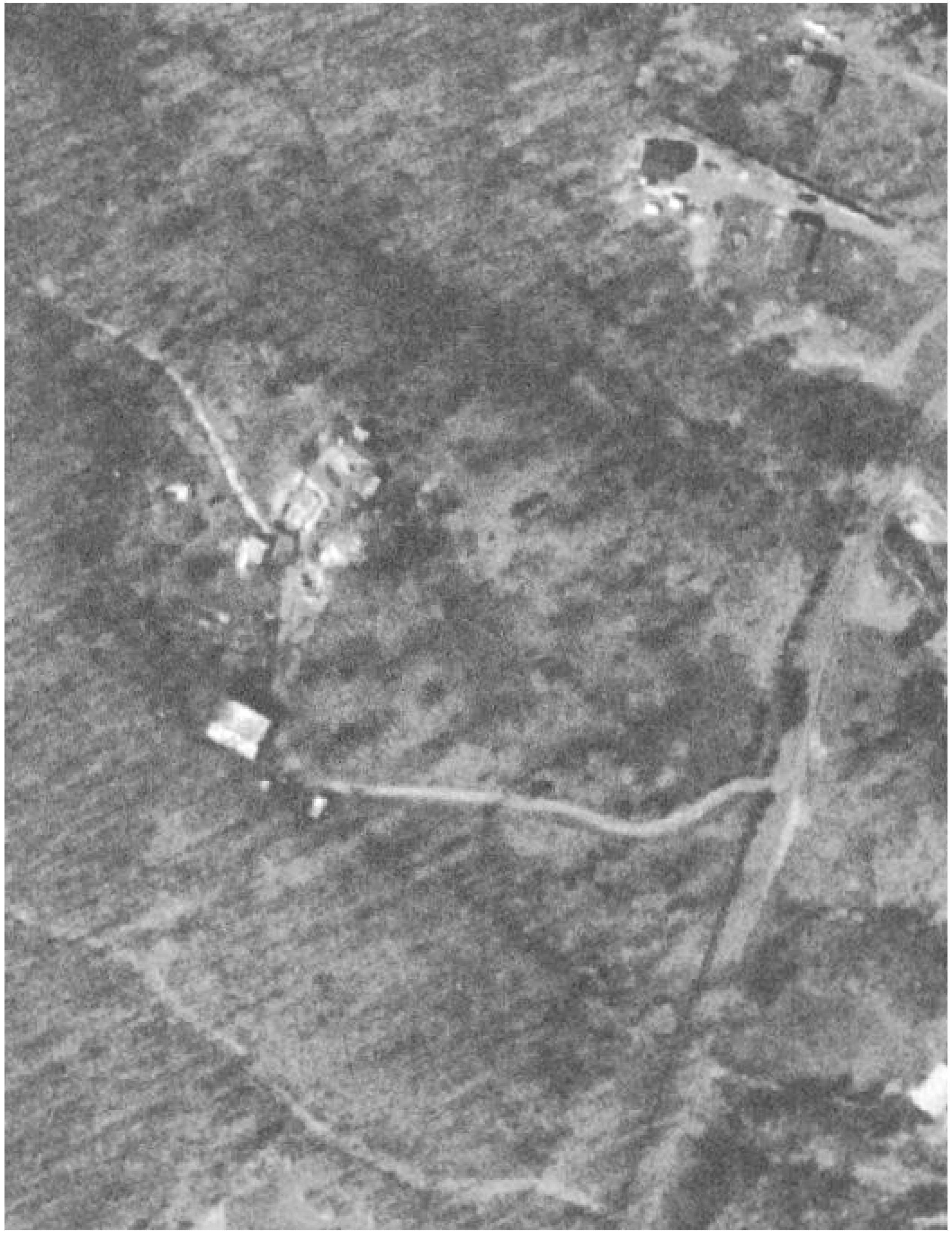
Purposes

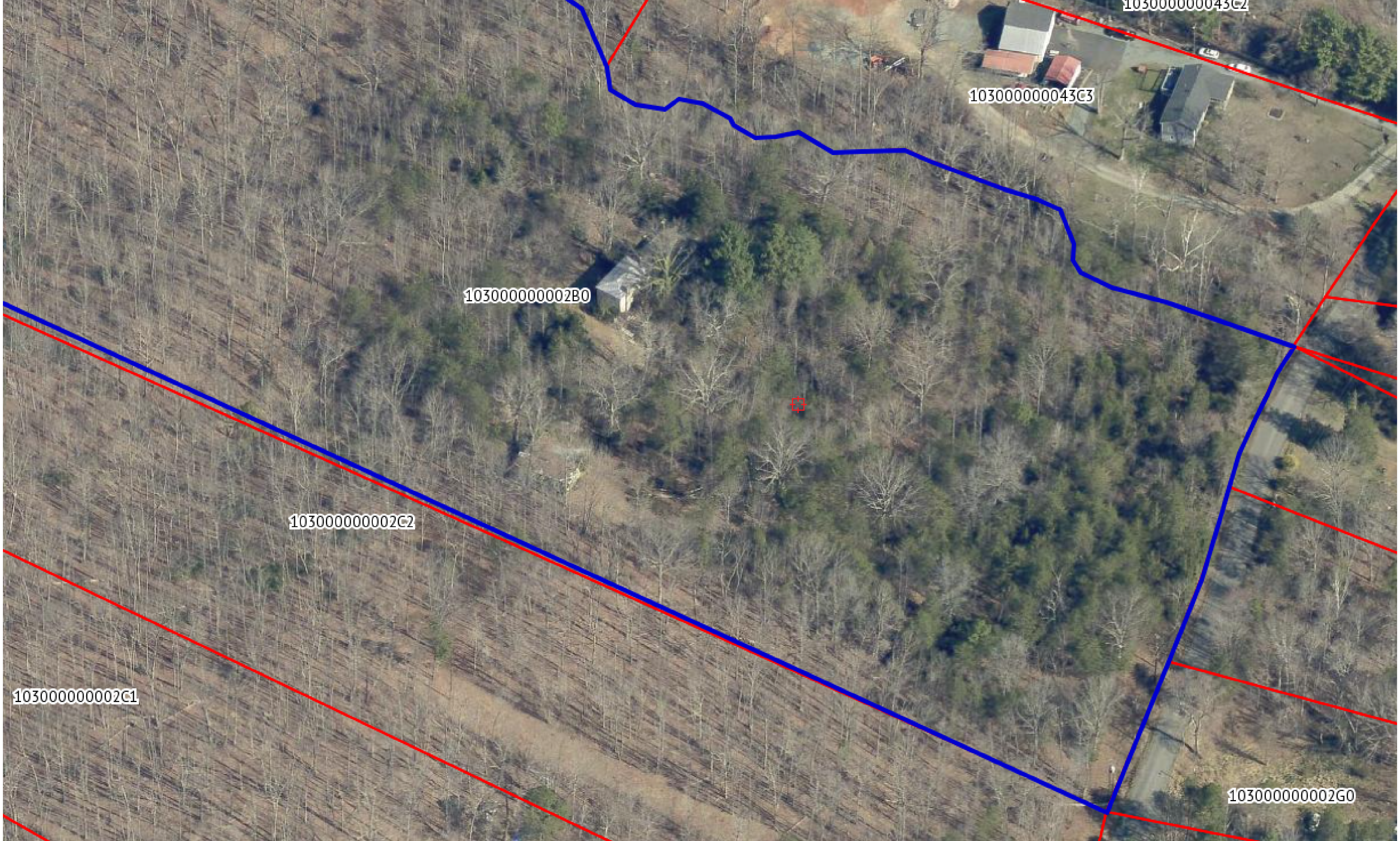
A. *Production of food and other agricultural and forestal products*. It is the policy of the State and the County to conserve and protect and to encourage the development and improvement of the Commonwealth's agricultural and forestal lands for the production of food and other agricultural and forestal products.

B. *Provide essential open spaces*. It is also the policy of the State and the County to conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands as valued natural and ecological resources which provide essential open spaces for clean air sheds, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, as well as for aesthetic purposes.

C. *Strong agricultural and forestal economy*. It is the policy of the County to support a strong agricultural and forestal economy.

D. *Protect and preserve natural resources and retain continuous and unfragmented land*. It is the policy of the County to protect and preserve natural resources, which include mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, streams, groundwater, and retain continuous and unfragmented land for agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, and natural resource protection.

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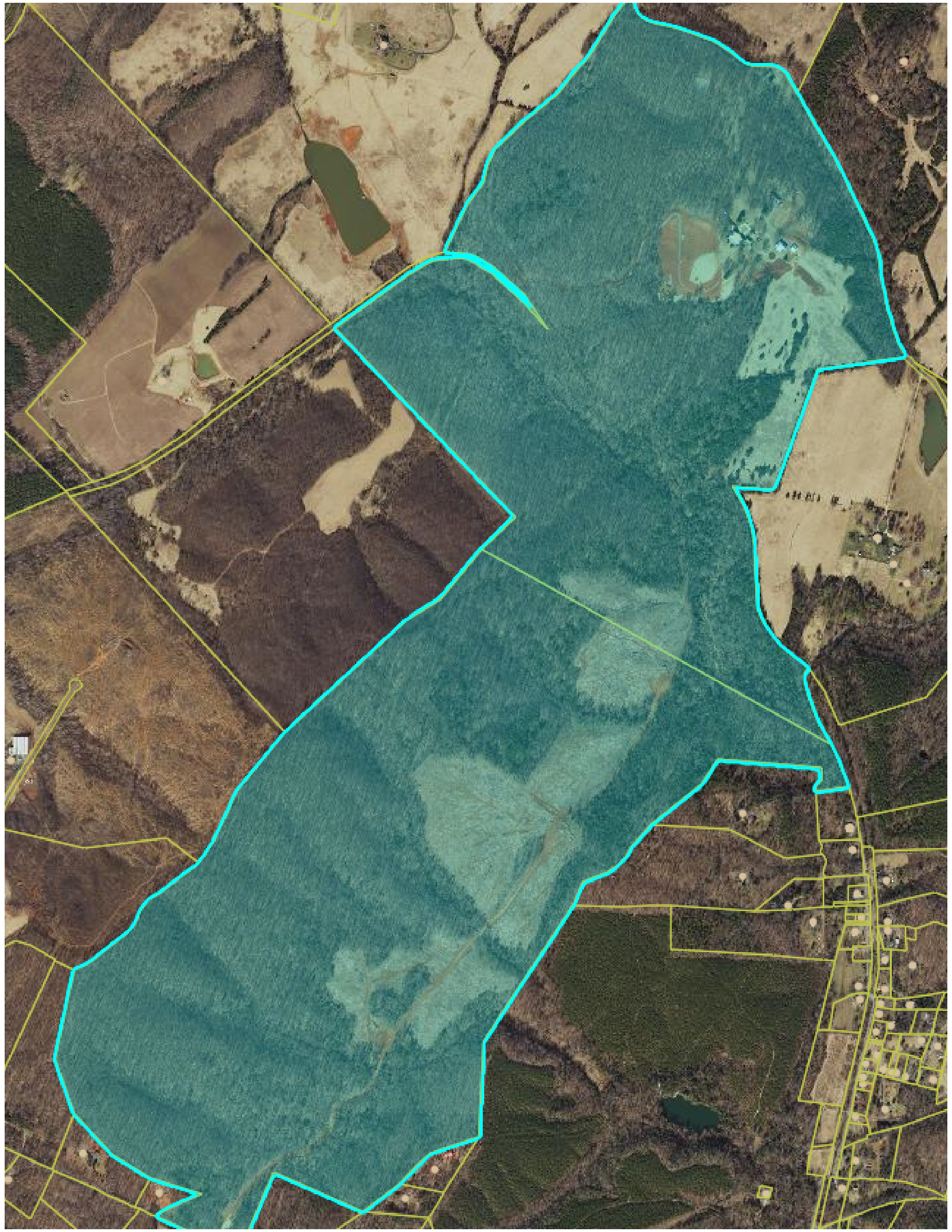
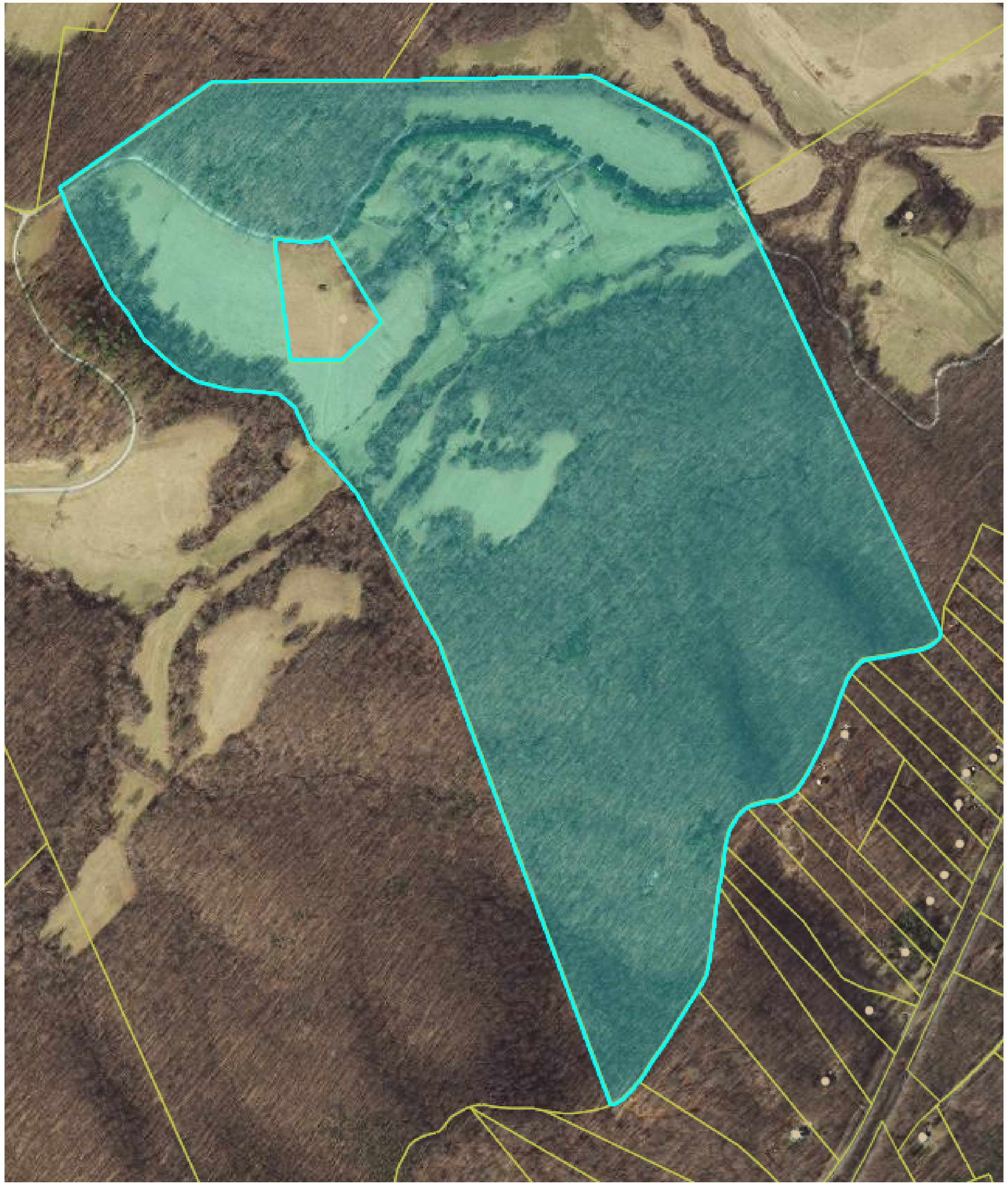
Addition Criteria

F. *Criteria*. The Advisory Committee, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors shall apply the following criteria when they review an application:

1. Agricultural and forestal significance of the land.
2. Significant agricultural or forestal lands not in active production.
3. Uses other than active farming or forestry.
4. Development patterns.
5. Comprehensive Plan and zoning regulations.
6. Environmental benefits.
7. Development rights.
8. Other.





Rural Parcels

Rural Parcels can be placed within 3 categories

Regular Parcels
(not in conservation program)

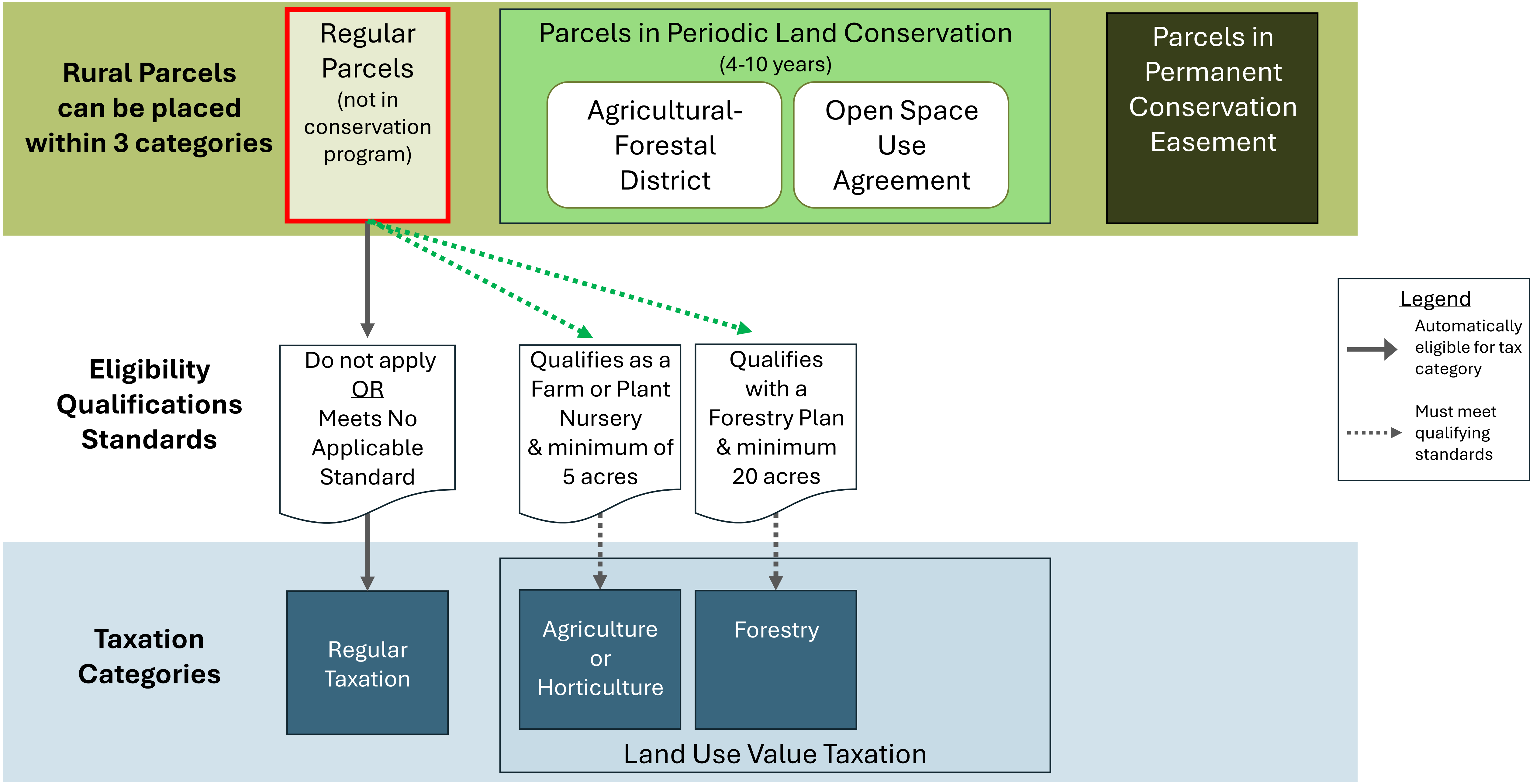
Parcels in Periodic Land Conservation
(4-10 years)

Agricultural-Forestal District

Open Space Use Agreement

Parcels in Permanent Conservation Easement

Tax Qualifications for Rural Parcels



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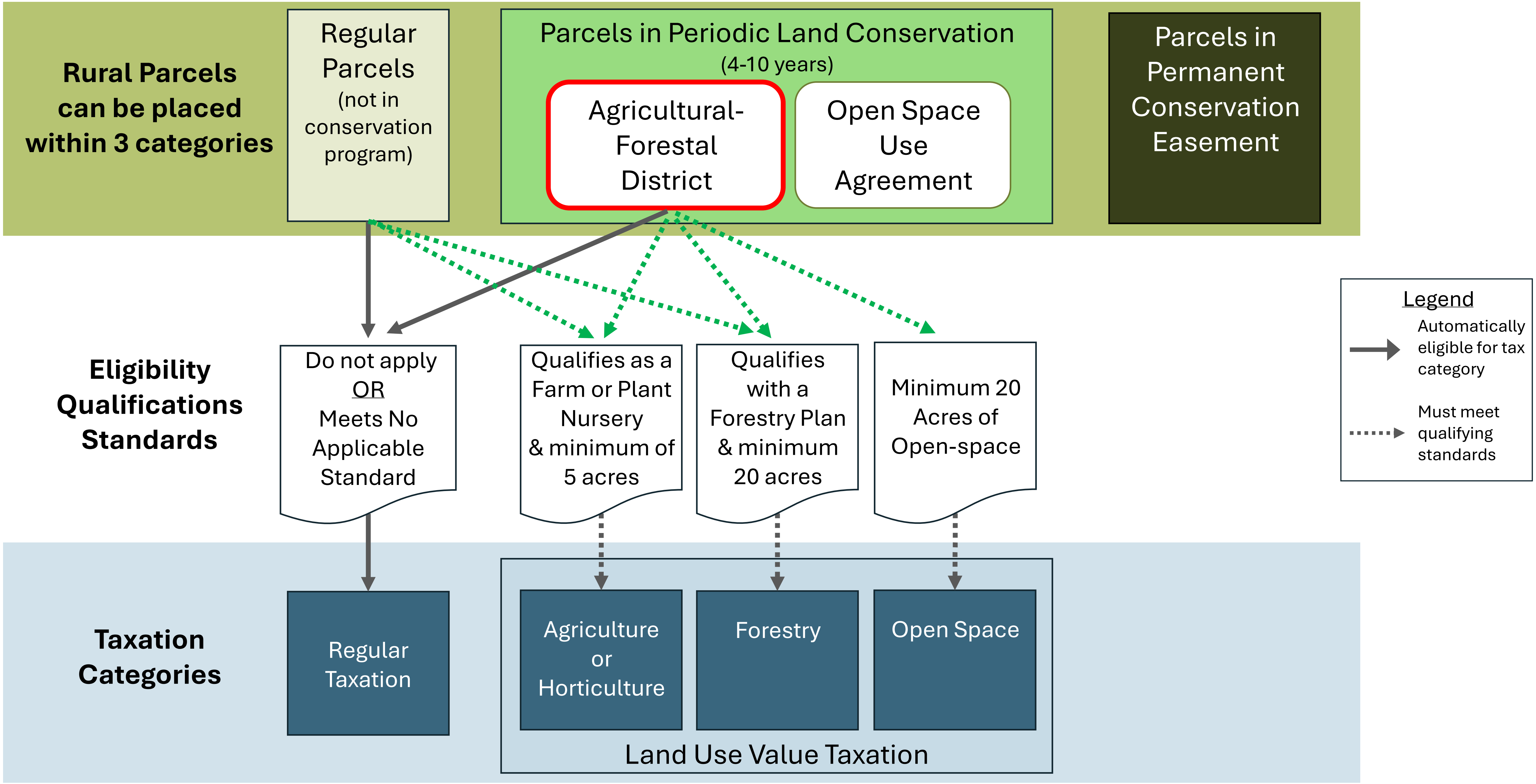

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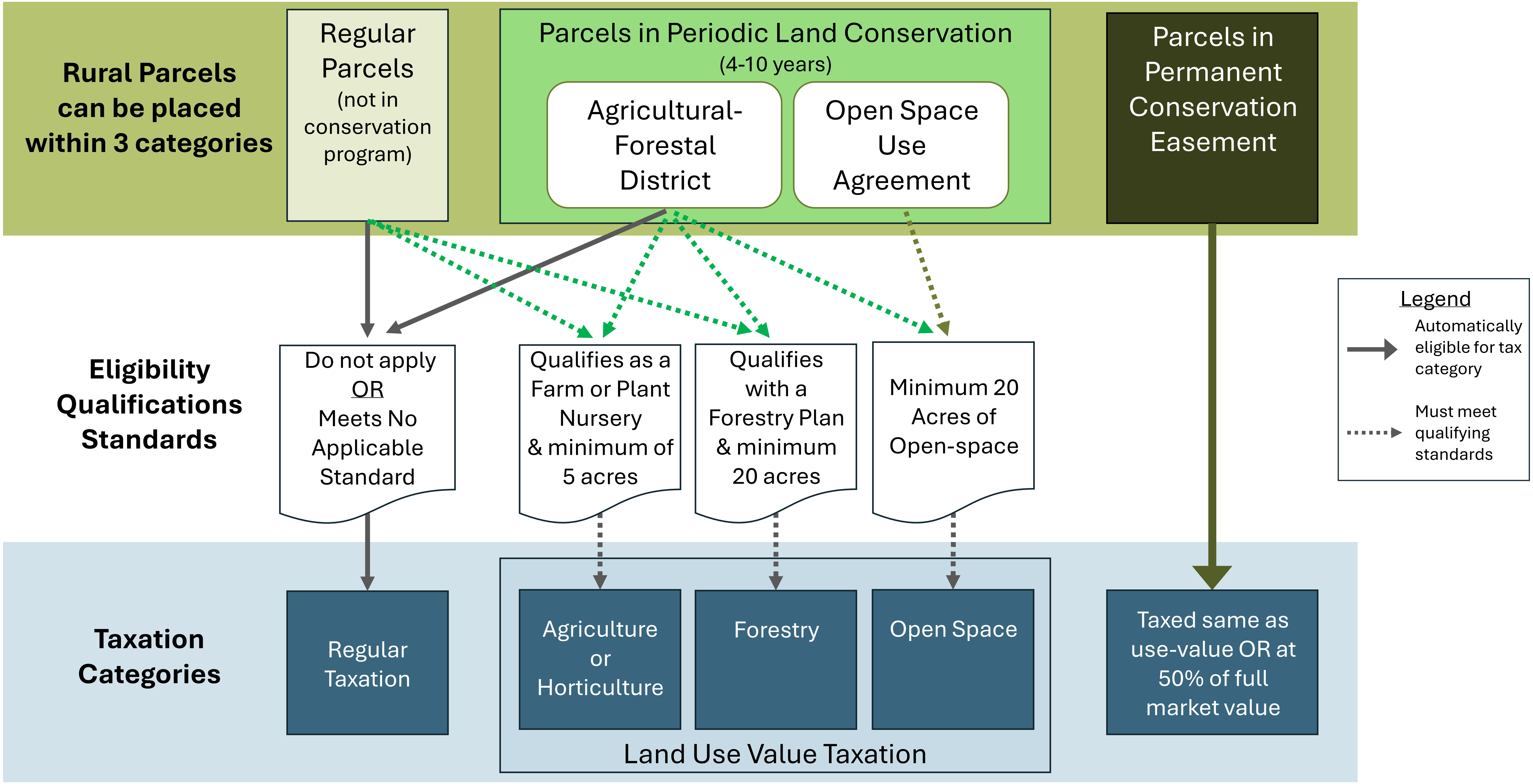

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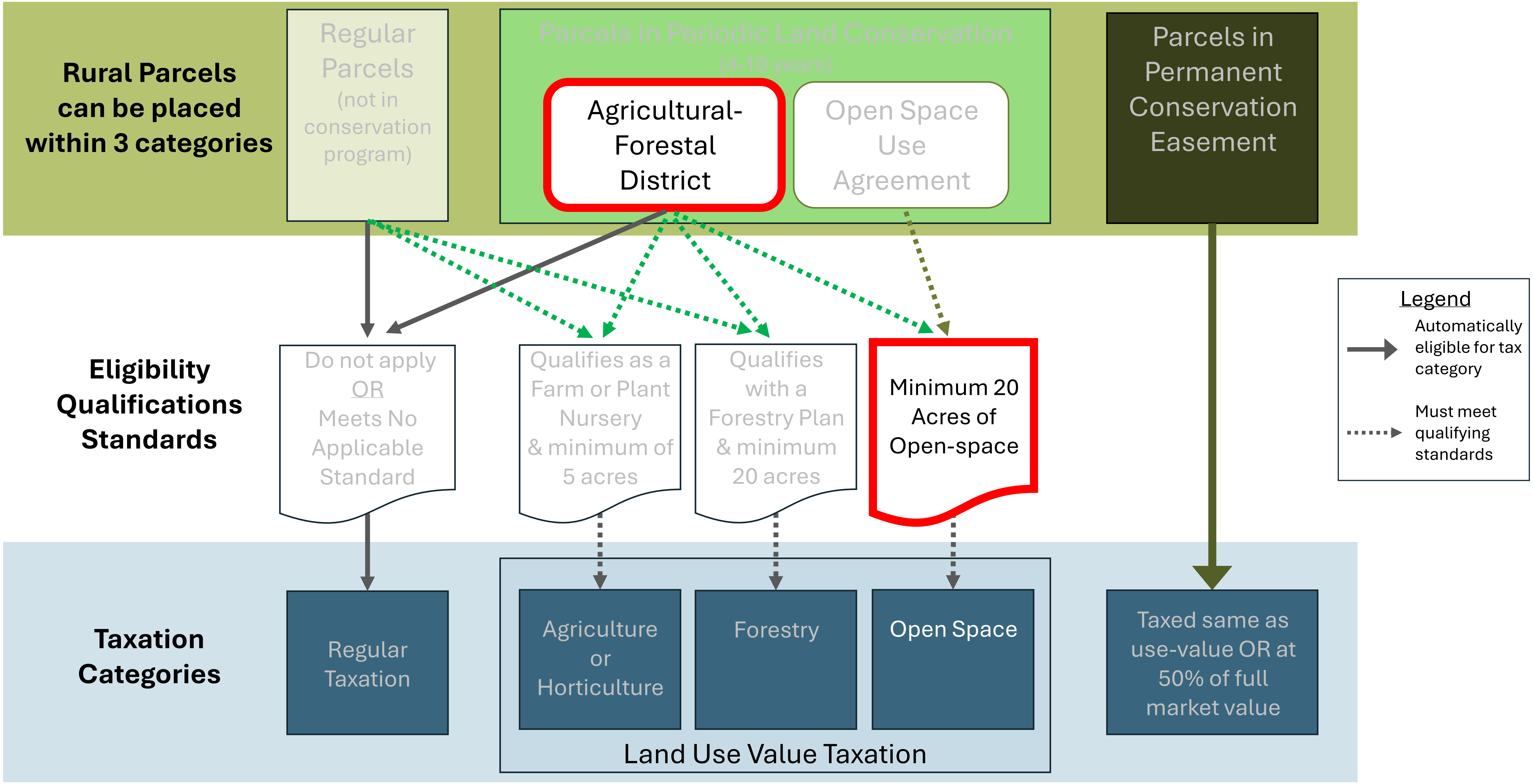
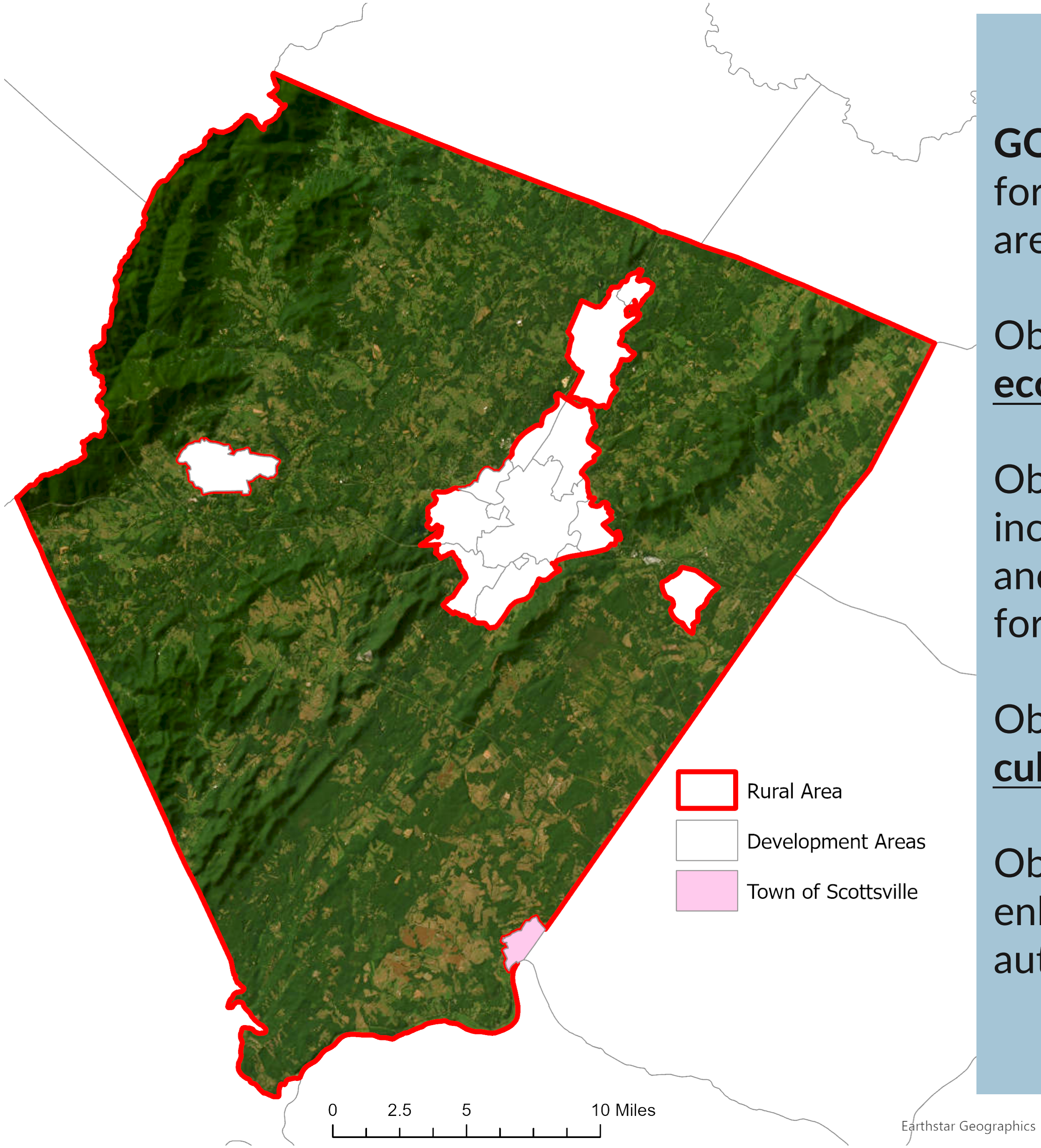




Comprehensive Plan – Rural Area

GOAL: Albemarle's Rural Area will have thriving farms and forests, traditional crossroads communities, protected scenic areas, historic sites, and preserved natural resources.

Objective 1: Support a **strong agricultural and forestal economy.**

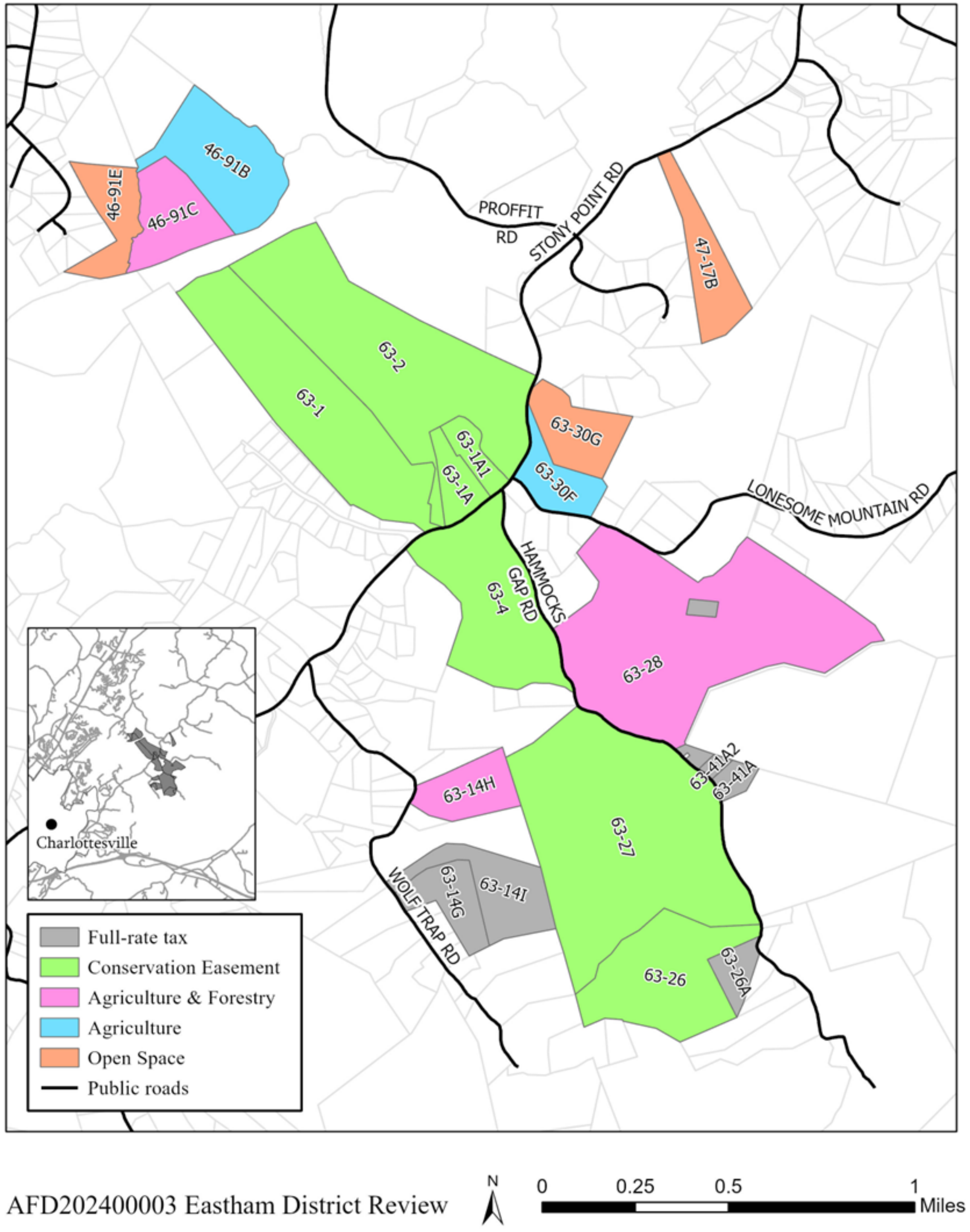
Objective 2: Protect and preserve **natural resources**, which include mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, streams, groundwater, and continuous and unfragmented land for agriculture, forestry, biodiversity and natural resource protection.

Objective 3: Protect the County's **historic, archeological, and cultural resources**.

Objective 4: Promote **rural and historic landscapes** that enhance visitors' experience and give historic sites as authentic a setting as possible.

AFDs & Taxation

- AFDs are a conservation program, not a tax program
- No automatic use-value tax benefit conveyed
- However:
  - Parcels that
    - have 20+ acres of "open space" land
    - and are in an AFD
  - ...qualify for the "open space" tax category.



AFD202400003 Eastham District Review