

# Game Farms and Hunt Preserves



Consent Agenda  
October 7, 2020



**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

Division: Law Enforcement

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This presentation will describe the proposed rule amendments to 68A-12.010, F.A.C., Hunt Preserves and 68A-12.011, F.A.C., Game Farms 68A-16.006.

The proposed revision will expand limited exception allowances for fencing, align rule language, and update Rule references.

Photo Credit: Joe Kosak/PGC Photo

# Proposed Rules

## Revision objectives:

- Expand limited exception allowances
- Align rule language
- Update rule references



Game farm and hunt preserve rules were last updated in 2018 and focused on strengthening the fencing requirements. After the rules were approved, captive wildlife investigators began working with stakeholders on coming into compliance and potential limited exception qualifications. Members of the game farm and hunt preserve industry contacted FWC staff to discuss possible solutions for game farm and hunt preserve facilities utilizing fencing that would not qualify for current limited exception language, which goes into effect December 2020. Staff reviewed the fencing requirements and met with stakeholders to ensure draft rule language would both contain game species and not cause undue financial burden to licensees.

The proposed rule revisions would also correct some grammatical errors and provide more disease protection for Cervidae in Florida. This would be accomplished in part by aligning the language in both rules to provide additional consistency and updating rule references that are out of date due to the reorganization of Chapter 68A-6 in May of 2019. Additionally, staff propose language added to Hunt Preserves that will streamline record requirements for Cervidae when being transported.

Photo Credit: FWC photo – Image of current fence with 14-gauge wire

## Proposed Fencing Allowances

- Change gauge requirement from 12.5 gauge to 14 gauge
- Remove requirement for connecting material every 18 inches



Currently, the limited exception language requires licensees who were licensed on November 28, 2018 to maintain their current fencing as long as it is 12.5 gauge and meets additional requirements. After the implementation of the rules, captive wildlife investigators began meeting with effected licensees to discuss the new regulations and ensure they had enough time to come into compliance if needed. Through these interactions, stakeholders expressed their concerns that 12.5 gauge was stronger than needed to contain game species.

Staff worked closely with stakeholders to reevaluate the gauge requirement and update the proposed language. Together the conclusion was reached that 14- gauge steel wire would contain game species and allow many stakeholders who had 14-gauge fence to be in compliance. Another proposed change is for the requirement to have a strength equivalent connector of double panels every 18 inches. This modification will leave it up to the effected licensees to ensure there are no gaps, but does not require them to measure every 18 inches for miles of fence line.

Photo Credit: FWC photo – Image of current fence with 14-gauge wire

# Outreach

- Staff continues to work closely with Game Farm and Hunt Preserve stakeholders



Staff has had many meetings with stakeholders to ensure there is an open dialogue and consistent collaboration on rule development. Staff will continue to work with stakeholders on emerging issues as they arise.

Photo Credit: FWC Photo

## Staff Recommendation

### Approve and adopt Final Rule 68A-12.010, Hunt Preserves and 68A-12.011, Game Farms

*If the rule is approved for both advertisement and final adoption, Commission staff will file the rules for adoption as allowed by s.120.54(3) Florida Statutes, without further public hearing.*



Staff is requesting the Commission's approval to advertise the proposed rule and file for adoption as soon as possible. If the rule is approved for both advertisement and final adoption, Commission staff will file the rules for adoption as allowed by s.120.54(3) Florida Statutes, without further public hearing.

Photo Credit: FWC Photo