

RESOLUTION 2021-14

A RESOLUTION OF THE WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REQUESTING PROTECTION FOR OKEFENOKEE SWAMP; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Ware County Board of Commissioners value the natural heritage and cultural significance of the Okefenokee Swamp and its associated natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the wetlands, cypress forests, islands, and prairies of the Okefenokee Swamp have great value as an undisturbed asset of our region; and

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, supports 750 jobs, and contributes more than \$64 million to our local economies; 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, 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 of our State; and

WHEREAS, the Ware County Board of Commissioners has a vested interest in protecting the Okefenokee Swamp, from any human activity that threatens its wellbeing;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ware County Board of Commissioners, urge the Governor of the State of Georgia, its responsible executive agencies, and the Georgia General Assembly to take every reasonable step to protect the integrity of the Okefenokee Swamp and the natural resources upon which Ware County and many other communities depend; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of Ware County, Georgia, urge the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, of which we are a member, to join us and encourage other members to join us in this request for protection of the invaluable natural resources in and around the Okefenokee Swamp.

SO RESOLVED, this 20th day of SEPT., 2021.


Elmer Thrift, Chairman

ATTEST:


Scott M. Moye, County Manager

[SEAL]