

GMU 35B

Access Information

United States Forest Service – Approximately 2/3 of GMU 35B is managed by the Coronado National Forest, Sierra Vista ranger district. Access into USFS lands is plentiful with numerous numbered roads and trails. Main roads are regularly maintained, however high-clearance vehicles are recommended for many of the spur roads. A very general rule of thumb is that the more digits in the road number, the more off-road capable your vehicle will need to be (FSR 61, for example, will generally be a better road than FSR 4069). Use caution when traveling on rough roads; cellular reception is limited in much of GMU 35B, and much of the service available in the southern half of the unit is provided by Mexican wireless providers that charge additional fees.

Arizona State Land Department – There are pockets of Arizona State Trust Land in GMU 35B, mostly in the northern portion northwest of Elgin. Arizona State Trust Land is managed by the State Land Department and is not public land. A recreation permit is required to camp, hike, or travel on State Trust Land; permits can be purchased online. Arizona hunting and fishing licenses include a permit for accessing State Trust Land. As long as you are actively hunting or fishing while on State Trust Land, and you possess a valid Arizona hunting or fishing license, you do not need an additional State Trust Land permit to access State Trust Land. Hunting and fishing are allowed on State Trust Land, however target shooting is prohibited.

Bureau of Land Management – The Bureau of Land Management manages a few parcels of land in the northern portion of GMU 35B, adjacent to the Arizona State Trust Land.

Babacomari Ranch – At nearly 28,000 acres, the Babacomari Ranch is the largest contiguous private property parcel in the state of Arizona. Most of the ranch lies in the northern portion of 35A with the western end extending into 35B. The ranch encompasses a large section of the lush Babocomari River, and contains ample habitat for pronghorn, mule deer, white-tailed deer, javelina, and Gould's turkeys. Recreational access in the past has been threatened by trespassers and irresponsible users driving off road, shooting near buildings, and leaving gates open. Recognizing a need to maintain access for responsible hunters while protecting ranch property, the ranch and the Director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department signed a Landowner Compact (Cooperative Stewardship Agreement) in May 2015. This Compact provides limited recreational access for hunters to large portions of the ranch, in exchange for law enforcement and wildlife management support provided by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Ranch access is regulated by the Ranch Manager, and written permission must be obtained from the Ranch Manager prior to hunting on the ranch. Please contact the Ranch

Manager (520-455-5507) well in advance of your hunt for permission to access the Babacomari Ranch.

Arizona State Parks – The southern portion of the San Rafael Valley belongs to the Arizona State Parks system and is known as the San Rafael State Natural Area. The Natural Area is not open to the public and there are currently no plans to open the area to the public. Duquesne Road (FSR 61) currently cuts across the area and folks interested in seeing the area are welcome to drive through.

Arizona Game and Fish Department – The Arizona Game and Fish Department manages the Bog Hole Wildlife Area, located on USFS land in the northern end of the San Rafael Valley (usually referred to as Meadow Valley). This area is typically accessed from the Patagonia-San Rafael Valley Road (FSR 58) by turning north on FSR 765 and then following FSR 5534 east to Bog Hole. Bog Hole is open to hunting, bird watching, and other forms of recreation but is closed to fishing. Waterfowl are plentiful at Bog Hole during season, and the surrounding area is great for both species of deer, Mearns' quail, scaled quail, and even pronghorn.

Private – GMU 35B has several large parcels of private property, including much of the San Rafael Valley and most land adjacent to Highway 82. Additionally, much of the land around Sonoita, Patagonia, and Nogales is also private, and mining activities have restricted access in the Flux Canyon and Hermosa Canyon areas. Hunters and other recreational users should take care not to trespass onto private property. Some private landowners are willing to allow access to recreational users if they contact the landowners to ask for permission. If you are granted permission, treat the land with utmost respect. When recreational users trespass or damage private property, it can lead to areas being closed off to everyone. Remember: respected access is open access.

AZ Access Map – Know before you go! AZ Access Map is an online mapping tool that allows the user to apply layers showing Game Management Unit boundaries, land ownership, access agreements, wildlife waters, and more. AZ Access Map is also now available on your mobile devices. Visit <https://azaccessmap.com/index.html> for more information.