



Marion County
Board of County Commissioners

McPherson Governmental Complex

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District 1 – David Moore, Commissioner
District 2 – Kathy Bryant, Chairman
District 3 – Stan McClain, Commissioner
District 4 – Carl Zalak III, Vice Chairman
District 5 – Earl Arnett, Commissioner

May 3, 2016

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jacksonville District Regulatory Division
Jacksonville Permits Section
Attn: Mr. Mark R. Evans
Post Office Box 4970
Jacksonville, Florida 32232

RE: Sabal Trail Transmission and Sabal Trail Citrus County Line projects within
Marion County, Florida

Dear Mr. Evans:

Over 30 miles of pipeline are expected to be installed within Marion County, Florida for the Sabal Trail Transmission and Sabal Trail Citrus County Line projects. These pipelines will cross important, sensitive environmental lands. While construction on these lands is not unusual in Marion County, this project is somewhat unique and we would like to have a better understanding of what has been considered and what best management practices will be implemented. The Citizens of Marion County continue to ask us questions which we have relayed to Sabal Trail, and we hope that between their responses and the Corps permitting review, assurances can be provided.

To familiarize you with Marion County, Marion County is home to three First Magnitude Springs, of which both Silver and Rainbow Springs are recognized as two of the largest spring formations in the world. This project passes within 1 mile of the headspring of Rainbow Springs. The flow paths that feed these springs are part of an underground karst network reaching far beyond the county's boundaries and producing average flows greater than 700 cubic feet per second.

While Sabal Trail project reports identify that Marion County is karst sensitive, we are unable to find specific details associated with their analysis of the Marion County portion of the project (approximate mile post 369 to 399). It would surprise us if there are no closed topographic depressions and other karst features at and within 0.25-mile of the

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project corridor. We would like to review their findings, know what construction techniques are being used in this karst environment, and most especially know more about the pipeline's tolerances and how it is expected to react should a sinkhole collapse underneath it.

There are also considerable wetlands being impacted by the project, many of which are associated with the Marjorie Harris Carr Cross Florida Greenway known for its large extent of undisturbed, rare habitat. Again, we are unable to find specific information regarding such impacts within Marion County and how they will be avoided or mitigated.

It is important for Marion County and our citizens to have a clear understanding of the project's environmental impacts and how those will be mitigated by either construction, operation and/or maintenance best management practices. We ask that the Corps obtain the environmental information necessary for an appropriate regulatory review, or conduct an independent investigation of environmental impacts. We also ask that this information be shared with Marion County. Should you wish to discuss these concerns or request, I can be reached at (352)438-2323, but also feel free to speak with Tracy Straub, PE, our County Engineer at (352)671-8686. Your help in this endeavor is appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Bryant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kathy Bryant
Chairman