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# Wakulla Springs Alliance

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

May 25, 2022

Tallahassee City Commission

300 South Adams Street

Tallahassee FL 32301

Dear Mayor Dailey:

I write on behalf of the Wakulla Springs Alliance Board to seek your assistance in persuading staff of the city Electric and Gas Utility to be more proactive in lobbying Origis Services to stop using herbicides to control vines and weeds under the solar panels at the airport solar farm. As you may know, Origis manages the solar farm for the owner, KKR, which leases the land from the city to produce electricity which it sells to the city.

An inquiry that we initiated on May 21, 2021, revealed that Origis was using Roundup and Oust at that time to control weeds under the lower ends of the fixed solar panels where their mowing equipment could not reach. We attempted to encourage Origis to take a serious look at using sheep grazing in lieu of the herbicides as is being done by several electric utilities in Florida and at some other solar farms managed by Origis.

Ultimately Origis rebuffed our proposal after we requested more detailed information about their use of herbicides. In February, we asked David Byrne to assist in persuading Origis to consider the sheep grazing alternative (see attached letter). Mr. Byrne's response has been that he sent a copy of our letter to Origis and that they have not replied.

We believe that as lessor of the land upon which the solar farm operates and as the sole customer for the power, the City of Tallahassee ought to be making certain that the operation does not pose risks of ground water contamination that may negatively affect nearby private wells and/or the water quality of Wakulla Spring. We detail this argument in the attached letter to Mr. Byrne.

We request that you call upon city staff to brief the City Commission on this matter and that you urge them to be more proactive about making certain that one of our city's most noteworthy environmental initiatives is, in fact, not posing a potential hazard to the local environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert A. Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" being more prominent and the last name "Williams" following in a similar style.

Robert A. Williams, Chair

Wakulla Springs Alliance

Cc: David Byrne

Attachment