

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge  
2700 Suwannee Canal Road  
Folkston, GA 31537  
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<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/okefenokee>

# News Release



**For Immediate Release**

Date: September 5, 2018

Contact: Susan Heisey, 912-496-7366 ex 233

Supervisory Refuge Ranger

## **Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Accepting Comments on Additions to Fee Program**

Folkston, GA...Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is accepting comments on a proposed fee structure for expanded amenity fees on the refuge. Since 1981, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has had authority to collect recreation fees. Since 1997, the Service has been able to retain fees collected at the station, first under the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program and then, in 2004, under the authority of Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). The FLREA was established to provide funding for recreation program improvements. Typical projects paid for by recreation fee funds include road and visitor facility maintenance, brochures, entrance passes, and salaries for law enforcement.

To better manage the use of refuge facilities and to be able to continue to improve the facilities for our visiting public, the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is proposing to implement a rental fee for the following facilities located at the Main Entrance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area) located near Folkston, GA:

- Rental of picnic pavilion - \$35/day
- Rental of Environmental Education Classroom - \$75/day

A fee analysis has been done by refuge staff and these fees are proposed based on what nearby facilities and national wildlife refuges are requesting. The refuge is proposing to make these fee changes effective January 1, 2019.

We are interested in hearing from you regarding the proposed new fee structure and are requesting public comments beginning September 5 – October 5, 2018. Please submit any comments to the Refuge Manager, Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, via email ([okefenokee@fws.gov](mailto:okefenokee@fws.gov)), phone (912-496-7366), or by mail to 2700 Suwannee Canal Road Folkston, GA 31537. All comments will be reviewed and considered before a final decision is made on the implementation of the fee.

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The Suwannee Canal Recreation Area (East Entrance) to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is the primary entrance managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is located 11 miles southwest of Folkston, GA off Hwy 121/23. The refuge is open daily and offers a variety of opportunities for the visiting public. Call 912-496-7836 or visit the refuge website at [www.fws.gov/okefenokee](http://www.fws.gov/okefenokee) for hours of operation, upcoming events, and entrance fee information.

*The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov). Connect with our Facebook pages at [www.facebook.com/okefenokeewildliferefuge](http://www.facebook.com/okefenokeewildliferefuge) or [www.facebook.com/usfwssoutheast](http://www.facebook.com/usfwssoutheast), follow our tweets at [www.twitter.com/usfwssoutheast](http://www.twitter.com/usfwssoutheast), watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwssoutheast>.*