GEORGIA FORESTWATCH

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Prescribed fire is a powerful forest management tool. A small group of practitioners can change a 1,000-acre forest for decades in a single day. The US Forest Service manages more of Georgia's forests with fire each year than any other management tool, often 35,000-40,000 acres.

Georgia ForestWatch acknowledges that fire has a natural role to play in the forest's ecology and has done so for many generations, including in our own Southern Appalachians. You can read GAFW's formal position on prescribed fire in full here: ***Fire in the Forest***.

In mid-March 2024, the USFS conducted a prescribed burn of 2,369 acres of the Rich

Mountain area in the Blue Ridge Ranger District. While the burn's stated benefits include hazardous fuel reduction and wildlife habitat improvement, some GAFW members and local citizens have raised concerns regarding the event. GAFW is actively engaged in productive conversation with USFS team leaders about the burn and is obtaining more information about it.

We will provide updates as we learn more. Be sure to **follow us on FB** for the latest news. You can also sign up for burn alerts from the USFS **here**.

Please **join GAFW** to receive timely updates on important issues affecting our treasured Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest. Your membership ensures that GAFW can continue watching over the forests.

Have questions? Please **email us.**

Donate to GAFW Today

National Security, Local Economies & The Okefenokee

Submit your comments now, before it's too late. Join thousands of Georgians who submitted comments opposing Twin Pines Minerals, LLC permits to mine near the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

Mining proponents frequently trot out the line that mineral mining on Okefenokee's Trail Ridge is needed for national security. Trail Ridge is a large geographic area that runs from Georgia into Florida. It is a mixed-sand ridge with deposits of heavy mineral sands, which can be processed into commonly available materials like titanium dioxide and zirconium.

Mining sands along the Okefenokee is not needed for national defense. These widely available sands are used in white paint, sunscreen, and as food additives. In fact, in **2020 Twin Pines Minerals, LLC applied** for and **received a permit to export** Heavy Minerals Concentrate to Malaysia for non-nuclear end-uses. **According to their application,** "The ultimate consignee in Malaysia intends to use the concentrated minerals for use in Ceramics, Foundry work, paint pigments, printing inks and the production of zirconium metal."

Mining and exporting common minerals to Southeast Asian companies could impact the estimated $79 million in economic output, **and $11.1 million in annual tax revenue in the area from Okefenokee swamp visits and the projected boom from potential UNESCO World Heritage Site designation**.

Share a Post: **Click here** to be redirected to GWC's Facebook page and share.

You can find more information **here.**

Native Plant Sale

The Environmental Stewardship and Preservation Program of the Sautee Nacoochee Center (SNC) will host a Native Plant Sale from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 20. Perennial wildflowers and some ferns will be available. Some of the plants that will be available are listed on our **website**.

The sale will take place in the new Native Plant Nursery in the ball field beside the Sautee Nacoochee post office. Follow the “Native Plant Sale” signs.

The event will also offer children (and adults!) opportunities to learn about pollinators. What animals are pollinators? How can we invite pollinators to our vegetable gardens? Are honey bees the only bees important for pollination? Come find out!

A sampling of local farmers will also be at the event. These farmers will be part of the Sunday Farmers Market beginning on May 5 at SNC.

On Sunday, April 21, the Center will screen *Roots So Deep (you can see the devil down there),* a 4-part documentary series about inventive cattle farmers, their animals and land, and a group of maverick scientists researching whether a type of cattle grazing that mimics the way bison once roamed the land, can be a tool for environmental health and climate change mitigation. Doors open at 2:00 p.m. with a suggested donation of $10, which includes popcorn and a beverage.

Upcoming GAFW Outings & Outreach

Saturday, April 13 - **Join Us! Oakland Spring to Life Festival**

Saturday, April 20 - **Join Us! Waterfest**

Saturday, April 27 - **Join Us! Blue Ridge Trout Fest**

Tuesday, April 30 - **Outing! Dukes Creek Falls Trail**

Saturday, May 4 - **Outing! Foraging for All Things Edible with Michelle Withrow**

Saturday, May 25 - **Outing!** GAFW Members Only - **Hiking, Looking, and Seeing: An Artsy Wildflower Hike**

Have you signed our Outing! **waiver**?

GAFW Outings on Meetup

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

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Thank You

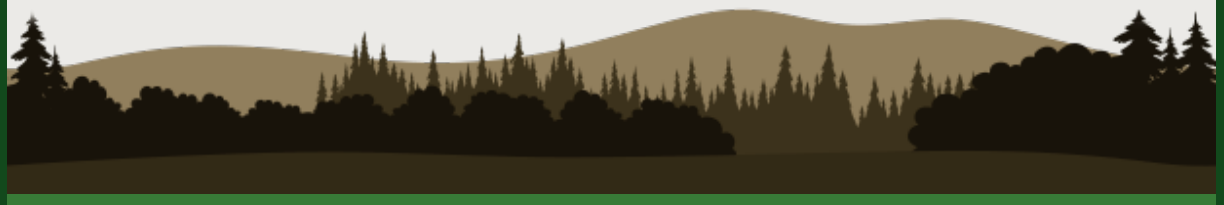
Georgia ForestWatch is the only nonprofit organization with a mission solely dedicated to ensuring the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests remain healthy and available for future generations, and we can only pursue our mission with the support of the community.

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 preserve and protect our national forests.



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