

Page County Planning Commission Public Hearing, Tuesday, July 14, 2026 (7pm)

Good evening, my name is Chris Anderson, Page and Warren Coordinator for Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley.

As hopefully you are aware, the Alliance typically wholeheartedly advocate for outdoor recreation infrastructure to boost the local economy and help folks connect with our iconic natural resources, but we are concerned about the scale of this project.

This proposal is concerning for numerous reasons, most of which can be summarized by asking the question, is this the right place and size for this campground resort?

The Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation identifies this part of Naked Creek and the parcel as important for flood plain conservation and flood resilience, outstanding forest conservation value, outstanding-to-very-high in wildlife and ecosystem biodiversity and natural habitat.

In addition, this site is not supported by town water and sewer: the comprehensive plan directs dense development to be guided towards the towns for this infrastructure.

Water Usage:

- With 192 camping sites, this could mean 800 people with staff at maximum capacity. This would be high water usage plus the groundwater needed to maintain a swimming pool, club house and spa, bathhouse and an RV washing station. We are in a drought in the Shenandoah Valley and in the application, I did not see a total estimated number of gallons needed per day but expect that it will be significant.

There are unanswered questions about the septic system:

- How many gallons per day will be treated? What steps are being taken to protect the water quality in Naked Creek? How much impervious surface will be created and what steps will be taken to mitigate stormwater runoff?

Also:

- How can the campground preserve rural character?
- What kind of impact analysis has been done regarding the viewshed from Shenandoah National Park including protecting the night sky and impacts to wildlife including noise with the cumulative effect of generators?
- Is there sufficient power for the campground or will additional power lines and/or upgrades be needed?

We question the increased traffic and safety of large RVs traveling along the narrow two-lane rural road and I am concerned with the emergency response time should the need arise because of forest fires, flooding or other natural disaster.

Naked Creek's watershed is 45,832 acres with much of the headwaters located in steep upland. After Hurricane Isabel, I worked with the county on three remediation sites from the considerable flooding which occurred. This is a dynamic watershed and flooding can be significant.

So, in conclusion, the Alliance supports outdoor recreation and campgrounds in general, however considering all of these concerns and the negative impacts of this large, industrial land use on this valuable ecosystem, I urge you to recommend denial of this proposal.

Thank you.

Comp Plan Info for Reference:

Goals and policies within the Comprehensive Plan (Volume 1, Chapter 3):

- **Goal 2: "Preserve and protect the natural, rural, and open space character of the County, its ecology and environmental features." (Volume 1-65).**
 - Policy 2.1: "Preserve a rural lifestyle in the County outside of the towns, Incorporated Areas Tier and Community Service Area Tiers." (Volume 1-66).
 - Policy 2.2: "Limit the impacts of development on the community's environmentally sensitive lands and key natural resources." (Volume 1-66).
 - Policy 2.3: "Protect environmentally sensitive areas such as perennial streams, floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes and highly erodible soils." (Volume 1-66).
 - Policy 2.4: "Preserve valuable open space and forests." (Volume 1-66).
 - Policy 2.7: "Require that non-residential developments be designed to preserve and enhance natural features such as vegetation, wildlife, waterways, wetlands, and topography." (Volume 1-66).
 - Policy 2.8: "Encourage multiple uses of forested land that are non-intensive and compatible, such as outdoor recreation, wildlife habitats, watershed protection, and selective timber harvesting" (Volume 1-66).
 - Policy 2.9: "Ensure that development on forestland is compatible with the environmental features of that land and does not diminish natural and scenic values." (Volume 1-66).
 - Policy 2.25: "Protect the night sky from light pollution particularly as it impacts Shenandoah National Park and George Washington National Forest." (Volume 1-68).
- **Goal 6: "Encourage and develop a diverse and viable local economy compatible with the County's rural character." (Volume 1-74).**
 - Policy 6.2: "Encourage economic growth that is compatible with the County's rural character while generating a positive net cash flow for the County." (Volume 1-74).
 - Policy 6.6: "Promote local employment opportunities." (Volume 1-74).
 - Policy 6.10: "Allow commercial and industrial uses in rural areas or near existing neighborhoods only if the use: a. Does not unduly impede traffic flow on roads or intersections; b. Is not, and does not, initiate strip development; c. Has direct access to adequate roads, railroads or airports; d. Meets all standards for water, sewage and waste disposal; and e. Does not adversely affect surrounding agricultural or residential activities." (Volume 1-74).
 - Policy 6.12: "Enhance the County's tourism and retail base." (Volume 1-75).