DRAFT RULE

RULE NO: 68A-15.061 RULE TITLE: Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas – Southwest Region.

PURPOSE AND EFFECT: The purpose of the proposed rule amendment is to revise specific area regulations on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in the Southwest 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 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:

- Chassahowitzka WMA – remove reference to Swamp Grade when describing the dog hunt area, this road no longer exists; and allow wild turkey to be hunted in the Annuteliga Hammock (the area east of US Highway 19) during spring turkey season.
- Green Swamp West WMA - change allowed vehicle access times on the day preceding special opportunity spring turkey season hunts (scout day) from 1½ hours before sunrise until 1½ hours after sunset to 1½ hours before sunrise until 3:00 p.m.
- Everglades Headwaters WMA, Hatchineha Unit – allow 1 additional non-hunting guest on family and youth turkey hunts.
- Hilochee WMA – expand small game season by 7 days (from 17 to 24 days) at the beginning of the season; and establish a 3-day general gun hunt opening the Saturday following the close of muzzleloading gun season (10 no-cost quota permits, no exemptions).
- Hilochee WMA, Osprey Unit – establish a 3-day general gun hunt opening the Saturday following the close of muzzleloading gun season (10 no-cost quota permits, no exemptions).
- Upper Hillsborough WMA - change the quota hunt for wild hog-dog from 20, no cost, quota permits (no exemptions) to 20, no-cost, daily quota permits available first-come, first-served at the check station each day of the season.

Additionally, the proposed rule amendment 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-15.061 Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas – Southwest Region.
(1) Green Swamp Wildlife Management Area.
   (a) Open season:
      2. Archery – October 30 through November 1, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only.
      3. No change.
      5. Spring turkey – March 20 through April 26.
      6. No change.
   (b) through (d) No change.
(2) Green Swamp Wildlife Management Area – West Unit.
   (a) Open season:
3. Special-opportunity archery – December 5-8 10 and 17-20 19-22.
5. Special-opportunity turkey – March 20-23 21-24, March 29 30 through April 1 2, April 3-6 4-7, 12-15 13-16 and 17-20 18-22.

7. through 8. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 4. No change.
5. Individuals in possession of a special-opportunity permit or quota permit shall have vehicle access to the area from sunrise to sunset on the day preceding the hunt, except special-opportunity spring turkey permit holders shall have vehicle access to the area 1 1/2 hours before sunrise until 3 p.m. 1 1/2 hours after sunset on the day preceding the hunt.
6. through 10. No change.

(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 12-16.
2. Bird dog training – Bird dogs may be trained in the bird dog training area September 19 21 through February 14 16 and bird dogs may be trained in the remainder of the area during the small game season except the field trial and Boy Scout areas.
4. Small game – November 16-29 18 through December 1 and on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays only December 2 4 through January 17 19.
6. through 7. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(4) Fred C. Babcock/Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area – Yucca Pens Unit.
(a) Open season:
2. General gun – October 31 through November 8 2-10.
3. Small game – November 11-13 through January 10 12 on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays only and the Friday after Thanksgiving Day.
4. through 5. No Change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(5) Upper Hillsborough Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
2. Archery – December 5-8 7-10 12-15, January 2-3 4-5 and 9-10 11-12.
5. Spring turkey – March 24-25 25-26, March 31 through April 1, April 1-2 7-8 8-9, 14-15 15-16 and 21-22 22.

6. No change.
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. through 12. No change.
13. During the wild hog-dog season, a wild hog-dog daily quota permit shall allow a hunting group of two
persons and a guest, as authorized by rule 68A-15.005, F.A.C., (3 total) to participate in the hunt.

(6) Arbuckle Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:
1. Archery – October 17 12 through November 6 4.
5. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(7) KICCO Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:
1. Archery – September 19 14 through October 18 13, Saturdays and Sundays only.
2. Muzzleloading gun – October 24-25 19-20 and October 31 through November 1 26-27.
3. Wild hog-still – November 1 9 through December 13 8, Saturdays and Sundays only.
5. Spring turkey – March 20 21 through April 18 19, Saturdays and Sundays only.
7. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(8) Hickory Hammock Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:
7. No change.
9. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.


(a) Open season:
1. Archery – October 3-4 September 28-29, 5-8, September 30 through October 3, October 9-11 4-6, 12-15 7-10 and 16-18 14-15.
2. Muzzleloading gun – October 5 November 30 through December 6 4, December 7-10 2-5 and 11-13 6-8.
4. Small game –February 6-14 1-9 and February 27 22 through March 7 4.
5. Spring turkey – March 30 21 through April 1 2.
6. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.

(10) Hilochee Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:
6. Archery – February 12-14 14-16.
7. General Gun – February 27 through March 1
   renumbered 8. No change.
9. Raccoon – August 6 through September 27 (from 1.5 hours before sunset on Thursday until 1.5 hours after sunrise on Sunday).
   (b) through (c) No change.
   (d) General regulations:
   1. through 5. No change.

6. During periods when the area is closed to hunting, public access other than by foot, bicycle, or horse is prohibited, except that motorized vehicles shall be allowed one day prior to the archery, muzzleloading gun, general gun, wild hog-still, and spring turkey hunts, and by individuals in possession of a valid fishing permit. Persons participating in the raccoon season may operate motorized vehicles from 1.5 hours before sunset on Thursday until 1.5 hours after sunset on Sunday.

7. through 10. No change.

11) Lake Marion Creek Wildlife Management Area.
   (a) Open season:
   1. Archery – October 17 through 19 and
   4. Small game – January 1 through 3 and 8 through 10.
   5. Wild hog-still – December 11 through 13 and 25 through 27.
   7. through 10. No change.

   (a) Open season:
   1. Archery – September 1 through October 3 in areas and during days specified by the Installation Commander or a designee.
   8. through 9. No change.
   10. Wild hog (still and dog hunts) – In areas and during days specified by the Installation Commander or a designee.
   (b) through (d) No change.

13) Croom Wildlife Management Area.
   (a) Open season:
   1. Muzzleloading gun – October 24 through November 24.
5. Fox, raccoon and bobcat – December 17 12 through March 13 18. Hunting is allowed from 5:00 p.m. Thursday to sunrise Sunday with dogs only. Taking wildlife with guns is prohibited during this season.
6. through 7. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(14) Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. General gun – November 2 2 through January 3 3.
5. through 6. No change.
9. Raccoon – January 30 through February 4-28 23 and April 30 through May 5-29 24 (from 1.5 hours before sunset on Thursday until 1.5 hours after sunrise on Sunday).
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. No change.
2. Hunting with dogs other than retrievers or bird dogs is prohibited west of the Main grade, on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service portion of the property. Hunting with dogs other than retrievers or bird dogs is prohibited in Zone C east of Swamp Grade, except during the wild hog-dog season. Dogs with a shoulder height greater than 17 inches are prohibited in that portion of the area lying east of the Main grade and Zone C west of the Swamp grade, except during the wild hog-dog and raccoon seasons when dogs are allowed east of Main Grade.
3. through 8. No change.
9. That portion of the area east of US Highway 19 shall be open for small game hunting and spring turkey season only.
10. through 13. No change.
(e) No change.
(15) Hilochee Wildlife Management Area – Osprey Unit.
(a) Open season:
2. Wild hog-still – November 27-29 29 through December 1.
5. Archery – February 12-14 14-16.
9. General gun – February 27 through March 1.
9. renumbered 10. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(a) Open season:
2. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(17) Lower Hillsborough Wildlife Management Area.
(a) Open season:
3. No change.
(b) through (d) No change.
(18) No change.
(19) Everglades Headwaters Wildlife Management Area – Hatchineha Unit.
(a) Open season:
7. Spring turkey – March 25-28 26-29 and March 31 through April 4 April 1-5.
8. through 9. No change
(b) through (c) No change.
(d) General regulations:
1. No change.
2. Public access is allowed year round except during quota hunts when only individuals authorized to participate participating in a hunt may access the area and during the family hunt and youth turkey hunt when one non-hunting guest per quota permit may also access the area.
3. through 8. No change.

PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2020

NAME OF PERSON ORIGINATING PROPOSED RULE: Morgan Richardson, Director, Division of Hunting and Game Management, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1600.
NAME OF AGENCY HEAD WHO APPROVED THE PROPOSED RULE: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.
DATE PROPOSED RULE APPROVED BY AGENCY HEAD: December 13, 2018.