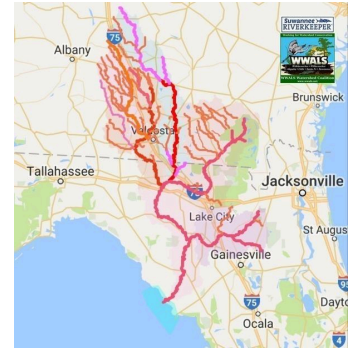


2025 Official Rules

Eighth Annual

Suwannee RIVERKEEPER®

Songwriting Contest



Important Dates:

- Tue., April 1, 2025 [Song submissions open](#)
- Wed., August 6, 2025 [Deadline for song submissions](#)
- Wed., August 13, 2025 [Applicants advised](#) whether they are finalists
- Sat., Sept. 6, 2025 [Contest Finals](#) at the WWALS River Revue

1. **Song submissions open Tuesday, April 1, 2025.**
 - a. \$25 submission fee. Submit at:
<https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/7EEW7Q8XPEEMJ>
 - b. Only one (1) entry per act (band or individual).
 - c. Contest is open to amateur, semi-pro, and professional songwriters.
 - d. Lyrics and melody must be the original creation of the entrant(s).
 - e. Song may not be more than 4.5 minutes in length.
 - f. Musical accompaniment is permitted.
2. **To submit your entry** by the deadline, go to wwals.net and submit it online.
 - a. This is the entry form: <https://forms.gle/7n6R9bEEYdcQw4gr8>
3. **Deadline for song submissions is Wednesday, August 6, 2025.** The following **must be received by the deadline** to be considered for the Contest:
 - a. Entry form, including the song title, the lyrics, date of creation, and the composer(s) name, email, mailing address and phone number
 - b. WAV or MP3 file audio recording of the composition
 - c. Affirmation of eligibility and release of recording rights and publicity

- i. The affirmation will state that the winner's song is original work and he/she holds all rights to the song. Failure to sign and return such affirmation and release within 14 days or provision of false/inaccurate information therein will result in immediate disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Affirmation and release for entrants under 18 years of age at time of award must be countersigned by parent or legal guardian. Affirmation and release subject to verification by WWALS and its agents. Entry constitutes permission to use winner's names, likenesses, and voices for future advertising and publicity purposes without additional compensation.
 - d. WWALS reserves the right to extend the deadline of the competition if needed.
 - e. Entries will not be returned or deleted, but all rights, other than as specified above and in the release, remain with the songwriter(s).
 - f. Submission fee as noted above.
4. **Once the submissions are received**, the WWALS Songwriting Contest Committee (Committee) selects finalists from the entrants using criteria including:
 - a. The song must be about one or more of the Suwannee or its tributaries the Little, Black, or Gopher, the Withlacoochee or its tributaries the Little or New, the Alapaha or its tributaries the Alapahoochee, Willacoochee, Little, Alapaha, or Dead, or other Rivers, creeks, springs, sinks, swamps, or ponds in the Suwannee River Basin or Estuary.
 - b. *Not* about the Santa Fe River or waterbodies in that sub-basin, because there's another contest for that.
 - c. Avoid proselytizing religion.
 - d. Avoid partisan politics or specific candidates, but issues are OK.
 - e. Avoid things that don't exist in the Basin or Estuary (no crocodiles; no flamingos).
 - f. Explicit lyrics (vulgar or violent) will not be accepted.
 - g. Any judge who is also a member of the Committee shall not vote on the selection of finalists to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest.
5. **Applicants will be advised by Wednesday, August 13, 2025**, if they have been selected to compete as finalists.

6. A **stage plot** will be required for any performances utilizing more than one musician and should be received by WWALS before the Contest.
7. Finalists agree to perform their song in **the Songwriting Contest, which begins at 5 PM on Saturday, September 6, 2025**, at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N Patterson St, Valdosta, GA 31601, as part of the WWALS River Revue.
 - a. The Committee reserves the right to change the precise start and end time of the Contest.
 - b. Finalists must arrive at the venue two hours before the contest starts for sound check.**
 - c. Upon request, WWALS will pay mileage at the usual WWALS rate for finalists from 50 up to 125 miles from the venue.
8. **Criteria the judges will use for selecting winners** from the finalists include:
 - a. 5 pts. Integrity, historical value, and/or present value of the waters
 - b. 5 pts. Originality of lyrics
 - c. 5 pts. Originality of music
 - d. 5 pts. Performance
 - e. + Extra credit for:
 - i. 3 pts. Naming the most rivers (springs, etc.) in a way that shows their value (even just listing them counts).
 - ii. 3 pts. Storytelling: creating a narrative regarding the history and/or attributes of the Suwannee River Basin.
9. **Prizes:**
 - a. All qualified finalists will receive an annual WWALS membership and a video of their performance at the Contest on YouTube.
 - b. A cash prize of \$300 will be awarded to one First Prize Winner.
 - c. Two prizes by geography will be awarded to different finalists other than who wins First Prize:
 - i. \$50 for Local (submitter lives within the Suwannee River Basin)
 - ii. \$50 for Non-local (from without)
 - d. Separate prizes will be awarded, one per music genre.
 - e. One or more prizes will be awarded to contestants younger than 18 years.
 - f. Prizes will be awarded jointly to all authors of any song; division of the prize is the responsibility of the winners.
 - g. The winners release sponsors from all liability regarding prizes won. Taxes are winners' responsibility.
10. **WWALS will video-record** each accepted entrant for YouTube. Signing the consent (application) is an acknowledgment of this opportunity. WWALS wishes to publish ALL performances on YouTube. WWALS reserves the right to not upload any or all of the

performances. If the artist chooses not to participate in the YouTube offer for any reason after the performance, they will have 24 hours to contact us via email to decline the YouTube offer. If the entrant wants a copy of the performance, they may contact the production company on their own. No other person may purchase a copy of the performance without the express written consent of the entrant.

For more information, see <http://wwals.net/pictures/songwriting2025/> or email song@wwals.net or song@suwanneeriverkeeper.org or call 850-290-2350.

WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (WWALS): is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity, established June 2012. WWALS advocates for conservation and stewardship of the surface waters and groundwater of the Suwannee River Basin and Estuary, in south Georgia and north Florida, among them the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, Santa Fe, and Suwannee River watersheds, through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities. Since December 2016, John S. Quarterman is the **Suwannee Riverkeeper®**, which is a staff position and a project of WWALS as the member of Waterkeeper® Alliance for the Suwannee River Basin.

