

**CITY OF WAYCROSS RESOLUTION NO. 21-78**  
**WARE COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2021-15**

**A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WAYCROSS, GEORGIA, AND THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF WARE COUNTY, GEORGIA, REQUESTING PROTECTION FOR THE OKEFENOKEE SWAMP; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**WHEREAS**, the Waycross City Commission, the Ware County Board of Commissioners and the citizens of Waycross and Ware County value their 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, hosting more than 600,000 visitors a year, supporting 750 jobs, and contributing more than sixty-four million dollars (\$64,000,000.00) to our local economies; and

**WHEREAS**, the swampland, forests, wetlands, and vast St. Mary's 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 City of Waycross and Ware County have a vested interest in protecting the Okefenokee Swamp from any human activity that will or may threaten its well-being; and

**WHEREAS**, said matter having been properly considered.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Commission of the City of Waycross and the Board of Commissioners of Ware County that the City Commission and the Ware County Board of Commissioners respectfully 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 with the City of Waycross and Ware County, and many other communities, depend.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Commission of the City of Waycross and the Board of Commissioners of Ware County also respectfully urge the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) and the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG), of which we are members, to join the City of Waycross and Ware County to encourage other members to join us in this request for the protection of the invaluable natural resources in and around the Okefenokee Swamp.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that that the Mayor and Acting City Clerk of the City of Waycross and the Chairman and Clerk of Ware County Board of Commissioners be authorized and directed to execute this Resolution on behalf of the City of Waycross and Ware County Board of Commissioners, respectively, and that the City Clerk and County Clerk forward a copy of this Resolution to the Honorable Brian Kemp, Governor of the State of Georgia, to the Georgia State Legislative Delegation representing the City of Waycross, the Georgia Municipal Association, to media outlets and other appropriate persons or entities

**SO RESOLVED AND ADOPTED** at a meeting of the City Commission of the City of Waycross, this 5<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021.

**SO RESOLVED AND ADOPTED** at a meeting of the Ware County Board of Commissioners, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2021.

**(SIGNATURES ON NEXT PAGE)  
CITY OF WAYCROSS**



BY: Michael Angelo James  
MICHAEL-ANGELO JAMES, MAYOR

ATTEST: China Agui  
ACTING CITY CLERK

**WARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

BY: Elmer Thrift  
ELMER THRIFT, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST: [Signature]  
COUNTY CLERK MANAGER

