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UAB Public Health Students Association Urges UA System Trustees to Stop the Shepherd Bend Mine

Birmingham – The UAB Public Health Students Association (PHSA) unanimously passed a [Resolution](#) urging the University of Alabama System Trustees (UA) to stop the proposed [Shepherd Bend Mine](#) from polluting a major drinking water supply for the greater Birmingham area. UA is the major owner of land and minerals coveted by Drummond for a coal mine on the Black Warrior River’s Mulberry Fork in Walker County. The 1,773-acre strip mine would discharge wastewater at 29 proposed outfalls, including one that is 800 feet across the river from a Birmingham Water Works Board intake facility providing tap water to 200,000 people.

The UAB PHSA is concerned that metals and sediment discharged from the Shepherd Bend Mine would lead to decreased water quality and increased filtration fees for consumers. Scientists, businesses, governments, environmental, civil rights and religious organizations, and UA and UAB alumni, faculty and students have all implored UA Trustees not to lease or sell their land and minerals to Shepherd Bend, LLC. That company is owned by Garry Neil Drummond, a Trustee Emeritus of the UA System. Without access to UA’s significant land and mineral holdings, it may not be practical for Drummond to begin mining at Shepherd Bend.

“UAB is a renowned leader in public health research,” said Charles Scribner, Executive Director of Black Warrior Riverkeeper. “It will be interesting to see if the UA System Trustees acknowledge the UAB Public Health Students Association’s strong recommendation on this pivotal public health issue. It is time the UA System stopped this threat to its reputation and our drinking water quality.”

“As students of Public Health we are taught not only to observe the actions taken by ourselves and others, but to understand the consequences of those actions,” said Mimi W. Penhale, President of the UAB PHSA. “We believe the mine proposed at Shepherd Bend will adversely affect the community we live and work in. We hope by passing this Resolution, others will see that we plan to hold our community and its institutions accountable for protecting the lives of its citizens.”

To view the UAB PHSA Resolution, [click here](#).

To read similar resolutions by the Birmingham City Council, UA Student Government Association, UAB Undergraduate Student Government Association, UAB Graduate Student Association, and to view more information, documents, action alerts, maps, pictures, and articles about the Shepherd Bend Mine proposal, [click here](#).

To view an aerial photo by Nelson Brooke, Black Warrior Riverkeeper, showing the water intake facility, the Black Warrior River’s Mulberry Fork, and the proposed mine site, [click here](#).

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Black Warrior Riverkeeper is a citizen-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to protect and restore the Black Warrior River and its tributaries. A member of Waterkeeper Alliance, Black Warrior Riverkeeper was the Alabama Environmental Council’s 2007 Conservation Organization of the Year and the American Canoe Association’s 2008 Green Paddle Award winner. Nelson Brooke, Riverkeeper, won the Alabama Rivers Alliance’s 2010 River Hero Award. For more information contact Charles Scribner, Executive Director, at cscribner@blackwarriorriver.org or 205-458-0095.