

**Charlie Smith**

**From:** Charlie Smith on behalf of Records Clerk  
**Sent:** Monday, April 15, 2024 2:43 PM  
**To:** 'Barber, Carley'  
**Cc:** Consumer Contact  
**Subject:** RE: Objection to Environmental Utilities, LLC's (EU) Plan for Installation of Central Sewer on Little Gasparilla Island

Good afternoon Carley Barber,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20240032, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance and Outreach.

Best regards,

*Charlie Smith II*

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

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**From:** Barber, Carley <carley.barber@ifco.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 15, 2024 2:27 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>  
**Cc:** Office of Chairman 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>; Office of Commissioner Graham <Commissioner.Graham@PSC.STATE.FL.US>; Office of Commissioner Fay <Commissioner.Fay@psc.state.fl.us>; Lisa Simmons <lisabsimmons@gmail.com>; Steve Egan <steveimprint1@aol.com>; simmonsrandy77@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Objection to Environmental Utilities, LLC's (EU) Plan for Installation of Central Sewer on Little Gasparilla Island

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Good Afternoon Public Service Commission Members,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Carley Barber, and my family has deep roots on Little Gasparilla Island. My mother and father separately own two homes on the island (8230 Little Gasparilla, Placida, FL 33946 & 8270 Little Gasparilla, Placida, FL 33946). They both worked extremely hard and made other sacrifices in their lives so that their children and grandchildren could experience the unique place that is Little Gasparilla Island.

It is unfortunate that I am writing to you yet again to express my strong opposition to Environmental Utilities LLC's (EU) proposed application for wastewater service on our beloved island.

Little Gasparilla Island holds a special place in my heart and in the hearts of many others. Its unique charm, devoid of roads and cars, allows it to retain its pristine natural beauty. I have been coming to the island for over 30 years and I have witnessed the island's tranquil allure and the importance of preserving its unspoiled environment.

In my original letter, I outlined several concerns regarding EU's proposal, including the financial burden it would impose on homeowners and the potential damage to our fragile ecosystem. However, we now have the additional concern that further emphasizes the unsuitability of this project: the effect on the nesting pair of American bald eagles on the north end of the island.

As stewards of our environment, it is our responsibility to protect and respect the habitats of native species, which include the eagles, burrowing owls and many gopher tortoises. The installation and operation of wastewater equipment and services would undoubtedly disrupt the birds' nesting sites, as well as the gopher tortoises' burrows, jeopardizing their safety and survival. Such disruption is not only ethically unacceptable but also legally reprehensible under various environmental protection laws.

Furthermore, the adverse effects of this project extend beyond ecological concerns. The narrow paths and delicate vegetation of our island are ill-suited for the heavy machinery and service trucks required for wastewater installation. The potential destruction of these natural assets would not only diminish the island's aesthetic appeal but also infringe upon the property rights of homeowners. Under EU's plan, the homeowners would not be compensated for this use of their land or any of the landscaping and property destruction that would inevitably be caused by the equipment needed for wastewater installations. They are barely financially and emotionally recovering from the effects of last year's hurricanes on their island homes and under the proposed plan would be responsible for forking over an exorbitant amount for a service they don't want or feel is necessary.

I know that my family would face significant financial hardship due to the proposed wastewater installation. The initial costs and ongoing expenses imposed by EU, which are substantially higher than any other area in Florida, would force them to sell their properties, a devastating and unfair outcome for many people.

We believe that as county commissioners, it is your elected duty to represent your constituents. It is worth noting that aside from those who would personally financially benefit from EU's plan, there are few, if any, residents that have expressed a need or want for this service on the island. This point reinforces the lack of genuine community support for the proposed wastewater service.

This wastewater service project does not make sense for Little Gasparilla Island. There have been no tests and no incidents to suggest that there are any quality issues with the water supply on or around the island. The community on the island has a small town feel and when one person is having a septic truck barged over to have their tank pumped, several others will plan together to have theirs done on the same day. Homeowners on the island talk to each other, help each other and take care of their homes and current septic systems appropriately. Approval of EU's application is going to force so many good, hard-working people off the island and cause an influx of big business, rental companies and new owners who do not appreciate what we have now.

In light of these considerations, I implore you to reject EU's application for wastewater service. The consequences of such a decision would be dire, not only for the residents of Little Gasparilla Island but also for the delicate ecosystem.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that you will make the right decision for the well-being of our island and its inhabitants.

**Carley Barber**

Manager, Customer Data Solutions



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