

Sept. 26, 2023

Dear County Commissioners,

Subject: Bryans Road Sub Area Plan

The New York Times recently wrote an article “America Is Using Up Its Groundwater Like There is No Tomorrow.” The water we drink is running out. The Bryans Road Sub Area Plan is not a good idea. The Charles County Planning and Growth has known for decades about the water problems affecting our county, specifically the aquifer issues. Our wells are in trouble because of the extreme growth that has been approved by our present and former Board of County Commissioners with no end in sight. The article states that in Charles County (the only county even mentioned) the water is getting further away from the surface, meaning there is less water underground than there used to be.

New York Times article dated August 28, 2023:

“Most of the water we’re pulling out of the ground is thousands of years old,” Jason Groth, the county’s deputy director of planning and growth management, told The Times. He said the county would be out of ground water within the decade.

Baltimore Banner article dated Sept. 8, 2023: In Maryland, almost three-quarters of monitoring wells have seen water levels drop since 1980, some by more than 100 feet. Charles County, which includes fast-growing suburbs of Washington, relies on groundwater, but within a decade, that groundwater will no longer meet its needs.

Although I do not live in Bryans Road, I too will pay for this development. This proposed plan will remove the Watershed Conservation District, Priority Preservation Area, and Important Bird Area. I can see the visual changes in the deterioration of Mattawoman Creek because of stormwater and excessive development in the watershed. The county always loses when it builds in sensitive, critical areas and pays the price years later in restoration costs. The economic development should be focused on eco-tourism like the Southern MD Heritage area that draws the public to tourism in Indian Head. Remember, the National Heritage Area was not implemented at the time when the sub area plan began. The National Heritage Area is an investment in our natural resources and

quality of life for residents of Bryans Road. The people in Bryans Road deserve to have a broader spectrum of alternatives other than one that would be fiscally *irresponsible*. The National Park Service did an excellent land use study for the town of Indian Head and a similar one would be welcome for Bryans Road.

Due to the great location of Bryans Road, and past preservation investment, there is an alternative. A fiscally responsible plan would keep our forests and increase our Heritage Tourism. People need and want nature. It is time to listen to what residents' value, more development is certainly NOT one of them.

I strongly oppose the Bryans Road Sub Area plan as stated above the aquifers cannot support this. I highly recommend that you deny this project.

Thank You,
AC Stark