

**Background Report
Draft Rule 68A-12.003
Agenda Item 10B
February 20, 2019**

DRAFT RULE

RULE NO.: 68A-12.003

RULE TITLE: Protection of Certain Deer and Turkey; Tagging of Deer, Bear, and Turkey; Evidence of Sex Required.

PURPOSE AND EFFECT: The purpose of the proposed rule changes is to support the establishment of a deer harvest reporting system. The effect of the proposed rule changes will be to enable the agency to better manage deer populations throughout the state through improved deer herd monitoring, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) surveillance, and by promoting compliance with proposed annual bag limits.

SUMMARY: The proposed rule amendment would establish regulations related to a deer harvest reporting system which would require all hunters to report all harvested deer to a telephone and internet-based harvest reporting system within 24 hours of harvest; require hunters to use a harvest log to record harvest prior to moving the deer from the point of harvest; and require all hunters to obtain an FWC-issued customer number prior to deer hunting.

THE FULL TEXT OF THE PROPOSED RULE IS AS FOLLOWS:

68A-12.003 Protection of Certain Deer and Turkey; Tagging of Deer, Bear, and Turkey; Deer Harvest Reporting; Evidence of Sex Required.

(1) Turkey:

(a) It is unlawful for any person to take or possess any unbearded turkey hen during any gobbler season ~~or any antlerless deer~~ within the state unless authorized by Title 68A these rules.

(b)(2) Positive evidence of sex identification, including the head and beard, shall remain ~~on deer taken or killed within the state and~~ on all turkey taken during any gobbler season when taking of unbearded turkey hens is prohibited so long as such ~~deer or~~ turkey is kept in the field or camp or forest or is en route to the domicile of its possessor or until such ~~deer or~~ turkey has been cooked or stored at the domicile of its possessor.

(c)(3) ~~Deer and~~ Turkey may be dismembered in the field or camp but each portion shall have a tag affixed to it identifying the name, address, FWC-issued ~~Recreational Licensing Issuance Services~~ Customer ID number (if a hunting license is required) of the person who harvested ~~killed~~ it, the date and location at which it was harvested taken, and shall be readily traceable to the portion or portions of the animal bearing the sex identification, head and, if applicable, beard.

(2) Deer:

(a) Positive evidence of sex identification, including the head with any antler or antlers, shall remain on harvested deer for the duration that such deer is kept in the field or camp or is en route to the domicile of its possessor or until such deer has been cooked or stored at the domicile of its possessor.

(b) Deer may be dismembered and/or transferred to another person in the field or camp but each deer, or portions and parts thereof, shall have written information attached thereto containing the first and last name and address of the person who harvested it; the date of harvest; the county or, if applicable, name of public hunting area where harvested; and the sex, and shall be readily traceable to the portion or portions of the animal bearing the sex identification.

(c) Harvest reporting requirements shall apply to any person that harvests a deer, except for the following: non-native deer, deer harvested out of state, deer killed by a motor vehicle, deer harvested under permits issued pursuant to Chapter 68A-9, F.A.C., and deer harvested on a licensed Game Farm or Licensed Private Hunting Preserve.

1. All deer harvested must be recorded in a harvest log and reported to the Commission's harvest reporting system within 24 hours of harvest and prior to final processing, prior to any parts of the deer being transferred to any meat processor or taxidermist, or prior to leaving the state.

2. Prior to moving a deer from the point of harvest, the person that harvested the deer shall record in a harvest

log: the first and last name of the person who harvested it; the date of harvest; the county or, if applicable name of public hunting area where harvested; and the sex.

3. An FWC-issued customer number is required for reporting harvested deer.

4. The harvest reporting system will provide a confirmation number once harvest is reported and the confirmation number shall be immediately recorded in the harvest log of the person that harvested the deer.

5. Once a harvested deer is reported through the Commission's harvest reporting system, all deer, or parts thereof, shall have written information attached thereto containing the information recorded in the harvest log and the harvest reporting confirmation number prior to being transferred from the person who harvested it to another party.

(3)(4) Bear:

(a) Positive evidence of sex identification in the form of testicles, penis, penis sheath, udder or vulva shall remain naturally attached to the carcass of all bear taken and shall remain attached until the bear is checked at a Commission designated check station.

(b)(5) No bear shall be dismembered until checked at a Commission designated check station. Bear may be dismembered in the camp or field after being checked at a Commission designated check station but each portion shall have a tag affixed to it identifying the name, address, and FWC Recreational Licensing Issuance Services Customer ID number of the person who killed it.

PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019.

Rulemaking Authority Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const. Law Implemented Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const. History--New 8-1-79, Amended 5-19-80, 6-21-82, Formerly 39-12.03, Amended 4-11-90, Formerly 39-12.003, Amended 7-29-15, 7-01-19.