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WWALS is an IRS 501(c)(3)  
nonprofit charity est. June 2012.

*Mission: WWALS advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.*



May 13, 2022

To: Mayor and City Council, Valdosta

Cc: Teresa Bolden, City Clerk  
Richard Hardy, Assistant City Manager

Dear Mayor and Council,

This is a request to put trash in Valdosta on the agenda for the next Valdosta City Council meeting.

As you know, for many months there have been discussions about what to do about trash in the City of Valdosta. It turns out there are now at least three vendors of affordable and effective trash booms, suitable for deploying in Sugar Creek, Two Mile Branch, and One Mile Branch, to keep trash out of the Withlacoochee River.

The first year, including purchase, deployment, and shakedown of a boom in each of those three creeks, should cost no more than \$40,000, and successive years no more than \$24,000 to clean out the booms, catalog the trash, etc.

That is one of four main ways we can all greatly reduce the trash problem:

1. Upstream education of fast food outlets and parking lot owners, including deployment of trash cans as required by Valdosta's ordinances, led by trash cans on the City's own parking lots, and backed by enforcement of those ordinances.
2. City Police enforcement of individual littering ordinances and laws.
3. Trash traps on the creeks, including feeding information on brand names and addresses found into education and enforcement.
4. Cleanups as needed, especially as reported through Click 'n' Fix, backed by ordinance education and enforcement.

WWALS will be happy to supply details on the trash boom providers, and specifics on maintenance including cleaning the booms weekly and before and after big rains, as well as recording brand names found in a standard format for use in alerting upstream trash sources and furthering education and enforcement.

WWALS looks forward to an education and enforcement plan by the City. WWALS stands ready to consult on construction and implementation of that plan.

Congratulations to the City on great progress in solving the sewage problem. Solving this trash problem should cost far less.

Less trash should mean much better prospects for eco-tourism, including the planned Troupville River Camp and Nature Park, which benefit by not having trash rafts coming downstream from Sugar Creek. The Withlacoochee River from Langdale Park to Troupville Boat Ramp, and Sugar Creek itself, will become much more attractive venues for boating, hiking, and fishing.

And the children of Valdosta will be at less health risk from trash in the creeks.

For the rivers and the aquifer,

John S. Quarterman, Suwannee Riverkeeper®  
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