



Leon County
Board of County Commissioners
301 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301
(850) 606-5302 www.leoncountyfl.gov

Commissioners

March 11, 2011

BILL PROCTOR
District 1

Mr. David Holmden
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
2600 Blairstone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2400

JANE G. SAULS
District 2

JOHN DAILEY
District 3

BRYAN DESLOGE
District 4

RE: Leon County/DEP Agreement No. LP6867

KRISTIN DOZIER
District 5

Dear Mr. Holmden:

NICK MADDOX
At-Large

In 2008, Leon County received a legislative appropriation of \$250,000 for the Wakulla Springs Aquifer Protection Project. An agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection was executed on June 12, 2008 and remains in effect until December 31, 2013.

AKIN AKINYEMI
At-Large

The Wakulla Springs Aquifer Protection Project has, as its primary goal, the protection of Wakulla Springs, an internationally recognized resource and the world's largest and deepest freshwater spring. It has an average discharge of over 250 million gallons per day, with the large spring vent lying 185 ft below the surface of the water.

PARWEZ ALAM
County Administrator

Wakulla Spring is impacted by both urban development in Tallahassee and rural development in surrounding areas. As the nitrate level in the water is elevated, the water clarity is decreased, damaging the unique ecosystem. Fertilizer use and thousands of septic tanks in Wakulla and Leon counties have been identified as one of the primary sources of these nitrates.

HERBERT W.A. THIELE
County Attorney

Although some periods of dark water in the spring are natural, due to dissolved organic matter in the blackwater streams of the Apalachicola National Forest, the frequency and intensity of dark water has increased dramatically over the last 30 years. Glass bottom boats rarely run these days due to the dark water in the spring.

The County, with the support of the City of Tallahassee, the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection proposed to address this problem through the development of a central sewer system. During the time the proposal to the legislature was developed, it was estimated that over 1400 homes and businesses in the area utilized septic tanks. A more accurate updated survey has shown that that estimate substantially undercounted the number with over 8,000 homes and businesses within the Springs Protection Zone utilizing septic tanks.

To date, the City of Tallahassee has conducted a feasibility study to determine the cost to run a central sewer line to the Woodville area. The development of just the force main is estimated to cost approximately \$1.5 million, with the total system costing approximately \$3 million. The County, in partnership with the City of

Leon County/DEP Agreement No. LP6867
March 11, 2011
Page 2

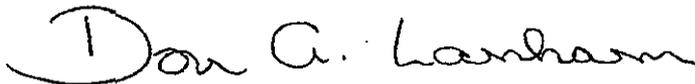
Tallahassee and Wakulla County has commissioned a study (due by the end of March, 2011) to determine a comprehensive approach to address the nitrates entering Wakulla Springs. According to a preliminary draft, the study will feature the central sewer system as one of its' key components.

As noted in the DEP agreement, the development of the system will be phased. Recent discussions with the City have explored the need to upgrade pipe size and pump stations at the current southern terminus of the City's central sewer system in order to have the capacity to serve the Aquifer Protection Zone.

The development of the central sewer system will also allow for the development of new businesses and the expansion of existing ones within the Aquifer Protection Zone. Development in that area slowed tremendously during the current economic slowdown. As the State recovers in the future, the lack of central sewer will be a limiting factor that will stifle business development.

In conclusion, Leon County requests that the \$250,000 legislative appropriation be retained to assist in the protection of this unique natural resource and to help the area to continue to grow and prosper. The County, the City of Tallahassee and Wakulla County have been working diligently to do both and the legislative appropriation will further those activities.

Sincerely,



Don A. Lanham, Grants Program Coordinator

CC. Parvez Alam, County Administrator
Vincent S. Long, Deputy County Administrator
Alan Rosenzweig, Assistant County Administrator
Tony Park, Director of Leon County Public Works