

Fernandina Beach's fight against a proposed bioethanol refinery near the historic downtown is gaining [statewide attention](#).

LINK: <https://floridaphoenix.com/2024/11/07/florida-beach-town-faces-explosive-fight-over-ethanol-plant/>

Multi-billion-dollar global company Rayonier – a huge landholder in Florida through timber plantations – wants to jam the toxic chemical production facility past local government zoning ordinances and state clean air regulation. The state Department of Environmental Protection/Prostitution, of course, doesn't mind since it's run by and for polluting corporations.

A local non-profit, [No Ethanol Fernandina](#), has stepped up to stop Rayonier.

LINK: <https://www.noethanolfernandina.com/>

No Ethanol Fernandina had prepared to appeal the DEP's decision to grant Rayonier an air pollution permit for the facility, but recently [withdrew its appeal](#) out of fear of being liable for Rayonier's legal expenses should the appeal be ruled against.

LINK: <https://fernandinaobserver.com/stories/ryam-legal-threats-result-in-no-ethanol-fernandina-dropping-challenge-of-bioethanol-air-permit,36849>

This all stems from a bill passed out of the legislature earlier in 2024 and signed into law by the governor stating that [anyone who opposes a DEP permitting decision](#) can be held liable for the defendant's legal fees. In this case, it would have meant that No Ethanol Fernandina, a local citizens group started by one guy and supported by small donations, would be required to pay Rayonier's legal expenses – a team of high paid corporate attorneys working around the clock – should the court rule against the group. That could be hundreds of thousands of dollars resulting in personal bankruptcy.

Of course, this is precisely what the bill was designed to do: scare citizens and non-profits away from challenging pro-pollution DEP permitting decisions. Florida has a government, and is a state, run by and for corporations and industry.

LINK: <https://www.wlrn.org/environment/2024-01-11/designed-to-intimidate-bill-would-make-it-costly-to-lose-environmental-lawsuits>

The good news is, during the recent election, three anti-bioethanol city council candidates won election, including taking two seats from well-financed incumbents who supported the refinery. That includes Fernandina Beach's mayor, Rayonier employee, and son of Florida representative Aaron Bean, Bradley Bean.

Aaron Bean has [a lifetime score of 0 from the League of Conservation voters](#) when it comes to voting for the environment. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree in that family.

LINK: <https://scorecard.lcv.org/moc/aaron-bean>

Long way to go yet on this one.

If you'd like to speak up on behalf of more green space, native plants, and shade trees for Jacksonville's park system, [you can do so here](#).

LINK: <https://www.imaginejaxparks.com/>

Speaking of, and speaking out on Jacksonville parks, there will be a public meeting on December 18th from 3:00-6:00 at the Main Library to present the Metropolitan Park concept plans to the community.

Cool story on [a plant rescue in central Florida](#).

LINK: <https://www.wuft.org/environment/2024-10-28/inside-the-grassroots-plant-rescue-ops-to-save-floridas-native-species>

From the "recycling is a scam" files, the vast majority of waste deposited in recycling specific trash cans [at University of Florida football games](#) ends up in the landfill will all the other garbage.

LINK: <https://www.wuft.org/environment/2024-11-13/what-happens-to-recycling-on-uf-football-game-days-most-of-it-ends-up-in-the-landfill>

Here's another staggering nugget from that article. The average UF home football game generates 11.5 tons of garbage!

We can talk about clean energy all we want to, but our destruction of the environment in America begins with consumerism: producing, buying, and throwing away too much stuff. Unfortunately, our society, culture, and economy are built on a premise of endless growth.

Saw this headline in the [Jacksonville Business Journal](#): "Sea walls gain popularity among First Coast luxury homeowners amid hurricane risks."

Rich people will always take care of themselves and be taken care of in America. They can drop millions on a beachfront home, then spend additional thousands on a sea wall to protect that home and send the water to some other person. A sea wall that disturbs the natural coastal ecosystem. The epitome of selfish, short-term, "I've got money, screw everyone else" thinking.

I'm not holding my breath to read a headline detailing how a rich millionaire is installing a living shoreline, or oyster reef, or sea grass bed, or mangroves to protect their beachfront mansion.

The story is available only to subscribers, but you can find it here:

https://www.bizjournals.com/jacksonville/news/2024/11/12/sea-walls-hurricane-protection-nefl.html?utm_source=st&utm_medium=en&utm_campaign=we&utm_content=JA&j=37505408&senddate=2024-11-16&empos=p4