

Lorena Hollett

From: Office of Chairman La Rosa
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 4:39 PM
To: Commissioner Correspondence
Subject: Docket Correspondence - 20240032
Attachments: FOR CENTRALIZED SEWER; Centralized Waste-Water Charlotte County FL

Good afternoon,

Please place attached emails in CORRESPONDENCE – Consumers & Representatives in docket 20240032.

Thank you.

Lorena Hollett

From: Carole Songey <songeyislandlife@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 12:10 PM
To: Office of Chairman La Rosa
Subject: FOR CENTRALIZED SEWER

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Commissioner LaRosa

Being a conscious citizen desiring a healthy environment in which to live and pass on to my family growing up in the future, IT IS IMPERATIVE to do what we as responsible citizens of this earth can do to have a clean and healthy environment.

Unfortunately there are individuals out there more worried about themselves than the environment or others, or perhaps even their own families growing up, who want to stop the proposal for removing wastewater from ALL barrier islands.

Will it cost all us money? Yes, of course. BUT what will be the cost in the future to our health and the health of all others living in a polluted land surrounded by polluted waters dues to leaking and broken septic systems. WHEN will they learn?

I have lived on Little Gasparilla island since December 1992. I have seen first hand the pollution of our once pristine waters. I have seen broken septic pipes dumping raw sewage on our land and into the waters surrounding the island. I have seen a rise in "Red Tide" with sewage being a major contributor to algae bloom. More dead fish, turtles, dolphins, manatees, to float up onto our beaches, the toxins released in the air that both people and animals have exposure to and other health problems or death in some instances from all forms of damage that septic systems release and contribute to.

For any truly concerned individual the passage for a Centralized Wastewater system needs to be approved.

A Healthy and Beautiful Environment needs your support in passing this request. Please keep me advised on your recommendations.

Carole Songey
9282 Little Gasparilla Island

Lorena Hollett

From: Linda Soderquist <linist@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 23, 2024 3:39 PM
To: Office of Commissioner Fay; Office of Commissioner Graham; Office of Chairman La Rosa; Office of Commissioner Clark; Office of Commissioner Passidomo; governorrn.desantis@eog.myflorida.com; ltgovernorjeanette.nunez@eog.myflorida.com
Subject: Centralized Waste-Water Charlotte County FL

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April 22, 2024

I am writing to comment on the proposed centralized waste-water treatment for the barrier islands in Charlotte County Florida.

I am not currently a homeowner, but did live full time on Little Gasparilla Island from 1992 until 2020. During most of that time I was a sea turtle primary permit holder (Imperiled species sea turtle permit TP-132 with FWC) During that time my permit included data collection, training and supervising volunteers, collecting data on sea turtle strandings, and leading educational opportunities. I was on the beach every single day from May 1st through October 31st starting in 1997 until 2019.

During my beach time as the permit holder, I was able to observe extreme tide changes and the beach during and after storms. Many times, I observed septic tanks compromised by the wind and tide, pouring raw effluent onto the sandy beach. The beachfront properties on Little Gasparilla are literally in the sea turtle nesting zone and most every septic tank has been affected to some extent multiple times. These properties have no recourse but to cover the exposed tanks and drain fields with beach sand (usually before the county could even come out to inspect the breach) and wait for the next high-water event. They have no place on their lot to relocate septic tanks. For this reason, centralized waste-water is a must for the barrier islands. Water quality is at stake.

I lived on the bay side of Little Gasparilla Island. In walking down the path to the beach every morning, I observed many similar situations with failing septic tanks and drain fields on the interior of the island. Some older properties do not even have drain fields, but merely a cesspool covered with plywood and sand. The flood tides and storm surges certainly negatively impact these properties over and over again. That polluted water drains off right back into the bay and gulf.

I am an environmentalist. I know water quality has been compromised by continuing to allow aging septic tanks on barrier islands, creekfront properties, and bayfront properties. I have been a member of the CHVWQMN (Charlotte Harbor Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network associated with FDEP) for over 20 years and have seen the data that supports declining water quality in many of the estuaries and creek areas. Much of this decline has to be a result of aging septic tanks on the barrier islands as well as nearby mainland waterfront and creekfront properties.

I believe there is a need NOW for centralized waste-water. The barrier islands are a place to start, but other areas need to be addressed as well. We cannot wait. I have many friends still on the island and have heard their comments. Many more are now in favor of centralized waste-water treatment. They have concerns and questions about the cost and feel they need assurances for the reliability of the systems proposed. Once these concerns are addressed, they will support a centralized waste-water system because they, too, see it as necessary to protect the beaches and island life they love.

Linda Soderquist

Watercolor Artist
Florida Master Naturalist

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