AFFECTED RESOURCE	ANTICIPATED DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS
American Alligator Hunting alligators on Banks Lake has never been permitted based on the lack of population data. Since 2013, Georgia DNR has conducted annual population surveys. The data indicates there is an average of 24 legal harvest-size alligators with an average of 8 harvest-size alligators per mile.	**Alternative A:** The no action alternative will not allow alligator hunting on the Refuge. This may result in an increased alligator population, which could reduce foraging opportunities and increase human/alligator conflicts. **Alternative B:** The hunt impacts are assumed to be minimal due to the small amount of hunters anticipated to participate in the hunt on the refuge. Georgia DNR will manage the hunt and issues 85 permits for a ten county area with a one alligator limit per permittee. Historically, Zone 4 has reported the least amount of alligators taken with tags going unfulfilled. The estimated amount of hunters and alligators harvested on the refuge is 10-20 per year. Georgia DNR survey data, from 2013 to present, suggests Banks Lake NWR currently supports an average of 24 legal harvest-size (48 inches) alligators with an average of 8 harvest-size alligators per mile. The hunt may improve foraging for smaller alligators by reducing competition. The hunt may also reduce nuisance alligators or lessen human/alligator conflicts (GADNR 2019).
Other Wildlife and Aquatic Species The refuge supports a diversity of wildlife species including game and nongame species, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates, which are important contributors to the overall biodiversity on the refuge. A species list of Refuge Biota is provided in Appendix J of the 2006 Comprehensive Conservation Plan.	**Alternative A:** No change to current management. **Alternative B:** Short-term direct effects of hunting include mortality, wounding, and disturbance of target and non-target species (De Long 2002). Hunting can alter behavior (e.g., foraging time), population structure, general health (e.g., weight loss), and distribution patterns of all wildlife within the hunt area (Owens 1977, Raveling 1979, White-Robinson 1982, Thomas 1983, Bartelt 1987, Madsen 1985, Cole and Knight 1990). The level of disturbance associated with hunting can be high due to the loud noises produced by guns and the rapid movement of hunters within the hunt area. Disturbance to wildlife can cause shifts in habitat use, abandonment of habitat, increased energy demands on affected wildlife, changes in nesting and reproductive success, and singing behavior (Knight and Cole 1990, Miller et al. 1998, Shulz and Stock 1993, Gill et al. 1996, Arrese 1987, Gill et al. 2001). Mitigation measures to reduce impacts will be implemented