

- 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 River or its tributaries the Little, Black, or Gopher, the Withlacoochee River or its tributaries the Little or New, the Alapaha River or its tributaries the Alapahoochee, Willacoochee, Little Alapaha, or Dead, the Santa Fe River or its tributaries the Ichetucknee or New, or other rivers, creeks, springs, sinks, swamps, or ponds in the Suwannee River Basin or Estuary including underground waters such as the Floridan Aquifer.
 - b. Avoid proselytizing religion.
 - c. Avoid partisan politics or specific candidates, but issues are OK.
 - d. Avoid things that don't exist in the Basin or Estuary (no crocodiles; no flamingos).
 - e. Explicit lyrics (vulgar or violent) will not be accepted.
 - f. 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 19, 2026**, if they have been selected to compete as finalists.