MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS

2026 ALLIGATOR HUNTING GUIDE



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: LYNN POSEY

ALLIGATOR
SEASON DATES
for 2026:

Public Waters Season
12:00 noon August 28 - 12:00 noon September 7, 2026

Private Lands Season
12:00 noon August 28 - 6 a.m. September 21, 2026

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks

1505 Eastover Drive • Jackson, MS 39211-6374 • (601) 432-2400

Commissioners

Gary Rhodes, Chairman, Flowood

Colin Maloney, Tupelo

Drew St. John, Madison

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Todd Hairston, Gulfport

Administration

Lynn Posey, Executive Director

Curtis Thornhill, Deputy Executive Director

Regional Offices

North - Enid, (662) 563-6222

Central - Canton, (601) 859-3421

South - Magnolia, (601) 783-2911

ATTENTION



The use of BAIT or BAITED HOOK LINES is ILLEGAL in MISSISSIPPI

NOTICE: Private Lands Permits **are not** for use on any public water, regardless, even if public water is surrounded by the permitted private land, nor can public water permits be used on any private lands.

ALLIGATOR HARVEST-REPORTING is MANDATORY

PUBLIC WATERS

Harvest-Report Online within 24 hours of Harvest

DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 8

Go to *mdwfp.com/alligator*

Do not return un-used tags or report card

PRIVATE LANDS

Harvest-Report Online within 24 hours of Harvest

DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 22

Do not return un-used tags or report card

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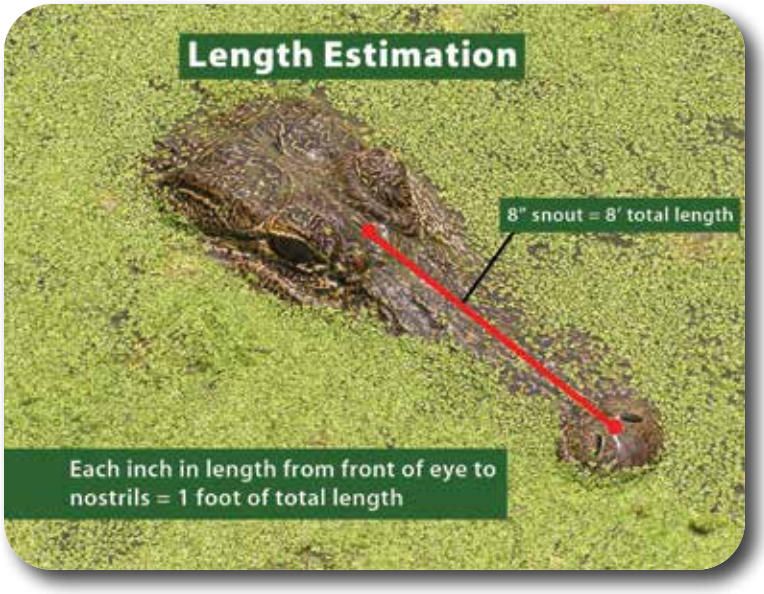
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Alligator Capture & Harvest Techniques



Estimating Alligator Length

The most accurate method to estimate total alligator length is by estimating the snout length (the distance between the nostrils and the front of the eyes). This is a scientifically proven method used by biologists when conducting population surveys. The snout length in inches can be translated into feet to estimate the total body length.

For example: an 8 inch snout length would translate to 8 feet total body length *(Left photo)*.

Capture Methods

Only legal methods of capture for the Mississippi Alligator Hunting Season are described in this Hunting Guide. **The use of bait and baited hook sets is illegal in Mississippi.** All alligators must first be captured and controlled by a restraining line before being dispatched. Restrained is defined as having a noose or snare attached to the neck or at least one leg in a manner in which the alligator is controlled. Shooting at or attempting to dispatch an alligator that is not restrained may result in the loss and needless waste of the animal. Capture methods will be dictated by the hunter's proficiency with equipment and the amount of obstacles in the water in which the alligator is located. For instance, all legal methods may be applicable for an alligator located in basically open water with few underwater or surface obstacles. However, capture methods should be more selective for an alligator located near dense vegetation, logs, stumps, or man-made structures such as piers or boat houses. Preferred methods in these instances may be a harpoon with attached cable and buoy or a hand or pole snare, which hold the alligator more securely and may be able to withstand more substantial resistance. Capture preference is strictly left up to the hunter.
Legal methods of capture are:

- Snatch Hooks (hand thrown or rod/reel)
- Harpoon (with attached line and/or buoy)
- Snare (hand or pole type)
- Bowfishing equipment (with attached line and/or buoy)

Dispatching Techniques

Alligators may only be dispatched with a shotgun with shot size no larger than #6 shot (ex. 6, 7, 7.5, 8, and 9 shot only) or with a bangstick chambered in .38 caliber or larger. All shotguns or bangsticks must remain cased and unloaded until the alligator is restrained. No alligator may be dispatched until it is restrained by a noose or snare around the neck or leg so that the alligator is controlled.

Once the alligator has been restrained, it may be dispatched with legal equipment. A good rule of thumb is to dispatch the animal when it no longer thrashes after tugging on the restraining line 2-3 times. This will ensure a still and safe target for dispatching with the shotgun or bangstick. To safely and humanely dispatch the alligator aim for the center of the spine directly behind the skull plate. Do not shoot through the skull plate. The skull of an alligator is very dense bone and fragments may ricochet. The brain, which is about the size of a walnut, is located 2-3 inches behind the eyes directly between the ear flaps. A properly placed projectile will sever the spinal cord and brain causing instant death. Never attempt to dispatch an alligator by shooting into the chest cavity. *The use of safety glasses is recommended when discharging any firearm or bangstick.*

Shotgun

After the alligator has been properly restrained, remove the shotgun from the case, place all persons in a safe location, and safely load the shotgun. While gentle pressure is kept on the restraining line to hold the head and neck above the surface of the water, place the end of the barrel of the shotgun a maximum of 3 to 4 inches from the alligator, directly above the neck. Aim for the very center of the neck (directly between the two center rows of scutes) at an angle slightly towards the base of the head. After properly firing the shotgun, the alligator will immediately relax and begin to sink. Follow directions located in the section "Transporting."

Bangsticks

After the alligator has been properly restrained, remove the bangstick from the case, place all persons in a safe location, and safely load the bangstick. Extreme caution should be used when handling any bangstick to ensure that the safety pin is not removed until fully prepared to dispatch the alligator. Always follow manufacturer's safety recommendations. A loaded bangstick should always be held over the side of the boat and pointed away from the boat. A bangstick should always be discharged below the water surface to reduce potential for aerial dispersal of bullet or bone fragments. *(Right top photo) .38 cal./.357 Mag. bangstick w/ safety pin inserted)*

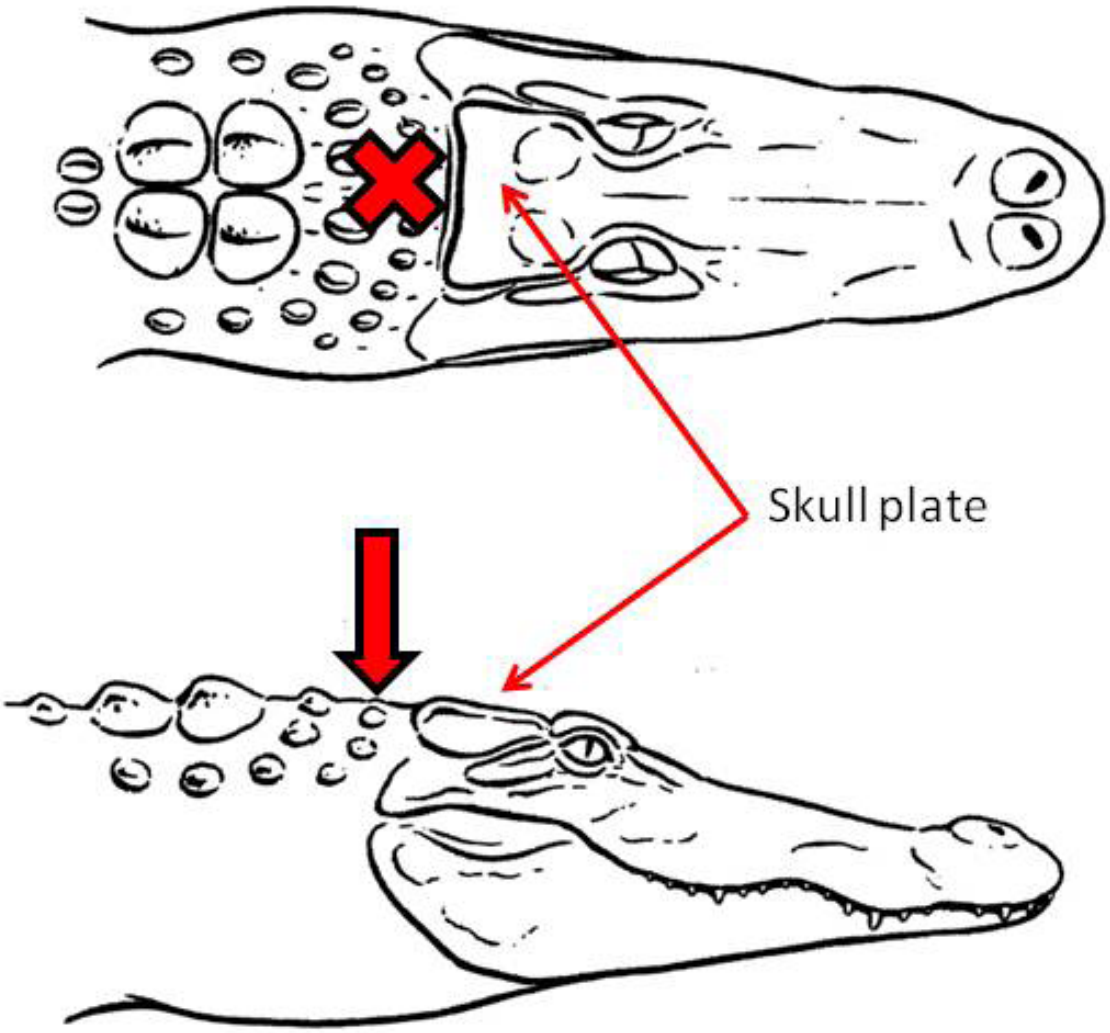


While gentle pressure is kept on the restraining line to hold the head and neck slightly below the surface of the water, aim for the very center of the neck (directly between the two center rows of scutes) at an angle slightly towards the base of the head and properly discharge the bangstick. The alligator will immediately relax and begin to sink. Follow directions located in the section "Transporting from the Field." *(Right bottom photo) Proper bangstick position behind skull plate, center of the neck, angled slightly forward.*



Proper Shot Placement

Shot placement is crucial for an effective dispatch of the alligator. DO NOT shoot into the skullplate. A shot into the skull plate can result in ricochet of bone and pellets and an ineffective dispatch of the alligator.



"X" indicates the proper location for dispatching an alligator.

Securing, Tagging, and Transporting from the Field

** ALWAYS RESTRAIN THE MOUTH BEFORE TRANSPORTING **

Securing

Once the alligator has been properly dispatched the mouth should be secured with tape or inner tube bands. *Note: Improperly dispatched alligators may appear dead or stunned. Never handle or load an alligator without securing the mouth shut.* An alligator that has not been properly dispatched may cause serious injury or even death. Use extreme measures to secure any alligator that is transported in a boat. A thrashing alligator could knock occupants overboard. Always wear a life jacket while transporting alligators in a boat. It may be difficult to sufficiently lift extremely large alligators to the boat gunnel. In this case, use the restraining noose to slowly tow the carcass to a firm bank, then use the restraining noose to pull the alligator onto the bank in order to secure the mouth and legs.



Mouth: Use the restraining noose to lift the head, belly side up, to the gunnel of the boat. While the top jaw is held against the gunnel of the boat use another rope to pull the lower jaw to the top jaw *(Photo top right)*. Secure the mouth with several wraps of quality duct tape or electrical tape. Large "rubber bands" can be made by cutting 3/4 - 1" cross sections from a car tire inner-tube *(Photo center)*.



Legs: The legs should be secured by tying the front legs to each other and the back legs to each other *(Bottom left photo)*. Using small diameter rope, tie to the elbow joint of one leg, then run the rope over the back of the alligator and tie to opposite leg. Do not use twine or heavy string to secure the legs, it may cause damage by cutting into the hide. Once the legs are secured over the back, the ropes can be used to assist in lifting or pulling the carcass.

Temporary Tagging Instructions



Temporary Possession Tagging Instructions

Temporary Possession Tags will be printed and conveniently attached to your Alligator Possession Permit in the form of two extra perforated cards. Upon harvest of an alligator:

1) Tear one of the Temporary Possession Tag cards from your Permit

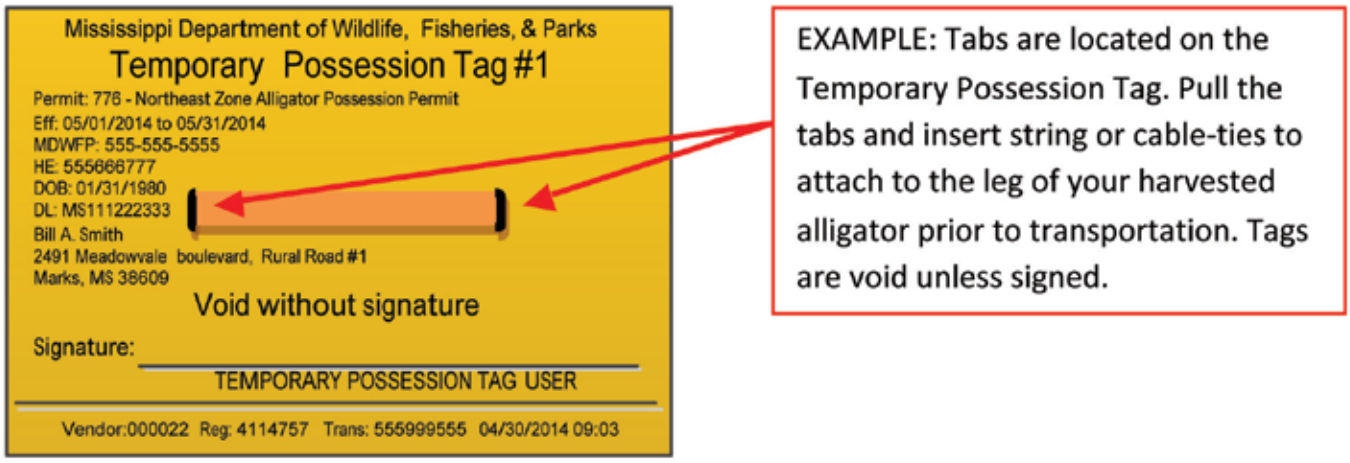
2) Be sure the tag is signed by the permitted hunter.

3) Gently pull the two tabs located on the Temporary Possession Tag card.

4) Insert string, wire, or a cable-tie though the holes and tie the Temporary Possession Tag card to the leg of the alligator.

5) The Temporary Possession Tag MUST remain attached to the carcass until processing.

6) The Temporary Possession Tag should be attached to the skin after skinning until a federal export CITES tag is obtained from MDWFP.



Obtaining CITES Tags: A federal CITES tag is required to be attached to the hide near the end of the tail if being sold to a licensed alligator parts dealer/processor or prior to transportation across state lines. A CITES tag(s) will be mailed to you upon receipt of your harvest report. CITES tags may also be obtained from MDWFP Regional Offices in person, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

- The wildlife agencies of Arkansas and Louisiana have specifically approved that properly licensed hunters with legally harvested alligators with properly attached temporary possession tags are legal to transport through their respective states for the purpose of processing.

MDWFP OFFICES

- Jackson Main Office, Wildlife Bureau - (601) 432-2217
- North Region Office, Enid - (662) 563-6222
- Central Region Office, Canton - (601) 859-3421
- South Region Office, Magnolia - (601) 783-2911

Transporting

If the alligator is too large to load into the boat, it may be secured to the bow of the boat, head first, and slowly towed. Use extreme caution in this case as the boat will handle much differently and may be difficult to navigate. Otherwise, load the alligator into the boat being careful not to shift too much weight to one side of the boat. This could cause it to capsize. For this reason, as well as others, a wide bottomed, sturdy boat is recommended. The CITES tag must remain attached to the hide until it is tanned or taxidermy mounted and during export from the state. The possession of any alligator hide not tagged (with either a temporary MS tag or CITES tag) is prohibited.

Mandatory Harvest Report and Survey

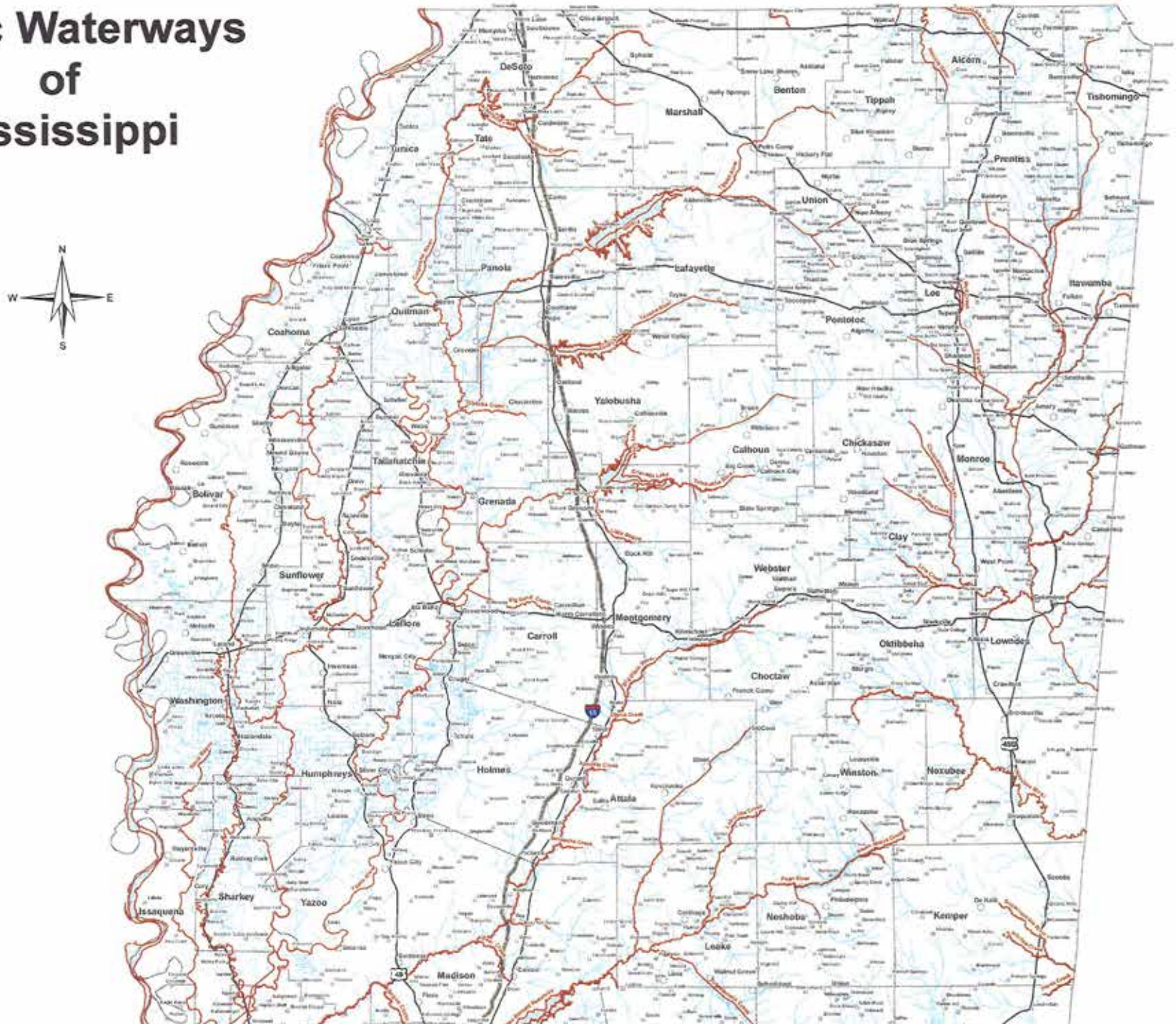
All permitted hunters are required to submit an online Harvest Report and Survey within 24 hours of harvest. You will need your MDWFP Customer Number (located on your Alligator Possession Permit) and your date of birth to login. For each alligator harvested you will need all of the information which is listed on your Harvest Report Card. You may login at any time to update your Report and Survey, if needed.

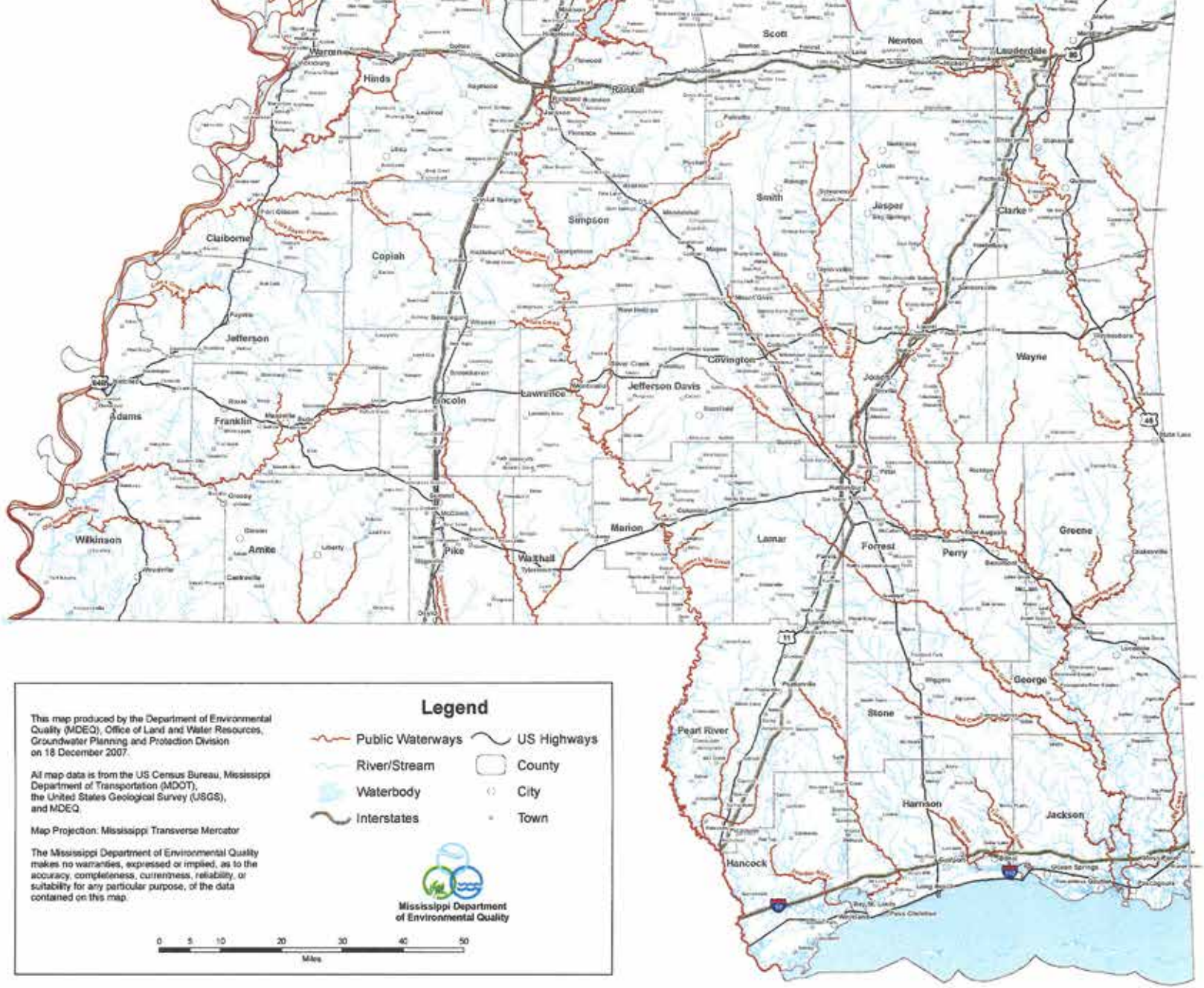
- Go to **mdwfp.com/alligator** to complete the Harvest Report and Survey.
- The Report is required even if you did not hunt.
- The Report is required even if you did not harvest an alligator.
- The Report deadline is 24 hours after season closes.

Documentation

All alligators skulls and skeletal parts which are not discarded must be permanently marked with the CITES tag number of the hide from which it was taken. The number may be marked in a conspicuous location, such as the inner lower jaw or palate of the mouth. The skull and other skeletal parts may be kept by the selected hunter, transferred, or sold. Records must be kept indicating to whom any parts are sold or transferred. Information should include hunter name, address, CITES tag number associated with the alligator, the date it was tagged, and a description of the parts. Any meat in storage must also be documented in the same manner and shall remain documented until it is prepared for consumption. Any cartons containing alligator hides, meat, or parts must be labeled with the above information for shipping interstate or intrastate.

Public Waterways of Mississippi




Warren
Hinds
Rankin
Scott
Newton
Lauderdale
Smith
Jasper
Clarke
Simpson
Claiborne
Copiah
Jefferson
Lincoln
Lawrence
Jefferson Davis
Covington
Wayne
Adams
Franklin
Wilkinson
Amite
Pike
Walthall
Marion
Lamar
Forest
Perry
Greene
George
Stone
Pearl River
Harrison
Jackson
Hancock
Legend
Public Waterways
River/Stream
Waterbody
Interstates
US Highways
County
City
Town
This map produced by the Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Office of Land and Water Resources, Groundwater Planning and Protection Division on 18 December 2007.
All map data is from the US Census Bureau, Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), the United States Geological Survey (USGS), and MDEQ.
Map Projection: Mississippi Transverse Mercator
The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality makes no warranties, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy, completeness, currentness, reliability, or suitability for any particular purpose, of the data contained on this map.
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
0 5 10 20 30 40 50
Miles

PUBLIC WATER ALLIGATOR HUNTING
LEGAL WATERWAYS CLARIFICATION

For those permitted in the following MS Public Water Zones:

1. Northeast
2. Northwest
3. West Central
4. Southwest
5. South Central
6. Southeast

The regulations ONLY allow permitted persons to hunt alligators within their drawn zone on waterways designated as a "Public Waterway" by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). There are also specifically named lakes and oxbow lakes within the Northeast, Northwest, West Central, and Southwest Zones that are legal hunting areas for those drawn within those zones.

A map and a list of designated waterways within each drainage system is available online here: http:// https://www.mdeq.ms.gov/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/MS-Public-Waterways---22x34.pdf

Clarification of Open Waterways:

1. Legal public water for public water alligator hunters include any public waterway, as designated by MDEQ, and all associated portions of each drainage that are not privately owned and have navigable access from the designated waterway.
2. For those who hunt on or near state borderline waters, such as the Mississippi River, lower Pearl River (in Pearl River and Hancock Counties), Eagle Lake, Chotard Lake, Albermarle Lake, Tennessee Lake, Lake Ferguson, Lake Whittington, and Lake Beulah, BE ADVISED, to cross the state border while pursuing alligators into any water that is not part of Mississippi will be considered illegal alligator hunting by the adjoining state (i.e. AR & LA). It shall be the hunter's responsibility to be aware of state borders.

Special Notifications:

1. West Central Zone Hunters: Be aware that alligator hunting access is allowed to permitted hunters at the Panther Swamp NWR boatramp located at Lake George on Callihan Road. Federal agents will enforce a no alligator hunting restriction north of the Callihan Road bridge.
2. Northeast Zone Hunters: Be aware to consult U.S. Army Corps of Engineer (USACOE) Regulations regarding hunting activities and boatramp use prior to hunting USACOE regulated waterways. A USACOE hunting permit may be required prior to hunting on the Tenn-Tom Waterway.

Private Lands Alligator Hunting

Permitting process

The permitting process for private lands is much different than public water permitting. Landowners may apply to receive harvest vouchers for alligators within privately owned water on the landowner's property. Harvest vouchers are issued at the rate of 1 voucher for 20 acres of permanent surface water and 1 additional voucher for each additional 100 acres of permanent surface water. Landowners may transfer any or all harvest voucher(s) to anyone 16 years of age or older.

Hunting hours

There are no hunting hour restrictions on private lands, however legal capture/take methods are restricted depending upon the time of day.

Harvest Restrictions

Daytime hours:

During daytime hours (½ hour before sunrise until ½ hour after sunset), nighttime capture and dispatch methods are legal. In additon, firearms may be used to dispatch an alligator without first being captured and/or restrained. However, type of firearm and ammunition are restricted. Centerfire rifles must be chambered in .277in./7.035mm (.270/7mm) or larger. Shotguns are restricted to 12 and 10 gauge. Shotgun ammunition is limited to slugs and shot size #6, 7, 7.5, 8, and 9.

Nighttime hours:

During nighttime hours (½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise), all alligators must be captured alive and legally restrained prior to being dispatched. It is il legal to kill an unrestrained alligator during nighttime hours. Restrained is defined as an alligator that has a noose or snare secured around the neck or leg in a manner that the alligator is controlled. Capture methods are restricted to handheld snares, snatch hooks (hand-held or rod/reel), harpoons (with attached line/buoy) and bowfishing equipment (w/ line attached from bow to arrow or buoy).

Hunting with a firearm during daylight hours

When using this method, several important suggestions should be considered:

(1) Always be extra cautious when discharging a firearm across water, due to ricochet possibilities. Shooting at a floating or partially submerged alligator is highly discouraged. Shooting a floating or partially submerged alligator should only be attempted after consideration for all concerns for safety.

(2) The preferred vital target area is the neck area between the head and front leg. Never attempt to shoot an alligator in the head. The vital area of the head (brain) is quite small (walnut sized) and the bone surrounding it is very dense and difficult to penetrate.

(3) A floating alligator will sink immediately after receiving a lethal shot from a firearm. Never shoot a floating/swimming alligator, unless you are prepared with the proper equipment to retrieve the alligator carcass from the bottom. Dead alligators will not float.

(4) Do not shoot an alligator in the chest cavity. A wounded alligator will retreat to the water and will most often move to an underwater bankhole or other location making retrieval nearly impossible.

Tagging

Temporary Possession Tags will be printed and conveniently attached to your Private Lands Alligator Possession Permit in the form of two extra perforated cards. Upon harvest of an alligator:

1. Tear one of the Temporary Possession Tag cards from your Permit.
2. Be sure the tag is signed by the permitted hunter.
3. Gently pull the two tabs located on the Temporary Possession Tag card.
4. Insert string, wire, or a cable-tie though the holes and tie the Temporary Possession Tag card to the leg of the alligator.
5. The Temporary Possession Tag MUST remain attached to the carcass until processing.
6. The Temporary Possession Tag should be attached to the skin after skinning until a federal export CITES is obtained from MDWFP.

Harvest Reporting

All Private Lands harvest reporting is conducted online at **mdwfp.com/alligator**.

Harvest reports must be submitted within 24 hours of harvest. The deadline is September 19 for all Private Lands harvest reports. Private Lands permit holders are no longer required to return unused temporary possession tags or Report Cards. Report cards are provided for your convenience to document the required information in the on-line report.

Documentation of Parts

Any part of the alligator kept in possession must be documented with a completed Alligator Parts Tag. Finished products may be permanently marked with the CITES tag number in lieu of the Alligator Parts Tag.

Violations of alligator tagging regulations may include federal penalties.

Mississippi Alligator Hunting Records

Alligator Hunting Records - PUBLIC WATERS

AS OF CLOSE OF 2025 HUNTING SEASON					
	Longest (Male)	Heaviest (Male)	Longest (Female)	Longest (Female)	Heaviest (Female)
RECORD	14 ft. 3in.	822 pounds	10 ft. 0 in.	11 ft. 3/4 in.	324 pounds
TAKEN BY:	Donald Woods	Clayton Gibson	Brandon Maskew	Jason Ullendorf	Jason Ullendorf
TOWN	Oxford, MS	Natchez, MS	Ellisville, MS	Saucier, MS	Saucier, MS
DATE	August 25, 2023	August 28, 2015	August 31, 2013	September 7, 2024	September 7, 2024
WATER BODY	Yazoo River	Mississippi River	Pascagoula River	Pascagoula River	Pascagoula River
METHOD OF HARVEST	Rod/Reel - Snatch hook	Rod/Reel - Snatch hook	Rod/Reel - Snatch hook	Rod/Reel - Snatch hook	Rod/Reel - Snatch hook
LENGTH	14 ft. 3in.	13 ft. 1/2 in.	10 ft. 0 in.	11 ft. 3/4 in.	11 ft. 3/4in.
WEIGHT (LBS.)	802.5	822	295.3	324	324
BELLY GIRTH (IN.)	65	65	50	37	37
TAIL GIRTH (IN.)	46.5	48	32	32	32
COMMENTS	West Central	Southwest	Southeast	Southeast	Southeast

Alligator Hunting Records - PRIVATE LANDS

AS OF CLOSE OF 2025 HUNTING SEASON				
	Longest (Male)	Heaviest (Male)	Longest (Female)	Heaviest (Female)
RECORD	14 ft. 1/4 in.	826 pounds	10 ft. 1/2 in.	283 pounds
TAKEN BY:	Kennie Crechale	Kennie Crechale	Jonathan Kent	Kevin Goza
TOWN	Morton, MS	Morton, MS	Greenwood, MS	Flowood, MS
DATE	August 29, 2015	August 29, 2015	September 19, 2015	September 25, 2010
COUNTY	Warren County	Warren County	Issaquena County	Issaquena County
LENGTH	14 ft. 1/4 in.	14 ft. 1/4 in.	10 ft. 1/2 in.	9 ft. 5 4/8 in.
WEIGHT (LBS.)	826	826	283 (Tie Record)	283 (Tie Record)
BELLY GIRTH (IN.)	68	68	46	48
TAIL GIRTH (IN.)	48	48	32	32
METHOD OF HARVEST	Firearm/ Rifle-Daytime	Firearm/ Rifle-Daytime	Rod/Reel - Snatch hook	Rod/Reel - Snatch hook

Record Alligator Certification Procedures

Is Your Alligator a New Record Length or Weight:

Hunters who wish to certify an alligator as a potential state record of harvest should contact MDWFP at 601-432-2217 or (after business hours) 601-432-2170. Hunters should be prepared to provide the following information at the time of your call:

1. Total length (feet - inches)
2. Belly girth (inches)
3. Tail girth (inches)
4. Weight (lbs) (*only needed if a potential weight record, plus length and girth measurements*)

The Alligator Program Coordinator will return the call ASAP, usually within 12 hours. If deemed a potential record by the program coordinator, arrangements will be made to meet with MDWFP personnel to obtain an official weight or length measurement.

Regarding Weight Records: Since weights are so difficult to estimate and vary greatly, hunters must pre-weigh their alligator before contacting MDWFP. If certified scales are not available, then efforts should be made by the hunter to obtain a weight from a reputable source of scales. Weight certification must be on certified scales or other MDWFP approved scales and witnessed by a MDWFP officer or biologist.

Measuring Tips:

1. Lay the alligator on a flat surface with the carcass laying completely flat and straight. Using a cloth measuring tape, measure along the dorsal side (top) of the alligator from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail following the dorsal contour of the alligator.
2. Measure to the nearest 1/8 inch.
3. For weight, be sure the alligator is completely suspended from the ground.
4. For weight, be sure to "zero tare" the scales when chains or straps are used to hoist the alligator before hoisting the alligator for measuring the weight. Chains and straps should not be included into the weight measurement.

2026 MS Alligator License Purchase Instructions

ALLIGATOR HUNTING LICENSES

This license is required for each person in the hunting party, 16 years of age or older (including 65 YOA and older). This license is applicable for ALL alligator hunting seasons (All Public Water Zone Hunting and/or Private Lands Hunting).

- Priv Code 754 ..... Alligator Hunting License (**$25**)

Available at any location that sells MS H/F Licenses, on-line, or 1-800-5GO-HUNT.

PREREQUISITES FOR ALLIGATOR LICENSES

You must possess a combination hunting/fishing type license to purchase any of the above alligator licenses/permits.

- **RESIDENTS** (Sportsman, All Game H/F, Small Game H/F, Apprentice Sportsman, Apprentice All Game, Apprentice Small Game, Senior Exempt, or Disabled Exempt)
- **NON-RESIDENTS** (All Game, 7-Day All Game, or Non-res MS Native Lifetime)
- **NON-RESIDENTS** who have permits for an approved private property in reciprocal agreement locations must purchase their Alligator Hunting License in the Jackson Office or by calling (601) 432-2263. Ask for Nakita Rankin or Carlos Gray.

***Hunter Education requirements do apply. If you have never been certified in hunter education and are unable to attend a hunter education course prior to the hunt, you may purchase an Apprentice License in lieu of a combination type license. The Apprentice License is available as a one-time purchase for hunters who have never been certified in hunter education. It is valid for only one year.

Who needs an Alligator Hunting License - In a Nutshell:

If a person is 16 years of age or older and are in possession of, or in a vessel that possesses capture equipment or equipment used to harvest alligators, then you must possess an Alligator Hunting License. Lifetime License holders are exempt from the Alligator Hunting License ($25).

No one may attempt to capture an alligator or possess alligator capture equipment while on the waterways, unless in the immediate ("Rock throwing distance") vicinity of a holder of a valid Alligator Possession Permit.

Who needs an Alligator Hunting License - In a Nutshell:

PUBLIC WATERS – Any person who is in a vessel with a person who possesses an Alligator Possession Permit must possess an Alligator Hunting License, regardless. Such licensed person may partake in any part of the alligator hunt process.

PRIVATE LANDS – only the person whose name is retained on the harvest voucher is required to purchase an Alligator Possession Permit. Any person 16 years of age or older that is part of a hunting party must possess an Alligator Hunting License.

- Private land hunters who have multiple permits do not have to purchase ALL of their possession permits at one time. You may choose to buy some now and some later after filling the initial permit's tags.

LIST of Alligator Hunting Licenses & Possession Permits

Code #	Description	Price
754	Alligator Hunting License	$25
870	Public Water Alligator Possession Permit	$200
759	Private Lands Possession Permit - RESIDENT	$100
769	Private Lands Possession Permit – NON RESIDENT	$200

FAQ's for Alligator Season

ALL HUNTERS – Public Water and Private Lands

- **Who needs an Alligator Hunting License ($25)?** Everyone in the hunting party 16 YOA or older. Lifetime License holders are exempt from the Alligator Hunting License.

- **Who needs an Alligator Possession Permit?** Only the person who was drawn for a public water permit or the person who possesses a private lands harvest voucher.

- **Where are Alligator Hunting Licenses sold?** Beginning August 1, assistants who need an Alligator Hunting License may purchase them anywhere Mississippi hunting and fishing licenses are sold, including online, or by calling **1-800-5GO-HUNT**.

- **Can I use a pistol loaded with a shotgun shell to dispatch my alligator?** No. Only long-barreled shotguns with #6 shot, 7, 7.5, 8, and 9, or bang-sticks chambered in .38 caliber or larger are allowed. *(Some exceptions only on private lands permitted hunts, see regulations).*

- **What is the bag limit?** For each possession permit there is a limit of 2 alligators at least 4 feet long, only one of which may exceed 7 feet.

- **Is the permit holder the only person who can capture or kill the alligator?** No. Anyone who has an Alligator Hunting License and is assisting a permit holder may partake in any part of the alligator hunting experience, including children under 16 YOA.

- **What are the temporary possession tags?** These tags must be attached to the leg of your alligator immediately after harvest and prior to moving or transporting. It is illegal to transport and possess an alligator that has not been tagged. Tags are not valid unless signed and dated.

- **Can I sell the hide or other parts of my harvested alligator?** Yes. Only to a person licensed to buy alligator parts, if properly tagged and documented with a federal export CITES tag.
See page 19 of the Alligator Hunting Guide.

Public Water Hunters

- **When is a WMA User Permit required?** Only if launching or accessing a public waterway from a MDWFP WMA property. It is not necessary if only entering or traveling in public waterways through a WMA via boat.

- **Can more than one boat be involved in the hunting party?** Yes. However any vessel containing capture and harvest equipment or a harvested alligator must be within the immediate vicinity of the permit holder.

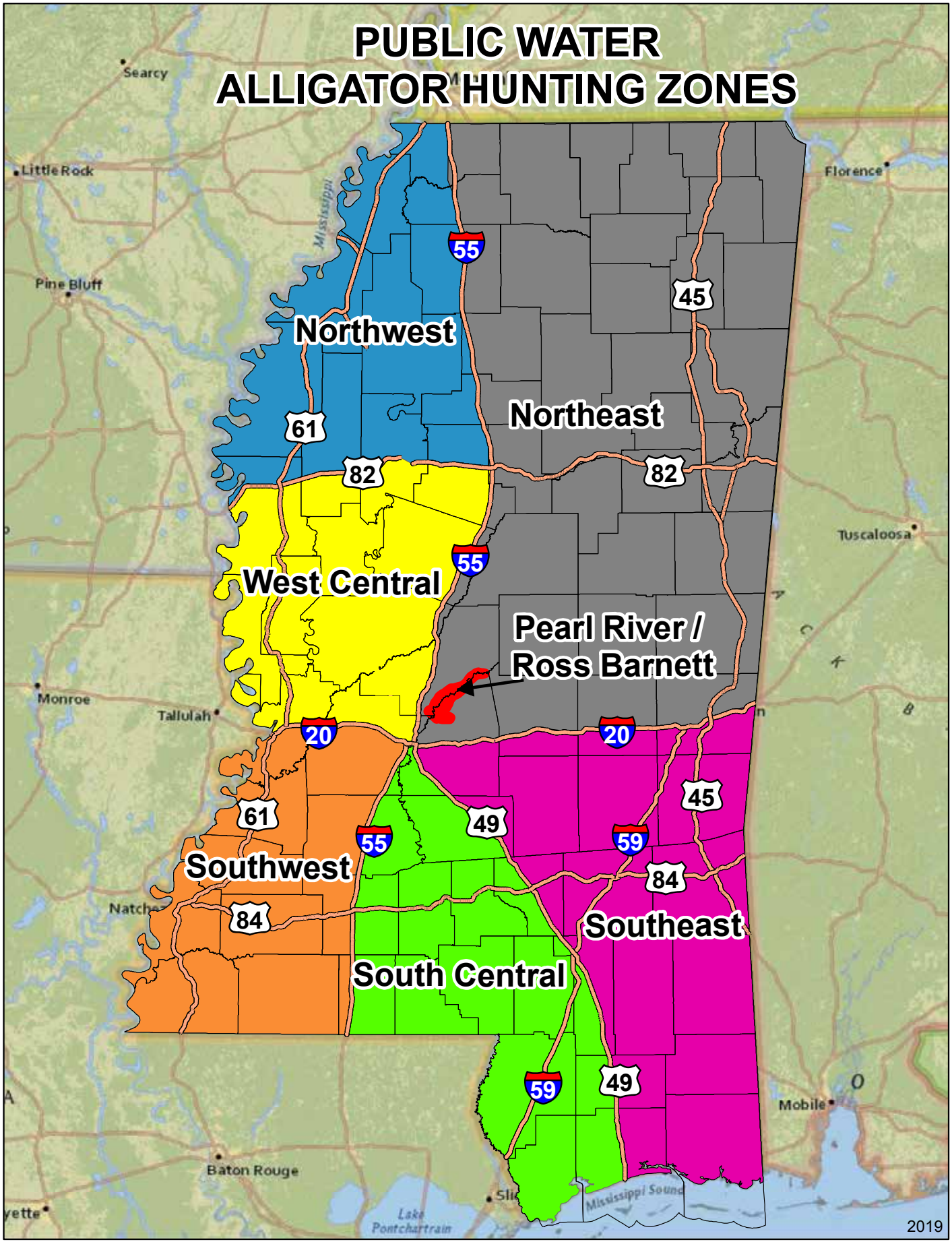
- **What is the purpose of the harvest report card?** It is provided so that you will have a standard location to document all of the necessary information needed for the mandatory on-line harvest report. Do not return it to MDWFP.

- **How do I report my harvest?** An on-line report is required and is only available at *mdwfp.com/alligator*. The report is required of ALL permitted hunters even if you did not harvest or participate in the hunt.

Private Lands Hunts

- **What items must be in my possession while alligator hunting?**
  - Alligator Harvest Voucher(s) signed by landowner and transferee. An Alligator Possession Permit must be purchased for EACH harvest voucher retained by a person. (i.e. 4 vouchers in possession = 4 Possession Permits = 8 alligator tags)
  - Temporary Possession Tags
  - Harvest Report Card for Private Lands
  - Alligator Possession Permit(s) one for each Voucher
  - Alligator Hunting License
  - Each person in the hunting party 16 YOA or older must possess an Alligator Hunting License ($25)

- **What is the purpose of the harvest report card?** Harvest report cards no longer have to be returned to MDWFP. The cards are for your convenience to record required data for the on-line harvest report.


PUBLIC WATER
ALLIGATOR HUNTING ZONES
Northwest
Northeast
West Central
Pearl River /
Ross Barnett
Southwest
Southeast
South Central
Searcy
Little Rock
Pine Bluff
Florence
Tuscaloosa
Monroe
Tallulah
Natchez
Baton Rouge
Mobile
Mississippi Sound
Lake Pontchartrain
55
45
61
82
20
49
59
84
2019

Title 40: Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

Part 2: Wildlife

Part 2, Chapter 5: Regulations regarding alligators.

RULE 5.2 ALLIGATOR HUNTING SEASON FOR PRIVATE LANDS.

A. An American alligator (Alligator mississippiensis) hunting season, hereby referred to as the "Private Lands Alligator Hunting Season," will be opened on private lands, according to restrictions below:

B. Location: Open to all 82 counties.

C. Dates: Starting at 12:00 Noon CDT on the last Friday in August and ending at 6:00 a.m. on Monday, 24 days thereafter.

D. Applicant restrictions and requirements:

1. Only one (1) application may be submitted per property.

2. The applicant's property must contain a minimum of 20 acres of privately-owned permanent surface water in an open county to qualify for an Alligator Harvest Voucher. (Public water is not eligible).

3. Alligator Harvest Vouchers will be issued at the rate of one (1) voucher for the first 20 acres of surface water and one (1) additional voucher is available for each additional 100 acres of surface water in contiguous ownership by the applicant.

4. Upon receipt of the application, surface water acreage of the applicant's property will be evaluated by the MDWFP. The rate of permit issuance may be increased or decreased based upon supporting biological information as provided by the Department.

5. Applicants must obtain and submit an application with the following information by July 1:

    a. A private lands alligator hunting permit application.

    b. Proof of ownership by providing a copy of the landowner's current property tax receipt for the property for which the applicant is submitting.

    c. A copy of the property deed with a complete property description.

    d. In addition to the above, a leaseholder may submit applications signed by the landowner and must provide a copy of a current exclusive hunting rights lease agreement, and each of the following:

        i. A legible map or aerial photo of the property labeled with property boundaries; and

        ii. A county map indicating the general location of the applicant's property within the county.

6. Obtaining Applications: Applications are available on-line at www.mdwfp.com/alligator. They

may also be obtained at the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) Jackson Office, or at any MDWFP Regional Office Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Completed applications must be received at the MDWFP Jackson Office by July 1. Incomplete or illegible applications will not be considered.

7. Mail completed applications to: MDWFP - Wildlife Bureau, Attention: Private Lands – Alligator, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211-6374. E. Private Lands Alligator Harvest Voucher:

    1. Each Private Lands Alligator Harvest Voucher (PLAHV) is valid upon the purchase of one (1) Private Lands Alligator Possession Permit (PLAPP), which is valid for the harvest of two (2) alligators per bag limit restrictions (see section H Bag Limit). A separate PLAPP is required for each PLAHV.

    2. Qualifying applicants will be mailed a PLAHV for each alligator hunting permit allowed for each property along with alligator hunting regulations and instructions.

    3. The landowner may transfer any or all PLAHVs to anyone (Resident or Non-resident) 16 years of age or older.

    4. Each PLAHV must be signed by the landowner and the transferee and completely filled out with the transferee's personal information.

    5. The PLAHV, properly signed, must be in the possession of the permitted hunter while hunting alligators.

F. Training Course: The Mississippi Alligator Hunting Training Course is strongly encouraged. The Mississippi Alligator Hunting Training Course is provided online via the MDWFP Alligator Program Webpage at www.mdwfp.com/alligator

G. Harvest Reporting and Tagging:

1. Temporary Alligator Possession Tag(s) (TAPT) will be issued with the purchase of each PLAPP.

2. The TAPT must be attached to each alligator immediately after being dispatched and prior to moving or transporting.

3. An on-line Alligator Harvest Report is mandatory. Failure to complete a timely report will result in revocation of the properties application and subsequent hunting permits in the following year.

4. The Alligator Harvest Report must be submitted to the Department no later than 24 hours after the season closes.

5. Upon harvest validation, a federal CITES tag will be mailed to the hunter. The TAPT must remain attached to the alligator until the CITES tag is attached.

6. No alligator, alligator hide, or parts may be transported across state lines without proper licenses, permits, and tags.

7. No alligator hide, meat, or parts may be transported within the state without proper licenses, permits, and tags.

8. No alligator or alligator parts may be left in the possession of another person/buyer in another state without a federal CITES tag or number.

9. Violations of alligator tagging/reporting regulations may include federal violations.

H. Bag limit:

1. Each PLAHV together with a PLAPP possessed by a person allows the harvest of two (2) alligators four (4) feet in length or longer.

2. Only one (1) alligator may exceed seven (7) feet in total length per permit.

3. All alligators must be pursued/hunted/taken from the property registered by the permitted landowner.

4. No alligators may be pursued/hunted/taken from public waters.

I. Capture and Dispatch Methods:

1. The use of bait or baited hooks is prohibited.

2. During daylight hours:

a. During daylight hours (from ½ hour prior to sunrise until ½ hour after sunset) unrestrained alligators may only be taken with:

i. Center-fire rifles chambered in 0.277 in./7.035mm (.270/7mm) or larger and shotguns (12 or 10 gauge only) with slugs only.

ii. "Bangsticks" chambered in .38 caliber or larger may be used.

b. No firearm may be discharged across or into any public waters.

c. Any dead or wounded alligators must be retrieved immediately. Hunters must make a reasonable prudent effort to retrieve any wounded alligator. Failure to do so is unlawful.

d.No shotgun ammunition other than slugs, #6, #7, #7.5, #8, and #9 size shot or smaller may be in possession of the hunting party.

e. Nighttime capture methods are also legal during daylight hours.

3. During nighttime hours:

a. During nighttime hours (from ½ hour after sunset until ½ hour before sunrise) alligators must be captured alive prior to shooting or otherwise dispatching the animal. It is unlawful to kill an unrestrained alligator.

b. Restrained is defined as an alligator that has a noose or snare secured around the head, neck, or leg in a manner that the alligator is controlled.

c. Capture methods are restricted to handheld snares, snatch hooks (handheld or rod/reel), harpoons (with attached line/buoy), and bowfishing equipment (longbows, recurve bows, compound bows, or crossbows w/ line attached from bow to arrow or line/buoy, bowfishing arrow tips only, no broadheads, and no tips containing cartridges, or other explosive devices).

d. All alligators must be dispatched or released immediately after capture.

e. Any alligator that is captured with a harpoon or bowfishing equipment must be reduced to the bag and may not be released.

f. Firearms used for dispatching an alligator during nighttime hours are restricted to long-barreled, shoulder-fired shotguns with only shot size #6, #7, #7.5, #8, or #9 ammunition and bangsticks chambered in .38 caliber or larger. All shotguns and bangsticks must be cased and unloaded at all times until a restraining line has been attached to the alligator. No rifles or pistols are allowed.

g. No firearm or bangstick may be discharged within 100 yards of any residence, building, boat ramp, or occupied campsite.

h. Any person or vessel that possesses equipment used to capture or harvest an alligator must be on a permitted property in the immediate vicinity of a person who possesses a valid Private Lands Alligator Possession Permit at any time while located in an area that may contain alligators. To do otherwise is illegal and considered hunting without a permit.

J. License Requirements:

1. No one may pursue/hunt alligators on any private property unless the property is permitted by the Department.

2. Anyone hunting alligators on property permitted by the Department must be in the immediate vicinity of a holder of a Private Lands Alligator Possession Permit.

K. Private Lands Alligator Hunting Permit (PLAPP):

1. The cost of the PLAPP is $100 for residents and $200 for non-residents.

2. The holder of a PLAPP must also purchase and have on their person a combination resident or nonresident hunting/fishing license and an Alligator Hunting License. Lifetime License holders are exempt from the $25 Alligator Hunting License.

3. The cost of the Alligator Hunting License is twenty-five dollars ($25).

4. To possess a PLAPP you must be a qualifying landowner with a PLAHV or have a PLAHV transferred to your name by a qualifying landowner including signed permission by the landowner as provided on the application (see section E. Private Lands Alligator Hunting Voucher).

L. Resident Alligator Hunting Assistant: All residents in the hunting party who are sixteen (16) years of age or older are required to purchase and have on their person a combination-type hunting/fishing license and an Alligator Hunting License ($25).

1. Residents 65 years of age or older may purchase a Senior Exempt Lifetime License ($5) in lieu of a combination-type hunting/fishing license.

2. Residents who meets disability license exemptions, may purchase a Disabled Exempt License in lieu of a combination-type hunting/fishing license.

3. Lifetime License holders are exempt from the $25 Alligator Hunting License

M. Non-resident Alligator Hunting Assistant: Any non-residents in the hunting party who are sixteen (16) years of age or older are required to purchase and have on their person a Non-resident All Game-type

Hunting License and an Alligator Hunting License ($25). Lifetime License holders are exempt from the $25 Alligator Hunting License.

N. Any holder of a valid Alligator Hunting License may partake in any part of the alligator hunting process while in the immediate vicinity of a holder of a PLAPP on permitted property. O. All licenses are non-transferable and non-refundable.

P. Any person who hunts or attempts to hunt alligators without obtaining a permit and/or license as per regulations set forth herein shall be guilty of a Class I violation of miss. code ann. §49-7-47 and upon conviction shall be punished according to Miss. Code Ann. §49-7-141.

Q. Any violation of any other provision of this Rule shall be a Class III violation and punishable as provided in Miss. Code Ann. §49-7-101.

History: Revised March 2026

Source: Miss. Code Ann. §§49-1-29, 49-4-4, and 49-7-47.

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS

Title 40: Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

Part 2: Wildlife

Part 2, Chapter 5: Regulations regarding alligators.

RULE 5.3 ALLIGATOR HUNTING SEASON FOR PUBLIC WATERS.

A. An American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis)* hunting season will be opened in the public waterways of the State of Mississippi and is hereby referred to as the following with described restrictions.

1. Legal public water for public water alligator hunting shall be any "public waterway", as designated by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and all associated portions of each designated public waterway drainage that are not privately owned and which have navigable access from the designated waterway.

2. Legal public water, as described above, will be open for alligator hunting from 12 p.m. on the last Friday in August and ending at 12 p.m. on the Monday, 10 days thereafter, for persons issued special permits as described below.

3. PUBLIC WATERWAY HUNTING ZONE DESCRIPTIONS:

a. Pearl River/Ross Barnett Zone - The public waters of the Pearl River Valley Water Supply District only within the area north of a line from Fannin Landing to Channel Marker "A" to the Natchez Trace Overlook on the main lake of Ross Barnett Reservoir, and south of Lowhead Dam on the Pearl River (excluding all areas of the main lake that are west of the Natchez Trace, i.e. North Bay and Twin Harbors). All other portions of Ross Barnett Reservoir are closed to alligator hunting including Pelahatchie Bay.

b. Northwest Zone – North of US Hwy. 82 and west of Interstate 55.

c. West Central Zone – South of US Hwy. 82, west of Interstate 55, and north of Interstate 20.

d. Northeast Zone – East of Interstate 55, north of Interstate 20, and excluding the area described as the Pearl River/Ross Barnett Zone. This zone does not include any portion of the Ross Barnett Reservoir, except portions of the Pearl River south of the spillway, north of Lowhead Dam, and Pelahatchie Creek east of Highway 471 are included in the Northeast Zone only. All other portions of Ross Barnett Reservoir are closed to alligator hunting including Pelahatchie Bay.

e. Southwest Zone – South of Interstate 20 and west of Interstate 55.

f. South Central Zone – South of Interstate 20, west of MS Hwy 49, east of

Interstate 55.

g. Southeast Zone – South of Interstate 20 and east of MS Hwy 49.

4. Public Waters shall include the following lakes of Mississippi within each of open hunting zones and no other land locked lakes shall be open:

a. Lake Ferguson (Washington County) in the Northwest Zone

b. Beulah Lake (Bolivar County) in the Northwest Zone

c. Lake Bolivar (Bolivar County) in the Northwest Zone

d. Lake Whittington (Bolivar County) in the Northwest Zone

e. Eagle Lake (Warren County) in the West Central Zone

f. Chotard Lake (Warren and Issaquena Counties) in the West Central Zone

g. Albemarle Lake (Issaquena County) in the West Central Zone

h. Tennessee Lake (Issaquena County) in the West Central Zone

i. Lake Washington (Washington County) in the West Central Zone

j. Bee Lake (Holmes County) in the West Central Zone

k. Little Eagle Lake (Humphreys County) in the West Central Zone

l. Dump Lake (Yazoo County) in the West Central Zone

m. Lake George (Yazoo County) in the West Central Zone

n. Tchula Lake aka "Tchula Run" (Holmes County) in the West Central Zone

o. Lake Mary (Wilkinson County) in the Southwest Zone

p. Okatibbee Lake (Lauderdale County) in the Northeast Zone

q. Crystal Lake (Rankin County) in the Northeast Zone

5. Public Waters shall include the following Bayous of Mississippi within the Southeast Zone:

a. Graveline Bayou and all portions thereof and shall not to extend into the Mississippi Sound. (Jackson County).

b. Fort Bayou and all portions thereof and shall not extend west of HWY 609 or Washington Ave. (Jackson County).

B. APPLICATIONS:

1. Applications will be accepted by an electronic web-based process via the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) website only.

a. Applicants must resident at least 16 years of age or older.

b. Applicants who possess a Lifetime License are eligible to apply.

c. Applicants must possess a valid pre-requisite license to apply.

d. Dates of application acceptance will be announced on the MDWFP website.

e. An electronic processing fee may be charged.

f. Persons are limited to one (1) application each.

g. The applicant is responsible for providing a correct email address during the application process.

h. The email address provided by the applicant will be the method of notifications from the MDWFP, to notify drawn applicants, and for important messages and documents.

C. PERMITS:

1. Only residents of the State of Mississippi who are sixteen (16) years of age or older may purchase an Alligator Possession Permit (Permit) (*see License Requirements*).

2. Non-residents may participate as alligator hunting assistants (*see License Requirements*).

3. Persons must have a valid resident Mississippi hunting license and a Mississippi Alligator Hunting License to purchase a permit.

4. Any Lifetime License holder may purchase a Permit.

5. Alligator permits and/or licenses are required of anyone 16 years of age or older. There are no exemptions for over 65 years of age or physical disability.

6. Permits will be available for purchase only by persons who have successfully made application for a permit in a zone and have been drawn by the MDWFP alligator hunting

permit drawing system.

7. All persons drawn for a permit will be notified by email, as provided by the applicant, and permits must be purchased electronically as directed by the Department. The applicant is responsible for providing a correct email address during the application process.

8. All permit sales require immediate payment prior to the deadline, as directed by the Department and all sales are non-refundable and non-transferable.

9. Persons are limited to one (1) permit per person.

D. TRAINING COURSE:

The Mississippi Alligator Hunting Training Course is strongly encouraged. The Mississippi Alligator Hunting Training Course is provided online via the MDWFP Alligator Program Webpage at www.mdwfp.com/alligator.

E. HUNTING REGULATIONS: (All Zones)

1. Persons eligible: Only residents of the State of Mississippi who are sixteen (16) years of age or older may apply for an Alligator Possession Permit (*see License Requirements*). Non-residents may participate as alligator hunting assistants (*see License Requirements*).

2. Bag limit: Each person receiving an Alligator Possession Permit will be allowed to harvest two (2) alligators four (4) feet in length or longer, only one (1) of which may exceed seven (7) feet in length.

3. Capture and Dispatch Methods:

a. Use of bait is prohibited.

b. Alligators must be captured alive prior to shooting or otherwise dispatching the animal. It is unlawful to shoot or kill an unrestrained alligator.

c. Restrained is defined as an alligator that has a noose or snare secured around the head, neck, or leg in a manner that the alligator is controlled.

d. Capture methods are restricted to hand-held snares, snatch hooks (hand-held or rod/reel), harpoons (with attached line/buoy), and bowfishing equipment (longbows, recurve bows, compound bows, or crossbows w/ line attached from bow to arrow or line/buoy, bowfishing arrow tips only, no broadheads, and no tips containing cartridges, or other explosive devises).

e. The use of fishing lures or other devices (with hooks attached) for the purpose of catching alligators in the mouth is prohibited.

f. All alligators must be dispatched or released immediately after capture

and prior to transporting.

g. Any alligator that is captured with a harpoon or bowfishing equipment must be reduced to the bag and may not be released.

h. Firearms used for dispatching an alligator are restricted to long-barreled, shoulder-fired shotguns with only shot size #6, #7, #7.5, #8, or #9 ammunition and bangsticks chambered in .38 caliber or larger. No pistols or rifles are allowed.

i. All shotguns and bangsticks must be cased and unloaded at all times until a restraining line has been attached to the alligator.

j. No other firearm or ammunition may be in possession of the permittee or hunting party.

k. No firearm or bangstick may be discharged within 100 yards of any residence, building, boat ramp, or occupied campsite.

l. Any person or vessel that possesses equipment used to capture or harvest an alligator must be in the immediate vicinity of a person who possesses a valid Alligator Possession Permit at any time while located in the hunting area. To do otherwise is illegal and considered hunting without a permit.

m. The possession of alcohol or alcoholic beverages is prohibited for any person in the act of alligator hunting, nor may it be contained in any vessel in the act of alligator hunting. It is prohibited to be in the act of alligator hunting while under the influence of intoxicating beverages.

n. Nothing within this Rule shall supersede any other municipal laws, including discharge of firearms within a municipality.

o. No person may hunt alligators within any public lake or pond that the governing entity does not specifically allow alligator hunting (i.e. state parks, state lakes, state wildlife management areas, federal refuges, municipal lakes and parks, etc.). However, public waterways, as designated by the MDEQ, that exist within MDWFP operated WMAs are not closed to alligator hunting, unless specifically noted.

p. The use of drones, UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), or any remotely operated vehicle or vessel to assist in the location, pursuit, and/or take of alligators is prohibited.

F. HARVEST REPORTING AND TAGGING:

1. TAGGING:

a. Two Temporary Possession Tags will be provided with the purchase of an Alligator Possession Permit.

b. The Temporary Alligator Possession Tags are not valid without a

current Alligator Possession Permit.

c. A Temporary Alligator Possession Tag must be signed and attached to the alligator's leg immediately after being dispatched and prior to moving or transporting.

d. Alligators must have a federal CITES tag attached before transferring the alligator or alligator parts to the possession of another person/buyer in another state.

2. ONLINE REPORTING:

a. Each permittee must submit an on-line harvest report and survey via www.mdwfp.com.

b. A report must be completed within 24 hours of harvest of any and each alligator.

c. Failure to comply will result in loss of alligator hunting privileges the following year.

d. Federal CITES tags will be mailed to permittees upon receipt of a completed Harvest Report.

G. LICENSE AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS:

1. Alligator Hunting Permittee:

a. All alligator hunting permittees (permit holder) must purchase and have on their person an Alligator Hunting License and Alligator Possession Permit.

b. In addition, a combination resident hunting/fishing license is required to purchase the Alligator Possession Permit and Alligator Hunting License. For the purpose of this Rule, all Lifetime Licenses are considered a combination hunting/fishing license.

i. Residents 65 years of age or older may possess a Senior Exempt Lifetime License in lieu of a combination hunting/fishing license.

ii. Residents who meet disability license exemptions may possess a Disabled Exempt License in lieu of a combination hunting/fishing license.

iii. Lifetime License holders are exempt from the $25 Alligator Hunting License

c. The cost of the Alligator Hunting License is twenty-five dollars ($25).

d. The cost of the Alligator Possession Permit is two hundred dollars ($200).

e. A "WMA User Permit" is required for all persons, unless otherwise

exempt, who are accessing a public waterway via any Department operated Wildlife Management Area.

f. All alligator licenses and permits are non-refundable and non-transferable.

2. Alligator Hunting Assistant:

a. Anyone, any age, resident or non-resident may participate as an alligator hunting assistant of a permit holder, as provided below:

i. All residents in the hunting party who are sixteen (16) years of age or older are required to purchase and have on their person a combination hunting/fishing license and an Alligator Hunting License. For the purpose of this Rule, all Lifetime Licenses are considered a combination hunting/fishing license. There are no exemptions.

ii. Any non-residents in the hunting party who are sixteen (16) years of age or older are required to purchase and have on their person a Non-resident-All Game Hunting License and an Alligator Hunting License. For the purpose of this Admin Rule, all Lifetime Licenses are considered a combination hunting/fishing license. There are no exemptions.

iii. Residents 65 years of age or older may possess a Senior Exempt Lifetime License in lieu of a combination hunting/fishing license.

iv. Residents who meet disability license exemptions may possess a Disabled Exempt License in lieu of a combination hunting/fishing license.

v. Lifetime License holders are exempt from the $25 Alligator Hunting License

b. A "WMA User Permit" is required for all persons, unless otherwise exempt, who are accessing a public waterway via any Department operated Wildlife Management Area.

c. All alligator licenses and permits are non-refundable and non-transferable.

H. Any person who hunts or attempts to hunt alligators without obtaining a permit and/or is not hunting within the immediate vicinity of a permit holder as per regulations set forth herein shall be guilty of a Class I violation of MISS. CODE ANN. §49-7-47 and upon conviction shall be punished as provided in MISS. CODE. ANN. §49-7-141.

I. Any violation of any other provision of this Rule shall be a Class III violation and punishable as provided in MISS. CODE. ANN. §49-7-101.

History: Revised April 2025.

BOATING REGULATIONS

Boating Courses are available - Check online: www.mdwfp.com

Know what Mississippi law requires regarding:

• Boat Registration • Boat and Motor Titling •Required Equipment • Education Requirements

Boat Registration

In Mississippi, all boats equipped with propulsion machinery and sailboats (anchored or not) which use the public waters of the state must be registered and numbered for identification. A person must register his/her boat no later than 10 days after the actual purchase. All boat registrations are valid for a period of three (3) years from the last day of the month of receipt of the original or transfer application. You must have your registration card on board the vessel at all times.

How To Apply For Registration Of A Boat

Owners of new or used boats may get the registration form at any local county tax collector's office, most places where boats are sold or serviced, MDWFP District Office, or online at www. mdwfp.com. Complete the form, attach any necessary documents, sign and forward to the Department with appropriate fee.

To register a new boat include the sales invoice showing proof of payment of Mississippi sales tax. If the boat was purchased in another state you may pay Mississippi state sales tax at the local county tax collector's office. Include this proof of payment with the registration application. If registering or transferring ownership of a used boat include a notarized bill of sale describing the boat being purchased. If the bill of sale is not notarized it must be signed by two witnesses. If a boat was previously registered and titled in a state that requires mandatory titling you must also include the previous state's registration and title.

The registration application requires a Hull Identification Number. This number should contain 12 digits if the boat was manufactured after November, 1972. Examples of proper 12 digit Hull Identification Numbers will be: ABC456781272 or ABC45678A484. Boats manufactured prior to 1972 will have a serial number.

How To Renew A Boat Registration

Once a boat is registered a notice to renew the registration will be mailed to the owner by the MDWFP. For convenience and faster service you may renew your boat registration wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold, by calling 1-800-5GO-HUNT (1-800-546-4868) which is available 24 hours a day, or online at www.mdwfp.com. You may also mail your renewal to the MDWFP Boat Registration Department. You should notify MDWFP Boat Registration Department of any address changes.

How to Obtain a Duplicate Boat Registration

If you lose your boat registration card and/or decals or if you need an additional boat registration card you may obtain a duplicate wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold or by calling 1-800-5GO-HUNT (1-800-546-4868) which is available 24 hours a day.

Registration, Transfer, Renewal, Duplicate & Boat inspection Fees

Fees for original, transfer of ownership, renewal, delivery, dealer, duplicate registrations and inspection fee are as follows:

Less than 16 feet	$10.99
16 feet but less than 26 feet	$25.99
26 feet to less than 40 feet	$48.49
40 feet and over	$48.49
Dealer Number	$40.99
Duplicate	$ 8.49
Boat Inspection	$13.49

Assignment of Registration Number

After processing a boat registration the department will assign a number to be displayed on the boat. This number is also noted on a water resistant, pocket-sized boat registration card which is mailed to the owner. This card must be on board the boat when in operation. In addition, boat owners will receive two (2) validating decals of appropriate color. The emblem should be displayed within six inches (6") of the number (See Boat Registration Numbering System and Proper Display). The decals correlate with the year the boat registration will expire. When MDWFP issues a number for a boat, that number becomes permanently assigned to that boat and remains as identification until such time as it is canceled, destroyed or abandoned. The same number will also be used for identification if the boat is transferred to a new owner.

Boat Numbering System and Proper Display

The numbering system consists of three parts: the first part consists of the symbol MI, which designates Mississippi; the second part consists of a numerical group having a maximum of four digits; and the third part an alphabetical group having a maximum of two letters; each part shall be separated by hyphens or equivalent spaces.

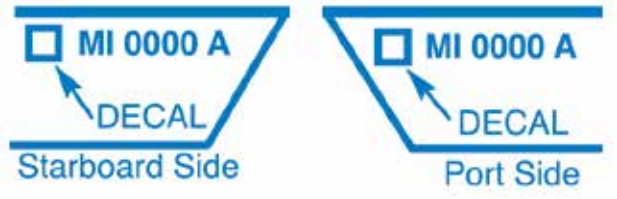
The assigned number shall be painted on or attached to each side of the bow of the vessel for which it was issued. The numbers shall be placed on each side of the forward half of the vessel in such position as to provide clear legibility for identification.

The numbers shall read from left to right and shall be in block characters of good proportion not less than three inches (3") in height. The numbers shall be of a color which will contrast with the color of the background ands so maintained as to

be clearly visible and legible, i.e., dark numbers on a light background, or light numbers on a dark background. No other numbers shall be carried on the bow of such vessel. The decals should be displayed within six (6") inches of the numbers.

Example of Correct Number and Decal Display

Validating decal should be displayed within 6 inches of the number.



Sold or Lost/Stolen Boat

Should you sell your boat, you are required to report such transaction to the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, who issues the identification number. The new owner must, within ten (10) days, make application to transfer the registration. If a numbered boat is lost, stolen or abandoned, the owner should first report it to the local authorities having jurisdiction then report to Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

Boat & Motor Titling

Boat and outboard motor titling is available in Mississippi but is not mandatory. Boat and motor titling is an optional choice for lending institutions and boat owners. The cost is $12.70 each for an original title, transfer of title or duplicate title. A boat must be registered prior to being titled. If the title is submitted indicating a lien the original title will be sent to the lending institution until the lien is satisfied. Once the lien is satisfied an original title will be provided to the owner. When a titled boat is sold, the owner must provide the original title to the purchaser along with a bill of sale in order for the boat to be eligible for transfer of ownership. Boat and Motor title applications may be obtained online at www.mdwfp.com, through your lending institution or the MDWFP Boat Registration Department.

Number Non-Tranferable

The number awarded a boat by the Department shall become a permanent number of the boat, and will remain with the boat until such time as it is canceled, destroyed or abandoned.

Selling A Boat

Should you sell your boat, you are required to report such transaction to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, who issued your number. The new owner must, within ten (10) days, make application to the Department for a Transfer of numbers.

Change of Residence

If you change your residence, notify the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

Reciprocity

Each state is required to recognize the validity of a certificate of registration which has been lawfully issued in another state. If the boat is kept in another state longer than 60 consecutive days the state may require compliance with its numbering system or law. Also, non-residents can operate on Mississippi waters sixty (60) consecutive days.

Lost or Stolen Boats

If a numbered boat is lost, stolen or abandoned, the owner should report it to the local authorities having jurisdiction (and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks).

Required Safety Certificate

No motorboat may be operated by any person under the age of 12 years unless he possesses a boating education certificate on board, is accompanied by someone who is at least 21 years of age, and is qualified and capable of operating the same. Persons born after June 30, 1980 must have a boating education certificate on board while the boat is in operation. This applies to the boat operator, not passengers.

Required Equipment

Every vessel shall have on board a Coast Guard approved wearable personal flotation device for each person aboard such vessel, and every person 12 years or younger on board a motorboat, sailboat, or vessel which measures less than 26 feet in length shall wear a Type I, II, or III Coast Guard approved personal flotation device when such motorboat, sailboat, or vessel is underway. For the purpose of this section, "underway" shall mean at all times except when a motorboat, sailboat or vessel is anchored, moored, or aground. Every vessel shall have lights during the hours of darkness, which comply with all federal regulations applicable to vessels of its classification. Such vessel shall not be operated unless in a safe and seaworthy condition; the owner and operator shall employ such safety devices as may be necessary for the safe operation of such vessel, including an efficient natural or mechanical ventilating system when necessary for safe operation. In addition to the requirements imposed by this section, all vessels shall comply with all federal regulations applicable to vessels of such classification.

Regulations applicable to specific classes of vessels may be obtained by writing the Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks and in such case the length of the vessel must be known. The basic requirements for vessels operated on the territorial waters of the State of Mississippi are as follows:

Class A (under 16 feet): Wearable Type I, II, III

1. A Coast Guard approved wearable personal flotation device.
2. Every person 12 years or younger is required to wear a Coast Guard approved PFD (see REQUIRED EQUIPMENT).

3. Red and Green running lights mounted on the bow: green to starboard (right side) and red to port (left side) and an all around white light on the stern, if operated after sunset.
4. Fire Extinguisher, if inboard engine, enclosed or permanently affixed fuel compartments.
5. Each person riding or being towed by a PWC must wear a Type I, Type II, or Type III, USCG approved PFD (personal flotation device).

Class I (16 to less than 26 feet)

1. Same as Class A except must have at least one throwable (Type IV) PFD per boat.
2. Sound producing device.
3. Fire Extinguisher, if inboard engine, enclosed, or permanently affixed fuel compartments.

Class II (26 to less than 40 feet)

Basic equipment requirements are the same as Class I.

Class III (40 to 65 feet)

Basic equipment requirements are the same as Class I.

For information on a free Safe Boating Class please call (601) 432-2181

Any person who violates any provision of the Boating Act is guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be subject to the following penalties: for the violation of any of the provisions of the law regarding boating accidents, reckless operation, water skiing, etc., a fine not to exceed $250.00 and imprisonment in the county jail not to exceed 30 days or both.

No person shall change or in any manner mutilate or deface any Hull Identification Number awarded a vessel, or any motor numbered or otherwise stamped, cast, or forged numbers or letter or other marks upon any vessel, outboard motor, boat or boat trailer, or assist in so doing, or having knowledge of such change, fail to report the same to the Boating Division of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks.

Violation of this provision will result in a fine not less than $250.00 nor more than $500.00, or by imprisonment in the county jail not to exceed 30 days, or both.

All vessels, outboard motors, boats and trailers appearing to have awarded numbers or identification numbers or marks which have been changed contrary to the boating act shall be seized. Upon the seizure of such property, forfeiture proceedings shall be instituted.

For the violation of any provision by the Boating Act, a fine of not less than $25.00 and not more than $250.00 shall be levied.

The owner and/or operator of a vessel shall be civilly liable for negligent failure to comply with any of the provisions of the Boating Act.

Speed and Reckless Information

No vessel shall be operated within this state in a reckless or negligent manner or at a rate of speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the then existing circumstances or when the operator is so physically or mentally incapacitated as to be incapable of safely operating such vessel, or while the operator is under the influence of intoxicating liquor or narcotics, or when such vessel is overloaded beyond its reasonable carrying capacity.

Enforcement

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks has officers for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Mississippi Boating Act and to promote water safety among boating organizations, clubs, etc., in setting up special rules and regulations where such are needed.

Water Skiing

There shall be two (2) persons in a boat which is towing a water skier - one to operate the boat and the other to observe the progress and safety of the skier. The observer shall be above ten (10) years of age. It is highly recommended that the skier wear a Coast Guard approved life preserver.

Accidents

In the case of a boating accident involving collision, or other casualty involving a motorboat or vessel, while operated upon the waters of this state, the operator thereof, if the collision, accident or other casualty results in death to any person, injury causing any person to require medical treatment beyond first-aid, or damage to property in excess of $100.00, shall file with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks an accident report with a full description of the collision, accident or other casualty, including such other information as is required under the provisions of the Boating Act. A "boating accident" includes, but is not limited to, capsizing, collision, foundering, flooding, fire, explosion and the disappearance of a vessel other than by theft. Whenever death results from a boating accident a written report shall be submitted within 48 hours. For every other reportable boating accident, a written report shall be submitted within five (5) days after such accident by the operator(s) of the boat(s). It shall be the duty of the operator of any vessel involved in a boating accident to remain at the scene of such accident until he has rendered all necessary aid and assistance. This shall include taking or the making of arrangements for taking any person involved in such accident to a physician, surgeon or hospital for medical surgical or hospital treatment, if it is requested by such injured person. It is further the duty of the operator of any vessel involved in a boating accident required to be reported under this act to report the same as herein provided.

Accident report forms can be obtained by contacting the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. **The submission of this report is very IMPORTANT and is required under penalty of law.**

ALCOHOL SAFETY: In Mississippi, it is illegal to operate a vessel while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If you have a blood alcohol content of 0.08% or greater, you are presumed intoxicated. By operating on the state's waterways, you are deemed to have given consent to be tested for alcohol if operating under the influence.

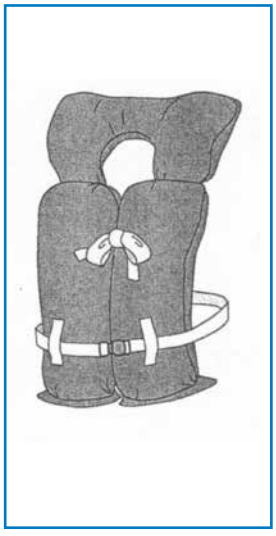
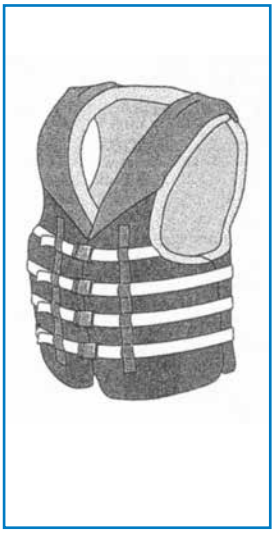
Accidents

In the case of a boating accident involving collision, or other casualty involving a motorboat or vessel, while operated upon the waters of this state, the operator thereof, if the collision, accident or other casualty results in death to any person, injury causing any person to require medical treatment beyond first-aid, or damage to property in excess of $100.00, shall file with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks an accident report with a full description of the collision, accident or other casualty, including such other information as is required under the provisions of the Boating Act. A "boating accident" includes, but is not limited to, capsizing, collision, foundering, flooding, fire, explosion and the disappearance of a vessel other than by theft. Whenever death results from a boating accident a written report shall be submitted within 48 hours. For every other reportable boating accident, a written report shall be submitted within five (5) days after such accident by the operator(s) of the boat(s). It shall be the duty of the operator of any vessel involved in a boating accident to remain at the scene of such accident until he has rendered all necessary aid and assistance. This shall include taking or the making of arrangements for taking any person involved in such accident to a physician, surgeon or hospital for medical surgical or hospital treatment, if it is requested by such injured person. It is further the duty of the operator of any vessel involved in a boating accident required to be reported under this act to report the same as herein provided.

Accident report forms can be obtained by contacting the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. **The submission of this report is very IMPORTANT and is required under penalty of law.**

PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

Before you buy any PFD check to make sure that it is Coast Guard approved.
The certification is for your protection. The types of Personal Flotation Devices are as follows:

PFD Type Number	PFD Type Number	PFD Type Number	PFD Type Number	PFD Type Number
Type I	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type V
Description Device	Description Device	Description Device	Description Device	Description Device
Life preserver with 22 pounds of buoyancy and designed to turn most unconscious wearers face-up in water.	Buoyant vest with at least 15.5 pounds of buoyancy and designed to turn many unconscious wearers face-up in water.	Buoyant vest or jacket with at least 15.5 pounds of buoyancy. Not designed to turn an unconscious wearer face-up in water	A throwable device such as the ring buoy or the familiar buoyant cushion. This is in addition to their wearable.	Device designed for specific restricted use; hybrid device must be worn to be counted as a regulation PFD.
Required for all Recreational Boats	Required for all Recreational Boats	Required for all Recreational Boats	Required for all Recreational Boats	Required for all Recreational Boats
				



MDWFP is an equal opportunity employer and provider of programs and services. If anyone believes they have been subjected to discrimination on the basis of political affiliation, race, color, national origin, marital status, sex, religion, creed, age, or disability, they may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, Office of Administration Services, 1505 Eastover Drive, Jackson, MS 39211-6374, or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1801 L. Street, N. W., Washington, D.C. 20507.