

Date Introduced: 10/25/14

Date Voted Upon: 11/22/14

A Resolution to be Entitled:

The University of Alabama System Must Stop the Shepherd Bend Mine

WHEREAS, the Norwood Neighborhood Association believes that clean, safe, affordable drinking water and the 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

WHEREAS, we believe the Shepherd Bend Mine would be detrimental to the quality of Birmingham-area drinking water, and to the health of the Mulberry Fork of the Black Warrior River. We are opposed to the discharge of polluted wastewater from coal mining into the Mulberry Fork at Shepherd Bend, the daily drinking water source for 200,000 customers of the Birmingham Water Works Board (BWWB); and

WHEREAS, despite widespread opposition, in July 2008 the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) issued a permit to Shepherd Bend, LLC for the discharge of water pollution at 29 points from coal mining operations on 1,773 acres adjacent to the river in Walker County. Black Warrior Riverkeeper has offered esteemed scientists' detailed information as to how discharges from the mine will introduce heavy metals, sediment, and other pollutants into the river, polluting a major drinking water source. The ADEM permit allows Shepherd Bend, LLC to discharge wastewater with 10 times the level of iron and 40 times the level of manganese recommended by the Safe Drinking Water Act; and

WHEREAS, despite widespread opposition, in October 2010 the Alabama Surface Mining Commission issued a permit to Shepherd Bend, LLC for mining on 286 acres adjacent to the river. The BWWB is appealing this permit and has offered detailed information as to how wastewater discharges from the mine will introduce heavy metals, sediment, and other pollutants into the river. These pollutants can result in increased treatment costs (typically passed on to customers), decreased tap water quality, and possible health risks, as well as degradation of the river. The BWWB also stated that a mine this close to a major municipal water intake would be "incompatible" and "unprecedented"; and

WHEREAS, Shepherd Bend, LLC has leases to start mining an initial increment of 38 acres. If they want to mine beyond that increment, they will have to obtain leases from other property owners, including the University of Alabama (UA), a major owner of land and mineral rights at Shepherd Bend; and

WHEREAS, in concordance with the American Rivers organization, which included the Black Warrior on its 2013 list of America's *Most Endangered Rivers*, we strongly believe the damage which would be done to drinking water, the harm to fish and wildlife, and the tons of sediment dumped into the river are all excellent reasons to not to allow this project to go forward; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Norwood Neighborhood Association, in concordance with Resolutions passed by the Birmingham Citizens Advisory Board, UAB USGA, UAB GSA, UAB Public Health Students Association, UAH SGA, Crestline Neighborhood, Titusville Community, Glen Iris Neighborhood, Forest Park / South Avondale Neighborhood, Highland Park Neighborhood, College Hills Neighborhood, Roebuck Springs / South Roebuck Neighborhood, Crestwood North Neighborhood, South East Lake Neighborhood, and the Birmingham City Council (signed by Mayor Bell), implore UA to neither sell nor lease its significant land and mineral holdings to allow mining at Shepherd Bend; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the University of Alabama System Trustees to make a swift decision against the sale or lease of land and mineral holdings for mining at Shepherd Bend; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we will send a copy of this Resolution to Chancellor Robert E. Witt The University of Alabama System, 500 University Blvd E., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401-1551; requesting that he share this Resolution with all UA System Trustees and Administrators.

President: _____

