

ACTS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA 2016

Act 531

Senate Resolution 863, Part IX

Effective May 3, 2016

SAUTEE NACOOCHEE ARTS AND HERITAGE DISTRICT — DESIGNATED.

A RESOLUTION

Dedicating certain portions of the state highway system; and for other purposes.

WHEREAS, the Nacoochee Valley was the point of intersection of two major trails used by early Native Americans, where a settlement was formed called Little Chota; and

WHEREAS, the Unicoi Trail passed through the Valley across Unicoi Gap going to Hiawassee, North Carolina, East Tennessee, and then Kentucky, and the Rabun Trail began with Coosa to Tugaloo River, Sautee Creek, and Bean Creek and then entered the Valley, exiting at Dukes Creek to Dahlonega then Northeast Alabama; and

WHEREAS, the Sautee Valley, adjacent to the Nacoochee Valley, has its center point at Highway 255 and Lynch Mountain Road; and

WHEREAS, a toll road was constructed by early settlers on the Unicoi Trail through the Cherokee Nation and was called the Unicoi Turnpike; and

WHEREAS, gold was first discovered in 1828 in the Valley, then a part of Habersham County, and in 1857, White County was cut out of Habersham; gold mining companies were given permission by the Georgia Legislature in 1858 to put in hydraulic mining techniques in the Valley; and

WHEREAS, Governor Hardman acquired the Nichols-Hunnicutt Hardman Estate with a home and the Cherokee Native American Burial Mound in the Nacoochee Valley in 1903, which is still one of the most photographed sites in Georgia; and

WHEREAS, massive timber companies operated in the Valley in the early twentieth century, and in the 1920s, the Smithsonian Museum excavated the Nacoochee Mound in the Valley and found Cherokee Native American artifacts; and

WHEREAS, in the 1970s, the City of Helen was regenerated and turned into an Alpine Village, bringing with it a huge influx of visitors to the Nacoochee Valley; and

WHEREAS, the Nacoochee Valley in White County with approximately 25,000 acres was added to the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of Interior in 1980; in 1986, the Sautee Valley with 10,000 acres was added to the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, the Sautee Nacoochee Community Association was then formed as a private, nonprofit organization with a mission to protect the Valley's preservation and is housed in a schoolhouse on the former Nacoochee Institute site; and

WHEREAS, the Sautee and Nacoochee Valleys were designated in the 1980s as one of the 100 Best Small Arts Communities in the United States; and

WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper that these historic areas and important locations be recognized by dedicating three roads in their honor.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA, that the following route in White County be dedicated as the Sautee Nacoochee Arts and Heritage District.

- On SR-255, from SR-17/SR-255, north to Covered Bridge Road (the roadway to the Stovall Mill Covered Bridge over the Chickamauga Creek); then
- On SR-17/SR-255, from Joe Brown Pike Bridge (over the Car Creek), to SR-75/Helen Highway; then
- On SR-75/Helen Highway, from the Dukes Creek, to 7300 Helen Highway.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Transportation is authorized and directed to erect and maintain appropriate signs dedicating the road facilities named in this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed to make appropriate copies of this Resolution available for distribution to the Department of Transportation.