

Seahorse Key Marine Lab General Rules

- All people staying at SKML must sign a liability release form. Participants under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian signature.
- Firearms and dogs (unless service animal) are forbidden at SKML, on boats, and on Seahorse Key.
- Removal of plants, wildlife, or archeological artifacts is not permitted without a Special Use permit from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service or Florida Fish and Wildlife.
- Clean all up after yourself at all times, everywhere. Please follow the guidelines for cleaning the lighthouse that are posted in the kitchen.
- Please note there are numerous venomous snakes (cottonmouth, *Agkistrodon piscivorus*) on Seahorse Key. Watch for snakes and do not molest them. These snakes are not aggressive unless you bother them.
- Due to the snake presence, visitors are required to carry a flashlight, wear shoes, and stay on paths if walking outside after dark.
- Be cautious about stingrays and oysters, which are present in surrounding waters. If in water, always wear sneakers or rubber boots and shuffle your feet when moving to avoid rays.
- The water from the taps is suitable for showering, washing dishes, and brushing teeth. Please use the water in the orange and blue containers provided for drinking and cooking.
- **Water conservation is essential.** Please try to use water efficiently in showering, dishwashing and cleanup. Please take military showers to conserve water. Please clean up following fieldwork by using the spigot at the west end of the lighthouse instead of showering.
- The interior of Seahorse Key is closed to general public use for the safety of visitors and the protection of the flora and fauna.
- Do not jump or dive from the dock or docking facilities. Swimming is not permitted at the dock or boat basin.
- No fires are permitted on Seahorse Key except for cooking fires in the designated grill adjacent to the lighthouse.
- Orderliness and respect in personal conduct and living habits is essential for comfort and good public relations among all who use and are responsible for this island and laboratory. Please remember that Seahorse Key is part of a National Wildlife Refuge and an extension of the University of Florida's campus. While here, we abide by both UF and US Fish and Wildlife Service rules.
- Be weather wise. Get off/out of water and inside during storms, particularly if thunder and lightening are present.
- Canoes may be used only on the north side of the island with life jackets ON. Users must tell their group leaders that they intend to use them, where they are going, and when they will be back.
- The weight limit for the lighthouse catwalk is a maximum of 600 people at one time.
- Please take **all** perishable food off the island when you leave.
- Do not leave valuable personal items exposed in your rooms.
- All garbage and trash should be put in the garbage containers or large trashcans

NCBS staff are dedicated to helping you have a safe and successful stay at Seahorse Key. Please interact courteously and observe all rules and suggestions you might be told.

