

**For Immediate Release**  
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**University of Alabama Student Government Association Resolution Opposes the Shepherd Bend Mine**

*Tuscaloosa* – The Student Government Association (SGA) at The University of Alabama (UA) has unanimously passed a [resolution](#) imploring UA leaders to stop the proposed [Shepherd Bend Mine](#) from polluting Birmingham’s tap water source. UA is a major owner of land and mineral rights sought by the mining company Shepherd Bend, LLC for a proposed coal mine on the Black Warrior River’s Mulberry Fork in Walker County. The strip mine would discharge wastewater 800 feet across the river from a Birmingham Water Works Board intake facility providing tap water daily to 200,000 Birmingham-area residents.

SGA Senators at UA voiced widespread concerns that heavy metals and sediment discharged from the mine could lead to decreased water quality and increased filtration fees for Birmingham consumers. The UA SGA is also worried about the negative consequences for their school’s reputation if UA sold or leased property for mining in this uniquely problematic location. The UA SGA’s resolution echoed many points expressed in prior Shepherd Bend Mine opposition resolutions passed unanimously by the Birmingham City Council and the UAB Undergraduate Student Government Association.

In addition to those resolutions, numerous scientists, businesses, civil rights and environmental organizations, and UA and UAB alumni, faculty, and students have implored UA not to lease or sell their land and minerals to Shepherd Bend, LLC. That mining company is owned by Garry Drummond, a Trustee Emeritus of UA. Without access to UA’s significant land and mineral holdings, it may not be practical for the company to pursue their proposed mine at Shepherd Bend.

"I am proud that the UA SGA is supporting the student body and the residents of Alabama by standing up and voicing concerns regarding the Shepherd Bend Mine," said Elliott Bell, UA SGA Senator. "I believe that this will only help to bring a beneficial end to the ongoing struggle to preserve the integrity of Alabama wildlife and our drinking water."

"It is imperative that we as students here at The University of Alabama let our administration know that we are concerned about the health risks the Shepherd Bend Mine could cause," added Sydney Page, UA SGA Senator. "This mine would discharge wastewater into the river, which subsequently runs near our campus, and would negatively affect the purity as well as increase the price of tap water to Birmingham residents. It is my hope that the UA System will see this SGA resolution as a unified effort among students voicing our concerns about the safety of the Black Warrior River and the water it provides to Birmingham residents as well as the preservation of Alabama wildlife."

"The UA SGA does not want the Shepherd Bend Mine to harm the river, the University of Alabama’s reputation, or the drinking water for Alabama’s largest city," said Charles Scribner, Executive Director of Black Warrior Riverkeeper. "By publicly endorsing the SGA’s position, UA’s leaders would send a welcome message of stewardship to their students while putting many concerned citizens at ease."

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

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Black Warrior Riverkeeper ([blackwarriorriver.org](http://blackwarriorriver.org)) 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. In 2011 the Black Warrior became one of America’s [Most Endangered Rivers](#) due to coal pollution.