



GMU 12B

April 17, 2024

Species within this game management unit (GMU): Pronghorn, Bighorn Sheep, Mule Deer, Chukar.

Game Management Unit Boundaries

Beginning at U.S. Hwy 89A and the Kaibab National Forest boundary near mp 566; southerly and easterly along the forest boundary to Grand Canyon National Park; northeasterly along the park boundary to Glen Canyon National Recreation area; easterly along the recreation area boundary to the Colorado River; northeasterly along the Colorado River to the Arizona-Utah state line; westerly along the state line to Kanab Creek; southerly along Kanab Creek to the Kaibab National Forest boundary; northerly, easterly, and southerly along this boundary to U.S. Hwy 89A near mp 566; except those portions that are sovereign tribal lands of the Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians.

The Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Strip District, 345 E. Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah, 84770, phone (435) 688-3200 manages the majority of GMU 12B. No motor vehicles are allowed in the Paria Canyon/Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area. These areas are open to foot and horseback travel only. Motor vehicle travel is restricted to existing roads on all BLM land in the GMU. No off-road travel by motor vehicles is allowed.

The state line is only marked at dirt road crossings. The AZ/UT state line on a GPS unit is N37° 00.0' latitude. It is the hunter's responsibility to know where they are, and the state line is patrolled heavily by both Utah and Arizona law enforcement.

Note: 12BW is the entire portion of 12B that is west of BLM road 1065 (House Rock Valley/ Coyote Valley Road), excluding the Paria Plateau. 12BE is the entire portion of 12B that is east of BLM road 1065 (House Rock Valley/Coyote Valley Road). BLM road 1065 runs north from the U.S. Hwy 89A to the U.S. Hwy 89 in Utah



between the Buckskin Mountains and the Paria Plateau.

All Hunts

Your big game hunter questionnaire link is located on the back of your tag. You also will receive a hunter questionnaire postcard in the mail. You can choose to return the hunter questionnaire postcard via postal mail or online: <https://www.azgfd.com/hunting/questionnaires>. You may also receive an email containing a link to your hunter questionnaire. You can respond by one method only. This information is a critical component of the hunt recommendation process, and your information helps us to accurately estimate species harvest and set permit levels.

Species Information

Elk and Bison

[Detailed bison hunt information web page](#)

*There are open limited opportunity draw bison hunts offered in 12A/12B/13A as well as general non-permit tag (nondraw) elk hunts offered in 12B. Elk season dates can be found in the regulations.

Hunters purchasing an elk tag should be aware that this GMU has very few elk and is considered a limited opportunity hunt. In the last few years, only a few elk or elk signs have been seen, mainly around Rock Canyon and the Pine Hollow habitat treatments.

Pronghorn

Overview: Pronghorn in Hunt GMUs 12A/12B are found primarily in House Rock Valley on the east side of the Kaibab Plateau in the grassland/desert scrub. Pronghorn are also found along the edge of the plateau in the pinyon juniper transition zone. Although this herd is only estimated to have around 100 animals, the herd appears to be fairly stable. There is also a small herd that lives just south of Fredonia in the grassland/ low shrub density areas. This herd generally varies from 15 to 30 animals, depending on movement between 13A and Utah. Although 12A/12B is not known for its "record breaking" pronghorn bucks, hunt success has typically been around 40% for archery and 100% for rifle.

This area is very remote with only a few conveniences provided at the communities of Vermilion Cliffs, Cliff Dwellers, Marble Canyon, Fredonia/Kanab, and Jacob Lake. Roads in the GMU can become extremely muddy when wet and heavy rains frequently wash out the main roads. It is important to be prepared with suitable shelter, plenty of food, water and extra fuel. Having extra spare tires would also be a good idea.

Areas: Pronghorn in House Rock Valley generally tend to be located within 6 to 7 miles of the base of the Kaibab Plateau. Drier habitat conditions further to the east limit use of this area. As mentioned above, the main concentration of pronghorn is in House Rock Valley. There are several small herds that reside on the



north side of Highway 89A in the grassland. North of Kane Ranch, there are a few groups of pronghorn scattered throughout the rolling hills. You will find the majority of pronghorn south and east of the ranch and all the way out to the rim of Marble Canyon. There are generally one or two herds on South Canyon Point; however, this area is more difficult to access as there are few roads in the area.

Good optics are a must for both scouting and glassing during your hunt. Most of House Rock Valley is fairly flat with low rolling hills, so it is important to be able to locate the pronghorn from a distance and plan your stalk according to the surrounding terrain and conditions. There are many stock tanks located throughout House Rock Valley and the pronghorn herds tend to center their activities on these water sources depending on the frequency of summer monsoons. Glassing from the slopes of the Kaibab plateau can give you a higher vantage point.

Remember that hunting with the aid of a vehicle is prohibited. This includes chasing, pursuing, or herding pronghorn with any type of vehicle. Shooting from a vehicle and from the roadway is also prohibited. Traveling off established roads is prohibited throughout House Rock Valley on BLM and Wilderness land.

Bighorn Sheep

Overview: Desert bighorn sheep were eliminated from GMU 12B in the early 1900's probably due to diseases they received from interacting with domestic sheep. Large numbers of domestic sheep grazed on the Paria Plateau, Vermilion Cliffs, and Paria Canyon until the 1960's when the Bureau of Land Management converted all grazing permits to cattle only. A total of 52 desert bighorn sheep were transplanted in the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs area in 1984 and 1985 from GMU 15B near Lake Mead. The population grew to about 160 bighorns within the first 8 years. The current population estimate is around 300 bighorn sheep. The average Boone and Crockett score for the last 5 years has been in the mid-150s.

Areas: Most of the desert bighorn sheep in GMU 12BE are found within the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area. The Paria Plateau, which is surrounded by the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area, has few roads and can only be accessed from BLM road 1065 on the west side of the plateau. This area is very isolated and will require 4-wheel drive for the soft sandy roads. There are no services on top of the Paria Plateau. The north rim of the Paria Canyon is accessed from Big Water, Utah and also requires 4-wheel drive due to soft sand. There are only a few conveniences provided along Hwy 89A in the small communities of Vermilion Cliffs, Cliff Dwellers, Marble Canyon and Jacob Lake. Thus it is important to be prepared with suitable shelter, plenty of food, water and lots of extra fuel. Having extra spare tires would also be a good idea.

The highest densities of bighorn sheep are going to be in Paria Canyon. Bighorn have typically been harvested along the rim of the Paria Plateau near Bush Head, Powell's Monument, and Fisher Point. Some bighorns have also been taken from the north rim of the Paria Canyon and near spring sources along the Vermilion Cliffs. During December, sheep are generally found at lower elevations on the talus slopes below the steep cliff faces. Spring sources along the Vermilion Cliffs are best accessed by horseback or hiking from



Highway 89A 2 or 3 miles to the base of the cliffs. It is common to observe bighorns in locations where it is not possible to recover them. Make sure that you can access the area before taking the shot.

Mule Deer

Notice: Archery deer hunters – GMU 12B and 12B West are not open areas for over-the-counter tag holders since 2008. To hunt GMU 12B or 12BW you must now obtain a permit-tag through the big game draw process. Important Note: (See GMU description under GMU Boundaries) 12BW includes the Buckskins to the north of the Kaibab and the west side winter range including Pigeon Canyon and Gunsight Point. It excludes the Paria Plateau and any areas east of BLM road 1065. Hunters with a 12B permit (vs. 12BW permit) may hunt the Paria Plateau as well as the rest of the GMU. Permit numbers for the 12B hunt are very limited. The separation of 12BW from 12B was designed to limit the number of hunters and the deer harvest on the Paria Plateau, but not restrict a hunter with a 12B permit to only hunting the Paria Plateau. Hunters who have no desire to hunt the Paria Plateau and want to hunt the Buckskins or the west side winter range should apply for a 12BW permit. Likewise, hunters who want to hunt the Paria Plateau must apply for a 12B permit.

Overview: This GMU is primarily winter range for migratory deer from both the North Kaibab Plateau in Arizona and from the Paunsaugunt Plateau in southern Utah. Elevation ranges from 4000 to 7000 feet with vegetation consisting primarily of pinyon-juniper and sagebrush flats. Studies have shown that the Paunsaugunt deer arrive in GMU 12B in mid-October through early November, extending southward about 8 miles into Arizona. Deer from the North Kaibab start migrating northward to merge with the Utah deer in early-November. Very few deer reside in 12BW year round, making it difficult to hunt during the archery season in August and September.

The central part of the GMU, the Buckskin Mountains, contains the highest deer densities and is best to hunt after mid-October. The Paria Plateau to the east has the lowest number of deer. This is a small resident herd and is not part of the deer that migrate from Paunsaugunt or the Kaibab.

The Alternative Deer Management Plan provides the guidelines for which decisions on hunt recommendations are made. The early hunt is managed for hunter opportunity and usually occurs during the early part of the deer migration, thus few older-age class bucks are found during the early hunt. The majority of the deer harvested on the early hunt are younger bucks around 2 years of age. Many hunters go home disappointed that they did not see big bucks on the early hunt, but every hunter should do their homework and know what they should expect on a hunt before setting high expectations. Unlike the early hunt, the late hunt is managed for harvesting older aged deer, having high hunter success, and low density of hunters. The majority of the GMU is public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management, Arizona Strip District, 345 E. Riverside Drive, St. George, Utah 84770, phone (435) 688-3200.

Areas: The Buckskin Mountains in the central portion of the GMU contains the highest densities of deer and is best to hunt after mid-October. As the weather continues to cool down and the snow fall increases, Kaibab



deer from the western portion of the plateau move down towards Pigeon Canyon, Toothpick Ridge and Gunsight Point, making this area best after early November.

If you have a 12B tag and are trying to decide whether to hunt 12BW or the Paria Plateau, there are a few additional things that you should consider. The Paria Plateau in eastern 12B has the lowest density of deer and is not part of the migratory herds from the Kaibab Plateau or the Paunsaugunt. Access to the Paria Plateau can be difficult and deer difficult to find so scouting before the hunt is extremely important.

During the early 12B hunts, deer are typically concentrated in the pinyon-juniper and along meadow edges at higher elevations in the Buckskins, southwest toward Snake Gulch. Scouting is recommended only a week or two prior to the start of the hunt, due to the nature of the migration pattern.

Deer begin to move down from the top Buckskin Mountains to the pinyon-juniper and sagebrush flats as the snow pushes them off the plateau during the late hunt. Depending on the amount of snowfall, Pigeon Canyon and Gunsight Point to the west are generally best after early November. Deer can be found in the open sagebrush flats, but not until snow pushes them out of the trees.

No motor vehicles are allowed in the Paria Canyon/Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area. These areas are open to foot and horseback travel only. Motor vehicle travel is restricted to existing roads on all BLM land in the GMU. No off road travel by motor vehicles is allowed. Be prepared for snow, mud, and adverse weather conditions, and bring plenty of supplies. Very few services are available for gas and food.

Note: The state line is only marked at dirt road crossings. The AZ/UT state line on a GPS unit is N37° 00.0' latitude. It is the hunter's responsibility to know where they are and the state line is patrolled heavily by both Utah and Arizona law enforcement.

Archery Deer Nonpermit-Tag Special Regulation - All archery deer nonpermit-tag hunters must report their deer harvest online at www.azgfd.gov/ArcheryDeerReport or by telephone at 623-236-7961 within 48 hours of taking a deer. When the number of deer equaling the archery deer harvest limit for a particular unit and species has been reported, that unit will be closed to further archery deer hunting at sundown the Wednesday immediately following. Hunters will be responsible for [checking online](#) or by telephone at 623-236-7961 before hunting to determine if their desired unit is still open.

Mountain Lion

The GMU 12 or Zone B (GMU's 12A and 12B) Mountain Lion population, based on harvest information and observed lion sign, appears to be healthy and robust. The current yearly threshold on lions harvested in GMU 12/Zone B stands at 18. Yearly reported harvest figures fluctuate around 1 dozen lions with most of these animals taken by houndsmen during the winter months. The lion population in GMU 12 is a migratory population of roughly 60-80 animals with the lions essentially following the deer herd as it migrates from



summer to winter ranges. During the winter months, access to areas within GMU 12 can be extremely limited, even nonexistent. Many hunters utilize horses and mules, snowmobiles, and other recreational vehicles to overcome these access limitations. Be prepared for extreme weather. The most common technique for lion hunting in GMU 12 is similar to that used throughout the "Rim" country in Arizona. After a snowstorm a hunter will drive the roads found within the GMU 12 winter deer range early in the morning looking for tracks. Once a track is located the hounds are released and the lion is pursued until "treed". Also, several lions are sighted each year by hunters glassing canyons and watching waters. Some lions have been harvested incidental to these other activities. If you are fortunate enough to receive a coveted 12B deer or sheep tag, you might consider purchasing a mountain lion tag before heading to the GMU.

Areas: Any areas with concentrations of deer or sheep often have lions associated with them. Concentrate your efforts in areas with rim-rock and significant changes in elevation. The large canyons and rocky areas that form the edges of the Kaibab and Paria plateaus are likely areas to locate "lion sign." The Vermillion Cliffs and Paria Plateau in 12BE, the western side of Buckskin Mountain, and the Gunsight peninsula including Kanab Creek and Snake Gulch have seen harvests in recent years, and are good starting points. If you are considering hunting mountain lions in GMU 12 for the first time, consider hiring a good houndsman/ guide to increase your likelihood of success.

Hunters are required to report their mountain lion harvest information to the Arizona Game and Fish Department within 48 hours of taking a mountain lion. Hunters can report their mountain lion harvest in person, by telephone at 1-877-438-0447, or [online](#).

In addition to the 48-hr reporting requirement, the hunter (or their designee) needs to present the mountain lion's skull and hide with attached proof of sex to a designated Arizona Game and Fish Department employee for inspection within 10 days of taking the mountain lion.

New Harvest Thresholds– When the number of harvested mountain lions reaches the threshold, that zone closes to the additional harvest of mountain lions at sundown the Wednesday immediately following. Before each hunting trip, verify that the zone is still open, by calling 877-438-0447 or checking online, view [harvest thresholds and zone closures](#). A map of the zones can be found at the [mountain lion management zones map](#).

Chukar

Overview: Chukar Partridge is an overlooked game bird in this GMU. This exotic game bird, native to the Middle East, was introduced into various areas in Arizona. This bird was first documented in 12B in Paria Canyon but has since been regularly observed along the Kanab Creek/ Snake Gulch drainage. Chukar have also occasionally been observed in drainages to the Colorado River and along the Vermillion Cliffs in the wilderness area in 12BE.

Areas: Chukar are found throughout the Kanab Creek drainage and associated side canyons and in Paria



Canyon and Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area. This game bird tends to concentrate around water sources, especially along steep cliffs.

Chukars are generally found within the lower 8 or 9 miles of Paria Canyon, along the rim of the Paria Plateau, and at spring sources along the Vermilion Cliffs. The majority of Chukar observed along the rim of the Paria Plateau are in the vicinity of Bush Head, Powell's Monument, and Fisher Point. Hunting in the bottom of the Paria Canyon requires hiking with wet feet in sandy terrain along the Paria River. Birds can sometimes be found along the Paria River, but they generally occupy the upper benches along the cliffs, high above the river. Other areas to consider are Badger Springs and Soap Spring along the Vermilion Cliffs within the wilderness area. There are no easy ways to hunt them, but the breath-taking scenery makes it a great place to try. Chukar are not numerous anywhere in Kanab Creek or its associated drainages. Birds are usually found in isolated coveys and can (usually do) descend thousands of feet into inaccessible canyons after being flushed. Occasionally, depending on rainfall and the availability of forage, coveys can be found in some of the shallow drainages along Kanab Creek.

The Paria Plateau has no services and is accessed from Coyote Valley Road (BLM Road 1065). It is very sandy and requires 4-wheel drive.

Travel Management Planning Update: The BLM is the primary federal land management agency across GMU 12B. Travel Management Plans have been completed for the entire Paria Plateau/Vermilion Cliffs National Monument and are in the process for the western half of 12B including the buckskin mountains. In general, unrestricted vehicle travel is allowed on all open BLM roads. All off-highway vehicles must display a current OHV decal and a street legal registration if operated on a county road. Cross country travel is not allowed on BLM lands. No motorized vehicles are allowed in BLM wilderness. Dispersed camping is allowed along BLM routes.

Game Management Unit Summary

Primary Game Species/ Hunting Month(s)

Mule Deer	October-November
Bighorn Sheep	December
Pronghorn	August-September

Secondary Game Species/ Hunting Month(s)

Waterfowl	October-January
Mountain Lion	August-May

Average # permits

Mule Deer - 275
Bighorn Sheep - 6
Pronghorn - 5

Climate Information

MONTH AVG. TEMP AVG. RAINFALL AVG. SNOWFALL

January	Max 42°/Min 24°	0.54"	2.0"
February	Max 50°/Min 31°	0.48"	0.8"
March	Max 59°/Min 37°	0.66"	0.2"
April	Max 69°/Min 44°	0.44"	0.1"
May	Max 79°/Min 53°	0.44"	0.0"
June	Max 91°/Min 63°	0.17"	0.0"
July	Max 96°/Min 69°	0.50"	0.0"
August	Max 93°/Min 67°	0.66"	0.0"
September	Max 84°/Min 58°	0.57"	0.00"
October	Max 71°/Min 47°	0.79"	0.00"
November	Max 54°/Min 35°	0.55"	0.5"
December	Max 44°/Min 26°	0.53"	1.4"

Other Climate Information

During big winter storms, the GMU experiences snowfalls that can make travel hazardous. Boaters on Lake Powell should check wind advisories daily and exercise caution near tour boat wakes.



Cities, Roads & Campgrounds

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

Page, Marble Canyon, Jacob Lake, Cliff Dwellers, Fredonia

Major Highways and Roads Leading To

From the East: State Hwy 98

From the West: State Hwy 389

From the North: U.S. Hwy 89

From the South: U.S. Hwy 89A

Developed Campgrounds

Wahweap Marina Campground at Lake Powell and Beehives Campground, administered by the National Park Service; Page Lake Powell Campground, 849 S. Coppermine Rd. in Page; Lees Ferry Campground, 4 miles north of Marble Canyon, administered by the National Park Service.

Undeveloped Campgrounds

Camping is allowed on BLM administered lands over most of the GMU. On National Park Service lands, camping is restricted to designated areas.

Brief Description of Terrain, Elevation, and Vegetation

Elevations range from approximately 4,000' in Glen Canyon to 7,000' on the Paria Plateau. The deeply eroded terrain is characterized by many protruding rock formations, with the massive sandstone Vermilion Cliffs dominating the landscape. Alluvial sandy soils occur throughout most of the GMU and vegetation is sparse, consisting mainly of sagebrush at lower elevations and pinyon-juniper trees at higher elevations.

Government Agencies and Phone Numbers

Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region II – 928 774-5045

Bureau of Land Management, AZ Strip Field Office – 435 688-3200

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area – 928 608-6200

Grand Canyon National Park, North Rim – 928 638-7870

City of Page Chamber of Commerce – 928 645-2741