GEORGIA FORESTWATCH
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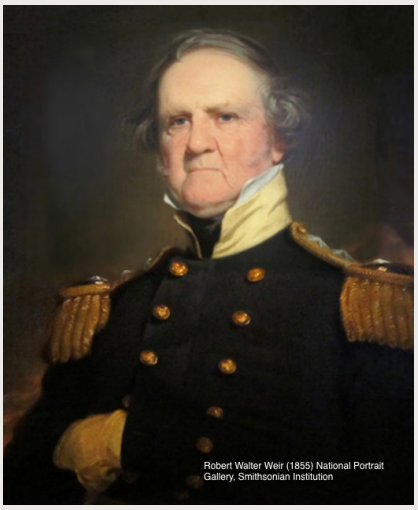
GAFW Will Be Closed to Honor Indigenous Peoples

On Monday, October 10, 2022, the GAFW office will be closed to honor and recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day. As detailed in our organizational Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, we honor America's first inhabitants and the Tribal Nations that continue to thrive today.

They willingly traded everything they owned...They were well-built, with good bodies and handsome features...They do not bear arms, and do not know them, for I showed them a sword. They took it by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane....They would make fine servants... With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.

-Excerpt from the diary of Christopher Columbus

General Winfield Scott



Lieutenant General Winfield Scott was known by two nicknames. The first, the "Grand Old Man of the Army," is due to his distinction of serving as a general longer than any other person in American history and, "Old Fuss and Feathers" for his flamboyancy and fiery irascibility. Scott experienced frequent career setbacks due to his harsh personality. He was suspended shortly after enlisting for his "short temper and propensity for harsh criticism." Then again, in 1810, he was court-martialed and suspended for a year. Notwithstanding, he served in the War of 1812, the Mexican–American War, and, despite being a Virginian, fought for the U.S. in the Civil War.

"I fought through the civil war and have seen men shot to pieces and slaughtered by thousands, but the Cherokee removal was the cruelest work I ever knew."
-A soldier remembers the march

In February 1836, President Jackson sent him to Florida to take command of the U.S. government's campaign against the native Seminoles. After a few months, with no success, he was sent to the Georgia-Alabama border to subdue the native Muscogee (Creek). Then in 1837, Scott's friend, President Van Buren, made him responsible for the removal of the Cherokee, which would ultimately become genocide. Knowing this was an immoral campaign, Scott resolutely forged ahead, implementing what would become known as the Trail of Tears.

"When you move a people from one place to another, when you displace people, when you wrench people from their homelands wasn't that genocide? We don't make the case that there was genocide, we know there was, yet here we are."
-Native American activist Suzan Shown Harjo of the Smithsonian's National
Museum of the American Indian

Many Cherokee refused to give up their homeland to the U.S. government and were forcibly removed west to what is now known as

Oklahoma. Families, children, and the elderly were marched west out of Georgia, and during the journey they suffered from exposure, disease, and starvation resulting in thousands of unnecessary deaths. Approximately 4,000 Cherokee died along the way.

...five thousand finally consented to be marched westward, but another
fifteen thousand clung to their neat farms, schools, and libraries "of good books." So General Winfield Scott set about systematically extirpating the rebellious ones. Squads of soldiers descended upon isolated Cherokee farms and at bayonet point marched the families off to what today would be known as concentration camps...they were set off on a thousand mile march -called to this day "the trail of tears"...
-Peter Farb, Man's Rise to Civilization (1968)

Lake Winfield Scott and the Lake Winfield Scott Recreation Area are located within our Chattahoochee National Forest and are named for the former general. Georgia ForestWatch asks why we are honoring this divisive figure? The man who led 7,000 U.S. soldiers to begin the genocide of the Cherokee is honored with his name on one of the most scenic and family-friendly places in our national forest.

That is why GAFW is investigating proposing to both the USFS and the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN) to change the name of both the recreation area and the lake itself to a name reflective of the indigenous peoples who lived throughout north GA for over 10,000 years. Our organization is especially interested in partnering with the Georgia Tribe of Eastern Cherokee to determine an appropriate name. If you are a member of the GA Tribe or have a connection to them, please reach out to us at director@gafw.org.

"Future generations will read and condemn the act and I do hope posterity will remember that private soldiers like myself, and like the four Cherokees who were forced by General Scott to shoot an Indian Chief and his children, had to execute the orders of our superiors. We had no choice in the matter. "
-Private John G. Burnett

Forward this Newsletter to a Friend

As a grassroots organization, we are only as effective as our depth of

support within the community. If you enjoy and appreciate Georgia ForestWatch's insight, please forward this email to a friend and ask them to register, follow, or join as a member.

Our goal in 2023 is to significantly expand the number and diversity of people engaged on our various platforms in the vital conversation of "managing" and protecting our state's national forest lands.

- Become a member of Georgia ForestWatch.
- Give a gift membership to Georgia ForestWatch.
- Subscribe to our email distribution list.
- Follow us on Meetup.
- Follow us on iNaturalist.

Volunteers Needed

Only three more weekends left to help monitor and record visitors to the most popular Wilderness areas in the forest this year.

If you are interested in hiking Woody Gap or Blood Mountain on an upcoming weekend in October **SIGN UP HERE**.

Online Auction is Live

Georgia ForestWatch's annual online auction is live and open through Sunday, October 9, 2022. Auction items include kayaking, guided fishing trips, pottery, original artwork, jewelry, Air BnB stays, and more. You can see everything here.

Not to be Missed Events

Foothills Landscape Project Meeting –The Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests will host its first annual stakeholder meeting for Foothills Landscape Project (FLP) implementation on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at Cohutta Springs in Crandall, Ga., from 1p.m. – 4p.m. USFS staff

will share project updates and initial plans for the upcoming year, including the draft Implementation Plan for the Mooneyham Implementation Area that includes prescribed burning, commercial timber sales and thinning, herbicidal applications, and stream enhancements on over 3,225 acres in the Mooneyham region of the Conasauga Ranger District next to the Cohutta Wilderness.

We will let you know if a virtual attendance option is made available. **The USFS indicates this large project will not be publicized for public comment, and your only opportunity to provide input is during this scheduled meeting.**

The Wurst Hike Ever – How about a short hike before the Wurst Festival on Saturday, October 22? Afterward, the entire group will join the rest of us at the festival for lunch, beer, and music. The hike will be free, but you must purchase a ticket to attend the Wurst Festival. You can register for the hike here or on our new Meetup platform.

Wurst Festival – Tickets are available now for the Wurst Festival at Fannin Brewing Company on Saturday, October 22, 2022. Order your tickets to attend now. All proceeds support GAFW, and we thank Fannin Brewing Company for hosting and supporting this fundraiser.

Hemlock Fest – Stop by our table on November 4-6 at Cherokee Farms in supporting the Lumpkin Coalition's fundraiser to address the parasitic Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) that is killing Georgia's beautiful Hemlocks. Tickets and more info here.

Community Survey

Thank you to the many members of our community and forest stakeholders who completed our survey. If you have not done so, please take five minutes to complete our eleven-question survey.

If this email was forwarded to you, please register here to receive GAFW updates.

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Thank You

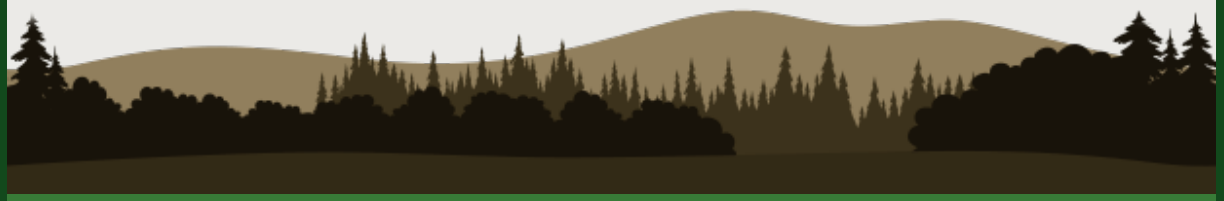
Georgia ForestWatch is the only nonprofit organization with a mission solely dedicated to ensuring the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests remain healthy and available for future generations, and we can only pursue our mission with the support of the community.

Please support our mission by ensuring your membership is up to date and providing additional support as you are able.

On behalf of our entire national forests in our beautiful state, we thank you for your support.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enhance the health of over 867,000 acres of Georgia's national forest by protecting our forests and streams, advocating for natural processes, and identifying opportunities to improve forest management. Visit Georgia ForestWatch (GAFW) to learn more.



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Georgia Forestwatch | 81 Crown Mtn Place, Building C, Suite 200, Dahlonega, GA 30533

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