

Bluffton Opinion

Enough May River studies already

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By [Joe Croley](#)

WHEN LIFE IS FAIR

When life is fair, at the proposed May 12 meeting between the Town of Bluffton and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, they will announce it is just a very late April Fool's joke, that they are going to combine to do additional study and validation of the problems affecting the well-on-its-way-to-dying May River.

Exactly what is there left to be studied? Now according to Webster's Dictionary, "study" can be defined as a careful examination or analysis of a phenomenon, development or a question.

Although quite out of context, the phenomenon of the May River being polluted by development cannot be questioned.

So now, after we have had the S.C. Department of Health & Environmental Control study the river, the Beaufort County Stormwater Commission study the river and the May River Watershed Commission study the river and confirm the findings of Dr. Fred Holland that after you had 20 percent of the area covered with impervious surface, disaster looms within the watershed, we are going to partner with the mother of all bureaucracies, the Federal Government, to tell us what we already know.

We certainly should welcome the EPA since they have done such a fine job protecting the Gulf of Mexico from oil spills.

Apparently the EPA is also going to present their concepts as they relate to some nebulous term of Sustainable Communities Building Blocks, another thing the federal government is famous for, building high rise tenements or tent cities to ease population growth in the times of crisis.

The South Carolina Coastal Conservation League presented a plan a year or two ago to both County Council and the Bluffton Town Council that addressed this very subject with local knowledge of the affected area and was given the normal thank-you-very-much-for-your-presentation-now-go-away attitude while we study some more and continued to approve new growth and modify existing developments agreements to give builders more legal leeway to increase the magnitude of the pollution problem.

Although I recognize that new development means more tax revenue coming in, consequently allowing the government entities to avoid the tough economic decisions that are looming after the 2012 reassessments, growth comes with a price, more police, more fire protection, more schools and certainly more impervious roads, one thing is certain, it is never free.

The May River Watershed Committee at its most recent meetings has seemed to be chomping at the bit to start to take actions that may help preserve the local waterways, but appears to be handcuffed by the regional bureaucrats.

Bringing in the federal government will only delay any positive steps being taken by the folks most familiar with the problem. Tell the Feds, thank you very much, now go away: actions speak louder than studies.

In the meantime, you can contact **Joe Croley** at Whenlifeisfair@hargray.com