2026 PINE TREE FESTIVAL

OFFICIAL PARADE RULES, GUIDELINES & STAGING MAP

Saturday, October 31, 2026 | Sparta, Georgia

REPORT TO STAGING	PARADE BEGINS	PARADE ROUTE
10:00 AM	11:00 AM	Approximately 1.2 miles

1 Check-In & Lineup

All entries must report to their assigned staging areas by **10:00 AM**. Arrive early enough to unload and organize. Follow parade marshals and volunteers. Late arrivals may be moved to the end of the lineup or denied entry after the parade begins.

2 Designated Staging Areas — FINAL ASSIGNMENTS

American Legion — 10020 GA Highway 15: Horses and equestrian entries. **All horses must have waste bags attached.**

Industrial Park Drive — at Highway 15: Floats, walking groups, and dance teams. Enter Industrial Park Drive, turn around at the cul-de-sac, and stage facing the exit. The Old Payback Building parking lot is **OFF-LIMITS** for staging or parking. Keep the turnaround and emergency access clear.

Jones Street: Marching bands and 18-wheelers. Band directors must organize and supervise their groups. Large vehicles must follow marshal instructions.

Hancock County Sheriff's Office — 67 Spring Street: Cars and motorcycles. Line up as directed by parade marshals.

3 Parade Route & Finish

From assigned staging areas, entries join **GA Highway 15 South** toward downtown under marshal direction, pass the Hancock County Courthouse, continue on **Broad Street / Highway 16 East** toward Augusta Highway, and finish at **J.D. Walls Community Center, 12560 Augusta Highway, Sparta**. Follow marshals for exact turns, merge points, and parking. See the route map on page 3.

4 General Safety & Conduct

• Obey law enforcement, parade marshals, and authorized volunteers at all times.

• Maintain safe spacing and operate vehicles slowly. No racing, burnouts, reckless driving, or dangerous maneuvers.

• Supervise children. Do not block intersections, driveways, or emergency access.

• No alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons, or dangerous materials as part of parade entries.

• Stay in assigned procession positions; do not leave the route without notifying a marshal.

PARADE PARTICIPANT SAFETY RULES

Please read these requirements before completing your online acknowledgment.

5 Candy & Giveaways

Throwing candy or other items is prohibited. Candy may be handed directly to spectators or gently dropped along the edge of the parade route by designated walkers. Distribution must not encourage children or spectators to enter the roadway or approach moving vehicles.

6 Floats, Trucks, Cars & Motorcycles

All vehicles must be in safe operating condition and driven by appropriately licensed drivers. Secure decorations and keep driver visibility unobstructed. Passengers must remain safely positioned; no boarding or exiting moving vehicles. Allow extra maneuvering room for 18-wheelers and large floats.

7 Bands, Dancers & Walking Groups

Group leaders must supervise participants, maintain safe spacing, keep pace with the procession, and avoid extended performances that delay the parade.

8 Horses & Equestrian Entries

Riders and handlers must maintain control of their animals. Horses should be accustomed to crowds, vehicles, and noise. **Waste bags must be attached to all horses.** Equestrian participants are responsible for appropriate cleanup. An animal presenting a safety concern may be removed from the route.

9 Finish & Dispersal

The parade ends at **J.D. Walls Community Center**. Follow marshals into designated parking and dispersal areas. Do not stop or unload on the active route. Group leaders should arrange participant pickup in advance.

10 Participant Responsibility & Liability

The Sparta-Hancock Chamber of Commerce is not responsible for any damages or liabilities that may occur during parade participation. Participants must act responsibly, follow safety rules, and comply with parade officials. The Chamber reserves the right to remove an entry for unsafe or disruptive conduct.

Entry Fees

Horses: $10 **Cars / Trucks / Motorcycles / Slingshots:** $20 **Floats:** $35 **Walkers / Dancers:** FREE

IMPORTANT: Review all rules, download or view the route map on page 3, and complete the required acknowledgments in the online registration form. On parade day, marshal and public-safety instructions take precedence.

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PARADE ROUTE & STAGING REFERENCE



Follow on-site instructions from parade marshals and public safety personnel.