

GMU 2A

Region 1 - GMU 2A: October 2026 (*This document date reflects its most recent review. Updates are made only when necessary.*)

Species within this game management unit (GMU): Pronghorn, Elk, and Mule Deer

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Game Management Unit Boundaries

Beginning at St. Johns on U.S. Hwy 191 (AZ Hwy 61); north on U.S. Hwy 191 (AZ Hwy 61) to the Navajo Indian Reservation boundary; westerly along the reservation boundary to AZ Hwy 77; south on AZ Hwy 77 to Exit 292 on I-40; west on the westbound lane of I-40 to Exit 286; south on AZ Hwy 77 to U.S. Hwy 180; southeast on U.S. Hwy 180 to AZ Hwy 180A; south on AZ Hwy 180A to AZ Hwy 61; east on AZ Hwy 61 to U.S. Hwy 180 (AZ Hwy 61); east to U.S. Hwy 191 at St. Johns; except those portions that are sovereign tribal lands of the Zuni Tribe.;

St. Johns Elk Hunt Area

Over the past several years, there have been limited opportunity hunts in Units 2A and 2B (none in 2C). The goal has been to reduce the population that has been encroaching on private lands. These hunts have been fairly successful in reducing the resident elk population in 2AB but, have had little to no effect on the resident elk in northern 2C and around St. Johns. These resident elk cause a lot of damage to the agriculture and cause a negative human/wildlife interaction. The goal of the St. Johns area hunt is to address these issues during the growing season of the local crops.

St. Johns Hunt Area in Units 2A, 2B, and 2C – Beginning at the junction of U.S. Hwy 180/191 and Apache County

Road 4165 (TEP Power Plant Road near Richville); east along County Road 4162 to TEP Power Plant; north around the TEP Power Plant property to the railroad tracks; north along the railroad tracks to the Zuni River (north of St. Johns); west along the Zuni River to the Little Colorado River; west along the Little Colorado River to U.S. Hwy 180 near mile post 340; east on U.S. Hwy 180 to AZ Hwy 180A; south on AZ Hwy 180A to AZ Hwy 61; south on AZ Hwy 61 to mile post 364; from mile post 364 east along Latitude N34.37648 on a line through Little Ortega Lake, Ortega Sink, and Hidden Spring then continuing east to U.S. Hwy 180/191 (milepost 379, north of Lyman Lake); south on U.S. Hwy 180/191 to County Road 4162.

Species Information

Pronghorn

Overview: The pronghorn population has been relative stable in this unit. Preseason scouting is recommended, as always, especially with the size of this unit. This will aid your hunting success.

Land Status: Most of this unit has a "checkerboard" land status. That is, the land ownership status of alternating sections is different. Some are private and State Trust (State) lands mixed, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands and private mixed, and Petrified Forest National Park and State Trust Land mixed. Legal hunting is allowed on all State Trust lands and BLM lands, however, access to these lands is not guaranteed. No hunting is allowed on the Petrified Forest National Park. The National Park has expanded its boundaries, so be aware of where you are.

You must have permission to cross private lands to get to these other lands. Some ranches have been closed to hunting in the past. Some access points into this unit include Apache County Road (ACR) 6390 from Hwy 180 near milepost 355 and ACR 7230 from Hwy 191 near milepost 345.

It is always recommended that hunters obtain permission to hunt on or cross over private land. This allows for good relationships to be built between the hunters and private landowners, and prevents the hunt from being interrupted by having a landowner ask the hunter to leave their property.

Various maps of the area can be purchased at map stores in Arizona. The BLM has 1:100,000 scale land status maps that are good references when hunting in these units. These maps can be purchased at BLM offices and some general map stores.

Bureau of Land Management Office – Phoenix
222 N. Central
Phoenix, AZ 85004-2208
(602) 417-9200

Bureau of Land Management Office – Safford
711 14th Ave.
Safford, AZ 85546
(928) 348-4400

Areas: Most of the western half and southern part of this unit is pronghorn habitat. The western portion is between a ridge line (starting near the junction of the Salt River Project railroad line and the county road, running from Witch Wells to Navajo, and running mostly southerly to the Stinking Springs Mountains, which are owned by the Zuni Indian Tribe) and Highway 180. The southern part is between the Hardscrabble Wash area and Highway 61.

The western part of the unit has a slightly higher pronghorn density than the eastern portion, which are the areas south of the Petrified Forest National Park to Highway 61 and between the previously noted ridge and Highway 180. There is generally good access to this area off of Highways 61 and 180. Access to the northern and central parts of the unit is off of County Road 7230 just north of the junction of Highways 191 and 61, near milepost 345 on Highway 191.

Generally, there is limited access into Unit 2A between St. Johns and the above-mentioned county road. The northeast portion of the unit borders the "New Lands" (the new part of the Navajo Reservation, which is not well posted). There are also about 15 sections of land, or 15 square miles, that are owned by the Zuni tribe in the south-central part of 2A, around the Stinking Springs Mountain area, that has reservation status. Neither the "New Lands" nor Zuni reservation lands are open for pronghorn hunting with a State permit. Neither are well-posted; so please be aware of where you are hunting.

The Petrified Forest National Park is located in the western to northern part of this unit. The Park recently acquired the Hatch Ranch located on its eastern boundary. No hunting is allowed on the Park. If a wounded pronghorn enters the Park or reservation lands, contact the appropriate landowner before entering these prohibited areas.

Concerns: The most common complaints from landowners deal with off-road driving. It is illegal to drive off-road with any vehicle, including ATV's, on State and BLM lands. Also, criminal charges can be filed for damages to private land from off-road driving. Please help us to keep all of these areas open to hunting by respecting both the land and the landowners. Remember, your OHV requires an OHV decal if it weighs under 1,800 pounds and will be ridden on State or Federal lands.

Elk

Overview: The majority of this unit has low-density elk habitat. This unit has been combined with the 2B limited opportunity hunts to make it the 2A and 2B limited opportunity hunts. Pre-season scouting is very important, as elk numbers are low and junipers are thick, making it hard to locate elk.

Land Status: Most of this unit has a "checkerboard" land status. That is, that the land ownership of alternating sections is different. Some are a mix of private and State Trust (State) lands, while others are a mix of private and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. Legal hunting is allowed on all State lands and BLM lands, however, access to these lands is not guaranteed. You must have permission to cross private lands to get to these other lands. Some ranches have been closed to hunting in the past. Some access points into this unit include Apache County Road (ACR) 6390 from Hwy 180 near milepost 355 and ACR 7230 from Hwy 191 near milepost 345. It is always recommended that hunters obtain permission to hunt on or cross over private land. This allows for

good relationships to be built between hunters and private landowners, and prevents the hunt from being interrupted by having a landowner ask the hunter to leave their land.

Various maps of the area can be purchased at map stores in Arizona. The BLM has 1:100,000 scale land status maps that are good to have when hunting in these units. These maps can be purchased at BLM offices and some general map stores.

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Areas: The majority of elk are found in the northern half of the unit around juniper stands. The main access to these areas are by County Road 7230, which heads west, just north of the junctions of Hwys 191 and 61 (Witch Wells), near milepost 345 and off of Hwy 180 on County Road 6193.

There are also about 15 sections of land in the south-central part of 2A that are owned by the Zuni tribe and have reservation status, which is the Stinking Springs Mountain area. Neither the "New Lands" nor Zuni reservation lands are open for elk hunting with a state permit. Neither is well-posted, so please be aware of where you are hunting. For more specific boundary details, consult the hunt regulations district boundaries section.

Petrified Forest National Park is located within Unit 2A. The Park recently acquired the Hatch Ranch located on its eastern boundary. No hunting is allowed on the Park. If a wounded animal enters the Park or reservation lands, contact the appropriate landowner before entering these prohibited areas.

Concerns: The most common complaints from landowners deal with off-road driving. It is illegal to drive off-road with any vehicle, including ATV's, on State and BLM lands. In addition, criminal charges can be filed for damages to private land from off-road driving. Please help us keep all of these areas open to hunting by respecting both the land and the landowners. Remember, your OHV requires an OHV decal if it weighs under 1,800 pounds and will be ridden on State or Federal lands.

Mule Deer

OTC Archery Deer Note: Hunters are responsible for confirming whether the GMU is still open before going into the field and should monitor the Arizona Game and Fish Department harvest tracking page to ensure the season remains open. 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. Click here for more information on archery deer regulations and harvest reporting. Hunters are required to report archery deer harvest information to the department within 48 hours of taking a

deer. Visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department harvest reporting page to complete the mandatory report.

Overview: The majority of this unit has very low-density mule deer habitat, with a few pockets of higher concentrations. Pre-season scouting is very important.

Land Status: Most of this unit has a "checkerboard" land status. That is, that the land ownership of alternating sections is different. Some are a mix of private and State Trust (State) lands, while others are a mix of private and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. Legal hunting is allowed on all State lands and BLM lands, however, access to these lands is not guaranteed. You must have permission to cross private lands to get to these other lands. Some ranches have been closed to hunting in the past. Some access points into this unit include Apache County Road (ACR) 6390 from Hwy 180 near milepost 355 and ACR 7230 from Hwy 191 near milepost 345.

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Areas: The majority of the western half and southern parts of this unit are not mule deer habitat. Most of the deer habitat is located between a ridge line (that starts near the junction of the Salt River Project railroad line and the county road running from Witch Wells to Navajo, going mostly southerly to the Stinking Springs Mountains, which are owned by the Zuni tribe) and Hwy 191; and south of the "New Lands" (the new part of the Navajo Reservation, which is not always posted) to the Hardscrabble Wash area on the west side and to Zuni Wash on the east side.

The main access to these areas is by County Road 7230, which heads west, just north of the junctions of Hwys 191 and 61 (Witch Wells), near milepost 345. Generally, there is limited access into Unit 2A along Hwy 191 between St. Johns and the county road.

Besides the "New Lands," there are also about 15 sections of land in the south-central part of 2A that are owned by the Zuni tribe and have reservation status, which is the Stinking Springs Mountain area. Neither the "New

Lands" nor Zuni reservation lands are open for mule deer hunting with a state permit. Neither is well-posted, so please be aware of where you are hunting. For more specific boundary details, consult the hunt regulations district boundaries section.

Petrified Forest National Park is located within Unit 2A. The Park recently acquired the Hatch Ranch located on its eastern boundary (view map). No hunting is allowed on the Park. If a wounded animal enters the Park or reservation lands, contact the appropriate landowner before entering these prohibited areas.

Concerns: The most common complaints from landowners deal with off-road driving. It is illegal to drive off-road with any vehicle, including ATV's, on State and BLM lands. In addition, criminal charges can be filed for damages to private land from off-road driving. Please help us keep all of these areas open to hunting by respecting both the land and the landowners. Remember, your OHV requires an OHV decal if it weighs under 1,800 pounds and will be ridden on State or Federal lands.

Questions? Contact the Pinetop regional office 928 367-4281.

Game Management Unit Summary

Primary Game Species/Hunting Month(s)	
Antelope	September
Mule Deer	November
Average # Permits in Past 5 Years	
Antelope	25
Mule Deer	80 (Combined with 2B & 2C)
Elk	200 (Combined with 2B)

Cities, Roads & Campgrounds

Major Cities and Towns in or Near Game Management Unit and Nearest Gas, Food, and Lodging:
St. Johns, Holbrook, Snowflake, Show Low, Concho, Sanders.