

**Background Report
Draft Rule 68A-15.064
Agenda Item 6
December 11, 2019**

DRAFT RULE

RULE NO: 68A-15.064

RULE TITLE: Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas – South Region.

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

Allapattah Flats WMA - allow harvested deer to be dismembered before leaving the area.

Big Cypress WMA - establish that hunters must check in and out when entering and leaving the area and check all harvested game when check stations are staffed..

Everglades and Francis S. Taylor WMA - remove bag limit and 15-inch shoulder height restriction for hunting wild hog.

Holey Land WMA - remove bag limit and 15-inch shoulder height restriction for hunting wild hog.

J.W. Corbett WMA - establish that tree stands, deer stands, and elevated shooting platforms may only be brought onto the area beginning 6 a.m. the day prior to archery season and must be removed no later than 6 p.m. the day following the close of general gun season; and during the August closure, allow campers to line up at an interior gate beginning 5 p.m. the Wednesday prior to the start of archery season.

Picayune Strand WMA - increase the wild hog bag limit to 1 per person but no more than 2 per quota permit during muzzleloading gun and general gun seasons, and remove 15-inch shoulder height restriction for hunting wild hog.

Rotenberger WMA - remove bag limit and 15-inch shoulder height restriction for hunting wild hog.

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-15.064 Specific Regulations for Wildlife Management Areas – South Region.

(1) J. W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area.

(a) through (c). No change.

(d) General regulations:

1. through 12. No change.

13. Public access is allowed throughout the year except from the Sunday two weeks prior to the opening of archery season until 8:00 a.m. the day prior to the archery season when the area shall be closed to public access except on the portion of the North Grade between the north entrance and the B camp gate and on the portion of Stumper's Grade between the south entrance and an internal gate where access will be allowed starting 5:00 p.m. three days prior to archery season. Vehicles parked on the North Grade during the closure period shall not be left unattended by a driver. Hiking on the Florida Trail and use of the Hungryland Boardwalk is allowed throughout the year.

14. through 19. No change.

20. Tree stands, deer stands and elevated shooting platforms are prohibited except from 6 a.m. the day prior to the opening of archery season until 6 p.m. the day following the end of general gun season.

(2) Holey Land Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. General gun – Walk, October ~~3-18~~ 5-20.
2. General gun – Vehicle (tracked vehicles only), October ~~24~~ 26 through November ~~8~~ 10.
3. Archery – August ~~8-30~~ 10 through September ~~1~~.
4. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~5-13~~ 7-15.
5. Small game – November ~~9~~ 11 through March ~~7~~ 1.
6. through 7. No change.

(b) Legal to take: All legal game (except wild turkey), fish, frogs and furbearers. Take of antlerless deer is prohibited during the archery season. Taking of antlered deer not having at least one antler with two or more points and having one or more antlers at least 5 inches in length visible above the hairline is prohibited. ~~The bag limit for wild hog shall be one per day; annual bag two. The take of wild hog with a shoulder height of less than 15 inches is prohibited.~~ The take of wild hog is prohibited during small game season. ~~During the general gun-vehicle season, a bag limit of one wild hog per day per vehicle shall apply.~~ The bag limit for antlered deer shall be one during archery season, one during muzzleloading gun season, one during general gun-walk season and one per tag during the general gun-vehicle season.

(c) through (e) No change.

(3) Everglades and Francis S. Taylor Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. General gun – Walk, October ~~3-18~~ 5-20, Conservation Areas 3A North and 2A (north of the East/West Airboat Trail) only.
2. General gun – Vehicle (airboats and tracked vehicles only), October ~~24~~ 26 through November ~~8~~ 10, in Conservation Areas 3A North, 3A South, 2, and the Francis S. Taylor Wildlife Management Area.
3. Archery – August ~~8-30~~ 10 through September ~~1~~, Conservation Area 3A North only.
4. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~5-13~~ 7-15, in Conservation Area 3A North only.
5. Small game – November ~~9~~ 11 though March ~~7~~ 1.
6. through 7. No change.

(b) Legal to take: All legal game (except turkeys), fish, frogs and furbearers. Taking of antlered deer not having at least one forked antler and having one or more antlers at least 5 inches in length visible above the hairline is prohibited. The forked antler shall have at least two points one inch or greater in length. Take of antlerless deer is prohibited during archery season. ~~The bag limit for wild hog shall be one per day and two annually. During the general gun-vehicle season, a bag limit of one wild hog per day per vehicle shall apply. The take of wild hog with a shoulder height of less than 15 inches is prohibited.~~ The take of wild hog is prohibited during small game season. The bag limit for antlered deer shall be one per season during archery, muzzleloading gun and general gun-walk seasons and one per tag during the general gun-vehicle season.

(c) through (e) No change.

(4) Rotenberger Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. General gun – Walk, October ~~3-18~~ 5-20.
2. General gun – Vehicle (tracked vehicles only), October ~~24~~ 26 through November ~~8~~ 10.
3. Archery – August ~~8-30~~ 10 through September ~~1~~.
4. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~5-13~~ 7-15.
5. Small game – November ~~9~~ 11 through March ~~7~~ 1.
6. through 7. No change.

(b) Legal to take: All legal game (except turkeys), furbearers, fish and frogs. Take of antlerless deer is prohibited during archery season. Taking of antlered deer not having at least one antler with two or more points and having one or more antlers at least 5 inches in length visible above the hairline is prohibited. ~~Wild hog daily bag limit one; two annually. During the general gun-vehicle season, a bag limit of one wild hog per day per vehicle shall apply. The take of wild hog with a shoulder height of less than 15 inches is prohibited.~~ The take of wild hog is prohibited during small game season. The bag limit for antlered deer shall be one per season during archery,

muzzleloading gun and general gun-walk seasons and one per tag during the general gun-vehicle season.

(c) through (e) No change.

(5) Big Cypress Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. through 3. No change.

4. Muzzleloading gun – October ~~10-25~~ ~~12-27~~, except in the Deep Lake Unit.

5. Spring turkey – March ~~6-7~~ through April ~~11~~ ~~12~~.

6. through 7. No change.

(b) through (c) No change.

(d) General regulations:

1. through 4. No change.

5. During periods when check stations are staffed ~~All~~ hunters shall check in at a designated check station when entering the area, retain in their possession a check station pass while hunting and check out at the same check station when exiting the area and shall check all game taken. Deer, wild hog and turkey may be divided or consumed in the field but each portion shall be identified by the number of the license of the person killing it and be readily traceable to the portion of the animal bearing sex identification. Jaw bones of the deer shall be saved for use by the Commission.

6. through 20. No change.

(6) Okaloacoochee Slough Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. Archery – August ~~8-14~~ ~~10-16~~ and ~~15-23~~ ~~17-25~~.

2. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~5-7~~ ~~7-9~~ and ~~12-14~~ ~~14-16~~.

3. Family Hunt – September ~~19-20~~ ~~21-22~~.

4. General gun – September ~~26-29~~ ~~28~~ through ~~October 1~~ and September 30 through ~~October 4~~ ~~2-6~~.

5. Small game – November ~~7-9~~ through January ~~10~~ ~~12~~.

6. Spring turkey – March ~~6-9~~ ~~7-10~~ and ~~10-14~~ ~~11-15~~.

7. through 9. No change.

(b) through (d) No change.

(7) Fisheating Creek Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. Archery – August ~~21-23~~ ~~23-25~~ and August ~~28-29~~ ~~30~~ through ~~September 1~~ west of US Highway 27 only.

2. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~11-13~~ ~~13-15~~ and ~~18-20~~ ~~20-22~~ west of US Highway 27 only.

3. General gun – October ~~2-4~~ ~~4-6~~ and ~~16-18~~ ~~18-20~~ west of US Highway 27 only.

4. Youth Turkey Hunt – February ~~27-28~~ ~~29~~ through ~~March 1~~ west of US Highway 27 only.

5. Spring turkey – March ~~6-9~~ ~~7-10~~, ~~12-15~~ ~~13-16~~, ~~19-22~~ ~~20-23~~, ~~26-29~~ ~~27-30~~ and April ~~2-5~~ ~~3-6~~ west of US Highway 27 only.

6. Special-opportunity spring turkey – March ~~6-12~~ ~~7-13~~ and ~~20-26~~ ~~21-27~~ east of US Highway 27 only.

7. Wild hog-still – November ~~21-22~~ ~~23-24~~ west of US Highway 27 only.

8. through 10. No change.

(b) through (d) No change.

(8) Picayune Strand Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. Archery – August ~~8-23~~ ~~10-25~~.

2. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~5-7~~ ~~7-9~~ and ~~12-14~~ ~~14-16~~.

3. General gun – October ~~10-13~~ ~~12-15~~, ~~14-18~~ ~~16-20~~ and ~~19-25~~ ~~21-27~~.

4. Small game – October 31 ~~November 2~~ through January ~~10~~ ~~12~~.

5. Youth turkey hunt – February ~~27-28~~ ~~29~~ through ~~March 1~~.

6. Spring turkey – March ~~6-9~~ ~~7-10~~ and ~~10-14~~ ~~11-15~~.

7. through 8. No change.

(b) Legal to take: All legal game, bear (only during those portions of the general gun season that coincide with the open season established for the South BMU in rule 68A-13.004, F.A.C.), fish, frogs and furbearers. 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 the archery season, the bag limit for deer and wild hog shall be one each. During the muzzleloading gun and general gun seasons, the bag limit for deer and wild hog shall be one per person, two per quota permit ~~and the bag limit for wild hog shall be two per permit. Wild hog: daily bag, 1; possession limit, 2. The take of wild hog with a shoulder height of less than 15 inches is prohibited.~~ The take of wild hog is prohibited during small game season. The taking of antlerless deer and turkey is prohibited during archery season. One gobbler (or bearded turkey) may be taken per spring turkey quota permit.

(c) through (d) No change.

(9) Dinner Island Ranch Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. Archery – August ~~7-10 9-12, 14-17 16-19, 21-24 23-26~~ and August ~~28 30~~ through September ~~3 5~~.
2. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~11-13 13-15~~.
3. General gun – September ~~19-21 21-23, 25-27 27-29~~ and October ~~2-4 4-6~~.
4. No change.
5. Family hunt – October ~~10-11 12-13~~ and ~~17-18 19-20~~.
6. Youth Turkey Hunt – February ~~27-28 29~~ through ~~March 1~~.
7. Spring turkey – March ~~6-8 7-9, 13-15 14-16~~ and April ~~3-5 4-6~~.
8. through 10. No change.

(b) through (d) No change.

(10) Spirit-of-the-Wild Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. Archery – August ~~7-10 9-12, 14-17 16-19, 21-24 23-26~~ and August ~~28-30 30~~ through ~~September 2~~.
2. Muzzleloading gun – September ~~11-13 13-15~~.
3. General gun – September ~~19-21 21-23, 25-27 27-29~~, and October ~~2-4 4-6~~.
4. No change.
5. Youth Turkey Hunt – February ~~27-28 29~~ through ~~March 1~~.
6. Spring turkey – March ~~6-8 7-9, 13-15 14-16~~ and April ~~3-5 4-6~~.
7. through 9. No change.

(b) through (d) No change.

(11) Allapattah Flats Wildlife Management Area.

(a) Open season:

1. Archery – September ~~12-15 14-17, 19-22 21-24~~, September ~~26-29 28~~ through ~~October 1~~, and October ~~3-6 5-8~~.
 2. Muzzleloading gun – October ~~17-19 19-21~~.
 3. Family hunt – ~~October 31~~ through November ~~3 2-5~~.
 4. General gun – November ~~7-11 9-13~~.
 5. Small game – November ~~12 14~~ through the second Sunday in January.
 6. Spring turkey – March ~~6-9 7-10~~ and ~~10-14 11-15~~.
 7. through 8.
- (b) through (c) No change.
- (d) General regulations:
1. through 3. No change.
 4. ~~No deer shall be dismembered until checked at a check station.~~
 5. through 8. renumbered 4. through 7. No change.

PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2020.

Rulemaking Authority Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const., 379.2223, 375.313 FS. Law Implemented Art. IV, Sec. 9, Fla. Const., 379.2223, 375.313 FS. History—New 6-21-82, Amended 7-1-83, 7-27-83, 9-27-83, 7-5-84, 7-1-85, 5-7-86, 8-5-86, 5-10-87, 8-24-87, 5-1-88, 6-7-88, 7-1-89, 7-1-90, 9-1-90, 7-1-91, 7-1-92, 7-1-93, 7-1-94, 7-1-95, 8-15-95, 7-1-96, 9-15-96, 10-20-96, 6-1-97, 8-7-97, 7-1-98, 7-2-98, 7-1-99, Formerly 39-15.064, Amended 11-17-99, 7-1-00, 7-1-01, 6-2-02, 2-27-03, 5-1-03, 7-1-04, 7-1-05, 7-1-06, 7-1-07, 7-1-08, 7-1-09, 7-20-09, 1-19-10, 7-1-10, 8-26-10, 7-1-11, 7-1-12, 7-1-13, 7-1-14, 9-18-14, 7-1-15, 7-29-15, 7-1-16, 7-1-17, 9-14-17, 7-1-18, 7-1-19, 7-1-20.