

Turtle Rock Community Association, Inc. Alligator Policy

Alligators are an important part of Florida's landscape and play a valuable role in the ecology of our state's wetlands. Alligators are federally protected by the Endangered Species Act as a Threatened species and as a Federally-designated Threatened species by Florida's Endangered and Threatened Species Rule. Alligators are predators and help keep other aquatic animal populations in balance. It is important to ensure that people and alligators can continue to coexist. We want residents to consider Turtle Rock's alligators as wildlife to be admired and respected.

In Florida, serious injuries from alligators are rare. Nevertheless, living safely with alligators relies on taking common-sense precautions:

- Don't feed them. It is illegal to do so. Feeding them can cause them to lose their natural fear of people.
- Don't walk the edge of ponds when you can avoid it, and do not bring small children or dogs to ponds' edges. Keep pets on a leash.
- Leave the alligators alone. Watch for alligators relaxing nearby and give them plenty of space. Don't swim or wade in the ponds.
- Know that alligators are mostly active between dusk and dawn and during mating season, typically April-June in Florida.

When residents ask to have an alligator removed, they are typically asked if the alligator is being aggressive. Generally, a non-aggressive alligator can be left in peace. If an alligator is "removed", then in accordance with Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission ("FWC") guidelines, it is sold for its meat and hide – it is not simply relocated. (For more information see FWC, Alligator Management Program, MyFWC.com/Alligator).

Management will use the following procedure regarding removal of alligators from Turtle Rock:

1. Any resident who believes an alligator poses a threat to people or pets should call the Turtle Rock Management office (Certified Association Manager or "CAM").
2. The CAM will make an assessment of whether the alligator is aggressive and a threat to people or pets. The CAM will explain to the resident Turtle Rock's general policy to co-exist with alligators, and that the alligator will eventually be killed if removed. Alligators less than 4 feet in length are not considered a threat and will not be removed.
3. If the CAM determines that the alligator is a threat and should be removed, the CAM will contact the FWC Nuisance Alligator Hotline and request a permit for the removal of the aggressive alligator.

4. Per FWC rules, FWC will issue the permit directly to an alligator trapper, specifying the number of alligators that the trapper may harvest on that permit, and the trapper will advise the CAM that the permit has been issued.
5. The permit will not be modified during the period it is in effect to increase the number of alligators to be harvested, unless the CAM has received complaints regarding additional alligators and agrees that the increase is appropriate. Under no circumstances will the number of alligators authorized by the permit exceed the number of alligators determined by the CAM to be aggressive based on a complaint or complaints made by Turtle Rock residents. The CAM will take care to assure that multiple complaints do not relate to the same alligator before adding any alligators to the permit.
6. The trapper will be admitted to Turtle Rock on a permit-by-permit basis to remove the aggressive alligator.
7. The CAM will request that the trapper keep the CAM informed of the progress of any alligator removal.
8. With respect to each complaint for which a permit is requested from FWC, the CAM will keep a record of the date of the complaint, the name and address of the complainant, details regarding the complaint, the number of alligators which the permit allows to be removed, and the date that the removal has been completed.

Turtle Rock will withdraw from and will not participate in the FWC Targeted Harvest Area program. That program provides the trapper with more discretion to remove alligators than is permitted by this policy.