DRAFT RULE
Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas – North Central Region
Agenda Item 12A
December 13, 2018


PURPOSE AND EFFECT: The purpose of the proposed rule amendment is to revise specific area regulations on wildlife management areas (WMAs) in the North Central Region and conform to calendar year date changes. The effect of the proposed rule amendment will be to enable the agency to better manage fish and wildlife resources and public use on WMAs.

SUMMARY: 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:

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.
Big Shoals WMA – remove check station requirements for hunters during spring turkey season.
Camp Blanding WMA – remove the limited entry daily quota permit requirement during the wild hog-dog season.
Devil’s Hammock WMA – during spring turkey season, legal shooting hours shall remain ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
Hatchet Creek WMA – during small game season, allow the use of dogs to take small game (quail, rabbit, squirrel and migratory birds).
Holton Creek WMA – during the day before each hunting period (scout day), prohibit the use of vehicles by persons not participating in the hunt.
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).
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.
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).

Additionally, the proposed rule amendments would provide non-substantive technical changes, such as grammatical corrections, language standardization, or clarification of an existing rule.

THE FULL TEXT OF THE PROPOSED RULE IS AS FOLLOWS:

68A-15.062 Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas – North Central Region.
(1) Camp Blanding Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. through 5. No change.
6. Archery – September 24-26 25-27 and October 1-3 2-4, only in the still hunt and archery-only areas; and October 8-10 9-11, 15-17 16-18, and the Monday before Thanksgiving and continuing for 55 days thereafter in the archery-only area, which is within the area described by a line beginning at the intersection of County Road 225 and Woodbury Road, then southeast on County Road 225 to State Road 16, then south on State Road 16 and County Road 230 to the Camp Blanding boundary on the east side of County Road 230, then east along the Camp Blanding boundary to Duval Road, then south on Duval Road to Yerkes Road, then west on Yerkes Road to Treat Road, then north on Treat Road to Lightning Strike Road, then west and north on Lightning Strike Road to State Road 230, then west on State Road 230 to the Camp Blanding boundary, then north along the Camp Blanding boundary to State Road 16, then east on the south side of State Road 16 to Lightning Strike Road, then north on Lightning Strike Road to Bessent Road, then north on Bessent Road to the starting point. A disjunct portion of the archery-only area is south of County Road 215, east of Rifle Range Road, north of State Road 16 and west of the Camp Blanding boundary.
7. No change.
8. Muzzleloading gun – October 8-10 9-11 and 15-17 16-18, only in the still hunt areas.
9. No change.
10. Trapping – December 1 through January 5, only in the still hunt areas.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 2. No change.
3. Possession or use of a dog, other than a dog on a leash for trailing wounded game, is prohibited except (1) in the dog hunt area and (2) bird dogs are allowed in still hunt areas 1 and 2 but only after the first 16 days of the general gun season. **During the wild hog-dog season, no more than three free-running dogs per wild hog-dog daily quota permit shall be allowed.**
4. through 15. No change.
16. During the wild hog-dog season, a daily quota permit allows three hunters to participate in the hunt.
(2) Cypress Creek Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. Archery – September 21 22 through October 6 7.
5. No change.
6. Small game – Opening November 9 10 and closing concurrently with the gray squirrel season established in Rule 68A-13.004, F.A.C.
(b) through (d) No change.
(3) Gulf Hammock Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
4. Archery – September 14 15 through October 18 19.
5. Archery and muzzleloading gun – October 19 20 through November 1 2.
7. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(4) Lochloosa Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. General gun – November 2-15 3-16, November 16 17 through December 1 2 and December 2-29 3-30.
6. No change.
7. Small game – December 30 31 through March 1 3.
8. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(5) Osceola Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Small game – January 6 7 through March 1 3.
6. Muzzleloading gun – October 19-26 20-27 in the still hunt area and Big Gum Swamp Wilderness only.
7. Fox, raccoon, opossum and bobcat – November 9 10 through March 1 3 in the dog hunt portion of the area.
8. through 9. No change.
11. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. No change.
2. Deer dogs may be trained from October 27 through November 5, except in the still hunt area.
3. through 5. No change.
6. During the fox, raccoon, opossum and bobcat, deer-dog training and general gun seasons, the possession of dogs other than bird dogs and waterfowl retrievers is prohibited, except on roads adjacent to the dog hunt area, all lands within the dog hunt area and Interstate 10; State Road 2; County Roads 125, 229, 250, 250A, Eddy Grade and Baxter Grade; and Forest Roads 231, 233, 236 (east from US 441 into the dog hunt area only), 237, 262, 263 and 285. Additionally, any leashed or caged dog may be kept at the East Tower hunt camp during the general gun season.
7. No change.
(6) Big Bend Wildlife Management Area – Tide Swamp Unit.
(a) Open season:
1. General gun – November 2 through December 30.
4. Small game – November 9 through March 1.
5. through 6. No change.
10. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 2. No change.
3. During periods when check stations are staffed during the muzzleloading gun season, the bear season, the youth turkey hunt, and the first 16 days of the archery, general gun and spring turkey seasons, hunters shall check in and out at a check station when entering or exiting the area and check all game taken.
4. through 7. No change.
(7) Big Bend Wildlife Management Area – Spring Creek Unit.
(a) Open season:
1. General gun – November 2-10 and November 11 through December 30.
4. Small game – November 11 through March 1.
8. through 10. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. During periods when check stations are staffed during the muzzleloading gun season, the bear season, the youth turkey hunt, and the first 16 days of the archery, general gun and spring turkey seasons, hunters shall check in and out at a check station when entering or exiting the area and shall check all game taken.
2. through 8. No change.
(8) Big Bend Wildlife Management Area – Hickory Mound Unit.
(a) Open season:
1. General gun – November 2-10 11-17 12-18 and November 18 19 through December 29 30.
2. Small game – November 11 12 through March 1 3.
5. through 7. No change.
8. Trapping – January 6 7 through March 1.
9. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 5. No change.
6. During periods when check stations are staffed during the bear season and the first 16 days of the archery, general gun and spring turkey seasons, hunters shall check in and out at a check station when entering or exiting the area and check all game taken.
Waterfowl hunters using the Hickory Mound Impoundment must check in and out at the check station whenever it is staffed and check all game taken.
7. through 13. No change.

(9) Big Bend Wildlife Management Area – Jena Unit.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 21 22 through October 20 21.
2. General gun – November 2-10 11-17 12-18 and November 18 19 through December 29 30.
4. Small game – November 11 12 through March 1 3.
5. through 6. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(10) Big Bend Wildlife Management Area – Snipe Island Unit.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 21 22 through October 20 21.
3. General gun – November 2-10 11-17 12-18 and November 18 19 through December 29 30.
4. Small game – November 11 12 through March 1 3.
8. No change.
(b) Legal to take: All legal game, bear (only during those portions of the archery and muzzleloading gun seasons that coincide with the open season established for the East Panhandle BMU in Rule 68A-13.004(3)(g), F.A.C.), fish, frogs and furbearers. The bag limit for deer shall be one per person per day. Taking of antlered deer not having at least one antler with two or more points is prohibited, except by persons less than 16 years of age. During archery season quota periods, one turkey may be taken per person, but no more than two turkeys per quota permit. During archery season non-quota periods, one turkey may be taken per person. During spring turkey season quota periods, one gobbler or bearded turkey may be taken per person, but no more than two per quota permit. During spring turkey season non-quota periods, one gobbler or bearded turkey may be taken per person. Gobblers or bearded turkeys may be taken during spring turkey season from one half hour before sunrise until sunset.
(c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 3. No change.
4. During periods when check stations are staffed during the muzzleloading gun season, the youth turkey hunt and the first 16 days of the archery, general gun and spring turkey seasons, hunters shall check in and out at a check station when entering or exiting the area and check all game taken.
5. through 6. No change.
(11) No change.
(12) Raiford Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. Archery and muzzleloading gun – November 2-10 3-11, Thanksgiving Day through the Sunday following Thanksgiving Day and December 21-24 22-25.
5. Youth turkey hunt – March 21-29 26-24 and April 4-7 9-12.
7. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 2. No change.
3. During periods open to hunting, archery, muzzleloading gun and archery/muzzleloading gun and wild hog-still seasons, hunters are allowed on the area from 1.5 hours before sunrise until 1.5 hours after sunset. During spring turkey season, hunters are allowed on the area from 1.5 hours before sunrise until 1:30 p.m.
4. through 7. No change.
(13) Cedar Key Scrub Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. General gun – November 2-10 3-11.
4. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(14) Andrews Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Muzzleloading gun – November 1-3 2-4 and 8-10 9-11.
8. Wild hog-still – May 1-3 3-5 and 8-10 4-6.
10. renumbered 9. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(15) Big Shoals Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 23-28 24-29, September 30 through October 5 October 1-6 and October 7-12 8-13.
3. Small game – November 9-10 through March 1-3.
6. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. Hunters shall check in and out at a check station when entering or exiting the area, and shall check all game taken, except during the archery, muzzleloading gun and small game seasons.

2. through 5. renumbered 1. through 4. No change.

(16) Twin Rivers Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
4. General gun – November 4-10 and 11-17.
5. No change.
7. Spring turkey – March 27-29 and April 17-19.
8. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(17) No change.

(18) Jennings Forest Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Supervised small game – October 12-21, east of Yellow Water Creek, and east of the North Fork Black Creek but only south of its convergence with Yellow Water Creek.
5. General gun – November 4-7, 8-11, 12-15 and 16-19.
7. Small game – January 3-4 through February 3-4, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only.
9. No change.
12. through 13. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(19) Holton Creek Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Mobility-impaired spring turkey – March 27-29 and April 17-19.
3. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. No change.
2. During periods open to hunting periods, public access is prohibited except for access will be restricted to individuals participating in the hunt and hikers using the Florida Trail.
3. No change.
4. Vehicles may be operated from 1.5 hours before sunrise until 1.5 hours after sunset and only on portions of named or numbered roads. During the day prior to the opening of each hunt, vehicle access is prohibited except for individuals participating in the hunt.
5. through 10. No change.

(20) Goethe Wildlife Management Area.
Open season:
3. General gun (still hunt) – November 2-4, 3-5, 5-7, 6-8, and 8-11, 9-12.
7. Spring turkey – March 21-27, 16-22, March 28 through April 5, 23-31, and April 6-12, 4-7.
8. No change.

Citrus Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. General gun – December 6-8, 7-9, and 27-29, December 28-30.
3. Muzzleloading gun – November 29-30, through December 1, 2, and December 13-15, 14-16.
7. through 8. No change.

(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 3. No change.
4. During periods when check stations are staffed, no deer or turkey shall be dismembered or removed from the area until checked at the check station.
5. through 11. No change.

Flying Eagle Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 28-29, through October 1, 2, and October 4-8, 5-9.
3. General gun – November 2-5, 3-6, and 8-12, 9-13.
6. through 7. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 3. No change.
8. During the September duck season, shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise until noon each day.
9. No change.

Potts Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Archery – October 3-6, 4-7, and 9-13, 10-14.
6. through 7. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

Homosassa Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Small game – November 8 9 through December 1 2, December 21 22 through January 12 13 and February 1-23 2-24.
3. Special-opportunity spring turkey – March 21-27 46-22 and April 4-10 March 30 through April 5.
4. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(25) Devil’s Hammock Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Family hunt – October 5-6 6-7 and 12-13 13-14.
4. General gun – November 2-5 2-6 and 6-10 7-11.
9. No change.
10. Fishing and frogging – Allowed year-round.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 6. No change.
7. Shooting hours during the youth turkey hunt and spring turkey season shall be from one-half hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
(26) Mallory Swamp Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
4. Small game – January 6 7 through February 16 17.
5. Wild hog-dog – February 17 18 through March 8 10, and opening the last Friday in April and closing 2 days thereafter and reopening the fourth Friday in June and closing 2 days thereafter.
7. No change.
8. Trapping – January 6 7 through March 1.
9. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 5. No change.
6. Public access is prohibited from 1.5 hours after sunset until 1.5 hours before sunrise, except by persons participating in the April and June wild hog-dog season hunts or by persons possessing a Special Use Authorization from the Suwannee River Water Management District.
7. through 8. No change.
9. During April and June, wild hog-dog season hunts will begin at 12:01 a.m. on the first day of the hunt and end at 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the hunt.
10. During April and June wild hog-dog season hunts, wild hog may be taken during the day or at night by the aid of a light with dogs and a firearm. The hunting of wild hog under this provision by display or use of a light from a moving vehicle, boat or animal is prohibited.
(27) Middle Aucilla Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. General gun – November 2-28 3-29 and November 29 30 through December 29 30.
6. Spring turkey – March 21 26 through April 26 27.
7. through 8. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(28) Little River Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 21-23 22-24, September 28-30 29 through October 1 and October 5-7 6-8.
3. Family hunt – November 2-3 3-4.
4. Small game – November 9 10 through March 1 3.
7. through 8. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(29) Troy Springs Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Small game – November 9 10 through March 1 3, except on Sundays.
2. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(30) Bayard Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 21 22 through October 6 7 and November 9-17 10-18.
3. No change.
6. through 8. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(31) Grove Park Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Muzzleloading gun – October 19 20 through November 1 2.
5. No change.
8. Spring turkey – March 21 26 through April 26 27.
9. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(32) Steinhatchee Springs Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 21 22 through October 20 21.
3. General gun – November 2-10 3-11 and 11-29 November 12-30 and January 6-19 7-20.
4. Small game – November 30 December 1 through January 5 6.
5. Wild hog-dog – January 31 through February 2, February 1-3, February 14-16, 15-17 and 21-23 22-24 and opening the last Friday in April and closing 2 days thereafter and reopening the fourth Friday in June and closing 2 days thereafter.
8. through 9. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 6. No change.
7. Public access is prohibited from 1.5 hours after sunset until 1.5 hours before sunrise, except by persons participating in the April and June wild hog-dog season hunts or by persons possessing a Special Use Authorization from the Suwannee River Water Management District.
8. During the wild hog-dog season quota hunts, no more than three free-running dogs per quota permit shall be allowed.
9. During the wild hog-dog season quota hunts, a quota permit shall allow a hunting group of two persons and a guest (3 total), as authorized by Rule 68A-15.005, F.A.C., to participate in the hunt.
10. During April and June, wild hog-dog season hunts will begin at 12:01 a.m. on the first day of the hunt and end at 11:59 p.m. on the last day of the hunt. Hunting on that portion of the area that lies south of U.S. Highways 19, 98 and 27 is prohibited.
11. During April and June wild hog-dog season hunts, wild hog may be taken during the day or at night by the aid of a light with dogs and a firearm. The hunting of wild hog under this provision by display or use of a light from a moving vehicle, boat or animal is prohibited.
10. renumbered 12. No change.
(33) Cary Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. Family hunt – November 2-3 3-4.
5. Small game – November 29 through January 19 20 (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).
8. through 9. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(34) Ralph E. Simmons Memorial Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
5. Family hunt – November 2-3 3-4.
7. No change.
9. through 10. No change.
(b) No change.
(c) Camping: During quota hunt periods, camping is allowed only in the Scotts Landing Road campground and only by hunters in possession of a valid quota permit. During the small game season and periods closed to hunting, camping in the Scotts Landing Road and the Cabin campgrounds campground is allowed only by permit from the Florida Forest Service and camping at campsites along the St. Mary’s River is allowed on a first-come first-served basis.
(d) No change.
(35) Lower Econfina River Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – October 5-20 6-21 and October 28 29 through November 10 11. 
3. Small game – November 11 12 through March 1 3.
6. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(36) Belmore Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. Family hunt – November 2-3 3-4 and 16-17 17-18.
5. Small game – November 29 30 through January 19 20 (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).
6. No change.
9. through 10. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(37) Four Creeks Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. Family hunt – November 2-3 3-4.
5. Small game – November 29 30 through January 19 20 (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).
7. No change.
10. through 11. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(38) Hatchet Creek Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. Family hunt – November 2-3 3-4.
6. No change.
9. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 2. No change.
3. Taking wildlife with dogs is prohibited, except any dog may be used to take small game during small game season.
4. through 8. No change.
(39) Log Landing Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 14-15 through October 13-14 and November 1-10 2-11 (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).
3. Small game – November 29-30 through December 15-16 and January 3-4 through March 1-3 (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).
4. No change.
6. Spring turkey – March 21-23 24-25 (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).
7. Wild hog-still – May 2-10 4-12.
8. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(40) Thomas Creek Wildlife Management Area – Kings Road Unit.
(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 21-23 22-24, September 30 through October 2 October 1-3 and October 7-9 8-10.
3. Family hunt – November 2-3 3-4.
6. No change.
8. Spring turkey – March 21-23 24-25, March 30 through April 1 25-27 and April 6-8 1-3.
9. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019