Nuisance Control Protocol for Alligators

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

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APPENDIX A

NUISANCE CONTROL PERMIT

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Prospective Nuisance Control Permittees (Permittee) must submit an application, attend a class, pass a written exam and pay fee before being issued a permit.
2. The Department may refuse permit issuance to any person who has been convicted of, pleaded nolo contendere to, or received deferred adjudication for:
   (a) a violation of Parks and Wildlife Code, Chapter 43, Subchapters C,E,L, or R;
   (b) a violation of Parks and Wildlife Code that is a Class B misdemeanor, a Class A misdemeanor, or felony; or
   (c) a violation of Parks and Wildlife Code, §63.002; or
   (d) convicted, pleaded nolo contendere, received deferred adjudication or pre-trail diversion, or assessed a civil penalty for a violation of 16 U.S.C. §§3371-3378 (the Lacey Act).
3. The Department may refuse to issue an initial or subsequent permit to any person who is not in compliance with the provisions of Texas Administrative Code §65.363 (f), regarding Reporting Requirements.
4. An applicant may request a review of a decision of the Department to deny permit issuance by contacting the Department, in writing, within 10 working days of being notified by the Department of permit denial.
   (a) The Department shall schedule a review within 10 days of a request for review.
   (b) The request for review shall be presented to a review panel. The review panel shall consist of the following, or their designee:
      i) the Deputy Executive Director for Fisheries and Wildlife;
      ii) the Director of the Wildlife Division; and
      iii) the Deputy Division Director of the Wildlife Division.
   (c) The Department shall conduct the review and notify the applicant of the results within 45 working days of receiving a request for review.
   (d) The decision of the review panel is final.

APPENDIX B

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR NUISANCE CONTROL PERMITTEES

1. Permittees must ensure compliance with Federal, State and city laws, ordinances, or regulations relating to alligators and nuisance alligator control.
2. Permittee shall provide a vehicle suitable for transport of alligators and all equipment necessary for humane handling or take of alligators.
3. Permittee shall receive all pertinent forms and alligator hide tags after all other requirements have been met.
4. Permittee shall not represent himself/herself to the public or any government agency as an "employee" of TPWD. The permittee functions only as a private citizen permitted by TPWD to assist with nuisance alligator control activities.
5. Landowners/agents must authorize nuisance control activities on their properties by signing the PWD 305, item 5, Section A. No nuisance control hunters can bring anyone to assist them on a nuisance call unless their names are registered with TPWD Alligator Program.
6. No nuisance control activities may take place past the deadline specified by the landowner/agent on PWD 305, Item 5, Section A.
7. Permittee must possess the PWD 305, item 5, Section A and the Daily Log while conducting nuisance control activities.
8. Nuisance Alligator complainant calls will be referred to the TPWD La Porte Law Enforcement Communications Center (281-842-8100). The TPWD dispatcher will determine if the call is an emergency or non-emergency. An emergency situation is one in which an alligator has attacked a person or pet, or is in a public or private place (parking lots, roads, highway, play grounds, public beaches, etc.) creating a safety hazard. An alligator that is located in or around alligator habitat and does not pose a safety risk is <u>not</u> considered an emergency situation. A non-emergency situation includes an alligator that is on land but can reasonably be expected to return to water if left alone.
9. TPWD Game Wardens may remove alligators when deemed in the best interest of public safety. Other TPWD personnel should remove alligators only in emergency situations.
10. Nuisance Control Permittee must receive a complaint number from the landowner/agent, prior to performing any nuisance control activity. The landowner/agent receives this complaint number from the TPWD Law Enforcement Communications Center.
11. The Nuisance Control Permittee shall determine appropriate course of action by utilizing the provided Nuisance Alligator Problem Assessment (NAPA) below.
12. Permittee may only capture or take an alligator which has been assigned a complaint number, and is determined to be a nuisance. No control hunter can harvest more than 1 alligator per complaint number unless cleared through LaPorte Dispatch.
13. Record recommended actions on PWD 305, Item 4, Section A.
14. Permittees may use only Department approved means, methods or procedures for capture or take of any nuisance alligator.
15. For any alligator captured or taken (by a Nuisance Control Permittee or TPWD staff), a Nuisance Alligator Report/Log PWD 305, Section B must be completed.

16. Permittees may release nuisance alligators in areas of suitable habitat <u>with prior written approval of the Department and the Landowner/agent of the property</u> where the release occurs. Authorization must be on file with the Alligator Program prior to any relocation. Alligator relocation will not be a common occurrence. TPWD Game Warden and Wildlife Biologist can give a nuisance control hunter permission to release alligators in public waterways provided the nuisance control hunter acquire a signature and date from a game warden or biologist on PWD 305, section A, item 5
17. TPWD may give alligators to a permittee for processing (e.g., live captures in emergency situations).
18. Permittee may hold live captured alligators for 7 days prior to sale to a farmer or other authorized license holder.
19. Alligators must be transferred to a holding facility within 24 hours of capture.
20. Within 7 days of removal, the Permittee will complete a PWD-305, Section B for each alligator taken. The white copy of PWD 305, Sections A and B, shall be submitted to the Alligator Program. If no alligator is taken, only the top section (Section A) of PWD 305 must be returned.
21. The yellow copy of the PWD 305 shall be retained by the permittee. The yellow copy of the PWD 305, Section B shall remain with the person possessing the alligator hide until shipped or sold out of state, at which time the copy will be submitted to the Alligator Program.
22. The landowner/ agent shall retain the pink copy of PWD 305.
23. Permittee must file a Transaction Report (PWD 306) to the Alligator Program on a quarterly basis for any alligators purchased, sold and exported. Transaction Reports of activities occurring between:
    (a) December 1 - February 28 are due March 15;
    (b) March 1 - May 31 are due June 15;
    (c) June 1 - August 31 are due September 15;
    (d) September 1 - November 30 are due December 15.
24. Permittee shall retain an invoice or sales receipt for each alligator sold or transferred.
25. Permittee shall retain all records and documents for inspection upon request of a department employee for a two-year period following the expiration of the Nuisance Control Permit.
26. All unused tags must be returned to the Alligator Program by December 31 of each year.
27. Permittees shall not entice landowners/agents into allowing them to take alligators.
28. Texas Parks and Wildlife employees acting within the scope of their official duties may verify all nuisance control activities of permittee.
29. TPWD La Porte Communications Center will provide a list of alligator complaints to the Alligator Program in Port Arthur on a daily basis. No Quarterly reports will be required from TPWD La Porte Communication.
30. Alligator Program address:

    10 Parks and Wildlife Drive
    Port Arthur, TX 77640

APPENDIX C

NUISANCE ALLIGATOR PROBLEM ASSESSMENT, METHOD OF TAKE, FACILITY STANDARDS

Nuisance Alligator Problem Assessment

1. a) Alligator has attacked people ……..…. Removal [1,4]
   b) Alligator has not attacked people ……..…….…… 2
2. a) Alligator is in natural habitat (ditches, ponds, marsh, etc.) ……...…… 3
   b) Alligator is in unnatural habitat (backyard, work site, urban area) ……...Removal[1]
   c) Habitat is incapable or unsuitable for long-term sustainability of alligator habitat……..... Removal [1]
3. a) Alligator/human contact is minimal ……..……..... Provide education Info [2]
   b) Alligator/human contact is frequent ……....……..……...…… 4
4. a) Natural movement of alligators to and from the area can occur ....Construct barriers and/or limit human activity [2,3]
   b) Natural movement of alligators to and from the area cannot occur…… 5
5. Habitat is isolated or immigration is unlikely …..……..……..……..... Removal [1]

[1]Nuisance Control Permittee (permittee) may harvest alligators in these cases.

[2]Consider for removal via legal hunting means, during the fall hunting season. If this does not address the complainant's needs, then NCP may remove the alligator.

[3]If one or more specific alligators are a repeated nuisance, alligator removal may be considered.

[4]Any alligator related injury should be reported to the Alligator Program Staff immediately.

Lethal Take

1. TPWD personnel should remove alligators only in emergency situations. Nuisance Control Permittees are expected to respond to all other complaints. In the event TPWD takes an alligator, a Nuisance Control Permittee will be contacted to retrieve, tag, and process the alligator.
2. Alligators shall be humanely captured using approved procedures. Legal means and methods for capturing alligators include: snare, hook and line, archery, and 3-prong gig. With special permission from Department personnel, a permittee may use a live trap or a rod and reel with a treble hook.
3. Use extreme discretion before dispatching an alligator in public. When possible, transport the alligator offsite to a remote location and dispatch it safely and humanely.
4. Immediately upon dispatching the alligator, place a nuisance alligator tag around a medial scute in the last ten inches of the tail.
5. Record tag number, length, sex and other required information on the Nuisance Alligator Hide Tag Report PWD 305, Section B. [Information on how to determine the sex of an alligator can be found in Appendix E, and information on how to skin an alligator can be found in Appendix F.]

6. Dead alligators must be kept damp and cool. If an alligator must be transported more than 2 hours before reaching its final destination, then it must be covered in ice to preserve the meat and hide.
7. Alligator meat must be processed in an FDA approved facility before it can be sold for human consumption.
8. A permittee has 7 days from take of alligator to submit a completed Nuisance Alligator Report/Log PWD 305 (including both Sections A and B) to the Alligator Program Office.
9. The permittee or the person possessing the alligator must keep the yellow copy of PWD 305, Section B until the hide is sold, transferred or exported.
10. All purchase, sales, and exports are reported to the Alligator Program quarterly on a PWD 306 Transaction Report.

Live Capture and Relocation

1. TPWD Game Wardens may remove alligators when deemed in the best interest of public safety. OtherTPWD personnel should remove alligators only in emergency situations. Nuisance Control Permittees are expected to respond to all other complaints. In the event TPWD captures an alligator, a Nuisance Control Permittee will be contacted to relocate the alligator.
2. Permitee may release nuisance alligators in areas of suitable habitat with prior writtern approval of the Department and the Landowner/agent of the property where the release occurs. Authorization must be o file with the Alligator Program prior to any relocation. Alligator relocation will not be a common occurrence.
3. TPWD Game Warden and Wildlife Biologist may give a nuisance control hunter permission to release alligators in public waterways provided the nuisance control hunter acquire a signature, date and telephone number from a game warden or wildlife biologist on PWD 305, Section A, item 5 (TPWD Contact).
4. Alligators shall be humanely captured using approved procedures. With specific permission from Department personnel, a permittee may use a live trap or a rod and reel with a treble hook.
5. Live captured alligators must be treated humanely during transport.
6. Complete the Nuisance Alligator Hide Tag Report PWD 305, Section B. [Information on how to determine the sex of an alligator can be found in Appendix E, and information on how to skin an alligator can be found in Appendix F.]
7. Live alligators must be kept wet or damp at all times during transport.
8. Always secure the mouth with duct tape, electrical tape or rubber bands.
9. In an open truck bed or trailer, secure the legs to keep the alligator from escaping or sustaining an injury during transport. Use a tarp or cloth to cover the head. In a closed truck bed, box trap or trailer, only the alligator's mouth needs to be secured.
10. The permittee must transfer live alligators to a holding facility within 24 hours of capture.
11. The permittee may hold live alligators for 7 days prior to sale to a farmer or other authorized permit holder.
12. A permittee has 7 days from capture of alligator to submit a completed Nuisance Alligator Report/Log PWD 305 (including both Sections A and B) to the Alligator Program Office.
13. All purchases, sales, exports and relocations are reported to the Alligator Program quarterly on a PWD 306 Alligator Transaction Report.

Alligator Relocation Sites

1. The permittee must provide GPS coordinates and a map of the release site, as well as a copy of the letter of authorization from landowner/agent which must be on file with the Alligator Program prior to any relocation.
2. The permittee must physically possess at all times:
    a. a letter from the landowner/agent granting permission for the property to be used as a release site for relocated alligators; and
    b. a signed form or letter from a TPWD Wildlife Biologist who approves the release site prior to the release of any alligators.
3. Alligators cannot be released into or within 400 meters of public waterways.
4. Low alligator-density release sites are preferred.
5. Nuisance alligators will not be released on or into TPWD lands or waters without the specific authorization of the TPWD facility manager, area manager or superintendant.
6. Law Enforcement and Wildlife Biologist can give nuisance control hunters permission to release alligators in public waterways provided the control hunter get the game warden or biologist signature and date on the PWD 305, section A, item 5.

Alligator Holding Facility Requirements

1. Alligators must be moved to a temporary holding facility within 24 hours of capture.
2. A temporary facility must be secured with barriers to prevent escape.
3. A facility must have a reliable source of clean fresh water while an alligator is being held.
4. For every 12 inches of an alligator's length, a space of at least 12" in length by 12" in width is required. For example, an alligator 4' in length requires a space of 4' in length by 4' in width.
5. A container large enough to meet the aforementioned size requirements (e.g., portable swimming pool) shall be surrounded by a chain-link fence buried 6" in the ground.
    - If the chain link fence is not buried, there can be no space between the edge of the swimming pool or other container and the fencing material.
6. Alligators can be held in these temporary facilities for only 7 days prior to sale to a farmer or other authorized individual.

APPENDIX D SECTION A & B

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NUISANCE ALLIGATOR REPORT/LOG

SECTION A

This form must be prepared and submitted when any type of nuisance alligator complaint is received.

1. **CALLER'S NAME:** _____ Phone _____

   Date and time nuisance call received: _____

2. **LANDOWNER/AGENT:** Name _____ Phone _____

   Address _____

   _____ County _____

3. **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROBLEM:** _____

   Number of alligator(s) involved _____ Estimated length(s) _____

4. **RESOLUTION:** *Check applicable*

   - ☐ Resolved on site (non-lethal) BGS info
   - ☐ Lethal removal by NCH
   - ☐ No alligator found during site visit
   - ☐ Live capture for farm stock
   - ☐ Relocated with TPWD authorization
   - ☐ Lethal removal by TPWD
   - ☐ Live capture by TPWD and transferred to NCH
   - ☐ Relocated by TPWD

5. **TPWD CONTACT:** _____ Phone _____

   NC licensed permittee _____ Phone _____

   DL# _____ Permit # _____ Address _____

   Complaint # _____

Landowner signature authorizes (NCP name) _____ to engage in nuisance alligator removal on his/her property during the following date(s) _____ to rectify the situation documented on this event. Time period may not extend over 10 days past the initial visit.

_____
Landowner name (print)

_____
Landowner signature

NUISANCE ALLIGATOR HIDE TAG REPORT

SECTION B

Harvest Date: _____

County of Take: _____

Hunter's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Hunting Lic. No.: _____

Landowner: _____

Relocation Site Address/Description _____

_____

Hide Tag No.: _____

Relocation or Captured Live: _____

Sex of Gator: _____

Carcass Length (unskinned): _____

Dispatched On Site: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Captured Live: ☐ Sold Live ☐ Dispatched off site

Hide Use: ☐ Sold whole ☐ Sold hide only ☐ Personal use

Skinning Method: ☐ Belly ☐ Hornback (mount)

I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION LISTED HEREON IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

_____
Nuisance Control Permit Signature

NOTE: Failure to **SUBMIT ALL INFORMATION** or enter a false statement in a government record is a Class A misdemeanor or a felony of the third degree under the Texas Penal Code.

(1) All WHITE copies — Submit to: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Alligator Program, 10 Parks and Wildlife Dr., Port Arthur, TX 77640, within 7 days after take

(2) YELLOW copy — Retain top portion for Department personnel only. Bottom portion (Nuisance Alligator Hide Tag Report) to NCH hunter; to be submitted by hunter to the Alligator Program upon shipping or selling out of state.

(3) PINK copy — Landowner

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

PWD 305–W7000 (4/13) — Previous editions obsolete – destroy

NUISANCE PERMITTEE QUARTERLY/TRANSACTIONS REPORT

___Sept. 1 - Nov. 30

___Dec.1 - Feb. 29

___Mar. 1 - May 31

___June 1 - Aug. 31

Name_____ Pemit No:_____

Address_____ Telephone No:( )_____

_____ Date of Report_____

city state zip Mo Day Yr

						Types of Parts				RELOCATION SITE, PERSON SOLD TO OR BOUGHT FROM		
	Complaint #	Live Relocation Export Tag	Date	Sale	Purchase	Hide	Meat	Others	Length/ Weight	Name	Lic. Permit	Address
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												
20												

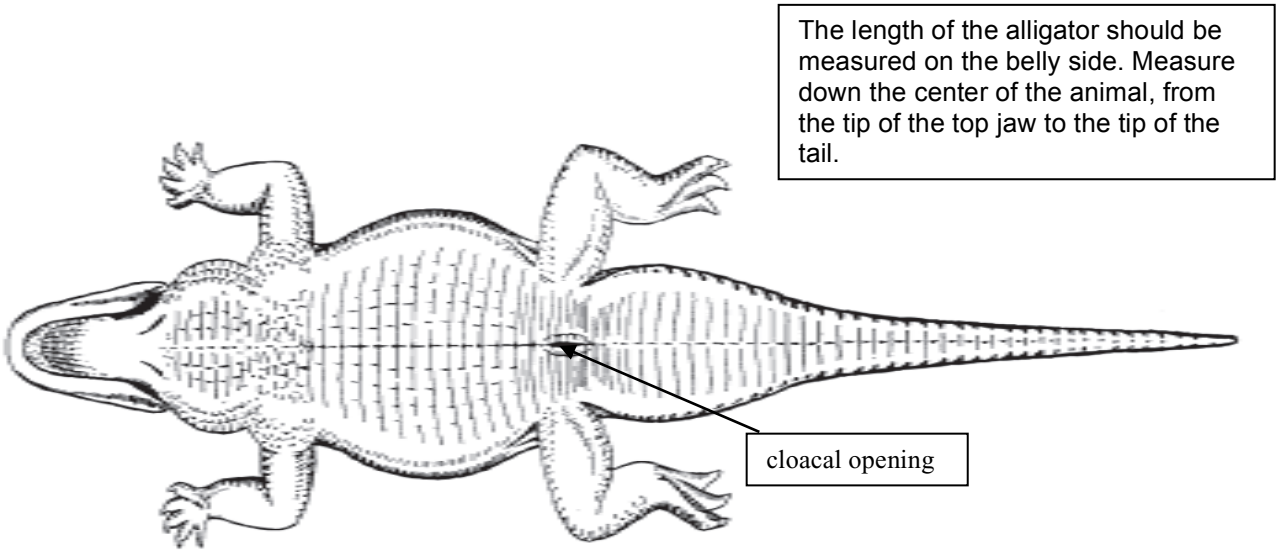
Prepared by Amos Cooper 3/28/2013

APPENDIX D
PWD-306A

APPENDIX E

DETERMINING THE SEX OF AN ALLIGATOR

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



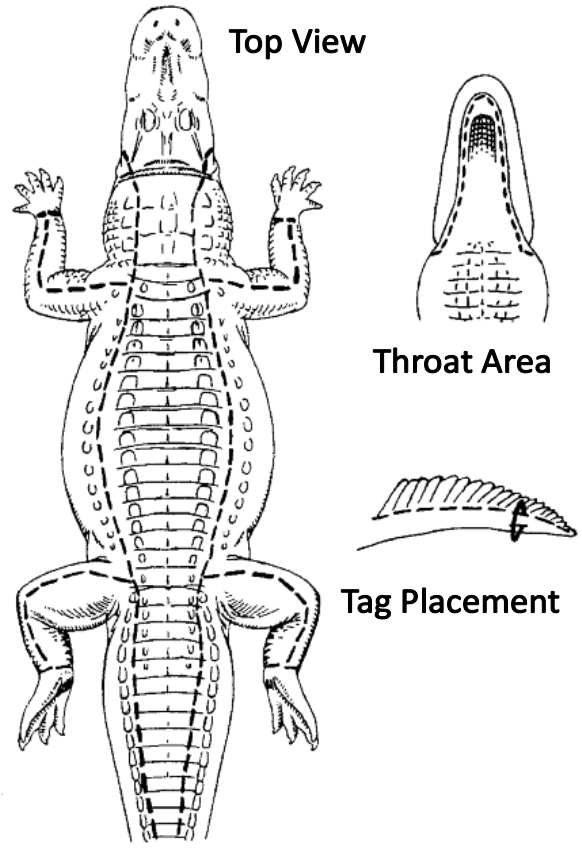
APPENDIX F

SKINNING AN ALLIGATOR

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

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

After the top tail scales have been removed, the tip-end of the tail is then skinned completely, making sure to remove all bone and meat. This can be achieved by carefully cutting the skin away from the tail meat. The end of the tail is skinned completely along the sides before proceeding on the outline – so as to butterfly cut the end of the tail. After tail skinning is completed, the outline of the alligator is completed to the base of the head and skinning of the body begins. Skinning of the body section begins with the front legs. As the front legs are skinned, the skin surrounding the legs and side of the alligator are also removed. Removing this skin can only be done by using a sharp knife and slowly cutting the skin away from the body of the alligator. The front legs and side skin are removed completely before moving on to the hind legs. Hind legs are skinned in the same fashion as the front legs.



The skin is removed from the hind legs completely, and down the sides of the animal before continuing on the tail. Some pulling can be done on the upper leg portion of the skin. Once the skin has been removed from the leg, the remaining skin must be detached by cutting. The skin is then removed from the remaining unskinned tail section. This skin can only be detached by cutting. Care should be taken to cut the skin from the carcass without cutting the skin or leaving excessive meat. Care should be taken in cutting the skin from the sides of the alligator to avoid cuts in the skin. Particular care must be taken where the legs join the body. The sides should be skinned completely. Only the belly portion of the animal should be left unskinned after this step. The alligator should be completely skinned along the sides, past the tail section, before proceeding on the head.

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

After all the skin has been cut from the lower jaw and neck, the alligator is then ready to be skinned down the belly. Skinning the underside of the alligator is best accomplished by both pulling and cutting. On small alligators, the skin can be removed from the belly by pulling only.

After the belly has been skinned down to the base of the tail, care should be taken to cut around the anal opening (vent). If the skin is not cut completely away from this area, it may tear during the pulling process. All meat and fat should be removed from the skin around the anus. The skin is then pulled and cut from the remaining tail section of the alligator. After the alligator has been skinned, some meat and fat will remain on the skin. All of this tissue must be removed before salting. Many different types of scraping tools can be used in scraping the meat and fat from the skin. One object that works well without cutting or tearing the hide is an 18" piece of chrome tubing. Large spoons or paint scrapers are also useful in removing flesh. By scraping the fleshy side of the hide with the end of the tubing, one can remove most of the excess meat and fat without damaging the skin. Particular attention should be given to the tail section and around the anal opening since these areas generally are more difficult to skin. Very little tissue should remain on the hide after it has been thoroughly scraped. Once scraping is complete, the hide should be relatively free of flesh and white in appearance. After the skin has been scraped thoroughly, it should be washed in clean, fresh water. By washing the skin in fresh water, most of the remaining blood and body fluids will be removed from the skin. Care should be taken during the washing process to thoroughly squeeze and rub the skin with the hands to remove any dried blood and loose flesh. The skin should be thoroughly clean and very white in appearance after washing. After washing the skin, it is then hung on a rack with the fleshy side to the inside and allowed to air dry. The skin should not be placed in the sunlight since over-drying of the outside portion of the skin could damage the hide. After the hide has dried, it is then spread out on a flat surface with the flesh side exposed for salting.

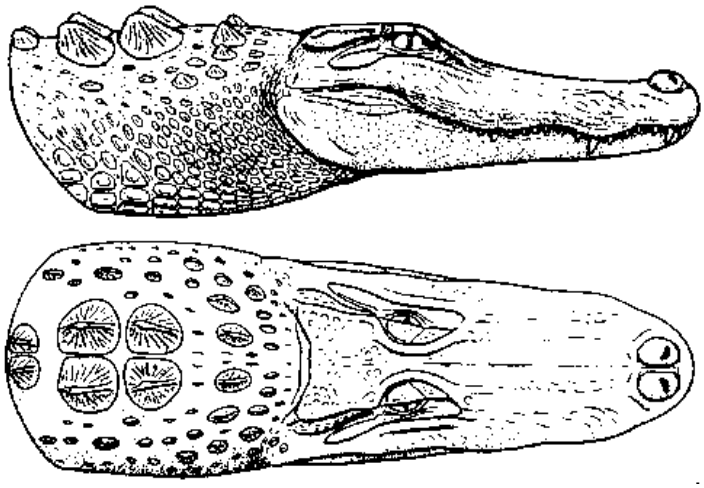
Salt (use fine grain salt) is applied to all areas of the hide until the skin is completely coated. Salting is an important process. It is very important to apply salt liberally to the skin. The salt should be rubbed thoroughly into the skin. Make sure to cover the head portion well. Additional care should be taken to rub salt into the tail section, making certain the salt is placed in the very end of the tail section. The hide is now ready for rolling into a compact bundle. Lay the hide out flat, flesh side up. Fold the legs toward the middle of the hide until the fold is even with the outer edges of the hide. Next, fold the outer edges of the hide inward until they meet at the center of the hide. The neck is folded in the same fashion as the sides. After the neck and sides are

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

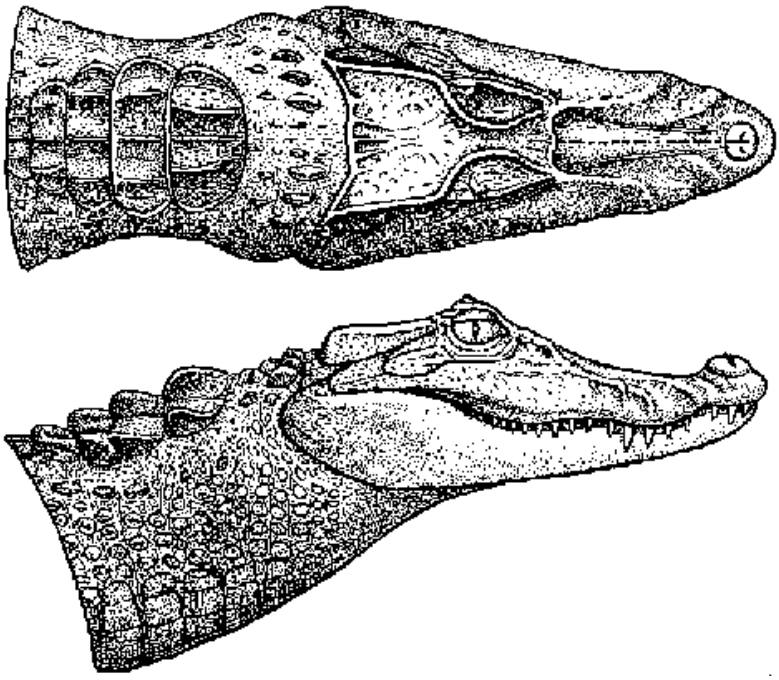
Once the skin has been rolled and tied, it is then ready for storing in a cool, dry place until sold or further processed. The rolled skin will continue to drain so the storage area should have adequate drainage. Hides stored more than a few days should be unrolled and resalted. After resalting and rolling,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

APPENDIX G

DISTINGUISHING AMERICAN ALLIGATORS FROM CAIMANS



The American Alligator has a broadly rounded snout. General coloration is black, but light markings of young may persist. Young alligators will have bold yellow cross bands on black background. The head is smooth in front of eyes.



The Spectacled-Caiman, sometimes referred to as caiman alligator, has a background color of greenish, yellowish, or brownish gray with dark brown cross bands. It has a curved, bony, crosswise ridge in front of eyes.