

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge  
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<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/okefenokee>

# News Release



**For Immediate Release**

Date: May 20, 2019

Contact: Susan Heisey, 912-496-7366, ex 233  
Supervisory Refuge Ranger

## **Compartment #1 Wildfire Update Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge**

Folkston, GA.....At approximately noon on Sunday May 19, a wildfire was reported in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge on the northern end of the refuge, about 1/2 mile east of Okefenokee Swamp Park in Waycross. Crews from both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Georgia Forestry Commission arrived on scene with Type VI engines and tractor plow units. Working until well after dark on Sunday, crews were able to establish a plow line around the fire to create containment and will continue mopping up any smoke that remains on the fire in the coming days. The weather is forecast to be extremely hot and dry for this week and into the holiday weekend, so fire crews will be extra vigilant in ensuring containment is maintained on this fire and that any new starts are extinguished as quickly as possible.

The Compartment #1 Fire was caused by lightning and is estimated at 180 acres and 90% contained. There are currently six Type VI engines, four tractor plow units, and one type III helicopter assigned to the fire.

As a precautionary measure, the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is imposing a temporary burn ban that includes both wood fires and charcoal grills until further notice. This burn ban includes the campground at Stephen C. Foster State Park and any picnicking areas at Okefenokee Swamp Park and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Main Entrance. Additionally, campfires and charcoal grilling by individuals on overnight camping trips on the Wilderness Canoe Trail System are prohibited.

For additional information about the Compartment #1 Fire or the temporary burn ban at the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, please call Susan Heisey at 912-496-7836 or email [susan\\_heisey@fws.gov](mailto:susan_heisey@fws.gov). Follow the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Facebook page ([@OkefenokeeWildlifeRefuge](https://www.facebook.com/OkefenokeeWildlifeRefuge)) for fire updates and on Inciweb at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6348/>

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The Main Entrance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area) 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. Entrance fees are \$5 per vehicle/\$1 per bicycle for a daily pass (good for 7 days). Annual passes are also available. 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](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/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](https://www.facebook.com/okefenokeewildliferefuge) or [www.facebook.com/usfwssoutheast](https://www.facebook.com/usfwssoutheast)*