

As mentioned here previously, Rayonier Advanced Materials (RYAM) intends to construct a bioethanol production facility at the company's Fernandina Beach plant. The Florida Department of Environmental "Protection" intends to issue an air quality permit allowing it.

The public has until April 10, 2024, to voice its opposition through FDEP. You don't have to be a Fernandina Beach or Nassau County resident to raise your voice. If you visit Amelia Island or live in the region, you are a stakeholder because the inevitable environmental damage that this plant will cause to the air and water will affect you.

Please consider doing so by emailing: David.Read@floridadep.gov

'CC your email to:

Yarborough.Clay.web@flsenate.gov

dean.black@myfloridahouse.gov

Make the Subject line:

Concerns Regarding Proposed Ethanol Refinery in Fernandina Beach, Florida 0890004-070-AC - DRAFT PERMIT

Body of message to copy or use your own:

I am very concerned about the proposed bioethanol plant on RYAM's property in the City of Fernandina Beach.

1. VOC Emissions

Emissions from the plant are already noticeable in the area without the ethanol production. Adding this will produce additionally toxic VOCs such as ethanol, methanol and acetaldehyde.

2. Baseline Emission data faulty

RYAM submitted baseline data from 2015 and 2016 before Lignotech came online. This is NOT their current emissions baseline and it's a lie for them to use it and claim that their proposed bioethanol plant would create a 5-10% reduction in emissions.

3. Storm risks

The plant is situated on a peninsula, in a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area in the Amelia River. In 2016 Hurricane Matthew caused a 6.96 ft storm surge in Fernandina Beach. And the storm was only a Cat 3 hurricane and did not make landfall. RYAM claims to have an earthen berm to protect the plant, but it is not contiguous. In the event of a storm, the area would be inundated. If cooling towers lose power, the risk of fire increases. None of these have been considered.

4. Waterways impacts

AFFF foam contains PFAS (per- and polyfluorinated substances) that are both carcinogenic and persistent endocrine disruptors. Forever chemicals. The cleanup of AFFF foam requires a HazMat team. Our nearest team is an hour away in Jacksonville. The risk of runoff into the Amelia River is very great.

5. Community Risks

Southside Elementary School sits less than 1 mile from this bioethanol plant location. This is a Title 1 School that has special federal protections. The location of a chemical refinery so close to so many disadvantaged students perpetuate social injustice. Young children have a special vulnerability to environmental pollutants. In addition, the citizens of Fernandina Beach do not wish to be exposed to more VOCs, more particulate matter and more dangerous emissions.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I trust that FL DEP will prioritize citizen health and safety in their decision making.

Name and Address

Speaking of Fernandina Beach, former Fernandina Mayor Aaron Bean, who has never met a development or developer he didn't like, has challenged a recent federal ruling [taking away wetlands permitting from the state](#) and giving it back to the federal government. Bean is now a U.S. representative for large portions of Nassau and Duval counties.

Bean, rightfully, understands requiring Florida developers to pass their wetland permitting through the Feds will slow down and block many of those projects which are rubberstamped by the state. He wants rubberstamping, ruination of wetlands, more development across Florida.

LINK: <https://news.wgcu.org/section/environment/2024-03-22/florida-wetlands-permitting-authority-fight-flares-in-congress>

Florida's Fish and Wildlife Commission has issued [a warning for boaters in Duval County](#) after 16 manatees were killed here last year.

LINK: <https://www.news4jax.com/news/florida/2024/03/27/fwc-issues-warning-for-boaters-after-16-manatees-died-in-duval-county-last-year/>

The North Florida Land Trust invites the public to a private screening of the short documentary film "O2O: Path to Connection" – about the Ocala to Osceola wildlife corridor.

After the film, a panel discussion with two O2O trekkers, Jason Lauritsen, Chief Conservation Officer of FWCF, and NFLT's Stewardship Director Rianna Elliott, will commence.

The event will be held on Thursday, April 4, 2024, at 7:00pm at Murray Hill Theatre.

LINK to RSVP: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/o2o-path-to-connection-expedition-film-screening-tickets-867419875197?aff=oddtcreator&mc_cid=7c1879315e&mc_eid=e70d4d1c83

Have you heard of the term "political theater?" Political theater is Governor Ron DeSantis initiating [a ban on offshore windfarms in Florida](#), despite there being no market in Florida for offshore wind power generation because the wind currents here aren't strong enough to generate industrial wind power.

This is a move done strictly to bolster his pro-fossil fuel, anti-clean energy credibility to lobbying interests and national right-wing commentators.

Want more evidence?

DeSantis' press office issued a list of highlights from the 2024 legislative session that included the pointless anti-wind energy legislation ban under a section titled, "Stopping the Woke."

For Ron DeSantis, clean energy is "woke."

LINK: https://jasongarcia.substack.com/p/ron-desantis-lobbied-for-windmill?utm_source=post-email-title&publication_id=687064&post_id=142983893&utm_campaign=email-post-title&isFreemail=true&r=g2ims&triedRedirect=true&utm_medium=email

Remember, Ixia's 9th Annual Native Plant Sale will be held in Native Parks 1 and 2, 3306 Park Street, Jax 32205 on April 13th, 2024, from 10 am – 2 pm.