

Yvette Gillespie

From: Yvette Gillespie on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2024 4:28 PM
To: 'Michelle Brown'
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: RE. Docket #20240032-SU

Good afternoon Captain Michelle Brown,

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.

Sincerely,

Yvette Gillespie

Commission Deputy Clerk I
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399
ygillesp@psc.state.fl.us
Phone: (850) 413-6195

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From: Michelle Brown <shellybrown091@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 9:11 AM
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>
Subject: RE. Docket #20240032-SU

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Hi All,

My name is Michelle Brown and I am emailing you in regards to the proposed central sewer. I have been a resident on Palm Island/Don Pedro Island for 4 years but vacationing here for over 29 years. I strongly oppose the proposed central sewer for the following reasons:

First, a sewer spill in the Intracoastal would be devastating to the local waters. As you probably know, the water quality in Charlotte County suffers tremendously from red tide. As a U.S. Coast Guard Licensed Captain that spends majority of my time on the water, I have personally seen the long-term horrible effects of bad water quality such as thousands of dead fish, dead manatees, dead birds, dead sea grass, sick humans and house pets, and a significant decline in tourism. I strongly advise against the proposed central sewer since the risk of a central sewer leak with an underwater crossing would be much greater than the risk of one or more septic systems developing leaks and spilling in the Intracoastal.

Next, gaining access to homes to install the new system and destroy the existing septic tanks would be a demanding, destructive, and expensive task. Some, if not most, properties on the island have physical constraints or landscaping that will complicate how the applicant gains access to each property. If the project were to move forward, these physical constraints would need to be damaged along with any trees or landscaping around the septic tanks that are currently in place. This will not only be very expensive to each homeowner, but also have negative effects to the wildlife, such as the endangered gopher tortoise, and destroy their habitat.

Lastly, the residents on Palm Island/Don Pedro Island have many concerns and unanswered questions regarding system and installation quality, system maintenance, and emergency preparedness. EU is not a contractor that has won a bid to install sewer systems. There is no performance bond required and we have no single point of recourse in the event of cost overruns or project failure. EU does not have experience installing sewers, especially in non-traditional neighborhoods and environments such as those on Palm Island/Don Pedro Island, which makes me extremely concerned for the quality of the system and installation. As you may know, the only way on and off the island is via boat or car ferry that operates only during certain hours. The applicant has not addressed how the system will be serviced in the event of failure during a storm or other adverse conditions.

Charlotte County regulations require all homes to connect to central water and wastewater within 1 year of availability. I speak for myself and several other residents of Palm Island/Don Pedro Island when I say that there are no benefits to the homeowners or the environment in moving forward with a central sewer. No water quality testing has been done in our area to prove a need for a central sewer. The costs of the mandatory generators, electric equipment, and land destruction are uncertain and estimated to be extremely high which could make the island unaffordable for many residents. The potential of a mass sewer leakage into the Intracoastal would be detrimental to the local waters and wildlife which would directly affect tourism and small businesses on and off the island.

Based on the above reasoning, I am formally requesting that the PSC deny EU's application for wastewater service.

Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Captain Michelle Brown

shellybrown091@gmail.com

727-710-0747

230 Bocilla Drive

Placida, FL 33946