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"In Most Mountain Counties, Developers Answer to No One."

The Risks of Buying Homes and Land in Western North Carolina. Real estate in Western North Carolina is offered as safe and secure property, but in reality the region's mountain slope acreage is dangerous and financially risky.

/24-7PressRelease/ - MARS HILL, NC, January 17, 2008 - Real estate in Western North Carolina is offered as safe and secure property, but in reality the region's mountain slope acreage is dangerous and financially risky. How risky? The state issues landslide advisories whenever excessive rain is forecast for the western counties.

Buyers of this "at risk" property will not find this material information on sales contracts. Hopefully the following will serve as a guide to safely buying a mountain home.

Newcomers should not rely on the actions of Western North Carolina planning boards or developers to protect their safety and financial interests.

Representative Ray Rapp, sponsor of the Safe Artificial Slope Construction Act, has encountered strong opposition from the real estate industry regarding the possibility of state regulation over construction standards and the disclosure of landslide risks.

In an interview with Becky Johnson, staff writer for the *Smoky Mountain News*, Rapp said, "The only thing I hear consistently is a concern that it might hurt economic development if there were any limits put on some of this slope development."

According to Ms. Johnson, "In most mountain communities, developers answer to no one. They don't have to file a plan with the county before putting in roads or home sites, and no one checks up on their work afterwards." Please see "Rapp tries to round up support for slope development bill." Becky Johnson, *Smoky Mountain News*, January 2, 2008 http://www.smokymountainnews.com/issues/01_08/01_02_08/fr_rapp_tries.html

Landslide property damage in Western North Carolina is commonplace, expensive, and uninsurable. Home owners across the region struggle with erosion and unstable building sites. It is not widely publicized but a growing number of property owners in Western North Carolina have had to deal with the condemnation of their homes after slope failures rendered their properties uninhabitable. Planning boards and developers did not rescue these home owners who were left holding mortgages on worthless real estate.

It is important to be informed. Much of the land in Western North Carolina is not suitable for homes and roads. Landslide maps show thousands of old landslide deposits throughout the 21 county area. These dormant landslides can easily be reactivated by inclement weather and unsafe building practices.

Choose wisely. Tell the seller/builder/developer that you will not consider a sale until the property's slope stability has been certified by a state licensed geologist.

About Carolina Concerns

Carolina Concerns is a Western North Carolina landslide advisory company