

Gainesville Sun Jeers HPS II Mine

February 11, 2018



In the [“Cheers and Jeers”](#) section of the [Gainesville Sun](#), Feb. 10, 2018 the “jeers” category includes the HPS II mine proposal. All citizens of Florida who care about the Santa Fe River should protest long and loud that some private company wants to put this river at risk for their own gain. Contact your legislator, and contact the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners in Starke.

Comments by OSFR historian Jim Tatum.

-A river is like a life: once taken, it cannot be brought back-

By The Gainesville Sun editorial board

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A massive phosphate mine proposed in Branford and Union counties has been called one of the biggest threats to the Santa Fe River

in decades. Now the backers of the project are using the courts to try to move the project forward.

Jeer: HPS II Enterprises, the company behind the mining plan, for suing Union County over its moratorium on permits for such projects.

Union County commissioners wisely voted last month to extend the moratorium through February 2019 as they work on stronger land-use regulations. A permit is unfortunately still pending in Bradford County.

The mine is proposed on more than 10,000 acres straddling the New River, a Santa Fe tributary. Alachua County Environmental Protection Director Chris Bird has called the project the biggest threat to the Santa Fe that he's seen in his 30-some years with the county.

Phosphate mining requires the removal of massive amounts of water and soil, causing wetlands to be altered or destroyed. The project poses an unnecessary risk to the aquifer, our drinking water source. Officials should be able to protect the local environment without being bullied by legal action.