

Big Cypress

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



A cooperative public wildlife and recreational area National Park 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 Big Cypress 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.

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 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.

QUOTA PERMIT INFORMATION:

<u>Muzzleloading Gun</u> (first 9 days) - 200 (Bear Island Unit), no-cost, quota permits. <u>General Gun</u> (first 9 days) - 200 (Bear Island Unit), 500 (Turner River Unit), no-cost, quota permits.

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. Quota application periods occur throughout the year beginning April 1; please refer to the hunting handbook or 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; ATVs may be ridden independently, if allowed 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 only be obtained from license agents or county tax collector's offices. 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. During a hunt that allows exemptions, a non-exempt supervisor of a youth must have a quota permit to hunt. 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.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV) PERMIT:

Vehicle operators must be state licensed (regular or learner's permit) and obtain an ORV operator's permit from the NPS for all vehicles, including airboats, used off-road on the Big Cypress Wildlife Management Area. All ORVs and their operators must be permitted and the vehicles inspected prior to operation in the preserve. The ORV permit is issued for the vehicle, but NPS maintains record of applicant and ownership information for each permitted ORV. Vehicle operators are responsible for knowing NPS regulations that apply to ORV use in the preserve. Please contact the Big Cypress National Preserve ORV Office, 33100 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, FL 34141, 239-695-1205, regarding vehicle use regulations or at nps.gov/bicy/planyourvisit/orv-use.htm. The NPS ORV permit is available at the Oasis Visitor Center.

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:

- 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.
- 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.
- 7. 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 under 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.
- 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. 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.
- Construction of buildings or other structures is prohibited, unless permitted by the National Park Service.
- Cutting or damaging fences used to contain animals (including cattle fences) is a felony of the third degree.
- 22. The collection of plants, rocks, minerals, animal life or other natural objects is allowed only in accordance with written permits obtained in advance from the National Park Service.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND VEHICLES:

- 1. Open to public recreational access year round.
- All vehicles and airboats used off-road on the Big Cypress Wildlife Management Area shall have a National Park Service ORV permit. See NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV) PERMIT section, page 1.
- To access the Bear Island Unit, all persons shall enter and exit the area at the Bear Island check station on the north end of Turner River Road or at the I-75 walk-in only access check station, located north of I-75 in the southeast portion of the Bear Island Unit.
- Vehicle use on Eleven-mile Road or the Florida Trail is prohibited; however, vehicles may cross Eleven-mile Road at marked designated crossing points. Maps are available at the Visitor Center.
- On Jetport Road, only vehicles with pneumatic tires may be operated and parked vehicles are prohibited.
- 6. 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.
- All airboats must be equipped with an orange flag at least 10 inches wide and 12
 inches long and displayed at a minimum height of 10 feet above the bottom of the
 vessel.
- 9. Public access inside any fenced portion of the Jetport property is prohibited.

HUNTERS AND CHECK STATIONS:

- At time of publication the seasons and bag limits for deer on the Stairsteps Unit had not been finalized. For the latest updates, please see the online brochure at MyFWC.com.
- Hunters must check in at a designated check station upon entering the area, retain in their possession a check station pass while hunting and check out at the same check station when exiting the area and shall check all game harvested.
- Hunters using the Bear Island Unit shall enter and exit only at the designated entrance at the north end of Turner River Road or designated entrances along I-75.
 The I-75 entrances are walk-in only and equipped with self-service check stations.
- 4. Deer, wild hog and turkey may be divided or consumed in the field, but each portion shall be identified with the license number of the person who took the game and be readily traceable to the portion of the animal bearing sex identification.
- 5. It is important that game stay intact as much as possible and be brought to the check station as soon as possible. Important biological data are obtained from the following animals and parts: deer (head, heart, kidney, and liver), hog (head) and turkey (wings and tail). If game is processed in the field, the above items should be brought to the check station along with the meat.
- 6. Deer jawbones shall be saved and brought to the check station.
- 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, but see #s 4 and 16 under the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RULES AND INFORMATION section.
- Licensed hunters are allowed to take Conditional Reptiles incidental to lawful hunting activities during established hunting seasons. Conditional reptiles shall not be transported alive from the area. Please report all take of Conditional Reptiles at 866-392-4286 or at MyFWC.com.

GUNS:

- Hunting on or from the rights-of-way of Burns Road; County Roads 839, 841, 837;
 State Roads 84 (I-75) or 94; or U.S. 41 is prohibited.
- In the Deep Lake Unit, only muzzleloading guns, bows or raptors may be used for hunting. Muzzleloading guns may only be used for hunting in the Deep Lake Unit during the small game season.
- 3. 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.
- 8. For hunting migratory game, only shotguns, bows 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 semiautomatic rifles having a magazine capable of holding more than five rounds, explosive or drug-injecting devices and set guns is prohibited.

DOGS:

- 1. Hunting deer or wild hog with dogs is prohibited.
- The possession of dogs is prohibited, except bird dogs or retrievers are allowed for hunting purposes only.
- 3. Dogs are prohibited in the Loop Unit.
- 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. Leashed dogs may not be used for trailing wounded game.

CAMPING:

- Camping is allowed in accordance with the regulations of the National Park Service. See the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RULES AND INFORMATION section for additional camping rules.
- Primitive camping is not limited to designated campsites except in Bear Island Unit and in Zone 4 when the campsite is accessed by airboat.
- Camping on Bear Island Unit is allowed at designated campsites only, only tents, trailers and self-propelled camping vehicles may be used in the Bear Island Campground. Only tents may be used in the Gator Pit and Pink Jeep Trail designated campsites.
- 4. Draining or dumping refuse or waste from any trailer or other vehicle is prohibited.
- Fires are allowed only on designated camping areas or in backcountry campsites and must be completely extinguished prior to the user leaving the campsite.

BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS: During quota hunts, host hunter and guest must share all bag and possession limits.

- Deer Daily limit 1, annual limit 2 (all seasons combined). At time of publication
 the seasons and bag limits for deer on the Stairsteps Unit had not been
 finalized. For the latest updates, please see the online brochure at
 MyFWC.com.
- 2. $\overline{\text{Wild hog Daily limit 1, annual limit 2 (all seasons combined).}}$
- 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 Prohibited.
- 7. Migratory birds See Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet.

ARCHERY SEASON:

September 1-30 (all Units).

November 10 through January 1 (Deep Lake Unit only).

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

<u>Legal to Hunt</u> - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog with shoulder height of 15 inches or more, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

<u>Regulations Unique to Archery Season</u> - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

- Hunting with firearms or crossbows (except by disabled crossbow) is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for taking migratory birds when one or more species are legal to hunt in all units except Deep Lake Unit (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).
- Duck hunting is prohibited in the Bear Island and Deep Lake Units during the special September season.
- 3. At time of publication the seasons and bag limits for deer on the Stairsteps Unit had not been finalized. For the latest updates, please see the online brochure at MyFWC.com.

MUZZLELOADING GUN SEASON:

October 6-21 (except Deep Lake Unit).

<u>Permit, Stamp and License Requirements</u> - Quota permit (if hunting Bear Island Unit Oct. 6-14), check station pass, hunting license, management area permit, muzzleloading gun permit, deer permit (if hunting deer), and migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds).

<u>Legal to Hunt</u> - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog with shoulder height of 15 inches or more, gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

<u>Regulations Unique to Muzzleloading Gun Season</u> - 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 in all units except Deep Lake Unit (see Migratory Bird section and the current Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations pamphlet).
- At time of publication the seasons and bag limits for deer on the Stairsteps Unit had not been finalized. For the latest updates, please see the online brochure at MyFWC.com.

GENERAL GUN SEASON:

November 10 through January 1 (except Deep Lake Unit).

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit (if hunting Nov. 10-18 in the Bear Island or Turner River Units), check station pass, 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).

<u>Legal to Hunt</u> - Deer with at least one antler 5 inches or more in length, wild hog with a shoulder height of 15 inches or more, 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. At time of publication the seasons and bag limits for deer on the Stairsteps Unit had not been finalized. For the latest updates, please see the online brochure at MyFWC.com.

SMALL GAME SEASON:

January 2 through February 1.

<u>Permit, Stamp and License Requirements</u> - Check station pass, hunting license, management area permit, migratory bird permit (if hunting migratory birds), and state waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp (if hunting waterfowl).

<u>Legal to Hunt</u> - Gray squirrel, quail, rabbit, raccoon, opossum, armadillo, beaver, coyote, skunk, nutria and migratory birds in season.

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

1. In the Deep Lake Unit, only muzzleloading guns, bows or raptors may be used.

2. Hunting with centerfire rifles is prohibited.

TRAPPING: Prohibited.

SPRING TURKEY SEASON:

March 2 through April 7.

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements – Check station pass, hunting license, management area permit and wild turkey permit.

<u>Legal to Hunt</u> - Bearded turkey or gobbler.

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

- 1. In the Deep Lake Unit, only muzzleloading guns, bows or raptors may be used.
- Legal shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
- Hunting other animals is prohibited.
- Hunting with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.

MIGRATORY BIRD SEASONS:

Duck may be hunted during the special September season in all units except Bear Island and Deep Lake units. Rail, common moorhen, mourning dove, white-winged dove, snipe, duck, geese, coot, woodcock and crow 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.

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

<u>Legal to Hunt</u> - 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 with bird dogs or waterfowl retrievers is allowed except in the Loop Unit.
- 2. Hunting duck, geese and coot with lead shot is prohibited.
- Centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting during established area seasons when one or more migratory birds are legal to hunt, except in the Deep Lake Unit.

FISHING AND FROGGING:

Allowed year round.

<u>Permit, Stamp and License Requirements</u> - Fishing license (not required when frogging). <u>Legal to Take</u> - See Florida Freshwater Fishing Regulations Summary.

Regulations Unique to Fishing and Frogging - All General Area Regulations and General Freshwater Fishing Regulations shall apply. Frogs may be taken by gig only. See #s 13, 14 and 15 in the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RULES AND INFORMATION section.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- 1. Information for persons with disabilities can be found at MyFWC.com/ADA
- If you have any questions about this material, please call the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission South Region Office at 561-625-5122 (TDD 800-955-8771)
- FWC is not responsible for protection of personal property and will not be liable for theft of or damage to personal property.
- Please report the location of any sick or extremely skinny deer to the Chronic Wasting Disease hotline, toll free at 866-293-9282.
- Small tracts of private property are located within the boundary of the wildlife management area. These lands may be posted against trespass and should not be considered to be part of the wildlife management area.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RULES AND INFORMATION:

This area is a national preserve and Big Cypress National Preserve regulations shall apply. For further information, contact the Big Cypress National Preserve, 33100 Tamiami Trail East, Ochopee, Florida 34141, 239-695-1205 or www.nps.gov/bicy/.

- Time limits apply to camping. Please contact Big Cypress NP for current camping regulations and limitations on the maximum number of days an individual may camp.
- Backcountry camping in the Bear Island Unit is allowed only at designated campsites: Gator Pit and Pink Jeep Trail sites.
- 3. Backcountry camping in Zone 4 is allowed as follows: Airboat users must camp in designated campsites only. Those gaining access by foot or non-motorized vessels may camp anywhere as long as the campsite is at least ½ mile from Loop Road and ¼ mile from any designated campsite or airboat trail.
- 4. Except for Zone 4, during archery, muzzleloading gun, general gun and spring turkey hunting seasons, an individual may camp or leave camping gear unattended for the length of the season in backcountry areas and the designated campsites in Bear Island, Gator Pit and Pink Jeep Trail, provided such equipment / camps are marked with the owner's name, address and telephone number. Sites / equipment may be occupied after 8 a.m. one day before the opening of the season and must be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the close of that season.
- Dead wood lying on the ground may be collected as fuel for campfires within the preserve. This wood cannot be removed from the Preserve.
- Primitive campsites must be located at least ½ mile from and out of sight of designated state or county roads.
- 7. All backcountry users are required to a have a backcountry use permit (free).
- Consumption of alcohol or possession of an open container of alcohol in or on a motor vehicle, including off-road vehicles and airboats, is prohibited.
- 9. All private property owners in the preserve are required to obtain a burn permit in advance from the Florida Division of Forestry by calling 239-690-3502 between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Call Big Cypress Dispatch at 800-788-0511 on the day of the burn to avoid false reports of fire caused by others reporting your smoke.
- 10. The preserve is closed to the viewing of wildlife with an artificial light, except that artificial lights may be used during frogging activities.
- 11. It is prohibited to destroy, injure, deface, remove, dig or disturb from their natural state living or dead wildlife, fish, plants, non-fossilized and fossilized paleontological specimens, cultural or archaeological resources or the parts of each thereof.
- The taking, feeding or intentional disturbance of wildlife (including snakes and other reptiles) is prohibited except as authorized by specific hunting regulations.
- Frogging regulations: 1) Commercial frogging is prohibited; 2) frogs may be taken by gig only; 3) the daily bag limit is one five-gallon bucket per vessel or individual; and 4) the possession limit is 18 lbs of dressed frog legs. Recreational frogging for personal use is allowed
- 14. Fishing in freshwater must be by hook and line.
- 15. Fishing is prohibited in the canal on the north side of U.S. Highway 41 in front of the Oasis Visitor Center for a distance of 200 yards east and west from a midpoint located directly opposite of the front door of the building and the Turner River Canal from the bridge on U.S. Highway 41 to 1/10 of a mile North.
- 16. During archery, muzzleloading, general gun and spring turkey seasons an individual may leave treestands or similar devices unattended for the length of the specific season provided such equipment is marked with the owner's name, address and telephone number. Individuals may bring this equipment into the preserve after 8 a.m. one day before the opening of the specific season and must be removed by 6 p.m. one day after the close of that season.
- 17. Off-road vehicle use is prohibited between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.

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.

BIG CYPRESS

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

711,848 acres

