



# Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, wetlands are critical for protecting the quality of groundwater, springs, lakes, and rivers surrounding the City of Ocala, in addition to sustaining the region's ecosystem and maintaining flood control; and

**WHEREAS**, wetlands are essential habitats for wildlife, providing a home for more than one-third of the U.S. federally threatened and endangered species and energy-rich resources necessary for migrating birds; and

**WHEREAS**, wetlands are popular recreation spaces that encourage hiking, birdwatching, and photography, which draw visitors and contributes to the local economy; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ocala Wetland Recharge Park was developed to recharge the Upper Floridan Aquifer, reduce groundwater nutrient levels, mitigate flooding by providing stormwater storage, create habitat for Florida wildlife, and provide residents with accessible trails for recreation and education; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ocala Wetland Recharge Park promotes public awareness of the City's valuable water resources and the importance of caring for these resources by watering and fertilizing responsibly, properly disposing of oil and household chemicals, and keeping trash out of waterways and storm drains; and

**WHEREAS**, the residents of the City of Ocala are called upon to help protect wetlands and appreciate the role wetlands play in contributing to the City's water resources, wildlife, and local economy.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ben Marciano**, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala, Florida, do hereby proclaim May 2024, as:

## AMERICAN WETLANDS MONTH

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Ocala, Florida, to be affixed this 1<sup>st</sup> day of May 2024.



*Ben Marciano*

Ben Marciano, Mayor  
City of Ocala