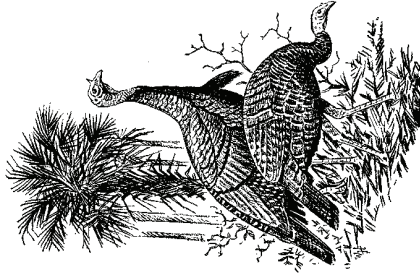


2011-  
2012  
Hunting  
Season

# Choctawhatchee River Wildlife Management Area

Regulations Summary and Area Map  
July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012



A cooperative public wildlife and recreational area

Northwest Florida 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 Choctawhatchee River 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 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 1-888-486-8356. 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 [duckstamp.com](http://duckstamp.com).

#### QUOTA PERMIT INFORMATION:

**Youth Turkey (spring turkey quota area only) - 5, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions).**

**Spring Turkey (spring turkey quota area only) - 10, no-cost, quota permits (no exemptions) for each of 2 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 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 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 (not including special-opportunity) 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 (including special-opportunity).

Transfer of permits: Quota and guest permits are not transferable. Except for youth under 16 years of age, a positive form of identification is required when using a non-transferable permit. 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 roosted 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. 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. Falconers are not exempt from quota permits during hunts requiring them.
20. The possession or consumption of intoxicating beverages is prohibited in the Holmes Creek Unit.

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

1. Open to public access year round.
2. Vehicles may be operated only on named or numbered roads.
3. Parked vehicles may not obstruct a road, gate or firelane.
4. No motor vehicle shall be operated on any part of any wildlife management area that has been designated as closed to vehicular traffic.
5. The use of all-terrain vehicles is prohibited.

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

1. Hunting equipment and dogs 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.
2. In the spring turkey quota area (see map), turkey may only be hunted during spring turkey season and only by those individuals authorized to participate in the hunt. The spring turkey quota area is located north of the pipeline right-of-way located up river (north) of Cedar Log Landing (Walton County) and Billy Lee Landing (Washington County).
3. During the spring turkey season in the spring turkey quota area only, hunters shall check in and out at the check station located at the main area entrance on the west side of Highway 179 (approximately 6.6 miles north of U.S. 90) when entering and exiting the area and shall check all turkey taken.

#### **GUNS:**

1. All firearms shall be securely encased and in a vehicle, vessel, camper or tent, during periods when they are not a legal method of take. Persons in possession of a valid Concealed Weapon or Firearm License may carry concealed handguns.
2. Target practice is prohibited.
3. Hunting with a gun and light is prohibited.
4. 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.
5. Children under the age of 16 may not be in possession of a firearm unless in the presence of a supervising adult.
6. No person shall have a gun under control while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
7. 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, 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.
9. Firearms using rimfire or non-expanding, full metal jacket (military ball) ammunition are prohibited for taking deer.
10. Fully 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 are prohibited.

#### **DOGS:**

1. Hunting with dogs, other than bird dogs or retrievers, is prohibited in the still hunt areas (see map).
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:**

Camping is allowed throughout the area (except where posted as no camping), but for no more than 14 consecutive days at a time. Camping is limited to tents, trailers or self-propelled camping vehicles. Kitchen stoves, refrigerators and freezers are prohibited, unless contained in mobile campers. Lumber, sheet metal or other building materials are prohibited. For additional information, call the Northwest Florida Water Management District at 850-539-5999.

**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.
2. Wild hog - No size or bag limit.
3. Turkey - Daily limit 1, season limit 2, possession limit 2. Only 1 gobbler or bearded turkey per quota permit in the spring turkey quota area.
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:**

**October 22 through November 20.**

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - 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 - Any deer (except spotted fawn), wild hog, turkey of either sex (except no turkey may be taken in the spring turkey quota area), 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.

1. Hunting with firearms or crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting during the small game season and 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).
2. Turkey may not be hunted in the spring turkey quota area.
3. Hunting deer and wild hog with dogs is prohibited.

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

**November 12 through March 4.**

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 December 1 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, except during general gun season.
2. Hunting with dogs, other than bird dogs or retrievers, is prohibited in the still hunt areas.

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

**November 24-27 and December 10 through February 1** (except Holmes Creek Unit and East River Island).

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - 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.

## **MUZZLELOADING GUN SEASON:**

### **December 3-5.**

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management area permit, muzzleloading gun 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, bobcat, otter and migratory birds in season.

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

1. Hunting with archery equipment or firearms, other than muzzleloading guns, is prohibited, except that centerfire shotguns are allowed for hunting during the small game season and 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).
2. Hunting deer and wild hog with dogs is prohibited.

## **TRAPPING SEASON:**

December 1 through March 1 (still hunt areas).

February 2 through March 1 (dog hunt areas).

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Trapping license and management area permit.

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

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

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

**February 2-12** (except Holmes Creek and East River Island).

**November 24-27, December 10 through February 12** (Holmes Creek and East River Island).

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Hunting license, management permit, archery permit (when hunting with archery equipment) or muzzleloading gun permit (when hunting with a muzzleloading gun), 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 Archery/Muzzleloading Gun Season - In addition to these regulations, all General Area Regulations shall apply.

1. Hunting with crossbows (except by disabled crossbow permit) or firearms (except 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) and centerfire shotguns and rimfire rifles are allowed for hunting small game.
2. Hunting deer and wild hog with dogs is prohibited.

## **SPRING TURKEY SEASON:**

**Youth Turkey: March 10-11.**

**Spring Turkey: March 17 through April 22** (except in the spring turkey quota area).

**March 17-19 and March 30 through April 1** (spring turkey quota area).

Permit, Stamp and License Requirements - Quota permit (if hunting in the spring turkey quota area), 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. In the spring turkey quota area, hunters shall check in and out daily at the check station located at the main area entrance on the west side of Highway 179 (approximately 6.6 miles north of Highway 90) when entering and exiting the area and shall check all turkey taken.
2. Legal shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.
3. Hunting other animals is prohibited.
4. **Hunting with firearms other than shotguns or using a shot size larger than #2 is prohibited.**
5. **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.

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 take.

## **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 (850) 265-3676 (TDD 800-955-8771).

## **NORTHWEST FLORIDA WMD RULES AND INFORMATION:**

1. This land was acquired by the Northwest Florida Water Management District (District) to protect public water resources. The purpose of the District's land acquisition and management program is to conserve and protect unique and irreplaceable land and water resources, restore areas to their original condition as much as possible and allow controlled multiple recreational and educational uses consistent with this purpose.
2. The District's land management activities for this area may include prescribed burning and timber harvesting during most months of the year. For personal safety reasons, area users should be aware of activities in the area and contact the District's Land Management office at 850-539-5999 with any questions. The District has no responsibility or obligation to identify and/or protect personal property while undertaking its land management activities.
3. Aerial maps of the Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area are available at [nwfwmd/lands/maps/choctawhatchee/choctaw\\_wma.html](http://nwfwmd/lands/maps/choctawhatchee/choctaw_wma.html).

## **COOPERATION REQUESTED:**

*If you see 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.*

*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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