

Lisa Smith

From: Lisa Smith on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 12:56 PM
To: 'Bruce Kelsey'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Docket #20200226-SU Proposed Wastewater System on Little Gasparilla Island

Good Afternoon, Bruce C Kelsey,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket 20200226-SU and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Thank you.

Lisa Smith

Commission Deputy Clerk I
Office of the Commission Clerk
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850
850-413-6770

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From: Bruce Kelsey <bruceckelsey@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 12:16 PM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>; Office of Commissioner La Rosa <Commissioner.LaRosa@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Clark <Commissioner.Clark@psc.state.fl.us>; Office of Commissioner Passidomo <Commissioner.Passidomo@psc.state.fl.us>
Subject: Docket #20200226-SU Proposed Wastewater System on Little Gasparilla Island

March 15, 2022
From: Bruce C Kelsey
9798 Little Gasparilla Island
PO Box 3462 Placida, FL 33946
bruceckelsey@yahoo.com

To: Records Clerk; Office of Commissioner La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo

Please deny the proposed wastewater system on Little Gasparilla Island.

In my opinion the proposed system is a greater risk to the environment than the individually owned septic tanks and drain fields. I also do not trust EU to have the experience to maintain the system.

As a retired professional engineer in Florida and having owned a home and property on Little Gasparilla Island for over 50 years, I urge you to consider my observations and opinions. Note my comments primarily refer to Little Gasparilla Island as follows:

1) This barrier island is only accessible by boat and has very few full time residents. The vast majority of properties consist of vacation homes, week end homes and rental con units. All of these non full time properties have a very low occupancy rate.

2) Have the consultants and engineers considered the occupancy rate of the homes and units on the island. I have used the county maintained online aerial photos at [Charlotte County GIS](#) to estimate the number homes and condo units compared to the boats moored at the docks. The number of boats at the docks imply an occupancy rate of less than 10% when the photograph was taken. A similar study of a Google Maps aerial photograph taken in 2022 implies an occupancy rate of 25%. Surely the occupancy rate is higher at other times but the overall average is probably far less than 50%.

Charlotte County GIS

3) Have the consultants and engineers estimated the amount of effluent based on the gallons of domestic water used on the island? The owner of EU also owns Little Gasparilla Island Water Company that supplies all of the water on the island and could provide the total gallons billed each month. This could be used to estimate the yearly gallons of effluent and the impact on the environment. I suspect due to the low occupancy rate, the effluent per acre on the island is far less than other water front communities on the mainland.

4) The proposed low pressure system requires each resident to have an electric pump to transfer fluids from a holding tank to the main sewer pipe line. Surely the main line will require numerous lift stations to pump the effluent to a central treatment plant. The system would require considerable maintenance and subject to power outages and/or flooding during a storm or unusual high tide. Accumulating all the sewer effluent into one treatment plant on the island would have the risk of a major spill into the bay due to damage or malfunction. Damage to the main sewer line and lift stations could also result in a massive spill. I also own property in a low area in Polk County that relies on several lift stations to pump the effluent. The pumping stations require continuous maintenance and are frequently jammed due to items flushed down resident's toilets. Surely the risk due to an electrical and mechanically operated central system on the island is much greater than the risk due to the individually owned septic tanks and drain fields that have no moving parts.

If there is truly an environmental risk due to septic tanks on the island, why doesn't the county provide a conventional system with a connection to a safe central treatment plant on the main land rather than accept the risk of a system on a barrier island maintained by an inexperienced private company? Resident's would be more confident in the reliability and true cost of a county installed and maintained

system. The county could start at the more densely populated islands north of Little Gasparilla Island and extend south in the future as needed.

Property taxes on the island are much higher than the main land in Charlottee County but few services are provided. If the implied sewer rates are implemented, my family will need to sell our property that we have enjoyed for 50 years. Property taxes, water rates and rates for an unnecessary sewer system will force out the old timers like myself and make the island only affordable to the ultra rich.

Thank you,
Bruce C Kelsey