



Choctaw NWR Special Opportunity Area Hunt Guidelines/Rules

The 2021-2022 hunting season is the genesis of a new landmark hunting opportunity through the partnership between the Alabama Department of Conservation (ADCNR) and Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). ADCNR and USFWS have come together to begin allowing more recreational hunting opportunities on USFWS owned National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) through ADCNR's SOA hunting program.

Successful applicants may be accompanied by hunting guest(s) as outlined below. Permit holders and their appropriate guest(s) must remain within their assigned hunt unit during hunting. Each hunting unit is clearly defined on the Special Opportunity Area (SOA) map and delineated with signage on the ground.

Following hunt registration and permit selection, permit holders will receive an email within a couple weeks covering specific SOA information, scouting information and unit assignments.

Note:

- A State Hunting License and Wildlife Management Area (WMA) License are required by all limited quota permit holders and guests unless exempt from needing such license.
- Statewide antlered buck season bag limit applies to all SOAs and all deer harvested are to be recorded at the check station or kiosk and reported through Game Check.
- Administrators of the hunt shall have the right to inspect all vehicles or other equipment while on the areas.
- Any violation of SOA rules and regulations (220-2-.55) or any other regulation or law while hunting on Choctaw NWR SOA will result in that individual losing their eligibility for future SOA hunts.
- Failure to unregister for an upcoming hunt outside of 7 days prior to your permitted hunt start date and failure to notify WFF personnel of cancellation within 7 days of the hunter's assigned hunt dates at Choctaw NWR SOA will result in that individual losing their eligibility for future SOA hunts.
- Hunters shall only hunt and/or scout in their assigned unit(s).

220-2-.55 Wildlife Management Areas, Community Hunting Areas, Public Hunting Areas, and Refuges of Alabama

(4) Hunting on Blackwater River, Cedar Creek, Crow Creek, Fred T. Stimpson, Portland Landing, Prairie Glades, Uchee Creek, Upper State, and Thigpen Hill Special Opportunity Areas, [Choctaw NWR] (SOA) will be permitted through a limited quota permit system selected by random computerized selection. Participants are required to obtain a Conservation Identification Number (CID) and apply through www.outdooralabama.com to register for a limited number of quota permits available for hunts on these AREAS. All successful applicants must obtain and have in possession a valid Alabama hunting license, WMA license, and state and federal duck stamps if applicable. **Any violation of any rules, regulations, or laws by permit holder or guest while hunting on any SOA will result in that individual forfeiting the remainder of their hunt and losing their eligibility for future SOA hunts.** Failure to participate in solicited hunt without providing Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries 7 days prior notice of cancellation will result in that individual losing their eligibility for future SOA hunts. Permit holders and guests shall only hunt and scout in their assigned hunt unit(s). All other access on any SOA is restricted to foot traffic and non-motorized vehicles only and only during daylight hours from May 15 to September 1 (excluding Crow Creek, Fred T. Stimpson, Upper State, and Prairie Glades). All deer and turkey hunters are required to report all harvests pursuant to the Game Check requirements in regulation 220-2-.146. Other requirements for hunters participating in limited quota hunts on the SOAs include:

(a) **On Choctaw NWR SOA:**

1. Deer Hunts:

a. Each deer hunt begins at 12:00 noon on day one (1) and ends at 12:00 noon on day four (4). With the exception of the day one (1) start time and day four (4) end time, hunters may enter the SOA 1 ½ hours prior to legal sunrise and must exit the SOA by 1 ½ hours after legal sunset each day. Travel to and from assigned hunt unit(s) may also occur between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

b. Antlered bucks harvested are required to have at least three (3) antler points (1 inch or longer) on at least one (1) main antler.

c. One (1) antlered buck and three (3) antlerless deer allowed each permit duration for permit holder and also for one (1) guest. Permit holder is allowed one (1) properly licensed guest each day. The guest may be a different person each hunt day, but the guest bag is cumulative.

d. Deer hunters are required to record harvest date, sex, lactation status of doe, body weight, and antler measurements of bucks on provided data forms, as well as complete the provided hunter observation data sheet. Deer hunters are also required to extract a lower jawbone from deer harvested and leave it at SOA kiosk.

e. Hunters are required to email pictures of their harvest to the managing biologist.

(5) A Wildlife Management Area License (required for deer, turkey, and waterfowl), PLUS the applicable Resident or Non-Resident Hunting License [for Alabama residents 16 through 64 years of age and for non-residents 16 years of age and older], PLUS a Wildlife Management Area

Permit [free of charge], are required for hunting on AREAS; provided however, that properly licensed persons under the “Wildlife Heritage License” may hunt legal small game except waterfowl on AREAS without the other licenses described herein. PLUS, in order to hunt waterfowl on AREAS, all persons must have, in addition to the otherwise required licenses and permit, a HIP and valid State (if required) and a valid Federal (if required) Waterfowl Stamp.

220-2-.56 2021-2022 Special Opportunity Area Hunting Seasons

**(a) District V 2021-2022 Special Opportunity Hunting Area Seasons and Bag Limits
 (Southwest Alabama)**

**1. CHOCTAW NWR
 (Choctaw County)**

DEER: (Primitive Weapons) Stalk Hunting Hunter’s Choice: **Nov. 25-28**. One antlered buck and one antlerless deer for each hunter during the 4-day hunt. By limited quota permit only for the properly licensed hunter. The permit holder may have one properly licensed hunting guest on that specified hunt date and in specified hunt unit. Permit and specified hunt unit to be determined through random draw.