

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: November 10, 2014

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

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

Folkston, GA...The smell of a wood burning fire cooking down gallons of freshly-pressed cane juice, along with the sight of other traditional activities and demonstrations will greet visitors at the historic Chesser Island Homestead on Saturday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> during a sugar cane boil and Pioneer Day Celebration from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. The Chesser Island Homestead is a premiere location to host this event, demonstrating the techniques used by the “swampers” of the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century using authentic tools and facilities. Enjoy food samples, quilting demonstrations, butter churning, and bluegrass music. Other demonstrations include soap making, basket making, live animals, and more! Visitors will be able to see the mule-powered cane grinder and sample the sweet cane juice. Come watch as sugar cane juice is boiled to produce pure cane syrup. Samples of the syrup along with biscuits will be provided, and jars of the syrup will be available for purchase.

But that’s not all! More activities will be available at the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center including wildlife and hunting exhibits, archery, crafts, and puppet shows for the kids, nature hikes, and boat tours by Okefenokee Adventures. A special guest, Wilderness Composer Stephen Wood, will be on hand presenting his music inspired by the Okefenokee Wilderness in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Special programs will be scheduled throughout the day, with opportunities for visitors of all ages to enjoy the festivities both at the Chesser Island Homestead and around the Visitor Center.

All activities start inside the east entrance of Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, 11 miles southwest of Folkston, Georgia, off the Okefenokee Parkway South (GA 121/23). For more information, contact the Richard S. Bolt Visitor Center at 912-496-7836, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. daily.

-fws-

The Suwannee Canal Recreation Area (East Entrance) 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/refuge/okefenokee](http://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](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>.*