

Date Introduced: January 9, 2013

Date Voted Upon: January 9, 2013

A Resolution to be Entitled:
Opposition to the Proposed Shepherd Bend Mine

1 WHEREAS, the UAB Graduate Student Association along with the Green Initiative at UAB and the UAB
2 USGA believe that clean, safe, affordable drinking water and the health of the Black Warrior River basin
3 are both essential to the quality of life of residents of the Birmingham area and the State of Alabama; and
4

5 WHEREAS, we believe that the Shepherd Bend Mine would be detrimental to the quality of Birmingham-
6 area drinking water, and to the health of the Black Warrior River itself. This damage would result from the
7 discharge of waste water from mining into the Black Warrior River's Mulberry Fork only 800 feet from the
8 drinking water intake for over 200,000 customers of the Birmingham Water Works Board (BWWB); and
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10 WHEREAS, despite widespread opposition, in October 2010 the Alabama Surface Mining Commission
11 issued a permit to Shepherd Bend, LLC for the mining of 286 acres adjacent to the river. The BWWB is
12 appealing this permit and has offered detailed information as to how the wastewater discharges from the
13 mine will introduce heavy metals, sediment, and other pollutants into the water. These pollutants can
14 result in increased treatment costs (typically passed on to customers), decreased water quality, and
15 possible health risks, as well a degradation of the river. The BWWB also stated that a mine this close to a
16 major municipal water intake would be "incompatible" and "unprecedented"; and
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18 WHEREAS, Shepherd Bend, LLC has leases necessary to start mining an initial increment of 34 acres. If
19 they choose to mine beyond that first small increment, they will have to obtain leases from other property
20 owners, including the University of Alabama System, a major owner of both land and mineral rights at
21 Shepherd Bend. As a practical matter, without the consent and full participation of the UA System, it may
22 not to be cost effective to mine Shepherd Bend at all; and
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24 WHEREAS, we strongly believe that the damage which would be done to drinking water, the harm to fish
25 and wildlife, and the tons of sediment dumped into the river are all excellent reasons to not to allow this
26 project to go forward; and
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28 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the UAB GSA, in concordance with unanimous Resolutions
29 passed by the UAB USGA, the UA SGA, and the Birmingham City Council, along with expressed support
30 from our student body and many UAB alumni; implore the University of Alabama System to neither sell
31 nor lease their significant land and mineral holdings to allow coal mining at Shepherd Bend; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the University of Alabama System Board to make a swift
34 decision against the sale or lease of land and mineral holdings for mining at Shepherd Bend; and
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36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will send a copy of this Resolution to Chancellor Robert E. Witt
37 The University of Alabama System, 401 Queen City Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401-1551; requesting that
38 he share this Resolution with all UA System Trustees and Administrators; and
39

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we believe a strong stance against the Shepherd Bend mine would
41 demonstrate the responsiveness of the University of Alabama System to the concerns of its students,
42 faculty, and employees.
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45 Author: Tyrel Smith, GSA Senator

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48 Chair of GSA Executive Council



Secretary of GSA

