

Bosque del Apache

National Wildlife Refuge Hunting Regulations 2025–2026



Welcome

Along the banks of the Rio Grande lies Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge: a rest-stop, home, and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. Since 1939, hunters and wildlife enthusiasts from around the world have been drawn to this oasis in the Chihuahuan Desert which consistently provides outstanding wildlife observation opportunities on over 57,000 acres of public land.

Accessibility

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental ability. For more information please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Equal Opportunity, <https://www.doi.gov/pmb/eo/public-civil-rights>.

Please contact us if you require a reasonable accommodation in order to hunt on the refuge. Beyond gravel parking areas and information kiosks, the refuge does not offer any hunting facilities.

Safety

At any time, you may encounter mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes, rattlesnakes, bears, stinging or biting insects or other potentially dangerous wildlife or sharp plants such as cactus or mesquite. Be alert for changing weather conditions that could bring strong winds, lightning or flashfloods.

Firearms

Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on National Wildlife Refuge System lands must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations (50 CFR 27.42 and specific refuge regulations in 50 CFR Part 32).

Possessing firearms or dangerous weapons in Federal facilities is prohibited.

Wilderness

Some areas of the hunt units are designated as wilderness. We do not allow the use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or mechanical transport, such as bicycles or game carts, in wilderness. We ask all refuge visitors to help us preserve wilderness character by practicing leave no trace principles and abiding by the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Hunting Regulations

Hunting regulations are designed to provide safe recreational opportunities through wise use of renewable wildlife resources. Hunting is allowed in accordance with Federal regulations governing public use on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Hunting will be in accordance with applicable State of New Mexico regulations subject to the conditions stated below. For more information on state regulations and requirements go to <http://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/home/publications/>.

Access

WHEN: You may only be on the refuge one hour before legal sunrise until one hour after legal sunset. Legal shooting hours align with State of New Mexico regulations.

HOW: You may hunt by foot in the East, West and Bajada Hunt Units. You may use bicycles or e-bikes within the East Hunt Unit only and they must stay on designated roads. We do not allow the use of any motor vehicles, motorized equipment or mechanical transport in wilderness. You may use horses and pack stock in support of hunting only in the East Hunt Unit.

The Tour Loop area is closed to general hunt activities.

Dogs

Hunters are allowed to use dogs when hunting, as per State of New Mexico hunting regulations. Dogs must be restrained when not hunting.

Special Hunts

Youth Turkey Hunting and Special Light Goose Hunting opportunities may be available at the refuge. Information about these hunts, including how to be considered for participation, are available on the refuge website.

Equipment

You must remove all personal property, such as tree stands, elevated platforms, and ground blinds, at the end of each day's hunt.

State hunting and fishing regulations, seasons, shooting hours, methods of take, bag limits, and license requirements apply to all hunting on the refuge. The refuge is open to hunting within parameters of the state season and bag limits. The refuge is closed to general hunting for all species not listed in the following table, including species designated as unprotected by state regulations.

Non-toxic shot is required for small game and migratory bird hunting.

Commercial Activities

Commercial activities such as guiding and outfitting, require a special use permit issued by Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

1001 Highway 1
San Antonio, NM 87832

575-835-1828

http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Bosque_del_Apache

For relay service TTY/Voice: 711

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

1-800-344-WILD

July 2025



Activity	West Hunt Unit	Bajada Hunt Unit	East Hunt Unit
Migratory Game Birds			
Mourning Dove White-winged Dove	Sept. 1 – Oct. 28, 2025 Dec. 1, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026	Sept. 1 – Oct. 28, 2025 Dec. 1, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026	Sept. 1 – Oct. 28, 2025 Dec. 1, 2025 – Jan. 1, 2026
Upland Game			
Eurasian Collared-Dove	Apr. 1 – Mar. 31 2026	Apr. 1 – Mar. 31, 2026	Apr. 1 – Mar. 31, 2026
Gambel's Quail Scaled Quail Northern Bobwhite Quail Montezuma Quail	Nov. 15, 2025 – Feb. 15, 2026	Nov. 15, 2025 – Feb. 15, 2026	Nov. 15, 2025 – Feb. 15, 2026
Non-Game and Unprotected Species			
Jackrabbit, Cottontail Rabbit	(no closed season)	(no closed season)	(no closed season)
Feral Hog	June, 2025 1 – Mar. 31, 2026	June, 2025 1 – Mar. 31, 2026	June 1, 2025 – Mar. 31, 2026
Big Game			
Mule Deer (archery) GMU* 17	Sept. 1 – 24, 2025 Jan. 1 – 15, 2026	Not applicable	Not applicable
Mule Deer (archery) GMU 20	Sept. 1 – 24, 2025 Jan. 1 – 15, 2026	Sept. 1 – 24, 2025 Jan. 1 – 15, 2026	Sept. 1 – 24, 2025 Jan. 1 – 15, 2026
Mule Deer (muzzleloader) GMU 17	Nov. 1 – 5, 2025	Not applicable	Not applicable
Mule Deer (muzzleloader) GMU 20	Nov. 1 – 5, 2025	Nov. 1 – 5, 2025	Nov. 1 – 5, 2025
Mule Deer (any legal sporting arm) GMU 17	Nov. 2 – 6, Nov. 9 – 13, Nov. 23 – Dec. 1 (youth only), 2025	Not applicable	Not Applicable
Mule Deer (any legal sporting arm) GMU 20	Nov. 8 – 12, 2025, Nov. 15 – 19, 2025 and Nov. 22 – 30, 2025 (youth only)	Nov. 8 – 12, 2025 Nov. 15 – 19, 2025	Nov. 8 – 12, 2025 Nov. 15 – 18, 2025
Javelina	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2026	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2026	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2026
Oryx	Closed	Closed	Jun. 1, 2025 – Mar. 31, 2026
Turkey			
Bearded Rio Grande Turkey	Apr. 15 – May 15, 2025 Apr. 11 – 13 (youth only)	Apr. 15 – May 15, 2025 Apr. 11 – 13 (youth only)	Apr. 15 – May 15, 2025 Apr. 11 – 13 (youth only)
State regulations apply for bag limits. *GMU = Game Management Unit			

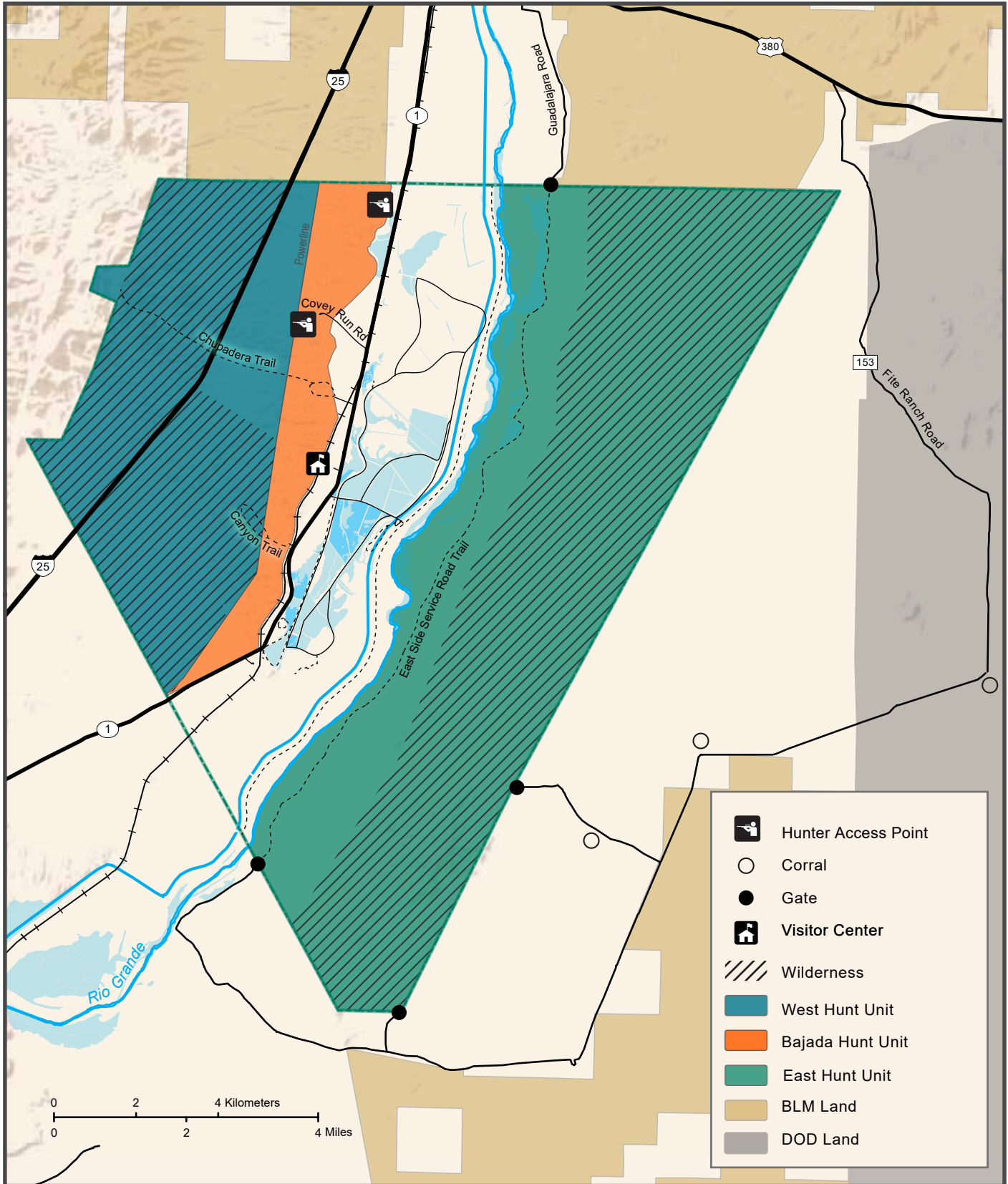
Prohibited Activities

By law, recreational activities on national wildlife refuges are prohibited unless expressly permitted.

Prohibited activities include:

- Possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting
- Camping and Fires
- Searching for or removal of any natural items such as antlers, skulls, plants, historic, and archaeological features as they are protected by Federal law
- Use of electronic or photographic trail monitoring devices
- Marking or flagging any tree or other refuge feature with reflectors, paint, or other substance
- Carts or any other mechanized device used for retrieving game or transportation in the Wilderness Area
- Permanent tree stands, nails, screw-in steps, or other items that penetrate the outer bark of a tree
- Leaving tree stands and ground blinds overnight
- Discharging a firearm within 150 yards of any building
- Going into closed areas





Bajada Hunt Unit

West from hunt unit boundary to power line: Bows and arrows, crossbows and bolts, muzzle-loader or muzzle-loading shotguns only, in accordance with state regulations

West Hunt Unit

West from power line to west refuge boundary: Any legal sporting arms

East Hunt Unit

East shore of Rio Grande to east refuge boundary: Any legal sporting arms

Produced in the Division of Visitor Services

Created: September 2, 2021

Datum: NAD 83

The USFWS makes no warranty for use of this map and cannot be held liable for actions or decisions based on map content

North

