

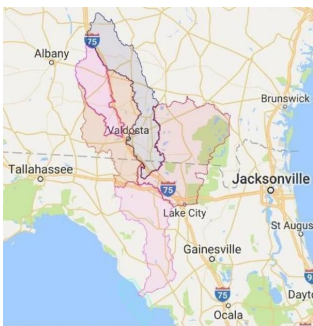
August 21, 2017



WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc



the WATERKEEPER® Alliance
Member for the Suwannee,
Withlacoochee and Alapaha Rivers



- Upper Suwannee River HUC 03110201
- Withlacoochee River HUC 03110203
- Alapaha River HUC 03110202
- Little River HUC 03110204
- Lower Suwannee River HUC 03110205
- Suwannee River Estuary

WWALS Watershed Coalition advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.



To: James Tallman, Chairman
Union County Board of County Commissioners
15 NE 1st Street, Lake Butler, FL 32054
(386) 496-4241
ucbocc@windstream.net

Cc: Scott R. Koons, Executive Director
North Central Florida Regional Planning Council
2009 NW 67th Pl, Gainesville, FL 32653
(352) 955-2200
koons@ncfrpc.org

Re: **Phosphate Mine zoning and land use**

Dear Chairman Tallman, Commissioners, Staff, Director Koons, and NCFRPC,

Thank you for your previous moratorium against phosphate mining Union County.

Please extend it indefinitely to protect your greatest asset: your water.

I had hoped to attend the public workshop today in Lake Butler on review of Comprehensive Land Use changes, but unfortunately nobody can be everywhere.

Please find attached a letter I sent last week to the Bradford BOCC on this subject, and here are YouTube videos I took of all three hours of their meeting last Thursday, August 17, 2017:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHZIBtonJzk&list=PLKwQ5xfKf-Qx9-M3ezSnOUC4lpQaRFbO>

As I mentioned when I spoke that day, yet another reason not to depend on state or federal agencies to enforce permit requirements or to deal with safety is that the Sabal Trail interstate natural gas pipeline LLC has spelled out that not only did they not notify anybody of their recent pair of multiple-day hazardous Mercaptan leaks at the site of their Dunnellon Compressor Station, they are not required to notify anybody. <http://wwals.net/blog/?p=35993>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHZIBtonJzk&list=PLKwQ5xfKf-Qx9-M3ezSnOUC4lpQaRFbO>

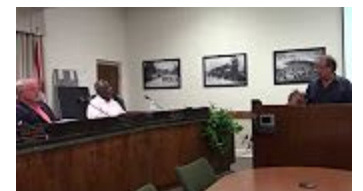
This is more evidence that if you permit a phosphate mine in your county, you, like Marion County Fire Rescue, will be left to deal with the hazardous consequences without assistance from the state or the federal government.

In addition, here are WWALS videos of the previous Bradford BOCC meeting of July 20, 2017, with some comments on the HPS II phosphate mine proposal: <http://www.wwals.net/?p=35374>

As my colleague Suncoast Waterkeeper Andy Mele said to the Bradford BOCC last Thursday, phosphate mining and its health and hydrologic effects are very hard to understand without expert assistance. However, as he and others pointed out, there is no doubt from experience in the Bone Yard of central Florida that property values and human health would go down, while industry and people are likely to flee.



in



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwIdFGfHRyE&index=45&list=PLKwQ5xfKf-Qx9-M3ezSnOUC4lwpQaRFbO>

Louella Phillips came four hours from Mulberry, Florida to tell us all about the people sick, dying, and dead near the Mosaic mine there, while the health department, FDEP, EPA, etc. have not even done a study to find out how bad the problem is. She and her neighbors have had to do their own surveys to get an idea of the extent of the problem, and it is very extensive, from bad bathwater to 10,000 homes contaminated.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwcdFPghLHs&index=44&list=PLKwQ5xfKf-Qx9-M3ezSnOUC4lwpQaRFbO>

The very complexity of phosphate mining is a very strong reason not to permit it. Unlike a manufacturing operation with complexity and effects confined to one building or site, mining by its nature has widespread effects. Effects you would need continual expert assistance to even evaluate, meaning indefinite expenditures even before actual ill effects occur.

Many other people spoke in Starke last Thursday, as you can see for yourself in the WWALS videos. Here is a summary by Jim Tatum of Our Santa Fe River (OSFR):

<https://oursantaferiver.org/bradford-county-packs/>

Several people remarked that they were outsiders because they did not live in Bradford County. Yet many of them live downstream from this proposed mine, and we all live in the Floridan Aquifer, so none of us are outsiders to the potential effects of this mine.

As Ken Cornell, Chairman of the Alachua BOCC remarked Thursday, “this seems to be the center of the world.” He was referring to the Bradford BOCC meeting, but the Union BOCC is the joint center of the world as far as preventing phosphate mining. “You can decide. You have that power,” he said, adding that his county had set aside some funds to assist.



Union County and Bradford County have the opportunity to say, as Ken Cornell suggested, “You know what, you have a lot of money, but we have the people. And the people have spoken to us and they have said the most important resource in our community is our water. The most important resources in our community is creating jobs, not just for our kids, but for our kids. And so we are going to protect something that is only getting more valuable. Clean water is not getting less valuable.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJ7yJfQs-B4&index=36&list=PLKwQ5xfKf-Qx9-M3ezSnOUC4lwpQaRFbO>

The biggest asset any of us, all together, will ever own, is water.

Phosphate mining is complicated, but your choice is not.

Please choose wisely and make your moratorium on phosphate mining permanent.

Sincerely,

John S. Quarterman, Suwannee Riverkeeper
President, WWALS Watershed Coalition
PO Box 88, Hahira, GA 31632
850-290-2350
wwalswatershed@gmail.com