For Immediate Release
Date: December 18, 2019

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Supervisory Refuge Ranger

Artist in Residency Gallery Reception
Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center

Folkston, GA…..The Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge will host a Gallery Reception at the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center on January 18, 2020 from 5:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. for local photographer, Jay Blanton. Mr. Blanton is known locally as The Georgia Photography Fanatic on Facebook and spent 2019 as the Okefenokee NWR Artist in Residence. Blanton is well known for the images he captures from around South Georgia and North Florida and was eager to take advantage of the opportunity to be the 2019 Artist in Residency at Okefenokee. During his Residency, he focused on capturing the beauty of the Okefenokee through drone, landscape, nature, long exposure, and astrophotography images. Blanton, who began landscape photography as a hobby in 2016, spent time at several camping platforms throughout the swamp and neighboring Stephen C. Foster State Park to capture astrophotography.

“Jay has the ability to capture beautiful landscapes and wildlife images that really invoke a sense of appreciation of the natural world”, states Refuge Manager Michael Lusk. “Mr. Blanton was the resounding winner of the 2016 Okefenokee Photography Contest and we were so excited to have him with us throughout 2019 as an Artist in Residence.”

His landscape and aerial photos of the Okefenokee will be on exhibit in the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center from January 2 - February 29, 2020 during visitor center hours; 9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday. During the evening event, Blanton will host a Gallery Talk, beginning at 5:00 P.M. to discuss his Residency and journey as a photographer. All are invited to attend and encouraged to bring a friend. Hors d’oeuvres will be served.

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The Main Entrance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area) to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is 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/refuge/okefenokee for hours of operation, upcoming events, and entrance fee information.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to our events for all participants. Persons needing reasonable accommodations in order to attend and participate in our events should contact Susan Heisey at 912 496-7366 ext. 233 or Susan_Heisey@fws.gov. In order to allow sufficient time to process requests, please contact us for assistance at least five business days before the event.