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## If It Killed the River....

### Editorial

*Tuesday, October 4, 2005*

On September 29 there was a public hearing on a request for a State of Florida permit to allow Buckeye Technologies, Inc. to send pulp mill waste down a fifteen mile pipeline from Perry to the Gulf of Mexico. This method of waste disposal is not a new idea. The Fenholloway River has long been used as a sewage canal for pulp mill wastes. The river is a man-made biological disaster. By dumping mill waste directly into the Gulf by way of a pipeline, the river may recover, in years or decades. But the toxic wastes that destroyed the river will go directly into the Gulf forty miles from the clam beds of Cedar Key. To take a line from Philosopher-Novelist Kurt Vonnegut, "Does this make sense to you?"

Does anyone expect the toxic wastes to stagnate off the coast of Taylor County? When freshwater floods out of the Suwannee River twelve miles from Cedar Key the clams are harmed. Flooding from the Suwannee is temporary and can't be avoided. But, a steady stream of pulp mill wastes down the coast from Taylor County to Cedar Key can and must be avoided.

Buckeye Technologies Inc. is planning to send a representative to Cedar Key within a week or two to have what should be a public meeting. That representative should be asked to explain the costs and benefits of a pipeline. Who will pay the costs and who will get the benefits? Riverfront land owners may benefit when and if the Fenholloway ever recovers and is safe for swimming. The seafood industry and the Gulf of Mexico will pay the price. Buckeye Technologies, Inc. has facilities in four countries and employs 1670 people. Beginning in the 1970's the paper mills of the U.S. began to clean up their acts. Air and water pollution was reduced. Why is Buckeye still living in the past? It is technically possible to stop using the air and water as convenient dumps for industrial wastes.

Let's ask Buckeye to use some of its technologies to catch up with the rest of the industry and stop dumping pulp mill wastes into public waters!

This is the time for the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association, nature lovers, fishermen and the Levy County Board of Commissioners to say "No" to the Buckeye sewer line to the Gulf. This is not a Taylor County issue. This is a threat to the clammers, oystermen and fishermen who harvest food from the Gulf of Mexico.