



GMU 17B

February 13, 2024

Species within this unit: Antelope, Black Bear, Elk, Javelina, Merriam's Turkey, Mountain Lion, Mule Deer, Dove, Tree Squirrel, Quail

Unit Boundaries

Beginning at the junction of Iron Springs Rd. (County Rd. 10) and Williamson Valley Rd. (County Road 5) in Prescott; westerly on the Prescott-Skull Valley-Hillside-Bagdad Rd. to Bagdad; northeast on the Bagdad-Camp Wood Rd. (FR 21) to the Williamson Valley Rd. (County Rd. 5, FR 6); south on the Williamson Valley Rd. (County Rd. 5, FR 6) to the Iron Springs Rd.

Species Information

Antelope

Antelope within Unit 17B occur in limited areas where important access issues exist. Most antelope hunting in Unit 17B is on private lands that may be posted where permission is required. Generally, most of the landowners in Unit 17B will not give permission to hunt antelope without a prior relationship or arrangement.

All antelope tags valid in Unit 17B have been combined with Unit 19B. If someone can gain access to an area in Unit 17B through a prior relationship or arrangement they should have good success finding antelope. If not, hunters usually fall back on hunting areas that are accessible in Unit 19B with great success.

Areas: Northeastern Portion. Most of the antelope in Unit 17B reside on the Las Vegas, Bar Triangle, and Long



Meadow ranches in the northeastern part of the unit. These ranches do not generally give permission to hunt antelope without a prior relationship or arrangement

A few pronghorn can also be found in the northwestern portion of the unit, west of the U. S. Forest boundary. These animals frequently move back and forth across Camp Wood Road, which is also the boundary between Units 17B and 18B.

Black Bear

Overview: Unit 17B is combined with other units for bear seasons, so refer to the current hunting regulations for additional information. Unit 17B does not have a high density bear population, but some opportunity exists.

Anyone going bear hunting must contact 1-800-970-BEAR (2327) or go to <https://harvest-tracking.azgfd.gov/> to determine if a particular hunt unit is still open. If a hunter has harvested a bear, they must contact the Arizona Game and Fish Department within 48 hours of take. This can be done in person during business hours, on the website under questionnaires in the hunting section (click on the black bear mandatory 48 hour report link) or by calling 800-970-BEAR, which is a 24-hour number. In addition, within 10 days of taking a bear, the hunter shall present the bear's skull, hide, and attached proof of sex for inspection. A premolar tooth will be removed during this inspection. Keep in mind that local Wildlife Managers may not be readily available to inspect a bear, which may require the hunter to take the animal to a Department office.

When in the field, care should be taken to watch for cubs near a potential game bear. Small bruins are not always visible in dense cover. It is unlawful to take a sow with cubs.

Elk

Overview: Unit 17B has relatively low elk densities with herds that move back and forth across unit boundaries. This nomadic behavior results in a challenging hunt that requires equal amounts of skill, pre-hunt scouting, and luck. Unit 17B is combined with several other units for elk hunts. Refer to the current hunting regulations for specifics on which units are combined. The elk hunts in Unit 17B are "Limited Opportunity" and can be very challenging.

The management objectives for Unit 17B are to maintain a limited number of elk far below the carrying capacity of the unit and to minimize elk conflicts for landowners.



Areas: Elk in Unit 17B occur in low densities and are mainly located along the northern boundary of the unit on the Cross U, Las Vegas, and Yolo Ranches. The areas are best accessed from Camp Wood Road (FR 21) and Fair Oaks Road (FR 85).

These ranches are generally posted private property surrounded by Forest Service land. Respect private property rights and obey all posting prohibiting trespass or hunting. Elk numbers across the rest of Unit 17B are also very low density and spotty. Scouting and spending lots of time in the field during the extended length seasons will increase your opportunity of finding elk sign.

Javelina

Overview: Javelina can be found in all of the different habitat types in Unit 17B. Scout areas prior to your hunt to locate fresh sign where javelina travel, bed, and feed. Look for scat, tracks, and rooting. Once you have located an area likely to contain javelina, find a good vantage point nearby to glass from. Many hunters make the mistake of just scanning the hillsides without really picking them apart, thus missing a lot of game. Attaching your binoculars to a tripod will make glassing much more effective, especially when glassing long distances. When hunting in areas where thick vegetation precludes glassing, try sitting waters frequented by javelina.

Hunter success during javelina season can be weather dependent. On rainy or windy days javelina will stay brushed up or in the bottom of draws in an attempt to stay warm. This obviously makes them difficult to locate. However, on calm days with the sun shining, javelina can be found relatively easily feeding on open slopes.

Once a javelina has been harvested, care should be taken to dress and skin it as soon as possible. A common misconception is that the scent gland on a javelina's back must be cut out. This is incorrect. The gland is contained within the skin, and simply skinning a javelina as you would any other animal will completely remove the scent gland. However, be sure not to touch a knife or fingers to the gland or hair and then touch the meat.

Areas: Fair Oaks Road (FR 85). This road provides access to a huge amount of good javelina habitat. It does pass through some private property, so watch out for and obey signs restricting trespassing or hunting.

Tonto Road (FR 102). Hunt east of this road towards Granite Mountain Wilderness. Once again, be aware of areas of private land.

Scott's Basin/Bear Flat. This area is State Land and can be accessed from the Camp Wood Rd (FR 21, aka County Rd



68) out of Bagdad.

Much of the southern part of 17B offers quality javelina hunting. Focus on the areas between Kirkland and Bagdad. Once again be aware of posted private property.

Merriam's Turkey

Overview: The turkey population in Game Management Unit 17 is fair after supplemental transplant efforts from 2015-2022. Currently, there are only two open seasons for turkeys in Unit 17, both in the spring. The draw tags issued for the first and second spring seasons are valid for bearded turkeys only.

When hunting turkeys during the spring season, make sure the bird you're about to bag has a visible beard. Don't rely on a colorful head or even the sound of a gobble when deciding to shoot. Also, be sure no other turkeys are behind or adjacent to the bird you decide to take. Accidentally killing multiple birds with one shot is more common than one might think.

Areas: Turkey habitat in Unit 17B is generally found in the higher elevation band from Camp Wood west towards the Yolo Ranch.

Mountain Lion

- Overview: Mountain lions are found in good numbers throughout Unit 17B. Annual lion harvest numbers in Units 17A and 17B are usually fairly high. Lions are reclusive animals that spend most of their time in rough more remote country. By far, the most effective lion hunting method is trailing them with hounds. However, lions will respond to predator calls, and hunters using this tactic harvest some each year.

When setting up to call mountain lions, pick an elevated calling location that allows you to view a lot of country from one point. Lions will generally come in slow and cautiously, so call on and off for at least 45 minutes, while glassing open areas and rock piles.

****Special Note:** Successful lion hunters must report their kill online on the website, in the questionnaire section under hunting (mountain lion 48 hour mandatory report link) or by telephone 877-438-0447, within 48 hours of taking a lion. In addition, within 10 days of taking a lion, the hunter shall present the lion's skull, hide, and attached proof of sex for



inspection. A small premolar tooth will be removed during this inspection. Keep in mind that local Wildlife Managers may not be readily available to inspect a lion, which may require the hunter to take the animal to a Department office. Also, it is unlawful to harvest a spotted kitten or a female accompanied by spotted kittens.

Mule Deer

Overview: Unit 17B habitat types are very diverse, and there is varying topography. While ponderosa pine is common in the northern part of the unit, pinyon/juniper woodland, chaparral, grassland savannas, and sonoran desert to the southwest typify other areas. The majority of Unit 17B is public land and hunter access is generally good. However, much of the private land in Unit 17B is posted and closed to hunting. In some cases these private portions block access to public lands. Problems such as vandalism, littering, harassment of livestock, and cross-country travel have caused these landowners to lock their gates.

Areas with open slopes, ridges, or mesas should be meticulously glassed for deer during early morning and late afternoon periods. As with any hunt, pre-hunt scouting will greatly increase your chances for success. A Prescott National Forest map is a good place to start (refer to the west half).

Areas: Tank Creek Mesa, Sycamore Mesa, Cedar Mesa, Smith Mesa, South Mesa, and Anderson Mesa and the associated canyons. Reaching these areas will require a 4X4 vehicle. Look closely at the edges of the mesas and the side canyons leading off the tops.

Tonto Road (FR 102, or County Rd 66). This area is accessed from the Iron Springs Rd (County Rd 10) out of Prescott. Many roads lead both east and west from the Tonto Road, entering good deer habitat.

Cottonwood Canyon area (FR 705). This area can be reached from Camp Wood Road (FR 21).

Dove

Overview: Game Management Unit 17B lacks large areas of irrigated cropland that provide optimum dove hunting associated with many other units. Although a few irrigated fields are maintained, they are on posted private property where permission to hunt is required.

Scouting potential areas shortly before the season will greatly improve your hunting success.



Tree Squirrel

Overview: Tree squirrels are associated with ponderosa pine/oak woodland. This type of habitat can be found around the Camp Wood area off Forest Road 21. Hunters can enjoy success by slowly walking through the forest looking and listening. Another tactic is to get in an area with fresh sign, such as cut pine limbs, then sit and wait.

Quail

Overview: Quail breeding activity and the survival of young Overview: Quail breeding activity and the survival of young birds is directly related to precipitation. Late winter and early spring moisture generally translates to a good hunting season.

Early in the season, birds will most likely be tied to water. As the season progresses and temperatures fall, they will move away from tanks and washes to the uplands.

Areas: Gambel's quail are found throughout the unit, although some of the best hunting is in the southern portion. To get there, take the Iron Springs Rd (County Rd 10) out of Prescott to the following areas:

Tonto Road (Forest Road 102, aka County Road 66). Hunt the hills and draws on both sides of the road. Be aware of posted private land and obtain permission to hunt where applicable.

Much of the southern part of 17B offers quality quail hunting. Focus on the areas between Kirkland and Bagdad. Once again be aware of posted private property.

Unit Summary

Primary Game Species/ Hunting Month(s)

Mule Deer	August-January
Javelina	January/February
Elk	September-November

Secondary Game Species/Hunting Month(s)

Turkey	April
Antelope	August/September

Climate Information

Month	Avg. Temp	Avg. Rainfall	Avg. Snowfall
January	Max 50°/Min 20°	1.72"	4.50"
February	Max 54°/Min 23°	1.51"	3.50"
March	Max 59°/Min 23°	1.53"	3.90"
April	Max 68°/Min 33°	0.72"	1.10"
August	Max 86°/Min 56°	3.45"	0.0"
September	Max 85°/Min 50°	1.49"	0.0"
October	Max 72°/Min 38°	1.22"	0.20"
November	Max 60°/Min 28°	1.33"	1.90"
December	Max 52°/Min 23°	1.80"	5.60"

Other Pertinent Climate Information

Temperatures and precipitation levels vary considerably due to the wide range in elevations. High-elevation climate information is from Prescott. Higher elevation areas, such as Camp Wood, will experience cooler temperatures and considerably more snowfall.



Cities, Roads & Campgrounds

Major Cities and Towns in or Near Game Management Unit and Nearest Gas, Food, and Lodging

Prescott, Bagdad, Seligman

Major Highways and Roads Leading To

From the East: State Hwy 69

From the West: State Hwy 97

From the North: Williamson Valley Rd

From the South: State Hwy 89

Developed Campgrounds

The Forest Service administers Granite Basin Recreation Area, just northwest of Prescott near Granite Mountain.

Undeveloped Campgrounds

None.

Brief Description of Terrain, Elevation, and Vegetation

Elevations range from roughly 2,500' in the southwestern portion of the unit to more than 6,400' near Camp Wood.

Terrain is very diverse, encompassing many large mesas with associated canyons, steep mountains, and wide flats.

Vegetation varies from sonoran desert scrub, to large expanses of chaparral and short grass meadow with interspersed pinyon-juniper, to coniferous forests.

Government Agencies and Phone Numbers

Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region III -928 692-7700

Prescott National Forest - 928 443-8000