

The Service put the Hunt Plan and EA out for two 30-day public review and comment periods. The local comment period ran from March 23 – April 20, 2020. The national comment period ran from April 9 – June 8, 2020. The Service received three comments on the draft Hunt Plan and EA. One of the comments wanted to ban all hunting on National Wildlife Refuges, and the other two comments asked for expanded hunting. Hunting is consistent with the NWRSAA and Secretarial Orders 3347 and 3356. The expanded hunting requests were either not allowable under state law or could not be supported with biological data.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon a review and evaluation of the information contained in the EA as well as other documents and actions of record affiliated with this proposal, the Service has determined that the proposal to implement alligator hunting on the Banks Lake NWR does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment under the meaning of section 102 (2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (as amended). As such, an environmental impact statement is not required.

Decision

The Service has decided to open Banks Lake National Wildlife Refuge to alligator hunting.

This action is compatible with the purposed of the refuge and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System. See attached Compatibility Determination (Appendix D).

The action is consistent with applicable laws and policies.

BRETT HUNTER Digitally signed by BRETT HUNTER
Date: 2020.07.30 14:16:11 -04'00'

David Viker

Date

Regional Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System