



# ALACHUA COUNTY HUNTING BUSINESS PLAN



Adopted January 22, 2013

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### Cover photos, clockwise from top left:

- **Gray squirrel.** Credit: Florida Nature.
- **White-tailed deer.** Credit: Florida Image Tools
- **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Youth Hunting Program.** Credit: The Future of Hunting in Florida.
- **Feral pigs.** Credit: NASA Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral.
- **Wild turkey.** Credit: Florida Nature.

*“The problem of game management is not how we should handle the deer...the real problem is one of human management. Wildlife management is comparatively easy; human management is difficult.”*– Aldo Leopold, Game Management, 1933

## Executive Summary

For many of Alachua County’s residents, hunting is a traditional form of recreation and a supplementary means of obtaining food. It is enjoyed in many forms, and hunters greatly value their outdoor experiences. Most of the nation’s conservation ethic and practice started with the setting aside of wild places for hunting. In fact, the landlord’s game preserves in medieval Europe are the forerunner of the modern park system in the United States. Hunting modes typically range from no hunting, to general public hunts, typically managed in Florida by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The FWC also manages many public hunting areas – including several in Alachua County. FWC controls hunter access and manages game through the establishment of hunting seasons, licensure and game law enforcement.

Alachua County has acquired several environmentally significant properties over the last decade. The purpose of these acquisitions was to protect, improve and manage water resources, wildlife habitats, and to provide natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation. Acquisitions were financed through two voter-approved initiatives: Alachua County Forever (approved in 2000) and Wild Spaces & Public Places (approved in 2008). These properties provide County residents with the satisfaction of knowing they have protected lands that will improve the quality of life for them and future generations. Conservation of these lands becomes even more important now as the human population increases and the landscape becomes more fragmented.

Conscientious stewardship of these lands protects this public investment, restores their ecological function, provides compatible recreational opportunities, and enhances their long-term value to the community. To guide stewardship of these preserves, the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) adopts a management plan for each preserve. In that plan, the overall vision for the site is articulated. Each plan furthers the Guiding Principles for Alachua County Forever (ACF) that were adopted by the BoCC on February 26th, 2002. Among these Principles were a “no loss of conservation values” stewardship philosophy and a directive that any stewardship be consistent with ACF’s primary goal of preserving, restoring and enhancing environmental values. These Principles are incorporated in the specific management plans for each preserve. These management plans are discussed with neighbors and stakeholders, and ultimately adopted by the BoCC as their vision for the Preserve. **This Hunting Business Plan does not supplant nor replace any of the objectives of the individual preserve management plans.** Rather, it is intended to complement them, to tease out the issues concerning recreational hunting opportunities on ACF lands and provide the BoCC with policy directives for adoption.

The County also strictly adhered to this Principle in the development of this Hunting Business Plan. Hunting, including recreational hunting, is considered a stewardship tool. **It must be applied in such a way that it furthers the Alachua County Forever Referendum goals, adopted Principles for the ACF program and the specific goals for the preserves.** Any action or activity on the preserve must not impact the conservation values of the preserve and will cease if such impacts occur.

The County Commission recognizes that the regulation of firearms in Florida is constitutionally reserved to the State. **This Business Plan does not regulate firearms.** The County is allowed to prohibit hunting on County-owned property. Where it does create hunting opportunities on County-owned

property, it is allowed to establish additional restrictions on species taken, dates for hunting, and to create hunt-free zones so long as these do not permit hunting in a manner that is less restrictive than allowed by the State regulations. These additional measures are contemplated where they enhance the ecology of the property, make non-hunting recreational uses safer or more meaningful, or to satisfy concerns of our preserve neighbors.

The County's challenge is then to match an appropriate hunting mode to the ACF-managed property that would meet a five-pronged test. The mode would have to:

- (1) further the BoCC's stewardship goals for the preserves
- (2) not violate State rules and regulations with respect to hunting
- (3) be considered within the context of other stewardship activities on the site particularly non-hunting recreational uses
- (4) provide a safe and enjoyable hunting experience
- (5) enable the County to continue to be a good neighbor

Specific modes are recommended for particular properties that meet this challenge and optimize the benefits. In terms of this Plan, "benefits" accrue to both the ecology of the site and the economy of the County.

**The purpose of this Hunting Business Plan is to:**

- **Articulate principles that guide recreational hunting on Alachua County Forever (ACF)-managed lands**
- **Identify issues for consideration by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC)**
- **Recommend sound business practices and policies for adoption by the BoCC that will then guide hunting on these lands**

This Business Plan is not intended to be a comprehensive treatment of hunting. There is enough detail to illustrate the principles and recommendations to be adopted. The Plan's first sections describe hunting generally, with the County's recommendations following. Site-specific recommendations are contained in Table 2. This Plan is not intended to apply to Conservation Easements since those lands remain privately owned, nor to County-contracted hunting to further a specific stewardship goal, for example feral hog removal.

## Recommended Policy Directives

### Existing Guiding Principles

The BoCC adopted the following Guiding Principles at their February 26th, 2002 regular Commission meeting (Item # 42R-022602). As they bear on any discussion of stewardship, they are worth repeating here:

*1. Certain administrative and operating expenses of the program may be borne by the General Fund. There are competing needs for County services using the General Fund and the services and benefits of land conservation to the community must be considered in the context of those other public needs. Additional sources of program support may need to be developed to support the operating costs, e.g. user fees.*

2. *Commercial Pooled Paper should be used to initially acquire properties until the appropriate time to issue the ACF Bonds. All costs directly related to the acquisition of a project, whether or not it is successfully consummated, are reimbursable from the Bonds.*

3. *The ACF program will use the existing contracts where appropriate and develop new contracts or the internal capacity where there is a deficiency in expertise or resources in the community. The BoCC recognizes the great value of using ACF funds to leverage partnerships in the protection of the county's sensitive lands. The County has the fiduciary responsibility for ACF funds and therefore will require BoCC approval prior to any application being made regarding committing funds in such partnerships.*

4. *The BoCC is aware that there are long term stewardship costs associated with projects selected but no funding source other than the General Fund Reserves has been identified. To minimize stewardship expenses while the Program is in this initial acquisition phase, staff will use a strategy of "no loss of conservation values" stewardship. The initial stewardship program will reflect this strategy. As the program matures and other funding sources materialize, the stewardship program may be enhanced.*

5. *Any stewardship of ACF sites shall be consistent with the ACF's primary goal of preserving, restoring and enhancing environmental values. A stewardship plan will be developed within 12 months of acquisition and made available for public comment prior to BoCC approval.*

## **Recommended Recreational Hunting Principles**

In furtherance of these general Principles and to enhance the County's ability to efficiently manage hunting on the acquired preserves and appropriately record and use any revenues generated by these operations, County staff recommends the BoCC adopt the following principles specific to the creation of recreational hunting opportunities on ACF-managed lands:

1. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that well-managed nature preserves contribute to the community's quality of life by protecting and enhancing water resources, wildlife habitats, and providing natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation.

2. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that hunting is an important recreational activity.

3. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that hunting can be a valuable tool to manage wildlife populations and directs that hunting be permitted where and when consistent with the State of Florida hunting regulations, the goals of the Alachua County Forever Referendum and the preserve management plans.

4. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that over hunting game results in a decrease in a valuable part of the natural ecosystem and is not consistent with Alachua County Forever and Wild Spaces & Public Places referenda. Therefore recreational hunting should only be implemented in a sustainable manner that furthers the goals of the Alachua County Forever Referendum and the preserve management plans.

5. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that hunting, as with other forms of recreation on County lands, will increase the potential for injury to users and neighbors and for damage to County and adjacent infrastructure. The Board therefore recognizes and accepts an increase in the County's liability for claims arising from their ownership of these properties opened to hunting.

6. The Board of County Commissioners, after carefully considering the risk and impact to the non-hunting public, directs staff not to offer County-managed hunting opportunities on any site after it has been opened to the general public for non-hunting recreation, and not to delay opening sites for the public in order to facilitate recreational hunting exclusively.

7. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that hunting rights are a commodity, with economic value subject to market forces. The Board also recognizes that, while it may be possible to license these opportunities to the highest bidder, the Board has a higher interest in making these opportunities available to a diverse and broad constituency. Further the Board recognizes that offsetting County property management expenses through competitively-awarded public-private partnerships can be a valuable substitute for cash proceeds.

8. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that leveraging stewardship partnerships with other entities enables the County to accomplish more of its goals without increasing its expenditures. The Board directs staff to ensure that the provision of hunting opportunities should not jeopardize these partnerships and their cost savings to the County.

9. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that allowing recreational hunting on ACF preserves will result in an increased workload for the Environmental Protection Department and supporting County staff. These include additional costs in administering the procedures and processes, additional maintenance costs, and increased liability to the County taxpayer. Any revenue collected for hunting can only be expected to offset a portion of the total operating cost to manage these public lands.

10. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes it is beneficial for the County to re-invest any hunting revenues in the stewardship of the Alachua County Forever portfolio of preserves and directs that these funds supplement existing core stewardship funding.

## Locally Important Game Species<sup>1,2,3</sup>

The white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) is an important game species in Florida. Records of white-tailed deer exist from Florida as early as the 1600's. The population declined severely until the 1940s probably due to over hunting and systematic extermination to eradicate tick-borne cattle fever. With the passage of the federal Pittman-Robertson (P-R) Act in 1937, federal aid flowed to states to restore wildlife and game populations. In 1941, the Florida Legislature agreed to create the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, now the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and began to receive these P-R funds. The FWC created Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) to manage lands for the long-term well-being of fish and wildlife and the benefit of people. Today, FWC manages over 5.5 million acres of WMAs and the deer population has exceeded 700,000 statewide.

A similar story is illustrated by the wild turkey population in Florida, perhaps the second-most important game animal after deer. The Osceola turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo osceola*), also known as the Florida turkey, is one of five subspecies of wild turkey in North America. The Osceola lives on the Florida peninsula and nowhere else in the world, making it extremely popular with in-state and out-of state hunters alike. Alachua County has high densities of wild turkey, primarily in the east, south and along the Santa Fe River where the landscape is still mostly un-fragmented (Figure 1).

By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, most of America's turkeys had been eliminated over most of its range, except in Florida where swamps, insects and a generally inhospitable environment kept civilization at bay. With the introduction of rails, roads, pesticides and air-conditioning, hunting proliferated to the point where by 1949, the population had decreased from over 250,000 to less than 26,000. With the creation of the FWC and the use of the P-R federal funds, the state trapped birds and restocked lands in all of Florida's counties. By 1970, Florida was the first State to complete restoration of a game species

with the P-R funds. A large part the success of this effort was due to conservation minded hunters supporting the P-R Act, conservation organizations and through purchases of recreational gear and permits.

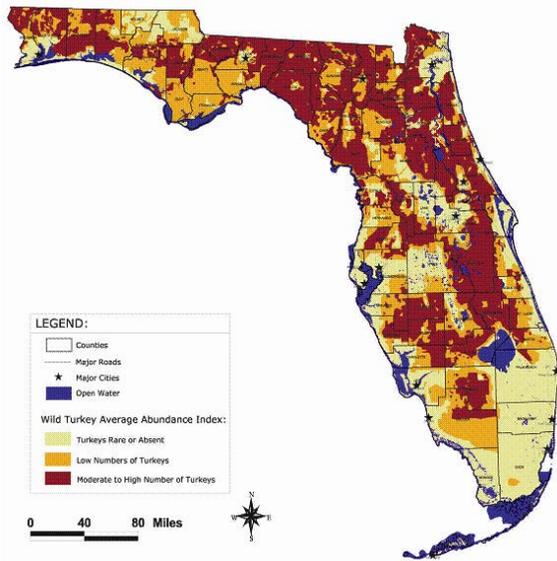


Figure 1. Distribution of wild turkey in Florida

The wild pig (*Sus scrofa*), also called the wild hog, wild boar or feral pig, is not a Florida native and may have been introduced by Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto as early as 1539. They occur in all of Florida's 67 counties within a wide variety of habitats, but prefer oak-cabbage palm hammocks, freshwater marshes and sloughs, and pine flatwoods. Wild pigs can reach weights of more than 350 pounds and be 5 to 6 feet long. They usually travel in small family groups or alone.

Among other species legal to hunt in Florida are alligator, dove, quail, snipe, waterfowl, rabbit, raccoon, possum, bobcat, fox, and squirrel. A complete list is available from FWC. Alachua County is not one of the Best Small Game Hunting Areas as listed by FWC<sup>4</sup>. However, some small game exists in Alachua County and some hunters have expressed an interest in this form of hunting on ACF lands. Hunting alligators, because it was a listed species, and is still strictly regulated, as well as dove, quail, and snipe are not being considered in this Plan.

## Hunting as a Management Tool<sup>1,2,3</sup>

With the loss of top level predators, white-tailed deer have become one of the species of wildlife whose over-abundance can seriously degrade its own habitat as well as the habitat of other wildlife species, and inflict serious damage on agricultural crops and ornamental plantings. Their over-abundance can also facilitate the outbreak of diseases and parasites that can threaten the health of both livestock and humans.

Feral hogs are large non-endemic, omnivorous animals (eating all kinds of food, both plants and animals) common to Florida. They possess the highest reproductive potential of any North American large mammal, and currently inhabit many areas in such large numbers that it adversely impacts the environment. Feral hogs impose a variety of negative environmental impacts through habitat degradation, predation on native species, and competition with native species. They are capable of destroying whole plant communities by their rooting activities. Some of these plant communities contain threatened or endangered plants and animals. Feral hogs are suspected of preying on young gopher tortoises, a listed species in Florida, hatchling sea turtles, and other rare amphibians, reptiles, and ground nesting birds.

Alachua County has entered into eight private License Agreements with a few hunters on County property to provide caretaking services. Six such Agreements are still in place. This practice started with the first ACF acquisition, Mill Creek Nature Preserve. The County chose to retain the same hunter who had previously hunted the property prior to County acquisition. At the time ACF had limited staffing and equipment and realized this relationship would provide needed services for the site. The hunter agreed to provide caretaking duties, including site security, maintaining fences and gates, mowing and maintaining interior roads and firebreaks, and removing feral hogs from the property. The Agreements require the hunter to have adequate insurance, provide the County with monthly activity logs, and allow the County to continue with resource management and educational tours. This arrangement is so successful that, as additional properties were acquired that had existing hunt leases in good standing, the practice was continued. Each Agreement has a stipulation that it would terminate once the Preserve was opened to the public. These Agreements have saved the County as much as \$10,000 per year per Preserve. An additional benefit is the site-specific knowledge of the properties that the hunters share with County staff, many of whom had been hunting and working the properties for many years prior to acquisition by the County.

The hunter therefore provides two valuable management services to the County. First, their caretaking role saves the County a significant amount of time and budget. Second, their limited hunting activities serve to monitor and check the populations of game animals.

## Hunting In Florida

Hunting in Florida is practiced in many forms on private and public land and historically was either locally regulated or not regulated at all. The State constitution was amended to reserve all regulation of hunting to the State thus ending the patchwork of local hunting laws. Recent legislation further reserved to the State all regulation of firearms. Under the State constitution, the FWC is the State-designated agency which can regulate hunting ([Appendix 1](#)). FWC has divided the state into zones to create a cohesive hunting regulatory environment. Alachua County is in Zone C (Figure 2). FWC regulates hunting through the issue of licenses, establishes hunting seasons as well as species-specific and method-of-take-specific permits. FWC may also issue permits to restrict access to specific areas in an effort to enhance the opportunity and reduce pressure on the game. With the variety of managed game, season, zone and choice of hunting method, the rules can be complex. To provide an illustration of this complexity, the 2012-2013 seasons for Zone C (Alachua County's zone) are attached as [Appendix 2](#).

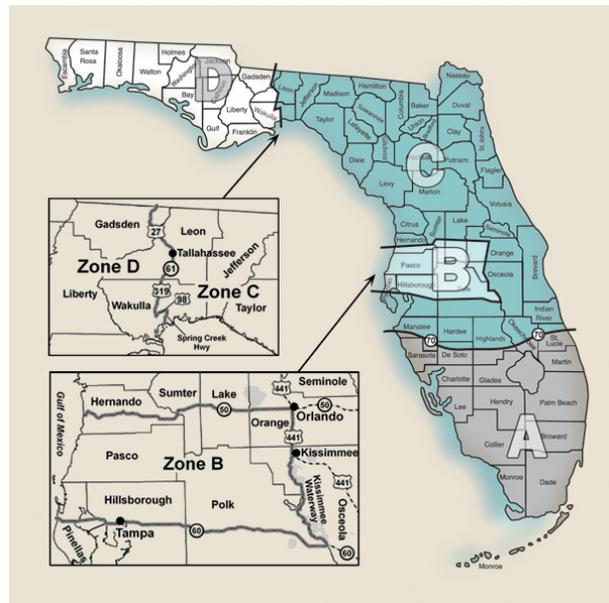


Figure 2. FWC Hunting Zones in Florida

Typically in Florida, hunting method-of-take can be conveniently divided into either gun or archery. Gun can be generally divided into muzzle-loading (or black powder) and general gun which includes rifle and shotgun. Hunters who use crossbows have a separate season from other archers. FWC

also issues a furbearing trapping license, but there has not seen a great demand in Alachua County, so it is not discussed in this Plan. Generally, the seasons are arranged so that the more challenging method-of-take occurs first. For a full description of the many hunting opportunities, a hunter should familiarize themselves with the regulations on the FWC website (<http://www.myfwc.com/hunting/regulations>).

In addition to its regulatory role is FWC's management of specially-designated areas for hunting called wildlife management areas (WMAs). The WMA system is organized through FWC cooperation with 26 cooperators to make the 5.7 million acres and 161 areas open to public hunting in Florida. Cooperators are lead land managers on 125 of these areas. FWC manages hunting in five WMAs in Alachua County: the 16,437-acre Grove Park WMA, the 2,760-acre Hatchet Creek WMA, the 11,149-acre Lochloosa WMA, the 7,272-acre Santa Fe Swamp (a portion is in Bradford County), and the 4,231-acre Watermelon Pond WMA (a portion is in Levy County). There are a total of 30 WMAs within 50 miles of Gainesville creating access to 688,711 acres available to local hunters ([Appendix 3](#)). There may be additional permit requirements required to hunt in the WMAs and the rules vary by WMA. Details are provided as rules in Florida Administrative Code and are incorporated in the WMA brochures for each area. They are all available on FWC's website [www.myfwc.com](http://www.myfwc.com). Some of the local WMA brochures for 2012-2013 are attached to this Plan (Appendix 4).

FWC has cooperatively established six WMAs on lands which are privately owned. Rather than have these WMAs drop out of the hunting system, the FWC offers Recreational Use Permits which are designed to provide more revenue to the landowners. To enable public recreational use of these private lands, the FWC compensates these private landowners with funds generated through Recreational Use Permit fees. This allows these private landowners to generate some compensatory revenue while enabling public recreational use of these private lands that could otherwise generate revenue for the private landowner through private hunt lease fees. The Grove Park WMA in Alachua County is one such example of the six of the 161 WMAs that remain and is owned by Plum Creek Timberlands which receives the recreational user permit fees. Revenue-generating hunting opportunities on public lands do not usually receive public support. An annual Wildlife Management Area Permit is required to hunt on public hunting areas managed by the FWC. However, area-specific fees are not required to hunt on the majority of public hunting areas managed by the FWC.

FWC also offers Special Opportunity Hunts designed to facilitate hunting for a targeted audience or to further management goals. A typical Special Opportunity Hunt makes available large areas with lots of game and low hunter quotas and provides excellent opportunities to bag trophy deer, turkey, hogs, dove and quail. Hunters participating in these "special" hunts have a high chance of seeing and bagging game. For more information, go to FWC's website at <http://www.myfwc.com/license/limited-entry-hunts/general-info/special-opportunity/>. FWC also has established a Youth Hunting Program to increase the number of youth involved in educational, safe, mentored wildlife and hunting activities through the opportunity to participate in the hunting heritage (<http://www.myfwc.com/education/outdoor-skills/hunting/>).

Alachua County staff is working with FWC to determine the feasibility of establishing FWC-managed hunts on County-owned lands (Table 2). On these lands, the County would still be responsible

for the non-hunting stewardship including non-hunting recreation (see discussion in [Management by FWC](#) section below). The County is also investigating participating in the FWC Youth Hunting Program.

A survey of Florida counties was conducted by staff as background for this Plan. The goal was to determine if there was any pattern to where hunting was allowed on just County-owned conservation lands. Staff of the county programs were contacted by email and asked to respond to an online survey or by email. The results are summarized in Table 1 below. Predominantly, for those Counties that responded, there is no hunting on County-owned lands (67%, n=12, there are 25 county land conservation programs in Florida). Where it is prohibited it is usually by Ordinance. There are FWC-managed hunting lands in almost every County as well as hunting on private and federal lands throughout the State.

**Table 1. Hunting by County**

Florida County	Hunting on County Conservation Lands (as of December 2012)
Brevard	No
Broward	No
Charlotte	No
Collier	County-managed, FWC-managed
Flagler	No
Lee	No
Manatee	County-managed
Marion	No
Martin	No
Miami-Dade	No
Monroe	No
Orange	FWC only
Palm Beach	No
Pasco	No
Polk	FWC-managed, County-managed
Seminole	No
St. Lucie	No
Volusia	FWC-managed and private lease

## Accessing Hunting Opportunities

A wide range of methods are used to determine who has access to hunting in Florida. At the most permissive, once a hunter obtains a valid state license and the appropriate species tags, they can access public lands that are available for general public hunting during authorized seasons (General Public Hunt). The FWC also has a Limited Entry/Quota Hunt Program that limits the number of hunters for specific areas. This is intended to offer a higher-quality public hunting opportunities, greater resource protection, and prevent hunter overcrowding. FWC and the landowner can also more closely control the harvest of game on wildlife management areas. FWC only requires a minimal fee for special-opportunity hunts to cover administrative costs. Some limited entry hunts managed by the FWC require no application fee. FWC also manages some lands for Small Game only, which is defined as the take of game species other than deer, wild hog or wild turkey.

Separately from the FWC-managed opportunities, it is possible for a landowner (including the County) to determine access to its lands by a lottery. They usually charge an entry fee to cover just the administrative costs, but some can be quite high depending on the quality of the opportunity. Usually

each lottery entrant has an equal chance of being picked, although there are lotteries that add weights to entrants based on some criteria; e.g. decreasing their chances if they were previous winners. The landowner may restrict the duration of the opportunity (within the FWC season), the number of hunters, the areas awarded, and specify the game to be taken (so long as it is legal under State rules). The nature of these details depends on the goals of the landowner. The landowner would have to depend upon their own enforcement of these additional restrictions to ensure they are followed and not on FWC, since they are not state regulations. If the landowner wants -- and the market will bear it -- a second fee may then be charged to the lottery winners before they can access the property. While the fees may generate some revenue, it may prevent other people from entering the lottery due to the high cost. The landowner's goals will dictate whether fees are charged and their amount.

Instead of a lottery, the opportunity can be awarded depending on the bids received pursuant to a formal request or auction. Here the entrants' chances are not equal but depend on either the best qualified, the highest bidder, or any other criteria the landowner decides is important. If the goal is to maximize rents, the highest bidder is awarded the opportunity and a fee collected. It is also possible to offer a combination of opportunities on the same site. For example, the first week of deer season (which is very desirable) can be auctioned off to the highest bidder. Then limited opportunities can be awarded via lottery later in the season where the winners have the site to themselves for a few days. For the rest of the season, the site may be opened to anyone for general public hunts or through private leases, or in the case of the County, through License Agreements.

Ultimately there are a myriad of ways the opportunities may be conveyed to hunters. The challenge for Alachua County is to convey them in a manner that ensures the goals of the Preserve are met, are consistent with State hunting laws, along with any economic and social goals of the County Commission, in a cost-effective manner.

## **Hunting Modes on Alachua County-Owned Lands**

Many Alachua County residents enjoy hunting both as a traditional form of recreation and as a supplementary means of obtaining food. Alachua County has acquired many environmentally significant properties over the last decade. The purpose of these acquisitions was to *“protect, improve and manage water resources, wildlife habitats, and to provide natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation”* (2000 Alachua County Forever Referendum). Nearly all of these lands were hunted by their former owners or by their tenants or guests. Hunters have also been supporters of the ACF program and support hunting in the State through the purchase of hunting-related gear and equipment. Recreational hunting is consistent with the conservation principles embodied in the referendum so long as it is managed at sustainable levels and does not negatively impact non-game species. The County is considering expanding its current recreational hunting levels upon the numerous requests from hunters in the community.

After reviewing hunting practices in Florida, the portfolio of lands owned by Alachua County and considering the referendum goals, staff has determined that four modes emerge as possibilities for recreational hunting on Alachua County-owned lands:

- Management by FWC either as part of a Wildlife Management Area, or a Public Small Game Hunt Area
- Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements, managed by Alachua County, with private individuals or a private group
- Limited-Hunt License Agreements, managed by Alachua County, with private individuals or a private group
- No Hunting.

Each is discussed in more detail below.

**Management by FWC.** There are several advantages to having FWC manage hunting on County-owned lands. The State would manage the administrative process for allowing entry, provide law enforcement, provide boundary and entrance signage and, if County funding was available, provide enhanced game management and research. Most importantly, a partnership FWC provides hunting venues in Alachua County where the general public benefits from these open-access lands at no cost beyond state hunting licenses and permits.

FWC has reviewed the current ACF portfolio which currently includes Balu Forest. They are interested in partnering with the County on several properties: Barr Hammock/Levy Lake Preserve, Lake Alto Preserve, Watermelon Pond – Gladman Preserve and Balu Forest. Staff is recommending the County work on a formal partnership with FWC to manage hunting on these tracts and others where such a partnership provides a clear benefit to the County and is compatible with the other management goals for the Preserves (Table 2). For the purposes of brevity, the FWC-managed hunts are classified in Table 2 as “FWC Small Game”, “FWC General Public Hunt” and “FWC Quota hunts”. Each has already been described in detail in the [Accessing Hunting Opportunities](#) section above.

To enter into a partnership on the Newnan’s Lake Conservation Area-Little Hatchet Creek Addition and Lochloosa-River Styx tracts, the County would need to obtain approval from the St Johns River Water Management District since they co-own and manage those tracts. The County would also have to negotiate a separate revenue-sharing agreement with Plum Creek. Grove Park WMA is privately owned by Plum Creek and they receive most of revenues generated through the Recreational Use Permits (\$448.50 per hunter for 2012-2013) for that property. Statutes (379.354 F.S.) governing the collection of Recreational Use Permits, such as those on Grove Park WMA, do not allow for this approach at the River Styx. If the BoCC desires to offer the hunt opportunities on this tract, the County would have to choose another of the modes or request it be added to the Lochloosa WMA. The Lochloosa WMA is close by and is owned by the St Johns River Water Management District and no additional fees are charged.

Under a scenario where FWC manages hunting on County lands, the County would remain responsible for the remaining land management activities such as prescribed burning, exotic control, and recreational infrastructure. The FWC may also become liable for any hunting-related accidents up to the statutory limits for torts established in section 768.28(5) Florida Statutes (\$300,000 without further approval by the Legislature). FWC may therefore share the liability with the County and possibly even

assuming the primary liability as hunt manager if a court determined it was solely liable. The landowner – in this case the County – always has some liability (also up to the statutory limits) especially if a court determined it contributed to the injury or was negligent. FWC staff has advised County staff that the FWC’s standard policy is not to indemnify the landowner or cooperator. It is unlikely staff will be able to negotiate a different arrangement whereby FWC indemnifies the County entirely. After pursuing this indemnification further, staff will return to the County Commission with the interagency agreements with FWC and disclose with whom liability lies and allow the County to consider executing the agreements or seek some other arrangement.

**Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements.** License Agreements are the proposed mechanism to provide hunting opportunities on County lands where the County - and not FWC - will be the hunting manager. Up until now, the County has used License Agreements to create caretaking relationships with a few hunters on ACF-managed properties. The Agreement requires the hunter to provide the caretaking and maintenance services such as site security, monitoring, road and trail maintenance, hog removal and mowing in exchange for limited hunting opportunities. The County has used these Agreements on sites that are not yet open to the public, which could support low intensity hunting, and with a Licensee who had a previous hunting lease on the property. Each Licensee has to carry appropriate hunting insurance and indemnify the County for accidents and damages. These have served the County very well; no cash exchanged hands and all of the Licensees have been excellent to work with. In the future, these hunting opportunities could be competitively bid out to the public using the County’s procurement processes. However, the issues associated with fees are discussed in the [Revenue-Generation and Issues Section](#) below.

The term of the Agreements depend on the goals for the property and the need to make them attractive enough for a potential caretaker to contract with the County. The consensus among hunting stakeholders is they would need is 3-5 years to familiarize themselves with a property, establish feed plots and hunt stands, and attract, raise and ultimately take, a quality animal. The length of this term is also desirable under quality deer management principles which are designed to allow a deer to reach trophy size. The opportunity to bag trophy deer would compensate the hunter/caretaker for the required maintenance efforts required by the County under the Agreement during the years trophy deer were not available and for the off-season when maintenance and security is still required. Shorter periods could be agreed upon if the goals were not for trophy deer and there were willing caretakers. It also seemed to be the consensus on how long potential caretakers would wait for the next opportunity to bid on the next Agreement.

Alachua County, as the landowner, may add requirements of the hunter so long as they do not violate FWC’s hunting regulations. For example, FWC’s regulations define antlered deer as *“having at least one antler, 5 or more inches in length visible above the hairline”*. The County could require hunters take only those bucks with at least three antler points or more on one side, 5 or more inches in length visible above the hairline. The harvest would have still to occur during the statewide antlered deer season and meet all the other FWC regulations. Hunters violating this requirement by harvesting bucks with only 2 points on one side would only be in violation of County requirements but would not be in violation of the FWC regulations. So, enforcement of the County’s requirements would be by the

County, not FWC. The penalty would be termination of the Agreement and a possible ban on hunting the property in the future.

**Limited-Hunt License Agreements.** As used in this Plan, Limited-Hunt License Agreement hunts are limited to just a few individuals, or a small select group, for a special event or for a very limited duration. The opportunity can be awarded in any number of ways including a lottery or based on responses received subsequent to a formal request for bids. The County may impose additional bag and term limits, e.g. a long weekend instead of the entire deer season. These hunts are intended to generate revenue as the hunter is not sharing the property with other hunters and it is not hunted during the rest of the season. So the winning bidder can be more confident that they will get a quality animal. The County would not receive any stewardship benefits as they might under a Multi-Year Hunting License Agreement. Once a bidder is selected, a Limited-Hunt License Agreement is executed between the hunter and the County, in which the terms, restrictions and insurance requirements are spelled out.

The County Commission may be interested in providing opportunities to non-traditional or under-represented hunting groups such as youth, disabled veterans, women, and minorities. These could be also implemented under Limited-Hunt License Agreements with an appropriate partner. As described later, the County has a Limited-Hunt License Agreement with the National Wild Turkey Foundation to provide hunting and outdoor educational opportunities to non-traditional hunting groups in the community.

**No Hunting.** No hunting is the final “mode” being considered. While the County recognizes the values of hunting – both recreational and ecological - other considerations must be weighed when considering ACF Preserves for recreational hunting. No hunting is being recommended for sites that meet the conditions described below in [Hunting Recommendations](#).

## Hunting Recommendations

To date, Alachua County has acquired 44 tracts with Alachua County Forever and Wild Spaces & Public Places funding (Figure 3). Table 2 below summarizes the recommended hunting strategies (marked with an “X”) on the portfolio. Several individual acquisitions have been combined into single Preserves (e.g. three Lake Alto acquisitions form the Lake Alto North Preserve and two comprise Mill Creek Preserve). The table also shows that there are additional modes that could be employed concurrently or instead of the recommended mode (marked with an “O”) depending on management priorities. Sites that staff recommends be available for hunting in some form are shaded green and those closed to hunting are shaded red. Note conservation easements are excluded since the hunting rights remain with the private landowner. These are depicted in Figure 3 but are not included in Table 2.

Several factors went into deciding which mode of hunting is being recommended as the dominant mode for each site:

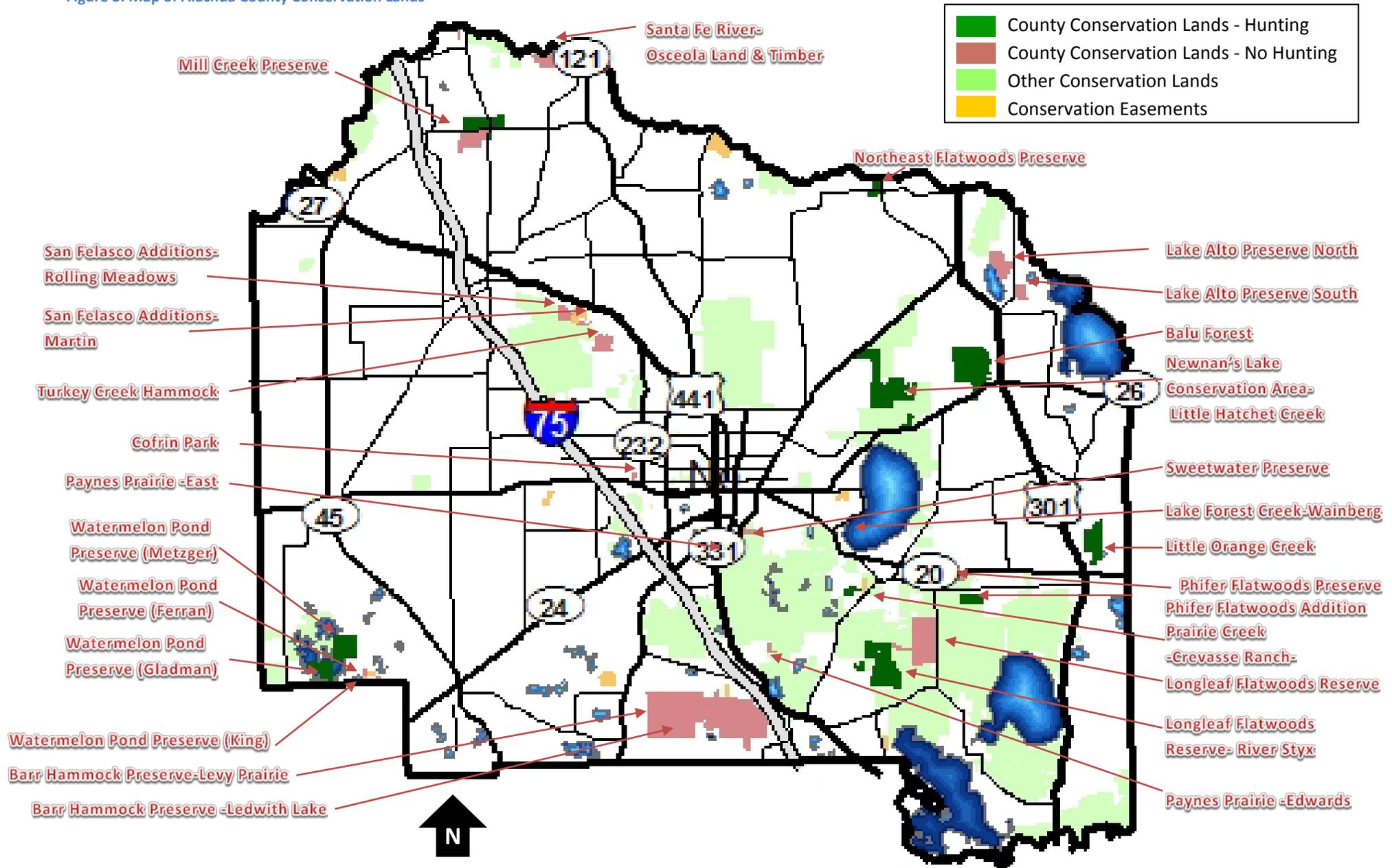
- **Size.** A larger property can generally support more hunting pressure depending on other factors. Larger property also allows for some isolation from neighboring land uses.

- **Is the site currently open to the public?** Is it open now by appointment? Will it be opened in the next year or two? There are two reasons to carefully consider when contemplating allowing hunting and non-hunting uses on the same property at the same time. First, the County is conservative in its risk and liability profile and so we are not recommending hunting and non-hunting uses on the same property at the same time. This is pertinent only for sites where the County will be managing the hunting. Where FWC would manage the hunting on County land, FWC could be liable up to the statutory limits and depending on the circumstances. The County could still be liable—again depending on the circumstances -- since it is the landowner. The FWC has a great safety record of public hunting on WMAs that includes no injury by a hunter to non-hunting users. Second, there is the perception of increased risk on the part of the non-hunting public and from neighbors. Many non-hunting users are deterred by the noise, the perceived risk, and other impacts associated with hunting, and therefore may be effectively excluded from properties where hunting is allowed. County-managed hunting will therefore cease on a property when the County opens that site to the general public for non-hunting recreation.
- **Habitat sensitivity.** ACF sites represent the best of our natural heritage. Some sites may be too sensitive to have the unaccompanied public on them especially off trails and using vehicles. There may be species using the property during hunting seasons and which would be impacted by hunting disturbance even if they were not targeted, e.g. Sandhill Cranes, Wood Storks and other migratory waterfowl. The County preserves may represent a valuable roosting, breeding or foraging area for species of interest (including game species). The County believes in providing refugia for these species free from hunting pressure. A mosaic of these refuges intermixed with hunting lands improves the quality and quantity of game and therefore the experience.
- **Access to the site and within the site.** Good vehicular access is particularly important for hunting and retrieving large game. Most hunters indicated they prefer to be no more than a ¼ or ½ mile from their vehicle if they have to drag large game out. Some hunters said they would pack animals out or use a bike trailer. The ability to have road access to and within hunting areas will be a factor in determining where hunting can occur and what species are hunted.
- **Neighboring land uses.** Some of the ACF sites are adjacent to suburban and residential land uses. There are neighbors who oppose hunting in such close proximity. Staff has heard concerns frequently expressed at management plan workshops about hunting and it's potential impacts on the subject site and our neighbors. The County Commission may decide that the greater public interest is served by not allowing hunting on that property. This issue may not so much of a concern in the rural areas where the ACF property may be adjacent to private land already hunted. This issue may influence the extent of the hunting area on a particular site and necessitate interior no-hunt buffers to private land.
- **Security and monitoring needs.** Partnerships with FWC or Licensees can help fulfill security and monitoring needs on County-owned sites, especially remote and isolated sites.
- **Is a stewardship partnership in place?** Where a site is being managed by a partner at no cost to the County and where that partner does not allow hunting, e.g. State Parks-managed properties (San Felasco Additions, Paynes Prairie Additions, see Table 2) the County should not terminate that relationship to provide hunting opportunities. The County would have to take on the long-

term cost of all of the management of the property, increasing the cost of the County's stewardship. The County would be ill-served to replace a long-term stewardship partnership with a hunting agreement. The resource management provided by the partner agency (exotic control, restoration, prescribed burning) is not replaced by the hunter who is not capable of providing the same level of service. It is also unlikely, based on the market for hunting in this area, that charging for these opportunities would compensate for the loss in stewardship.

- **Any restrictions from acquisition funding or stewardship funding?** Some properties have restrictions from the original agreement to restrict hunting. The donation of the Odum property, the sellers of the Bloom & Frank parcel and the cooperative management agreement on the Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve are examples which prohibit hunting on those sites.
- **Sustainable game populations?** Staff and the community have expressed the concern that there is no good data on the quality and quantity of game animals on ACF preserves. If hunting is to be allowed in a sustainable manner so as not to over hunt the property and degrade its conservation value, how would the County know it is at this level? The ACF program is not staffed nor funded to carry out wildlife surveys some have suggested are needed. Rather, the County relies on indirect measures of sustainability and the expertise of the FWC. Indirect measures include the quality of the browse or forage on the property; the worse off it is and the more pressure is being exerted by the game animal indicating there are too many animals present. Others are sighting reports from staff, neighbors, users and hunters, presence and density of deer ticks. The License Agreements allow a very low number of hunters and their pressure is low. The FWC is ultimately responsible for the quality of the hunting experience and the care of game populations in Florida. Their expertise allows them to establish seasons, quotas, bag limits, firearm restrictions and species-specific restrictions all of which are presumed to preserve the sustainability of wildlife populations.

Figure 3. Map of Alachua County Conservation Lands



**Table 2. Hunting Matrix**

Sites available for hunting shaded green and those closed to hunting are shaded red.

The recommended hunting strategies are marked with an "X".

The additional modes that could be employed concurrently or instead of the recommended mode are marked with an "O".

Element	Size (ac)	Stewardship and Responsible Entity		Public Access	Comment	Recommended Hunting Modes					
						No Hunting	Limited-Hunt License Agreements	Multi-Year Hunting License Agreement	FWC Small Game	FWC General Public Hunt	WMA Quota hunts
Balu Forest	1,599	Primary	ACF/Public Works	To be opened	Good interior access, on a public road. Portion may be a solid waste facility.		O		O		X
Barr Hammock Preserve -Ledwith Lake	2,396	Primary	ACF	To be opened	Not on a public road	X					
Barr Hammock Preserve-Levy Prairie	3,309	Primary	ACF	To be opened	No interior roads, on a public road.	X					
Cofrin Nature Park	23	Secondary	City of Gainesville	Yes	No hunting in City of Gainesville	X					
Lake Alto Preserve North	479	Primary	ACF	To be opened	Good interior access, on a public road. Adjacent to Santa Fe Swamp WMA.	X					
Lake Alto Preserve South	184	Primary	ACF	To be opened	Poor interior access, on a public road. Private residential inholding.	X					
Lake Forest Creek-Wainberg	25	Primary	ACF	By Appointment	No interior roads, on a public road.			X			
Little Orange Creek	702	Secondary	ACT	To be opened	Good interior access, on a public road.			X			
Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve	1,388	Secondary	SJRWMD	Yes	No hunting in Coop agreement Good interior access, on a public road.	X					
Longleaf Flatwoods Reserve-River Styx	1,354	Secondary	SJRWMD	Yes	Not on a public road, may be included in Lochloosa WMA						X
Mill Creek Preserve SW Tract	600	Primary	ACF	Yes	Good interior access, on a public road.	X					
Mill Creek Preserve-North Tract	570	Primary	ACF	By Appointment	Good interior access, on a public road.		X	O			
Mill Creek Preserve-SE Tract	60	Primary	ACF	By Appointment	No interior roads, on a public road.		O	X			
Newnan's Lake Conservation Area- Little Hatchet Creek	1,876	Secondary	SJRWMD	Yes	Hunted via Hatchet Creek WMA. May add additional area to WMA						X
Northeast Flatwoods Preserve	234	Primary	ACF	By Appointment	Good interior access, on a public road, divided into 3 small sections.			X			
Paynes Prairie Additions Edwards	276	Secondary	State Parks	Yes	Managed by State Parks State Parks don't allow hunting. Not on a public road.	X					
Paynes Prairie Additions East	25	Secondary	State Parks	To be opened	Managed by State Parks State Parks don't allow hunting.	X					
Phifer Flatwoods Preserve	644	Primary	ACF	Yes	Good interior access. Adjacent to Gainesville-Hawthorne Trail and SR-20.	X					
Phifer Flatwoods Preserve Addition	325	Primary	ACF	By Appointment	Good interior roads, on a public road.		O	X			
Prairie Creek- Crevasse Ranch	96	Secondary	ACT	To be opened	Good interior access, on a public road.			X			

Sites available for hunting shaded green and those closed to hunting are shaded red.

The recommended hunting strategies are marked with an "X".

The additional modes that could be employed concurrently or instead of the recommended mode are marked with an "O".

Table 2 continued

Element	Size (ac)	Stewardship and Responsible Entity		Public Access	Comment	Recommended Hunting Modes					
						No Hunting	Limited-Hunt License Agreements	Multi-Year Hunting License Agreement	FWC Small Game	FWC General Public Hunt	WMA Quota hunts
San Felasco Additions-Martin & White	65	Secondary	State Parks	Yes	Managed by State Parks State Parks don't allow hunting. Not on a public road.	X					
San Felasco Additions-Rolling Meadows	208	Secondary	State Parks	Yes	Managed by State Parks State Parks don't allow hunting. Not on a public road.	X					
Santa Fe River-Odum	47	Primary	ACF	No	Not on a public road	X					
Santa Fe River-Osceola Land & Timber	464	Secondary	SRWMD	To be opened	Not on a public road. Managed by SRWMD. (County owns 25%)	X					
Sweetwater Preserve	113	Primary	ACF	Yes	Small urban site with high visitation	X					
Turkey Creek Hammock Preserve	380	Primary	ACF	To be opened	Currently being hunted under a License Agreement; will terminate when it opens	X					
Watermelon Pond Preserve (Ferran)	34	Primary	ACF	By Appointment	Not on a public road	X					
Watermelon Pond Preserve (Gladman)	440	Primary	ACF	To be opened	Poor interior access, on a public road. Would be managed as part of the Watermelon Pond WMA or WEA					X	
Watermelon Pond Preserve-Williams (King)	40	Primary	ACF	By Appointment	Not on a public road	X					
Watermelon Pond Preserve (Metzger)	634	Primary	ACF	To be opened	Good interior access, on a public road. Subject to cattle grazing License Agreement with hunting rights.			X			

Some notes on Table 2.

The County has acquired ten conservation easements on private property. These are not included in the table since the hunting rights remain with the landowner and are not available for the County to allocate.

As mentioned earlier, it may be possible to offer a combination of opportunities on a site in addition to the recommended mode listed in the table. For example, the County has executed an Agreement with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) to provide hunting opportunities to non-traditional and under-represented demographics on Mill Creek North, both of which are recommended for a Multi-Year hunting License Agreement. The NWTf stage their events at discrete times of the year, for short periods (1-2 days or a week) leaving the rest of the season to the Licensee.

No long-term hunting was recommended for sites that will be opened in the next year or two unless it will be managed by FWC since they have the experience managing these multiple users. Most hunters preferred a three to five-year agreement. However, if a site has a current agreement in place, (e.g. Barr Hammock and Turkey Creek Hammock), and the site will be opened in year or two, then that agreement will be honored until the site is opened. This is more efficient than using the procurement process and entering into a one-time agreement with an unknown group for a short period. Sites that may be opened in the 5+ year range could support hunting under an appropriate FWC-managed hunts or License Agreements managed by the County.

Balu Forest is included in Table 2 even though it was not acquired through the Land Conservation programs. It is an appropriate location for hunting and has generated a great deal of interest in the discussions with the hunting public. It is large enough to accommodate several hunters at a time, and has good access both to the property and within the site. Except for the southeast corner, it is surrounded by large undeveloped property which is also hunted. In conversations with County staff, FWC has suggested that Balu Forest could be added to the Hatchet Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA), and would be subject to the same rules currently in effect there. It is also possible to negotiate managing hunting on Balu Forest as a separate unit of the WMA with slightly different rules if the County goals required it. FWC and County staffs are concerned that users are clear on which rules apply.

A number of other issues would also need to be resolved before Balu can be hunted. Because some portion of Balu Forest may be used in the future as a solid waste management facility, a formal agreement must specify that a portion of the property can be removed from the WMA when the facility is to be developed. A second issue to resolve is closing the gates after hunting is over. Currently, Hatchet Creek is managed by FWC as a Quota Hunt with hunting allowed on 11 long weekends only. The rest of these weeks and the remainder of the year, it is open for general public recreation. County staff may be responsible for closing the gates after the weekend hunts to ensure site security. Readers should refer to the Hatchet Creek WMA Brochure in [Appendix 4](#).

Under agreements with the FWC or in areas designated as WMA or similarly designated hunting areas managed by FWC, hunting can be allowed along with non-hunting uses. County staff is recommending a similar arrangement for these sites if we can negotiate the primary liability remain with the State and not with the County. FWC has advised County staff that the FWC's standard policy is

not to indemnify the landowner or cooperator. Staff is recommending exploring the indemnification with FWC. Staff will return to the County Commission with the Agreements and disclose the state of the liability and allow the County to execute them or seek some other arrangement.

The County may close open sites to the public where there is no hunting and offer a limited hunting opportunity as part of a limited and focused stewardship activity, e.g. feral hog removal. Procedures to adequately notify the public of such closures will be developed and implemented to avoid any accidents.

In summary, staff is recommending recreational hunting opportunities be established: (1) where the County and FWC have mutually agreed that FWC can manage hunting and an appropriate Interagency Agreement to facilitate public hunts can be agreed upon, and; (2) continue to use License Agreements to continue to create opportunities on sites not managed by FWC and not yet open to the public, to offset our potential cost and leverage private caretaking capacities.

## **Hunting License Agreement Development and Management**

Individual Hunting License Agreements will govern the County's relationship with specific hunters on its preserves. The County's adopted contract management and procurement procedures will guide the development of these Agreements. Each Agreement is developed by Environmental Protection Department staff, and reviewed by staffs in the Office of Management & Budget, Contracts, Risk Management, and the County Attorney's Office. In general, the Hunting License Agreement addresses several issues that may include:

- Term
- Site security and frequency of inspections
- Reporting
- Insurance and indemnification
- Interior road maintenance and mowing
- Requirements for feed plots or stands
- Suspension of hunting activities for certain County management activities
- Phasing out of hunting areas to facilitate restoration
- Revenues or rents for hunting rights
- Renewal and termination
- Compatible public access and recreation
- Feral hog removal
- Gate & fence maintenance
- Species of game taken
- Numbers of hunters & visitors
- Vehicular use on the property
- Number, size and location of food plots, feeders and stands

## Revenue-Generation and Related Issues

There are important issues worth further consideration when deciding whether to charge hunters for hunting opportunities or to close property to facilitate hunting for revenue-generation.

**FWC-managed Hunts.** Generally, the public does not support revenue-generating hunting on public land. So charging special fees for hunting on FWC-managed lands may not be possible. The County still benefits from partnerships with FWC as discussed earlier, even if the County cannot charge for the opportunity.

**Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements.** The most important benefit of the Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements is the value of the services the Licensee performs as part of the consideration for the hunting privilege. Staff has estimated that the in-kind value of these Agreements exceeds \$10,000 per site annually. Clearly the County has an interest in leveraging this effort and minimizing the budget enhancements that would have been necessary to provide the same level of services as provided by these Licensees. Several issues do need to be considered.

Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements would not be used on sites where FWC manages hunting for the County. The Licensee would not be well-served to share this opportunity with the general hunting public. Licensees are interested in the property since it offers an exclusive opportunity to hunt quality game. This mitigates the effort they are required to put into the property during the off-season. Losing quality game to the public hunters diminished their interest. Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements would also not be used on sites that were open to the public for non-hunting recreation. This would necessitate closing the site during the more desirable part of the year to non-hunting recreation.

A concern raised among hunters about these Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements is that they are by nature exclusive to the Licensees. The County has clearly benefitted from maintaining long-term relationships with current Licensees who were previous hunters of the property. It is at the request of other hunters that County staff is considering rotating these opportunities. Staff envisions selecting future Licensees based on their responses to a formal Request-For-Qualifications. The County does risk entering into an Agreement with an unknown hunter who may not have the same integrity or standard of care as the current Licensees who have been tenants on the property, some for decades. The County is protected by the one-sided nature of these Agreements which allows the County to terminate the Agreements, unilaterally, with little notice. However significant damage can be done in a short time by unscrupulous caretakers and they can set back the County's goals for restoration and recreation.

Another concern we heard was that many hunters cannot invest the time or money needed to create a caretaking capacity. These would be excluded from competing for these Agreements as they would not be able to then meet the County's scope of services.

Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements may also have the potential to generate revenue for the County through the collection of rents. The amount of revenue generated on a site depends on the mode of hunting and a multitude of other factors such as game quality, access, exclusivity, neighboring land uses and obligations of the Licensee to the County. Rents for typical hunting tracts in this area run between \$5 and \$15 per acre per year for long-term leases. On sites that were closed to the public, and the County was interested in generating revenues, the opportunity to enter into a Multi-Year Hunting License Agreement could be bid out and the amount of the rent could be determined in two ways. First

as a fixed amount required from the successful bidder prior to entering into the Agreement. Second, it could be the tie-breaker between bidders capable of providing the complete range of services.

Staff is not recommending charging for these Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements – or for any hunt opportunity – for a couple of reasons. The County may have a higher obligation to the Licensee if they are paying for the opportunity rather than it being a recognized exchange of equal benefits. Second, a drawback to accepting money is that it may make canceling the Agreement more difficult when the County needs to shut down hunting for a valid stewardship reason or because of a failure on the part of the Licensee. Finally, it may also exclude hunters who may be able to act as capable caretakers but cannot afford to bid high amounts in an auction. This last concern was oft-heard from the local hunting stakeholders we spoke to.

The benefit to the County is obvious: a responsible private entity that takes care of many of the needs of the property, alleviating the need to pay for it from the County budget. Staff is comfortable that these benefits outweigh the negative consequences and is recommending the BoCC authorize their continued use in exchange for caretaking services.

**Limited-Hunt License Agreements.** Another revenue-generating possibility is closing sites otherwise open to the general public and awarding a Limited-Hunt License Agreement to a successful bidder. These hunts could be scheduled for desirable times of the year and last for a relatively short period – a long weekend to a few weeks. These could be prized opportunities and could generate hundreds of dollars for the right property. There would be no required management services and the County would remain responsible for the full suite of stewardship services.

Staff heard several concerns with respect to this idea. A main concern, similar to that above, was it would disenfranchise local hunters in favor of wealthy non-resident hunters. Local hunters, like other taxing users have already contributed to the purchase and management of the property. They have pointed out that the County does not charge other users to access the sites so they should not have to pay additional access fees. Recently the Suwannee River Water Management District floated a proposal asking for bidders for hunting opportunities on property adjacent to their Mud Swamp Conservation Area. It was rescinded by their Governing Board after it was met with large, vocal and organized opposition from hunters and non-hunters alike.

Another important concern we heard regarding closing otherwise open public land for these hunts was that it excludes a multitude of non-hunting users and allows only a very few private individuals for hunting, even if for a limited time. It should be noted: this is a concern for lands on which the County would manage the hunts, not FWC-managed hunts. FWC maintains that hunting and non-hunting uses are compatible and that is the way they manage most of the WMAs in the State. Notably, both hunters who want access to public lands at no additional cost, and non-hunting user groups we spoke to expressed concerns about being excluded for the sake of a privileged few who could afford to bid up the opportunity. Similarly, both groups did not support the concept of hunting and non-hunting users on the same property at the same time. For the hunters, their concern was their liability if they harmed another user. Hunters tend to understand and can predict the behavior of hunters in shared areas. Non-hunting recreational behavior can be random and unpredictable for a hunter. Similarly, hunters were concerned about non-hunters' presence changing the game animals' behaviors and patterns making them more difficult to track and take. Non-hunters perceived a greater possibility of harm if hunters were present and therefore they would avoid the area.

A concern for staff is the additional burden involved to provide hunting opportunities through a multitude of Limited-Hunt License Agreements on ACF preserves. Providing more passive recreational opportunities such as hiking and nature appreciation does not require special License Agreements; passive users walk in and enjoy preserves without any additional administrative process. Managing Limited-Hunt License Agreements will require developing new processes and drafting and negotiating each Agreement. This will add to the workloads of the Environmental Protection Department, the County Attorney's Office, the Office of Management and Budget, Risk Management and the Purchasing Divisions. It is unlikely that any fees collected for these services will offset the increased costs associated with the development, administration and enforcement of these opportunities. County staff would have to ensure hunters are complying with the rules of the Agreements since the FWC law enforcement would not enforce these local Agreements. Staff able to handle the workload negotiating and monitoring the few Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements and interagency agreements required arising from the recommendations in Table 2.

Staff is therefore not recommending using very many these Limited-Hunt License Agreements since it would require closing an open site, benefit a few at the expense of many non-hunting users, incur additional workload, and the need is not present given the other hunting opportunities being offered. There would have to be a demonstrated public benefit such as a significant offset of expenses as with the Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements or the provision of unique opportunity such as that with the NWTF at Mill Creek Preserve discussed earlier.

Staff is also not recommending charging for these Limited-Hunt License Agreements for the same reasons as stated in the Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements section above: (higher obligation, makes canceling more difficult, discriminatory).

If it is determined by the Board that charging hunters is in the public interest, and the costs and burdens are worthwhile, then staff recommends any revenues generated by these Licenses should be used for stewardship of the Alachua County Forever-managed preserves. This is appropriate since these rights are attached to these properties and were a part of the bundle of rights when the property was purchased. Environmental Protection Department staff would also bear most of the burden. Staff is recommending a departure from previous business plans and allow these proceeds to be used to offset the operating costs incurred managing these opportunities, and not just capital costs.

It is also appropriate to spend the proceeds on a different preserve if the hunted site does not need the revenues to achieve the management goals for that site. The disposition of the funds will depend on the legal constraints and funding covenants that govern the preserve. For example, according to the recorded Grant Covenants, revenues from properties that were acquired with Florida Communities Trust grants must be used on management activities that occur on the same property.

A final consideration is the amount received needs to meet the Internal Revenue Service tests for tax-exempt municipal bonds. Over certain thresholds, the amount of revenue can trigger a taxable-event for bond-holders. EPD and Finance & Accounting staffs are monitoring the Agreements and applying the IRS criteria to ensure this does not happen.

Year-to-year, the number of hunts and the revenues realized will be unknown. Staff is recommending these revenues should be deposited in the appropriate revenue account identified by the preserve-specific accounting nomenclature sequence in use by the County for Alachua County Forever-managed preserves. For example, fund 326-5563.343.90-20 would receive the proceeds from

hunting on the Watermelon Pond Preserve. These would be unanticipated revenues until they are recognized in the budget.

## **The Business Plan - A Static Document for Specific Management of Dynamic Ecosystems**

This is the initial Business Plan. The policy directives it contains reflect the mission of the Alachua County Forever Program, and the current fiscal, economic, social and political environment of the County. Staff recognizes that changes in any of these may require this Plan to be amended by the County Commission. The Plan may also be amended as additional site information is gathered, sites are acquired or resource management and site stewardship needs change. Hunting may need to be increased if the game populations grow to cause damage to the Preserve, or may be curtailed if the population falls to low levels.

In the development of this plan, County staff met with County Advisory Boards, hunting interests, conservation interests, outdoor enthusiasts, individual hunters and non-hunters, FWC staff (especially Matthew Chopp with FWC's Division of Hunting & Game Management), UF/IFAS Wildlife Extension Specialist Dr. Bill Giuliano, Water Management District and Florida State Parks staffs. All provided valuable insight and advice. Their assistance and input is much appreciated.

## Glossary of Selected Terms used in this Plan<sup>6</sup>

<i>Alachua County Forever preserves</i>	Are those lands that were acquired, and are managed, to fulfill the purposes of the Alachua County Forever referendum of 2000 and the Wild Spaces and Public Places referendum of 2008
<i>Auction</i>	A well-defined, limited hunting opportunity is offered to the public at large and awarded based on the highest bidder.
<i>Furbearers</i>	Raccoon, opossum, skunk, nutria, beaver, coyote, fox, bobcat, otter, mink, weasel, and round-tailed muskrat (FWC)
<i>Game</i>	Game mammals and game birds (FWC)
<i>Game birds</i>	Wild turkey, quail, rails, snipe, woodcock, ducks, geese, brant, dove, coot, common moorhen, and non-native species generally considered game such as pheasant, chukar partridge, and coturnix quail (FWC)
<i>Game mammals</i>	Deer, gray squirrel, rabbits, and non-native species generally considered game such as elk, antelope and buffalo (FWC)
<i>License Agreement</i>	<p>A formally-executed contract between the County and the Licensee, in which the County authorizes the Licensee's use or access to property for a specific purpose. Licensee does not have a possessory interest, cannot assign or share their use rights, and is usually terminable with short or no notice.</p> <p>The County may enter into Multi-Year Hunting License Agreements or more restrictive Limited-Hunt License Agreements depending on the goals for the Preserve.</p>
<i>Lottery</i>	A mechanism to ensure each person gets an equal and random chance to be awarded the hunting right. Some lotteries allow a hunter to purchase multiple entries increasing their chances of winning.
<i>Quota</i>	A mechanism to limit the participation of hunters on site
<i>Special Opportunity Hunts</i>	These hunts make available large areas with lots of game and low hunter quotas and provide excellent opportunities to bag trophy deer, wild hogs, quail, wild turkeys or doves (FWC)
<i>Small Game</i>	Game species other than deer, wild hog or wild turkey.
<i>Wildlife Management Area (WMA)</i>	<p>Wildlife management area – An area of private or public ownership established for the management of wildlife or freshwater fish on which hunting, fishing or other outdoor recreation may be permitted only at such times and under such regulations as are specifically provided for each individual area.</p> <p>Such an area upon which the users are subject to the management area stamp requirements of Section 379.354, F.S., excluding lands owned by the United States of America, Department of Defense.</p>

## Citations

1. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. <http://myfwc.com/hunting/by-species/>
2. White-Tailed Deer of Florida. WEC133. Schaefer and Main. University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences. Reviewed October 2011.
3. Wild Hogs in Florida: Ecology and Management, WEC277. William M. Giuliano. University of Florida Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw322>
4. Best Small Game Hunting Areas in the North Central Region, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. [http://myfwc.com/media/546657/Hunt\\_Best\\_SG\\_Areas\\_NC.pdf](http://myfwc.com/media/546657/Hunt_Best_SG_Areas_NC.pdf)
5. Statewide map of Wildlife Management Areas. <http://myfwc.com/media/1380222/huntingwmamap.pdf>
6. FWC definitions from 68A-1.004 Florida Administrative Code.

## Useful Links

- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission: <http://myfwc.com/>
- FWC Wildlife Management Areas: <http://myfwc.com/hunting/wma-brochures/#nc>

# Appendices

## Appendix 1. State-issued Hunting Licenses and Permits

Except as noted under FWC's License and Permit Exemptions, the following licenses and permits are required:

**Hunting license:** Required when taking or attempting to take game or furbearing animals (by methods other than trapping).

**Deer permit:** Required, in addition to a hunting license, when taking or attempting to take deer.

**Turkey permit:** Required, in addition to a hunting license, when taking or attempting to take turkeys.

**Migratory bird permit:** Required, in addition to a hunting license, when taking or attempting to take ducks, geese, brants, coots, common moorhens, gallinules, rails, snipes, woodcocks, mourning doves and white-winged doves. Permit is valid from Sept. 1 through March 31. A migratory bird permit is not required to take crows.

**Florida waterfowl permit and Federal duck stamp:** Required, in addition to a hunting license and migratory bird permit, when taking or attempting to take ducks and geese.

**Archery permit:** Required, in addition to a hunting license, when hunting during archery season.

**Crossbow permit:** Required, in addition to a hunting license, when hunting with a crossbow or bow during crossbow season.

**Muzzleloading gun permit:** Required, in addition to a hunting license, when hunting with a muzzleloading gun, crossbow or bow during muzzleloading season.

**Management area permit:** Required, in addition to a hunting license, when taking or attempting to take wildlife on wildlife management areas, wildlife and environmental areas and some public small-game hunting areas. There are some exceptions listed by FWC. A management area permit is also an annual pass on wildlife management areas where a day use fee is required.

**Limited entry/quota permit:** Required to hunt, or access for recreational purposes, some management areas during specified periods.

**Trapping license:** Required when taking or attempting to take furbearing animals using live traps or snares. Wild hogs on private property are not considered game animals, therefore, no license or permit is required to hunt or trap them – just the landowner's permission.

## Appendix 2. 2012-2013 Florida Hunting Season Dates

# 2012-2013 Florida Hunting Season Dates and Bag Limits

Seasons, dates and bag limits do not apply to wildlife management areas.

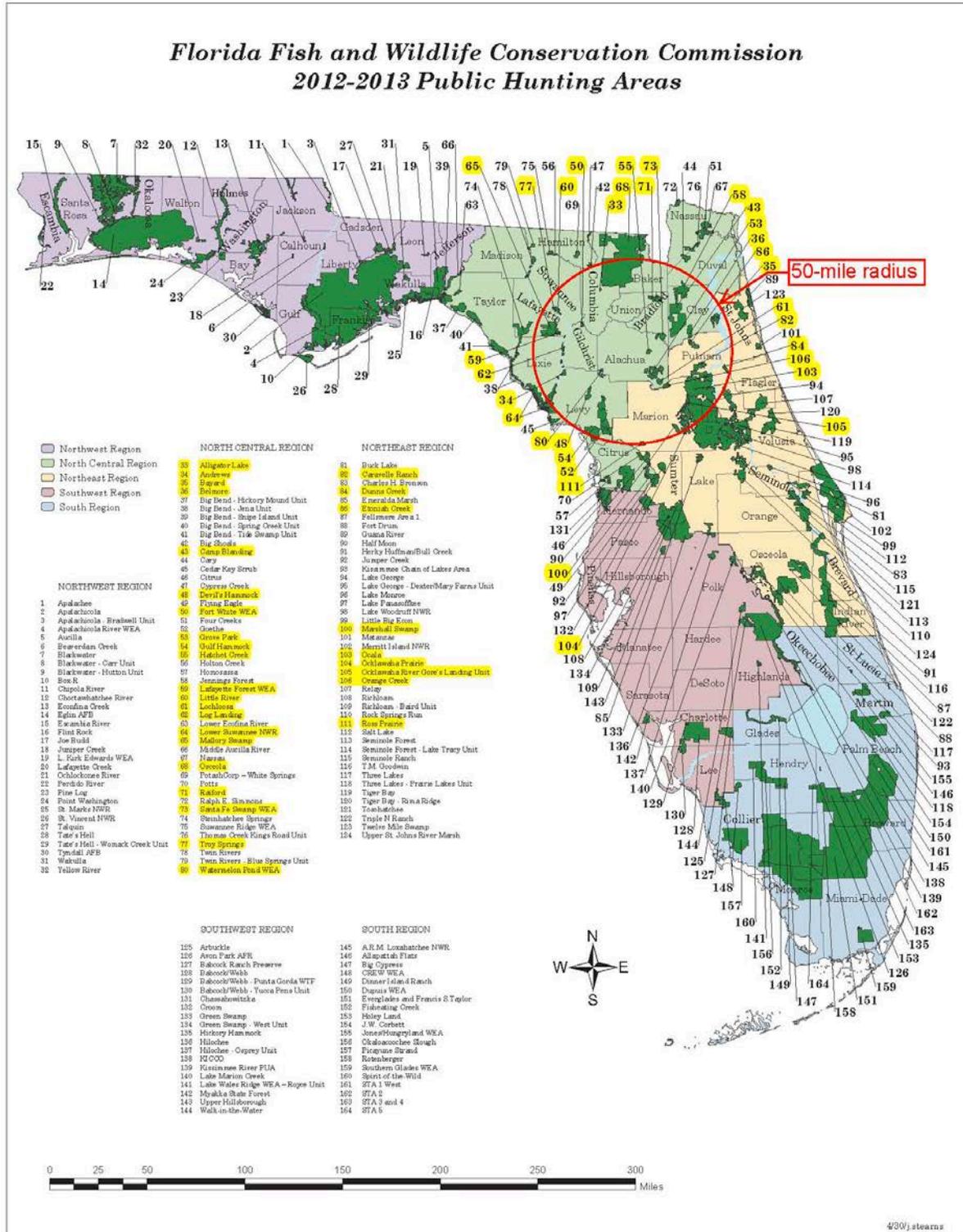
Species	Zone/ statewide	Season dates	Bag limits
Deer (1)	Zone A	<b>Archery Season (A)</b> July 28 – Aug. 26 Antlered or antlerless deer by bow only	During <b>Archery Season and first phase of Crossbow Season</b> , daily bag limit is: 2 antlered deer 2 antlerless deer <b>or</b> 1 antlered deer and 1 antlerless deer <b>or</b> 2 antlerless deer.
		<b>Crossbow Season (C)</b> July 28 – Aug. 26 Antlered or antlerless deer by crossbow or bow only <b>Aug. 27-31</b> Antlered deer only by crossbow or bow	
	Zone B	<b>Oct. 13 – Nov. 11</b> Antlered or antlerless deer by bow only	During <b>Antlerless Deer Season</b> (Nov. 17-23 in zones A and C; Dec. 26 – Jan. 1 in zones B and D), daily bag limit is: 2 antlered deer <b>or</b> 1 antlered deer and 1 antlerless deer.
		<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 14</b> Antlered or antlerless deer by bow only	
Must have \$5 Deer Permit as well as hunting license to hunt deer.	Zone C	<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 21</b> Antlered or antlerless deer by bow only	During <b>all other seasons (including second phase of Crossbow Season)</b> , daily bag limit is: 2 antlered deer, and antlerless deer may be taken by antlerless deer permit only.  Possession limit: 4 deer
		<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 14</b> Antlered or antlerless deer by crossbow or bow only <b>Oct. 15-19</b> Antlered deer only by crossbow or bow	
	Zone D	<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 21</b> Antlered or antlerless deer by crossbow or bow only <b>Nov. 26-30</b> Antlered deer only by crossbow or bow	<b>Nov. 22-25 and Dec. 8 – Feb. 17</b> Antlered deer entire season; <b>antlerless deer may be taken Dec. 26-Jan. 1</b> by all legal centerfire rifles and pistols, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows and bows
		<b>Dec. 1-7 and Feb. 18-24</b> Antlered deer only by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow	
<b>Fall turkey</b> (gobblers and bearded only) (1)	Zone A	<b>July 28 – Aug. 26</b> by bow only	<b>Fall Turkey Season</b> <b>Oct. 8-14 and Nov. 17 – Jan. 6</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols <b>Dec. 1 – Jan. 27</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols
		<b>Oct. 13 – Nov. 11</b> by bow only	
	Zone B	<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 14</b> by bow only	<b>Nov. 3 – Dec. 30</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols <b>Nov. 22-25 and Dec. 8 – Jan. 13</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols
		<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 21</b> by bow only	
	Zone C	<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 19</b> by crossbow or bow only	<b>Nov. 17-30</b> by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow only <b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 2</b> by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow only <b>Dec. 1-7</b> by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow only
		<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 21</b> by crossbow or bow only	
Zone D (3)	<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 21</b> by bow only	<b>Sept. 1-14</b> by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow only	Season and possession limit: 2 for all fall seasons combined
	<b>July 28 – Aug. 26</b>	<b>Sept. 1-14</b>	

Quail (D)	Zone A	by bow only	by crossbow or bow only	by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow only	by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols	Daily bag limit: 12	
	Zone B	<b>Oct. 13 – Nov. 9</b> by bow only	<b>Oct. 13 – Nov. 9</b> by crossbow or bow only		<b>Nov. 10 – March 3</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols		
	Zone C	<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 14</b> by bow only	<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 19</b> by crossbow or bow only	<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 2</b> by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow only	<b>Nov. 10 – March 3</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols		Possession limit: 24
	Zone D	<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 9</b> by bow only	<b>Oct. 20 – Nov. 9</b> by crossbow or bow only		<b>Nov. 10 – March 3</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols		
Gray squirrel (D)	Zone A	<b>July 28 – Aug. 26</b> by bow only	<b>July 28 – Aug. 31</b> by crossbow or bow only	<b>Sept. 1-14</b> by muzzleloader, crossbow or bow only	<b>Oct. 13 – March 3</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols	Daily bag limit: 12	
	Zone B				<b>Oct. 13 – March 3</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols		
	Zone C	<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 12</b> by bow only	<b>Sept. 15 – Oct. 12</b> by crossbow or bow only		<b>Oct. 13 – March 3</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols		Possession limit: 24
	Zone D				<b>Oct. 13 – March 3</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols		
Spring turkey (gobblers and bearded only) (4)	Zone A	<b>Feb. 23-24</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols	<b>March 2 – April 7</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols		Season and possession limit: 2 for spring season		
		<b>March 9-10</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols	<b>March 16 – April 21</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols				
	Zones B, C, D except Holmes County	<b>March 9-10</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols	<b>March 16-31</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols			Daily bag and season limit: 1	
Rabbit	Statewide	<b>Year-round</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols (D)				Daily bag limit: 12 Possession limit: 24	
Wild hog	Statewide	<b>Year-round</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols. Hunting license not required on private property. Wild hogs also may be trapped but cannot be transported alive without permit from the Florida Dept. of Agriculture at 850-410-0900. (D)				No limits	
Bobcat (D)(F)	Statewide	<b>Dec. 1 – March 1</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns, muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols	Those with a hunting license may possess no more than 1 bobcat and 1 otter pelt between April 1 and Nov. 30, 2013, unless pelt has FWC tag. Also, otter and bobcat pelts may not be taken out of Florida unless tagged. Bobcats may be chased with dogs year-round.			<b>Bobcat:</b> No limits <b>Otter:</b> No limits	
Raccoon, opossum,		<b>Year-round</b> by all legal rifles, shotguns,	Hunting raccoons or opossums at night is allowed, but only .22-caliber rimfire firearms (other than .22-mag-nums) or single-shot .410-gauge shotguns (using shot not larger than size 6) may be used. Firearms may not be				

<b>coyote, beaver, skunk, nutria</b>	Statewide	muzzleloaders, crossbows, bows and pistols (D)(F)	loaded until immediately prior to shooting raccoons or opossums. Hunting raccoons or opossums by displaying or using lights from moving vehicles, vessels or animals is prohibited. It is illegal to transport wild-trapped live raccoons within, into or from the state, except by FWC permit or authorization.	No limits on any species
<b>Deer-dog training</b>	Zone A	<b>Aug. 11-30</b>	Those with a hunting license may train or toughen free-running deer dogs on private property during daylight hours, after first registering (at no cost) the tract of land with the FWC. While training, all deer dogs must have their FWC-issued registration number, along with the owner's name and address on their collars. Copies of the registration must be in the hunter's possession when training deer dogs.	
	Zone B, D	<b>Oct. 27 – Nov. 15</b>		
	Zone C	<b>Sept. 29 – Oct. 18</b>		

- (A) Must have \$5 Archery Season Permit as well as hunting license. It is prohibited to use bows equipped with sights or aiming devices with electronic computational capabilities or light (laser) projection during Archery Season.
- (C) Must have \$5 Crossbow Season Permit as well as hunting license.
- (M) Must have \$5 Muzzleloading Gun Season Permit as well as hunting license. The only muzzleloaders that can be used during Muzzleloading Gun Season are those that take black powder or a non-nitro-cellulose substitute and are fired by wheel lock, flintlock, percussion cap or centerfire primer (including 209 primers). Muzzleloaders using smokeless powder, those that can be loaded from the breach or those with self-contained cartridge ammunition capabilities are not legal during Muzzleloading Gun Season.
- (D) Free-running dogs may be used for hunting but must wear collars listing the owner's name and address. When using dogs to hunt deer on private property, hunters must first register with the FWC (at no cost) the tract of land they have permission to hunt, and all deer dogs must have their FWC-issued registration number on their collars. Copies of the registration also must be in hunter's possession when using dogs to pursue deer.
- (T) Must have Turkey Permit (\$10 for residents, \$125 for nonresidents) as well as hunting license to hunt turkeys.
- (F) Furbearers may be taken with live traps and snares, but must have \$26 Trapping License. Live traps and snares must be checked at least every 24 hours. Using or possessing steel or leg-hold traps where wildlife might be found is prohibited, unless authorized by permit from the FWC executive director. Trapping License also is required to sell hide and meat of furbearing mammals year-round, but otter and bobcat pelts may be sold to licensed fur dealers or agents from Dec. 1 through March 31 only. It is illegal to transport wild-trapped live raccoons within, into or from the state, except by FWC permit or authorization.
- (1) **Antlered deer** – Deer having at least one antler 5 or more inches in length visible above the hairline.  
**Antlerless deer** – Deer (except spotted fawns) that do not have antlers or have antlers less than 5 inches in length. It is illegal to take spotted fawns.
- (2) No antlerless deer may be taken on that portion of the eastern Everglades south of Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41) and east of Everglades National Park; or in Collier County south of I-75 during Antlerless Deer Season.
- (3) In Holmes County, there is no fall harvest of turkeys allowed.
- (4) When hunting spring turkeys on wildlife management areas, only shotguns and muzzleloading shotguns using shot no larger in diameter than No. 2 may be used. Bows and crossbows, where allowed, also may be used. All rifles, pistols, buckshot and slugs are prohibited. This rule does not apply to hunting spring turkeys on private lands.
- (5) Only youths under 16 years old are allowed to harvest a turkey while supervised by an adult 18 years or older. However, adult supervisors with a hunting license and turkey permit are allowed to "call in" the turkey and otherwise participate in the hunt, but they are not permitted to harvest one. Any turkey harvested during the Youth Spring Turkey Hunt counts toward the youth hunter's spring season limit of 2.

Appendix 3. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Wildlife Management Areas Map.5



## Appendix 4. WMA Brochures

2012-  
2013  
Hunting  
Season

# Grove Park

## Wildlife Management Area

Regulations Summary and Area Map  
July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013



A cooperative public wildlife and recreational area

Plum Creek Timber Company  
St. Johns River Water  
Management District

Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission  
MyFWC.com



This brochure is designed to provide the public with information and a summary of regulations pertaining to hunting and other recreational use on the Grove Park Wildlife Management Area. **Regulations that are new or differ substantially from last year are shown in bold print.** Area users should familiarize themselves with all regulations. For exact wording of the wildlife laws and regulations, see the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's wildlife code, on file with the Secretary of State and state libraries. This brochure and the Recreation Use Permit worksheet should provide the information necessary for you to plan your hunting activities. These publications are available from any Commission office, county tax collector and at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

Persons using wildlife management areas are required to have appropriate licenses, permits and stamps. The following persons are exempt from all license and permit requirements (except for quota permits when listed as "no exemptions", recreational use permits, antlerless deer permits and the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp [federal duck stamp]): Florida residents who are 65 years of age or older; residents who possess a Florida Resident Disabled Person Hunting and Fishing Certificate; residents in the U.S. Armed Forces, not stationed in Florida, while home on leave for 30 days or less, upon submission of orders; and children under 16 years of age. Children under 16 years of age are exempt from the federal duck stamp. Anyone born on or after June 1, 1975 and 16 years of age or older must have passed a Commission-approved hunter-safety course prior to being issued a hunting license, except the Hunter Safety Mentoring exemption allows anyone to purchase a hunting license and hunt under the supervision of a licensed hunter, 21 years of age or older, for one year.

Licenses and permits may be purchased from county tax collectors, license agents, at [MyFWC.com/license](http://MyFWC.com/license) or by telephone at 888-486-8356. A no-cost Migratory Bird Permit is available when purchasing a hunting license. Any waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must possess a federal duck stamp; available where hunting licenses are sold, at most post offices or at [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com).

### RECREATIONAL USE PERMIT INFORMATION:

A \$475 recreational use permit is required to hunt on this area; there are no exemptions, except that one dependent child, under 16 years of age, per permittee may hunt under the supervision of the permittee and is exempt from the fee. The number of available recreational use permits will be indicated on the recreational use permit worksheet. Recreational use permits are not transferable.

Permit applications (all application dates are for **2012**): Hunters must submit electronic applications for recreational use permits through TLS. Successful applicants have the option of renewing their permits for up to two additional years. The Recreational Use permit renewal period is **April 15 through May 15**. Please refer to the hunting handbook or [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for dates to apply for remaining permits. A worksheet with a list of available permits may be obtained 1-2 weeks before each application period from FWC offices, tax collectors, license agents and at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

### GENERAL AREA REGULATIONS:

All general laws and regulations relating to wildlife and fish shall apply unless specifically exempted for this area. Hunting or the taking of wildlife or fish on this area shall be allowed only during the open seasons and in accordance with the following regulations:

1. Any person hunting deer or accompanying another person hunting deer shall wear at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent-orange material as an outer garment, above the waistline. These provisions are not required when hunting with a bow and arrow during archery season.
2. Taking of spotted fawn, swimming deer or roasted turkey is prohibited. Species legal to hunt are listed under each season.
3. It is illegal to hunt over bait or place any bait or other food for wildlife on this area.
4. Driving a metal object into any tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven, is prohibited.
5. No person shall cut, damage or remove any natural, man-made or cultural resource without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
6. Taking or attempting to take any game with the aid of live decoys, recorded game calls or sounds, set guns, artificial light, net, trap, snare, drug or poison is prohibited. Recorded calls and sounds can be used to hunt furbearers, wild hog and crows.
7. The wanton and willful waste of wildlife is prohibited.
8. Hunting, fishing or trapping is prohibited on any portion of the area posted as closed to those activities.
9. People, dogs, vehicles and other recreational equipment are prohibited in areas posted as "Closed to Public Access" by FWC administrative action.
10. Taking or herding wildlife from any motorized vehicle, aircraft or boat, which is under power is prohibited until power, and movement from that power, has ceased.
11. Most game may be hunted from ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset (see exceptions for each season).

12. The release of any animal is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
13. The head and evidence of sex may not be removed from the carcass of any deer or turkey on the area.
14. The planting or introduction of any non-native plant is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
15. Wild hog may not be transported alive.
16. Littering is prohibited.
17. Fires are prohibited.
18. A Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Officer may search any camp, vehicle or boat, in accordance with law.
19. Falconers may hunt during the statewide falconry season anytime a management area is open for public access. Falconers are not exempt from the recreational use permit requirement.

**PUBLIC ACCESS AND VEHICLES:**

1. Recreational access is allowed only by individuals possessing a valid Grove Park recreational use permit (except as described in items 2, 3 and 4), except that the spouse and dependent children of a permittee may engage in outdoor recreational activities other than hunting while in the company of the permittee. One minor dependent, under 16 years of age, may hunt with the permittee.
2. All persons are allowed on the designated recreational trails (see map) year round for hiking, bicycling and horseback riding, provided they stay on the trails. A Grove Park recreational use permit is not required.
3. Horses are allowed on established roads only during periods closed to hunting and only by persons with a Grove Park recreational use permit. During hunting periods, horses are allowed only on designated recreation trails identified on the brochure map.
4. Persons without a valid Grove Park recreational use permit may operate vehicles only on Prison Farm, Ivey and Johnson roads and only for the purpose of through travel.
5. Vehicles are prohibited year round in the Camps Canal walk-in area, those lands lying south of CR 346 and in those lands lying north of CR 2082. Vehicles are allowed only on named or numbered roads in the remaining portion of the area.
6. Non-motorized bicycles are allowed, but may be ridden only on named or numbered roads and the designated recreational trails shown on the brochure map.
7. Parked vehicles may not obstruct a road, gate or firelane.
8. No motor vehicle shall be operated on any part of any wildlife management area that has been designated as closed to vehicular traffic. Motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles may only be operated on roads open to other motor vehicles.

**HUNTERS AND CHECK STATIONS:**

Hunting equipment may not be taken onto the WMA until after 8 a.m. the day before the opening of a season and shall be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the end of the season.

**GUNS:**

1. Hunting on or from the rights-of-way of CRs 325, 2082 and 346 is prohibited.
2. Hunting at night with a gun is prohibited.
3. Muzzleloading guns used for taking deer must be .40 caliber or larger, if firing a single bullet, or be 20 gauge or larger if firing two or more balls.
4. Children under the age of 16 hunting with a firearm must be in the presence of a supervising adult.
5. No person shall discharge a firearm or have a loaded firearm in hand while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
6. For hunting non-migratory game, only shotguns, rifles, pistols, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used. Hunting during the spring turkey season with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.

7. For hunting migratory game, only shotguns, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used. Shotguns shall not be larger than 10 gauge and shall be incapable of holding more than three shells in the magazine and chamber combined.
8. Hunting deer with rimfire or non-expanding, full metal jacket (military ball) ammunition is prohibited.
9. Hunting with full automatic or silencer-equipped firearms, centerfire semi-automatic rifles having a magazine capable of holding more than five rounds, explosive or drug-injecting devices and set guns is prohibited.
10. The discharge of a firearm outside of periods open to hunting or in areas closed to hunting is prohibited per s. 790.15 FS.

**DOGS:**

1. Hunting with dogs, except bird dogs, is prohibited.
2. Dogs used for hunting may be taken onto the WMA after 8 a.m. the day before the opening of a season and shall be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the end of the season.
3. No person shall allow any dog to pursue or molest any wildlife during any period in which the taking of wildlife by the use of dogs is prohibited.
4. Dogs on leashes may be used for trailing wounded game.
5. For purposes other than hunting, dogs are allowed, but must be kept under physical restraint at all times.

**CAMPING:** Prohibited.

**BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:**

1. Deer - Daily limit 2, possession limit 4. During archery season, that limit may include any combination of antlered and antlerless deer. During other seasons only antlered deer may be taken.
2. Wild hog - No size or bag limit.
3. Turkey - Daily limit 1, season limit 2, possession limit 2.
4. Gray squirrel, quail and rabbit - Daily limit 12, possession limit 24 for each.
5. Raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk and nutria - No bag limits.
6. Bobcat and otter - Possession limit 1 unless in possession of a Trapping License.
7. Migratory birds - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

**ARCHERY SEASON:**

September 15 through October 14.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit, hunting license, archery permit, deer permit (if hunting deer), wild turkey permit (if hunting wild turkey), migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Any deer (except spotted fawn), wild hog, turkey of either sex, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Archery Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with firearms or crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).

**MUZZLELOADING GUN SEASON:**

October 20 through November 2.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit, hunting license, muzzleloading gun permit, deer permit (if hunting deer) and migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Muzzleloading Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with archery equipment or firearms, other than muzzleloading guns, is

prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).

#### **GENERAL GUN SEASON:**

November 10 through January 6.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit, hunting license, deer permit (if hunting deer), migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season. Bobcat and otter beginning December 1.

Regulations Unique to General Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

#### **TRAPPING SEASON:**

December 1 through January 6.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit and trapping license.

Legal to Trap - Raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria, otter and bobcat.

Regulations Unique to Trapping Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

#### **SMALL GAME SEASON:**

January 7 through March 3.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit, hunting license, migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season. Bobcat and otter through March 1.

Regulations Unique to Small Game Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with centerfire rifles is prohibited.

#### **SPRING TURKEY SEASON:**

Youth Turkey: March 9-10.

Spring Turkey: March 16 through April 21.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit, hunting license and wild turkey permit.

Legal to Hunt - Bearded turkey or gobbler.

Regulations Unique to Spring Turkey Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

1. Legal shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
2. Hunting other animals is prohibited.
3. Hunting with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.
4. During the youth turkey hunt, only youth under 16 years of age may hunt and must be under the supervision and in the presence of an adult not younger than 18 years of age. Adults with required licenses and permits for taking wild turkeys may participate when in the presence of a youth, but may not harvest a wild turkey.

#### **MIGRATORY BIRD SEASONS:**

Rails, common moorhen, mourning dove, white-winged dove, snipe, woodcock and crows may be hunted during seasons established by the Commission for these species that coincide with the archery, muzzleloading gun, general gun or small game seasons. Duck, geese and coot may be taken during seasons established by the Commission for these species.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit, hunting license, migratory bird permit, and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

Regulations Unique to Migratory Bird Seasons - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations and Migratory Bird Regulations shall apply.

1. Hunting duck, geese or coot with lead shot is prohibited.
2. Centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting during established area seasons when one or more migratory birds are legal to hunt.

#### **FISHING AND FROGGING:**

Allowed year round.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Recreational use permit and fishing license (fishing license not required when frogging).

Legal to Take - See Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary.

Regulations Unique to Fishing and Frogging - All General Area Regulations and General Freshwater Fishing Regulations shall apply. Shooting frogs is allowed only during the listed open hunting seasons and only with the legal methods of take during each particular season.

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Information for persons with disabilities can be found at [MyFWC.com/ADA](http://MyFWC.com/ADA).
2. If you have any questions about this material, please call the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 386-758-0525 (TDD 800-955-8771).
3. FWC is not responsible for protection of personal property and will not be liable for theft of or damage to personal property.
4. Please report the location of any sick or extremely skinny deer to the Chronic Wasting Disease hotline, toll free at 866-293-9282.

#### **COOPERATION REQUESTED:**

*If you see law violators or suspicious activities, contact your nearest Commission regional office or call 888-404-FWCC. You may qualify for a cash reward from the Wildlife Alert Reward Association.*

*The U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: The Office for Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. The project described in this publication is part of a program funded by federal dollars under the Wildlife Restoration Act. Federal funds pay 20 percent of the cost of the program.*



**When you spot law violators or suspicious activities,  
contact your nearest Commission regional office or  
call**

**1-888-404-FWCC**

**You may qualify for a cash reward from the  
Wildlife Alert Reward Association.**

# GROVE PARK

## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

16,437 acres  
Alachua County

Gainesville 11 miles

Grove Park

20

Gainesville - Hawthorne Trail

Hawthorne

2082

Gainesville - Hawthorne Trail

Prison Farm Road

Fish Camp Road

Ivey Road

Bee Tree Road

Johnson Road

Barrel Junct. Road

Ocala 35 miles

301

234

Camps Canal

Soyx River

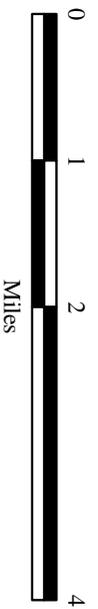
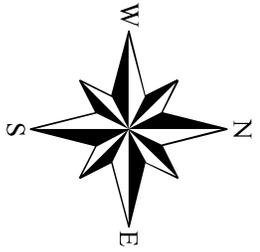
346

225

325

325

Cross Creek



**Legend**

- Management Area
- Private Property
- Walk-in Area
- Parking Area
- Town
- Designated Recreational Trail
- Paved Road
- Improved Road
- Unimproved Road
- Creek

2012-  
2013  
Hunting  
Season

# Hatchet Creek

## Wildlife Management Area

Regulations Summary and Area Map  
July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013



A cooperative public wildlife and recreational area

St. Johns River Water  
Management District

Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com



This brochure is designed to provide the public with information and a summary of regulations pertaining to hunting and other recreational use on the Hatchet Creek Wildlife Management Area. **Regulations that are new or differ substantially from last year are shown in bold print.** Area users should familiarize themselves with all regulations. For exact wording of the wildlife laws and regulations, see the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's wildlife code, on file with the Secretary of State and state libraries. This brochure, the Florida Hunting Regulations handbook, and quota permit worksheets should provide the information necessary for you to plan your hunting activities. These publications are available from any Commission office, county tax collector and at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

Persons using wildlife management areas are required to have appropriate licenses, permits and stamps. The following persons are exempt from all license and permit requirements (except for quota permits when listed as "no exemptions", recreational use permits, antlerless deer permits and the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp [federal duck stamp]): Florida residents who are 65 years of age or older; residents who possess a Florida Resident Disabled Person Hunting and Fishing Certificate; residents in the U.S. Armed Forces, not stationed in Florida, while home on leave for 30 days or less, upon submission of orders; and children under 16 years of age. Children under 16 years of age are exempt from the federal duck stamp. Anyone born on or after June 1, 1975 and 16 years of age or older must have passed a Commission-approved hunter-safety course prior to being issued a hunting license, except the Hunter Safety Mentoring exemption allows anyone to purchase a hunting license and hunt under the supervision of a licensed hunter, 21 years of age or older, for one year.

Licenses and permits may be purchased from county tax collectors, license agents, at [MyFWC.com/license](http://MyFWC.com/license) or by telephone at 888-486-8356. A no-cost Migratory Bird Permit is available when purchasing a hunting license. Any waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must possess a federal duck stamp; available where hunting licenses are sold, at most post offices or at [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com).

#### QUOTA PERMIT INFORMATION:

Archery - 15, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions) for each of 3 hunts.

Muzzleloading Gun - 15, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions).

Family Hunt - 5, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions).

General Gun - 15, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions) for each of 2 hunts.

Youth Turkey - 5, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions).

Spring Turkey - 5, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions) for each of 3 hunts.

Permit applications: Hunters must submit electronic applications for quota and special-opportunity permits through the Commission's Total Licensing System (TLS). Worksheets listing hunts, application periods, deadlines and

instructions are available at county tax collector's offices, FWC offices or [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com). Quota application periods occur throughout the year beginning April 1; please refer to the hunting handbook or [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for specific dates. Worksheets will be available about 2 weeks prior to each application period.

Guest hunters: For each non-transferable archery, muzzleloading gun, general gun, wild hog, spring turkey and mobility-impaired quota permit issued through the Commission's TLS, only one guest permit may be obtained. Guest permits are not issued for family and youth turkey quota permits. The following persons may be a guest hunter, but are not required to obtain a guest permit: a youth under 16 years of age, a youth supervisor, a mentor license holder or a mentor license supervisor. A quota permit holder (host) may only bring 1 guest hunter at a time. The following persons are not considered to be guest hunters: other quota permit holders, non-hunters and exempt hunters (on areas and during seasons that allow exemptions). The host must share the bag limit with the guest and the host is responsible for violations that exceed the bag limit. The guest and host must enter and exit the area together and must share a street-legal vehicle while hunting on the area. The guest may only hunt while the host is on the area. A person is only eligible for one guest permit per hunt. Guest permits may be obtained from county tax collectors, license agents or at [MyFWC.com/license](http://MyFWC.com/license). Guest permits may be obtained up to and during the last day of the hunt. Refer to the quota hunt worksheets for additional information.

Youth and mentor license holders: A youth hunter (less than 16 years of age) must be supervised by a person at least 18 years of age. A mentor license holder must be supervised by a licensed hunter at least 21 years of age. Unless exempt, only those supervisors with proper licenses and permits may hunt. If the supervisor is hunting during any hunt for which quota permits are issued, at least one person in the party must be in possession of a quota permit. A non-hunting supervisor is allowed to accompany a youth or mentor license holder during any hunt.

Transfer of permits: Quota and guest permits are not transferable. A positive form of identification is required when using a non-transferable permit, except for a youth under 16 years of age. The sale or purchase of any quota permit or guest permit is prohibited.

#### GENERAL AREA REGULATIONS:

All general laws and regulations relating to wildlife or fish shall apply unless specifically exempted for this area. Hunting or the taking of wildlife or fish on this area shall be allowed only during the open seasons and in accordance with the following regulations:

1. Any person taking deer or accompanying another person taking deer shall wear at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent-orange

- material as an outer garment, above the waistline. These provisions are not required when hunting with a bow and arrow during archery season.
- Taking of spotted fawn, swimming deer or roosted turkey is prohibited. Species legal to hunt are listed under each season.
  - It is illegal to hunt over bait or place any bait or other food for wildlife on this area.
  - Driving a metal object into any tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven, is prohibited.
  - No person shall cut, damage or remove any natural, man-made or cultural resource without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
  - Taking or attempting to take any game with the aid of live decoys, recorded game calls or sounds, set guns, artificial light, net, trap, snare, drug or poison is prohibited. Recorded calls and sounds can be used to hunt furbearers, wild hog and crows.
  - The wanton and willful waste of wildlife is prohibited.
  - Hunting, fishing or trapping is prohibited on any portion of the area posted as closed to those activities.
  - People, dogs, vehicles and other recreational equipment are prohibited in areas posted as "Closed to Public Access" by FWC administrative action.
  - Taking or herding wildlife from any motorized vehicle, aircraft or boat, which is under power is prohibited until power, and movement from that power, has ceased.
  - Most game may be hunted from ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset (see exceptions for each season).
  - The release of any animal is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
  - The head and evidence of sex may not be removed from the carcass of any deer or turkey on the area.
  - The planting or introduction of any non-native plant is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
  - Wild hog may not be transported alive.
  - Littering is prohibited.
  - It is unlawful to set fire to any forest, grass or woodlands.
  - A Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Officer may search any camp, vehicle or boat, in accordance with law.
  - Falconers may hunt during the statewide falconry season anytime a management area is open for public access. Falconers are not exempt from quota permits during hunts requiring them.

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS AND VEHICLES:**

- Open to public recreational access year round, except during periods open to hunting when public access is allowed only by individuals participating in the hunt.
- Motorized vehicles are allowed on the area only on hunt days, the day before each hunt and the weekend before the archery and muzzleloading gun seasons and the family hunt.
- Vehicles may be operated only on named roads.
- Airboats, all-terrain vehicles, tracked vehicles and unlicensed and unregistered motorcycles are prohibited.
- Bicycles are allowed only on named roads or designated trails.
- Parked vehicles may not obstruct a road, gate or firelane.
- No motor vehicle shall be operated on any part of any wildlife management area that has been designated as closed to vehicular traffic.

#### **HUNTERS AND CHECK STATIONS:**

- Hunters must enter and exit only at the designated entrance.
- Hunting equipment may not be taken onto the WMA until after 8 a.m. the day before the opening of a season and shall be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the end of the season.

#### **GUNS:**

- Hunting on or from the rights-of-way of Boundary Road is prohibited.
- Hunting at night with a gun is prohibited.
- Muzzleloading guns used for taking deer must be .40 caliber or larger, if firing a single bullet, or be 20 gauge or larger if firing two or more balls.
- Children under the age of 16 hunting with a firearm must be in the presence of a supervising adult.
- No person shall discharge a firearm or have a loaded firearm in hand while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- For hunting non-migratory game, only shotguns, rifles, pistols, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used. Hunting during the spring turkey

season with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.

- For hunting migratory game, only shotguns, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used. Shotguns shall not be larger than 10 gauge and shall be incapable of holding more than three shells in the magazine and chamber combined.
- Hunting deer with rimfire or non-expanding, full metal jacket (military ball) ammunition is prohibited.
- Hunting with full automatic or silencer-equipped firearms, centerfire semi-automatic rifles having a magazine capable of holding more than five rounds, explosive or drug-injecting devices and set guns is prohibited.
- The discharge of a firearm outside of periods open to hunting or in areas closed to hunting is prohibited per s. 790.15 FS.

#### **DOGS:**

- Hunting with dogs is prohibited.
- No person shall allow any dog to pursue or molest any wildlife during any period in which the taking of wildlife by the use of dogs is prohibited.
- Dogs on leashes may be used for trailing wounded game.
- For purposes other than hunting, dogs are allowed, but must be kept under physical restraint at all times.

#### **CAMPING:**

Camping is allowed only by permit from the St. Johns River Water Management District (386-329-4404).

**BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:** During quota hunts, host hunters and guests must share all bag and possession limits.

- Deer - During archery season, 1 antlered or antlerless deer per quota permit. During family hunt, 1 antlered and 1 antlerless deer per quota permit (not per person). During muzzleloading gun and general gun seasons, 1 antlered deer per quota permit.
- Wild hog - No size or bag limit.
- Turkey - Archery season: daily limit 1, season limit 2, possession limit 2. Spring turkey season: 1 per quota permit.
- Gray squirrel, quail and rabbit - Daily limit 12, possession limit 24 for each.
- Raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk and nutria - No bag limits.
- Migratory birds - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

#### **ARCHERY SEASON:**

September 21-23, 28-30 and October 5-7.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit, hunting license, management area permit, archery permit, deer permit (if hunting deer), wild turkey permit (if hunting wild turkey), migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler having 3 or more points (each point 1-inch or more in length), antlerless deer (which includes does and bucks with antlers less than 5 inches in length, but not spotted fawn), wild hog, turkey of either sex, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Archery Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with firearms or crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for taking migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).

#### **MUZZLELOADING GUN SEASON:**

October 20-22.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit, hunting license, management area permit, muzzleloading gun permit, deer permit (if hunting deer) and migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler having 3 or more points (each point 1-inch or more in length), wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Muzzleloading Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with archery equipment or firearms, other than muzzleloading guns, is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for taking

migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).

#### **FAMILY HUNT:**

**November 3-4.**

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit, hunting license, management area permit, deer permit (if hunting deer) and migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler having 3 or more points (each point 1-inch or more in length), antlerless deer (which includes does and bucks with antlers less than 5 inches in length, but not spotted fawn), wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Family Hunt - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

1. One or two youths (under 16 years of age but not younger than 8 years of age), per quota permit, may hunt under the direct supervision of an adult (at least 18 years of age) but the quota permit holder must be present for the youth to hunt.
2. The quota permit holder may hunt, but only in the presence of at least one youth.

#### **GENERAL GUN SEASON:**

**November 9-11 and 23-25.**

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit, hunting license, management area permit, deer permit (if hunting deer), migratory bird permit (if taking migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if taking waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler having 3 or more points (each point 1-inch or more in length), wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to General Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

**TRAPPING:** Prohibited.

#### **SPRING TURKEY SEASON:**

Youth Turkey: March 9-10.

Spring Turkey: March 16-18, 22-24 and 29-31.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit, hunting license, management area permit and wild turkey permit.

Legal to Hunt - Bearded turkey or gobbler.

Regulations Unique to Spring Turkey Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

1. Legal shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
2. Hunting other animals is prohibited.
3. Hunting with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.
4. During the youth turkey hunt, only youth under 16 years of age may hunt and must be under the supervision and in the presence of an adult not younger than 18 years of age. Adults with required licenses and permits for taking wild turkeys may participate when in the presence of a youth, but may not harvest a wild turkey.

#### **MIGRATORY BIRD SEASONS:**

Rails, common moorhen, mourning dove, white-winged dove, snipe, duck, geese, coot, woodcock and crows may be hunted during seasons established by the Commission for these species that coincide with the family hunt or the archery, muzzleloading gun or general gun seasons.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit, hunting license, management area permit, migratory bird permit, and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

Regulations Unique to Migratory Bird Seasons - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations and Migratory Bird Regulations shall apply.

1. Hunting duck, geese and coot with lead shot is prohibited.
2. Centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting during established area seasons when one or more migratory birds are legal to hunt.

#### **FISHING AND FROGGING:**

Allowed year round.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Fishing license (not required when frogging).

Legal to Take - See Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary.

Regulations Unique to Fishing and Frogging - All General Area Regulations and General Freshwater Fishing Regulations shall apply. Shooting frogs is allowed only during the listed open hunting seasons and only with the legal methods of take during each particular season.

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Information for persons with disabilities can be found at [MyFWC.com/ADA](http://MyFWC.com/ADA).
2. If you have any questions about this material, please call the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 386-758-0525 (TDD 800-955-8771).
3. FWC is not responsible for protection of personal property and will not be liable for theft of or damage to personal property.
4. Please report the location of any sick or extremely skinny deer to the Chronic Wasting Disease hotline, toll free at 866-293-9282.

#### **COOPERATION REQUESTED:**

*If you see law violators or suspicious activities, contact your nearest Commission regional office or call 888-404-FWCC. You may qualify for a cash reward from the Wildlife Alert Reward Association.*

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**Order Your Hunting and Fishing License  
by Phone...**

**Use Your Credit Card and Call**

**1-888-HUNT-FLORIDA (486-8356) OR  
1-888-FISH-FLORIDA (347-4356)**

**(There is a vendor fee of \$3.95 per license.)**

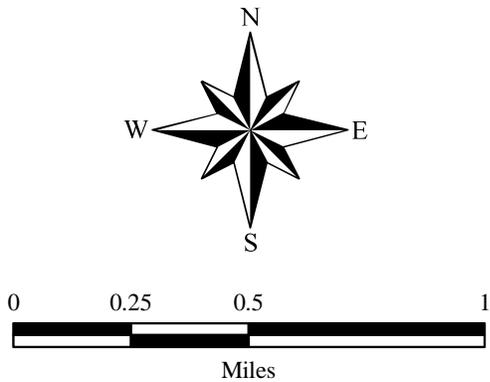
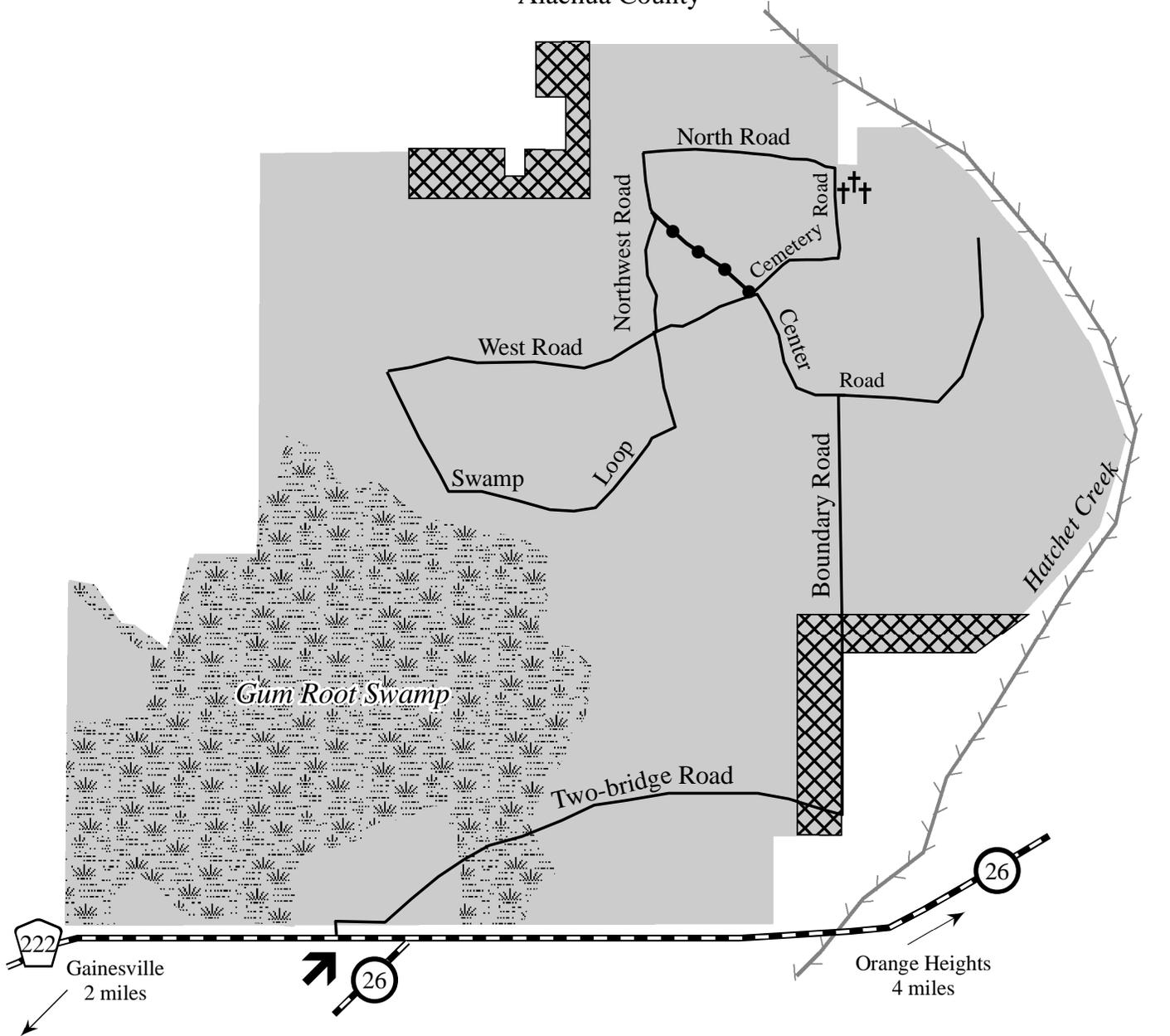
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**1-888-404-FWCC**

**You may qualify for a cash reward from the  
Wildlife Alert Reward Association.**

# HATCHET CREEK WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

2,760 acres  
Alachua County



**Legend**

	Management Area		Cemetery
	Closed to Hunting		Paved Road
	Swamp		Improved Road
	Designated Entrance		Trail - No Vehicles
			Creek

2012-  
2013  
Hunting  
Season

# Lochloosa

## Wildlife Management Area

Regulations Summary and Area Map  
July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013



A cooperative public wildlife and recreational area

St. Johns River Water  
Management District

Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com



This brochure is designed to provide the public with information and a summary of regulations pertaining to hunting and other recreational use on the Lochloosa Wildlife Management Area. **Regulations that are new or differ substantially from last year are shown in bold print.** Area users should familiarize themselves with all regulations. For exact wording of the wildlife laws and regulations, see the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's wildlife code, on file with the Secretary of State and state libraries. This brochure, the Florida Hunting Regulations handbook, and quota permit worksheets should provide the information necessary for you to plan your hunting activities. These publications are available from any Commission office, county tax collector and at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

Persons using wildlife management areas are required to have appropriate licenses, permits and stamps. The following persons are exempt from all license and permit requirements (except for quota permits when listed as "no exemptions", recreational use permits, antlerless deer permits and the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp [federal duck stamp]): Florida residents who are 65 years of age or older; residents who possess a Florida Resident Disabled Person Hunting and Fishing Certificate; residents in the U.S. Armed Forces, not stationed in Florida, while home on leave for 30 days or less, upon submission of orders; and children under 16 years of age. Children under 16 years of age are exempt from the federal duck stamp. Anyone born on or after June 1, 1975 and 16 years of age or older must have passed a Commission-approved hunter-safety course prior to being issued a hunting license, except the Hunter Safety Mentoring exemption allows anyone to purchase a hunting license and hunt under the supervision of a licensed hunter, 21 years of age or older, for one year.

Licenses and permits may be purchased from county tax collectors, license agents, at [MyFWC.com/license](http://MyFWC.com/license) or by telephone at 888-486-8356. A no-cost Migratory Bird Permit is available when purchasing a hunting license. Any waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must possess a federal duck stamp; available where hunting licenses are sold, at most post offices or at [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com).

### QUOTA PERMIT INFORMATION:

**General Gun** - 50, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions) for each of 3 hunts.

Permit applications: Hunters must submit electronic applications for quota and special-opportunity permits through the Commission's Total Licensing System (TLS). Worksheets listing hunts, application periods, deadlines and instructions are available at county tax collector's offices,

FWC offices or [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com). Quota application periods occur throughout the year beginning April 1; please refer to the hunting handbook or [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com) for specific dates. Worksheets will be available about 2 weeks prior to each application period.

Guest hunters: For each non-transferable archery, muzzleloading gun, general gun, wild hog, spring turkey and mobility-impaired quota permit issued through the Commission's TLS, only one guest permit may be obtained. The following persons may be a guest hunter, but are not required to obtain a guest permit: a youth under 16 years of age, a youth supervisor, a mentor license holder or a mentor license supervisor. A quota permit holder (host) may only bring 1 guest hunter at a time. The following persons are not considered to be guest hunters: other quota permit holders, non-hunters and exempt hunters (on areas and during seasons that allow exemptions). The host must share the bag limit with the guest and the host is responsible for violations that exceed the bag limit. The guest and host must enter and exit the area together and must share a street-legal vehicle while hunting on the area. The guest may only hunt while the host is on the area. A person is only eligible for one guest permit per hunt. Guest permits may be obtained from county tax collectors, license agents or at [MyFWC.com/license](http://MyFWC.com/license). Guest permits may be obtained up to and during the last day of the hunt. Refer to the quota hunt worksheets for additional information.

Youth and mentor license holders: A youth hunter (less than 16 years of age) must be supervised by a person at least 18 years of age. A mentor license holder must be supervised by a licensed hunter at least 21 years of age. Unless exempt, only those supervisors with proper licenses and permits may hunt. If the supervisor is hunting during any hunt for which quota permits are issued, at least one person in the party must be in possession of a quota permit. A non-hunting supervisor is allowed to accompany a youth or mentor license holder during any hunt.

Transfer of permits: Quota and guest permits are not transferable. A positive form of identification is required when using a non-transferable permit, except for a youth under 16 years of age. The sale or purchase of any quota permit or guest permit is prohibited.

### GENERAL AREA REGULATIONS:

All general laws and regulations relating to wildlife and fish shall apply unless specifically exempted for this area. Hunting or the taking of wildlife or fish on this area shall be allowed only during the open seasons and in accordance with the following regulations:

1. Any person hunting deer or accompanying another person hunting deer shall wear at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent-

- orange material as an outer garment, above the waistline. These provisions are not required when hunting with a bow and arrow during archery season.
2. Taking of spotted fawn, swimming deer or roasted turkey is prohibited. Species legal to hunt are listed under each season.
  3. It is illegal to hunt over bait or place any bait or other food for wildlife on this area.
  4. Driving a metal object into any tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven, is prohibited.
  5. No person shall cut, damage or remove any natural, man-made or cultural resource without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
  6. Taking or attempting to take any game with the aid of live decoys, recorded game calls or sounds, set guns, artificial light, net, trap, snare, drug or poison is prohibited. Recorded calls and sounds can be used to hunt furbearers, wild hog and crows.
  7. The wanton and willful waste of wildlife is prohibited.
  8. Hunting, fishing or trapping is prohibited on any portion of the area posted as closed to those activities.
  9. People, dogs, vehicles and other recreational equipment are prohibited in areas posted as "Closed to Public Access" by FWC administrative action.
  10. Taking or herding wildlife from any motorized vehicle, aircraft or boat, which is under power is prohibited until power, and movement from that power, has ceased.
  11. Most game may be hunted from ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset (see exceptions for each season).
  12. The release of any animal is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
  13. The head and evidence of sex may not be removed from the carcass of any deer or turkey on the area.
  14. The planting or introduction of any non-native plant is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
  15. Wild hog may not be transported alive.
  16. Littering is prohibited.
  17. Fires are prohibited.
  18. A Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Officer may search any camp, vehicle or boat, in accordance with law.
  19. Falconers may hunt during the statewide falconry season anytime a management area is open for public access. Falconers are not exempt from quota permits during hunts requiring them.

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS AND VEHICLES:**

1. Open to public recreational access year round.
2. Vehicles and bicycles may be used on established roads only.
3. All-terrain vehicles, tracked vehicles and unlicensed and unregistered motorcycles are prohibited.
4. Parked vehicles may not obstruct a road, gate or firelane.
5. No motor vehicle shall be operated on any part of any wildlife management area that has been designated as closed to vehicular traffic.
6. Horses are allowed only during periods closed to hunting and only on established roads.

#### **HUNTERS AND CHECK STATIONS:**

Hunting equipment may not be taken onto the WMA until after 8 a.m. the day before the opening of a season and shall be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the end of the season.

#### **GUNS:**

1. Hunting with archery equipment or firearm on or from the rights-of-way of County Road 325 is prohibited.
2. Hunting at night with a gun is prohibited (see general gun and small game seasons for exceptions).
3. Muzzleloading guns used for taking deer must be .40 caliber or larger, if firing a single bullet, or be 20 gauge or larger if firing two or more balls.

4. Children under the age of 16 hunting with a firearm must be in the presence of a supervising adult.
5. No person shall discharge a firearm or have a loaded firearm in hand while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
6. For hunting non-migratory game, only shotguns, rifles, pistols, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used. Hunting during the spring turkey season with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.
7. For hunting migratory game, only shotguns, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used. Shotguns shall not be larger than 10 gauge and shall be incapable of holding more than three shells in the magazine and chamber combined.
8. Hunting deer with rimfire or non-expanding, full metal jacket (military ball) ammunition is prohibited.
9. Hunting with full automatic or silencer-equipped firearms, centerfire semi-automatic rifles having a magazine capable of holding more than five rounds, explosive or drug-injecting devices and set guns is prohibited.
10. The discharge of a firearm outside of periods open to hunting or in areas closed to hunting is prohibited per s. 790.15 FS.

#### **DOGS:**

1. Hunting deer with dogs is allowed.
2. Hunting wild hog with dogs is prohibited.
3. Dogs used for hunting may be taken onto the WMA after 8 a.m. the day before the opening of a season and shall be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the end of the season.
4. No person shall allow any dog to pursue or molest any wildlife during any period in which the taking of wildlife by the use of dogs is prohibited.
5. Dogs on leashes may be used for trailing wounded game.
6. For purposes other than hunting, dogs are allowed, but must be kept under physical restraint at all times.

#### **CAMPING:** Prohibited.

**BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:** During quota hunts, host hunters and guests must share all bag and possession limits.

1. Deer - Daily limit 2, possession limit 4. During archery season, that limit may include any combination of antlered and antlerless deer, during other seasons only antlered deer may be taken.
2. Wild hog - No bag or size limit.
3. Turkey - Daily limit 1, season limit 2, possession limit 2.
4. Gray squirrel, quail and rabbit - Daily limit 12, possession limit 24 for each.
5. Raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk and nutria - No bag limits.
6. Bobcat and otter - Possession limit 1 unless in possession of a Trapping License.
7. Migratory birds - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

#### **ARCHERY SEASON:**

September 22 through October 21.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, archery permit, deer permit (if hunting deer), wild turkey permit (if hunting wild turkeys), migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Any deer (except spotted fawn), wild hog, turkey of either sex, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Archery Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with firearms or crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).

## **MUZZLELOADING GUN SEASON:**

October 26-28.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, muzzleloading gun permit, deer permit (if hunting deer) and migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Muzzleloading Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with archery equipment or firearms, other than muzzleloading guns, is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).

## **GENERAL GUN SEASON:**

November 3-16, November 17 through December 2 and December 3-30.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit, hunting license, management area permit, deer permit (if hunting deer), migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season. Bobcat and otter beginning December 1.

Regulations Unique to General Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Raccoon or opossum may be hunted at night by the aid of a light and dogs, with .22 rimfire firearms other than .22 magnum, or with a single-shot .410 gauge shotgun using shot no larger than No. 6. The hunting of raccoon or opossum under the provision of this paragraph by display or use of a light from a moving vehicle, boat or animal is prohibited.

## **SMALL GAME SEASON:**

December 31 through March 3.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season. Bobcat and otter through March 1.

Regulations Unique to Small Game Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

1. Hunting with centerfire rifles is prohibited.
2. Raccoon or opossum may be hunted at night by the aid of a light and dogs, with .22 rimfire firearms other than .22 magnum, or with a single-shot .410 gauge shotgun using shot no larger than No. 6. The hunting of raccoon or opossum under the provision of this paragraph by display or use of a light from a moving vehicle, boat or animal is prohibited.

**TRAPPING:** Prohibited.

## **SPRING TURKEY SEASON:**

Youth Turkey: March 9-10.

Spring Turkey: March 16 through April 21.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit and wild turkey permit.

Legal to Hunt - Bearded turkey or gobbler.

Regulations Unique to Spring Turkey Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

1. Legal shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
2. Hunting other animals is prohibited.
3. Hunting with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.
4. During the youth turkey hunt, only youth under 16 years of age may hunt and must be under the supervision and in the presence of an adult not younger than 18 years of age. Adults with required licenses and

permits for taking wild turkeys may participate when in the presence of a youth, but may not harvest a wild turkey.

## **MIGRATORY BIRD SEASONS:**

Rails, common moorhen, mourning dove, white-winged dove, snipe, woodcock and crows may be hunted during seasons established by the Commission for these species that coincide with the archery, muzzleloading gun, general gun or small game seasons. Duck, geese and coot may be hunted during seasons established by the Commission for these species.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit (if hunting during any quota period), hunting license, management area permit, migratory bird permit, and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

Regulations Unique to Migratory Bird Seasons - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations and Migratory Bird Regulations shall apply.

1. Hunting duck, geese and coot with lead shot is prohibited.
2. Centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting during established area seasons when one or more migratory birds are legal to hunt.

## **FISHING AND FROGGING:**

Allowed year round.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Fishing license (not required when frogging).

Legal to Take - See Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary.

Regulations Unique to Fishing and Frogging - All General Area Regulations and General Freshwater Fishing Regulations shall apply. Shooting frogs is allowed only during the listed open hunting seasons and only with the legal methods of take during each particular season.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Information for persons with disabilities can be found at [MyFWC.com/ADA](http://MyFWC.com/ADA).
2. If you have any questions about this material, please call the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 386-758-0525 (TDD 800-955-8771).
3. FWC is not responsible for protection of personal property and will not be liable for theft of or damage to personal property.
4. Please report the location of any sick or extremely skinny deer to the Chronic Wasting Disease hotline, toll free at 866-293-9282.

## **COOPERATION REQUESTED:**

*If you see law violators or suspicious activities, contact your nearest Commission regional office or call 888-404-FWCC. You may qualify for a cash reward from the Wildlife Alert Reward Association.*

*The U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: The Office for Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. The project described in this publication is part of a program funded by federal dollars under the Wildlife Restoration Act. Federal funds pay 20 percent of the cost of the program.*

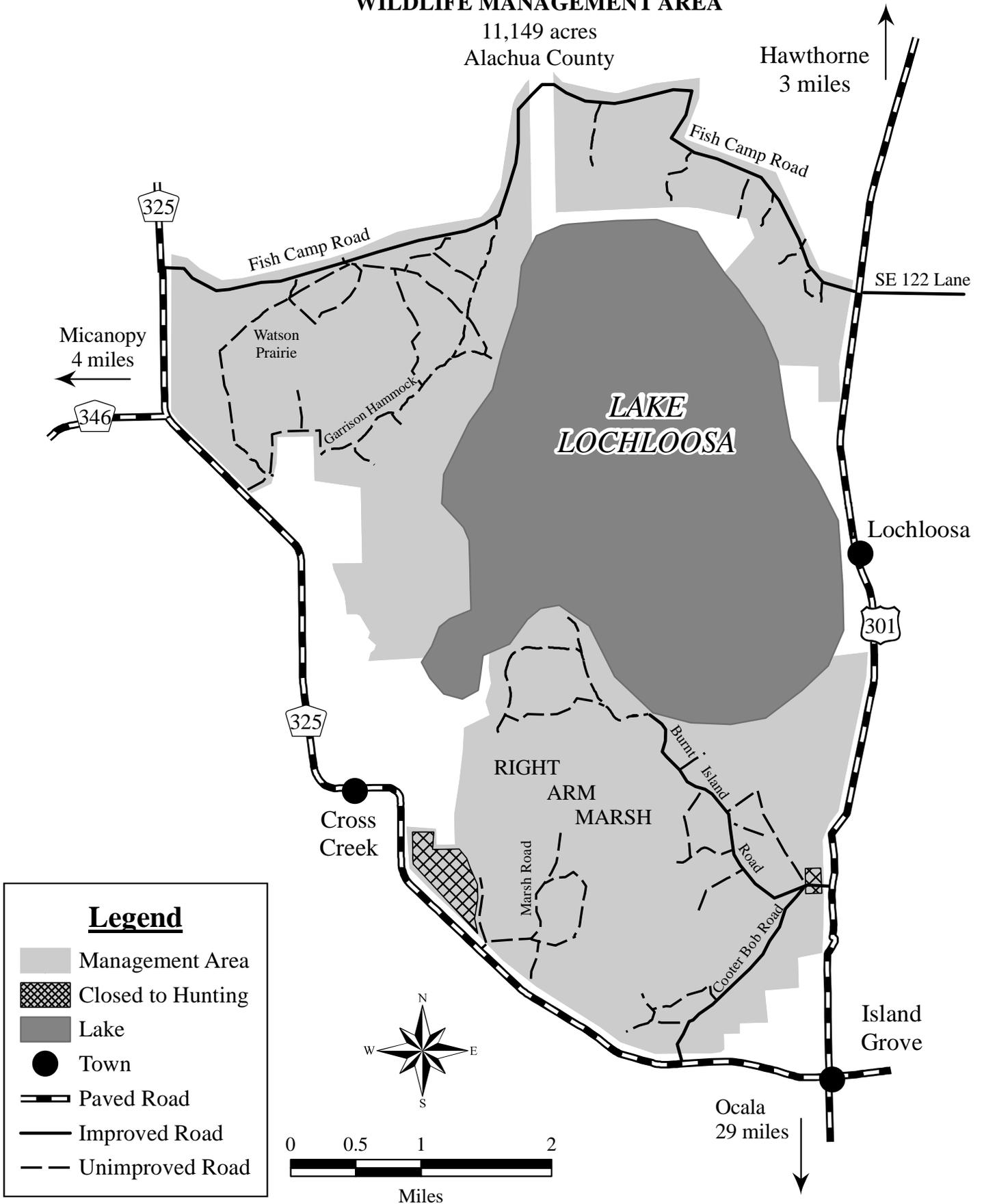
**When you spot law violators or suspicious activities,  
contact your nearest Commission regional office or  
call**

**1-888-404-FWCC**

**You may qualify for a cash reward from the  
Wildlife Alert Reward Association.**

# LOCHLOOSA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

11,149 acres  
Alachua County



2012-  
2013  
Hunting  
Season

# Santa Fe Swamp

Wildlife and Environmental Area

Regulations Summary and Area Map  
July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013



A cooperative public wildlife and recreational area

Suwannee River Water  
Management District

Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com



This brochure is designed to provide the public with information and a summary of regulations pertaining to hunting and other recreational use on the Santa Fe Swamp Wildlife and Environmental Area. **Regulations that are new or differ substantially from last year are shown in bold print.** Area users should familiarize themselves with all regulations. For exact wording of the wildlife laws and regulations, see the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's wildlife code, on file with the Secretary of State and state libraries. This brochure and the Florida Hunting Regulations handbook should provide the information necessary for you to plan your hunting activities. These publications are available from any Commission office, county tax collector and at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

Persons using wildlife and environmental areas are required to have appropriate licenses, permits and stamps. The following persons are exempt from all license and permit requirements (except for quota permits when listed as "no exemptions", recreational use permits, antlerless deer permits and the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp [federal duck stamp]): Florida residents who are 65 years of age or older; residents who possess a Florida Resident Disabled Person Hunting and Fishing Certificate; residents in the U.S. Armed Forces, not stationed in Florida, while home on leave for 30 days or less, upon submission of orders; and children under 16 years of age. Children under 16 years of age are exempt from the federal duck stamp. Anyone born on or after June 1, 1975 and 16 years of age or older must have passed a Commission-approved hunter-safety course prior to being issued a hunting license, except the Hunter Safety Mentoring exemption allows anyone to purchase a hunting license and hunt under the supervision of a licensed hunter, 21 years of age or older, for one year.

Licenses and permits may be purchased from county tax collectors, license agents, at [MyFWC.com/license](http://MyFWC.com/license) or by telephone at 888-486-8356. A no-cost Migratory Bird Permit

is available when purchasing a hunting license. Any waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must possess a federal duck stamp; available where hunting licenses are sold, at most post offices or at [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com).

#### QUOTA PERMIT INFORMATION:

Quota permits are not required for this area.

#### GENERAL AREA REGULATIONS:

All general laws and regulations relating to wildlife and fish shall apply unless specifically exempted for this area. Hunting or the taking of wildlife or fish on this area shall be allowed only during the open seasons and in accordance with the following regulations:

1. Any person hunting deer or accompanying another person hunting deer shall wear at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent-orange material as an outer garment, above the waistline. These provisions are not required when hunting with a bow and arrow during archery season.
2. Taking of spotted fawn, swimming deer or roasted turkey is prohibited. Species legal to hunt are listed under each season.
3. It is illegal to hunt over bait or place any bait or other food for wildlife on this area.
4. Driving a metal object into any tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven, is prohibited.
5. No person shall cut, damage or remove any natural, man-made or cultural resource without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
6. Taking or attempting to take any game with the aid of live decoys, recorded game calls or sounds, set guns, artificial light, net, trap, snare, drug or poison is prohibited. Recorded calls and sounds can be used to hunt wild hog.
7. The wanton and willful waste of wildlife is prohibited.
8. Hunting, fishing or trapping is prohibited on any portion of the area posted as closed to those activities.

9. People, dogs, vehicles and other recreational equipment are prohibited in areas posted as "Closed to Public Access" by FWC administrative action.
10. Taking or herding wildlife from any motorized vehicle, aircraft or boat, which is under power is prohibited until power, and movement from that power, has ceased.
11. Most game may be hunted from ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset (see exceptions for each season).
12. The release of any animal is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
13. The head and evidence of sex may not be removed from the carcass of any deer or turkey on the area.
14. The planting or introduction of any plant is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
15. Wild hog may not be transported alive.
16. Littering is prohibited.
17. It is unlawful to set fire to any forest, grass or woodlands.
18. A Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Officer may search any camp, vehicle or boat, in accordance with law.
19. **Falconers may hunt during the statewide falconry season anytime a management area is open for public access.**

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS AND VEHICLES:**

1. Open to public recreational access year round from 1½ hours before sunrise until 1½ hours after sunset.
2. Vehicles are prohibited except in designated parking areas.
3. **Persons must enter and exit the area only at designated entrances** or via Little Santa Fe Lake.
4. Parked vehicles may not obstruct a road, gate or firelane.
5. No motor vehicle shall be operated on any part of any wildlife management area that has been designated as closed to vehicular traffic.

#### **HUNTERS AND CHECK STATIONS:**

Hunting equipment may not be taken onto the area until after 8 a.m. the day before the opening of a season and shall be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the end of the season.

#### **GUNS:**

1. Only bows and muzzleloading guns may be used for hunting.
2. Hunting at night with a gun is prohibited.
3. Muzzleloading guns used for taking deer must be .40 caliber or larger, if firing a single bullet, or be 20 gauge or larger if firing two or more balls.
4. Children under the age of 16 hunting with a firearm must be in the presence of a supervising adult.
5. No person shall discharge a firearm or have a loaded firearm in hand while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
6. For hunting non-migratory game, only muzzleloading guns, bows or **falconry** may be used. Hunting during the spring turkey season with firearms other than muzzleloading rifles or muzzleloading shotguns is prohibited. Hunting during the

spring turkey season with a muzzleloading shotgun using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.

7. Hunting with full automatic or silencer-equipped firearms, centerfire rifles, explosive or drug-injecting devices and set guns is prohibited.
8. The discharge of a firearm outside of periods open to hunting or in areas closed to hunting is prohibited per s. 790.15 FS.

#### **DOGS:**

1. Hunting with dogs is prohibited.
2. No person shall allow any dog to pursue or molest any wildlife during any period in which the taking of wildlife by the use of dogs is prohibited.
3. Dogs on leashes may be used for trailing wounded game.
4. For purposes other than hunting, dogs are allowed, but must be kept under physical restraint at all times.

#### **CAMPING:** Prohibited.

#### **BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:**

1. Deer - Daily limit 2, possession limit 4. During archery season that limit may include any combination of antlered and antlerless deer, during other seasons only antlered deer may be taken.
2. Wild hog - No size or bag limit.
3. Turkey - Daily limit 1, season limit 2, possession limit 2.
4. Gray squirrel and rabbit - Daily limit 12, possession limit 24 for each.
5. Armadillo – No size or bag limit.

#### **ARCHERY SEASON:**

September 21 through October 19.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, archery permit, deer permit (if hunting deer) and wild turkey permit (if hunting wild turkey).

Legal to Hunt - Any deer (except spotted fawn), wild hog, turkey of either sex, gray squirrel, rabbit and armadillo.

Regulations Unique to Archery Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with firearms or crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) is prohibited.

#### **MUZZLELOADING GUN SEASON:**

October 20-22.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, muzzleloading gun permit and deer permit (if hunting deer).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog, gray squirrel, rabbit and armadillo.

Regulations Unique to Muzzleloading Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with archery equipment or firearms, other than muzzleloading guns, is prohibited.

## **ARCHERY/MUZZLELOADING GUN SEASON:**

November 3 through December 30.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, archery permit (if hunting with archery equipment), muzzleloading gun permit (if hunting with a muzzleloading gun) and deer permit (if hunting deer).

Legal to Hunt - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog, gray squirrel, rabbit and armadillo.

Regulations Unique to Archery/Muzzleloading Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) or firearms, other than muzzleloading guns, is prohibited.

**TRAPPING:** Prohibited.

## **SPRING TURKEY SEASON:**

Spring Turkey: March 16 through April 21.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit and wild turkey permit.

Legal to Hunt - Bearded turkey or gobbler.

Regulations Unique to Spring Turkey Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

1. Legal shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
2. Hunting other animals is prohibited.
3. Hunting with crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) and firearms other than muzzleloading rifles or muzzleloading shotguns is prohibited. Hunting with a muzzleloading shotgun using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.

## **FISHING:**

Allowed year round.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Fishing license.

Legal to Take - See Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary.

Regulations Unique to Fishing - All General Area Regulations and General Freshwater Fishing Regulations shall apply. Frogging is prohibited.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Information for persons with disabilities can be found at [MyFWC.com/ADA](http://MyFWC.com/ADA).
2. If you have any questions about this material, please call the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 386-758-0525 (TDD 800-955-8771).
3. FWC is not responsible for protection of personal property and will not be liable for theft of or damage to personal property.
4. Please report the location of any sick or extremely skinny deer to the Chronic Wasting Disease hotline, toll free at 866-293-9282.

## **SUWANNEE RIVER WMD RULES AND INFORMATION:**

1. The Santa Fe Swamp is critically important to the maintenance of water quantity and quality of the Santa Fe lakes and river. These lands were acquired through a donation from Georgia Pacific Corporation to the Suwannee

River Water Management District (SRWMD), which manages these lands for the conservation and protection of water resources, public recreational use and the restoration of natural communities. These SRWMD lands may be used for recreational purposes that are compatible with these objectives.

2. Public use of SRWMD lands is regulated by Chapter 40B-9, Florida Administrative Code in addition to the FWC rules listed above. For detailed information regarding public use rules and recreational opportunities on SRWMD lands, please visit [mysuwanneeriver.com](http://mysuwanneeriver.com) or contact the Land Management Specialist at 386-362-1001, 800-226-1066 (FL only) or [recreation@srwmd.org](mailto:recreation@srwmd.org).
3. The SRWMD management activities include prescribed burning and timber harvesting during most months of the year. For personal safety reasons, area users should contact the SRWMD for information and locations at 386-362-1001 or 800-226-1066 (FL only). Notices are posted at [mysuwanneeriver.com](http://mysuwanneeriver.com).
4. The possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.

## **COOPERATION REQUESTED:**

*If you see law violators or suspicious activities, contact your nearest Commission regional office or call 888-404-FWCC. You may qualify for a cash reward from the Wildlife Alert Reward Association.*

*The U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: The Office for Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. The project described in this publication is part of a program funded by federal dollars under the Wildlife Restoration Act. Federal funds pay 20 percent of the cost of the program.*



**When you spot law violators or suspicious activities,  
contact your nearest Commission regional office or  
call**

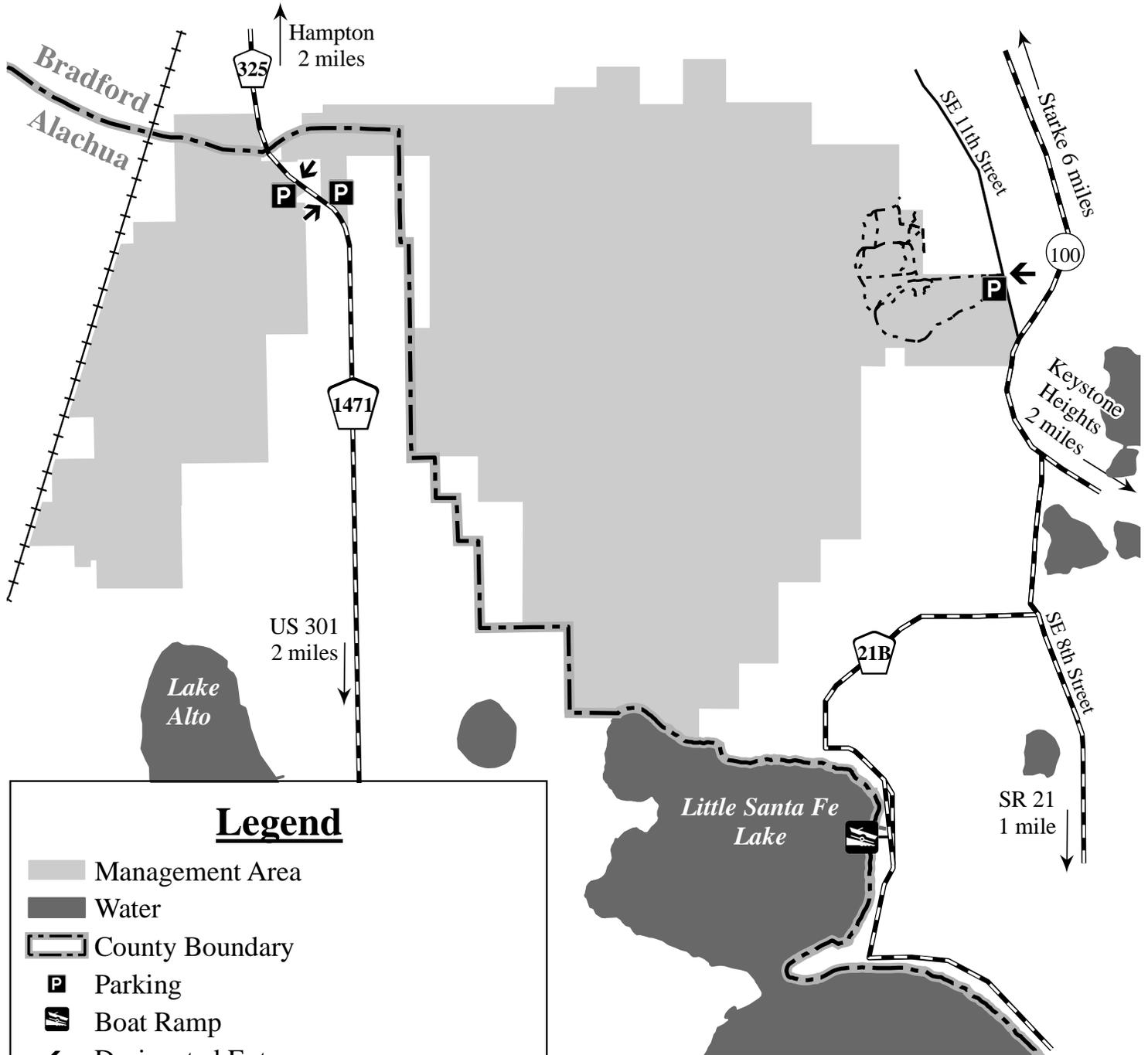
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**You may qualify for a cash reward from the  
Wildlife Alert Reward Association.**

# SANTA FE SWAMP

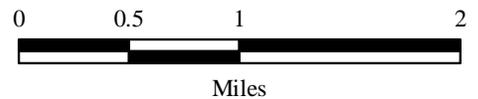
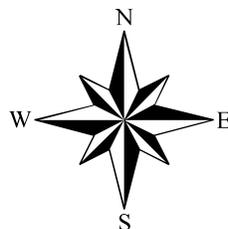
## WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL AREA

7,272 acres  
Alachua and Bradford Counties



### Legend

- Management Area
- Water
- County Boundary
- P Parking
- / Boat Ramp
- Designated Entrance
- Service Road - No Motorized Vehicles
- Improved Road
- Paved Road
- Railroad - Public Access Prohibited



2012-  
2013  
Hunting  
Season

# Watermelon Pond

## Wildlife and Environmental Area

Regulations Summary and Area Map  
July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013



A cooperative public wildlife and recreational area

Florida Forest Service

Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission

MyFWC.com



This brochure is designed to provide the public with information and a summary of regulations pertaining to hunting and other recreational use on the Watermelon Pond Wildlife and Environmental Area. **Regulations that are new or differ substantially from last year are shown in bold print.** Area users should familiarize themselves with all regulations. For exact wording of the wildlife laws and regulations, see the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's wildlife code, on file with the Secretary of State and state libraries. This brochure and the Florida Hunting Regulations handbook should provide the information necessary for you to plan your hunting activities. These publications are available from any Commission office, county tax collector and at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

Persons using wildlife and environmental areas are required to have appropriate licenses, permits and stamps. The following persons are exempt from all license and permit requirements (except for quota permits when listed as "no exemptions", recreational use permits, antlerless deer permits and the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp [federal duck stamp]): Florida residents who are 65 years of age or older; residents who possess a Florida Resident Disabled Person Hunting and Fishing Certificate; residents in the U.S. Armed Forces, not stationed in Florida, while home on leave for 30 days or less, upon submission of orders; and children under 16 years of age. Children under 16 years of age are exempt from the federal duck stamp. Anyone born on or after June 1, 1975 and 16 years of age or older must have passed a Commission-approved hunter-safety course prior to being issued a hunting license, except the Hunter Safety Mentoring exemption allows anyone to purchase a hunting license and hunt under the supervision of a licensed hunter, 21 years of age or older, for one year.

Licenses and permits may be purchased from county tax collectors, license agents, at [MyFWC.com/license](http://MyFWC.com/license) or by telephone at 888-486-8356. A no-cost Migratory Bird Permit is available when purchasing a hunting license. Any waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must possess a federal duck stamp; available where hunting licenses are sold, at most post offices or at [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com).

#### QUOTA PERMIT INFORMATION:

Quota permits are not required for this area.

#### GENERAL AREA REGULATIONS:

All general laws and regulations relating to wildlife and fish shall apply unless specifically exempted for this area. Hunting or the taking of wildlife or fish on this area shall be allowed only during the open seasons and in accordance with the following regulations:

1. Any person hunting deer or accompanying another person hunting deer shall wear at least 500 square inches of daylight fluorescent-orange material as an outer garment, above the waistline. These provisions are not required when hunting with a bow and arrow during archery season.
2. Taking of spotted fawn, swimming deer or roasted turkey is prohibited. Species legal to take are listed under each season.
3. It is illegal to hunt over bait or place any bait or other food for wildlife on this area.
4. Driving a metal object into any tree, or hunting from a tree into which a metal object has been driven, is prohibited.
5. No person shall cut, damage or remove any natural, man-made or cultural resource without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.

6. Taking or attempting to take any game with the aid of live decoys, recorded game calls or sounds, set guns, artificial light, net, trap, snare, drug or poison is prohibited. Recorded calls and sounds can be used to hunt furbearers, wild hog and crows.
7. The wanton and willful waste of wildlife is prohibited.
8. Hunting, fishing or trapping is prohibited on any portion of the area posted as closed to those activities.
9. People, dogs, vehicles and other recreational equipment are prohibited in areas posted as "Closed to Public Access" by FWC administrative action.
10. Taking or herding wildlife from any motorized vehicle, aircraft or boat, which is under power is prohibited until power, and movement from that power, has ceased.
11. Most game may be hunted from ½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset (see exceptions for each season).
12. The release of any animal is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
13. The head and evidence of sex may not be removed from the carcass of any deer or turkey on the area.
14. The planting or introduction of any plant is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
15. Wild hog may not be transported alive.
16. Littering is prohibited.
17. Fires are prohibited.
18. A Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Officer may search any camp, vehicle or boat, in accordance with law.
19. Falconers may hunt during the statewide falconry season anytime this area is open for public access.

**PUBLIC ACCESS AND VEHICLES:**

1. Open to public recreational access year round from 1½ hours before sunrise until 1½ hours after sunset.
2. Persons must enter and exit the area through a designated entrance.
3. Motorized vehicular access is prohibited, except in designated parking areas.
4. Parked vehicles may not obstruct a road, gate or firelane.
5. Bicycles may be ridden only on named or numbered roads or designated bicycling trails.
6. Horses may be ridden only on roads and designated horse trails.

**HUNTERS AND CHECK STATIONS:**

Hunting equipment may not be taken onto the area until after 8 a.m. the day before the opening of a season and shall be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the end of the season.

**GUNS:**

1. Hunting at night with a gun is prohibited.
2. Children under the age of 16 hunting with a firearm must

be in the presence of a supervising adult.

3. No person shall discharge a firearm or have a loaded firearm in hand while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
4. For hunting non-migratory game, only shotguns, rifles (muzzleloading and rimfire only), pistols, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used.
5. For hunting migratory game, only shotguns, bows, crossbows or falconry may be used. Shotguns shall not be larger than 10 gauge and shall be incapable of holding more than three shells in the magazine and chamber combined.
6. Hunting with full automatic or silencer-equipped firearms, centerfire rifles, explosive or drug-injecting devices and set guns is prohibited.
7. The discharge of a firearm outside of periods open to hunting or in areas closed to hunting is prohibited per s. 790.15 FS.

**DOGS:**

1. Hunting with dogs is prohibited except that bird dogs and waterfowl retrievers are allowed during the small game season.
2. No person shall allow any dog to pursue or molest any wildlife during any period in which the taking of wildlife by the use of dogs is prohibited.
3. Dogs on leashes may be used for trailing wounded game.
4. Possession of dogs is prohibited, except as allowed in the above rules.

**CAMPING:** Prohibited.

**BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS:**

1. Deer - Season limit 1.
2. Wild hog - No size or bag limit.
3. Turkey - Daily limit 1, season limit 2, possession limit 2.
4. Gray squirrel, quail and rabbit - Daily limit 12, possession limit 24 for each.
5. Raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk and nutria - No bag limit.
6. Bobcat and otter - Possession limit 1 unless in possession of a Trapping License.
7. Migratory birds - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

**ARCHERY SEASON:**

October 13-21.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, archery permit, deer permit (if hunting deer), wild turkey permit (if hunting wild turkey) and migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds).

Legal to Hunt - Any deer (except spotted fawn), wild hog, turkey of either sex, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

Regulations Unique to Archery Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with firearms or crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).

**SMALL GAME SEASON:**

November 16-29 and December 14-29.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds) and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - Wild hog, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season. Bobcat and otter beginning December 14.

Regulations Unique to Small Game Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply. Hunting with centerfire rifles is prohibited.

**TRAPPING:** Prohibited.

**MIGRATORY BIRD SEASONS:**

Rails, common moorhen, mourning dove, white-winged dove, snipe, duck, geese, coot, woodcock and crows may be hunted during seasons established by the Commission for these species that coincide with the archery or small game seasons.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, migratory bird permit, and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

Legal to Hunt - See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

Regulations Unique to Migratory Bird Seasons - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations and Migratory Bird Regulations shall apply.

1. Hunting duck, geese and coot with lead shot is prohibited.
2. Centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting during established area seasons when one or more migratory birds are legal to hunt.

**FISHING AND FROGGING:**

Allowed year round.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Fishing license (not required when frogging).

Legal to Take - See Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary.

Regulations Unique to Fishing - All General Area Regulations and General Freshwater Fishing Regulations shall apply. Shooting frogs is allowed only during the listed open hunting seasons and only with the legal methods of take during each particular season.

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Information for persons with disabilities can be found at [MyFWC.com/ADA](http://MyFWC.com/ADA).
2. If you have any questions about this material, please call the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at 386-758-0525 (TDD 800-955-8771).
3. FWC is not responsible for protection of personal property and will not be liable for theft of or damage to personal property.
4. Please report the location of any sick or extremely skinny deer to the Chronic Wasting Disease hotline, toll free at 866-293-9282.

**FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE RULES AND INFORMATION:**

1. The Florida Forest Service requires a daily-use fee at some of their areas. Hunters are exempt from paying these fees during scheduled hunts and scouting days. For information on general recreation and fees, please contact the Florida Forest Service at 352-465-8585.
2. The Florida Forest Service may be conducting forest management activities, including but not limited to logging and prescribed burning, at any time of the year. For current information on activities and areas affected, call the Florida Forest Service at 352-465-8585.

**COOPERATION REQUESTED:**

*If you see law violators or suspicious activities, contact your nearest Commission regional office or call 888-404-FWCC. You may qualify for a cash reward from the Wildlife Alert Reward Association.*

*The U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: The Office for Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. The project described in this publication is part of a program funded by federal dollars under the Wildlife Restoration Act. Federal funds pay 20 percent of the cost of the program.*

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# WATERMELON POND

## WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL AREA

4,231 acres  
Alachua and Levy Counties

