

Ceremonies

Special Use Permit (SUP) Special Conditions

1. Each request must be submitted a minimum of 30 calendar days in advance of the event by completing a Special Use Permit (SUP) application. Each request will then be evaluated for appropriateness and compatibility.
2. Up to two events may be permitted per month. Preference will be given to new requests over repeat requests.
3. Ceremonies will not exceed four hours in duration. This time period includes setup and breakdown of equipment, materials, etc. Event length should be limited to the shortest amount of time reasonably required.
4. Ceremonial props must be approved before the ceremony. Props can be in place one hour before the ceremony and all items must be removed within one hour after the ceremony's conclusion.
5. Music is limited to unplugged instruments of five or less pieces or hand-held players including but not limited to harmonica, recorder, spoons, ocarina, djembe, kalimba, and/or washboard.
6. No litter may be left on site including biodegradable materials.
7. No balloons, rice, birdseed, confetti, etc. are permitted because of the hazard such materials pose to wildlife.
8. The Refuge Manager, or their designee, has the right to attend any special event, with proper notice, as a non-paying observer.
9. The permittee will disclose during all programs that this area is the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) which is part of the National Wildlife Refuge System administrated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Service's and System's missions will also be summarized. Refuge leaflets and brochures will be provided through the Visitor Center or Refuge Headquarters prior to scheduled programs.
10. All Refuge regulations and permit conditions will be adhered to by the permittee and event participants. Any violation of regulations or conditions witnessed by the permittee will be promptly reported to the Refuge Manager. All other Refuge rules and regulations apply.
11. The Refuge Manager reserves the right to correct or prohibit any written materials that convey false, misleading, or incorrect information.
12. This SUP authorizes entry into the Refuge during hours specified in SUP and entry into public use areas only.
13. Standard Refuge entrance fees apply for all attendees.
14. No portion of the Refuge will close to accommodate ceremonies.
15. Special accommodations and settings for people with special needs (elderly, physically disabled) may be granted. If needed, this should be described in a written request.
16. Refuge staff will not provide any assistance in setting up or removing props for ceremonies.
17. Activities or practices that could be hazardous to visitors, wildlife, vegetation, or facilities are not allowed. Such activities include, but are not be limited to, lighting candles, burning incense, sacrifices (animal or otherwise), or scattering ashes.
18. All event activities will meet the standards of public decency and will not violate any animal or human rights.
19. It is the responsibility of the permittee to provide and manage all activity-related materials (tables, chairs, additional temporary restrooms, etc.) and ensure that all participants remove litter and other activity-related materials from Refuge property immediately following conclusion of the event.
20. A maximum of 50 people may participate in an event.
21. Bond requirement is at the discretion of the Refuge Manager, based on an analysis of the nature and scope of the event, and the associated level of risk for resource damage and

anticipated cost of any restoration or repair of any damage. The permittee is responsible for site cleanup immediately following any ceremonial event. The Refuge Manager or their designee may inspect the site prior to release of any bond.

22. Failure of the permittee to comply with any of these Special Conditions or with any State or Federal laws or Refuge regulations will be sufficient cause for permit revocation and may result in denial of future SUPs.
23. Permittee must have the signed SUP in their possession at all times while on the Refuge. A copy of the permit must also be prominently displayed on the dash of permittee's vehicle(s) at all times while on the Refuge. The permit must be presented to Refuge personnel upon request.
24. All vehicles must park in designated spaces. No vehicles may be parked on the grass or other natural areas.
25. Decorations and other activity-related materials that are made from plant (e.g. flower and plant arrangements) or animal (e.g. feathers, shells, etc.) materials must be approved prior to the event in order to maintain the environmental health of the Refuge and to prevent the introduction of any pests, pathogens, or invasive species.
26. All activities will be conducted in such a manner as to minimize disturbance to wildlife, Refuge resources, and the visiting public. The following will be specifically prohibited: 1) audio amplification devices; 2) adhering, fixing, or fastening decorations to vegetation and/or structures; 3) erecting self-supporting decorations, banners, flags, etc. in a manner that will obstruct the view of public areas or disturb wildlife; 4) throwing or scattering rice, bird seed, or similar products; and 5) the release of any type of wildlife (e.g. butterflies, doves, etc.), balloons, or lanterns.
27. No food or beverages will be allowed unless they are a fundamental part of a religious practice or ceremony and will not cause disturbance to wildlife. Receptions in association with permitted events will not be allowed.
28. A NWRS fact sheet will be provided with every SUP and must be distributed by the permittee to all adult participants.
29. The permittee agrees to forever hold harmless the United States, its officers, agents, employees, contractors and/or assigns from any and all damages to property or injuries to persons which arises or may be incidental to the activities associated with an SUP.
30. The Refuge Manager reserves the right to modify the terms and conditions of the Special Use Permit at their sole discretion to ensure the safety and compatibility of all activities.
31. In case of emergencies or to report suspicious activity, please call 1-800-307-5789. In the event that 911 is called, please call the 800 number as well in order to provide best possible response times.