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Alliance Forms to Protect Paris Mountain from Commercial Development
Location threatens Sky Meadow State Park and the Appalachian Trail

Paris, VA (December 2, 2025) – Seventeen local and regional organizations have joined forces as the Paris Mountain Alliance following the announcement of a proposed 150-acre hotel complex on the southeastern slope of Paris Mountain where Loudoun, Clarke, and Fauquier counties meet. The multi-jurisdiction mobilization is an unprecedented rapid response to a massive development threat to an irreplaceable natural region.

Initiated by Friends of Blue Ridge Mountains, the alliance includes the Piedmont Environmental Council, Citizens for Fauquier County, Save Rural Loudoun, Land Trust of Virginia, the Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area Association, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and ten other groups. The alliance partners have united to oppose the construction of a hotel-restaurant-spa complex overlooking Fauquier’s Crooked Run Valley near the crest of the historic Ashby Gap into the Shenandoah Valley. A website, fundraising, and community outreach are underway as the alliance’s seventeen partners marshal resources to reach tens of thousands of members and supporters, regional residents who will be impacted by this intense development, as well as the hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Sky Meadow State Park and other public conservation and recreation resources.

Dulany Morison, Chair Emeritus of the Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area Association, emphasizes that “This western gateway is central to Virginia’s and the nation’s history, providing access to a Native American seasonal route and transformed by colonists in the 17th and 18th centuries into a primary means of trade and travel. We have worked tirelessly to protect this important corridor through traffic calming and the defeat of misguided development proposals in Aldie and Upperville, including a proposed resort. We will do the same now.” Mr. Morison is also the Vice Chair of the Land Trust of Virginia, Chair of the Riparian Buffer Program for the Goose Creek Association, and Chair of the PFH Conservation Fund.

Fairfax-based Mountain Resort LLC and New York-based Eastwind Hotels have initiated the pre-application process with Loudoun County’s planning department for “Eastwind Blue Ridge.” According to their project description, they intend to market to young couples as an exclusive ‘boutique resort’ with rooms costing \$400 to \$600 per night. The developers’ draft plans, shared in the pre-application packet with Loudoun staff, show a cluster of all structures, parking lots, wells, and septic located exclusively on the Loudoun County parcels, apparently to take advantage of Loudoun County’s zoning and to avoid protections in Clarke and Fauquier counties. They have not yet filed a formal application with Loudoun County, and the proposal as it exists today would be subject to the legislative process with public hearings and final decisions by Loudoun County officials.

“Eastwind Blue Ridge” (as described in its pre-application filing) would include two hotel buildings for a total of forty rooms, an 88-seat restaurant, a niche spa, a pavilion and plans for events. Paris Mountain Alliance spokesperson Bill Waite notes that, “Eastwind Blue Ridge would permanently scar the rugged, scenic beauty that defines this landscape — from Sky Meadows State Park to the Appalachian Trail — transforming a place of long term conservation into one of commercialization and short term private benefit. The development would damage and diminish the natural resources that both residents and the mountain’s wildlife depend upon.”

Estimates of water and septic demand cannot be determined based on available information. However, any new demand in the immediate area is a cause of concern. The recently released “Assessment of the Groundwater Supply in Loudoun County, VA”¹ finds significant water table decline in western Loudoun County, including on the mountain, because of recurrent drought and commercial and residential development. The proposed development’s location within an invaluable recharge zone amplifies its negative impacts.

The high elevation site would be visible from the national and state-listed Crooked Run Valley Rural Historic District that encompasses the village of Paris and Sky Meadows State Park. The development would also affect views from the Ambassador Whitehouse Trail that extends from the junction of Sky Meadow State Park and provides access for thousands to the Piedmont Memorial Overlook. The acreage includes steep slopes identified by Loudoun County as “sensitive resources” and high value forest, ecological core, and wildlife habitat, according to state agency resources.^{2 3}

The developers plan to use the narrow, single lane Mount Weather Road from westbound U.S. Route 50 as their sole point of access and route all exiting traffic onto Virginia Route

¹ <https://loudouncoalition.org/loudoun-county-groundwater-study/>

² <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/nhdeinfo>

³ <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/wildlife-action-plan/>

601/Blue Ridge Mountain Road in Clarke County at a sharp turn just south of the access to the Appalachian Trail. That rural road is already over-burdened. Both the Clarke and Fauquier county board of supervisors' chairs have written to their Loudoun County counterpart to express reservations about the proposal's consequences to Loudoun's neighboring counties and residents.

"Eastwind Blue Ridge will significantly impact public conservation and recreation values in our region," said Chris Miller, president of the Piedmont Environmental Council. "Paris Mountain is a conservation priority for its ecological, cultural, historical, and scenic significance. The breadth of this alliance reflects how deeply our communities care about this singular place, and our determination to prevent its commercialization is a groundswell that is growing by the day. Stopping Eastwind Blue Ridge is a priority for PEC. Our board, leadership team and staff fully support the Paris Mountain Alliance," he said.

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