

UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

2012-2013



RESOLUTION: 1213-R-001



Submitted by: *Aaron Traywick, College of Arts and Sciences Senator*
Evan Brock, College of Arts and Sciences Senator
Jordan Green, International Student Senator

Date: *October 17, 2012*

Title: *Resolution in Support of UAB USGA, UA USGA, and Birmingham City Council Opposition to the Proposed Shepherd Bend Mine*

- I. WHEREAS: The University of Montevallo Student Government Association, in keeping with the atmosphere of sustainability and environmentally-conscious thought and action of the UM student, faculty, and staff population, believe that safe, affordable drinking water and the environmental health of the Black Warrior River basin are both essential to the quality of life of residents of the Birmingham area and the State of Alabama, AND;
- II. WHEREAS: We believe that the Shepherd Bend Mine would be detrimental to the quality of drinking water and the surrounding area, and to the health of the Black Warrior River itself. This damage would result from the discharge of waste water from the coal mining into the Black Warrior's Mulberry Fork only 800 feet from the drinking water intake for over 200,000 customers of the Birmingham Water Works Board (BWVB), AND;
- III. WHEREAS: Despite widespread opposition, In October 2010 the Alabama Surface Mining Commission issued a permit to Shepherd Bend, LLC for the mining of 286 acres adjacent to the river. The BWVB is appealing this permit and has offered detailed information as to how the wastewater discharges from the mine will introduce heavy metals, sediment, and other pollutants into the water. These pollutants can result in increased treatment costs (typically passed on to customers), decrease water quality, and possible health risks, as well as degradation of the river. The BWVB also stated that a mine this close to a major water intake would be "incompatible" and "unprecedented", AND;
- IV. WHEREAS: Shepherd Bend, LLC has leases necessary to start mining an initial 34 acres. If they choose to mine beyond that first small increment, they will have to obtain leases from other property owners, including the University of Alabama (UA) System, a major owner of both land

and mineral rights at Shepherd Bend. As a practical matter, without the consent and full participation of the UA System, it may not be cost effective to mine Shepherd Bend at all, AND;

- V. WHEREAS: We strongly believe that the damage which would be done to drinking water, the harm to fish and wildlife, and the tons of sediment dumped into the river and the adjacent wetlands are all excellent reasons to not allow this project to go forward, AND;
- VI. WHEREAS: In support of the City of Birmingham residents and all the citizens living alongside the Black Warrior River's Mulberry Fork, the University of Montevallo Environmental Club has hosted an ongoing petition drive to gain student and citizen signatures from within the Montevallo community. Current signatures of over 300 persons have been obtained, with all copies being sent to all key administrators at the University of Alabama System, AND;
- VII. WHEREAS: The University of Montevallo has a history of successful, public advocacy of opposition to irresponsible, potentially harmful industrial development, as emphasized by the role many of our students, faculty, and administrators played in the defeat of the Ebenezer Swamp quarry. The University and City of Montevallo exist as a testament to just how communities may successfully preserve the sanctity of their tap water drinking supplies, and as such, we have an obligation to our fellow communities within Central Alabama, AND;
- VIII. WHEREAS: The University of Alabama at Birmingham Undergraduate Student Government Association (in consultation with UAB Green Initiative) and the University of Alabama USGA have both recently passed highly-publicized resolutions in opposition to this mine, and in support of the actions and concerns of the Birmingham City Council and BWWB. It is in this same sense of solidarity that this resolution has been presented, as well as in the hopes that other Student Government Associations on universities across the great State of Alabama will follow in our stead.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO STUDENT SENATE: *That we, the UM SGA, in concordance with the UM Environmental Club, UAB USGA, Green Initiative at UAB, and UA USGA, along with significant expressed support from both our student body and the members of our greater community, implore the University of Alabama System to neither sell nor lease their significant land and mineral holdings to allow coal mining at Shepherd Bend, AND;*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: *We urge the University of Alabama System Board to make a swift decision against the sell or lease of land and mineral holdings for mining purposes at Shepherd Bend, AND;*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: *We believe a strong stance against the Shepherd Bend mine would demonstrate the responsiveness of the University of Alabama System Board to the concerns of its students, faculty, and employees, AND;*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT: Copies of this resolution be sent to all trustees of the University of Alabama System, Mr. Darryl Jones, Assistant General Manager of Technical Services at Birmingham Water Works Board; Stephen Swinson, Nicole Bohannon, Randy Bowden, and all other executive officers of the University of Alabama SGA; Ashley Lowe, SGA President; The Honorable Todd Strange, Chairman of the Board of Trustees; Dr. John Stewart III, President of the University of Montevallo; Mr. Billy Hughes, Director of Physical Plant; Dr. Benton Tyler, President of Faculty Senate; Dr. Mary Beth Armstrong, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Jenny Bell, Director of Student Life; and Korey Wilson, Student Trustee.

Ashley Lowe

Ashley Lowe

SGA President (President of SGA)

10/19/12

Date

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Courtney Meadows

Courtney Meadows

Vice President (President of Senate)

10/18/12

Date

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