

Agenda Item

File #: 2023-1178, **Version:** SUBSTITUTE 10/24/23

Public Hearing: YES NO

Department: Board of Commissioners - District 6

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): All

A Resolution by The DeKalb County Board of Commissioners to Support a Georgia Effort to Protect the Okefenokee Swamp

Information Contact: Commissioner Edward C. “Ted” Terry

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PURPOSE:

For the DeKalb County Governing body to support a Georgia effort to protect the Okefenokee Swamp, and to encourage Governor Kemp to request that the Georgia EPD deny all permits for the TPM mining project. This resolution further supports that the Georgia Legislation pass the Okefenokee Protection Act during the 2024 state legislative session, and to encourage Governor Kemp to sign this bill.

NEED/IMPACT:

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.

Not only is the Okefenokee swamp loved by many generations of Georgians, it 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

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 generation.

The adoption of this resolution signifies the Dekalb County Board of Commissioner’s solidarity in this Georgia effort to protect the Okefenokee Swamp.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No cost to the County

RECOMMENDATION:

To adopt the attached resolution sharing the Governing body of DeKalb County supports the protection of the Okefenokee Swamp and to forward this executed Resolution to Governor Kemp and others as requested.