

WHEREAS, the main mined mineral from such mines is titanium dioxide, whose main use is for white paint, which is not worth risking the Okefenokee Swamp, the Suwannee River, or the Floridan Aquifer, and;

WHEREAS, TPM is still under a Florida Consent Order for a range of infractions at Chemours mine sites in north Florida, including letting wastewater escape, not doing required water quality testing, and not doing required reporting, and;

WHEREAS, the president of TPM was one of the proponents of two biomass plants in north Georgia, which caused the state of Georgia to pass a law to stop them from burning railroad ties and causing air and water pollution, and;

WHEREAS, the Franklin County biomass plant caused a massive fish kill, and;

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Commission, which originally supported the biomass plant in its county, since declared it a public nuisance and opened a lawsuit against it, and;

WHEREAS, in October 2020 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers abandoned oversight of the mine site and of TPM's permit application to the Corps, took it up again in 2022, and was ordered by a court in 2022 to lay that oversight down again, with the ultimate resolution in another court case, with further legal decisions, including by the U.S. Supreme Court, leaving Corps oversight in doubt, and;

WHEREAS, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA-EPD) has five permit applications from TPM related to the proposed mine, for which GA-EPD is attempting to do the kind of extensive review that the Army Corps usually does, and;

WHEREAS, the current TPM permit applications are for a demonstration site, yet they own hundreds more acres they plan to mine ever-closer to the Okefenokee Swamp, as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wrote in 2019, "The initial project location is the farthest that mining activity would be from the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) boundary and the Okefenokee Swamp. Any additional mining that occurs within the 12,000-acre permit area would be closer to the refuge. The northwest boundary of the permit area is within a half mile from the refuge boundary and 400 feet from the edge of the Okefenokee Swamp," and;

WHEREAS, the Berrien County Comprehensive Plan says, "Strip mining on the eastern edge of the swamp could affect the local hydrology and ecological value of the swamp and Suwannee River."

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Berrien County Board of Commissioners:

1. Oppose the Twin Pines Minerals LLC (TPM) strip mine near the Okefenokee Swamp, as well as any other strip mine permit applications within ten miles of the Swamp.