

NOTICE OF REVISION/CHANGE

TO

POLICY & PROCEDURE MEMORANDUM #68

SUBJECT: ANIMAL CONTROL

TO: ALL POLICY AND PROCEDURE MEMORANDUM HOLDERS

EFFECTIVE DATE: JANUARY 6, 2008

REVISION DATE: August 11, 2015, October 14, 2015

This memorandum supersedes and replaces all previous information included in PPM #68 originally issued January 6, 2008. The current PPM is to be replaced in its entirety by this revised issue dated October 7, 2015.



ASSISTANT SECRETARY

This is revision No. 2 to this PPM with an original effective date of January 6, 2008.

IMPORTANT

Insert this revision notice in PPM file preceding all other information on this subject to maintain a current document file.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MEMORANDUM NO. 68

SUBJECT: ANIMAL CONTROL

TO: ALL POLICY AND PROCEDURE MEMORANDUM HOLDERS

EFFECTIVE DATE: JANUARY 6, 2008

POLICY

To establish a humane method by which problematic animals will be identified, controlled and properly removed or disposed of.

PROCEDURE

Problematic animals are individual animals of native species, exotic animals, domesticated and feral animals whose actions create special management problems. Examples of animal species from which nuisance cases may arise include raccoons, armadillos, squirrels, beaver, coyotes, feral hogs, dogs, cats, alligators, nutria, opossum, snakes and black bear. The following problems may occur:

Unacceptable threat to humans of physical injury (bites or scratches) or disease due to abnormal or conditioned behavior patterns, including presence in high public use areas;

Unacceptable damage to park facilities or public property;

Unacceptable damage to natural and cultural resources;

Unacceptable injury/illness to animal.

Before any management measures can be taken, there must be documented evidence that a site has an identifiable animal problem. This documentation can be in the form of visitor complaints (Park Ranger Daily Logs, Visitor Comment Forms, etc.), staff complaints or observations (sightings of raccoon in garbage barrels, feral hogs on hiking trails, etc.), damage to park facilities or natural resources (raccoons tearing porch screens, etc.).

Once the proper documentation is in place, an Animal Removal Request (Exhibit A) with documentation attached is completed and routed through the District Manager to the Assistant Secretary for final approval.

Upon fulfillment of the approved animal removal request, a follow-up email must be sent to the District Manager, and retained by the Regional Manager documenting the results of the removal. The email should include the number of species removed, disposal methods, and any other pertinent information.

The following management measures for resolving identified animal problems are listed in preferred order:

Educate park staff. Park staff are responsible for taking measures to eliminate all food sources as animals are many times searching for food. Unsecured waste receptacles are an attractive nuisance. Park staff should ensure all trash receptacles are in good working order and secured properly.

Educate park visitors. Park visitors should be educated through appropriate interpretive materials to avoid careless or deliberate encounters with animals and thereby avoid exposure to their hazards. Park visitors will be warned for deliberately

feeding wildlife. Visitors should be encouraged to properly dispose of food scraps so as not to attract animals to public use areas.

Anticipate, detect, and resolve animal situations before they become problematic. Past experience, watchfulness and good communication among park staff are the keys to proactive management of animal problems. In the case of “friendly” animals, elimination or modification of a food source or visitor behavior may prevent problematic situations. Nuisance animals that approach humans for food, or that approach high public use areas, should be harassed (chased or prodded), non-injurious but repeatedly, to recondition them to avoid humans or the specific high use area.

Relocate animals. Individual animals that cause problems despite the above attempted remedies should be captured and relocated, if practicable, with the approval of the Administrative Office. Relocation should occur within the same unit whenever possible and, if not, to other properties with permission.

Relocate and/or rehabilitate injured/ill animals. In instances where an individual animal is injured park staff should intervene and seek the assistance of a Wildlife Rehabilitator.

Governmental outside agency removal of animals. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF), Livestock Brand Commission provides trapping and removal services at no cost. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), APHIS/Wildlife Services will contractually provide trapping and removal services for a fee. Any communications with these agencies will be coordinated through the District Manager and submission to the Assistant Secretary for final approval.

Contract removal of animals. The Office of State Parks may contractually secure the trapping and removal services of a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO). Any such contract will be coordinated through the District Manager and sent to the Assistant Secretary for final approval.

Private nuisance hunter. The Office of State Parks should secure a sworn declaration (Exhibit B) with a private nuisance hunter to trap and remove nuisance animals, outlaw quadrupeds, including feral hogs.

Staff removal of animals. The Office of State Parks may authorize employees to trap and remove feral hogs after securing express approval routed through the District Manager and final approval from the Assistant Secretary.

Humanely dispatch animals. The dispatching of problematic animals may be necessary for the safety of our staff and park visitors, but only after other methods of trapping and removal have been considered or failed. These cases will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, requiring consultation with the District Manager and final approval from the Assistant Secretary, except in emergencies when immediate action must be taken to safeguard staff or visitors. The method of destruction must be pre-approved by the Assistant Secretary, and only authorized individuals will be permitted to participate in the process of destroying and disposing of animals.

Control of Wild Quadrupeds.

The following wild quadrupeds may be taken year-round by trapping: armadillo, nutria, beaver, opossums, and raccoons, but only if the following conditions are met: the animals are treated in a reasonable and humane manner, and released generally within twelve hours and no later than twenty-four hours of capture to a remote location of the site. Traps shall be set in such a manner that provides the trapped animal protection from harassment from other animals, park visitors' view and extended sun exposure. Two-door traps similar to Havahart® Traps should be used.

No animal taken under this provision shall be sold or used in any way for the personal benefit of an employee.

The baiting, caging and release of animals under this provision will only be allowed on weekdays (e.g., Monday – Friday). All bait will be removed from all cages/traps and the cages/traps must be secured (closed) on Friday so that an animal cannot inadvertently be trapped over the weekend. No animal taken under this provision will be allowed to remain in a cage/trap over the weekend.

In no case will leg hold traps and other body-gripping devices be allowed.

Control of Feral Hogs

Feral hogs will be removed from state park lands by cooperative agreement with other state agencies (Department of Agriculture and Forestry), federal government agencies (United States Department of Agriculture, APHIS/Wildlife Services), or by sworn declaration with a private nuisance hunter, or by authorized state park staff with express approval from the Assistant Secretary.

Hogs may be removed by trapping or by shooting. All trapped hogs will be treated humanely. Live traps should be used whenever possible and, once baited, must be checked every 24 hours. In no case will leg hold traps and other body-gripping devices be allowed. Any trapped hogs are to be relocated off park property or shot. Any injured or ill hogs that are to be euthanized must be killed with a gunshot to the brain. Hogs will not be shot in public view, or at times when the sound of firearms may be disruptive to normal recreational uses of park property. Only authorized personnel are allowed to shoot feral hogs in conjunction with the authorized state park trapping. No animal taken under this provision may be released into the wild. No animal taken under this provision shall be sold or used in any way for the personal benefit of an employee.

The baiting and caging of feral hogs will only be allowed on weekdays (e.g., Monday – Friday). All bait will be removed from all cages/traps and the cages/traps must be secured (closed) on Friday so that an animal cannot inadvertently be trapped over the weekend. No feral hog will be allowed to remain in a cage/trap over the weekend.

Control of Nuisance Alligators in non-emergency situations.

A nuisance alligator is identified as a specific alligator that poses a threat to human life or property.

Alligator warning signs are to be posted at high public use areas.

Any staff observing or receiving a report of an alligator which is aggressive to humans, persistent in approaching heavy-use areas, or behaves abnormally in the presence of humans, shall immediately notify the Park Manager or staff-in-charge.

The Park Manager or staff-in-charge shall immediately institute protective measures (swimming area closure) as may seem appropriate according to the initial report and his/her own assessment.

The Park Manager or staff-in-charge shall immediately contact the District Manager and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to obtain a reference number and the contact information for the local nuisance hunter.

Once the nuisance alligator is removed from the park, an Initial Report is to be filed to document the occurrence.

Control of Nuisance Alligators in emergency situations.

The emergency dispatching of an alligator to save human life or prevent imminent injury shall occur only as a last resort and at the discretion of the Park Manager or staff-in-charge. Such dispatching should be only by law enforcement personnel.

If time allows, the Park Manager or staff-in-charge must first contact the District Manager and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries prior to the emergency destruction.

If time does not allow prior to the emergency destruction, the Park Manager or staff-in-charge must immediately contact the District Manager and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries after the emergency destruction.

An Initial Report is to be filed documenting all such cases.

Control of Stray and Feral Cats and Dogs

Removal of cats and dogs may be accomplished by humane live trapping or hand capture by site staff or local animal control agencies.

Two-door traps similar to Havahart® Traps must be used.

Traps must be set in areas out of sight of visitors and monitored at least every two hours.

The cat or dog shall be delivered to (or arrange for pickup) the local animal control facility.

If a cat or dog cannot be taken directly to the local animal control facility, animal rescue group, humane society or veterinary office it should be transferred to a larger carrier and provided with proper food, water and shelter until delivery.

If a cat or dog can be identified as owned, notify the owner to retrieve the animal without delay. If the animal's owner cannot be contacted after a five (5) day period or is contacted but fails to recover the animal after at least five (5) days, the Park Manager is authorized to deliver the animal to (or arrange for pickup) the local animal control facility, animal rescue group, humane society or veterinary office. During the period of captivity the "owned" cat or dog must be provided with proper food, water, shelter and clean cage.

The baiting, caging and release of animals under this provision will only be allowed on weekdays (e.g., Monday – Friday). All bait will be removed from all cages/traps and the cages/traps must be secured (closed) on Friday so that an animal cannot inadvertently be trapped over the weekend. No animal taken under this provision will be allowed to remain in a cage/trap over the weekend.

Control of Black Bear

Park personnel are required to document all black bear sightings as to location, day, date, time, number, activity, etc. As sightings increase, park personnel must contact the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries at 1-800-442-2511, to devise a Louisiana Black Bear Conflict Resolution Plan for the site.

Contact Information on Agencies that deal with nuisance animals.

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF), Livestock Brand Commission at 1-800-558-9741.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), APHIS/Wildlife Services
Parks south of Alexandria:
P.O. Box 589
Port Allen, LA 70767
225-389-0229

Parks north of Alexandria:
P.O. Box 9026
Monroe, LA 71211
318-343-6499

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Region Offices, Current Nuisance Alligators and Current Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCO)(fees charged based upon on an individual basis and are determined by the NWCO):

www.wlf.louisiana.gov/wildlife/nwco

Contact Information for Wildlife Rehabilitators

Louisiana Wildlife Rehabilitators Association
www.site.lawraonline.com
Site maintains a current list of wildlife rehabilitators around the state.

Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries: www.wlf.louisiana.gov/wildlife/rehab

EXHIBIT A

OFFICE OF STATE PARKS

ANIMAL REMOVAL REQUEST

SITE: _____ DATE: _____

JUSTIFICATION (Attach documentation copies):

MEANS OF REMOVAL:

_____ Live Trap and Relocate	_____ Outside Agency Removal
_____ Contract Removal	_____ Destroy
_____ Park Staff Removal of Feral Hogs	_____ Private Nuisance Hunter

TARGET NUMBER OF EACH SPECIES TO BE REMOVED:

SPECIES:	NUMBER:	DATES OF REMOVAL:	
		FROM	TO
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

AREAS WHERE CONTROL MEASURES ARE TO OCCUR:
(ATTACH A PARK MAP INDICATING LOCATION)

PARK MANAGER APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____
DISTRICT MANAGER APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____
ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL: _____ DATE: _____

EXHIBIT B

SWORN DECLARATIONS

I, the undersigned, declare and certify:

1. My name, primary address, phone number(s), and additional contact information are:

Print Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
Additional Contact Information (Optional) _____

2. I possess a valid Louisiana hunting license, which is required to take nuisance animals and outlaw quadrupeds, including feral hogs.
3. I have otherwise complied with all applicable laws and regulations regarding the taking of nuisance animals and outlaw quadrupeds on public property.
4. I will not release into the wild any nuisance animals or outlaw quadrupeds (e.g. feral hogs) that I have taken from property that is under the supervision or jurisdiction of the Louisiana Office of State Parks, and I will not authorize, assist, tolerate, or permit others to do so.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: _____
(Date)

Executed by: _____
(Declarant's Signature)

Witnessed by: _____ Initials: _____
(OSP Staff Printed Name)

Location: _____
(State Park, City, Parish)