

Emerald Coastkeeper, Inc.

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Hays Griffin, P.E.
Florida Department of Transportation
Design Project Manager
1074 Hwy 90 E
Chipley, FL 32428
Office 850-330-1755
Hays.Griffin@dot.state.fl.us

Statement for Public Record
Carpenter Creek Bridge
FDOT
Project ID # 437178-1-52-01
October 27, 2017

Dear Mr. Griffin,

I am writing you in reference to the Carpenter Creek bridge project located on 9th Avenue (State Road 289) in Pensacola, Florida. Several months ago I sent you a request for documents in reference to this project. This letter is an additional support document that my organization is submitting as a result of a recent Town Hall meeting for public comment held by City of Pensacola Councilwoman Sherri Myers.

Emerald Coastkeeper has been an active and passionate organization involved in the restoration of Carpenter Creek for over a year. As a local scientist who has traveled the entire creek bed, I have personally seen the deteriorating effects that urban development has placed on this habitat. Once a heavily wooded watershed full of long-leaf pines, bald cypress, and other native flora, has now become a shallow creek due to significant erosion from increased stormwater runoff.

I have seen the impacts to Carpenter Creek at other bridge locations. Short-spanned bridges that contain deep culverts and riprap narrow the stream channel and create cut-banks downstream due to the increased velocity and scattering effect of the natural stream flow. This condition destabilizes the stream bank, creating erosion; felled trees and a positive feed back system.

We understand that a safe and stable bridge is an important goal for the Florida Department of Transportation. We want to work with your department to help you reach that goal. However, our goal is to make Carpenter Creek safe and stable again as well.



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We hope that your department will work with our organization to address our concerns on how the bridge design could have a negative impact on the future health of this watershed.

Emerald Coastkeeper is requesting that the Florida Department of Transportation re-evaluate the bridge design to include the following factors; a larger bridge span to reduce the impacts of increased hydrological velocity, the use of strong ryzone-type root network of vegetation and native tree varieties in lieu of riprap that can resist water flow up to the high water mark and is drought tolerant on the upper banks. The use of geotextiles like coconut fiber are helpful with the installation of the vegetation, which can provide equal bank stabilization at the bridge supports without degradation of the wildlife habitat and encouragement of erosive impacts.

We are also interested in the type of erosion and sediment control measures used during and post construction. The installation of turbidity gauges both upstream and downstream from the bridge project will allow local scientists to monitor any changes of sedimentation and/or decrease of dissolved oxygen to Carpenter Creek.

Thank you for your time and interest in our official public comment.

Sincerely,

Laurie Murphy
Executive Director
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