

October 12, 2021

To: Chairman Bill Slaughter
Commissioner Joyce Evans
Commissioner Scottie Orenstein
Commissioner Mark Wisenbaker
Commissioner Demarcus Marshall
Commissioner Clay Griner

Cc: Chad McLeod, Director of Engineering Services
Belinda C. Lovern, County Clerk

Re: Please don't close Folsom Bridge Landing on the Little River at Wells Road

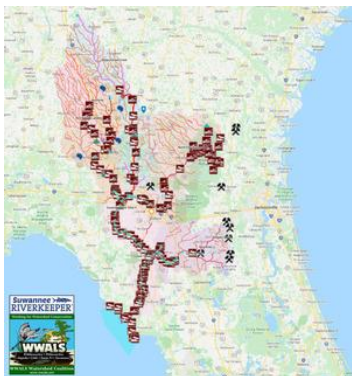


Dear Chairman, Commissioners, and Director,

Related to your agenda for this evening:



6.a. [Abandonment of a portion of Salem Church Road \(CR #68\) and Wells Road \(CR # 68 & CR #69\)](#)



According to the description and map in the board packet, the intent is to close Wells Road completely. That would also close access to Folsom Bridge Landing, which turns off of Wells Road. That is one of only two public access points on the Little River in Lowndes County. Please do not close it.

It is already far, 25 river miles, to the next public access point, Troupville Boat Ramp of off GA 133. If Folsom Bridge Landing is closed, it would be 31 river miles downstream from Cook County Boat Ramp at GA 76 in Cook County. That is much too far for a day trip, and far for a river stretch with no public camping. (The Little River access on Lawson Millpond Road in Brooks County is private, not public.)

Making that already hard paddle even longer would not help with plans to make a Troupville River Camp just downstream from Troupville Boat Ramp. According to the Chairman and the Mayor last Saturday, Lowndes County and Valdosta are working to purchase the 77.14 acres of Land Between the Rivers at the Little River Confluence for establishment of a nature park and Troupville River Camp, with five screened in sleeping platforms with electricity and two bathrooms with hot and cold running water and air conditioning. Those will be less useful if there is no practical upstream access on the Little River to paddle down to Troupville Boat Ramp.

In addition, as Commissioner Demarcus Marshall pointed out yesterday morning, the Mary Turner Lynching Site memorial is also accessed through Wells Road, at the Folsom Bridge Landing turnoff. We work with one of the sponsors of that memorial, Macedonia Community Foundation, and we also are concerned that the descendants might not have access to that memorial.

Further, as the Chairman pointed out yesterday morning, there are other people who live on that road who apparently were not consulted, and who do not want that road closed.

Could we have more process before closing a road? Including contacting all the stakeholders, which in this case would include Macedonia Community Foundation and WWALS, as well as all the landowners on the road.

Meanwhile, at the very least, I ask the county not to close access to Folsom Bridge Landing and the Mary Turner Lynching Site monument. It would also be prudent not to close the road at all if any other landowners on it object.

For the rivers and the aquifer,

John S. Quarterman
Suwannee RIVERKEEPER®
/s/
WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc.

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WWALS is an IRS 501(c)(3)
nonprofit charity est. June 2012

WWALS Watershed Coalition advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.

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