

1200-070821

RESOLUTION NO:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF HOMELAND, GEORGIA  
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
REQUESTING PROTECTION FOR OKEFENOKEE SWAMP AND THE SURROUNDING NATURAL  
RESOURCES AND DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Homeland value the natural heritage and cultural significance of the Okefenokee Swamp and its associated natural resources; and

WHEREAS, many families living within the City of Homeland have currently and have ancestors who resided, hunted, farmed, fished, and made livings in and around the Okefenokee Swamp; and

WHEREAS, the wetlands, cypress forests, islands, and prairies of the Okefenokee Swamp have great value as an undisturbed asset of our community, and are a great source of pride and identify for Homeland residents; and

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WHEREAS, the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, established by the federal government in 1937 and currently encompassing over 400,000 acres, hosts more than 600,000 visitors a year who travel here from numerous, often distant, locations and contribute to our local economy while imposing only modest costs on our communities; and

WHEREAS, the swampland, forests, wetlands, and vast St. Marys River system provide subsistence and sport hunting and fishing sites, as well as recreational opportunities for our community and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the residents of Homeland are dependent on healthy and reliable water supplies provided by the City government from wells that pump water from the Floridan aquifer, nearly 700 feet deep; and

WHEREAS, the natural environment in and around the Okefenokee Swamp and affecting Homeland's drinking water supplies is already threatened by naturally recurrent and apparently increasing drought, wildfires, disease, and a changing climate; and

WHEREAS, Trail Ridge, the geologic dam that helped create the Okefenokee Swamp, contains valuable heavy mineral sands that are attracting the attention of industrial and commercial mining operations that may adversely affect the environment, groundwater quality and quantity; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division governed by the State of Georgia is responsible for regulating and permitting all industrial and commercial activities that affect the natural resources upon which Homeland is dependent; and

WHEREAS, the City of Homeland has a vested interest in protecting the Okefenokee Swamp, local groundwater supplies, and surface waters from human activity that threatens the health and safety of residents and visitors to the area; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Homeland, Georgia, urge the Governor of the great State of Georgia, and its responsible executive agencies to perform their due diligence in ensuring the protection of the integrity of the Okefenokee Swamp and the natural resources which make the Okefenokee Swamp a National Treasure; now be it further

RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Homeland, Georgia, urge the Georgia Municipal Association, of which we are a member, to join us and encourage other members to join us in this plea for due diligence in research conducted prior to authorizing mining operations to ensure protection of the Okefenokee Swamp; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be provided to our above named representatives in the State of Georgia, and members of the United States Congress representing taxpayers and municipalities dependent on the resources in and around the Okefenokee Swamp.

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SO RESOLVED: This 8th day of July, 2021

Ouida Johnson  
Ouida Johnson, Mayor

July 8, 2021  
Date

Bernice Pascal  
Attest: Bernice Pascal, City Clerk

July 8, 2021  
Date