

2009 Statewide Alligator Hunting Permit Information

The FWC is offering a great opportunity to take part in its annual statewide alligator harvest. Since 1988, Florida has offered alligator hunts, which provide a thrilling, hands-on adventure unlike any other outdoor experience.

The alligator hunting season runs from Aug. 15 – Nov. 1, 2009. More than 4,000 alligator harvest permits will be available. Each permit allows the take of two alligators.

Phase I - Applications will be accepted from 10:00 a.m. (all time is Eastern) on June 1 through midnight June 15, 2009; only one application may be submitted per person; permits will be awarded by random drawing; payments of required fees by selected applicants will be accepted from June 18 - June 29; if the selected applicant does not submit the required fees by the deadline, that permit will be offered in Phase II; applicants are limited to one permit.

Phase II - Any permits remaining after Phase I will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis beginning at 10:00 a.m. on July 1 through midnight July 6, 2009; persons that purchased a permit in Phase I may not apply; applicants are limited to one permit.

Phase III - Any permits remaining after Phase II will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis beginning at 10:00 a.m. on July 7, 2009 until permits are gone; anyone can apply; persons that purchased a permit in Phase I or II may apply for additional permits.

All applications must be submitted and fee payments made at any county tax collector's office, license agent (retail outlet that sells hunting and fishing licenses), or online at www.wildlifelicense.com.

There is no cost to apply for a permit, but each person awarded a permit must pay for an alligator trapping license and hide validation tags totaling \$271.50 for residents and \$1,021.50 for nonresidents. The cost for additional permits, if awarded, is \$61.50 regardless of residency. All persons seeking a harvest permit must be at least 18 years of age by August 15, 2009. All sales are final.

No other hunting licenses or permits are required. After payment is made, the permit and tags will be mailed to the applicant within three to four weeks.

Any hunter who takes an alligator must submit an alligator harvest report. The information gathered from these reports helps the FWC monitor population trends and impacts of the annual harvest. Unused alligator tags must be returned to the FWC. Failure to comply with this important requirement may result in denial of future participation and possibly criminal misdemeanor charges and fines.

An alligator trapping agent license also is available for \$51.50, which allows the license holder to assist a trapper in taking alligators.

The FWC offers no-cost, three-hour alligator harvest training and orientation classes during July and August at locations throughout the state. Permit recipients are not required to attend, but first-time participants are strongly encouraged to do so. Permit holders will receive, by mail, a manual that lists the dates and locations. This list will also be online at MyFWC.com/gators.

To learn more details about these exciting alligator hunts, visit MyFWC.com/gators and click on "[Statewide Alligator Hunts](#)."

Questions and Answers about the new Statewide Alligator Harvest Permit Issuance Process

How is the process different from last year?

The Statewide Alligator Hunt permit issuance process is going from first-come, first-served to a random drawing process during the first phase. Phase I of the new process will include a two week period, June 1 - 15, when people can submit an application through all of the same TLS outlets as previous years (Internet, Tax Collector's Offices, and licensing agents). Only one application may be submitted per person, and permits will be awarded by random drawing. Any permits that remain after Phase I will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis, similar to last year.

Why was this change necessary?

Statewide alligator harvest permits were issued on a first-come, first-served basis through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Total Licensing System (TLS) from 2004 through 2008. Significant problems in four out of these five years resulted in many dissatisfied customers. These problems were caused by factors overseen by the contracted vendor that hosts and operates the TLS. FWC requested and received a comprehensive assessment from the vendor about what could be done to make the first-come, first-served permit issuance process work smoothly. After thoroughly reviewing this information, FWC staff believes that similar problems will continue to occur under this issuance process, and that it is in the best interest of its customers that the FWC replace the first-come, first-served process during the first phase with a process that will be more reliable, fair, and user-friendly.

I thought most participants liked the first-come, first-served process?

In a survey of alligator hunting permit holders, most of the respondents indicated to the FWC that they preferred the first-come, first-served process if the system could work consistently and reliably. Since the FWC cannot be assured that the system will be able to always handle the initial volume of applications in a first-come, first-served process, the FWC chose to implement a random drawing process during Phase I for issuing statewide alligator harvest permits as a fairer alternative.

▪ What are the "pro's" with this new process?

- The random drawing process is widely considered fair by most customers and has been accepted as the primary method for issuing nearly every other limited-entry (quota) permits offered by the FWC.
- Persons will not have to take time off from work to apply in Phase I for a permit, as was often the case with the first-come, first-served process. Applications will be accepted for a two-week period, and it does not matter when someone applies during this period.

▪ What are the "con's" with this new process?

- A random drawing process takes longer to administer and will require more steps for participants to be issued a permit.
- Applicants will not know immediately if they have received a permit or for which area and harvest period.

Why didn't the FWC ask for more input before making this change?

In October 2008, the FWC conducted a survey to ask permitted alligator hunters for their opinions on the first-come, first-served permit issuance process. More than 1,200 persons responded. A majority of respondents preferred to stay with the first-come, first-served process, but only if it worked properly. Many other customers have given the FWC unsolicited input for and against the first-come, first-served process. After reviewing this public comment, the FWC decided to make changes believed necessary to make the process fair for everyone. However, after all permits are

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issued for the upcoming 2009 season, the FWC will be seeking input on this new process to ensure that it's customers are satisfied with the changes and will make any necessary improvements.

How do I get a permit under the new system?

- All applications must be submitted at any county tax collector's office, license agent (retail outlet that sells hunting and fishing licenses), or online at www.wildlifelicense.com. A worksheet will be available for downloading to guide persons through the application process. Applications and payments mailed to the FWC will not be accepted.
- **Phase I** - Applications will be accepted from 10:00 a.m. (all times Eastern Daylight) on June 1 through midnight June 15, 2009; only one application may be submitted per person; permits will be awarded by random drawing; applicants can check their award status on the Internet after the drawing is held; payments for selected applicants will be accepted between June 18 - 29; if a selected applicant does not purchase their permit by the deadline, that permit will be offered in Phase II; applicants are limited to one permit.
- **Phase II** - Any permits remaining after Phase I will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis beginning at 10:00 a.m. on July 1 through midnight July 6, 2009; persons that purchased a permit in Phase I may not apply; applicants are limited to one permit.
- **Phase III** - Any permits remaining after Phase II will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis beginning at 10:00 a.m. on July 7, 2009 until permits are gone; anyone can apply; persons that purchased a permit in Phase I or II may apply for additional permits.

How will I know if I am drawn for a permit in Phase I?

Applicants can check the status of their application for Phase I after June 17 by going to MyFWC.com/hunting, then choose the link under "Limited Entry Hunts," and click on "Check Permit Availability and Drawing Results." A direct link to this page will be provided on MyFWC.com/gators. If successful, applicants will need to pay license and tag fees at any license agent, tax collector's office or online at www.wildlifelicense.com by June 29. Licenses and tags will be mailed to customers approximately 3-4 weeks after payment.

Will the first-come, first-served process work during Phases II and III?

The FWC believes that most permits will be sold during Phase I, and there will be significantly less demand for the remaining permits during these phases. Therefore, the TLS system should be able to handle the reduced load.

How do I get more than one permit?

If there are any permits available in Phase III, anyone that received a permit in Phase I or Phase II can apply for additional permits in Phase III.

How much does a permit cost?

There is no cost to apply for a permit, but each person awarded a permit must pay for an alligator trapping license and hide validation tags totaling \$271.50 for residents and \$1,021.50 for nonresidents. The cost for additional permits, if awarded, is \$61.50 regardless of residency. All persons seeking a harvest permit must be at least 18 years of age by August 15, 2009. All sales are final.

Where can I learn more about the new permit issuance process and alligator hunting?

Visit <http://MyFWC.com/gators> on the Internet and click on "Statewide Alligator Hunts."