



May 19, 2009

Commissioners Nancy Argenziano, Lisa Polak Edgar,  
Matthew M. Carter II, Katrina J. McMurrian, Nathan A. Skop  
Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oaks Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Fl. 32399-0850

Re: PSC Docket # 090189-SU

**Task Force Officers:**

**President**

Ottice Amison, *Amison Seafood*

**Vice-President**

Billy Dalton, oysterman

Tommy Ward, *Buddy Ward and Sons Seafood*

Bruce Rotella, oysterman

John Richards, oysterman

Ron Harrison, *Leavins Seafood*

David Barber, *Barber's Seafood*

Lynn Martina, *Lynn's Quality Seafood*

Anthony Coulter, crab fisherman

David Gilbert, shrimper

**Executive Director**

Kevin Begos

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Apalachicola, FL 32329

**Secretary**

Charlene Burke

*Franklin County / UF Oyster Lab*

**OUR MISSION**

To represent and protect the local Seafood Industry and all those who work in it; educate people about the unique seafood heritage and environment of northwest Florida; promote and provide public access to Apalachicola Bay for future generations; and encourage sustainable harvesting and the use of science to benefit the environment, and consumers.

Dear Public Service Commissioners:

This letter is a request to address the Commissioners at any Agenda Conference of the above Docket, and to note serious factual errors in the original application for a Proposed Wastewater System by Water Management Services, Inc. (WMSI).

Applicant WMSI claims that there is a "critical" need for a wastewater treatment system on St. George Island, and that "*In recent years, the adjacent waters have been closed numerous times due to high bacterial counts.*"

In fact, there is no record of adjacent waters being "closed" in recent years due to any events from the proposed WMSI service area, or from St. George Island in general.

The Bay has occasionally been closed due to Red Tide, flood, hurricanes or exceptionally heavy local rainfall, but none of those events can be blamed on St. George Island, and such natural events would not be mitigated or reduced in the future by the proposed WMSI system.

It appears that WMSI has either deliberately or out of ignorance suggested that closures to Apalachicola Bay oyster harvesting have been linked to sewage issues in the St. George Island business district, as a means of justifying a critical need. No evidence exists that the two are linked; and the swimming advisories due to bacteria counts on the beach side of the Island are just that; advisories and not closures.



In fact, there has not been a single instance of Apalachicola Bay being closed to oyster harvesting due to Norovirus (the bacteria linked to human sewage) for over seven years, according to the detailed records and excellent monitoring system of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

We urge the Public Service Commission to hold public hearings on the WMSI application and allow sufficient time for fact finding, public input and discussion.

And we repeat: there is no documented or anecdotal evidence that sewage problems from the St. George Island business district have harmed oysters in Apalachicola Bay or reduced the ability of our oystermen to work.

In fact, we are concerned that the proposed WMSI system could do more harm than good to Apalachicola Bay and the oyster industry, by encouraging high density development.

Sincerely,

Ottice Amison  
President  
850 653 8340