

The Florida Park Service Historic Weapons Event Information

A Guide for Reenactors



**FLORIDA
State Parks**
*...the Real Florida*SM



Welcome to the Florida Park Service Historic Weapons Firing Safety Program!

The Florida Park Service Historic Weapons Firing Program consists of events and demonstrations, including battle reenactments and other interpretive programming involving the use of historic weapons. Safety is a priority during all demonstrations and events involving historic weapons.

Event Points of Contact	
Historic Weapons Safety Supervisor	Melisa Thompson / 386-454-1853
Historic Weapons Safety Assistant(s)	George Paxton / 352-316-6472 David Riker / 863-860-8782
Volunteer Coordinator	Paul Rowley / 352-804-8846
Event Coordinator	Paul Rowley / 352-804-8846

Participation Requirements

Registration

- All participants are encouraged to pre-register for this event with the registration form available at www.alligatorfest.org

Volunteer Expectations

- Volunteers are essential to the Florida Park Service and help us perform our mission.
- As this is the Alligator Warrior Festival's event and is only hosted by O'Leno State Park, all Volunteers are required to be registered with the Alligator Warrior Festival. Advance registration is preferred and encouraged. Registration forms are available in advance at the event web site www.alligatorfest.org and are mailed to previous participants prior to the event. Though not recommended, same-day on-site registration is also accepted. Same-day registration forms are available at the event registration tent.
- Each volunteer is required to be covered by the Alligator Warrior Festival's own insurance coverage and liability.

Age Requirements

- The minimum age at which Reenactors (Demonstrators) are permitted to participate in carrying or firing historic weapons during FPS demonstrations is 16 years.
- If reenactors are under 16 years of age, they may still participate in areas appropriate to the event or demonstration that do not require weapons handling; children must remain under parent, guardian or unit supervision at all times.

General Event Safety

- Alcoholic beverages will not be consumed during normal park operating hours. Any individuals under the influence will be removed.
- Placement of barriers, between audience and event or demonstration area.
- A rope barrier separates spectators (park visitors) from the battlefield and do-not-cross tape blocks closed paths during the battle reenactment or any other weapons demonstrations.
- Placement of vehicle barriers around pedestrian traffic areas.
- FPS traffic cones to block non-emergency vehicle access to road between infirmary and dining hall and between dining hall and handicrafts building, except during set-up and tear-down.

General Historic Weapons Safety

- Park visitors are not permitted to handle any edged weapons or any weapon or equipment containing black powder.
- No loose powder is allowed in the event or demonstration area.
- To protect against flash burns, all demonstrators must wear long-sleeved, natural fiber or animal skin clothing appropriate to the time-period being portrayed.
- Before firing, warn the visitors of the loud noise, and caution visitors with hearing aids and small children to cover their ears.
- The demonstration area shall be safe for the size of the event of demonstration. All events or demonstrations where weapons are fired will follow the *Primitive Weapons Range Diagram*, *Small Arms Range Diagram*, *Artillery Range Diagram*, or *Opposing Troops Range Diagram* as appropriate.
- No bullets, musket balls, projectiles, or loading blocks will be carried AT ANY TIME during an event or demonstration.
- Demonstrators are not permitted to fire their weapons in the encampments or along marching routes without prior approval from the Safety Supervisor or Safety Assistant in charge of the event or demonstration. An area for weapons testing will be designated, if needed.
- Opposing troops will not advance within 45 feet (15 yards) of another unit at any time during a battle reenactment.
- All firing will be done at an elevated angle. Never aim a weapon directly at another person.

- Each unit commander is responsible for the conduct of all reenactors in the unit. (This includes women and children). The unit commander is responsible for making sure the reenactors are aware of the safety rules and that they understand and abide by them.
- When a reenactor/demonstrator is not part of a formal unit or command structure, each adult demonstrator/reenactor, their partner/spouse and children are considered a unit.
- All ram rods, including those of an NCO, are prohibited on the reenactment battlefield, except those carried by the Park safety supervisor and safety assistants.
- To maintain a historically accurate portrayal: Seminole warriors should not fire while in shoulder to shoulder formations. Seminole war reenactors collaborate by planning, example, inspiration and request but do not give orders, except to prevent a safety violation or to remove a safety violator from the field.
- If a weapon misfires, explain the procedures to the visitors, keeping them at a safe distance until the weapon is discharged or is rendered safe. If attempts fail to correct a misfire, then small arms will be removed from the area. Visitors will be removed from the demonstration area for artillery misfires which are not able to be rendered safe. Standard unloading procedures will then be followed.
- In the event of an actual injury needing immediate attention during an event or demonstration, either the injured person or someone going to his aid will shout the word “MEDIC” to signify this injury. The word “MEDIC” is to be used ONLY in the case of an ACTUAL INJURY requiring immediate attention. Once the term “MEDIC” is heard, all activity will cease, and the injured person will be cared for.
- No hand-to-hand combat is permitted (including swords, sabers or other weapons).

Weapons Inspections

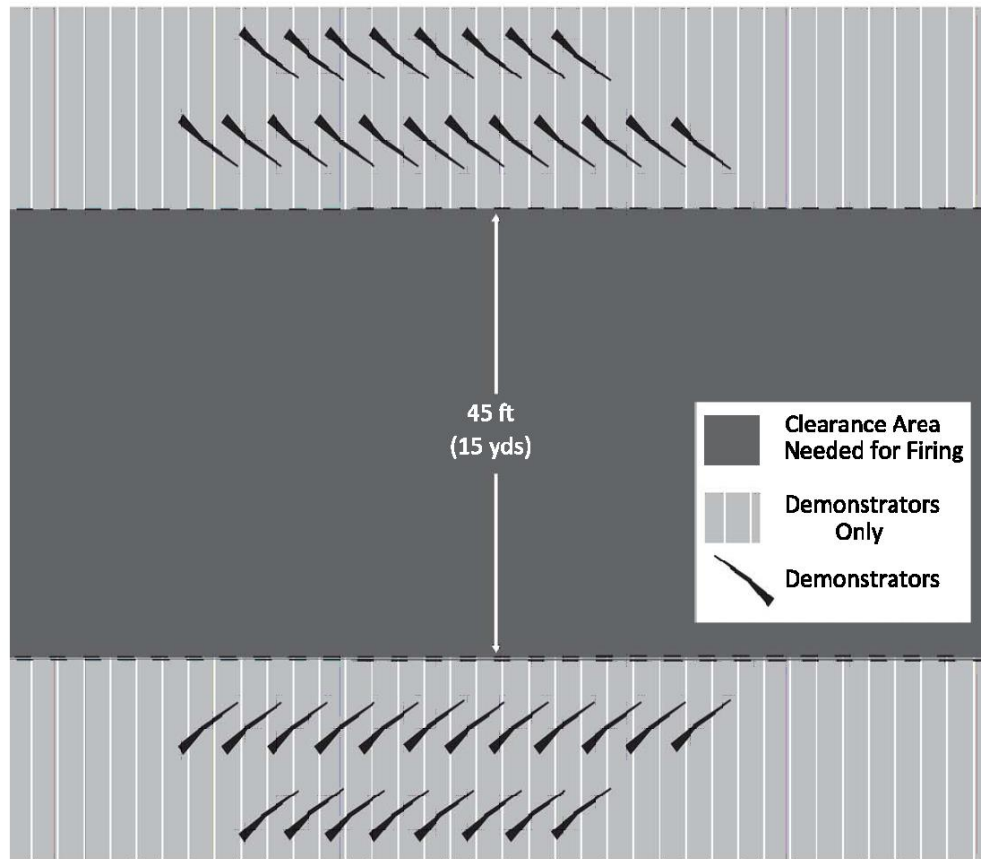
- All weapons are subject to inspection prior to firing during an event or demonstration.
- Cannon crews are required to perform firing and misfiring drills as part of a safety inspection.
- Event and Safety personnel collaborate to maintain a log of inspections and power distribution.

Black Powder

- Alligator Festival of Lake City FL, Inc. will provide pre-rolled 60g or 120g FFg black powder cartridges to battle participants and historic weapons demonstrators. Alligator Festival of Lake City FL, Inc. will pre-arrange to provide Fg black powder to the cannon crew. The cannon crew will prepare the Fg cannon rounds prior to arrival at the park. All black powder brought into the park by Event organizers, battle participants, weapons demonstrators or others must be in the following prepared format – cartridges or cannon rounds, as appropriate.
- The use of FFFg (3F) and FFFFg (4F) is not permitted during Florida Park Service Events or Demonstrations or in Florida State Parks. Only FFg (2F) is permitted for small arms, and Fg (1F) or C Grade (Cannon Grade) is permitted for artillery.
- Pyrodex (or other synthetic black powders) and fireworks grade powder are not permitted in Florida Park Service Events or Demonstrations or in Florida State Parks.
- Nothing may be added to the black powder for special effects, such as flour, accelerants, etc.
- Aluminum foil will be the only material used to prepare artillery charges – no plastic bags, etc.
- Powder horns may not be used as a method to load weapons nor may black powder be carried in powder horns - no loose powder is allowed in the event or demonstration area. If appropriate to the time-period being portrayed, empty powder horns may be worn.
- Torn or damaged small arms cartridges will not be used.
- Ammo cans, limbers/ammunition boxes and pass boxes containing black powder in any format must remain secured and under supervision.
- Black powder in the form of cartridges (paper or metal) may be carried in cartridge boxes, cartridge bags, or ammo belts only for use during this event. Cartridge boxes should be lined with a metal tin or a wooden cartridge blocks.
- Black powder in the form of cannon rounds may be temporarily stored in a limber/ammunition box only for use during this event. The limber/ammunition box must be constructed of wood or metal, and lined with non-sparking material.
- Sales of black powder are not permitted in Florida State Parks.

Opposing Forces

The demonstration area shall be safe for the size of the event of demonstration. **All events or demonstrations where weapons are fired and there are opposing troops will follow the *Opposing Troops Range Diagram*.**



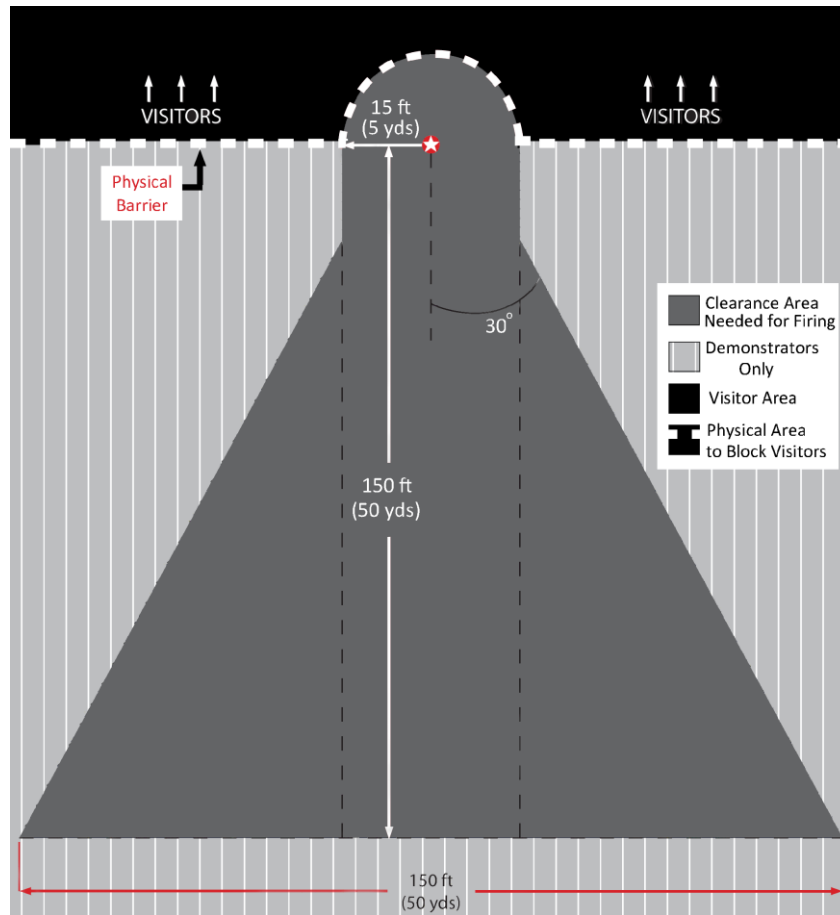
Small Arms

General Safety:

- All weapons are subject to inspection prior to firing during an event or demonstration.
- Weapons are to be kept down-range and pointed away from visitors at all times.
- All flintlocks must be fitted with flash guards and frizzen stalls.
- Wadding is not permitted except in the use of handguns.
- Ramming is not permitted during opposing force reenactments. All rammers will be left in the encampment during battle reenactments, except those carried by the Park safety supervisor or safety assistants.
- Multiple loading is not permitted.
- Edged weapons may be carried but will not be unsheathed at any time without direct command of an officer. The command will only be given with prior approval of the park staff.
- Only officers, non-commissioned officers and MOUNTED warriors or cavalymen may carry pistols. Revolvers are not permitted in the reenactment of 2nd Seminole War battles. Do not fire handguns directly at any person.
- If a weapon misfires, explain the misfire procedure to the visitors, and keep them at a safe distance until the weapon is discharged or rendered safe. If attempts fail to correct a small arms misfire, small arms will be removed from the area.

Range:

The demonstration area shall be safe for the size of the event of demonstration. All events or demonstrations where small arms are fired will follow the *Small Arms Range Diagram*.



Loads:

All events or demonstrations where small arms are fired will follow the *Table of Maximum Loads*.

Weapon Type	Caliber	Maximum Blank Load
18th Century Muskets, Rifles & Pistols		
"Brown Bess" Musket (<i>flintlock</i>)	.75	125 grains FFg
Charleville Musket (<i>flintlock</i>)	.69	125 grains FFg
American Musket (<i>flintlock</i>)	.69	125 grains FFg
Kentucky Rifle (<i>flintlock</i>)	variable	90 grains FFg
Pistols & Horse Pistols (<i>flintlock</i>)	variable	90 grains FFg
19th Century Rifles, Muskets & Revolvers		
U.S. Rifle, 1841 (Mississippi Rifle) (<i>percussion</i>)	.54 or .58	60 grains FFg
U.S. Rifle Musket, M1855-1864 (<i>percussion</i>)	.58	60 grains FFg
Springfield, 1855-1864 (<i>percussion</i>)	.58	60 grains FFg
British Enfield Rifle, 1853/1858 (<i>percussion</i>)	.58	60 grains FFg
U.S. Musket, 1842 (<i>percussion</i>)	.69	75 grains FFg
Sharps Carbine/Rifle (<i>percussion</i>)	.54	60 grains FFg
Revolver (<i>percussion</i>)	.36 or .44	30 grains FFg
19th Century Metallic Cartridge Small Arms		
U.S. Springfield Rifle	.50	70 grains FFg
U.S. Rifle, 1866-1870	.45	70 grains FFg
Sharps Carbine	.50	55 grains FFg
U.S. Springfield Rifle, M1866-1860	.45	70 grains FFg
U.S. Springfield Carbine	.45	55 grains FFg
Colt Revolver, M1873	.45	28 grains FFg
Henry Repeating Rifle	.44	25 grains FFg
Spencer Rifle, M1860	.52	25 grains FFg
U.S. Carbine, M1873-1884	.45	28 grains FFg

*All musket charges include priming. For muzzle loading rifles and muskets not listed, the general guideline should be about **one grain of powder per caliber**.

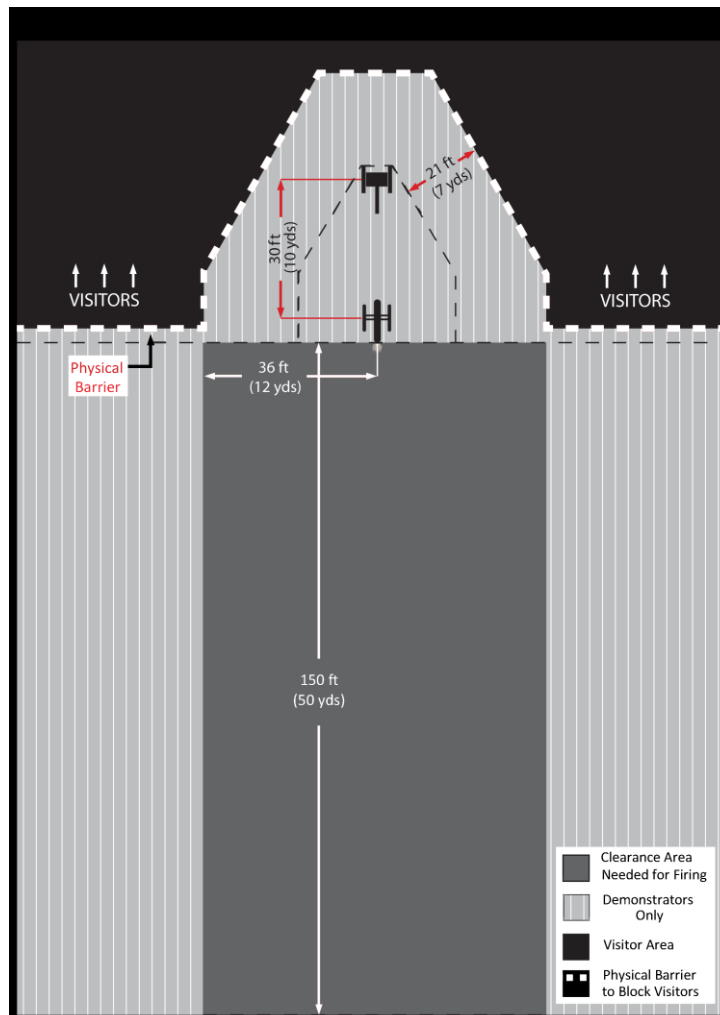
Artillery

General Safety:

- All weapons are subject to inspection prior to firing during an event or demonstration.
- Cannon crews are required to perform firing and misfiring drills as part of a safety inspection.
- All Demonstrators must wear period uniform coats or jackets when firing.
- It is recommended that items which may encumber the Demonstrator, such as sabers, pistol holsters, haversacks, etc., not be worn during the demonstration. Canteens may be worn or placed near the limber. If haversacks are worn, they should be nearly empty with no cups attached to the outside.
- Spurs should be worn only when a Demonstrator can demonstrate they will not interfere with his/her duties.
- Cannoneers No. 1 and 2 must wear buckskin or light leather gauntlets similar to “cavalry” gauntlets.
- Artillery demonstrations shall consist of at least 4 people for a “5-man crew” and at least 6 people for a “7-man crew”. These positions consist of the Gunner and Cannoneers No. 1 through No. 5.
- Aluminum foil will be the only material used to prepare cannon charges – no plastic bags.
- For maximum safety, cannons should be fired no more than once every 3 minutes.
- If a weapon misfires, explain the misfire procedure to the visitors, and keep them at a safe distance until the weapon is discharged or rendered safe. If attempts fail to correct an artillery misfire, visitors will be removed from the area and standard unloading procedures will follow.

Range:

The demonstration area shall be safe for the size of the event or demonstration. All events or demonstrations where artillery is fired will follow the *Artillery Range Diagram*.



Loads:

All events or demonstrations where artillery is fired will follow the *Table of Maximum Loads*.

Weapon Type	Size	Maximum Blank Load
18th Century Artillery		
Swivel Gun 2	2 pounder	4 ounces Fg or C grade
"Grasshopper" Bronze 3	3 pounder	6 ounces Fg or C grade
British Light Gun 6	6 pounder	12 ounces Fg or C grade
British Field Howitzer	5.8 inch	10 ounces Fg or C grade
Iron Gun	3 pounder	6 ounces Fg or C grade
Iron Gun	4 pounder	8 ounces Fg or C grade
Iron Gun	6 pounder	10 ounces Fg or C grade
Iron Gun	12 pounder	20 ounces Fg or C grade
Howitzer	8 inch	36 ounces Fg or C grade
Howitzer	8.76 inch	16 ounces Fg or C grade
Iron Gun (Armstrong)	9 pounder	16 ounces Fg or C grade
Iron Gun (Armstrong)	18 pounder	32 ounces Fg or C grade
Iron Gun (Artmstrong)	24 pounder	36 ounces Fg or C grade
19th Century Artillery		
Napoleon (M1857 Gun Howitzer)	12 pounder	20 ounces Fg or C grade
M1841 Howitzer (Field Howitzer)	12 pounder	10 ounces Fg or C grade
Mountain Howitzer (M1841)	12 pounder	6 ounces Fg or C grade
Gun, 1841 (M1841 Gun)	6 pounder	10 ounces Fg or C grade
Parrott Rifle	2.9 inch	10 ounces Fg or C grade
Ordnance Rifle	3 inch	10 ounces Fg or C grade
Lyle Line-Throwing Gun	————	1.5 ounces Fg or C grade

*For cannons smaller than full scale and for cannons not listed, the maximum charge is **no more than 2.5 ounces Fg or C grade powder per one full inch of bore opening.**

Cavalry

Any Cavalry that participates during this event are only allowed to carry a single shot pistol. Loading to be done for rider/s by unmounted person/s.

Authenticity

Pre-1859 Florida Living History: The majority of the reenactors will represent Florida's 1821 transition from a 2nd Spanish period colony to a US territory, Alligator Village and Alligator Warrior, the establishment of Fort Gillelaud and Newnansville, the 2nd Seminole War period, the 2nd Seminole War Battle of San Felasco Hammock, Florida's 1845 statehood, the renaming of Alligator Town to Lake City FL. Other history covered by the event includes, the expedition of Hernando de Soto, the first Spanish Period, the British period and Florida's loyalty to the crown during the American War of Independence, the war of 1812, the resettlement of Creek war refugees in Florida, and Florida as a destination for formerly-enslaved persons.

Camping

- Campfires will be in designated areas only.
- Dry camping without water or electricity, will be available. Please contact the event coordinator.
- Full facility camping is available for tents or RVs. Please contact Reserve America, online at reserveamerica.com or over the phone, 1-800-326-3521

Scenario for the Battle of San Felasco Hammock, 18 September 1836

- Park staff and volunteers prevent spectators, other park visitors and reenactors who were not cleared at the safety meeting from getting onto the battlefield.
- Seminole Warriors hide in the palmettos, out of sight, at the bottom of the hill, near the river.
- Soldiers and Militia gather at the far side of the battlefield.
- Militia, without weapons, start the scenario by pulling a cart up the road in the role of farmers returning from the field.
- A handful of Seminole Warriors frighten the farmers pulling the cart up the road by firing at high elevation, away from the spectators. The farmers hurry to the soldiers to report the presence of the Seminole warriors in the Hammock. The Seminole weapons must be empty before the Seminole warriors step onto the road, to ensure that the 15-foot distance from the spectator line is maintained.
- One of the Seminole warriors activates a 90-second white smoke bomb in a designated area in the cart.
- Based on the report of the farmers, the Colonel sends armed scouts to the Hammock to identify the location of the Seminole Warriors. The warriors stay hidden. No one fires. The scouts do not find the warriors but they find the cart and pull it to the top of the hill.
- The scouts report to the Colonel. In case they are still there, the Colonel orders the regulars, artillery and militia to the hammock.
- When the soldiers have advanced to beyond the center of the field, the warriors emerge the exchange of fire begins.
- The soldiers and militia pull back as the Seminole warriors advance.
- The Seminole warriors pull back as the soldiers and militia repel their push.
- After 3 pushes by the Seminole Warriors, they withdraw back into the palmettos, out of sight, at the bottom of the hill, near the river and cease returning fire.
- The soldiers and militia approach the dense Hammock and fire into it but when their fire is not returned the colonel decides not to pursue the Seminole warriors into the dense hammock.
- After the soldiers and militia withdraw, the warriors emerge and everyone except the artillery gathers on the opposite side of the road from the spectators, to maintain the 15-foot minimum distance.
- Salute rounds are fired after brief statements.
- After all weapons, including the cannon, have been discharged or otherwise emptied, the spectators are allowed onto the battlefield to mingle with the reenactors.