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Birmingham's Citizens Advisory Board Resolution Urges UA to Stop the Shepherd Bend Mine

Birmingham, AL – Representing all 99 of the city's neighborhood associations, Birmingham's Citizens Advisory Board 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.

Birmingham neighborhood leaders and residents are concerned that metals and sediment discharged from the Shepherd Bend Mine would lead to decreased water quality and increased filtration fees for consumers. Businesses, churches, civil rights organizations, environmentalists, government groups, scientists, and UA System alumni, faculty and students have all urged UA 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 to start mining at Shepherd Bend even if Drummond obtains a new waste water discharge permit for the proposed mine. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management is hosting an [August 28 Shepherd Bend Mine public hearing](#) regarding that new draft permit.

"As several cities across this great nation have recently suffered through tap water problems caused by various pollutants, it is refreshing to see Birmingham's leaders take a proactive and preventative stance on the Shepherd Bend Mine," said Charles Scribner, Executive Director of Black Warrior Riverkeeper.

To view the Citizen Advisory Board's Resolution, [click here](#).

For more about the Shepherd Bend Mine, including maps, pictures, documents, and other groups' resolutions, [click here](#).

To view an aerial photo by Nelson Brooke, Black Warrior Riverkeeper, of the proposed Shepherd Bend Mine, the Black Warrior River's Mulberry Fork, and the Birmingham Water Works' Mulberry Intake, [click here](#).

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[The Citizens Advisory Board](#) is Birmingham's one central body which channels policy proposals from neighborhoods into city hall. This body maintains contact with the mayor and the city council, as well as other departments when necessary. Its formal representative structure, derived from all 99 of Birmingham's neighborhood associations, gives it the potential to articulate policy positions as the voice of the neighborhoods.

[Black Warrior Riverkeeper](#)'s mission is to protect and restore the Black Warrior River and its tributaries. The citizen-based nonprofit organization promotes clean water for improved public health, recreation, and wildlife habitat throughout Alabama's Black Warrior River watershed.