

Date Introduced: February 6, 2012

Date Voted Upon: February 6, 2012

**A Resolution to be Entitled
Opposition to the Shepherd Bend Mine Proposal**

1 WHEREAS, the UAB USGA along with the Green Initiative at UAB and the UAB Student Body believe
2 that clean, safe, affordable drinking water and the environmental 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 drinking water
6 and the surrounding area, and to the health of the Black Warrior River itself. This damage would result
7 from the discharge of waste water from the coal mining into the Black Warrior's Mulberry Fork only 800
8 feet from the drinking water intake for over 200,000 customers of the Birmingham Water Works Board
9 (BWVB); and
10

11 WHEREAS, despite widespread opposition, in October 2010 the Alabama Surface Mining Commission
12 issued a permit to Shepherd Bend, LLC for the mining of 286 acres adjacent to the river. The BWVB is
13 appealing this permit and has offered detailed information as to how the wastewater discharges from the
14 mine will introduce heavy metals, sediment, and other pollutants into the water. These pollutants can
15 result in increased treatment costs (typically passed on to customers), decrease water quality, and
16 possible health risks, as well as degradation of the river. The BWVB also stated that a mine this close to
17 a major water intake would be "incompatible" and "unprecedented"; and
18

19 WHEREAS, Shepherd Bend, LLC has leases necessary to start mining an initial 34 acres. If they choose
20 to mine beyond that first small increment, they will have to obtain leases from other property owners,
21 including the University of Alabama (UA) System, a major owner of both land and mineral rights at
22 Shepherd Bend. As a practical matter, without the consent and full participation of the UA System, it may
23 not be cost effective to mine Shepherd Bend at all; and
24

25 WHEREAS, we strongly believe that the damage which would be done to drinking water, the harm to fish
26 and wildlife, and the tons of sediment dumped into the river and the adjacent wetlands are all excellent
27 reasons to not allow this project to go forward;
28

29 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the UAB USGA, in concordance with the Green Initiative of
30 UAB, along with expressed support from our student body and many UAB alumni; implore the University
31 of Alabama System to neither sell nor lease their significant land and mineral holdings to allow coal
32 mining at Shepherd Bend; and
33

34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge the University of Alabama System Board to make a swift
35 decision against the sell or lease of land and mineral holdings for mining purposes at Shepherd Bend;
36 and
37

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we believe a strong stance against the Shepherd Bend mine would
39 demonstrate the responsiveness of the University of Alabama System Board to the concerns of its
40 students, faculty, and employees; and
41

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to President Garrison, all trustees of
43 the University of Alabama System, Birmingham Water Works Board, and to the leaders of the USGA of
44 the University of Alabama Tuscaloosa campus.
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46 Author: Dexter Forbes, President of the UAB Green Initiative
47 Andrew Hayes, USGA Senator-at-Large
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49 Sponsor: Michael Stuckey, USGA Senator-at-Large
50 Jack Wilson, USGA School of Education Senator
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52 Contact: Dexter Forbes, President of the UAB Green Initiative
53 Andrew Hayes, USGA Senator-at-Large