



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Cypress  
National Preserve

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## Big Cypress Off-Road Vehicle Permit Guidelines

It is a **3-Step Process** to obtain an off-road vehicle permit for use of an ATV, airboats, swamp buggy or street legal - 4 X 4, in Big Cypress National Preserve: **1) an operator permit (free), 2) an inspection sticker (free), and 3) an annual vehicle permit (fees apply) are required.** Motorcycles and other two-wheeled motorized vehicles are not permitted in the national preserve backcountry.

The Off-Road Vehicle Permitting Office is located at the Big Cypress National Preserve Oasis Visitor Center. Contact the office at 239-695-1205 for details and hours.

### EXPLANATIONS

#### 1) Operator Permit

In order to get this identification card, you must come to the Big Cypress Visitor Center at Oasis, located halfway between Naples and Miami on Highway 41 (Tamiami Trail). Bring your **valid state driver's license or learner's permit (required)**. **Note** — Those who have a learner's permit must be accompanied by a licensed adult 18 years or older (while operating an off-road vehicle) who also possess a Big Cypress National Preserve off-road vehicle operator's permit. **Unlicensed drivers are not permitted to operate off-road vehicles in Big Cypress.**

You will be shown a presentation and your photo will be taken. Off-road vehicle staff will produce an operator's permit card while you watch the video. You are required to carry the operator permit with you whenever you are operating an off-road vehicle within the national preserve.

It is extremely important that you provide the staff with current address, telephone and email (if available) information so that we may send you mail with important updates on trails, regulations, and off-road vehicle-related news.

This part of the permit process will take approximately 45 minutes.

#### 2) Vehicle Inspection Sticker

**Bring your vehicle in to the visitor center call ahead to the Off-Road Vehicle Office to verify best days and times to do so.** The inspection sticker is valid for 3 years, at which time, the vehicle will need a reinspection. Off-road vehicle staff will inspect your vehicle under the following guidelines:

## OFF-ROAD VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

### ATV 3 & 4 WHEELERS (C)

- VIN#
- Muffler
- PROOF OF TITLE
- Working red tail light
- Working white headlight
- Rear tires nine inches minimum
- Front tires seven inches minimum

### AIRBOAT (A)

- Width eight foot maximum
- Current state registration decal
- Working white aft light to be seen 360 degrees
- Must have an automotive-style factory muffler per Florida Statute 327.391
- Minimum of three inches, FL numbers displayed on each side of the bow
- Hull length 14 feet maximum including grass rake

OR

- Fire extinguisher
- Hull identification number
- Personal floatation device (Life Jackets)
- Minimum of six inches, FL numbers displayed on both sides of rudders
- Orange safety flag 10x12" or larger- flown at minimum 10 feet above vessel
- Port and starboard lights (Coast Guard Requirement)

### SWAMP BUGGY (B)

- Muffler
- Four-wheel drive
- Title (for UTVs only)
- Working red tail light
- Working white headlights
- Width eight foot maximum
- All tires minimum of nine inches
- Weight (will be weighted at inspection)

### STREET LEGAL 4X4 (D)

- VIN#
- Muffler
- Four-wheel drive
- Working red tail lights
- Working white headlights
- Tires minimum of nine inches
- Current registration and insurance
- Weight (will be weighed at inspection)

### 3) Annual Vehicle Permit

Once you have obtained an operator permit and your vehicle has passed the inspection and received an inspection sticker, you may then purchase the annual off-road vehicle permit (fees apply).

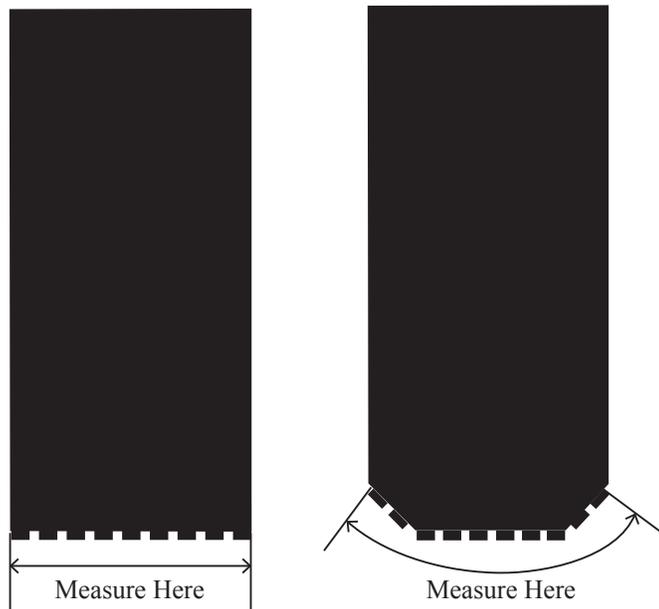
**These permits are valid from January 1 of each year to January 31, of the following year - a 13-month period, however, they are NOT prorated from the date of purchase.** This means that whatever your date of purchase is, the permit will still expire on January 31, and therefore it is more economical to purchase it early in the year. Permits go on sale mid-December of each year and 2,000 permits are available each year.

All permit sales are on a first-come, first-served basis at this time, but a drawing system may be used as demand approaches the 2,000 permit limit. **Permits are not transferable between vehicles.**

**It is strongly advised that you call the visitor center at 239-695-1205 before you bring your vehicle in. We may be able to save you time and extra trips with a brief conversation before your visit.**

## Measuring Tire Tread Width

*Measure tread width from edge to edge along face*



**Tread Face** – That portion of the outer surface of the tire that actually makes contact with the trail substrate during normal use. This includes those portions of tread which extend onto the sides of the tire since they are designed as such to aid in cornering and in soft ground are load bearing.

**Measurement of Tread Face** – Tread Face will be measured using a flexible tape measure capable of conforming to a rounded surface. The measurement will be from one edge of the tread face to the other, along the flat or rounded tread surface of the tire as viewed in cross – section.