Know Before You Go

When planning your trip, consider the following:

- **Check the weather conditions prior to your trip—be prepared!**
- **Each camping group is limited to 20 people.**
- **Entrance fees are included in the Wilderness Camping Permit.**
- **All permits will be required to print their own permits and parking placards. You may print your permit up to 7 days in advance of your trip. Once your permit is printed, no changes will be authorized.**

Check the weather conditions prior to your trip—be prepared!

- **You must remain at the designated overnight area between sunset and sunrise. Each party must leave the platform by 10 am.**
- **Each party must sign-in/out when entering and leaving the overnight stop is reached before dark each day. Parties must launch before 10 am to ensure that open fires (wood or charcoal) are permitted only at Canal Run, Mixons Hammock, and Floyds Island. Restrictions may be put in place during high fire danger. Bringing in firewood from outside of the refuge is prohibited to reduce the spread of invasive fungus and insects. Visit http://www.dontmovefirewood.org/ for more information.**
- **Portable camp stoves are required for cooking in areas where restrooms facilities are available at overnight stops and day-use shelters.**
- **All members of the party must be present at time of departure.**
- **All permittees will be required to print their own permits and parking placards. You may print your permit up to 7 days in advance of your trip. Once your permit is printed, no changes will be authorized.**
- **Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms will comply with all provisions of state and local law. Firearms are prohibited in all buildings. Persons may only use discharged firearms in accordance with refuge regulations 50 CFR7.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32.**
- **The collection and/or capturing of any plant and/or animal is strictly prohibited. Do not approach, feed, or harass wildlife.**
- **Open fires (wood or charcoal) are permitted only at Canal Run, Mixons Hammock, and Floyds Island. Restrictions may be put in place during high fire danger. Bringing in firewood from outside of the refuge is prohibited to reduce the spread of invasive fungus and insects. Visit http://www.dontmovefirewood.org/ for more information.**
- **All licenses, permits, equipment, and effects, including vehicles and canoes are subject to inspection by state and federal officers.**
- **All state, federal and county laws regarding alcohol consumption are strictly enforced.**

How Difficult is Paddling in the Okefenokee?

Consider the skill level of individuals in your party before choosing a trail! The swamp terrain is flat; there is little moving water/current and dry land is scarce. Your paddle will be used every inch of the way as you wind through cypress forests or cross open prairies exposed to the sun and wind. Paddling can be slow and strenuous on shallow and/or narrow trails. You may have to get out of your canoe and push across peat blowups, shallow water, or trees. You must plan ahead if you choose a trail that does not return to the same boat launch. Highway distance between landing:

- Suwannee Canal Recreation Area to Kingfisher Landing: 25 miles
- Suwannee Canal Recreation Area to Stephen C. Foster State Park: 70 miles
- Kingfisher Landing to Stephen C. Foster State Park: 96 miles

**Note:** Kingfisher Landing is an unstaffed entrance. The collection and/or capturing of any plant and/or animal is strictly prohibited. Do not approach, feed, or harass wildlife. All members of the party must be present at time of departure.
Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge – Wilderness Water Trails

A trip into the Okefenokee is an experience that you will remember for a lifetime. Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge contains over 407,000 acres of open water prairies, cypress forests, interior islands, and pine-uplands. Most of the refuge is a nationally designated Wilderness Area, providing opportunities for recreating in solitude. Seven overnight shelters and two islands provide a variety of trips from one to four nights with opportunities for both shorter and longer paddling distances. There are also endless possibilities for day trips into the refuge through several different entrance/access points. Read this brochure carefully and be sure you understand the refuge regulations.

Day Trips into the Okefenokee

There are many different ways you can enjoy the nearly 120 miles of Wilderness water trails within the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors can access the Okefenokee with a personal boat (canoe, kayak, or boat with motor less than 10 HP). Canoes, kayaks, jet boats, and guided tours are available for visitors through Okefenokee Adventures and Stephen C. Foster State Park. Call Okefenokee Adventures at 912-496-7156 at the Main Entrance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area). Call Stephen C. Foster State Park at 912-837-5274 for information about the West Entrance (entrance nearest Fargo). Refer to the map for additional information on mileage and day-use versus overnight trail access.

Overnight Wilderness Camping

Full of outstanding wildlife observation and photography opportunities, visitors can choose to spend anywhere from one night up to four nights on an overnight paddling trip. These paddling trips have a range of distances and can be challenging when considering steep blowdowns, narrow trails, shallow water, etc. Know the limitations of your group members when making a reservation and check the trail conditions with staff before you set out on your trip. It is required for parties to take man-made structures. Permit fees will apply to the new permit reservation. Changing the number of people with same dates and use it as this opens space for others. For reservations made in advance (no walk-in reservations authorized). Permits must be made in advance (no walk-in reservations authorized). If you cancel your reservation 13 days or less prior to the entry date, all use fees (excluding fees for one person/night reservations – $15) will be refunded. The $10 reservation fee is non-refundable for all reservations. If you cancel your reservation 13 days or less prior to the entry date, no fees will be refunded. If the refuge must cancel your reservation due to extreme weather events requiring the closure of the refuge and trails (hurricane, wildfire, etc.), you will be notified, and a full refund of fees will be issued. If you do not cancel and decide not to use your reservation, make all of the fees will be lost. Please cancel your reservation if you are unable to use it as this space is reserved for others.

How Do I Make a Reservation for a Wilderness Camping Permit?

Complete your reservation in the refuge to ensure you have a Wilderness Camping Permit (excluding camping areas within Stephen C. Foster State Park). Permits must be purchased in advance (no walk-in reservations authorized). Reservations are made by calling the Permit Reservation Line at 912-496-3331 between 7:00-10:00 am, Tuesday, Thursday, excluding federal holidays. Reservations can be made up to two months in advance of your trip. Things to know before calling to make a reservation:

- You need to have a profile in Recreation.gov before calling to make your permit reservation. Okefenokee uses Recreation.gov to create your campsite and process payments.
- There is a $10.00 non-refundable reservation fee in addition to the $15/person per night use fees. Be prepared to make payments online or be refunded. Each fee will be made through Recreation.gov; only credit cards will be accepted. No discounts are offered for America the Beautiful passholders. The permit fees cover the refuge entrance fees.

Day Trips into the Okefenokee

Overnight Wilderness Camping

While you may choose to bring communication and navigational equipment (cell phone, maps, and marking devices) with you, this is not a substitute for proper preparation. Cell phone coverage will be inconsistent, batteries die, and equipment gets dropped or wet. It is imperative that you keep on the most direct trail to the platform specified on your permit for safety. Never stray off marked trails. Check the weather conditions for the refuge prior to setting out on your trip.

Platforms/Islands on the Refuge

Each camping platform in the refuge contains a roof on half of the platform and a pit toilet. Platforms also have a picnic table or shelter for cooking. Some platforms may share water with the open water and provide fantastic night sky and sunrise/sunset viewing, while others are built into a bank or scrub/shrub and are a little more protected. Floyd’s Island and Mixers-Hamrock are islands in the swamp and provide for a more traditional camping experience, where visitors can have a campfire using the fire ring provided. Canal Run is a platform but is built into the bank of the historic Suwannee Canal, so there is solid land where a fire ring is also provided. Firewood must be purchased on site to reduce the spread of invasive species.

Parts of interest, overnight stops, and navigational information. A great resource for navigating the swamp is the Discover Nature Wilderness App. Download this app onto your smartphone to have a map of the refuge, points of interest, overnight stops, and navigational information.

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difficulty to paddle during low water levels. Floyds Island to Stephen Green Trail
The island has a fire ring for having a campfire.

Brown Trail. This site is only two miles from Stephen C Foster Mixons Hammock (Island)
Difficulty: moderate - difficult

Maul Hammock is a long day of
Difficulty: moderate

Maul Hammock and Big Water
Captain's Reserve
Round Top

Okefenokee Swamp Park

General information
Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge
2700 Suwannee Canal Road
Folks, GA 31937
912-496-7836

Overnight Wilderness Canoe Information and Reservations: The Overnight
Hunting Reserve Line is open Tuesday through Thursday (except federal
holidays) 7 - 10 am

Toilet paper. Each overnight campsite has a pit toilet, but bring TP
in case supplies are low.
You should carry the following items:

- Extra flashlights and batteries
- Portable toilet with disposable bags
- Rope for pulling canoe
- First aid kit
- Rain gear
- Sleeping bag/free-standing tent or hammock for sleeping
- Insect repellent
- Duct tape for emergency repairs
- Spare paddle
- Waterproof bags/containers
- Cord to tie down tent
- Bailer
- Sun protection (sunsreen, wide brim hat, light-colored long
  sleeve shirt, and pants)

What if I am a guide or outfitter?
If you change any fee into the Okefenokee, you are required to have a Commercial Guide Special Use Permit. Permits are only issued once annually, in the fall. For more information, call 912-406-3331. Note: Visit the refuge website (Wilderness Canoeing) for a list of permitted day use and overnight guides.

Do I need a special permit to cross the Suwannee Sill?
You no longer need a permit to cross the Suwannee River Sill. Contact Stephen C. Foster State Park at 912-637-5274 if leaving a vehicle parked in their parking lot overnight. All overnight trips must park at the Stephen C Foster State Park, not at the Sill parking area (day-use only).

Wilderness Canoe Trails
Trails within the refuge are color-coded blue, brown, green, orange, pink, purple, red, yellow. Numbered mile markers line each trail, while wooden posts painted white on top serve as trail markers to help you find your way. At main intersections wooden signs indicate the direction of several different trails or sites.

Blue Trail
Description: This trail connects the Orange Trail with the Green Trail and skirts the edge of Chesser Prairie. The deeper holes you come across are good fishing areas. It is used mainly as a route from the Orange Trail to Floyds Island or Buff Lake.
Difficulty: moderate

Overnight Sites: N/A

Brown Trail
Description: Campers access Mixins Hammock with an easy two-mile paddle across Billys Bay. To reach the Suwannee River Sill, paddle five miles through the River Narrows. The trail continues an additional three miles along the Sill through mixed cypress, bay, and gum swamp. Trail conditions vary with water levels. There can be a current in the River Narrows, which may make the return trip difficult.
Difficulty: easy (to Mixins Hammock), moderate (River Narrows)

Overnight Sites: Mixins Hammock (Island) - This island is located at the west end of Billys Lake before the River Narrows on the Brown Trail. This site is only two miles from Stephen C Foster State Park, making it a great site for less experienced paddlers and families with children. There are hiking opportunities on the island. The island has a fire ring for having a campfire, but bring TP in case supplies are low. The next nine miles to Floyds Island take you through Territory and Chase Praies with narrow cypress trees in the bottomland forest. The prairies may be difficult to paddle during low water levels. Floyds Island to Stephen C Foster State Park is nine miles of marshes and cypress forests, ending in Billys Lake.

Green Trail
Description: Kingfisher Landing to Buff Lake is eight miles along a channel originally cut for ore mining and across open lakes and a waterway lined with pitcher plants and sphagnum moss. The next nine miles to Floyds Island takes you through Territory and Chase Praies with narrow cypress trees in the bottomland forest. The prairies may be difficult to paddle during low water levels. Floyds Island to Stephen C Foster State Park is nine miles of marshes and cypress forests, ending in Billys Lake.

Difficulty: moderate - difficult

Overnight Sites: Buff Lake (Platform) - This site is located on the Green Trail accessible from Kingfisher Landing). Paddle across Buff Lake to the overnight shelter. Stars are beautiful on a dark night.
Floyds Island (Island) - This site is located on Floyds Island along the Green Trail. A 4 mile trail traverses across the island, offering access to the east to the west side of the island. If you are camping on Floyds Island as a through trip, you must portage across the island. An old hunting cabin sits partway down the trail across from the campsite. The campsite also contains a fire ring.

Orange Trail
Description: Follow the historic Suwannee Canal, dug in the late 1800s in an attempt to drain the swamp. Six miles from the Suwannee Canal Recreation Area is a day use shelter. Coffee Bay, which is a great spot to stretch your legs and have lunch. Canal Run Shelter is a 10-mile paddle from the Suwannee Canal Recreation Area (vacant enclosures). The trail past Canal Run Shelter becomes narrow and winding for five miles to Billys Island. Follow Billys Lake for two miles to Stephen C Foster State Park. During times of low water levels, paddlers may be navigating sawgrass, peat bogs, and encroaching vegetation between Canal Run and Billys Island.
Difficulty: easy to moderate due to distance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area to Canal Run), difficult (Canal Run to Stephen C Foster State Park)

Overnight Sites: Canal Run (Platform) - This platform is located on the edge of the historic Suwannee Canal, where the trail is surrounded by cypress, cypress, and lampo's bogs draped with Spanish moss. The platform is adjacent to a small hammock, where a campfire ring is available for use. It is located 10 miles from Suwannee Canal Recreation Area and seven miles from Stephen C. Foster State Park.

Pink Trail
Description: This trail starts off the Suwannee Canal or Orange Trail, heading south into Chesser Prairie, then Grand Prairie, and ending at Monkey Lake. This trail goes through some of the most iconic open prairie, growing plants and scrub-shrub habitat.
Difficulty: difficult

Overnight Sites: Monkey Lake (Platform) - This platform is located in Grand Prairie. The platform sits on the edge of Monkey Lake with the back of the platform surrounded by scrub-shrub habitat. Be sure to take the time to paddle past the overnight stop to Buzards Roost - this wide-open lake provides great wildlife viewing and fishing opportunities.

Purple T
Description: Prairie an from the 3 prairie.
Difficulty: moderate

Overnight Sites: Billys Island (Platform) - This platform sits in the middle of Monkey Lake with the back of the platform surrounded by scrub-shrub habitat. Be sure to take the time to paddle past the overnight stop to Buzards Roost - this wide-open lake provides great wildlife viewing and fishing opportunities.

Red Trail
Description: Mau Hammock, a sucking muck, is a beautiful
Difficulty: difficult

Overnight Sites: Mau Hammock (Platform) - This platform is located on the left edge of Mau Hammock Lake, is so sure to look behind you to find your overnight stop as you enter Mau Hammock. The lake, and the other lakes along the Red Trail, provide good fishing opportunities. This site is one of the remotest locations along the overnight camping trails. Enjoy beautiful night sky and sunrise/sunset viewing opportunities at this platform.

Yellow Trail
Difficulty: easy

Overnight Sites: Cedar Hammock (Platform) - This platform is located three miles from the Suwannee Canal Recreation Area, making it a great platform for less experienced paddlers and/or families with children. The platform sits in Mizell Prairie, offering open views of the surrounding area.