



Emerald Coastkeeper, Inc.
P.O. Box 13283
Pensacola, Florida 32591

September 7, 2016

Pensacola City Council
222 West Main Street
Pensacola, FL 32502

Escambia County Development Services
Planning and Zoning
3363 West Park Place
Pensacola, FL 32505

Mayor Ashton Hayward
222 West Main Street
Pensacola, FL 32502

Bill Weeks
City of Pensacola Inspection Services
5th Floor
222 West Main Street
Pensacola, FL 32502

Re: Development on Carpenter's Creek

To Whom It May Concern:

Emerald Coastkeeper has received several complaints recently regarding the declining environmental conditions around Carpenter's Creek in Pensacola. On August 15th, we received a complaint of log-jams and garbage pile-ups in the creek. On August 30th, we received two complaints regarding clear-cutting of vegetation behind the new Mattress Firm located at Davis Highway and Airport Boulevard. It is our understanding that the clear-cutting occurred to prepare land for the construction of an Outback Steakhouse. Trees were completely leveled all the way to the water's edge.

The removal of significant amounts of vegetation around Carpenter's Creek has led to increased flooding, non-flood event erosion, garbage pile-ups at log-jams, and loss of local wildlife. The garbage pile-ups cause water to stagnate, which increases the risk of mosquito-borne illnesses such as West Nile and Zika. The declining state of this environment has also led to a significant reduction in recreational water activities on this creek.

There is an inextricable link between urban development and the degradation of an aquatic environment. Urban development has a significant impact on the interactions of groundwater and surface water, allowing for contamination to impact the aquifer. Development activities also have been linked to a significant reduction in both scope and variety of native wildlife. There is also a link between increased urban development and stormwater runoff, sewer overflow, and personal loss of property.

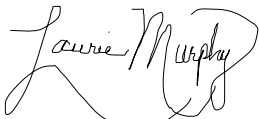
I understand the importance of economic development. I also believe that the Pensacola community recognizes the importance of economic development. I have looked into how the city's missions currently align economic development with the five target areas in the Mayor's *Green Initiatives* report from 2012; Energy, Solid Waste, Land Development & Mobility, Natural Resources and Education & Outreach.

With this letter, we are requesting clarifications as to how the tree ordinance and the Natural Resource initiatives are applied to urban development in regards to the Mayor's Green Initiatives. I would also like to entertain a proposal for an expansion of the *Green Initiatives* through the addition of pervious pavement incentives. I also would like to propose application of an environmental protected area to all riparian zones near commercial development, extending up to 300 feet from the water's edge. This protected area would apply to riparian zones on or near property zoned for commercial use, whether under the city or county jurisdiction or both. These protected areas would be applied to all current and future development.

It is important for us to make a collective effort to resolve problems associated with riparian zones within the county. I would like to work with both the city and county to resolve the constraints placed on riparian zones and allow for the protection of them to be part of the *Green Initiatives*. I also would like to add additional initiatives to become part of the five target areas, or to be added as an additional objective, such as the pervious pavement incentives.

Thank you for your time and attention to this serious matter. I am looking forward to working on this collective effort.

Regards,



Laurie Murphy
Executive Director
Emerald Coastkeeper, Inc.
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