

Have formal oral comment.
Mr. Lopez asked another question

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TCEQ Public Meeting Form

Thursday, May 15, 2008

LCS Corrections Services, Inc.
Proposed Water Quality Permit
No. WQ0014802001

TEXAS
COMMISSION
ON ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY
2008 MAY 21 PM 2:43
CHIEF CLERKS OFFICE

PLEASE PRINT:

Name: Lionel Lopez

Address: 4325 Philippine

City/State: Corpus Christi TX Zip: 78411

Phone: (361) 854-5248

Please add me to the mailing list.

Are you here today representing a municipality, legislator, agency, or group? Yes No

If yes, which one? South Texas Colonia Initiative

IF YOU WANT TO GIVE FORMAL COMMENT PLEASE ✓ BELOW

I wish to provide formal oral comments.

I wish to provide formal written comments at tonight's public meeting.
(Written comments may be submitted any time during the meeting)

Please give this to the person at the information table. Thank you.

mw



STCI
South Texas colonia Initiative, Inc.
 Lionel Lopez, Director *Juanita Lopez*, Office Manager
 4325 Philippine, Corpus Christi, TX 78411
 Phone/fax 361-854-5248 juanita@southtexascolonia.org

April 28, 2008

Office of the Chief Clerk
 MC-195
 P.O. Box 13087
 Austin, TX 78711

MWD
58720
PM *OPA*
 MAY 01 2008
 BY *BP*

TEXAS
 COMMISSION
 ON ENVIRONMENTAL
 QUALITY
 CHIEF CLERKS OFFICE
 2008 MAY -1 AM 10:45

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

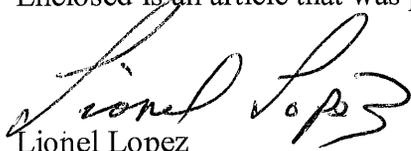
RE: public meeting on Application No. WZ0014802001 filed by LCS Corrections Services, Inc.

My name is Lionel Lopez with South Texas Colonia Initiative, Inc., a non-profit organization that has been helping colonia residents in Nueces, Kleberg, Jim Wells, and San Patricio Counties for close to 30 years. It came to our attention that TCEQ will be holding a meeting here in Corpus Christi at the Holiday Inn Airport May 15th. We have received calls from residents from Lost Creek Colonia complaining about transportation. Round trip from Lost Creek to the Holiday Inn Airport and back is close to 100 miles. Most residents living in Lost Creek are not able to make the trip due to health conditions, no vehicle, gasoline prices, or are elderly. We are asking you to please move the meeting place to Robstown which is a lot closer.

Residents are very concerned about the permit filed by LCS. When there is rain in the area, Lost Creek Colonia floods due to Petronila Creek being so full of debris. **The creek is blocked;** any water that goes into the creek has nowhere to go. It remains stagnant, mixes in with the contaminated water already in the creek and flows in to the colonias. If LCS is permitted to discharge water into the creek it could be disastrous to the colonia residents living in the area.

Mr. Israel Carasco (361-854-9982) and Launa Bacco (360-540-0369) are co-community leaders in Lost Creek Colonia if you have further questions please contact them or Lionel Lopez (361-854-5248).

Enclosed is an article that was published this past weekend.


 Lionel Lopez
 South Texas Colonia Initiative, Inc.

cc: Zandra Zuniga, Senator Juan "Chuy Hinojosa", Corpus Christi office
 Dr. Julie Tuason, Texas Stream Team, Texas State University at San Marcos
 Sinoel Contreras, Nueces County Colonia Ombudsman

jl

MWD



George Gongora/Caller-Times

Petronila Creek, which starts one mile southeast of Banquete and flows about 44 miles into Kleberg County before emptying into Alazan Bay, is dry in some areas because debris has blocked the flow of water near the Lost Creek colonia. The creek has high levels of chloride, sulfate and total dissolved solids, especially in the area southeast of U.S. Highway 77, according to state documents

PETRONILA from **1B**

Petronila Creek has been clogged for years, residents say, but the matter has taken on a new sense of urgency for Lopez, who worries about a proposed wastewater discharge permit for a new prison just north of Lost Creek.

"If they don't clean this up before the discharge starts, there's going to be a big problem," Lopez said while touring the creek bed recently. The creek floods during rain events, and Lopez worries the extra water discharge could cause flooding.

The company building the prison, LCS Correction Services of Louisiana, applied to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality last May. The permit calls for no more than 150,000 gallons per day of treated wastewater to be discharged into a ditch that leads to Petronila Creek. It has received preliminary approval.

Commission spokeswoman Lisa Wheeler declined to comment on the permit application except to say the facility will be monitored for compliance if the permit is granted. Amy Hesseltine, project manager for LNV Engineering, which is working on the permit for LCS, said maintenance of the creek is outside the scope of the permit. Both encouraged the public to address their concerns at a public hear-

ing on the permit set for 7 p.m. May 15 at the Holiday Inn Airport in Corpus Christi.

"We're complying with the rules and regulations," Hesseltine said.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality is not required under state law to remove the debris because Petronila Creek is considered non-navigable, Wheeler said. The agency does investigate blockages of navigable waterways and can use a dragline to remove obstacles.

The private prison, which will house federal prisoners, is set to open next month. Lopez has been knocking on doors in the Lost Creek colonia to encourage residents to attend the public hearing.

Lopez tested creek water twice and hasn't found E. coli bacteria, though some other undetermined types of bacteria were present, he said.

Most strains of E. coli are harmless, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Some strains, however, can cause diarrhea, nausea, cramps and headaches. Severe cases can lead to kidney damage and death. Children, the elderly and people with weak immune systems are especially susceptible.

Julie Tuason, environmental education coordinator for the Texas Stream Team at Texas State University in San Marcos,

trained Lopez and four others to test for E. coli. The Texas Stream Team is an educational rather than regulatory agency, though results volunteers find could be taken to agencies such as the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality if they show cause for further investigation, Tuason said.

Elevated bacteria levels in 25 percent of at least 10 readings indicate a likely problem, she said.

"One elevated reading is not sufficient to be treated as a cause for concern," Tuason said.

Testing should be done in various weather conditions, as E. coli is more likely to be high after rains, Tuason said. This can be especially true in colonias, which are low-income developments that often lack potable water, paved roads and sewer systems.

Petronila Creek is on a list of waterways to be improved through a Texas Commission for Environmental Quality and Environmental Protection Agency program. The creek has high levels of chloride, sulfate and total dissolved solids, especially in an area southeast of U.S. Highway 77 where brine pits and brine injection wells are most common, according to state documents. 4-27-08

Contact Denise Malan at 886-4334 or maland@caller.com

LOCAL / TEXAS

Colonia residents concerned about creek

Water sickens pets, leaves sores on kids, people in the area say

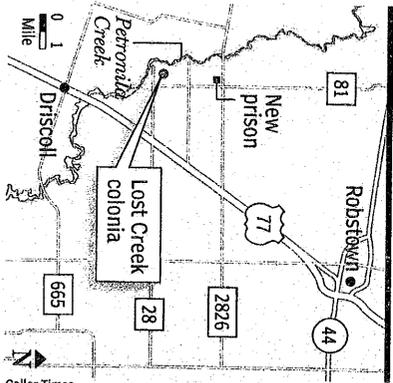
BY DENISE MALIAN

Caller-Times

ROBSTOWN — Israel Carrasco won't let his grandkids or any other neighborhood children play in the stagnant area of Petronila Creek that runs along his property.

"It's poison to me," Carrasco said. "I'm afraid all this poison water is going into the ground and it's getting in my water well."

The creek water, nearby residents say, leaves sores on children's rums and has sickened livestock and pets. The creek is so clogged with trees, limbs and other debris that its southeasterly flow is



Caller-Times

blocked. People dump animal carcasses and trash in the creek, which residents worry is teeming with bacteria and other pollutants.

"They need to clean it so that it's running all the time. Then it will

be fresh," said Carrasco, who along with his son owns 15 acres in the Lost Creek colonia southwest of Robstown. Petronila Creek starts one mile southeast of Banquete and flows about 44 miles into Kleberg County and empties into Alazan Bay.

Lionel Lopez, founder of the South Texas Colonia Initiative, completed training about three weeks ago to test the water for E. coli bacteria and started taking samples April 17. Results so far are not statistically significant to draw a conclusion. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality monitors for bacteria quarterly at two stations east of U.S. Highway 77, and those have not shown elevated levels.

Please see **PETRONILA 2B**



Lionel Lopez, founder of the South Texas Colonia Initiative, takes a water sample from Petronila Creek near the Lost Creek colonia, southwest of Robstown. Residents have complained that the creek is polluted. Lopez and volunteers have been trained to test for bacteria.

George Gongora/Caller-Times



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Lionel Lopez, Director *Juanita Lopez*, Office Manager
4325 Philippine, Corpus Christi, TX 78411
Phone/fax 361-854-5248 juanita@southtexascolonia.org

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Lionel Lopez
South Texas Colonia Initiative, Inc.

cc: Zandra Zuniga, Senator Juan "Chuy Hinojosa", Corpus Christi office
Dr. Julie Tuason, Texas Stream Team, Texas State University at San Marcos
Sinoel Contreras,

jl

Done formal oral comment. (5)

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TEXAS
COMMISSION
ON ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY

PLEASE PRINT:

Name: Mayor Rodrigo Ramon Jr

Address: 101 E Main Ave

City/State: Robstown, Tx Zip: 78380

Phone: (361) 387-4589

Please add me to the mailing list.

Are you here today representing a municipality, legislator, agency, or group?

Yes No

If yes, which one? Robstown

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Formal oral comment (4)

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No. WQ0014802001

CHIEF CLERKS OFFICE

2008 MAY 21 PM 2:43

TEXAS
COMMISSION
ON ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY

PLEASE PRINT:

Name: ELIAS R. VASQUEZ

Address: 622 HUISACHE ST.

City/State: ROBSTOWN, TX Zip: 78380

Phone: (361) 389-3621

Please add me to the mailing list.

Are you here today representing a municipality, legislator, agency, or group? Yes No

If yes, which one? CITY OF ROBSTOWN - MAYOR PRO-TEM

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