

FREEDOM HILLS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
(Colbert County)
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF WILDLIFE & FRESHWATER FISHERIES
Hunting Regulations – September 2019 – August 2020

PERMITS: Permits for Youth Deer Hunts will be issued from the checking station on the dates of the hunts. Map/permits will be will be available at the self-service issuing station located at Stewart’s Camp and Horse Trail Information Board; locally from Wal-Mart in Russellville and Muscle Shoals;; Yogi’s, intersection of Hwy. 72 and 247; Chiska Food Mart, Cherokee; Chevron Station, Barton; Colbert County Courthouse in Tuscumbia; Franklin County Courthouse in Russellville; Dick’s in Florence; by writing the Area Biologist at 4200 White Pike, Cherokee, AL 35616, (include current hunting license number and stamped, self-addressed envelope), or by printing from the Internet at www.outdooralabama.com (both front and back pages of the internet map/permit must be together to be valid). Trapping permits must be obtained from Area Biologist. All deer and turkey harvested during any hunt shall be reported to the hunt administrators at the checking station on the day harvested, or if the checking station is closed, in the archery/turkey harvest box at the Stewart’s Camp and Horse Trail information board prior to leaving the WMA. **Note:** Silver gates on old portion of area will be closed except on days of gun deer hunts and the first 10 days of the squirrel season. All other entrance gates will be open from September 1 through the end of small game season and during the Spring Turkey Season. No secondary gates will be opened.

NOTE:• **A State Hunting License, Wildlife Management Area (WMA) License and a wildlife management area permit are required when hunting deer, turkey, or waterfowl on a wildlife management area. For residents, a State hunting license, Wildlife Heritage License (residents only), or State fishing license (residents only), and WMA permit are required for hunting small game, except waterfowl on wildlife management areas. Nonresidents must possess a wildlife management area license in addition to a hunting license and WMA permit to hunt big game and small game.**

- **Youth hunters on youth deer hunts must be less than 16 years of age. Supervisors must be 21 years old or older, or a parent, and must be properly licensed. Youth must remain within 30 feet of supervisors at all times. Permits for the Youth Hunt will be issued from the checking station/area headquarters on the day of the hunt. The adult-youth pair is to check in and out at the Area checking station as a single unit.**
- **Individuals, ages 16 through 64, that utilize the shooting range on Freedom Hills WMA are required to possess a valid wildlife heritage license (residents only), state hunting license, wildlife management area license, or state fishing license (residents only). FIRING RANGE WILL BE CLOSED ON DAY OF YOUTH GUN DEER HUNT.**
- **Hunters must check in at check station for Youth Deer Hunt. All deer and turkey harvested during any hunt must be recorded at the check station or if check station is closed, in harvest box at Stewart’s Camp or Horse Trail information board prior to leaving the WMA.**
- **Statewide antlered buck season bag limit applies to all WMAs. Antler Restrictions: On all deer hunts except the youth hunt, all bucks must have a minimum of three points on one side. For a point to be counted, it must be at least one inch long.**
- **Riding or possession of horses on Freedom Hills is approved on designated trails only and shall be allowed from March 1 to the beginning of turkey season and May 1 to September 30 only. Riding or possession of horses shall be restricted to holders of a current valid Wildlife Management Area license and a valid wildlife area map/permit.**
- **Administrators of the hunt shall have the right to distribute the hunters and to inspect all vehicles or other equipment while on the areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and landowners, who are making the hunting possible, hereby put each hunter on notice that he hunts at his own risk and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and such landowners shall not be responsible for any accidents or injuries that may occur.**

HUNTING DATES:

DEER:

Zones A & B

(Youth)	Stalk Hunting Hunter’s Choice: Nov. 16. One deer per day - one unantlered deer or one antlered buck. Hunters must submit all harvested deer at check station for data collection.
(Gun)	Stalk Hunting Hunter’s Choice: Nov. 28-Dec. 1, Dec. 5-8, Dec. 19-22. One deer per day - one unantlered deer or one antlered buck. All deer harvested on Saturday hunts must be presented at check station for data collection. Check station will be open from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. *Antlered buck restrictions apply.
(Primitive Weapons)	Stalk Hunting Hunter’s Choice: Nov. 18-21. One deer per day - one unantlered deer or one antlered buck. All deer harvested must be recorded at check station or hunter information board. *Antlered buck restrictions apply.
(Archery)	Stalk Hunting Hunter’s Choice: Oct. 15 – Feb. 10. One deer per day - one unantlered deer or one antlered buck. All deer harvested must be recorded at check station or hunter information board. *Antler buck restrictions apply. No hunting on days of youth deer hunts. Archery hunters must abide by all gun deer hunt regulations.

Zone A

(Gun)	Stalk Hunting Antlered Bucks Only: Jan. 8-12 and Jan. 29-Feb. 2. One antlered buck per day. *Antlered buck restrictions apply. All deer harvested on Saturdays must be presented at check station for data collection. Check station will be open from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
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Zone B

(Gun)	Stalk Hunting Antlered Bucks Only: Jan. 15-19 and Feb. 5-9. One antlered buck per day. *Antlered buck restrictions apply. All deer harvested on Saturdays must be presented at check station for data collection. Check station will be open from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM.
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***To be legal for harvest, antlered bucks must have at least three (3) antler points (1 inch or longer) on at least one main beam.**

TURKEY:	(Physically Disabled)	Mar. 27 (daylight hours). Gobblers only. All turkey harvested must be recorded at check station or hunter information board.
	(Regular)	Mar. 28-May 3 (daylight hours). Gobblers only. All turkey harvested must be recorded at check station or hunter information board.
DOVE:		State seasons (opening day - 12:00 noon to sunset; remainder of season - ½ hour before sunrise to sunset). Saturdays and Wednesdays only. No hunting on days of youth and gun deer hunts.
QUAIL:		Nov. 2 – Feb. 29. No hunting on days of youth, primitive weapons and gun deer hunts.
RABBIT & SQUIRREL:		Sep. 14-Mar. 8. No hunting on days of youth, primitive weapons and gun deer hunts. Fox squirrel season closed during February and March.
RACCOON, OPOSSUM & FOX:		Sep. 1-30 and Feb. 1-29 (nighttime hours only). Fox hunting: dogs only – no weapons.
BOBCAT, COYOTE, FERAL SWINE & FOX:		Open during any other scheduled WMA Hunting Season using weapons and ammunition approved for those hunts. No Dogs Allowed. Daylight Hours Only. One fox per day.
SNIPE:		State Season. No hunting on days of youth, gun deer and primitive weapons hunts.
WOODCOCK:		State Season. No hunting on days of gun deer hunts.
FURBEARER TRAPPING (excluding feral swine):		Nov. 2 – Feb. 29. Trapping permits must be obtained from Area Biologist. All trappers must wear hunter’s orange while trapping on days of youth and gun deer hunts.

BAG LIMITS:

Deer – See above deer hunt schedule. - *Turkey (Gobblers only)* - 1 a day (5 per season); *Squirrel* - 8 a day; *Quail* - 6 a day; *Rabbit* - 8 a day; *Raccoon & Opossum* - No Limit; *Fox* – 1 per day; *Woodcock* – 3 a day, *Dove* - 15 a day. Falconers per listed seasons and bag limits.

PERMITTED FIREARMS, BOW AND ARROW, & FALCONRY:

Deer:	<i>Stalk Hunts:</i> As defined in Alabama Regulations legal arms and ammunition in 220-2-.02(2), (excluding buckshot) and archery equipment in 220-2-.03.
Primitive Weapons:	Using only muzzle loading rifles (.40 caliber or larger), muzzle loading shotguns, air-powered guns (.30 caliber or larger) or archery equipment as defined in 220-2-.03.
Turkey:	As defined in 220-2-.02(3), except no center-fire pistols or crossbows allowed.
Remainder of Seasons:	Legal arms and ammunition as defined in 220-2-.02 and archery equipment in 220-2-.03. As Defined in 220-2-.30(2), except no .22 magnums are allowed.

Falconry will be legal on all AREA scheduled hunts for legally permitted falconers; following the dates those seasons are open on each AREA.

IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL:

1. To hunt, trap, use dogs, possess firearms, ammunition, traps or bow and arrow without a valid permit. A permit is valid only during scheduled management area seasons during legal hunting hours and only with the required hunting license(s) and only weapons and ammunition permitted for hunting the wildlife listed on permit. See (28) for limited exception.
2. To use dogs for stalk hunting of deer or for turkey hunting. (Leashed dogs may be used for the expressed purpose of retrieving wounded deer, limited to two dogs per tracking event).
3. To use dogs for feral swine or small game hunting where dogs are expressly prohibited.
4. To use dogs for hunting, training or any purpose from March 6 until August 31.
5. For any person under 16 years of age to hunt on the management area unless accompanied by an adult who is either 21 years old or older or the parent and who possesses all licenses to hunt WMA.
6. To have in possession any fully automatic rifle or firearms, ammunition or bow and arrow except as described about in Permitted Firearms and Bow and Arrow section.
7. For any person to carry firearms in or on a vehicle, and any of the following: any firearms [including pistols/handguns, except as described in (28)] with ammunition in the magazine, breech or clip attached to firearms, or black powder weapons with primer, cap or flash powder in place or cocked crossbow. See (28) for limited exception for certain lawfully licensed handguns possessed for personal protection.
8. To camp in the management area except in designated sites. Campers using generators must camp in site designated for generator use. Individuals or groups may camp on the management area for a period not to exceed nine (9) days in any 30 day period. Campfires must be extinguished before departing. No warming fires shall be permitted away from camping area. All campers (portable shelters on wheels) must be removed from the Freedom Hills AREA by sundown on the first Sunday following April 30th; otherwise, the camper may be towed from the AREA at the owner’s expense; or may be relocated to another portion of the AREA without AREA personnel being responsible for any damages and the owner assessed a \$10.00 per day storage fee without the State or AREA personnel being responsible for any damage, loss, etc. No campers are permitted on the Freedom Hills AREA, until September 1, unless approved by special PERMIT issued by the AREA biologist. All campers left unattended overnight must display the owner’s contact information to include name, address, and phone numbers.
9. To kill or willfully molest any species of wildlife except those designated for hunting.
10. To discharge fireworks at any time.
11. To discharge firearms for target practice, except at designated target range near Stewart’s Camp.
12. To hunt or discharge firearms within 150 yards of any camping area, dwelling, dam or timber operation, 100 yards of any public road or highway, or from within a posted safety zone, or within one-half mile of a church on Sunday **or from within the right of way of any developed road open to vehicular traffic.**
13. **To possess open alcoholic beverages outside designated camping areas.**
14. For any person except authorized personnel to operate any motor driven vehicle behind, under or around any locked gate, barricaded road or sign which prohibits vehicular traffic.
15. For any unauthorized person to possess and/or operate ANY UNLICENSED MOTOR DRIVEN VEHICLE on any AREA, except when utilized for the expressed purpose of retrieving harvested deer, traveling to or from a hunting location, or any other hunting related activity. ALL VEHICLES, whether licensed or unlicensed must remain on regularly used roads open for public use by four wheel vehicle traffic.
16. For any unauthorized person to ride or possess horses on Freedom Hills except: on designated horse trails from March 1 to the beginning of turkey season and May 1 to September 30. Riding or possession of horses shall be restricted to holders of a current valid Wildlife Management Area license and a valid WMA map/permit.
17. For any person to hunt any wildlife species (except turkey, migratory birds and while hunting legally designated species during legal nighttime hours) without wearing the minimum requirement of hunter orange as described in 220-2-.85.
18. For any person except authorized personnel to block or otherwise stop traffic on any road or at any gate by parking a vehicle in such a way that passage around the vehicle is impossible.
19. For any person to possess, deposit, distribute or scatter grain/corn, salt, litter, or any other materials on any AREA maintained by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources prior to receiving approval from said Department.
20. To hunt small game during gun deer hunts.
21. To damage or remove any artifacts, trees, crops, plants, dirt, gravel or sod without legal authorization.
22. To erect or use a permanent tree stand or scaffold without written permission from the landowners.
23. To cast a light of any kind, either hand held, affixed to a vehicle, or otherwise, between the hours of sunset and sunrise except in areas where the state law is more restrictive. This paragraph does not apply to the headlights of vehicles traveling in a normal matter on an open established road.
24. To hunt from an elevated stand or platform without first attaching themselves to the tree or platform with a full body safety harness capable of supporting their weight.
25. To transport deer, turkey, or swine killed during any hunt from the area before being checked or reported at the designated checking stations.
26. To violate any posted restrictions on entry, hunting, fishing, or other conduct.
27. To release any animal, bird, fish, or other wildlife on any WMA, Refuge, or Public Lake without first obtaining written permission from the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division.
28. Nothing in this regulation prohibits or requires a wildlife management area permit for the possession of handguns by lawfully licensed persons for personal protection, provided the handguns are not used to hunt or take or to attempt to take wildlife (including persons while bow hunting) except as otherwise provided by this regulation.
29. **Users should refer to WMA Regulation 220-2-.55 for the complete list of WMA specific regulations.**

WMA is provided by the Wildlife Section of the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, in cooperation with the Forever Wild Land Trust.