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Environmental groups sue Corps of Engineers to stop petro pipeline

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By Dave Miller, Digital Exec. Prod. | CONNECT

ALBANY, GA (WALB) - The Gulf Restoration Network (GRN), the Flint Riverkeeper, and the Sierra Club have joined forces to stop construction of the controversial Sabal Trail pipeline.

Attorneys for the group filed a lawsuit in the U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals Wednesday to withdraw three Clean Water Act permits that would allow construction of the 500 mile Florida Southeast Market Pipelines Project.

The Sierra Club says that the Sabal Trail project would disrupt the very important Floridan aquifer, and hundreds of waterways and bodies of water in Florida and Georgia.

"We stand in solidarity with the Gulf Restoration Network and the Sierra Club in opposition to this illegal permit action," said Flint Riverkeeper Gordon Rogers. "The US Army Corps of Engineers in concert with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and their cronies in the frack gas industry have steadily robbed the public and private property owners of their rights to review, analyze, and comment on this misbegotten and confiscatory project."

"Our rivers, aquifers, and wetlands are in great jeopardy," Rogers said. "Our citizens' property is being reduced to a vehicle for private gain via the awesome power of eminent domain handed over to an out-of-state energy company by the federal government. Poor freeholders and tenants in our Flint River communities, wealthy ranchers and plantation owners, and folks in the middle are all equally threatened, and equally wronged by the supposed protectors of our environment and our rights. We intend to bring these out-of-control federal agencies into line with the strongly held values of Georgians and all Americans."

"We have collected 25,000 signatures in opposition to the pipeline, but the Army Corps is just not listening," said Johanna DeGraffenreid with Gulf Restoration Network. "The public has continually been left out of the decision making process for this project and that is unacceptable. Our water and communities are too important to risk for an unnecessary pipeline."

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