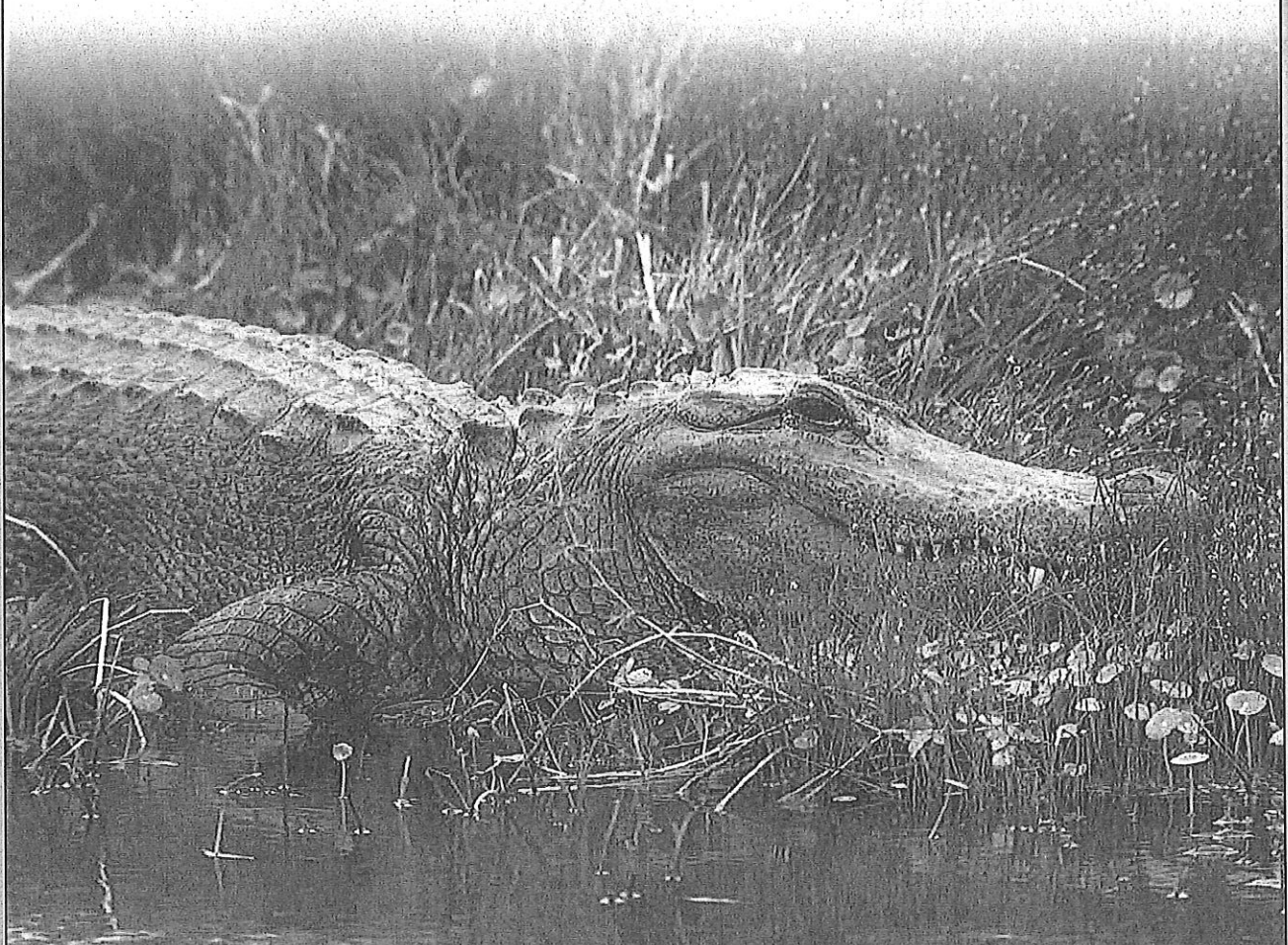


TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

ALLIGATORS IN TEXAS



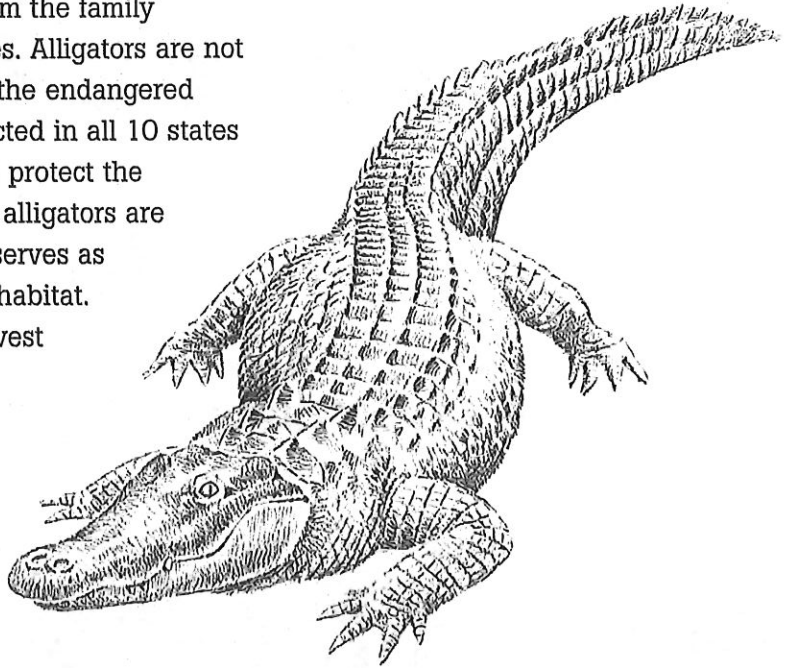
Rules, regulations and general information



2017-2018

A TEXAS NATIVE

The American Alligator is the only species from the family Alligatoridae that is native to the United States. Alligators are not an endangered species. They were taken off the endangered species list in 1978; however, they are protected in all 10 states where they occur. How does harvesting them protect the species? As a sustainable economic resource, alligators are important to regional economies. That value serves as an incentive to protect and manage alligator habitat. Responsible recreational and commercial harvest is a critical component of effective habitat management, which guarantees the future of the alligator and the many other species of animals and plants that share its habitat.



For more information about alligators:
txgator.info@tpwd.texas.gov

This booklet is provided for quick reference to state regulations governing alligators.

The complete regulations can be obtained by calling (800) 792-1112

or by visiting the TPWD website at www.tpwd.texas.gov.

RECREATIONAL REGULATIONS – SPRING ONLY

OPEN SEASON

- In all other counties in Texas, except the 22 core counties listed, Angelina, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Matagorda, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Polk, Refugio, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Trinity, Tyler and Victoria counties the open season is from April 1 through June 30.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

- NO person may possess an untagged alligator hide or undocumented alligator part except as provided by the Parks and Wildlife Code or regulations of the department.
- NO person may hunt an alligator in this state unless that person is in possession of a valid hunting license.
- In non-core counties (except on special properties) alligators may be taken ONLY on private property and ONLY with the consent of the owner of the property.
- On all properties that are not special properties or in core counties, no person may employ more than one taking device at any time to hunt alligators.

BAG LIMITS

- Non-core counties*: One alligator per person per season.

***NOTE:** The core county bag limit applies to any property, regardless of county, for which the department has issued hide tags directly to the landowner. On special properties, the core county bag limit applies.

LAWFUL MEANS

- hook and line (line set)*
- alligator gig*—A lawful gig is a pole or staff equipped with at least one of the following:
 - immovable prongs;
 - two or more spring-loaded grasping arms; or
 - a detachable head.
- lawful archery equipment and barbed arrow*
- hand-held snare with integral locking mechanism*
- lawful firearms (in non-core counties ONLY). Firearms are not lawful on special properties.

***NOTICE:** A line of at least 300-pound test must be securely attached to all taking devices. Unattended hook-bearing lines must be attached to a stationary object capable of maintaining a portion of the line above water when an alligator is caught on the line. A line attached to an arrow, snare, or gig must have a float attached when used to take alligators. The float shall be no less than six inches by six inches by eight inches, or, if the float is spherical, no less than eight inches in diameter.

HOOK AND LINE (LINE SET)

- No person shall set more than one line.
- In non-core counties (except for special properties), line sets shall be secured at one end on private property (with the consent of the owner of the property).
- In all counties, each baited line shall be labeled with a plainly visible, permanent, and legibly marked gear tag that contains:
 - (1) the full name and current address of the person who set the line;
 - (2) the hunting license number of the person who set the line; and
 - (3) a valid hide tag number, if the line is set on a property for which hide tags have been issued.
- In all counties, line sets shall be inspected daily, and alligators shall be killed, tagged or documented, and removed immediately upon discovery.

FIREARMS

- It is lawful to hunt alligators with any legal firearm, including muzzle loading weapons, except in core counties.
- It is unlawful to use rimfire ammunition to hunt alligators.
- It is unlawful to hunt alligators with a fully automatic firearm. Silencers are lawful for the take or dispatch of alligators; however, all federal, state, or local laws regarding the possession or use of silencers continue to apply.

- Alligators may be hunted by means of firearms ONLY on private property (including private waters wholly within private property).
- Alligators MAY NOT be hunted by means of firearms from, on, in, across, or over public water.
- Alligators lawfully caught on a taking device may be dispatched by means of firearms in all counties.

LAWFUL TAKING HOURS

- Lawful hunting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.
- Hook-bearing lines may not be set prior to the general open season and shall be removed no later than sunset of the last day of the open season.
- From sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, only line sets may be used to hunt alligators.
- From sunset to one-half hour before sunrise no person shall set any baited line capable of taking an alligator and no person shall remove alligators from line sets.

TAGGING

- A person who kills an alligator in a non-core county (except for special properties) shall immediately affix a completed Wildlife Resource Document to the alligator, which shall accompany the alligator until the alligator is permanently tagged. Within 72 hours of harvest, the person shall complete an alligator hide tag report (PWD 304A) and mail it, along with the \$21 tag fee (NO CASH—check or money order only), to the department at 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744. The Wildlife Resource Document and PWD 304A can be located in the Outdoor Annual (available wherever licenses are sold), and can also be obtained by visiting the TPWD website at www.tpwd.texas.gov or by calling any regional law enforcement office; the Alligator Program at (409) 736-3625; or (800) 792-1112. The department then will mail a permanent hide tag to the person. The person shall permanently tag the alligator within 10 inches of the tip of the alligator's tail immediately upon receipt the hide tag from the department.

REPORTS

- In non-core counties (except for special properties), a person who takes an alligator shall complete and submit to the department an alligator hide tag report (PWD 304A) within 72 hours of harvest.

SALE

- Alligators taken under a hunting license may be sold only to a person possessing either a valid wholesale alligator dealer permit or a valid alligator farmer permit.

RECREATIONAL REGULATIONS – FALL ONLY

OPEN SEASON

- In Angelina, Brazoria, Calhoun, Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Matagorda, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Polk, Refugio, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Trinity, Tyler and Victoria counties (referred to as 'core' counties), the open season is from September 10 through September 30. This season also applies on any property, regardless of county, for which the department has issued hide tags directly to the landowner (referred to in this publication as special properties).

GENERAL PROVISIONS

- NO person may possess an untagged alligator hide or undocumented alligator part except as provided by the Parks and Wildlife Code or regulations of the department.
- NO person may hunt an alligator in this state unless that person is in possession of a valid hunting license.
- NO person may hunt an alligator in a core county or on a special property unless the person is in physical possession of at least one valid, unused alligator hide tag per taking device employed by the person.

BAG LIMITS

- Core counties*: One alligator per unused hide tag in possession; or
- Non-core counties*: One alligator per person per season.

***NOTE:** The core county bag limit applies to any property, regardless of county, for which the department has issued hide tags directly to the landowner. On special properties, the core county bag limit applies.

LAWFUL MEANS

- hook and line (line set)*
- alligator gig*—A lawful gig is a pole or staff equipped with at least one of the following:
 - immovable prongs;
 - two or more spring-loaded grasping arms; or
 - a detachable head.
- lawful archery equipment and barbed arrow*
- hand-held snare with integral locking mechanism*

***NOTICE:** A line of at least 300-pound test must be securely attached to all taking devices. Unattended hook-bearing lines must be attached to a stationary object capable of maintaining a portion of the line above water when an alligator is caught on the line. A line attached to an arrow, snare, or gig must have a float attached when used to take alligators. The float shall be no less than six inches by six inches by eight inches, or, if the float is spherical, no less than eight inches in diameter.

HOOK AND LINE (LINE SET)

- In core counties and on special properties, no person shall set more than one line per unused hide tag in possession.
- In core counties and on special properties, all line sets shall be secured at one end on the tract of land specified for the hide tags.
- In all counties, each baited line shall be labeled with a plainly visible, permanent, and legibly marked gear tag that contains:
 - (1) the full name and current address of the person who set the line;
 - (2) the hunting license number of the person who set the line; and
 - (3) a valid hide tag number, if the line is set on a property for which hide tags have been issued.
- In all counties, line sets shall be inspected daily, and alligators shall be killed, tagged or documented, and removed immediately upon discovery.

FIREARMS

- It is lawful to hunt alligators with any legal firearm, including muzzle loading weapons, except in core counties.
- It is unlawful to use rimfire ammunition to hunt alligators.
- It is unlawful to hunt alligators with a fully automatic firearm. Silencers are lawful for the take or dispatch of alligators; however, all federal, state, or local laws regarding the possession or use of silencers continue to apply.
- Alligators lawfully caught on a taking device may be dispatched by means of firearms in all counties.

LAWFUL TAKING HOURS

- Lawful hunting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset.
- Hook-bearing lines may not be set prior to the general open season and shall be removed no later than sunset of the last day of the open season.
- From sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, only line sets may be used to hunt alligators.
- From sunset to one-half hour before sunrise no person shall set any baited line capable of taking an alligator and no person shall remove alligators from line sets.

TAGGING

- Alligators taken in core counties and on special properties must be immediately tagged with a hide tag within 10 inches of the tip of the alligator's tail.

REPORTS

- In core counties and on special properties, a person who takes an alligator shall complete an alligator hide tag report (PWD 304) immediately upon harvest. The report shall be submitted to the department within seven days of harvest.
- A person to whom the department has issued more than one hide tag shall file an annual report (PWD 370) accounting for all tags within 10 working days following the close of the open season in the county for which the tags were issued. All unused tags shall be returned with this report.

NOTICE: The department may refuse to issue additional hide tags to any person who does not file the reports as required by this section or does not return unused hide tags as required by this section.

SALE

- Alligators taken under a hunting license may be sold only to a person possessing either a valid wholesale alligator dealer permit or a valid alligator farmer permit.

TAG ISSUANCE TO LANDOWNERS

- Alligator tags may be issued in any county; however, only lands designated as alligator habitat by the department are eligible for tag issuance.
- Landowners or landowners' agents must certify total acreage owned or represented on a form prescribed by the department. Landowners and/or landowners' agents should be prepared to present proof of ownership if questions arise regarding the ownership of any tract of land. Proof of ownership would include a copy of the property tax receipt, deed, etc. A map showing boundaries of the property and GPS coordinates for the property entrance are required in processing your application. The GPS coordinates must be in degrees, minutes and decimal seconds for example (29°58' 08.13"N 93°54' 51.96"W)
- Non-contiguous properties cannot be combined to increase the number of tags issued.
- Multiple landowners may pool their lands for purposes of tag issuance; however, only one of the landowners may act as a landowner's agent for the other property owners.
- Issuance rates for alligator tags will be determined by the department.
- Acreage in a particular habitat must meet or exceed tag quota ratios established by the department in order to qualify for tag issuance.
- Special surveys for areas outside the habitat issuance zones established by the department will be scheduled during the first three weeks of June. Reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis. Landowners must request the survey, and transportation on the property must be provided to perform the survey.
- The department will not issue additional tags for any property determined to be at maximum issuance level. However, the department will review requests for additional tags if the request includes additional biological data to justify additional tag issuance, nuisance complaints to the department that have not been resolved, documented loss of livestock, etc.
- In areas where hide tag issuance rates are difficult to determine such as easements, property transfers, multiple owners of same property, habitat issues and encroachment by humans the Department, reserve the right to not issue for that property until all parties have come to an agreement. Issuance rates will be determined by the department. **If a private or public entity controls the water body then all hide tags MAY be issued to the public or private entity for distribution as they see fit.**
- Applicants who receive a permit every three years was meant to offer a little opportunity to those with a component of land touching water and not a recognition that they have alligator habitat. Since issuance is based on holding at least 300 acres of alligator habitat, this situation would fall under the opportunity issuance scenario. If a person does not own alligator habitat, then they cannot assign agent status to another person for the one in three year issuance rate. For all hide tags issued at a rate of 1 tag per 3 years, landowners must pick up hide tags for their own property.
- Lost or stolen tags will not be replaced. Damaged tags will be replaced upon submission of the damaged or broken tags.
- Landowners or their agents receiving alligator hide tags are responsible for ensuring that all required reports are accurately completed and submitted to the department by the established deadlines.
- All landowners or their agents who wish to receive alligator hide tags for the fall season should make prior arrangements with their biologist to ensure that a site visit (if necessary) has been completed, and that all of the required forms and paperwork have been completed at least 2 weeks prior to tag issuance day.
- If your county is not listed below as an alligator hide tags issuance location or if you intend to pick tags at one of the locations other than that of your biologist, you may use the nearest issuance location however, prior notice should be given.
- Landowners in other counties may inquire about hide tag issuance for the September season; otherwise, they may take advantage of the open season beginning April 1 and extending through June 30. Alligators may not be taken during this season on any property where alligators were taken during the September season.

If you have any questions, contact the Alligator Program at (409) 736-3625, or email us at txgator.info@tpwd.texas.gov

FALL SEASON ALLIGATOR HIDE TAG ISSUANCE LOCATIONS AND ASSOCIATED COUNTIES

Sean Willis
Lufkin Wildlife Field Office
1805 E. Lufkin Avenue
Lufkin, TX 75901
(936) 639-1879
(Angelina, Trinity, Nacogdoches)

Kevin Kriegel
Guadalupe Delta WMA
State Highway 35
(361) 552-6637
(Calhoun, Jackson, Refugio, Victoria)

Lang Alford
Matagorda County Courthouse
2200 7th Street, 4th Floor
Bay City, TX 77414
(979) 798-8746
(Brazoria, Matagorda)

Gary Calkins/Bob Baker
Jasper District Office Complex
1289 CR 098
Jasper, TX 75951
(409) 384-6894
(Jasper, Hardin, Newton, Sabine, San Augustine)

Chris Gregory
462 Castlewood Road
Livingston, TX 77351
(936) 327-8487
(Liberty, Polk, San Jacinto, Tyler)

Jonathan Warner/Andrew Peters
J.D. Murphree WMA
10 Parks and Wildlife Drive
Port Arthur, TX 77640
(409) 736-3625
(Jefferson, Chambers, Orange)

Jonathan Warner/Andrew Peters
Whites Park Community Center
Chambers County
Located on Hwy 61, 1/10 of a mile off IH
10, exit #812 eastbound, and exit #813
westbound.
(409) 736-3625
(Chambers, Galveston, Liberty)

COMMERCIAL REGULATIONS

NOTE: The following regulations govern activities of alligator farmers, wholesale dealers, egg collectors, and control hunters.

§65.352. Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this subchapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. All other words and terms shall have the meanings assigned in Subchapter A of this chapter (relating to the Statewide Hunting and Fishing Proclamation) and in the Parks and Wildlife Code.

- (1) Alligator—For the purposes of this subchapter, alligator means any American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*), living or dead, or any part of an alligator.
- (2) Control hunter—A person authorized by the department to take nuisance alligators.
- (3) Consumer—A person who purchases alligators, alligator parts, or products made from alligators for personal use or consumption and who does not sell, resell, trade, or barter the alligators, alligator parts, or products made from alligators in exchange for anything of value.
- (4) Egg collection—To remove or possess alligator eggs from wild nests.
- (5) Egg collector—A person authorized by the department to collect, possess, or transport alligator eggs.
- (6) Farm—A premises where alligators are bred or raised under department-sanctioned conditions.
- (7) Farmer—A person holding an alligator farming permit.
- (8) Gig—A pole or staff equipped with at least one of the following:
 - (A) immovable prongs;
 - (B) two or more spring-loaded grasping arms; or
 - (C) a detachable head.
- (9) Hatchling alligator—Any alligator less than 12 inches in length.
- (10) Nuisance alligator—An alligator that is depredating or a threat to human health or safety.
- (11) Processed product—Any alligator part (and its resulting products) that has been treated to prevent decomposition and/or packaged for sale. Alligator meat is a processed product only if it has been processed and packaged in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal rules regarding food processing.
- (12) Propagation—The holding of live alligators for production of offspring.
- (13) Retail dealer—A person who operates a place of business (mobile or permanent) for resale of alligators to the consumer only, except as provided in §65.357 of this title (relating to Purchase and Sale of Alligators).
- (14) Wholesale dealer—A person who operates a place of business (mobile or permanent) for the purpose of buying nonliving alligators for resale, canning, preserving, processing, or handling for shipment or sale.
- (15) Skull length—the distance from the anterior edge of the premaxilla to the posterior edge of the parietal, measured along the mid-line of the skull.

§65.353. General Provisions.

(a) Except as provided in this subchapter or Subchapter A of this chapter, no person may possess an untagged alligator hide or undocumented alligator part.

(b) No person may possess a live alligator without possessing a valid alligator farming permit, except:

(1) as provided in this subchapter or by the Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 43, Subchapter C; or

(2) a common carrier or person transporting legally documented live alligators for purposes of shipping the alligators to a final destination that is outside this state.

(c) Any person transporting live alligators shall take reasonable precautions to maximize the humane treatment of and minimize stress to the alligators being transported.

§65.357. Purchase and Sale of Alligators.

(a) Sale by control hunter.

(1) A control hunter may possess a dead alligator indefinitely, but may sell the alligator only to a farmer or wholesale dealer. While in possession of a dead alligator taken under a control contract, a control hunter shall maintain possession of the contract under which the alligator was taken and a copy of the Nuisance Alligator Hide Tag Report (PWD 305). The control hunter shall present the contract upon request of a department employee acting within the scope of official duties.

(2) A control hunter may temporarily possess a live nuisance alligator, but must sell the alligator to a licensed alligator farmer within 14 days from the time the alligator is first captured.

(b) Purchase and sale by retail dealer.

(1) A retail dealer may purchase an alligator only from a valid wholesale dealer or lawful out-of-state source.

(2) Except as provided in this subchapter, no person may purchase an alligator from a wholesale dealer for the purpose of resale without possessing either a valid retail dealer's permit or a valid wholesale dealer's permit.

(3) Except as provided in this subchapter, no person may sell processed alligator parts such as skulls, feet, or teeth unless that person possesses a valid retail dealer permit.

(4) A person possessing a valid retail dealer permit may sell legally obtained and documented processed alligators only to consumers.

(5) A retail dealer permit is not required of a:

(A) person selling processed products so long as alligator hide is the only alligator part used (e.g., footwear, belts, wallets, luggage, etc.); or

(B) person that sells alligator ready for immediate consumption in individual portion servings; or

(C) person selling alligator meat processed and packaged in accordance with applicable local, state and federal laws governing the processing of food for sale to the public.

(6) A retail dealer permit is required for each place of business, mobile or permanent, where activities that require a retail dealer permit are conducted.

(c) Purchase and sale by wholesale dealer.

(1) A person possessing a wholesale dealer permit may sell:

(A) legally obtained and documented processed alligators to anyone; and

(B) legally obtained and documented unprocessed alligators only to another wholesale dealer or to an alligator farmer.

(2) A wholesale dealer may purchase legally taken alligators from any hunter, dealer, farmer, import permit holder, or control hunter.

(d) Purchase and sale by farmer.

(1) A farmer may purchase:

(A) live or dead alligators from a farmer, wholesale dealer, hunter, or control hunter; and

(B) alligator eggs from an egg collector.

(2) A farmer may sell:

(A) live alligators to another farmer or to the holder of a permit issued under Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 43, Subchapter C; and

(B) lawfully documented, unprocessed, dead alligators only to a wholesale dealer or another farmer.

(3) It is an offense for any alligator farmer to:

(A) transport or receive a live alligator unless a game warden at the point of origin (if in Texas) and the destination (if in Texas) are notified at least 24 hours prior to transport; or

(B) transport live alligators for exhibition purposes unless authorized by a permit issued under Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 43, Subchapter C.

(e) Sale by recreational hunter.

(1) A person who lawfully kills an alligator under a hunting license may sell only to a farmer or wholesale dealer or lawful out-of-state purchaser.

(2) An alligator taken on a wildlife management area may not be sold or bartered for anything of value at any time unless a commercial alligator hide tag has been purchased from the department and attached to the alligator.

§65.358. Alligator Egg Collectors.

(a) Landowners may apply for alligator nest stamps by submitting a completed Nest Stamp Application (PWD 459) to the department.

(b) It is unlawful for a landowner to utilize a nest stamp for a tract of land or water other than the tract for which the stamp was originally issued.

(c) An alligator egg collector shall collect only on tracts designated for the stamps in their possession.

(d) Alligator eggs shall be collected from the wild only by hand.

(e) No person may possess alligator eggs without possessing an egg collection permit or a valid alligator farmer permit.

(f) When collecting, an alligator egg collector must possess on his or her person one or more current nest stamps and an Alligator Nest Stamp Authorization (PWD 453). At least one person in a collecting party must possess a current nest stamp and PWD 453.

(g) No person may collect alligator eggs without possessing a valid hunting license.

(h) Immediately upon collection and throughout transportation and incubation each clutch of eggs must be accompanied by a completed nest stamp.

(i) No less than 24 hours prior to each collection trip, an egg collector shall notify a game warden in the collection area of the date, time, and location of the collection.

(j) An alligator egg collector may sell alligator eggs only to a farmer(s) designated by permit.

(k) No alligator eggs collected or obtained under authority of this subchapter may be shipped out of state.

§65.359. Possession.

(a) A consumer may possess processed alligators and processed alligator meat products without permit or documentation requirements.

(b) Except as provided in subsection (a) of this section, all alligators or alligator parts possessed, sold, purchased, exported, or imported shall be accompanied by evidence of lawful take and/or possession. Depending on the applicability of paragraphs (1)-(3) of this subsection, evidence of lawful take shall consist of:

(1) an applicable license or permit number and hide tag issued by the state or country of origin, which shall be firmly attached to an alligator hide. If the alligator hide is boxed or otherwise packaged for transport, the hide must be tagged, but the license or permit may be retained by the person in possession of the alligator, provided it is kept available for inspection by an authorized employee of the department;

(2) a document, tag, or label for each alligator part, except for the hide, that specifies the:

(A) place of origin;

(B) name and address of the seller;

(C) applicable license or permit number that is required by the state or country of origin;

(D) hide tag number of the alligator from which the part originated;

(E) Import Permit number, if imported into Texas; and

(F) date of shipment, if imported into Texas; or

(3) a document, tag, or label affixed to the outside of any package or container of alligators. The label must specify the:

(A) contents;

(B) hide tag number of the alligator from which the parts originated; and

(C) any applicable license or permit numbers.

(c) Meat products finally processed and packaged by a farmer or wholesale dealer must be accompanied by an invoice or bill of sale that:

(1) specifies the amount of packaged alligator meat by weight; and

(2) identifies the farmer or wholesale dealer from which the packaged meat originated.

(d) The documents required in this subsection must accompany individual alligator parts after sale.

(e) An individual skull not accompanied by the hide and/or parts of the alligator from which it originated shall be legibly marked with the hide tag number of the alligator from which it originated. The marking shall be in indelible ink on the lower jaw. The provisions of this subsection apply only to skulls of nine inches or greater in length when measured as described in §65.352(16) of this title (relating to Definitions). This subsection does not apply to skulls possessed before the effective date of the subsection.

§65.360. Report Requirements.

(a) A Nuisance Alligator Hide Tag Report (PWD 305) shall be completed by a control hunter immediately upon take and shall be submitted to the department within seven days. A dealer or person possessing the alligator hide shall retain a copy of the PWD 305 until the hide is shipped or sold out of state, at which time the copy shall be forwarded to the department.

(b) A person receiving hide tags from the department shall file an annual report (PWD 370) accounting for all tags by October 10 following the end of the open season for which tags were issued. Unused tags shall be returned with this report.

(c) A wholesale dealer shall file reports (PWD 306) by October 31 and by the last day of every third month thereafter detailing purchase and sale transactions during the license year. A wholesale dealer shall retain a copy of each PWD 306 so filed for a minimum of two years and shall produce such records upon demand by the department.

(d) A retail dealer shall retain records of all purchases from wholesale dealers for a minimum of two years.

(e) An alligator import permit holder shall report all import activities during a reporting period within 30 days following permit period termination.

(f) A farmer shall submit quarterly reports (PWD 371) within 15 days of the end of each quarterly period (February, May, August, and November).

(g) An alligator egg collector shall submit an annual report and return all unused nest stamps by August 31 of each year.

(h) All persons to whom hide tags or nest stamps have been issued shall notify the department in writing within 15 days in the event that any tags or stamps are lost, stolen, mutilated, or destroyed. The department will not replace tags or stamps so reported.

§65.362. Importation and Exportation.

(a) No alligator may be imported into this state unless the importer possesses a valid alligator import permit. This subsection does not apply to alligators not taken or originating in Texas that are shipped by common carrier or accompanied by documentation of lawful possession from outside of this state to a destination within this state for immediate shipment outside the state.

(b) An import permit is required for shipment of live alligators into this state. No person shall import a live alligator under a permit authorized by this subchapter unless that person has notified the department not less than 24 hours or more than 48 hours prior to each instance of importation. Notification shall be by fax or telephone contact with the Law Enforcement Communications Center in Austin.

(c) In the case of alligators taken in another state under a sport hunting license, no import permit is required.

(d) Legally tagged and documented alligators and alligator parts may be exported from this state by all categories of license and permit holders.

(e) Except as provided in this subchapter, no live alligators shall be exported from Texas without specific departmental authorization. No person shall export an alligator under this subsection unless an alligator export fee of \$4.00 per alligator has been paid to the department, except for alligators accompanied by a valid department-issued hide tag.

§65.363 Nuisance Alligator Control

(a) Permit Required. Except as provided in §65.49(g) of this title (relating to Alligators), no person may take, kill, transport, sell, or release a nuisance alligator, or offer to take, kill, transport, sell, or release a nuisance alligator unless that person possesses a valid nuisance alligator control permit issued by the department.

(b) Permit Application and Issuance.

(1) The department may issue a nuisance alligator control permit to a person who has:

(A) submitted a completed application on a form supplied by the department;

(B) completed a department-administered course on nuisance alligator control;

(C) taken a department-administered examination and obtained a minimum passing score

as determined by the department; and

(D) paid the nonrefundable fee prescribed by Chapter 53, Subchapter A of this title (relating to Fees).

(2) In order to be considered for permit issuance in any given year, an applicant shall submit a completed application to the department by no later than November 1.

(3) The department may refuse to issue a permit to any person who, in the department's determination, lacks the skill, experience, or aptitude to adequately perform the activities typically involved in nuisance alligator control.

(c) Period of Validity. A nuisance alligator control permit is valid from the date of issuance through August 31 of the following year.

(d) Permit Privileges and Restrictions.

(1) A permittee under this section may:

(A) contract directly with a landowner or landowner's authorized agent (including a political subdivision, governmental entity, or property owner's association, as defined by Property Code, §204.004), for a fee or other compensation to be determined by the parties involved, for the removal of a nuisance alligator or alligators;

(B) capture or kill a nuisance alligator at any time of day;

(D) retain and sell nuisance alligators, alive or dead, taken under a nuisance alligator control permit as provided under §65.357 of this title (relating to Purchase and Sale of Alligators); and

(E) release nuisance alligators in areas of suitable habitat with the prior written approval of the department and the owner (or the owner's authorized agent) of the property where the release occurs.

(2) A permittee may not:

(A) capture or kill an alligator that is not a nuisance alligator; or

(B) use any means, method, or procedure not approved by the department for the capture, immobilization, transport, or dispatch of a nuisance alligator.

(e) Tagging Requirements. All provisions of this subchapter applicable to the tagging of alligators apply to alligators taken under a nuisance alligator control permit.

(f) Reporting, Notification, and Recordkeeping Requirements.

(1) Landowner authorization. No permittee may engage in nuisance alligator control activities unless the written authorization of the landowner, the landowner's authorized agent, or a government official acting within the scope of official duty has been obtained. The authorization shall contain, at a minimum, the date, the name, address, phone number, and Texas Department of Public Safety driver's license or identification card number (or, if the person is not a Texas resident, similar documentation from the person's state of residence) of the person with whom the permittee has contracted for nuisance alligator control; and shall be signed by the landowner, agent, or official. The permittee shall physically possess the authorization required by this paragraph:

(A) at all times that the permittee is engaged in or conducts nuisance alligator control activities; and

(B) subsequent to the capture of a nuisance alligator, at all times the permittee is in possession of the alligator, dead or alive, until the alligator is sold, transferred to another person legally permitted to possess the alligator, or released.

(2) Daily Log. A permittee shall continuously maintain and possess upon their person while engaged in any activity governed by this subchapter a completed daily log on a form prescribed by the department, indicating:

(A) the date, location, and department-assigned case number for each nuisance alligator complaint responded to by the permittee;

(B) the date and location of each nuisance alligator captured by the permittee;

(C) the sex and length of each alligator captured;

(D) the disposition of each alligator captured, to include:

(i) the means of dispatch, if lethal control is employed; and

(ii) if the alligator is lawfully sold or lawfully transferred to another person, the name and applicable permit number of the person to whom the nuisance alligator is sold or transferred.

(3) Record of Sale or Transfer. A permittee shall retain an invoice or sales receipt for each alligator sold or transferred to another person.

(4) Record Retention. All records and documents required by this section shall be retained and kept available for inspection upon request of a department employee acting within the official scope of duty for a two-year period immediately following the expiration of the period of validity of the permit under which they are required to be kept.

(5) Reporting.

(A) A permittee shall complete a Nuisance Alligator Hide Tag Report (PWD 305) immediately upon the take of a nuisance alligator and shall submit the report to the department within seven days.

(B) A permittee shall submit completed quarterly reports to the department by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15. The reports must be on a form supplied or approved by the department and must be submitted even if no nuisance alligators were taken by the permittee.

(C) The department may refuse to issue an initial or subsequent permit to any person who is not in compliance with the provisions of this paragraph.

(D) A violation of any of the following Standard of Operating Procedures for Nuisance Control Permittee will lead to termination and charges with a violation. The final decision will be made by TPWD Review Panel.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR NUISANCE CONTROL PERMITTEES

1. Permittee must ensure compliance with Federal, State and city laws, ordinances, or regulations relating to alligators and nuisance alligator control.
2. Permittee shall provide a vehicle suitable for transport of alligators and all equipment necessary for humane handling or take of alligators.
3. Permittee shall receive all pertinent forms and alligator hide tags after all other requirements have been met.
4. Permittee shall not represent himself/herself to the public or any government agency as an "employee" of TPWD. The permittee functions only as a private citizen permitted by TPWD to assist with nuisance alligator control activities. A nuisance alligator control hunter permit does not allow for the filming of nuisance activities prior to nuisance alligator removal. No one other than those authorized by this permit may touch or hold a nuisance alligator that has been captured.
5. Permittee must retake the nuisance alligator course every 5 years, or if permit has not been renewed for two consecutive years.
6. Nuisance Alligator complainant calls will be referred to the TPWD La Porte Law Enforcement Communications Center (281-842-8100). The TPWD dispatcher will determine if the call is an emergency or non-emergency. An emergency situation is one in which an alligator has attacked a person or pet, or is in a public or private place (parking lots, roads, highway, play grounds, public beaches, etc.) creating a safety hazard. An alligator that is located in or around alligator habitat and does NOT pose a safety risk is not considered an emergency situation. A non-emergency situation includes an alligator that is on land but can reasonably be expected to return to water if left alone.
7. TPWD Game Wardens may remove alligators when deemed in the best interest of public safety. Other TPWD personnel should remove alligators only in emergency situations.
8. **The Nuisance Control Permittee may only capture or take an alligator which has been assigned a complaint number, and is determined to be a nuisance.** The Permittee must receive a complaint number from the landowner/agent, prior to performing any nuisance control activity. The landowner/agent receives this complaint number from the TPWD Law Enforcement Communications Center. **No control hunter can harvest more than one alligator per complaint number unless cleared through La Porte Law Enforcement Communications Center.**
9. After a permittee accepts an alligator call from a complainant and is given a complaint number the permittee must notify the La Porte Law Enforcement Communications Center immediately to have his or her name recorded as the first responder.
10. Landowners/agents must authorize nuisance control activities on their properties by signing the PWD 305, item 5, Section A. **No nuisance control hunters can bring anyone to assist them on a nuisance call unless their names are registered with TPWD Alligator Program.**
11. Permittees shall not entice landowners/agents into allowing them to take alligators.
12. No nuisance control activities may take place past the deadline specified by the landowner/agent on PWD 305, Item 5, Section A.
13. Permittee must possess the PWD 305, item 5, Section A and the Daily Log while conducting nuisance control activities.
14. Permittees may use only Department approved means, methods or procedures for capture or take of any nuisance alligator.
15. Permittees may release nuisance alligators in areas of suitable habitat **with prior written approval of the Department and the Landowner/agent of the property** where the release occurs. Authorization must be on file with the Alligator Program prior to any relocation. Alligator relocation will not be a common occurrence.
16. The Nuisance Control Permittee shall determine appropriate course of action by utilizing the provided Nuisance Alligator Problem Assessment.
17. When the permittee has a resolution for the alligator such as (transferred to a farm, relocated to wild, unable to locate ...) he or she must call La Porte Law Enforcement Communications Center immediately with the disposition. The actions taken must be recorded on PWD 305, Item 4, Section A at that time as well.
18. TPWD may give alligators to a permittee for processing (e.g., live captures in emergency situations).
19. Alligators must be transferred to a holding facility within 24 hours of capture.
20. Permittee may hold live captured alligators for (2) days prior to sale to a farmer or other authorized license holder.
21. Permittees shall not collect alligator nests from private property. The landowner/agent must contact the Alligator Program to be issued a nest stamp. After being issued a nest stamp a permitted Alligator Farmer or Egg Collector may be contacted.
22. Texas Parks and Wildlife employees acting within the scope of their official duties may verify all nuisance control activities of permittee.
23. TPWD La Porte Communications Center will provide a list of alligator complaints to the Alligator Program in Port Arthur on a daily basis.

24. Within 7 days of removal, the Permittee will complete a PWD 305, Section B for each alligator taken. The white copy of PWD 305, Sections A and B, shall be submitted to the Alligator Program. If no alligator is taken, only the top section (Section A) of PWD 305 must be returned.
25. The yellow copy of the PWD 305 shall be retained by the person in possession of the alligator hide until shipped or sold out of state, at which time the copy will be submitted to the Alligator Program.
26. The landowner/ agent shall retain the pink copy of PWD 305.
27. Permittee must file a Transaction Report (PWD 306) to the Alligator Program on a quarterly basis for any alligators purchased, sold and exported. Transaction Reports of activities occurring between:
 - (a) December 1 - February 28 are due March 15;
 - (b) March 1 - May 31 are due June 15;
 - (c) June 1 - August 31 are due September 15;
 - (d) September 1 - November 30 are due December 15.
28. Permittee shall retain an invoice or sales receipt for each alligator sold or transferred.
29. Permittee shall retain all records and documents for inspection upon request of a department employee for a two-year period following the expiration of the Nuisance Control Permit.
30. All unused tags must be returned to the Alligator Program by December 31 of each year.
31. Violations of any of the above standard operating procedures for nuisance control hunters may affect subsequent permit renewal or issuance, and may result in Law Enforcement action.
32. Alligator Program address: 10 Parks and Wildlife Drive, Port Arthur, TX 77640

(g) Denial of Permit Issuance. The department may refuse permit issuance to any person who has been convicted of, pleaded nolo contendere to, or received deferred adjudication for:

- (1) a violation of Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 43, Subchapters C, E, L, or R, or Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 65;
- (2) a violation of Parks and Wildlife Code that is a Class B misdemeanor, a Class A misdemeanor, or felony; or
- (3) a violation of Parks and Wildlife Code, §63.002; or
- (4) convicted, pleaded nolo contendere, received deferred adjudication or pre-trial diversion, or assessed a civil penalty for a violation of 16 U.S.C. §§3371-3378 (the Lacey Act).

(h) Review of Agency Decision. An applicant for a permit under this subchapter may request a review of a decision of the department to refuse issuance of a permit.

- (1) An applicant seeking review of a decision of the department with respect to permit issuance under this subchapter shall first contact the department within 10 working days of being notified by the department of permit denial.
 - (2) The department shall schedule a review within 10 days of receipt of a request for a review. The department shall conduct the review and notify the applicant of the results within 45 working days of receiving a request for review.
 - (3) The request for review shall be presented to a review panel. The review panel shall consist of the following, or their designees:
 - (A) the Deputy Executive Director for Fisheries and Wildlife;
 - (B) the Director of the Wildlife Division; and
 - (C) the Deputy Division Director of the Wildlife Division.
 - (4) The decision of the review panel is the final department decision.
- (i) Prohibited Acts. It is an offense for a permittee to:
- (1) violate a provision of this subchapter;
 - (2) violate a condition of a permit issued under this subchapter; or
 - (3) treat or allow the treatment of an alligator in a cruel manner as defined in Penal Code, §42.092.

The provisions of this §65.363 adopted to be effective May 3, 2012, 37 TexReg 3172

NUISANCE ALLIGATOR PROTOCOL

Landowners will be able to contract directly with nuisance alligator control hunters under new rules adopted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission. The new protocol will authorize a permitted nuisance alligator control hunter to contract directly with a landowner or a landowner's agent (including a political subdivision, governmental entity, or property owner's association) for a fee or other compensation for the removal of nuisance alligators.

By allowing nuisance alligator control hunters to contract directly with landowners, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) intends to simplify the process. The new protocol would allow nuisance alligator control hunters to retain and sell alligators taken under a permit and to release nuisance alligators in suitable habitat with the approval of both TPWD and the landowner of the property where the release will take place.

Each nuisance alligator control hunter must complete a certification process that includes (1) an application to TPWD, (2) a department administered nuisance alligator control course, (3) a written exam on nuisance alligator control, and (4) a live alligator handling exam. Additionally, an annual permit fee of \$252 is required. **No one in Texas is excluded from having a valid nuisance control permit issued from TPWD for the capture and release of American Alligators, including local animal control officers.**

A Landowner or Agent must contact the TPWD La Porte Law Enforcement Dispatch at (281) 842-8100 to receive a complaint number prior to any nuisance alligator control. Individuals living along waterways controlled by subdivisions, homeowners associations, corporations, or governmental entities cannot get a complaint number from Dispatch. The complaint number will be given to the person in charge of the subdivision, association, or corporation or their designee.

TPWD La Porte Dispatch will determine if an alligator is a nuisance. Nuisance alligators are categorized as either emergency and non-emergency. Emergency situations will be handled by Law Enforcement; all other complaints will be handled by permitted nuisance alligator control hunters. If TPWD La Porte Dispatch determines an alligator to be a nuisance, they will assign a complaint number to the case and give the landowner or agent contact information for several nuisance alligator control hunters. Documents related to nuisance alligator control can be found at www.tpwd.texas.gov/business/permits/land/wildlife_management/alligator/. A document entitled Nuisance Control Permittee Contact Information (PWD 0051B) contains a complete list of nuisance alligator control permittees and can be found under the Alligator Nuisance Control Permittee on the website provided above. A nuisance alligator control hunter permittee has 10 days from initial site visit to capture an alligator. After 10 days, a new complaint number must be obtained. If an alligator is not a nuisance it cannot be taken!

For all relocation sites, the Permittee must provide GPS coordinates and a map of the release site, as well as a copy of the letter of authorization from the landowner/agent. A copy of the letter must be on file with the Alligator Program prior to any relocation. Nuisance alligators cannot be released on or into TPWD lands or water without specific written authorization from a TPWD facility manager, area manager or superintendent.

After a permittee accepts an alligator call from a complainant and is given a complaint number the permittee must notify the La Porte Law Enforcement Communications Center immediately to have his or her name recorded as the first responder. When the permittee has a resolution for the alligator such as (transferred to a farm, relocated to wild, unable to locate ...) he or she must call La Porte Law Enforcement Communications Center immediately with the disposition. The actions taken must be recorded on PWD 305, Item 4, Section A at that time as well.

Persons interested in the nuisance alligator control hunter program can request the information by email at jonathan.warner@tpwd.texas.gov. Prospective permittees can also contact Jonathan Warner at (409) 736-3625 to receive an application in the mail. Nuisance alligator control courses will be held annually in August. Applications should be sent to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Alligator Program, 10 Parks and Wildlife Drive, Port Arthur, Texas 77640. Applications received between April 1 through June 30 of each year will be eligible for the upcoming August class. The Nuisance Alligator Control Course has been canceled until new control hunters are needed.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Please remember alligators are protected and strict regulations exist regarding possession and sale of any and all alligators and/or alligator parts. Refer to the Alligator Regulations for further details on laws regarding alligators.

Send all reports (except PWD 304A*) to: **TPWD Alligator Program**
10 Parks and Wildlife Dr.
Port Arthur, TX 77640

Landowner and/or Landowner Agent

A landowner shall submit:

- 1) A request for tags on set issuance dates, or for properties applying for eligibility, request must be submitted 60 days prior to season openings (see tag clarification information).
- 2) PWD 370 to the department no later than 15 days following the close of the open season.
- 3) A notarized letter for stolen or lost tags, and return unused CITES hide tags to the department not later than 15 days following the close of the open season.

Hunter

CORE COUNTIES— A hunter shall file:

- 1) PWD 304 Individual Hide Tag Report seven days after harvest.
- 2) PWD 306 after selling an alligator (whole or part) to a licensed dealer or after shipping an alligator hide out of state for any purpose. Upon shipping out of state the hunter is required to submit the yellow copy of the PWD 304 to the Alligator Program.
- 3) PWD 373 Alligator Parts Label for use of packages or containers of alligator parts.

NON-CORE COUNTIES— A hunter shall file:

- 1) PWD 304A* within 72 hours of harvest, accompanied by a \$21 tag fee (check or money order only).

*Send to: Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

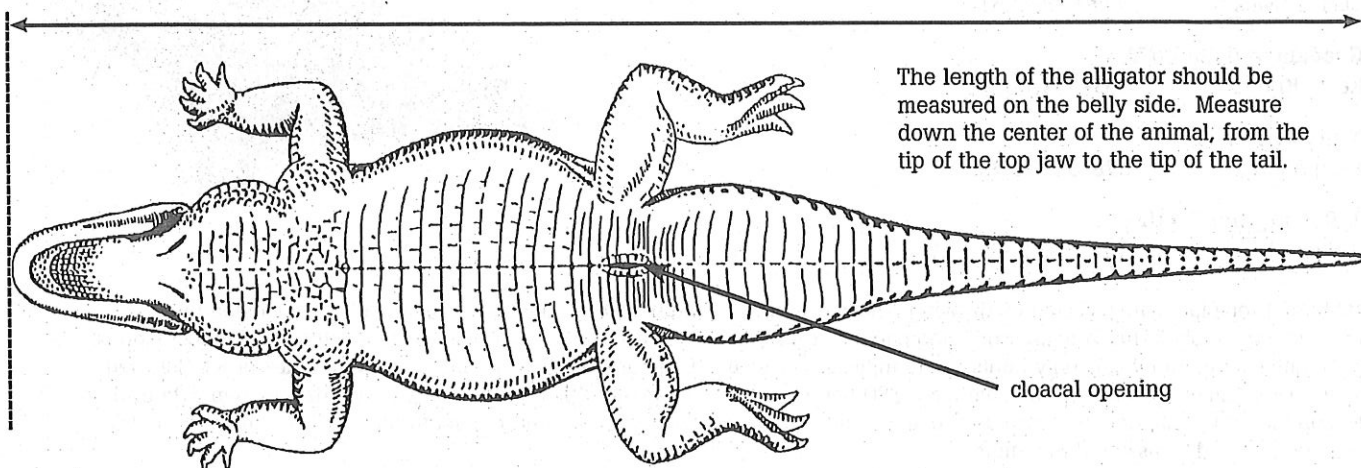
Wholesale Dealer/ Retail Dealer

A wholesale and/or retail dealer shall file:

- 1) PWD 306 by October 31 and by the last day of every third month thereafter documenting purchases and sales transactions during the license year, and shall retain records of all transaction for a minimum of two years and shall produce such records upon demand by the department.

How to determine the sex of an alligator:

This method is reliable for alligators over 3 feet. Locate the **cloacal opening**, which is on the belly side of the alligator as noted in the drawing. This area is probed, and males are verified if a penis is present; otherwise, your report should note the harvest of a female. Your accurate documentation of measurements and other harvest data is essential for biological tracking. Do not assume that any alligator over 8 feet is male. This is not always the case.



The length of the alligator should be measured on the belly side. Measure down the center of the animal, from the tip of the top jaw to the tip of the tail.

HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES

These are listed as a courtesy – please contact individual guides for further details.

Aransas and Refugio Counties
Dan Kubecka (361) 782-2141

Refugio County
D. Bellows (361) 220-4116

Galveston County
Jesse Dunn (409) 740-6679

Matagorda County
John C. Dickerson III (979) 245-0717

Matagorda County
Coastal Wings Guide & Lodge Service
Larry Robinson (979) 866-8897

Matagorda County
TWE GRAS Inc
Jean Davis (713) 295-9699

Wharton and Matagorda Counties
Stuffin' Critters Taxidermy and
Alligator Hunts, Brian Kutach
(979) 541-3448 (979) 578-0619

Liberty County
Clay Mound Sporting Center, LLC
Dwight Lumpkins
(936) 334-9200 (936) 336-0443

Jackson County
Larry Janik
(979) 543-5894 (979) 332-1463

Jefferson County
Texas Swamp Stompers
Troy Broussard (409) 466-3574

Jefferson County
Hemmenway Ranch
Trey Pearson (409) 719-7090

Jefferson County
Jay Braxton (409) 721-6030

Jefferson and Chambers Counties
Central Flyway Outfitter Inc.
Will Beaty (832) 627-1827
www.hunttexas.com

Jefferson and Chambers Counties
Harlan Hatcher (409) 794-1862

Chambers County
Lagow Ranch, Carter Hooper/outfitter
(210) 336-0984 (713) 962-7633

Chambers County
Pickets Bayou Club
Eddie V. Gray (281) 422-3677

Chambers County
Oyster Bayou Hunting Club
Bob Campbell/outfitter
(281) 703-6070
Southshoresos@netscape.com

Chambers County
Cajun Outback, Coy Farmer
(832) 984-0445 (281) 385-6605

Calhoun County
Williams Waterfowl Outfitters
(361) 935-1795

Calhoun County
H&H Guide Service
Alligatorandwaterfowl.com
Kevin Henke (361) 552-2892
Cory Housworth (361) 552-7077

Brazoria County
Two Bayous Hunting Club
Steve Parker (281) 334-1140

Fort Bend and Brazoria Counties
El Lagarto (281) 777-5729

Harris County
Michael Howard (713) 869-1919

Victoria County
Southwood Hunting
Lonis Soderholtz (361) 655-6747

ALLIGATOR HUNTS ON PUBLIC LANDS

In a continuing effort to provide additional public hunting opportunities on land under its control, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department offers alligator hunting under the Public Hunting Lands Program. Special permit hunting categories are offered on these wildlife management areas:

Angelina Neches/Dam B
Cody Dunagan 936-569-8547

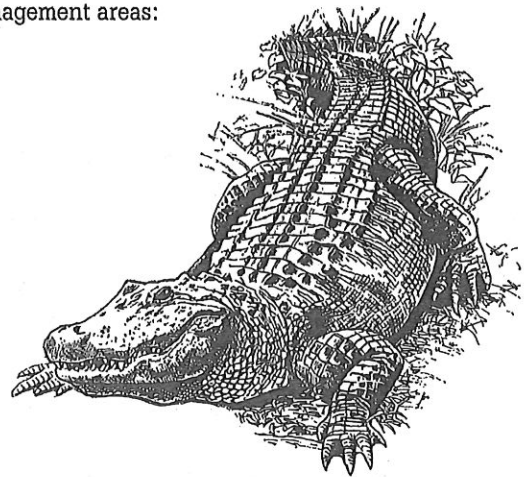
James Daughtrey WMA
Chris Mostyn 830-676-3413

Gus Engeling Delta WMA
Tucker Slack 903-928-2251

Guadalupe Delta WMA
Kevin Kriegel 361-552-6637

Mad Island WMA
Lang Alford 979-323-9579

J. D. Murphree WMA
Andrew Peters 409-736-2551 X24



Special Permit recipients are selected by drawing. There is a limit on the number of hunters participating in scheduled hunts, and hunters may apply in the computer drawing each year for only one of the areas listed in each hunt category. Hunt categories include regular hunt, and youth-only hunts. Each applicant 17 years of age or older is charged an application fee of \$3. Selected applicants 17 years of age or older are charged a \$80 permit fee (\$130 for extended hunt periods). On youth-only hunts, both the application fee and permit fee are waived for both the non-hunting adult supervisor and the youth hunter. Learn more or apply online at www.tpwd.texas.gov/drawn hunts.

ALLIGATOR HIDE TANNING

Tanning of alligator hides requires special processing to ensure suitable quality of leather for later production of many items that alligator hunters may be interested in making from the alligator that they harvest. As a service to our hunters the following U.S. tanneries are listed below. Alligator hunters are encouraged to contact these businesses for more details on current prices, methods of shipment, etc., prior to deciding who will handle final processing of hides.

American Tanning and Leather
312 W. Solomon
Griffin, Georgia 30223
(770) 228-4433
fax - (770) 228-8229
www.amtan.com

Florida Reposta, Inc.
c/o Sebring Custom Tanning
Sebring Air Terminal Plant, Bldg 727
Sebring, FL 33870
(863) 655-1600
www.sebcu@strato.net

RESIDENT ALLIGATOR BUYERS

Mark Porter
P.O. Box 1265
Anahuac, TX 77514
(409) 550-3481
portergators@yahoo.com

Larry Janik
El Campo, TX
(979) 543-5894
(979) 332-1463
donjan@wirehand.com

Charles Reddell
Reddell Fur Co.
Box 1248
Winnie, TX 77665
(409) 296-4436
(409) 782-2784
cnreddell@gmail.com

TEXAS ALLIGATOR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Mark Porter
POB 1265
Anahuac, TX 77514 (409) 550-3481

Jim's Taxidermy
1424 Willow Court
Nederland, TX 77627 (409) 727-0070

Albert Morone
2407 Ridgmont Rd.
Missouri City, TX 77489 (281) 777-5729

The Sportsman's Memory Shop
13639 US Hwy. 287 N.
Grapeland, TX 75877 (936) 687-2945

Gator Country
IH-10 at Exit 838 (F.M. 365) (409) 794-WILD (9453)

Larry Janik
Janik Alligators LLC
3244 CR 410
El Campo, TX 77437 (979) 543-5894 (979) 332-1399

Moye's Taxidermy
Danny Moye
252 Garden City Road
Livingston, TX 77351 (936) 327-4850

Tanned hides, heads, meat and accessories

Taxidermist: Alligator – shoulder and full body mounts
Also waterfowl and fish

The Skull Company – skull cleaning services

Master taxidermists

Alligator Wildlife Park

Custom skinning, meat processing, head mounts,
guided hunts and shipping to tanner

Taxidermy and Deer Processing

ALLIGATOR SKINNING INSTRUCTIONS

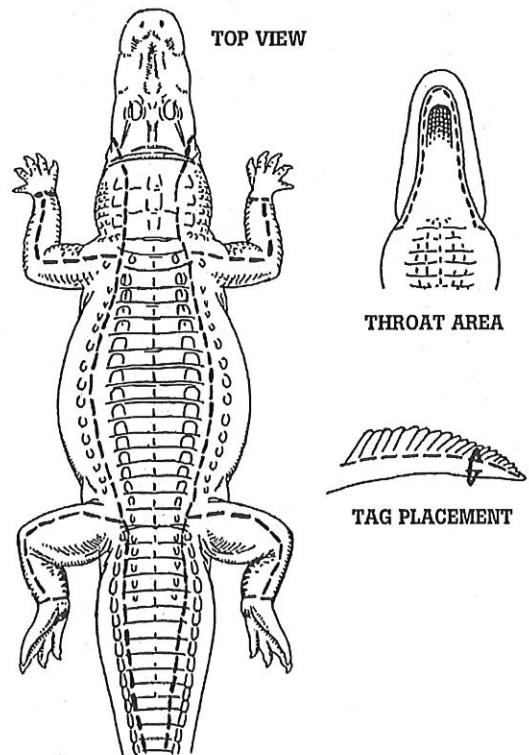
Alligators are harvested effectively by fishing with a 9/0 to 14/0 stainless steel hook and at least 300 pound test nylon cord. This technique is both highly efficient and size selective. After an alligator has been caught, the alligator hunter slowly pulls the animal to the edge of his boat or onto the bank. The alligator is then killed by shooting or clubbing in the head with an axe or hatchet. After the animal has been killed, the hook is removed, and may be used again. The alligator is then tagged with a plastic numbered tag issued by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The tag is used in identifying legally-taken alligators and the color of these tags changes each year. This tag is placed in the last 10 inches of the tail. Remember that the alligator's tail muscles will continue to contract and twitch, sometimes violently, so be careful. Use a fixed or locked blade knife. The tag must be left on the skin until the hide is a finished product.

Once the alligator has been properly tagged, it is then placed over the end of a boat or table with the head held down and allowed to bleed thoroughly. This will improve the quality of the skin and meat. Before skinning begins, several well-sharpened skinning knives should be available. Other skinning equipment includes sharpening stone, oil, steel tape or wire and a clean cloth for wiping your hands while skinning. Plenty of fresh water at the skinning site is also desirable. A location in the shade is recommended, as the job may take a novice up to two hours to complete.

Bellyskin – use this procedure if you are going to sell the hide to a licensed alligator buyer, or have the hide processed for boots, belts, shoes, etc.

Skinning begins by making an incision along the topside of the animal above the first row of scutes along the back. A complete outline of the body is cut where skinning will be initiated. In outlining the alligator, the cut along the side is made between the first and second row of buttons. This allows for the first row of buttons to be left on the skin. Buyers and tanners encourage hunters to follow these procedures. As the hunter proceeds to outline the animal, a straight cut is made from the back along top of each leg. Cut completely around each foot at the wrist or ankle area. The outline cut is then extended onto the lower end of the tail below the top row of upper tail fins. When the outline cuts reaches the single row of tail fins midway along the tail, a cut is then made through this row of tail fins at their base, all the way to the tip of the tail. The fins remain on the carcass, attached to the back skin, which is also not included in the final skin. It is important to cut all the way to the tip of tail (do not cut it off) because the skin's value is determined mainly by length. Care should be used so as not to cut too deep where you may lose the tag attached to the end of the tail. As mentioned earlier, this tag must remain on the skin from the time the animal is killed.

After the top tail scales have been removed, the tip end of the tail is then skinned completely, making sure to remove all bone and meat. This can be achieved by carefully cutting the skin away from the tail meat. The end of the tail is skinned completely along the sides before proceeding on the outline—so as to butterfly cut the end of the tail. After tail skinning is completed, the outline of the alligator is completed to the base of the head and skinning of the body begins. Skinning of the body section begins with the front legs. As the front legs are skinned, the skin surrounding the legs and side of the alligator are also removed. Removing this skin can only be done by using a sharp knife and slowly cutting the skin away from the body of the alligator. The front legs and side skin are removed completely before moving on to the hind legs. Hind legs are skinned in the same fashion as the front legs. The skin is removed from the hind legs completely, down the sides of the animal, before continuing on the tail. Some pulling can be done on the upper leg portion of the skin. Once the skin has been removed from the leg, the remaining skin must be detached by cutting. The skin is then removed from the remaining unskinned tail section. This skin can only be detached by cutting. Care should be taken to cut the skin from the carcass without cutting the skin or leaving excessive meat. Care should be taken in cutting the skin from the sides of the alligator to avoid cuts in the skin. Particular care must be taken where the legs join the body. The sides should be skinned completely. Only the belly portion of the animal should be left unskinned after this step. The alligator should be completely skinned along the sides, past the tail section, before proceeding on the head.



After the sides and legs are skinned, the alligator is then turned on its side and an outline cut is made along the lower jawbone. This cut is made along the outer edge of the lower jaw skin, which is the only part of the head skin which remains on the head. The skin is removed from the lower jaw by grasping the jaw muscle with thumb and forefinger and carefully cutting the skin from the meat. To enable easier holding, a small hole can be cut through the jaw muscle for grasping. The flesh under the lower jaw is very loose and soft. Care must be taken in removing the skin from this region. By pulling on the jaw muscle, the flesh can be tightened, thus allowing for easier skinning.

After all the skin has been cut from the lower jaw and neck, the alligator is then ready to be skinned down the belly. Skinning the under side of the alligator is best accomplished by both pulling and cutting. On small alligators, the skin can be removed from the belly by pulling only. After the belly has been skinned down to the base of the tail, care should be taken to cut around the anal opening (vent). If the skin is not cut completely away from this area, it may tear during the pulling process. All meat and fat should be removed from the skin around the anus. The skin is then pulled and cut from the remaining tail section of the alligator.

After the alligator has been skinned, some meat and fat will remain on the skin. All of this tissue must be removed before salting. Many different types of scraping tools can be used in scraping the meat and fat from the skin. One object that works well without cutting or tearing the hide is an 18" piece of chrome tubing. Large spoons or paint scrapers are also useful in removing flesh. By scraping the fleshy side of the hide with the end of the tubing, one can remove most of the excess meat and fat without damaging the skin. Particular attention should be given to the tail section and around the anal opening since these areas generally are more difficult to skin. Very little tissue should remain on the hide after it has been thoroughly scraped.

Once scraping is complete, the hide should be relatively free of flesh and white in appearance. After the skin has been scraped thoroughly, it should be washed in clean, fresh water. By washing the skin in fresh water, most of the remaining blood and body fluids will be removed from the skin. Care should be taken during the washing process to thoroughly squeeze and rub the skin with the hands to remove any dried blood and loose flesh. The skin should be thoroughly clean and very white in appearance after washing. After washing the skin, it is then hung on a rack with the fleshy side to the inside and allowed to air dry. The skin should not be placed in the sunlight since overdrying of the outside portion of the skin could damage the hide. After the hide has dried, it is then spread out on a flat surface with the flesh side exposed for salting. Salt (use fine grain salt) is applied to all areas of the hide until the skin is completely coated. Salting is an important process. It is very important to apply salt liberally to the skin. The salt should be rubbed thoroughly into the skin. Make sure to cover the head portion well. Additional care should be taken to rub salt into the tail section, making certain the salt is placed in the very end of the tail section. The hide is now ready for rolling into a compact bundle. Place hide flat with flesh facing up. The rolling procedure begins by folding the legs over the belly of the skin. Both the front and back legs are folded with one side overlapping the other.

After the legs are folded, completely covered by the side portion of the skin after it has been folded. The neck is folded in the same fashion as the sides. After the neck and sides are folded, the rolling process begins. Rolling begins by folding the lower jaw section of skin over the top of the neck section. The skin is then rolled from the head to the tail in a compact ball. As the skin is rolled, the tail section is folded in, so as to completely cover the salted side of the head. Rolling usually requires two people to keep the hide in a neat, compact roll. After the skin has been completely rolled, it is tied with cotton string. It is advisable to run the cotton string through the fastened tag to ensure that the tag remains with rolled hide. Several wraps are used in tying the skin in a compact bundle.

Once the skin has been rolled and tied, it is then ready for storing in a cool, dry place until sold or further processed. The rolled skin will continue to drain so the storage area should have adequate drainage. Hides stored more than a few days should be unrolled and resalted. After resalting and rolling, the hides may keep several months if stored in a cool place, but check with a hide buyer or tanner for preferred handling.

This completes your briefing on the recommended procedures for taking and processing alligators. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department wishes you a safe and successful alligator hunt. If you have further questions, please consult with department personnel.



Submit to: Alligator Program, TPWD, 10 Parks and Wildlife Dr., Port Arthur, TX 77640



ALLIGATOR HIDE TAG REPORT

Submit report no later than 15 days following the close of the open season.

Hide Tag Recipient: _____

Recipient No.: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No.: (____) _____

City State Zip

Date of Report: _____
Month Day Year

INSTRUCTIONS

1. List numbers of all hide tags received, in numerical order.
2. If tag was issued to hunter, give hunter name and license number.
3. Check appropriate box to indicate used, returned, damaged, or lost.
4. All unused or damaged tags must be returned with report.

	Tag Number	Hunter Name	License Number	Used by Hunter	Returned Intact	Damaged	Lost
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12.							
13.							
14.							
15.							
16.							
17.							
18.							
19.							
20.							

NOTICE: A FALSE ENTRY OR STATEMENT IN A GOVERNMENTAL RECORD IS A CLASS A MISDEMEANOR UNDER THE TEXAS PENAL CODE.

I hereby certify the above information is true and correct.

Total number of hide tags issued:

Number of hide tags reported used: _____

Number of tags lost: _____

Number of tags returned intact: _____

Number of tags returned damaged: _____

Number of tags accounted for: _____

SIGNATURE — Hide Tag Recipient _____

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department maintains the information collected through this form. With few exceptions, you are entitled to be informed about the information we collect. Under Sections 552.021 and 552.023 of the Texas Government Code, you are also entitled to receive and review the information. Under Section 559.004, you are also entitled to have this information corrected. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, TX 78744, www.tpwd.state.tx.us

PWD 370-W7000 (7/06)
Previous editions obsolete - destroy

WHITE copy —
Alligator Program
Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept.
10 Parks and Wildlife Dr.
Port Arthur, TX 77640

YELLOW copy —
Hide tag recipient

- 6-8 in Harris Co, 1 in Waller

- call dispatch if can't reach warden

• all ^{permitted} hunters can work in any county in TX

(varment busters)

↳ one of the active hunters in Houston

24 hr dispatch