



see also 1986 doc from USFWS

4US004

Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands

As approved by Rec.C.4.7 of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, Montreux, Switzerland - July 1990

NOTE: Please read the accompanying guidelines before attempting to complete this form. An example of a completed data sheet is also included.

Completed sheets should be returned to: T.A. Jones, Ramsar Database, IWRB, Slimbridge, Gloucester GL2 7BX, England

1. Country: United States of America 2. Date: 1992 3. Ref: office use only 4US004

4. Name and address of compiler:
USFWS

5. Name of wetland: Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge

6. Date of Ramsar designation:

7. Geographical coordinates: 30°36'N to 31°02'N 82°09'W to 82°31'W

8. General location: (e.g. administrative region and nearest large town)
on The Florida - Georgia Borders approx 80Km NW of Jacksonville FL

9. Area: (in hectares)
159,889 ha

10. Wetland type: (see attached classification, also approved by Montreux Rec.C.4.7)
M, ⑤, U, X, S, W

11. Altitude: (average and/or maximum & minimum)
approx. 35m to 45m above sea level

12. Overview: (general summary, in two or three sentences, of the wetland's principal characteristics)
The Okefenokee swamp is ^{outstanding regional} composed of cypress swamps, gum ponds, bay swamps and shrub bogs from which the Suwannee river and St Marys river flow.

13. Physical features: (e.g. geology; geomorphology; origin - natural or artificial; hydrology; soil type; water quality; water depth; water permanence; fluctuations in water level; tidal variations; catchment area; downstream area; climate)
The Okefenokee swamp lies in the Gulf Atlantic coastal flats ~~and overlies~~ ^{and overlies} upper Tertiary (Pliocene & Miocene) rocks of little erosional resistance. It serves as the headwaters for the Suwannee river system. Soils of the region are mostly poorly to very poorly drained, sandy spodosols and Histisols. The swamp has a very complex and variable hydrology pattern that produces a complex mosaic of vegetation throughout the region.

14. Ecological features: (main habitats and vegetation types)
The area tends to be dominated by bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), Water tupelo (*Nyssa Aquatica*), and pumpkin ash (*Fraxinus profunda*), though a wide range of vegetation is found throughout the area as a result of the effects of variable hydroperiods, fire and local topography.

15. Land tenure /ownership of:

(a) site *owned & controlled by U.S. Government, Department of Interior, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.*

(b) surrounding area *Mixed multiple ownership*

16. Conservation measures taken: (national category and legal status of protected areas - including any boundary changes which have been made; management practices; whether an officially approved management plan exists and whether it has been implemented)

Area is managed as a wildlife refuge.

17. Conservation measures proposed but not yet implemented: (e.g. management plan in preparation; officially proposed as a protected area etc.)

18. Current land use: principal human activities in:

(a) site *Wildlife refuge*
Hunting
Fishing
Outdoor recreation

(b) surroundings/catchment
Forestry - Logging
Grazing Farming

19. Disturbances/threats, including changes in land use and major development projects: (factors which may have a negative impact on the ecological character of the wetland)

(a) at the site

20. Hydrological and physical values: (groundwater recharge, flood control, sediment trapping, shoreline stabilisation etc.)

The Okefenokee Swamp is the headwaters area of the Suwannee River system. The swamp serves to regulate water flows and smooth flow into Suwannee river.

21. Social and cultural values: (e.g. fisheries production, forestry, religious importance, archaeological site etc.)

- A refuge for Endangered species. Area is used ~~extensively~~ for public education on conservation of wetlands
- Be used for outdoor recreational values; hunting, fishing and camping.
- Extremely wide variety of waterbirds found in & are ~~found~~ nest in the swamp

22. Noteworthy fauna: (e.g. unique, rare, endangered, abundant or biogeographically important species; include count data etc.)

Red cockaded woodpecker and the Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are protected

23. Noteworthy flora: (e.g. unique, rare, endangered, or biogeographically important species/communities etc.)

The white topped pitcher plant is considered endangered by the state of Georgia

24. Current scientific research and facilities: (e.g. details of current projects; existence of field station etc.)

25. Current conservation education: (e.g. visitors centre, hides, information booklet, facilities for school visits etc.)

Refuge has a visitor education center
Refuge leaflet & species list are available for
the refuge.

26. Current recreation and tourism: (state if wetland used for recreation/tourism; indicate type & frequency/intensity)

27. Management authority: (name and address of body responsible for managing the wetland)

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge
Route 2, Box 338
Folkston, GA 31537
USA

28. Jurisdiction: (territorial e.g. state/region and functional e.g. Dept of Agriculture/Dept of Environment etc.)

United States Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

29. Bibliographical references: (scientific/technical only)

30. Reasons for inclusion: (state which Ramsar criteria - as adopted by Rec.C-4.15 of the Montreux Conference - are applicable)

31. Map of site (please enclose the most detailed and up-to-date map available - preferably at least 1:25,000 or 1:50,000)