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Wakulla Springs Alliance

"Protecting and restoring water quality, spring flow and ecological health of Wakulla Spring."

April 24, 2016

Mr. Brett J. Cyphers
Executive Director
Northwest Florida Water Management District
81 Water Management Drive
Havana, FL. 32333

Dear Mr. Cyphers:

Re: Ames Sink Acquisition Proposal

Approximately 30% stormwater from Tallahassee flows south through the Lake Munson watershed. This water has been traced from the Capital to Wakulla Springs. After passing through Lake Munson, the water flows underground into the aquifer, through a geological feature named Ames Sink. It is located in Bradford Brook on Cottonwood Lane about a mile north of the Leon/Wakulla County line. Scientists released dye in Ames Sink and it reached Wakulla Spring 21 days later---a distance of six miles.

Ames Sink is a unique geological feature which serves educational and scientific purposes. The Northwest Florida Water Management District maintains a flow meter in the sink and water quality testing is conducted there sporadically. Palmetto Expeditions has conducted monthly "Saving Wakulla Springs" educational tours of this portion of the Wakulla Spring Basin for the past three years and Ames Sink is a popular stop during the tour. Mr. Sam Wommack has graciously permitted these tours on his property. Hundreds of county residents have observed this geological phenomenon during these tours. Four Leon County Commissioners, Democrat Publisher Skip Foster, and Representative Gwen Graham have taken the tour and seen Ames Sink. Acquisition of this property should ensure the continuation of education tours, scientific monitoring and research and also help to mitigate flooding problems on private property and reduce local pollution thereby protecting Wakulla Spring.

Relatively recent acquisitions in the Munson watershed have contributed to the protection of Wakulla Spring. In 2010 Leon County obtained the 8- Mile Pond tract consisting of 132 acres. Munson Slough flows into and out of 8-Mile Pond and then continues to Ames Sink ½ mile downstream. The cave conducting the water from Ames Sink to Wakulla Spring passes beneath the 700 acre Chason Woods property purchased in 2013 by the state and

managed as a state forest by the Florida Forest Service. The property is in Leon County and borders the south county line and State Road 61.

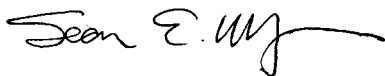
Ames Sink is privately owned by Mr. Wommack and his son, Kenneth Wommack. They each own two lots. The two lots that contain Ames Sink (#36 and 007-0) are often flooded by the stormwater draining from Tallahassee. The lots are not developable due to this frequent flooding. Mr. Wommack lives in a frame house on lot 37, parts of which also flood. He has lived there over 20 years. His wife died on April 3rd. He is 84 and is a willing seller. His two lots (combined as Parcel ID: 4611160000370) and his son's lot which includes a portion of the sink (Parcel ID 4611050000070) totaling 3.5 acres should be acquired.

Management would involve periodic inspections to protect the property from littering and other possible abuses. As it is only ½ mile from the county's 8-Mile Pond, such inspections should be simple. It seems that the county would be the appropriate manager. Another advantage of this project is to satisfy some of the county's responsibility for the Wakulla Springs and River BMAP requirements. Funding partners may include Leon County, Blueprint and the NFWFMD springs appropriation. The Property Appraiser's total market value for the three lots is \$105,000.

There is a precedent for this type of acquisition. The Trust for Public Lands, using donated funds, acquired Rose Sink, in Columbia County that was proven to be connected by cave to Ichetucknee Springs five miles downstream. The purpose of the acquisition was to protect the water flowing to the springs and to permit educational and scientific activities that benefit the springs.

The Wakulla Springs Alliance requests that the Northwest Florida Water Management District give serious consideration to acquiring these three lots to contribute to the protection of Wakulla Springs.

Sincerely,



Seán E. McGlynn, President
Wakulla Springs Alliance
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Tallahassee, FL 32301
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cc: Ms. Mary Ann Lindley
Leon County Commission