



Developing Definitions for Priority Areas for the Upper Scioto  
Watershed Planning Partnership (USPP)

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**PCA Definitions from previous Balanced Growth Plans:**

*Priority Conservation Area:* An area designated by local jurisdictions for protection, conservation, or restoration because of its ecological, cultural, recreational, or historical value and for the significant role these areas play in maintaining the integrity of the watershed.

*Priority Conservation Area:* Locally designated areas for protection and restoration. They may be important ecological, recreational, heritage, agricultural, and public access areas that are significant for their contribution to Lake Erie water quality and general quality of life.

*Priority Conservation Area:* Locations where land use change may have a high impact on the watershed including flooding, erosion, and water quality. The site has unique ecological or historic considerations or may be particularly difficult to develop.

*Priority Conservation Area:* Existing or potential natural areas which have critically important ecological, recreational, heritage, public access, or other environmentally critical benefits.

*Priority Conservation Area:* A locally designated area targeted for protection and restoration to:

- Protect the ecological health of the watershed and tributaries.
- Provide a process by which areas containing environmental, natural, historic or archaeological resources of critical watershed concern may be identified and protected from substantial deterioration or loss.
- Provide procedures by which areas of critical watershed concern may be designated.
- Protect and enhance public health, safety, and welfare.
- Guide state programs, policies, and investments that influence the location of conservation and/or development.

Potential Definitions:

A *Priority Conservation Area (PCA)* is an area designated by local jurisdictions for protection, conservation, or restoration because of its unique ecological, cultural, recreational, or historical significance.

A *Priority Conservation Area (PCA)* is a locally designated area recognized for its ecological, cultural, recreational, or historical value and for the significant role these areas play in maintaining the integrity of the watershed. These areas are the focus of partnership efforts to protect, conserve, or restore.

A *Priority Conservation Area (PCA)* is an area distinguished by local jurisdictions for its unique ecological, agricultural, cultural, or historical value and targeted for preservation and restoration because of the potential for negative impacts due to land use change

**PDA Definitions from previous Balanced Growth Plans:**

*Priority Development Area:* A locally designated area defined by its potential for development or redevelopment in accordance with the area's infrastructure, development, or plan and the area's ability to accommodate development in a manner consistent with our goal.

*Priority Development Area:* Locally designated areas where development and/or redevelopment is to be encouraged in order to maximize development potential, maximize the efficient use of infrastructure, promote the revitalization of cities and towns, and contribute to the restoration of Lake Erie.

*Priority Development Area:* A locally designated area where growth / redevelopment should be promoted to maximize development potential, efficiently utilize existing infrastructure, revitalize communities, and contribute to the restoration of Lake Erie.

*Priority Development Area:* Locations where land use change is predicted to have minimal impact on the watershed and where other conditions, such as access to highways, existing or planned utility service areas, and existing development, suggest that additional development may be appropriate.

*Priority Development Area:* Areas with existing road or utility infrastructure, areas of rapid human growth, development, urbanization or exhibiting other human-desired characteristics – proximity to recreation or commercial areas – in which (re)development should be supported.

Potential Definitions:

A *Priority Development Area (PDA)* is a locally designated area defined by its potential for development or redevelopment in accordance with the area's existing infrastructure, development, or underutilization.

A *Priority Development Area (PDA)* is an area designated by local communities as a prime focus for development or redevelopment based on a nexus of existing development trends, its proximity to existing infrastructure, and the area's ability to accommodate development with minimal predicted impact on the watershed.

A *Priority Development Area (PDA)* is an area where conditions are predicted to be particularly favorable for future development or redevelopment and where the local jurisdiction will promote use of the land, community services, and existing infrastructure with maximum efficiency.

### **Priority Agricultural Area or Not?**

**Olentangy River Plan-** *Priority Agricultural Area (PAA):* A locally designated area targeted for continued, expanded and/or intensified agricultural activities due to historical, cultural, natural or human-created traits which make it conducive to agriculture and related activities.

**Chagrin River Plan-** *No Priority Agricultural Area* designation. Most likely because farmland is included in the PCA definition and preservation of farmland is listed as an implementation tool.

- The PCA designations promote the protection of existing green space and preservation of additional critical areas to minimize loss of habitat, **farmland**, forest, and open space.
- Smaller PCAs in more urbanized communities may be locations for pursuing suburban agricultural interests.

**Chippewa Creek Plan-** *No Priority Agricultural Area* designation.

- Farm conservation is a long term Balanced Growth Initiative goal
- One area classified as a PDA contains an old tree farm, the area was proposed to be part of a recreational area

**Rocky River Plan-** Priority Agricultural Area designation (PAA)

- Agriculture is an important land use to consider when developing a watershed balanced growth plan. The Rocky River Upper West Branch Watershed Planning Partnership opted to create a separate priority category for agriculture rather than trying to fit it into the category of PCA or PDA for the following reasons:
- Agricultural land use could be classified as a factor for either conservation or development based on practices applied.
- Representatives from Farm Bureau indicated that farmers want to keep their options open for how their land will be used.
- It is hoped that farms located in areas designated as PAAs will receive extra consideration for state agricultural programs.
- There is a strong desire to preserve the watershed's rural heritage.

Criteria applied- Farmland enrolled as AG (Agricultural) Districts.

**Swan Creek Plan-** Priority Agricultural Area designation (PAA)

- PAA development includes criteria that indicate productive farm land and PCAs included criteria that supported natural habitat and processes.
- PAAs are areas which exhibit natural characteristics (prime or well-drained soils) or built characteristics (large farm size or producer participation in agricultural programs) that lend themselves to productive and viable agricultural operations.

A Priority Agricultural Area (PAA) is a locally designated area targeted for continued, expanded and/or intensified agricultural activities due to possession of naturally occurring or human created traits which make it conducive to highly productive agriculture, silviculture or other natural product creation processes. These may include commodity foodstuffs

(wheat, corn, and soybeans), specialty crops (fruit, vineyards, herb gardens, and flower fields), timber areas, livestock pastures or other production areas.