

Group files suit to try to stop proposed pipeline

DEMOCRAT STAFF REPORT

The American Canoe Association filed suit against U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officials Wednesday to force the agency to hold a hearing on Buckeye Florida's proposed pipeline.

Buckeye wants to pipe its waste discharge 15 miles from its plant in Perry to near the Gulf of Mexico as part of a state plan to clean

up the polluted Fenholloway River.

The EPA has stopped the state from issuing the permit to determine whether the plant should reduce pollution rather than build the pipeline, which some environmentalists oppose.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection in June 1998 asked EPA to hold a hearing on the permit. DEP and Buckeye officials said last month

they want the EPA to act on the request.

EPA officials were not immediately available for comment Wednesday. An agency official said in October he expects a hearing next spring after the agency continues inspecting the

plant.

The American Canoe Association filed the federal lawsuit Tuesday to force EPA to act and require Buckeye and the DEP to obey state and federal water quality standards, an attorney for the group said.