

game and bird sanctuary or as a national park."¹⁷

The Okefenokee Association in Waycross, supported by the Chamber of Commerce and the newspaper, arranged a meeting in Waycross on March 12 to support the congressional efforts. Gov. Hardeman announced his support of the Okefenokee Plan. A number of dignitaries were invited to the meeting and motion pictures of Okefenokee scenes were shown by Peter S. Twitty. The meeting appears to have generated considerable editorial support in area newspapers, including the Quitman *Free Press* and the Brunswick *Pilot*. But the movement soon lost momentum as conflicting interest groups jumped on the bandwagon.¹⁸

By the end of the summer, the bills urging the Federal government to purchase the property as a wildlife refuge or a national park were joined by bills or resolutions in the Georgia Legislature and the Congress proposing its purchase as a forest reserve or as the route for a ship canal. The Okefenokee Association also lost one of its most knowledgeable and enthusiastic leaders, Charles N. Wilson. Wilson moved to Bradenton, Florida as a Boy Scout executive of the Sunnyland BSA Council. The local movement withered in confusion.¹⁹

After years of frustrated campaigns and disorganized organizations, a small group of naturalists, most of them from Atlanta, organized the Georgia Society of Naturalists in 1929. They enjoyed frequent field trips and lectures on natural history. They held many of their meetings at Emory University. Several of the members were faculty members at the university. They quickly embraced a special Society project on which to focus their collective efforts—to persuade the Federal government to purchase the Okefenokee Swamp as a biological preserve. They lobbied State and Federal legislators, wrote articles for newspapers, and enlisted support from a variety of individuals and conservation groups, including Daniel Hebard and his son, Frederick V. Hebard, owners of most of the Okefenokee property. The Society sought and received the support of

¹⁷Congressional Record-House, 70th Congress, 2nd Session, February 26, 1929, p. 4485; March 2, 1929, 5124-5126.

¹⁸ Waycross Journal-Herald, February 16, 1929; February 23, 1929; March 2, 1929; March 9, 1929; March 16, 1929.

¹⁹ Waycross Journal-Herald, March 9, 1929; July 13, 1929; July 20, 1929.