

August 21, 2025

To: Teresa Willis
Berrien County Zoning Administrator
229-686-2149
twillis@berriencountyga.gov
201 N. Davis Street Room 122
Nashville GA 31639

Re: Subdividing M&P 061-14-000, 061-16-002, Old Valdosta Rd. & Bradford Rd.

Dear Berrien County Zoning Administrator and Planning Commission,

I write with concern about the proposal to put a housing subdivision in an agricultural area.

As you know, the Berrien County Comprehensive Plan Strategy for an Agriculture Character Area says: "Preserve the rural/agricultural character of these areas by maintaining very low-density residential development primarily accessory to farm operations and large lot sizes." These houses would not be accessory to farm operations.

Two miles south of the subject property, I have experience with a subdivision next to my west field. With it came trespassers, poachers, four-wheelers in fields, trash thrown over my fence into my field, and somebody calling the fire department every time I do a prescribed burn.

That subdivision was used as a precedent for more subdivisions. Fortunately, we the neighbors fought those off. Please listen to the neighbors of Bradford Road.

House lots would produce more runoff, carrying trash and other contamination into Gin Branch Creek that runs north across Bradford Road and west into the Withlacoochee River.

This subdivision would cost more in services than it would bring in in taxes: for Sheriff and Fire on call, and especially for school buses and places in school for the students.

Back in 2007, Lowndes County paid a University of Georgia professor to do a study: "The Local Government Fiscal Impacts of Land Use in Lowndes County: Revenue and Expenditure Streams by Land Use Category," Jeffrey H. Dorfman, Ph.D., Dorfman Consulting, December 2007.

<http://loco.quarterman.org/docs/Lowndes-Report-Final.pdf>

The precise numbers will of course be different for Berrien County and 18 years later, but they will add up to the same conclusions: the farther out from existing services houses are built, the worse return the county will get on taxes. The attached figures from that report show negative returns for residential land use for five Georgia counties.

The county has to supply Sheriff and Fire on call, and most expensively regular school buses. Tax revenues from lots such as are proposed would never be enough to pay for those services. This should be a concern for Berrien County Commissioners. Taxpaying citizens should care, because their taxes would subsidize these services to these new houses.

I ask the Planning Commission to recommend denial, and I ask the Berrien County Commissioners to deny the subdividing needed for this subdivision.

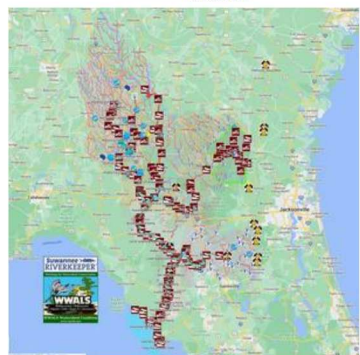
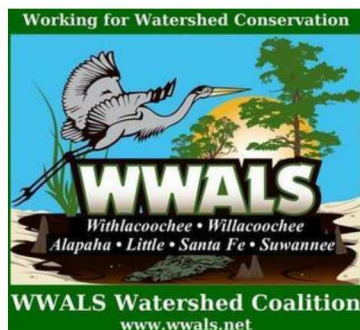
For the rivers and the aquifer,

John S. Quarterman



Suwannee Riverkeeper
229-560-4317

Attachment: Revenues per \$1 in Expenditures by Land Use from Dorfman Report



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

WWALS advocates for conservation and stewardship of the surface waters and groundwater of the Suwannee River Basin and Estuary, in south Georgia and north Florida, among them the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds, through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.

