

Atlantic Sturgeon. Under the Endangered Species Act, the Army Corps of Engineers must ensure that this project is not likely to destroy or adversely modify habitat needed by these species.

The application also does not fully address the potential hydrological impacts of the mine. The applicant proposes to excavate 25-40 acres of land each year to an average depth of 50 feet. These pits will then be backfilled with homogenized soil from the mining tailings. It is unclear how this soil homogenization will affect the local hydrology. Because changes in groundwater flow from mining operations lower the water table, and because the site has very shallow groundwater, we also are concerned about the impact on adjacent isolated wetlands. The application, again, does not address these potential impacts.

The application indicated that a series of reports are forthcoming which will give information on two of the most prominent concerns we have about the project- the hydrogeology of the area and the methodology and feasibility for stream and wetland construction after mining. We requested an extension to the review process so that we may review these reports and provide more informed comment. Without this critical information needed from the applicant, we must now request the preparation of a full Environmental Impact Statement by your office. We also request that the Corps of Engineers conduct a public meeting to receive public comment on this project. This meeting should be held near to the mining site in Folkston, Georgia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna Laws".

Anna Laws  
St. Marys Riverkeeper