



Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission

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South Florida Water  
Management District

sfwmd.gov

# Stormwater Treatment Area 3/4

## Public Small Game Hunting Area

Regulations Summary and Area Map  
July 01, 2023 - June 30, 2024

2023-  
2024

Hunting  
Season

This brochure is designed to provide the public with information and a summary of regulations pertaining to hunting and other recreational use on the Stormwater Treatment Area 2 (STA 2) Public Small Game Hunting Area. Regulations that are new or differ substantially from last year are shown in bold print. Area users should familiarize themselves with all regulations. For exact wording of the wildlife laws and regulations, see the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's wildlife code, on file with the Secretary of State and state libraries. This brochure and the Florida Hunting Regulations handbook should provide the information necessary for you to plan your hunting activities. These publications are available from any Commission office, county tax collector, and at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com).

Persons using public small game hunting areas are required to have appropriate licenses, permits, and stamps. The following persons are exempt from all license and permit requirements (except for the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp [federal duck stamp]): Florida residents who are 65 years of age or older; residents who possess a Florida Resident Disabled Person Hunting and Fishing Certificate; residents in the U.S. Armed Forces, not stationed in Florida, while home on leave for 30 days or less, upon submission of orders; and children under 16 years of age. Children under 16 years of age are also exempt from the federal duck stamp.

Licenses and permits may be purchased from county tax collectors, license agents, by telephone at 888-486-8356, or at [GoOutdoorsFlorida.com](http://GoOutdoorsFlorida.com). A no-cost Migratory Bird Permit is available when purchasing a hunting license. Any waterfowl hunter 16 years of age or older must possess a federal duck stamp (available where hunting licenses are sold, at most post offices, or at [www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com)).

### License and Permit Requirements:

1. Valid Florida hunting license (or other license that includes a hunting license), Florida waterfowl permit and federal duck stamp, STA waterfowl quota permit (except for youth hunts), management area permit, and migratory bird permit (unless exempted by law).
2. Licenses and permits may be purchased from county tax collectors, license agents, by telephone at 888-486-8356, or at [GoOutdoorsFlorida.com](http://GoOutdoorsFlorida.com). Federal duck stamps are available at U.S. Post Offices and online at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).
3. 40 STA 3/4 Waterfowl Quota Permits will be available for each hunt day: 20 for the morning hunt and 20 for the afternoon hunt.
4. 40 STA 3/4 Veterans and Military Waterfowl Quota Permits will be available for each veterans and military waterfowl hunt: 20 for the morning hunt and 20 for the afternoon hunt.
5. 30 STA 3/4 Standby Opportunities will be available for each morning hunt, except for youth waterfowl hunts.
6. A quota permit is not required during youth waterfowl hunts.
7. Hunters must submit electronic applications for STA waterfowl quota permits and standby opportunities at [GoOutdoorsFlorida.com](http://GoOutdoorsFlorida.com). Application periods, deadlines, worksheets, instructions, and other information regarding waterfowl permits are available at [MyFWC.com](http://MyFWC.com), FWC offices, or county tax collector's offices. Any waterfowl quota permits remaining after the drawing held in Phases 1 and 2 will be available during Phase 3 on a first come, first served basis until the quota is met. Hunters who are unable to use their waterfowl quota permit may return it. The availability of returned waterfowl quota permits is reflected in real time and these returned permits are included in weekly reissue drawings throughout the season. **Standby opportunities for morning hunts will be awarded in weekly drawings throughout the season. The standby opportunity applications will open the Saturday prior to the hunt and will close the following Tuesday.** Standby opportunities will not be available for return/reissue. More information about standby opportunities is available at <https://myfwc.com/license/limited-entry/waterfowl-standby-opportunities/> and <https://myfwc.com/STA>.
8. Each authorized hunter may bring up to two guests, either hunting or non-hunting. The hunt party shall not exceed three persons, except during youth waterfowl hunts. A youth hunter must be accompanied by at least one non-hunting adult, per F.S. 790.22. Adult supervisors with required licenses and permits may actively participate in youth waterfowl hunts but shall not take wildlife with a gun. During veterans and military waterfowl hunts, all permit holders and their hunting guests must carry proof of active duty or veteran status at all times to harvest waterfowl. Non-hunting assistants with required licenses and permits may actively participate in veterans and military waterfowl hunts but shall not take wildlife with a gun.
9. STA waterfowl quota permits and standby opportunities are non-transferable.

### General Area Regulations:

All general laws and regulations relating to wild animal life or freshwater aquatic life shall apply unless specifically exempted for this area. Hunting or the taking of wildlife or fish on this area shall be allowed only during the open seasons, and in accordance with the following regulations:

1. Taking or attempting to take any game with the aid of live decoys, recorded game calls or sounds, set guns, artificial light, net, trap, snare, drugs, or poison is prohibited.
2. The wanton and willful waste of wildlife is prohibited.
3. Public access is prohibited on any portion of the area posted as "Closed" or "Restricted."
4. Taking or herding wildlife from any motorized vehicle, aircraft, or boat which is under power is prohibited, until power and movement

from that power, has ceased.

5. The release of any animal is prohibited, without written authorization of the landowner or primary land manager.
6. It is unlawful for any person to leave any garbage, refuse, or litter in the area.
7. It is unlawful to set fire to any forest, grass, or woodland.
8. A Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Law Enforcement Officer may search any camp, vehicle, or boat in accordance with law.
9. Spent shell casings and all materials used for temporary blinds must be removed after each hunt. Construction or use of permanent blinds or structures is prohibited.
10. Tampering with or destruction of equipment, improvements, or water control structures is prohibited.
11. Cutting or damaging fences is prohibited.
12. Fires are prohibited.
13. It is illegal to hunt over bait or place bait or food for wildlife on this area.

#### **Parking:**

1. Hunters must park their vehicles and enter and **exit** the marsh directly from their assigned parking spaces and each group's parking assignment must be displayed on the windshield or dashboard of the permitted vehicle.
2. Parking spaces will be selected by waterfowl hunters prior to entering the area from the list of available parking spaces maintained by check station staff.
3. Waterfowl quota permit holders will be able to select their parking space according to the order their permits were awarded during the waterfowl quota drawing.
4. The check station operator maintains an ordered list of waterfowl quota permit holders and will call each permittee by name (roll call) to check in and select their parking space starting at 4 a.m. for morning hunts and at 12:30 p.m. for afternoon hunts. Waterfowl quota permit holders should arrive on time to avoid missing their initial chance to select a parking space. Waterfowl quota permit holders arriving after their name has been called, but before 4:30 a.m. for morning hunts or 1 p.m. for afternoon hunts, will be checked in after the check station operator has completed the initial roll call.
5. Hunters can check their place on the list of permit holders and standby recipients by using their account at [GoOutdoorsFlorida.com](http://GoOutdoorsFlorida.com). Each awarded quota permit and standby opportunity will include the order they were drawn.
6. To avoid crowding, only permit holders and standby recipients should approach the check station when checking in, declaring hunt guests, and selecting parking spaces.
7. For morning hunts only and beginning at 4:30 a.m., each standby recipient will select their parking space according to the order their opportunity was awarded via the standby drawing, provided a waterfowl quota permit becomes available.
8. For afternoon hunts only and beginning at 1 p.m., walk-in hunters will select their parking spaces in the order in which they are chosen via the on-site walk-in lottery.
9. Participants in youth hunts will be checked in on a first come, first served basis from 4 am to 4:30 am for morning hunts and from 12:30 pm to 1 pm for afternoon hunts.
10. Parking locations adjacent to boat ramps are available by disabled parking permit only.

#### **Public Access and Vehicles:**

1. Authorized hunters and guests must enter and exit only at the designated entrance and at the same time on waterfowl hunt days (Fridays and Sundays during "waterfowl season" in this brochure).
2. Access to the STA is allowed for hunting waterfowl only unless authorized by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Other specific uses may be permitted by the SFWMD.
3. Access is prohibited on structures and equipment and in areas posted as "Closed" or "Restricted".
4. Vehicles may not be operated on roads or levees posted as closed. Do not block gates or levees with vehicles or equipment. Use of motorized vehicles is prohibited except by authorized hunters on established waterfowl hunt days.
5. Possession of bicycles or electric bicycles is prohibited on all waterfowl hunt days. On all remaining days, use of bicycles or electric bicycles is prohibited from ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise.
6. Only one vehicle per authorized hunting group may access the area on scheduled hunt dates, except during youth waterfowl hunts when up to two vehicles per authorized hunting group may access the area.
7. Motorized vessels, including gas and electric-powered boats, and boat trailers are prohibited, except that permitted alligator hunters may trailer non-motorized vessels (backing trailers down levees is prohibited).
8. All boats must be equipped with required boating safety equipment.
9. Airboats, tracked vehicles, motorcycles, ATVs, recreational off-highway vehicles (side-by-sides) and swamp buggies are prohibited.
10. **Class 1 electric bicycles may be operated according to rules for traditional, non-motorized bicycles. All other electric bicycles may be operated only on named or numbered roads open to motorized vehicles. For more information visit [MyFWC.com/ebike](http://MyFWC.com/ebike).**

#### **Hunters and Check Stations:**

1. Authorized hunters and guests must report at the check station together when entering and leaving the area and check all harvested game. To avoid crowding, only one hunter per group should approach the check station when checking in, declaring hunt guests, and selecting parking spaces.
2. The check station will open at 4 a.m.
3. Hunters who have waterfowl quota permits for the morning hunts must report at the check station between 4 a.m. and 4:30 a.m. and declare their hunting guests to the check station operator prior to 4:30 a.m. All hunters participating in a morning hunt must check out by noon.
4. Hunters who have waterfowl quota permits for the afternoon hunts must report at the check station between 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. and must declare their hunting guests to the check station operator prior to 1 p.m. All hunters participating in an afternoon hunt must check out by **1.5** hours after sunset.

5. Waterfowl quota permit holders who do not check in during the required time intervals forfeit their permit.
6. Waterfowl quota permit holders who do not declare their hunting guests during the required time intervals will forfeit their ability to take hunting guests on their hunt.
7. For morning hunts only, standby recipients will be selected starting at 4:30 a.m. and concluding at 5:00 a.m. to replace no-show waterfowl quota permit holders in order of the random drawing until the quota is met. There is no guarantee that persons with a standby opportunity will be allowed onto the area to hunt. Standby recipients must decide if their position on the standby list is worth showing up at the check station on the hunt day. Selected standby recipients must report at the check station upon being chosen (or forfeit their opportunity) and declare their hunting guests (or forfeit their ability to take hunting guests on their hunt).
8. For morning hunts only, standby recipients who show up the morning of the hunt, but are not selected to replace a no-show waterfowl quota permit holder due to the quota being met or permit holders who arrive after 4:30 a.m. and thus forfeit their permit may remain at the check station after the standby selection process has concluded at 5:00 a.m. and check in as other hunters check out, provided that a quota of 20 authorized hunters on the area (not including guests) is not exceeded throughout the duration of the hunt. Permit holders who forfeit their permit by arriving after 4:30 a.m. or standby recipients who arrive after the standby selection process has ended, also may be selected to enter the area on a first come, first served basis if the quota of 20 authorized hunters has not been met by the conclusion of the standby selection process at 5:00 a.m. No additional replacement hunters will be admitted within 1.5 hours before legal shooting time ends for the morning hunt.
9. For afternoon hunts only and beginning at 1 p.m., a lottery system will be used to determine the order and distribution of any unissued or forfeited permits to walk-in hunters. Hunters selected during the lottery must report at the check station upon being selected (or forfeit their permit) and will declare their hunting guests (or forfeit their ability to take hunting guests on their hunt).
10. During afternoon hunts, replacement walk-in hunters will be allowed to check in as the initial walk-in hunters check out such that a quota of 20 authorized hunters (not including guests) is not exceeded throughout the hunt. The order in which the replacement walk-in hunters may enter the area will be determined by the same lottery system used to select the initial walk-in hunters. No additional replacement walk-in hunters will be admitted within 1.5 hours before legal shooting time ends for afternoon hunts. Any walk-in hunters who arrive after the lottery has begun must form a separate line (in the order of arrival) until after the initial walk-in lottery is completed. If additional openings occur, hunters in this line will be let in on a first come, first served basis.
11. Please be advised, submitting false information or using another person's identity without their consent is considered identity theft and may result in felony charges and loss of hunting privileges.

#### **Guns:**

1. Shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise until 11 a.m. for morning hunts and 2 p.m. until sunset for afternoon hunts.
2. All boat ramps, parking areas, roads, water control structures, earthen berms, levees, and powerline pads are closed to hunting, except that permitted alligator hunters may take alligators from levees during open seasons. Hunting is prohibited in any portion of the area designated (either on-site or in the brochure) as closed to hunting.
3. The discharge of a firearm outside periods open to hunting or in areas designated as closed to hunting is prohibited per s. 790.15 FS.
4. Hunting with firearms other than shotguns is prohibited.
5. Hunting with shotguns capable of holding more than 3 shells is prohibited.
6. Use of non-toxic shot approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required.
7. Non-native reptiles may be removed year-round by methods other than firearms. During waterfowl hunt days, non-native reptiles may be removed using shotguns, except in areas closed to hunting.

#### **Dogs:**

1. Dogs are prohibited except waterfowl retrievers and bird dogs may be used while hunting.
2. Dogs must be kept under physical restraint when not hunting.
3. When hunters are at the check station, their dogs must be left restrained at the hunter's vehicle.

#### **Waterfowl Season:**

Teal and Wood Duck Only: September 17

Teal Only: September 22, 24

Youth Hunt (no quota permit required): November 11

Duck, Light Goose, and Coot - Phase 1: November 19, 24, 26

Duck, Light Goose, and Coot - Phase 2: December 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31, January 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 28

Veterans and Military Hunt: February 4

Youth Hunt (no quota permit required): February 10

**Permit, Stamp, and License Requirements** - Quota permit (except during youth hunts), hunting license, military license or ID (if harvesting waterfowl during the Veterans and Military Waterfowl Hunts), management area permit, migratory bird permit, state waterfowl permit, and federal duck stamp.

**Scouting Dates** - STA 3/4 will be open for scouting from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sept. 9-10 and from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Nov. 4-5 and Dec. 2-3, 2023.

**Legal to Hunt** - Ducks (including mergansers), geese (including Egyptian geese), and coot. [See migratory bird season dates, bag limits, and regulations.](#)

**Regulations Unique to Waterfowl Hunting Seasons** - In addition to these regulations, all migratory game bird regulations pertaining to waterfowl hunting shall apply.

1. Hunting ducks, light geese, and coot with lead shot is prohibited.
2. Shooting hours for ducks, light geese, and coot are ½ hour before sunrise until sunset.
3. All levees, roads, boat launches, parking areas, water control structures, powerline pads, and earthen berms are closed to hunting.

Hunting is prohibited in any portion of the area designated (either on-site or in the brochure) as closed to hunting.

**Report your leg bands:** [www.reportband.gov](http://www.reportband.gov).

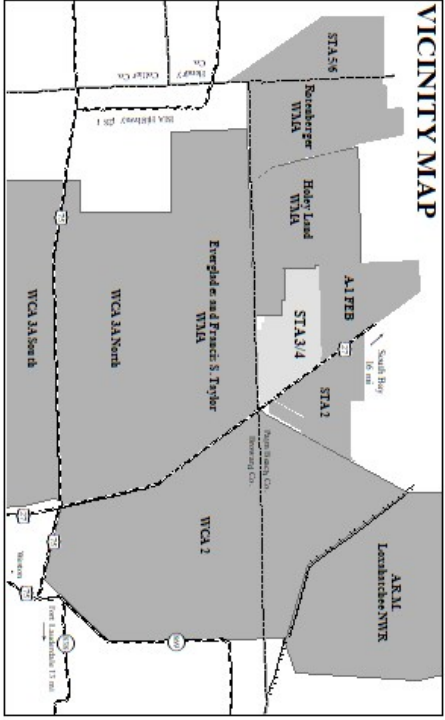
**About STA 3/4:** Stormwater Treatment Area 3/4 (STA 3/4) is a 16,772 acre constructed wetland designed to reduce phosphorus loading to the northern Everglades and Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. The plants inside this constructed wetland are absorbing phosphorus as they grow, eventually depositing much of the nutrient in the soils. Previously under agricultural practices for decades, phosphorus from fertilizers and organic soils has been carried into the Everglades by storm runoff, causing a change in the Everglades landscape. Too much of this essential nutrient has allowed cattail to invade the River of Grass, reducing the coverage of sawgrass and open water sloughs. Unfortunately, cattail does not provide the habitat necessary to support many of the plant and animal species that are unique to the Everglades. STA 3/4 was constructed at a cost of over \$83 million and is one of six STAs mandated by the State of Florida's Everglades Forever Act with a primary goal of reducing the amount of phosphorus that reaches the Everglades ecosystem. The numerous levees, water control structures and monitoring equipment within STA 3/4 are critical to the success of the phosphorus control program. Any damage to these facilities as a result of public access could restrict the continued public use of STA 3/4. This waterfowl hunting area is a cooperative effort of the South Florida Water Management District and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to provide additional opportunities for recreation on public lands in South Florida. Due to the purpose-first nature of the STAs, all or part of each area may be closed for construction or other management activities.

**Cooperation Requested:**

*Please help in protecting the integrity of stormwater treatment facilities – remove vegetation from boats before entering and leaving the area. Your support is appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact FWC at (954) 746-1789. If you see law violators or suspicious activities, contact your nearest Commission regional office or call 888-404-FWCC (\*FWC or #FWC may also be used depending on your phone service provider). You may qualify for a cash reward from the Wildlife Alert Reward Association.*

*The FWC receives financial assistance from the Department of the Interior (DOI), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The DOI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or you need more information, please contact the FWC at: FWC, Office of Human Resources, 620 S Meridian St., Tallahassee, FL 32399, (850) 488-6411, or write to: Office of Diversity, Inclusion & Civil Rights, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.*

**VICINITY MAP**



**STORMWATER TREATMENT AREA 3/4**  
**PUBLIC SMALL GAME HUNTING AREA**  
 16,772 acres  
 Palm Beach County

**Legend**

- STA 3/4 Management Area
- Closed to Hunting
- Designated Entrance
- Check Station
- Paved Road
- Levee Road (check parking maps for vehicle access)
- Cell 3A Boundary
- County Line

**NOTICE:** The STAs undergo frequent closures due to construction or other management activities. This map depicts areas open to hunting in the absence of closures. Hunters must consult the STA 3/4 brochure, parking maps, and other notices for areas open to waterfowl hunting during the current season.



**DISCLAIMER:** This graphical representation is provided for informational purposes and should not be considered authoritative for navigational, engineering, legal, and other uses.