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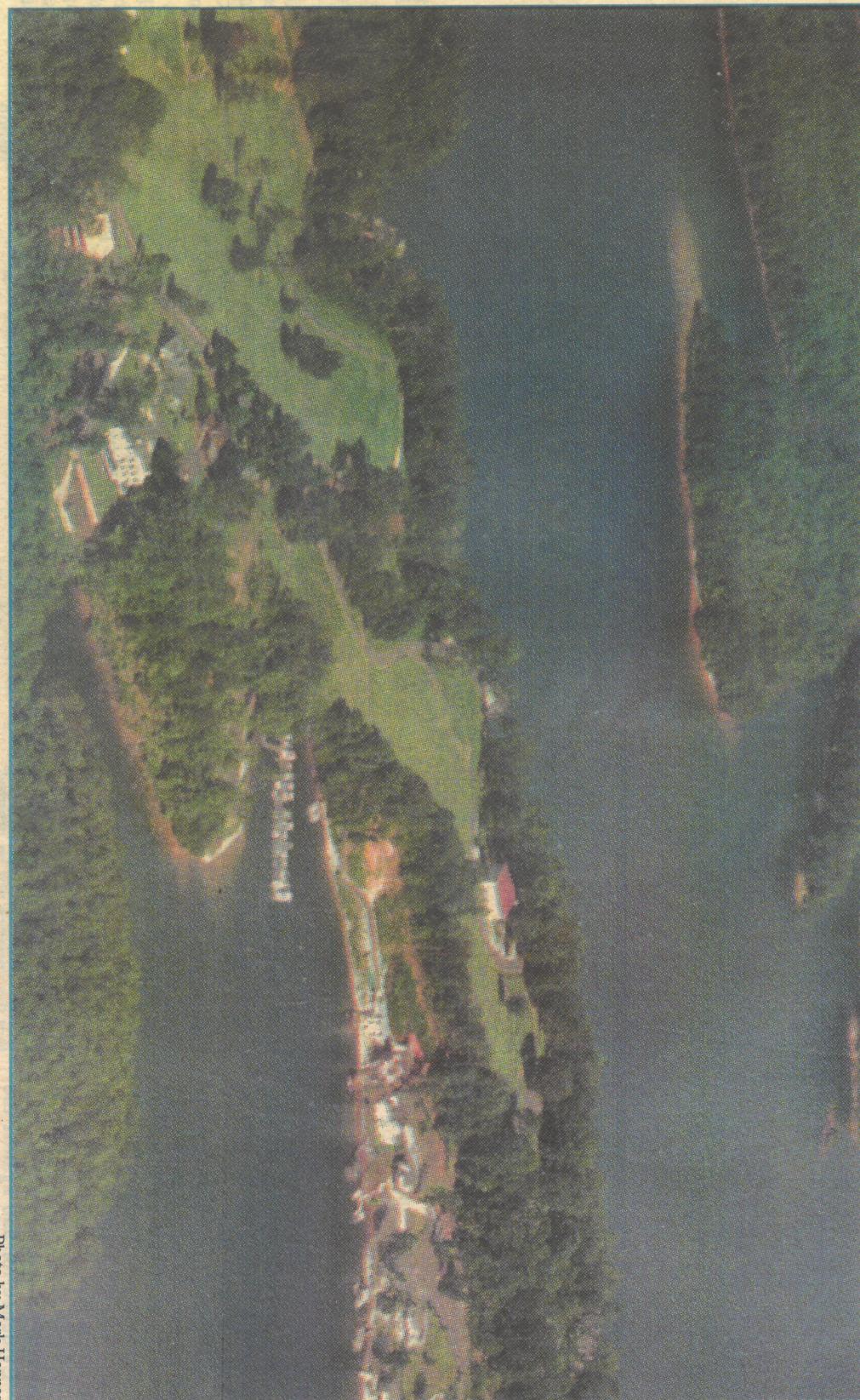
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after bombings
—Page 10A



FORECAST: Tonight, clear. Low around 60. Saturday, mostly sunny. High in the upper 80s. (Details on Page 11A)



This aerial photograph taken recently from an airplane shows a residential area of Lake James.

Airpark's impact on lake disputed

By SABIAN WARREN
News Herald Staff Writer

If built near Lake James as proposed, a new airport/industrial park would have a detrimental impact on the lake by spurring growth, conservationists claim.

Supporters of the joint Burke-McDowell airpark, however, say the facility, while close by, would not affect development on Lake James. Under a consultant's proposal, the controversial facility would be built in McDowell County near the Burke County line in an area between Interstate 40 and U.S. Highway 70, near Muddy Creek Road.

The \$22.7 million facility, which has drawn considerable public criticism in the past few months, would be located less than two miles south of Lake James. "It would certainly increase activity," said airpark opponent Bo Cash, a biology teacher at Freedom High School and the owner of a fly fishing shop. "There would be more people on the roads around the lake and more people on the lake. I'm not against natural growth, but I don't like using taxpayers' money to bring in people from the outside to aid in what I consider the destruction of the lake."

The airpark is projected to lure \$235 million in investment and create 5,000 new jobs. Supporters say the new jobs are needed as traditional industries like textiles and furniture decline. The private investment would greatly expand the two counties' tax base, they say. Proponents of the two-county project include a majority on the Burke County commission. Among the supporters is Commission

Lake James At The Crossroads

Chairman J.R. Simpson, who has publicly stated his wish to protect Lake James.

Simpson says the airpark would not stimulate a development boom on the shoreline, as some fear, and pointed out that Crescent Resources owns most of the land along the lake. What happens to lakeside property will be determined by Crescent and no one else, he said.

"I don't see the airpark having any effect on what Crescent might decide to do," Simpson said. "Everything hinges on Crescent and not on a third party."

While the goal of Burke and McDowell counties is to attract industries to the airpark, the industrial development would be far enough away from the lake not to impact it, he said. "Lake James is one of the attrib-

utes that might make companies locate here. That's why it shouldn't be spoiled," Simpson said.

Cash and other opponents, however, say the airpark would have a spillover effect.

"I feel like Lake James would become a personal playground for people who come into that area," he said. "I don't like to see our natural resources eaten up like that. It makes me want to move from here, and I've never felt like that before."

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sewer lines to the airpark.

Most of the \$22.7 million cost of the facility would be paid for with state and federal grants. All told, factoring in various grants that likely will be available, each county would have to chip in about \$2.6 million in local money.

Other county commissioners, even those who oppose the airpark, say they don't think it would do harm to Lake James.

"I can't see that the airpark is going to have that much of an impact on the development of the lake," said Commissioner David Campbell.

But Cash noted, "In Catawba County all I see is massive industrialization. It's ruined, and we're next. I grew up here. I'm a very outdoors-oriented person. I want our county to be attractive to people for its beauty, not its industry."

He questioned why commissioners are so intent on moving forward with the airpark when public sentiment appears against it.

"I've got friends who are pilots, and none of them are for this," Cash said. "I don't know anybody who's for it."

Paul Braun, a leader in a conservation group called Citizens To Save Lake James, says the airpark would be too close for comfort.

"If that airpark gets passed, it will lead to large-scale commercial development in the area," Braun said. "It would make the lake that much more accessible."

The proposed airpark suffered a blow this week when the Burke County Chamber of Commerce came out publicly against the project.

Under the plan, the City of Morganton would extend water and

Please turn to Page Two

Tower orders in place

By BETH S. AMMON
News Herald Staff Writer

Case Farms has agreed to the conditions laid down by the city of Morganton for building a new feed mill but some residents of the area may yet challenge the construction in Superior Court.

The mill will be constructed at 120 Dixie Blvd. and will stand 155