



Letter to the Editor

3-11-06

As a recent resident of Florida and Cedar Key, I was disheartened to learn of the pollution threatening Cedar Key caused by Buckeye Paper as well as their proposed pipeline 'solution'.. Make no mistake; this WILL adversely affect Cedar Key and its aquaculture industry because of the prevailing Gulf currents.

I came from Michigan where this would never be tolerated today. Back in the 70s when its paper mills ranked with the auto industry and steel mills as major causes of pollution of its air and natural resources, Michigan passed tough Natural Resources legislation, backed by a courageous governor, legislators and Department of Natural Resources director.. This would normally have been considered unthinkable. Nobody ever fought the auto giants and won. Yet they did and once this behavior was firmly entrenched it became the norm.

In the 80s, I was vice president of engineering for a major auto industry supplier,. One of our divisions was a paper mill producing worse stuff than ordinary newsprint.. Yet the effluent leaving the plant had to be potable and the solids were strained out, compressed and used as fuel. When the painting vapors scrubbing system broke down in our body parts stamping division, we had the choice of shutting down Chevrolet – something a parts supplier never did if they wished to remain in business – or pay the \$500,000 fine for each day we continued to discharge raw paint solvent fumes into the atmosphere. We had it fixed by the weekend.

The paper mill waste cleaning technology existing today is much more cost effective and efficient than it was in the 80s. In fact, studies have repeatedly shown that the payback of a paper waste treatment plant is excellent. The reason the industry doesn't do it is money. With a waste treatment facility, there are the continuing costs of maintenance and personnel. Dumping waste into a convenient river doesn't cost anything. A pipeline is a one time cost and they can discharge the effluent unabated forever. It is cheaper to buy off a few key politicians and DEP directors by either contributing heavily to their

