

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

# News Release



**For Immediate Release**

Date: October 19, 2016

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Supervisory Refuge Ranger

## **Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge to Host Pioneer Day Festival**

Folkston, GA....The smell of a wood burning fire cooking down gallons of freshly-pressed cane juice, along with other traditional crafts and activities will greet visitors at the historic Chesser Island Homestead on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup> during the Pioneer Day Festival from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. The Chesser Island Homestead is a premiere location to host an event like this, demonstrating the techniques used by the homesteaders of the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century using authentic tools and facilities. Visitors will be able to grind sugar cane using a traditional mule-powered grinder and sample the sweet cane juice. Samples of cane syrup along with biscuits will be provided, and jars of the syrup will be available for a donation.

More activities will be available to visitors at the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center including wildlife and hunting exhibits, archery, kids crafts, and boat tours by Okefenokee Adventures. To add to the festivities, the refuge will be featuring special guests, IBEX Puppetry. Special features will include endangered species parades, puppet creation stations, and a 40 foot long inflatable alligator featuring a photo booth for photo opportunities.

Join in the festivities at the Chesser Island Homestead and the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center and participate in all of the events of the day. With crafts, food, exhibits and information, and lots of fun activities for children, plan to bring the entire family and spend the day at the Main Entrance to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge as we celebrate our annual Pioneer Day Festival.

All activities start inside the Main Entrance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area) of Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, 11 miles southwest of Folkston, Georgia, off the Okefenokee Parkway South (GA 121/23). A \$5 refuge entrance fee per vehicle or annual entrance pass required. For more information, contact the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center at 912-496-7836, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., daily.

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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. 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 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](mailto: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](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>.*

