

September 12, 2011

Honorable Rick Scott  
Governor, State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Scott,

Enclosed is a list of 3,920 people who have signed a petition asking you and Secretary Herschel Vinyard to stop the proposed pipeline into the St. Johns River by the Georgia-Pacific (GP) paper mill in Palatka. The petition reads as follows:

*I support the restoration of the St. Johns River and the thousands of jobs and numerous businesses that a clean and healthy river supports in my community.*

*I am opposed to the plans by Georgia-Pacific (GP) to build a pipeline to divert millions of gallons of polluted wastewater from Rice Creek to the heart of the St. Johns River.*

*The St. Johns River is critical to our economy and quality of life in Northeast Florida. We cannot afford to jeopardize the future health of our river and the economic well-being of the hundreds of thousands of people who live downstream of the mill.*

*We ask that you direct the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to require further toxicity testing of Georgia-Pacific's wastewater and to require GP to pursue other viable alternatives to the pipeline.*

*Thank you for your consideration, your leadership and your support for the protection of the St. Johns River and the economy that depends upon it.*

We previously sent a similar letter to you on February 16, 2011 that included a list of 1,230 concerned citizens who had signed the petition as of that date. Unfortunately, we still have not received a response from you, nearly seven months later, acknowledging your receipt of the petitions or addressing our valid concerns regarding the proposed pipeline.

St. Johns Riverkeeper, these concerned citizens, and many others continue to seek your assistance in finding a more sensible solution to Georgia-Pacific's unresolved pollution problems. Two independent experts with extensive experience and knowledge of the pulp and paper industry, Dr. Bob Hayes and Dr. Lucinda Sonnenberg, have thoroughly analyzed this issue.

Both have concluded that pollution problems persist that have not been adequately addressed (such as the problem with dioxin), and thus a more comprehensive analysis of the mill's waste stream and the sources of the pollution is necessary. They have both also concluded that viable alternatives to the pipeline have either been insufficiently evaluated or ignored.

As a result, a permit decision is not possible at this time until a more thorough analysis has been conducted and all viable alternatives have been sufficiently explored.

The St. Johns River is critical to our economy and quality of life in Northeast Florida. We cannot afford to jeopardize the future health of our river and the economic well-being of the hundreds of thousands of people who live downstream of the mill. We will not allow politics to take precedence over the health of our river. We also will not stand idly by and allow this pipeline to be built, when significant pollution problems remain and viable, cost-effective alternatives do exist.

Let me be clear in closing that we have no interest in closing the Georgia-Pacific mill or eliminating jobs. We are convinced that alternatives are readily available that would allow GP to meet water quality standards in Rice Creek, address its ongoing pollution problems such as dioxin, and satisfy the needs of both the mill and the downstream communities.

Thank you for your consideration and support for the protection of the St. Johns River.

For the River,

Neil A. Armingeon  
St. Johns Riverkeeper