

Outline of likely comments by Jack Leppert
as a panelist at meeting by 1000 Friends of Florida on Feb 25-26

Successes, Concerns and Opportunities
as related to restoring water quality at Wakulla Springs

Successes

At long last the science, the politics, the will, and the support exists
An expensive and divisive trial was avoided - mediation was successful
A viable program of Spring's biological restoration is progressing
Capable and committed City leadership and project director are in place
Changed sprayfield farming impacts are producing "downstream" results

Concerns

Effects of the new sprayfield farming practices are not yet well known
Overuse or untimely scheduling of re-use could become damaging
Water quality measurements from down-gradient sample well sites,
especially weather event correlated samples, are not taken or
publicly reported often enough
Any reduction of general research support from the two Geological
Survey units or DEP could undercut our knowledge flow
Reductions in environmental reporting from the media could lead to an
under-informed, and thus unappreciative public.
City fiscal constraints relating to the 6-year plan are a possibility

Opportunities (as distinct from specific recommendations)

A collaborative plan of scheduled public reporting of progress would
communicate and support deserved credit and explain any delays.
Accelerated progress toward a multi-government, multi advocacy group
collaborative for the explicit purpose of enacting septic and other
waste management processes should be actively encouraged.
Begin the process soon to prepare for the next permit renewal
cycle which will occur in 3 years so that it can occur in a timely
fashion and thus not once again become a contentious process
The city's oversight committee could play a more active and public role.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW UP ACTIONS
AS RELATED TO CITY WASTE WATER TREATMENT
IN SUPPORT OF THE RESTORATION OF WAKULLA SPRINGS

By Jack Leppert on February 25, 2009

That There Be:

MORE DOWN-GRADIENT RESEARCH, scientifically designed, adequately funded, and useful to the city, the public, DEP and all others participating in and monitoring these landmark efforts. Periodic as well as event triggered measures from “downstream” chemical, biological and hydrological variables would be exceedingly helpful to researchers, the public, and communities worldwide.

REDUCED LOADING - That there be a long term commitment to reduce weekly discharge amounts at the current Southeast Sprayfield below the maximum 3.2 inch rule standard (and lesser during periods of heavy rainfall) and that the City and County together seek and select a second major sprayfield site in preparation for regional growth and the next permitting cycle.

INCREASED PUBLIC REVIEW AND REPORTING - by the city, by the media, by those doing formal research, and by independent evaluators of this landmark series of events. These efforts could include a monitoring and review of project progress and difficulties, of the emerging worldwide and local research, and of the oversight of each of the provisions of the permit and of the settlement agreement.