



Newsletter

W.A.R., Inc.

Withlatchoochee Area Residents
P.O. Box 350 - Inglis, FL 34449-0350

July 23, 2008

SUMMER 2009

CONTACTS

- President:
(2buntings@comcast.net)
- Keep W.A.R. Informed: Send your email tel. & add changes to:
(jlmsvc@aol.com)

July 2009

THE W.A.R., INC. NOW AND THEN GAZETTE – SUMMER 2009

Seems kind of quiet these days I know, the heat being here and something unusual called rain, for those who don't recall much of it. The District claims the aquifer level is rising, Weather Channel announced the beginning of another El Nino and the 'skeeters are starting to whine. They aspire to political ambition no doubt.

I'll throw a little news your way, in case you've missed it:

Tarmac LLC King Road Mine – Remember the draft environmental impact study the Corps of Engineers is working on? Seems like a lifetime back that we gathered at the Inglis Community Center for that. First it was going to be....., then....., and recently.....now we are promised it won't be presented for public comment prior to Labor Day. I think you can take that to the bank. In the background, your Task Force Director, Edward Michaels is still stirring the pot. It was noted in the DEIS for the Lake Belt mines that alternatives mine locations in the state were problematic for several reasons. One of them of course is local objection to new mines. On that point, we have rated a “substantial” rating in our resistance to that mine, from the Corps itself. Congratulations to you all!!

Progress Energy is taking some lumps after their clean sweep with the State in their application for the nuke plants. Our own Beth Foley put an issue before the Administrative Law Judge regarding salt drift, and on that point the NRC has determined that various groups intervening on a federal level have standing in the case, and salt drift is one of their issues. Others include wetlands, the Lower River, ground water and the Barge Canal.

I recently spoke with Ginny Brown-Waite's grant director in an effort to garner federal funds for reconnecting the Lower River. After hearing my pitch she contacted the District and was told the project did not have adequate return on a cost benefit analysis. That is District fog, for those not familiar with the term. It means they are not interested, even though they found it reasonable to spend \$26 million dredging silt off the bottom of Lake Panasoffkee. Go figure..... I asked if it would be possible to simply insert funding for the project in a bill, any bill, because in context of the permit conditions it would trigger the process for action on the issue. She responded that these projects need to

“start from the ground up.” Folks, I looked at my feet; they were square on the ground as I spoke with her. I cannot imagine a clearer illustration of the disconnect that exists between politicians and constituents these days.

At present, John Fuchs is plugging away at several projects. First priority has been the conversion to a 501. (c) 3 corporation status for the organization. That is proceeding well, but it takes time. Additionally, John and I are collaborating on Part 2 of the Herbicide issue. Also in the works and at the request of EPA, we are building a document on the matter of Endangered Species Act violation which we alleged in our initial salvo. A last project for the moment is a 4-5 part guest editorial for the Chronicle on water and its regulation in the state. No projection of completion is proffered on any of these efforts.

The Citrus County Commission recently voted approval of 3 agenda items that will, upon favorable review from DCA, change the nature of our community greatly in a very lasting way. I cannot say any of it is good for us. Two projects are underway, one being the expansion of the River Lodge LLC by approximately 160 acres and some 500 RV parking spaces. The other is the creation of a Port District, this being a zoning change for over 500 acres on Citrus Mining and Timber property. After DCA review the LDC, Atlas and map amendments will be approved or modified as needed and the county will address the master plan process on both projects. Please understand this has not been adopted by WAR as an item of interest by the corporation. Nonetheless, many WAR members and non-members from the community attended and addressed the issues. I would not be the least surprised to hear a motion at our next meeting in August for the organization to attend to the permitting processes by FDEP on these projects. If you have any thoughts on this matter, please attend the meeting and make your thoughts known.

OLD BUSINESS:

Dixie Hollins and Cemex have still not been able to renew their water use permit after more than a year of trying. Can it be the District is actually doing its job? From all appearances this is the case. Unfortunately there is no legal requirement that sets a time limit on this process. In truth Hollins/Cemex can work until Hell freezes on repetitive permit extensions, science be damned. In truth, the Water District cares more about law and how it can be manipulated than science. Thank your state legislature for that.

That is all for now, enjoy the rain!

Dan Hilliard