



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Rick Scott
Governor

Jennifer Carroll
Lt. Governor

Herschel T. Vinyard, Jr.
Secretary

April 4, 2011

County Commissioner

APR ' 7 2011

Mr. Charles R. "Randy" Oliver
Administrator
Escambia County
P.O. Box 1591
Pensacola, FL 32591-1591

Dear Mr. Oliver:

A recent email from Escambia County Commissioner Gene Valentino has been brought to my attention, and it causes me some concern. On March 31, 2011, Commissioner Valentino, in an email to Keith Wilkins and others, was very critical about the efforts of the state, BP, and the federal government in coming up with a plan for continuing offshore and onshore oil cleanup. He also mentioned criminal negligence as it relates to these efforts. Those are very strong words, and I believe based on that, we need to respond to this email.

Since the very beginning of the Deepwater Horizon disaster, we at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have worked hard to ensure that all the impacts of the spill were promptly and thoroughly managed within the best of our ability. We have forged a very strong and positive working relationship with Escambia County staff and elected officials, as well as the other affected counties in the panhandle. Staff from many areas within DEP have been on the job, and remain on the job, and have been as responsive as humanly possible to the continuing issues you are facing. When Commissioner Valentino raised issues related to laboratory testing and monitoring, I personally arranged a teleconference with my laboratory team to help him understand what we were testing and how the results were interpreted. I can't think of a time when we haven't tried to be as understanding and responsive to issues surrounding the spill and continuing problems.

Throughout the response, DEP has supported a series of conference calls and meetings with the county. These are currently held on Wednesday afternoons of each week. There have also been periodic county specific meetings between BP, the U.S. Coast Guard, and state personnel involved in the response to discuss issues and concerns. Members of the County Commission have participated in these meetings, providing an opportunity for all to hear and discuss concerns related to the response effort.

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I hope that if there is a specific concern that the County Commission has with DEP and our work with you, you will let me know. I commit to you that I will personally engage in trying to reach the best solution possible within our resources.

I look forward to hearing back from the Commission about these serious allegations and concerns.

Sincerely,



Mimi A. Drew

Special Advisor to Secretary Herschel T. Vinyard Jr.

cc: The Honorable Kevin White, Chair, Escambia County
The Honorable Wilson Robertson, Vice-Chair, Escambia County
The Honorable Grover Robinson, Commissioner, Escambia County
The Honorable Gene Valentino, Commissioner, Escambia County
The Honorable Marie Young, Commissioner, Escambia County
Keith Wilkins, Escambia County
Henry Barnet, Director, Division of Law Enforcement, DEP
Shawn Hamilton, Acting Director, Northwest District Office, DEP
Phil Wiczynski, Chief, Bureau of Environmental Response, DEP