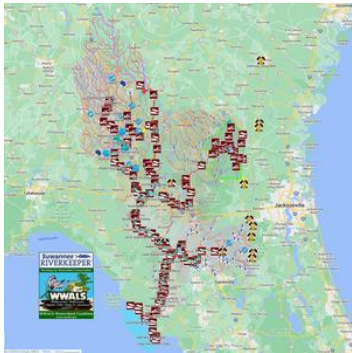
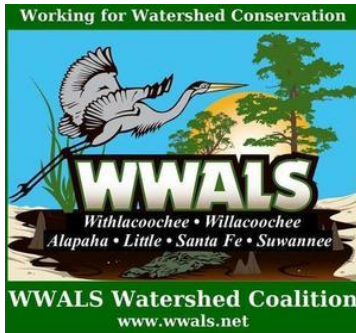


April 6, 2026



PO Box 88, Hahira, GA 31632
850-290-2350
wwalswatershed@gmail.com

www.wwals.net
[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#)
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WWALS is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity est. June 2012.

WWALS advocates for conservation and stewardship of the surface waters and groundwater of the Suwannee River Basin and Estuary, in south Georgia and north Florida, among them the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds, through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.



To: Bradford County BOCC
Carolyn Spooner, Chairwoman
Diane Andrews, Vice Chairwoman
Scott Kornegay, County Manager
945 N. Temple Ave
Starke, FL 32091
Scott_Kornegay@BradfordCountyFl.gov
(904) 966-6280

Re: Douglas Building contamination and future uses

Dear Bradford County,

As I'm sure you are aware, Starke has had occasional sewage spills, although fortunately none reported recently. <https://wwals.net/?p=56093/#starkespills> Increasing the population by about 50% in a detention center would stress the local sewage system and directly detract from community and local business growth capacity, leading to rate increases and fees associated with waste management.

Any sewage spills on the proposed Douglas Building site could adversely affect local water wells and multiple waterways. That would damage recreation and tourism, including ongoing stigma. The site is between Alligator Creek and Prevatt Creek, which end up in the Santa Fe River by way of Lake Rowell and the canal to Lake Sampson, then through the Sampson River. See maps below.

It would be prudent to defer any decision on use of the Douglas Building until results are in from this item on the Consent Agenda for tomorrow: *5.G. Site Access Agreement with Florida Department of Environmental Protection for monitoring of the "Douglas Building" Property – 14281 US Hwy 301 South, Starke, Florida.*

In particular, until that monitoring reveals the current state of the property and any of these steps needed are taken:

- remove, treat and/or dispose of contaminated soils, sediments, and water;
- remove contaminated soil by digging with backhoes, large diameter augers and similar equipment;
- install, operate, and remove remedial equipment;
- install and remove utility connections;
- trenching for connection of remediation wells to equipment;

Plus current and potential effects on neighboring properties, surrounding groundwater, and the creeks.

Finally, let me agree with the Sheriff as recorded in the Minutes for March 3:

- No person would ever be housed on land without proper environmental studies performed by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Lack of such studies could result in financial shortfall, perhaps as the Sheriff also noted:

- Florida was not reimbursed by the federal government (for construction of "Alligator Alcatraz") because it did not follow the proper procedures.

That's in addition to the financial risk of depending on anything from ICE in the currently volatile political situation.

Perhaps the recent attention to the Douglas Building will lead to better possibilities for its use, alternatives better suited for Bradford County as per the Commission's mission statement to "protect the health, safety and welfare of and to positively impact the lives of the citizens of our community through the provision of high-quality, cost-effective local government services."

After FDEP has reported results from the environmental studies.

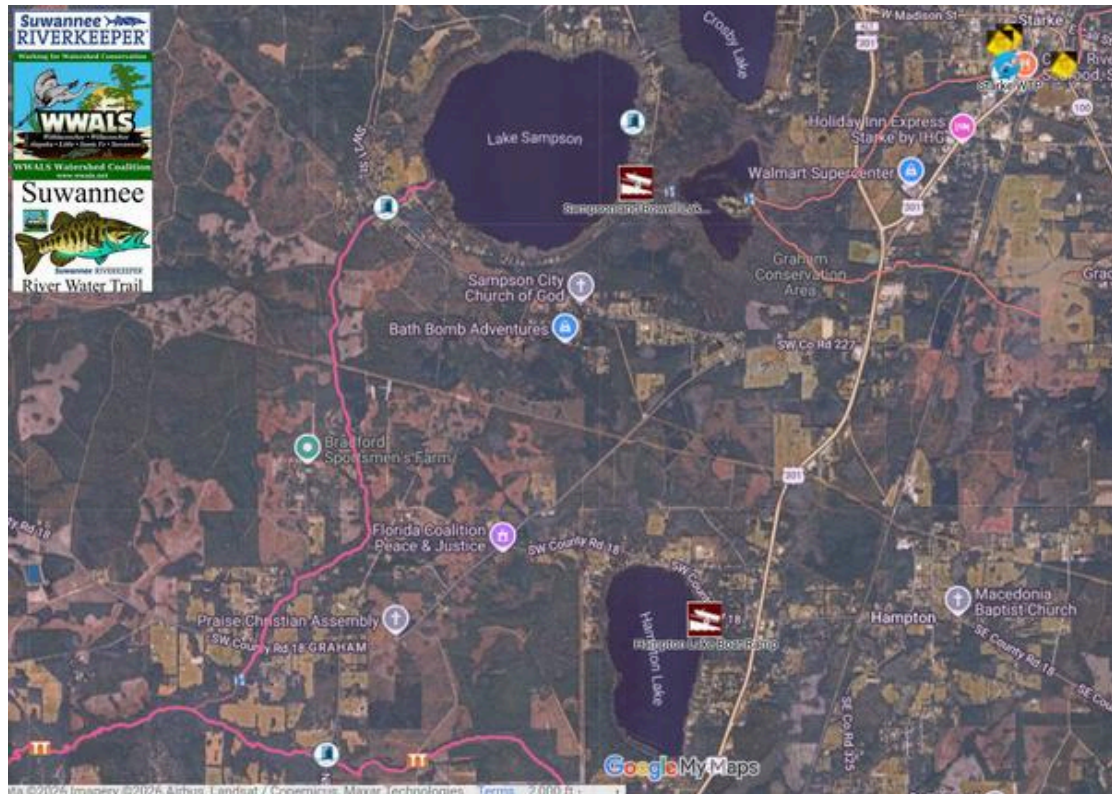
For the rivers and the aquifer,



John S. Quarterman, Suwannee Riverkeeper and Executive Director
229-560-4317



Map: Douglas Building just below the 301 marker; between Alligator and Prevatt Creeks. The yellow diamonds by Starke in the upper right mark sewage spill sites.



On to Lake Rowell, the canal to Lake Sampson, the Sampson River, the Santa Fe River, and the Suwannee River. Maps by WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (WWALS).