

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF DEKALB COUNTY,
GEORGIA REQUESTING PROTECTION FOR THE OKEFENOKEE SWAMP**

WHEREAS, the Okefenokee Swamp is Georgia's greatest natural wonder, protected by the largest National Wildlife Refuge east of the Mississippi, is home to over 1,000 species of plants and animals, many of which are threatened or endangered, and is an International Dark Sky Park; and

WHEREAS, the Okefenokee swamp is loved by many generations of Georgians and is a critical natural resource and vital carbon sink due to the swamp's carbon-rich peat soils. Should these soils dry out or be exposed due to drought, massive amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, like methane and carbon, will be released into the atmosphere. Any activity that increases draught in the swamp will accelerate climate change and will have vital consequences for all people, including DeKalb County residents; and

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County governing body understands that the Okefenokee is too important ecologically and economically to the citizens of Dekalb County, the state, the nation, and the world to be placed at such grave risk, and instead should be protected for the benefit of present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners understands through outreach to relevant parties that the local governments directly adjacent to the proposed mine, Clinch, Echols, and Ware Counties and the City of Waycross, as well as the DeKalb County delegation to the Georgia State Legislature, support this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of this resolution signifies the Dekalb County Board of Commissioners' solidarity in this Georgia effort to protect the Okefenokee Swamp; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of DeKalb County, Georgia:

1. Supports the Georgia State Legislature passing the Okefenokee Protection Act during the 2024 legislative session; and
2. Supports the local governing authorities adjacent to the Okefenokee Swamp, Clinch, Echols, and Ware Counties and the City of Waycross, in their respective requests for protection for the Okefenokee Swamp.

ADOPTED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this ____ day of _____, 2023.

ROBERT J. PATRICK
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia