



GMU 4A

Region 1 - GMU 4A: October 2026 *(This document date reflects its most recent review. Updates are made only when necessary.)*

Species within this game management unit (GMU): [Pronghorn](#), [Black Bear](#), [Elk](#), [Mountain Lion](#), [Mule Deer](#), [Merriam's Turkey](#), [Band-tailed Pigeon](#), [Dove](#), [Tree Squirrel](#) and [Waterfowl](#).

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Game Management Unit Boundaries

Beginning on the boundary of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests with the Coconino National Forest at the Mogollon Rim; north along this boundary (Leonard Canyon) to East Clear Creek; northerly along East Clear Creek to AZ Hwy 99; north on AZ Hwy 99 to AZ Hwy 87; north on AZ Hwy 87 to Business I-40 (3rd St.); west on Business I-40 (3rd St.) to Hipkoe Dr.; northerly on Hipkoe Dr. to I-40; west on I-40 to mp 221.4; north to the southwest corner of the Navajo Indian Reservation Boundary; east along the Navajo Indian Reservation Boundary to the Little Colorado River; southerly along the Little Colorado River to Chevelon Creek; southerly along Chevelon Creek to Woods Canyon; westerly along Woods Canyon to Woods Canyon Lake Rd.; southeasterly along the Woods Canyon Lake Rd. to the Mogollon Rim; westerly along the Mogollon Rim to the boundary of the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest with the Coconino National Forest.

**Note – Unit 4A is closed to all hunting of dusky grouse (formerly named blue grouse) in order to enhance new transplant populations.*

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 [here](#). 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

Pronghorn

Overview: Pronghorn are located in the northern part of this unit. This area consists of a “checkerboard” of Hopi Tribal Trust and State Trust lands. Access to the unit is by way of State Hwy 99. Two ranches are the major landholders in habitat where pronghorn are found.

Areas: O'Haco Cattle Company is located in the southern part of the pronghorn range, and requires controlled access on the entire ranch. Hunters must sign in and out at one of the three access points, and must obey all rules allowing access. The west part of the ranch allows hunter access from August 15 through Dec 1. The east portion is open year-round. Pronghorn hunters planning to scout prior to August 15 should be aware of these closure dates. The ranch welcomes hunters who sign in. Any person in violation of ranch rules will be immediately trespassed. They are also subject to being trespassed per Landowner Compact.

The northern portion of the pronghorn range is on a ranch owned by the Hopi tribe known as the Hopi 3 Canyon Aja Ranch. Access is granted to hunters through a sign in and out access agreement. There are three sign-in stations located on this ranch. Hunters must sign in and out at access points and must obey all rules allowing access. The ranch welcomes hunters who sign in. Hunters must stay on established roads with all vehicles, unless picking up game. Please don't litter, and camp at least ¼-mile from water holes and water developments.

Black Bear

Overview: Bears are found on U.S. Forest Service lands within Unit 4A. In conjunction with Unit 5A, bears are managed with a female harvest objective.

Areas: Bears are generally found along the canyons in the unit and will be found wherever there are acorns. The heads of these canyons start along the Rim Road (FR 300) and run to the north. Some of the canyons to check out are Chevelon, Willow Creek, Turkey, Bear and Leonard. Scout the unit to determine if and where the acorns are. Remember that sows with cubs are not legal to take.

Special Regulations: Bear hunters should be familiar with the following laws and regulations prior to going bear hunting. Female bears with cubs are not lawful for harvest. Care must be taken to look for the presence of cubs with all bears considered for harvest. Baiting is not lawful for bear hunting.



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. Click [here](#) for more information on black bear regulations and harvest reporting.

Hunters are required to report black bear harvest information to the department within 48 hours of taking a black bear. In addition, the hunter (or their designee) must present the skull and hide, with attached proof of sex, to a designated department employee for inspection within 10 days of harvest. Visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department [harvest reporting page](#) to complete the mandatory report and schedule a physical checkout.

Elk

Overview: The majority of elk in Unit 4A are located on National Forest lands in the southern part of the unit. Elk summer in the higher elevations, and as snow depths increase, they move north to lower elevations. Sometimes the November and December hunts can be affected by snow conditions.

Unit 4A has a variety of hunting opportunities for those sportsmen that draw permits. There are September archery bull and antlerless hunts, an October juniors-only antlerless hunt, an October antlerless hunt, a November archery bull hunt, and a November general firearms bull hunt. Sportsmen should refer to the current hunt regulation booklet for specific hunt information.

Elk can usually be found throughout the unit on the earlier hunts, and no one place seems to be better than another. Because elk are found everywhere, a person can hunt from mixed conifer to open juniper grasslands. Pre-hunt scouting is also recommended. The Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest map will be a big help to the hunter in determining access routes in the unit.

Late hunts can have heavy snow, which will limit access along the Mogollon Rim country. If this does occur, access will be from the north on State Route 99 from Winslow. Additional access is by Forest Road 300, also known as the Rim Road, in the southeast part of the unit. To get to FR 300, take the Woods Canyon Lake turnoff on Hwy 260. You can also come from Unit 5A (located to the west of 4A) on FR 300, and from Unit 4B to east on FR 504.

Areas: Most hunters work the higher elevations in the unit to the south near FR 300. Elk densities and the number of hunters decrease as you go north. Hunting opportunities exist in the northern part of the unit for those who wish to get away from the crowds. Over the last couple years, elk numbers have increased in the portion of the unit north of Forest Service lands. These elk can easily be glassed from a distance, but getting close is a challenge since most the area is open grassland. This is a good area for both antlerless and bull hunts. The elk that live in these grasslands are on both the Hopi 3 Canyon and O'Haco Ranches. See below for access information.

The O'Haco Cattle Company borders the Forest on the north and welcomes elk hunters. The entire ranch now has controlled access, and hunters must sign in at one of the three access points. The west part of the ranch allows hunter access from August 15 through Dec 1. The east portion is open year-round. Hunters must obey all



ranch rules, which are posted, use common sense, and be a good visitor. Any person in violation of Ranch Rules will be immediately trespassed. They are also subject to being trespassed per Landowner Compact.

Most of the ranch is open grassland and tests the stalking skills of a hunter. Your best bet is to use binoculars from high points, locate elk, and then stalk them. Since the country is quite open, they see and hear vehicles approach and will move off. Remember that hunting with the aid of a vehicle is unlawful, and you must stay on existing roads, except when retrieving game.

North of the O'Haco Ranch is the Hopi 3 Canyon Aja Ranch. Access is granted to hunters through a sign in and out access agreement. There are three sign-in stations located on this ranch. Hunters must sign in and out at access points and must obey all rules allowing access. The ranch welcomes hunters who sign in. Hunters must stay on established roads with all vehicles, unless picking up game. Please don't litter, and camp at least ¼-mile from water holes and water developments

Over-the-counter elk permit areas: The only portions of Unit 4A that is open to the OTC elk hunt opportunity are the portion that lies east of AZ Hwy 99 and north of Territorial Road, and the portion that lies north of I-40. The best place to look OTC elk in Unit 4A is along the Little Colorado River from Chevelon Creek to Winslow. There has been a large group of elk living along the LCR in the Winslow area. Be sure to verify the boundary of the archery-only area that is adjacent to Winslow before you go hunt.

Mountain Lion

Overview: Mountain lions are found throughout Unit 4A. They are mainly associated with the country at the southern end of the unit, and the numerous canyons that traverse the unit from south to north.

Access to this unit is from the southeast via Hwy. 260; turn at the Woods Canyon Lake Road (FR 300). You may also enter from the north by taking Hwy. 99 south from Winslow, or come in from the east by taking FR 504 from Heber.

Areas: Leonard, Willow Creek, Clear Creek, Alder, Chevelon, and West Chevelon Canyons each provide excellent lion habitat. Generally, access is good throughout the unit. The O'Haco Cattle Company, located north of the National Forest, has controlled access on its lands west of Hwy. 99. Hunters must sign in at one of the entry points.

Special Regulations: Lion hunters should be familiar with the following laws and regulations prior to going lion hunting. Legal lion is any lion except spotted kittens or females accompanied by spotted kittens. 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 harvest threshold is reached, the zone closes to additional mountain lion harvest at sundown on the Wednesday immediately following. Click [here](#) for more information on mountain lion regulations, the management zones map and harvest reporting.

Hunters are required to report mountain lion harvest information to the department within 48 hours of taking a



mountain lion. In addition, the hunter (or their designee) must present the skull and hide, with attached proof of sex, to a designated department employee for inspection within 10 days of harvest. Visit the Arizona Game and Fish Department [harvest reporting page](#) to complete the mandatory report and schedule a physical checkout. If a hunter freezes the skull or hide before presenting it for inspection, the hunter shall prop the jaw open to allow access to the teeth and ensure that the attached proof of sex is identifiable and accessible. A premolar tooth will be removed during the inspection.

Mule Deer

Overview: Unit 4A has both general firearms deer and archery deer hunting opportunities. The general season is combined with Unit 4B. Mule deer occur throughout the unit, with the majority being found on National Forest lands in the southern part of the unit. Sparse densities of deer do occur north of the Forest. The deer population in Unit 4A is low, and time should be focused on pre-season scouting. Whitetail deer are also found in this unit, and can be harvested since Unit 4A is an “any antlered deer” hunt area.

Areas: National Forest lands in Unit 4A are accessed from both the southwest and the southeast by taking the Woods Canyon Lake turnoff on Hwy 260 and then onto Forest Road (FR) 300, also known as the Rim Road. State Hwy 99 come into the unit from the north (Winslow) and FR 504 enters from the east (Unit 4B).

Access within the unit is excellent. Hunters should obtain an Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests map for reference. Check old burns (forest fire areas) and areas along the canyons and major drainages when scouting for deer. Forest thinning efforts have improved deer habitat in the Nagel Analysis Area. These thinning projects have occurred between Forest Roads 34, 100, 169 and 300. During the last two years, deer have keyed in on these thinned areas.

That portion of the unit off the Forest, to the north, is a checkerboard of private and State Trust lands. Access on O'Haco Cattle Company lands is controlled with three hunter sign-in boxes. The west part of the ranch allows hunter access from August 15 through Dec 1. The east portion is open year-round. In order to maintain future sportsmen access, please obey all posted rules while on the ranch. Any person in violation of Ranch Rules will be immediately trespassed. They are also subject to being trespassed per Landowner Compact.

Most of the ranch is juniper grassland with a sparse deer population and somewhat limited road densities. The ranch to the north of the O'Haco is the Hopi 3 Canyon Aja Ranch, now owned by the Hopi Tribe. This ranch has controlled access through a sign in and out boxes. Currently, the Hopi Tribe is allowing hunter access, however, this could change at any time. This area also has a very low deer population.

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.

Merriam's Turkey

Notice: The fall hunting season is now a limited weapon-shotgun shooting season only. There is still a fall archery-only over-the-counter permit hunt available in fall.

Overview: Turkey hunting in Unit 4A is by permit only for both the fall and spring hunts and both hunts are limited weapon-shotgun shooting season only, while the archery turkey hunt offers an over-the-counter permit. Refer to the current hunt booklet for further information. Turkeys are located on the forest portion of the unit, and are generally found in the coniferous forest in the southern part of 4A.

Access to the unit from the southeast is by way of Forest Road (FR) 300 (Rim Road) at the Woods Canyon Lake area. Access from the north is by way of State Hwy 99, and from the east via FR 504.

Areas: Fall turkey hunting is usually best along the Rim Road (FR 300) area, and throughout the Forest within four to five miles north of the Rim. Turkeys use the meadows and open pine areas, feeding on insects, acorns, pine seeds, and grass seed. Look for sign at dirt stock tanks while scouting, and check meadows in mornings and late afternoons for hens and poults. Access in the fall is good on graveled Forest Service roads.

Spring hunters for bearded turkeys usually do best along the larger drainages in this unit. Snow is usually a factor influencing access. Most years, for the first few weeks of the season, FR 300 is closed by snow and access is from the north (Hwy 99) or east (FR 504). Hunters should obtain an Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests map when hunting this unit.

Band-tailed Pigeon

Overview: Within Unit 4A, band-tailed pigeons are associated with the pine and mixed conifer forests. This habitat type covers about two-thirds of the southern part of Unit 4A. Populations in this area are considered to be low.

Access from the south is via Hwy. 260; turn on the Woods Canyon Lake Road (FR 300). You may also enter from the north by taking Hwy. 99 south from Winslow, or come in from the east by taking FR 504 from Heber.

Areas: The best areas are located in the southern portion of the unit, along FR 300. Areas with good acorn production, associated with watering sites, are good places to find band-tails.

Dove

Overview: Mourning doves can be found throughout Unit 4A, however, by September, many have left the southern portion due to cooling weather.

Access to Unit 4A can be gained from the southeast via Hwy. 260; turn on the Woods Canyon Lake Road (FR 300). You may also enter from the north by taking Hwy. 99 south from Winslow, or come in from the east by taking FR 504 from Heber.

Areas: Generally, those areas along the Little Colorado River tend to hold the most birds. Hunting dirt stock tanks is also a good bet. Most of these tanks are located on private lands north of the National Forest. The major landowners in this area are the O'Haco Cattle Company and the Hopi Tribe. The O'Haco Ranch and the Hopi 3 Canyon Aja Ranch allow hunting on their ranches through controlled access using sign in and out boxes.

A common violation that occurs during the dove hunt is littering (ARS 17-309.A9 – failing to pickup your empty shotgun shells). Be aware that this is a serious offense, and could result in having your hunting privileges revoke by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

Tree Squirrel

Overview: Tree squirrels are associated with the pine forests within this unit. This covers about two-thirds of the southern part of Unit 4A. Access is from the Woods Canyon Lake area by way of Forest road 300, or from the north on Hwy 99. This year should produce some good hunting opportunities.

Areas: Your best areas will be those accessed from Forest Road 300, also known as the Rim Road, and roads that connect to the 300 road, running north through the pine forest. Walking along the canyons away from the roads is usually a good way to hunt tree squirrels. Look for areas that have fresh pine clippings on the ground.

Waterfowl

Overview: Waterfowl are found predominantly in the northern quarter of Unit 4A. Overall, populations are considered low, relative to the rest of the state, and fluctuate greatly during the course of the season. Access to the best waterfowl areas with Unit 4A is by Hwy. 99 south of Winslow. This area is comprised of mostly privately owned lands.

Areas: The best areas are along the Little Colorado River, south and east of Winslow.

Game Management Unit Summary

Primary Game Species/Hunting Month(s)

Elk	September/November
Pronghorn	August/October
Turkey	April/May, October

Secondary Game Species/Hunting Month(s)

Pronghorn	September
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Average # Permits in Past 5 Years

Elk	> 1,360
Mule Deer	> 300 (4A and 4B combined)
Turkey	> 450, 500 (4A and 4B combined)
Pronghorn	> 30

Climate Information

Month	Avg. Temp	Avg. Rainfall	Avg. Snowfall
April	Max 64°/Min 30°	0.59"	3.2"
May	Max 69°/Min 37°	2.15"	0.0"
August	Max 83°/Min 55°	4.26"	0.0"
September	Max 77°/Min 46°	0.52"	0.0"
October	Max 66°/Min 32°	1.61"	0.0"
November	Max 49°/Min 25°	2.23"	9.5"

Other Climate Information

Heavy snows occur mid-October through May. Visitors should always be prepared for inclement weather.

Cities, Roads & Campgrounds

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

Winslow, Heber, Payson, Forest Lakes

Major Highways and Roads Leading To

From the East: Interstate 40

From the West: Interstate 40

From the North: State Hwy 99

From the South: State Hwy 260

Developed Campgrounds

Woods Canyon Lake (Managed by a private concession. Reservations and availability information can be obtained through the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, Heber Ranger Station.)



Developed Campgrounds

Woods Canyon Lake (Managed by a private concession. Reservations and availability information can be obtained through the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, Heber Ranger Station.)

Undeveloped Campgrounds

Bear Canyon Lake Campground, FS Rd. 89 north or FS Rd. 300 (Rim Road); Chevelon Canyon Lake Campground on 169B east or 169.

Brief Description of Terrain, Elevation and Vegetation

From north to south, elevation ranges from 5,000' to 7,900', vegetation from grassland to mixed conifer. Unit is cut by canyons running south to north.

Government Agencies and Phone Numbers

Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region I – [928-367-4281](tel:928-367-4281)

Apache-Sitgreaves Natl Forest, Black Mesa Ranger District – [928-535-7300](tel:928-535-7300)