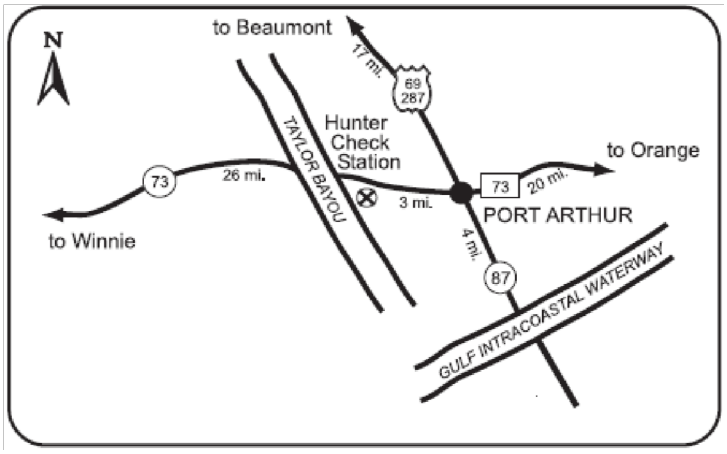
J. D. Murphree WMA Youth Alligator Hunts

Background



The J. D. Murphree Wildlife Management Area is located adjacent to the southwestern city limits of Port Arthur, Jefferson County, Texas. The Headquarters is located on the south side of State Highway 73, one-half mile east of the Taylor Bayou Bridge and three miles west of the State Highway 82 intersection in Port Arthur. The Murphree Area is a 25,667-acre block of fresh to brackish marsh on the upper Texas coast near the Louisiana border. The area is primarily managed to maintain high quality wintering waterfowl habitat and secondarily to provide public recreation through hunting and sport fishing. All access is by **boat only**.

Public Hunting

Properly equipped permitted hunters should report to the WMA headquarters by 11:00 am on the first day of their assigned hunt period. **Hunters must contact the area as soon as possible if they are unable to attend their accepted hunt or not able to arrive on the first day for orientation.** No standby hunters will be drawn for this hunt. All hunters will be required to attend an orientation session immediately before their hunt. During this check-in and orientation, hunters will be assigned a hunt area on the J. D. Murphree WMA. No hunter substitutions are permitted. Only hunters listed on the permit will be allowed to accompany the hunt party. Camping is not available at the WMA, but commercial lodging is available nearby.

Your alligator hunt permit and hunting license must be presented upon check in. Youths and supervising adults will be required to show their driver's license (if applicable) and social security card or proof of social security number. Only the youth(s) will be authorized to hunt an alligator, but both the youth(s) and the supervising adult must possess a valid hunting license, regardless of age, which can be purchased at any license vendor. An additional $126 tag fee will be assessed in the event you are successful in harvesting an alligator and opt to sell the alligator on the commercial market. (There is no tag fee for personal use.) Each youth hunter listed on the permit will be allowed to harvest one alligator during the hunt.

Any legal method for taking is permitted during this hunt. Shotguns should be used to dispatch alligators secured on line or snare. It is unlawful to shoot free swimming alligators during the September Alligator Season. Only one method of take may be used at a time by each permitted hunter.

1. The following are legal means and methods for taking an alligator:
   A. Hook and Line (limit of 1 set per hunter) - non-stainless-steel hook of at least 9-0 size, 3 to 6 feet of leader material and 30 feet of rope (at least 300# test) per set, approximately one pound of bait per set (beef spleen or 1/4 chicken) and a tool for driving stakes. Area staff will supply one cane pole and stake per hunter (return required).

   B. Archery - longbow, recurve bow or compound bow with reel device and arrows with line of at least 300# test securely attached to the barbed fish point**.** **Crossbows are prohibited**.

   C. Hand-held Snare - Size No. 4 or larger with integral locking mechanism attached to 100 feet of at least 300# test line and a long pole.

   D. Gig - may be used only when a line of at least 300# test is securely attached to the hook or head of the device in such a manner to prevent separation from the hook or head until the carcass is retrieved

2. Arrows, hand-held snares and gigs must be attached to a stationary or floating object capable of maintaining the line above water when an alligator is attached. If a non-stationary floating object is used, it must be at least six inches by six inches by eight inches or if the float is spherical, no less than eight inches in diameter.

3. Only a shotgun is accepted for dispatching alligators secured on line or snare. Use of non-toxic shot is preferred on the WMA. A shotgun with light shot shell loads of #6 shot or slugs is adequate. **Rifles and handguns are strictly prohibited as a means of dispatching alligators**.

4. **Access to the Unit is by boat only.** A shallow draft boat approximately 14-16 feet in length equipped with an outboard motor (20-40 horsepower) light enough to be pulled over small levees is strongly recommended. An additional canoe or small boat may aid in accessing assigned hunting areas within leveed compartments. Large, moderate draft or heavy boats will limit access in many hunt areas due to shallow water conditions and levee portages. Be prepared for thick stands of heavy aquatic vegetation. **Parties with inadequate or unsafe boats or equipment are not guaranteed a hunt.**

5. The following equipment is necessary for alligator hunters on the WMA: boat and outboard motor (described above), proper safety devices as required by law, drinking water, paddle, flashlight, push-pole, outboard gas sufficient for 25 miles of travel, rain gear, hip boots or waders, insect repellent, extra propeller and prop retainers, knife and a shotgun with

appropriate ammunition. Boats (persons, equipment, harvested game, etc.) may not exceed U.S. Coast Guard approved load capacity.

6. Hunt parties utilizing inadequate boats or equipment may be limited to sharing available hunt areas. Be prepared for heavy mosquito infestation.
7. **All persons entering the area do so at their own risk**. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department assumes no responsibility for personal injury or property damage.
8. Accommodations for hunters with disabilities on public hunt sites vary between areas. If you would like to request accommodation, please contact each area directly at least 2 weeks in advance of your hunt to discuss the options that may be available.

If you have further questions, call the J. D. Murphree WMA headquarters at (409) 736-2551.