

# Lake James

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vices. The closest grocery store is in Glen Alpine. There's not many places to get gas and no restaurants."

Officials in other counties along the more developed portions of the Catawba River, however, offer a word of caution to leaders in Burke and McDowell: take things slowly, and act now to protect some of the shoreline from development.

"My advice is to go out and find as much money as possible and purchase some land," said Lake Norman Marine Commission member Bob Elliott. "We should have done that on Lake Norman back in the '70s, but nobody had any mon-

ey."

Lake Norman is gripped in a "frenzy of development," he said, with the amount of undisturbed land along the shoreline disappearing at an alarming rate.

"It's a zoo," he said. "No one who lives here gets on the lake on the weekend."

While Lake Norman is different from Lake James in that it is close to a major metropolitan area, Lake James won't be exempt from growing pains, Elliott said.

"The development is so rapid in North Carolina, I'm not sure there's anything anyone can do," he said.

For some, Lake James has already become too crowded. Retired educator Tim Shane lived

in the Holiday Shores subdivision on the Burke shoreline for 20 years but sold his lake house in 1996 "to move to a more secluded area."

"The main reason I got off the lake is that I like my peace and quiet and solitude," Shane said. "I like the birds and raccoons and seeing deer in the yard. They started building houses all around me, closer even than in town. And there was getting to be so many boats. They're turning it into Lake Norman."

*(Coming Tuesday: A look at Crescent Resources' plans for residential development around Lake James.)*