

**Rule Changes related to Hunting**  
**Agenda Item 12 A**  
**Summary of Proposals**

**68A-9.004 Permits for Hunting or Other Recreational Use on Wildlife Management** – The proposed rule amendment would increase the total Grove Park WMA Recreational Use Permits (RUPs) available and RUP cost from 200 RUPs (\$475/each) to 235 RUPs (\$595/each).

**68A-12.002 General Methods of Taking Game and Crows; Prohibitions** – The proposed rule amendment would allow the use of muzzleloading rifles .30 caliber or larger for hunting deer and the use of bows equipped with sights or aiming devices with electronic computational capabilities (rangefinder) or light projection (laser) features for hunting game or crows during any archery season.

**68A-13.003 Hunting Regulations for Ducks, Geese, and Coots.**– The proposed rule amendment would redistribute the 2-day Youth Waterfowl Hunt so that one hunt day would occur the Saturday prior to the opening of the first phase of duck, light goose, and coot season and one hunt day would occur the second Saturday following the close of the second phase of duck, light goose, and coot season.

**68A-13.008 Hunting Regulations for Migratory Birds Other than Ducks and Coots** – The proposed rule amendment would expand the falconry dove season by 17 days.

**68A-15.004 General Regulations Relating to Wildlife Management Areas** – The proposed rule amendment would extend shooting hours for all spring turkey seasons on Wildlife Management Areas from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset, unless otherwise provided by specific area regulation.

**68A-15.006 Regulations Relating to Miscellaneous Areas** – The proposed rule amendments would revise or establish specific area regulations on miscellaneous areas as follows:

- (1) **Babcock Ranch Preserve Tier I** – extend scouting hours before each spring turkey quota hunt to 1½ hours before sunrise until 1½ hours after sunset; and shift the start of the general gun mobility-impaired and general gun quota hunts from Friday to Saturday (the length of the hunts will remain the same).
- (2) **Babcock Ranch Preserve Tier II** – reduce antler point restriction for harvesting antlered deer from "at least 1 antler having 4 or more points" to "at least 1 antler having 3 or more points OR one antler with a main beam of 10 inches or more" (consistent with Zone A antler point restrictions).
- (3) **Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Area** – allow deer to be hunted during archery, muzzleloading gun and general gun seasons in the Drasdo Unit; and allow centerfire rifles to be used for hunting in the Drasdo Unit.
- (4) **Kissimmee River Public Use Area** – establish two 5-day wild hog-dog hunts during the months of April and May (no quota requirement).

**68A-15.061 Specific regulations for Wildlife Management Areas - Southwest Region** – The proposed rule amendment would adjust season dates to conform to calendar year changes and revise specific area regulations on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the Southwest Region as follows:

- (1) **Arbuckle WMA** – change the name of “Gulfstream Tract” of the Everglades Headwaters WMA to “Arbuckle Unit” of the Everglades Headwaters WMA.

(2) **Avon Park Airforce Base WMA** – legal shooting hours for spring turkey will remain ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.

(3) **Babcock/Webb WMA** – require a permit for camping within designated campgrounds. A permitting system will eliminate the first-come, first served line-up in advance of the campground opening and reduce unsafe conditions when the line backs up to the highway.

(4) **Chassahowitzka WMA** – prohibit public access from 1½ hours after sunset until 1½ hours before sunrise, except for registered SCUBA divers and during periods open to hunting.

(5) **Green Swamp WMA** – allow camping equipment to remain on the area between archery and general gun season; and allow kitchen stoves to be used outside of mobile campers while camping.

(6) **Green Swamp West WMA** - legal shooting hours for spring turkey will remain ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.

(7) **KICCO WMA** – establish a 2-day youth turkey quota hunt (5 no-cost quota permits, no exemptions).

(8) **Hilochee WMA, Osprey Unit** – expand small game season from 12 to 21 days; and shift small game season dates to begin the day following the close of the wild hog-dog season.

**68A-15.062 Specific regulations for Wildlife Management Areas - North Central Region** – The proposed rule amendments would adjust season dates to conform to calendar year changes and revise specific area regulations on wildlife management areas (WMAs) in the North Central Region as follows:

(1) **Andrews WMA** – expand the small game season from three 3-day hunts to five 3-day hunts (Friday through Sunday) by converting the two 2-day family hunts into two 3-day small game season hunts.

(2) **Big Shoals WMA** – remove check station requirements for hunters during spring turkey season.

(3) **Camp Blanding WMA** – remove the limited entry daily quota permit requirement during the wild hog-dog season.

(4) **Devil’s Hammock WMA** – during spring turkey season, legal shooting hours shall remain ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.

(5) **Hatchet Creek WMA** – during small game season, allow the use of dogs to take small game (quail, rabbit, squirrel and migratory birds).

(6) **Holton Creek WMA** – during the day before each hunting period (scout day), prohibit the use of vehicles by persons not participating in the hunt.

(7) **Mallory Swamp WMA** – extend spring turkey season from 16 to 32 days; and expand the wild hog-dog season by adding two 3-day wild hog-dog hunts that allow hunting during the day and at night with the aid of a light and firearm (one each during April and June, no quota permit required).

(8) **Osceola WMA** – allow hunters to transport dogs on Forest Service Road 233 during the fox/raccoon/opossum/bobcat, deer-dog training, and general gun seasons.

(9) **Steinhatchee Springs WMA** – expand the wild hog-dog season by adding two 3-day wild hog-dog hunts that allow hunting during the day and at night with the aid of a light and firearm (one each during April and June, no quota permit required).

**68A-15.063 Specific regulations for Wildlife Management Areas - Northwest Region** – The proposed rule amendment would adjust season dates to conform to calendar year changes and revise specific area regulations on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the Northwest Region as follows:

(1) **Blackwater WMA, Hutton Unit** – increase the antler point restriction for all antlered deer hunts to minimum of 4-points-on-a-side.

(2) **Chipola River WMA** – expand the general gun season 14 days later to encompass the rut; begin the archery/muzzleloading gun season 3 weeks later to accommodate the general gun season expansion; during established seasons, restrict the take of deer and wild hog within the Hayes Spring Run and Waddell Mill Creek areas to archery equipment only; and, prohibit the take of wildlife with centerfire rifles and centerfire pistols in the Hayes Spring Run and Waddell Mill Creek areas.

(3) **Choctawhatchee River WMA** – establish five 3-day wild hog-dog hunts (1 per month from May through September) across still and dog hunt areas (except in Holmes Creek Unit) that allow hunting during the day and at night with the aid of a light and firearm.

(4) **Eglin WMA** – require the use of remote tracking (GPS) and correctional collar devices when hunting hogs with dogs.

(5) **Plank Road WMA** – expand the second spring turkey quota hunt from 2 days to 3 days.

(6) **Tate's Hell WMA, Womack Creek Unit** – establish a 13-day wild hog-dog season beginning the day following the general gun-dog season and ending 12 days thereafter.

**68A-15.064 Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas - South Region** – The proposed rule amendment would adjust season dates to conform to calendar year changes and revise specific area regulations on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the South Region as follows:

(1) **Big Cypress WMA, Stairsteps (Zones 1-3) and Loop units only** - establish that only deer having at least one antler with 4 or more points can be harvested; prohibit hunting with guns other than bows during the general gun season; and establish a bag limit for deer of 1 annually in the Stairsteps and Loop units combined.

(2) **Dinner Island Ranch WMA** – within posted dove fields, remove daily quota requirement for dove hunts during Phase 2 and 3 of the statewide dove season. A daily quota will still be required during Phase 1 dove field hunts.

(3) **Fisheating Creek WMA** – during special-opportunity spring turkey hunts (east of U.S. 27 only) the legal shooting hours for turkey hunting shall remain ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.; and during spring turkey quota hunts (west of U.S. 27 only), allow harvested turkeys to be divided or consumed in the field provided each portion shall be tagged with the date/time of harvest and the name, address, and hunting license number (if required) of the person that harvested the game. Each portion of the divided turkey would be readily traceable to evidence of the birds sex identification.

(4) **Picayune Strand WMA** – allow use of swamp buggies and ROVs during quota hunts and associated scouting periods, but only for hunters (and their guests) having a valid quota permit; and limit swamp buggy

and ROV access to roads designated by Florida Forest Service within that portion of the area east of Miller Blvd.

**68A-15.065 Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas - Northeast Region** – The proposed rule amendment would adjust season dates to conform to calendar year changes and revise specific area regulations on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the Northeast Region as follows:

- (1) **Charles H. Bronson WMA** – restrict vehicular access during scouting days and hunting seasons to 1 ½ hours before sunrise until 1 ½ hours after sunset.
- (2) **Lake George WMA, Dexter Mary Farms Unit** – during special-opportunity spring turkey hunts, legal shooting hours for turkey hunting shall remain ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
- (3) **Lake Panasoffkee WMA** – during special-opportunity spring turkey hunts, legal shooting hours for turkey hunting shall remain ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
- (4) **Little Big Econ WMA** – restrict vehicular access during scouting days and hunting seasons to 1 ½ hours before sunrise until 1 ½ hours after sunset.
- (5) **Matanzas WMA** – remove the area specific rule requiring that vehicles must be parked at designated parking areas or parked within 25 feet of a named or numbered road; restrict public access during non-hunting periods from sunrise to sunset, during hunting seasons from 1 ½ hours before sunrise until 1 ½ hours after sunset; and allow vehicular access only during scouting days and hunting seasons or by permit from the Florida Forest Service.
- (6) **Seminole Ranch WMA** – remove all the quota and daily permit requirements for the wild hog-dog hunt.
- (7) **Tiger Bay WMA, Rima Ridge Unit** – restrict public access during non-hunting periods from sunrise to sunset, during hunting seasons from 1 ½ hours before sunrise until 1 ½ hours after sunset.
- (8) **Tosohatchee WMA** – allow public access from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. during spring turkey season to accommodate the expansion of spring turkey shooting hours (1/2 hour before sunrise until sunset).
- (9) **Triple N Ranch WMA** – allow vehicle access for all area users on scouting days for small game season and wild hog-still season (these are not special-opportunity hunts).

**68A-17.004 General Regulations Relating to Wildlife and Environmental Areas** – The proposed rule amendment would extend shooting hours for all spring turkey seasons on WEAs from one-half hour before sunrise until sunset, unless otherwise provided by specific area regulation.

**68A-17.005 Specific regulations for Wildlife and Environmental Areas** - The proposed rule amendment would adjust season dates to conform to calendar year changes and revise specific area regulations on Wildlife and Environmental Areas (WEAs) as follows:

North Central Region

- (1) **Lafayette Forest WEA** – allow persons hunting during the April or June wild hog-dog season hunts on Mallory Swamp WMA to traverse Lafayette Forest WEA on McCalls Chapel Grade at night (from 1 ½ hours after sunset until 1 ½ hours before sunrise) with no requirement to possess a Special Use Authorization from the Suwannee River Water Management District.