

RESOLUTION 2017 -01

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF HAMILTON COUNTY, FLORIDA DEMANDING PROTECTION OF THE WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER, THE ALAPAHOOCHEE RIVER, THE ALAPAHA RIVER AND THE SUWANNEE RIVER FROM THE ILLEGAL DISCHARGE OF RAW SEWAGE BY THE CITY OF VALDOSTA, GEORGIA.

WHEREAS, the Withlacoochee River forms the Western boundary of Hamilton County, Florida from the Florida/Georgia state line until its juncture with the Suwannee River; and

WHEREAS, the Withlacoochee River provides recreational and economic benefits to the citizens of Hamilton County and others; and

WHEREAS, citizens of Hamilton County depend on clean water from the Withlacoochee River watershed for activities of daily life as well as for agricultural, business, and recreational purposes; and

WHEREAS, the health and welfare of many Hamilton County citizens is directly harmed by any degradation of the quality of water in the Withlacoochee River and its watershed; and

WHEREAS, the City of Valdosta, Georgia over the past several years has experienced numerous failures and spills with their wastewater treatment facility; which resulted in the construction of a new facility that was placed into service in 2016; and

WHEREAS, the City of Valdosta, on January 22, 2017, had yet another failure which resulted in the release of 2.2 million gallons of raw sewage and stormwater into the Withlacoochee River; and

WHEREAS, the Hamilton County Health Department has issued numerous health advisories warning of the dangers of contact with the waters contaminated by sewage discharged into the Withlacoochee River by the City of Valdosta, Georgia. Further testing by the Health Department has shown the presence of enteric bacteria in well water in test wells adjacent to the Withlacoochee River; and

WHEREAS, on numerous occasions residents of Hamilton County, near the Withlacoochee River, have been advised by the Hamilton County Health Department to use only bottled or boiled water because of potential contamination of their well water; and

WHEREAS, it was recently reported that the January 27, 2017, discharge of sewage also contaminated Mud Creek, which flows into the Alapahoochee River, then into the Alapaha River and into the Suwannee River, all in Hamilton County

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Hamilton County and the Hamilton County Development Authority have worked to promote our rivers to attract business and to increase tourism; and

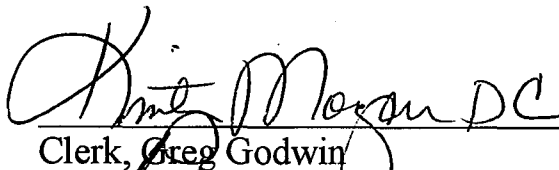
WHEREAS, there currently exist numerous statues and regulations of the State Governments of Florida and Georgia, as well as those of the United States of America, which prohibit the discharge of sewage into the Withlacoochee River, the Alapahoochee River, the Alapaha River and the Suwannee River.

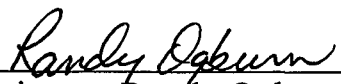
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of County Commissioners of Hamilton County, Florida respectfully requests that the Governors of the State of Florida and the State of Georgia, and other elected leaders of both states, seek every appropriate remedy through every relevant agency of the State and Federal Governments to stop the discharge by the City of Valdosta, Georgia into the waters of the Withlacoochee River, the Alapahoochee River, the Alapaha River and the Suwannee River:


DULY ADOPTED in regular session, this 21st day of February 2017.


Attest:


BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HAMILTON COUNTY, FLORIDA



Clerk, Greg Godwin

By: 
Chairman, Randy Ogburn


Commissioner, Josh Smith


Commissioner, William Mitchell


Commissioner, Robert E. Brown


Commissioner, Beth Burnam