

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge
2700 Suwannee Canal Road
Folkston, GA 31537
Phone: (912) 496-7836
Fax: (912) 496-7991
<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/okefenokee>

News Release



For Immediate Release
Date: February 23, 2018

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

Celebrate Earth Day and Get Healthy... Okefenokee NWR Hosting a 5K Run and 1-Mile Fun Run

Folkston, GA.....The Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is hosting the Okefenokee Critter Crawl on Saturday April 21 at 8:00 a.m. for visitors to come out and get some exercise and celebrate Earth Day. The Okefenokee Critter Crawl is a 5K or 1-Mile Fun Run organized by the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and the Okefenokee Wildlife League. The refuge would like to invite runners and walkers alike to come out and join refuge staff and volunteers for this fun and fast 5K/1-miler.

The race route will be along the refuge's Swamp Island Drive, where participants will also enjoy the refuge landscape and observe wildlife – gopher tortoise, red-shouldered hawks, and red-cockaded woodpeckers are all possible wildlife sightings during the race. For visitors who have never been down the Swamp Island Drive and visitors who have driven the drive hundreds of times, this race is one you don't want to miss!

To sign up for the race, visit <http://alturl.com/vb9pt>. Race t-shirts are only guaranteed for people who register by April 1, 2018.

Earth Day 2018, officially celebrated on Sunday April 22, is aiming to end plastic pollution. At Okefenokee, it is not uncommon to see fishing line by boat ramps, plastic bottles floating in the water underneath the Chesser Island Boardwalk, or plastic cups along the refuge entrance road. Do your part in reducing plastic waste that pollutes our public lands. Come out and enjoy, appreciate, and support your public lands.

The Okefenokee NWR will be offering this event at the Main Entrance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area) near Folkston. The Swamp Island Drive is one of many attractions at this entrance that visitors can enjoy, so plan to come and spend the day, take a stroll on the Chesser Island Boardwalk, visit the Chesser Island Homestead take a boat tour with Okefenokee Adventures, bring a picnic, and visit the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center.

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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.

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. Connect with our Facebook pages at www.facebook.com/okefenokeewildliferefuge or www.facebook.com/usfwsoutheast, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwsoutheast, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsoutheast>.