

- All other public uses on the refuge will not change and would continue to be managed as described in current plans.

Measures to mitigate and/or minimize adverse effects have been incorporated into the selected action. These measures include:

- Any activity that might cause an effect to a historic property will be subject to a case-by-case Section 106 review.
- The Service has not identified any potential high and adverse environmental or human health impacts from this proposed action or any of the alternatives. The Service has identified no minority or low-income communities within the impact area. Minority or low-income communities will not be disproportionately affected by any impacts from this proposed action.
- The refuge will continue to engage in current management activities during the hunt to ensure the refuge meets its other management objectives. Impacts will be minimized by ensuring hunters, cooperators, visitors and partners are aware of each other's activities and timed to minimize conflict when possible. Management activities can generally be separated by time or area during the hunts.
- Conflicts between hunting and non-hunting recreational users will be minimal due to the administration by Georgia DNR.
- The refuge will be open to hunting up to six days of the State season. Negligible effect expected to vegetation from trampling by hunters, because of the low number of users and days of use expected.

While refuges, by their nature, are unique areas protected for conservation of fish, wildlife and habitat, the proposed action will not have a significant impact on refuge resources and uses for several reasons:

- 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.
- The Service works closely with the State to ensure that additional species harvested on a refuge are within the limits set by the State to ensure healthy populations of the species for present and future generations of Americans.
- The action will result in beneficial impacts to the human environment, including the biodiversity and ecological integrity of the refuge, as well as the wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities and socioeconomics of the local economy, with only negligible adverse impacts to the human environment as discussed above.
- In north and central Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, wood storks lay eggs from March to late May, with fledging occurring in July and August. Alligator season usually