

Upland Game

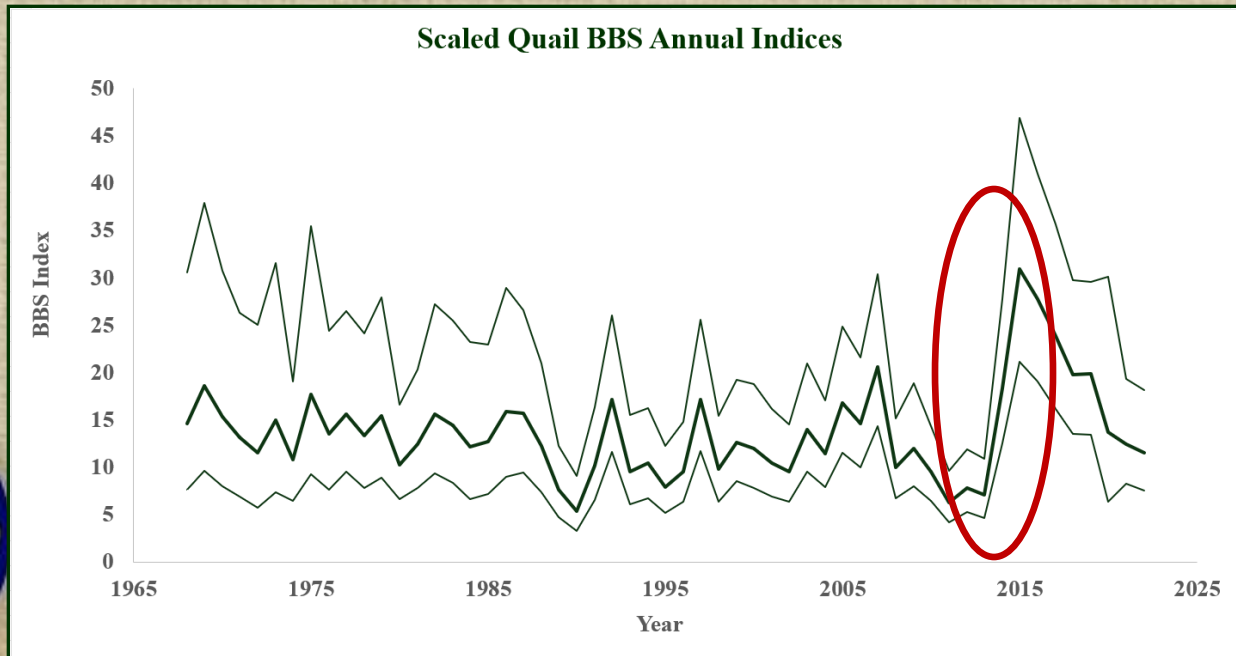
19.31.5 NMAC

August 15, 2025

**New Mexico State Game Commission Meeting
Reserve, NM**



Background Upland Game Population Fluctuations



Background

Upland Game Management Theory

- **Modern Understandings**
 - Upland harvest is a combination of compensatory and additive mortality
 - Harvest later is more additive than early season harvest
 - Hunters self-regulate... mostly
 - Fewer hunters hunt in low population years
 - Though these hunters are often more dedicated and efficient



Background

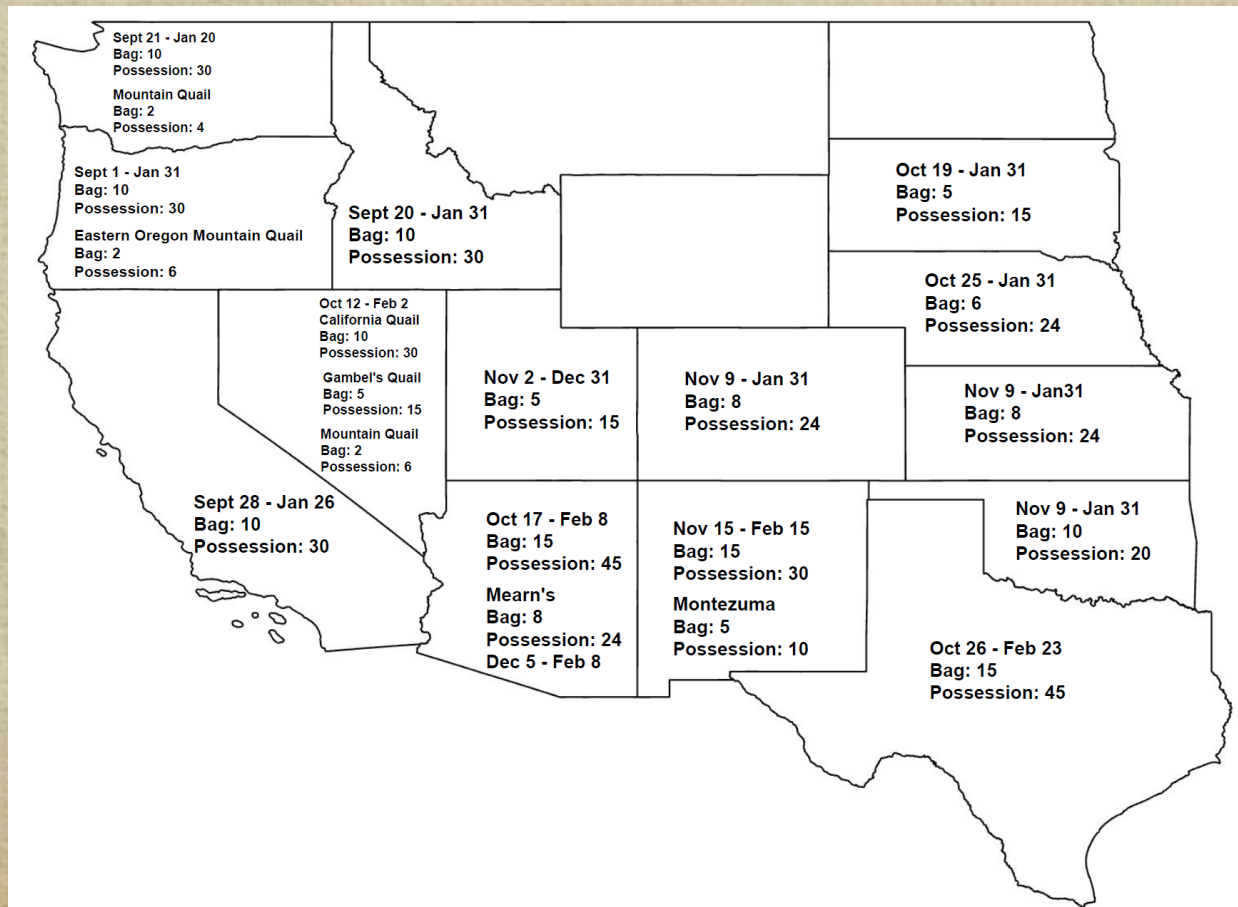
Upland Game Management Theory

■ **Modern Understandings (continued)**

- Changing regulations annually does not appear to increase populations
- Harvest impact populations locally, but it does not appear to negatively impact populations at a statewide level
- There are harvest refuges across the landscape
 - Areas where hunting pressure is low or non-existent (i.e. increased distances from road, hostile habitat, closed private lands, etc.)



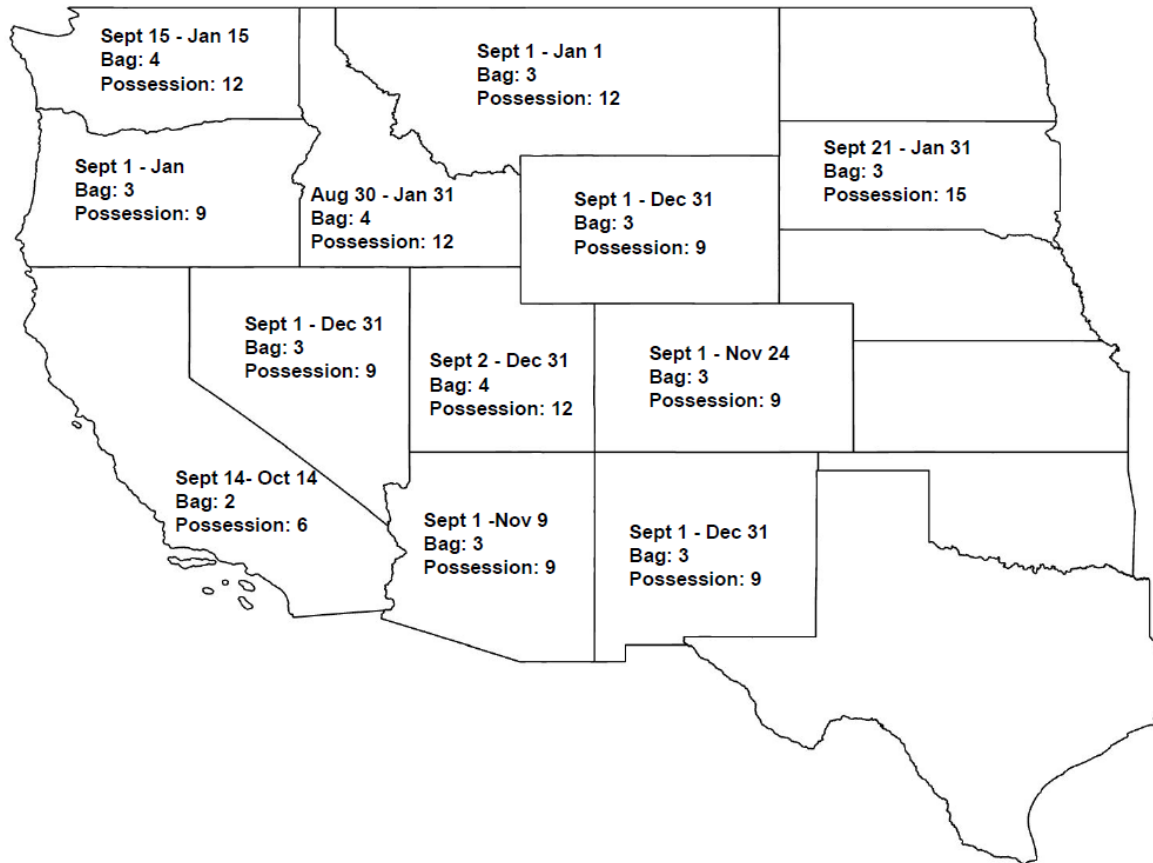
Background Western State Quail Dates and Limits



Background

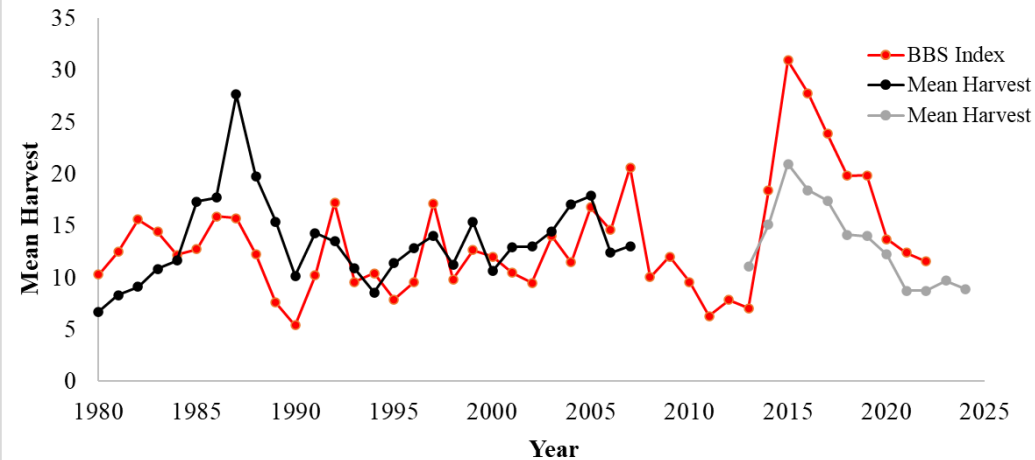
Western State Forest Grouse

Dates and Limits

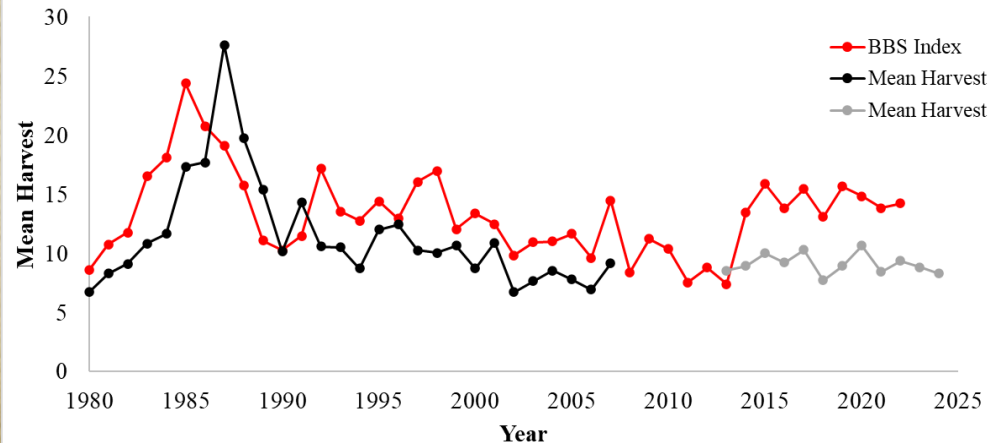


Harvest Trends Compared to Population Fluctuations

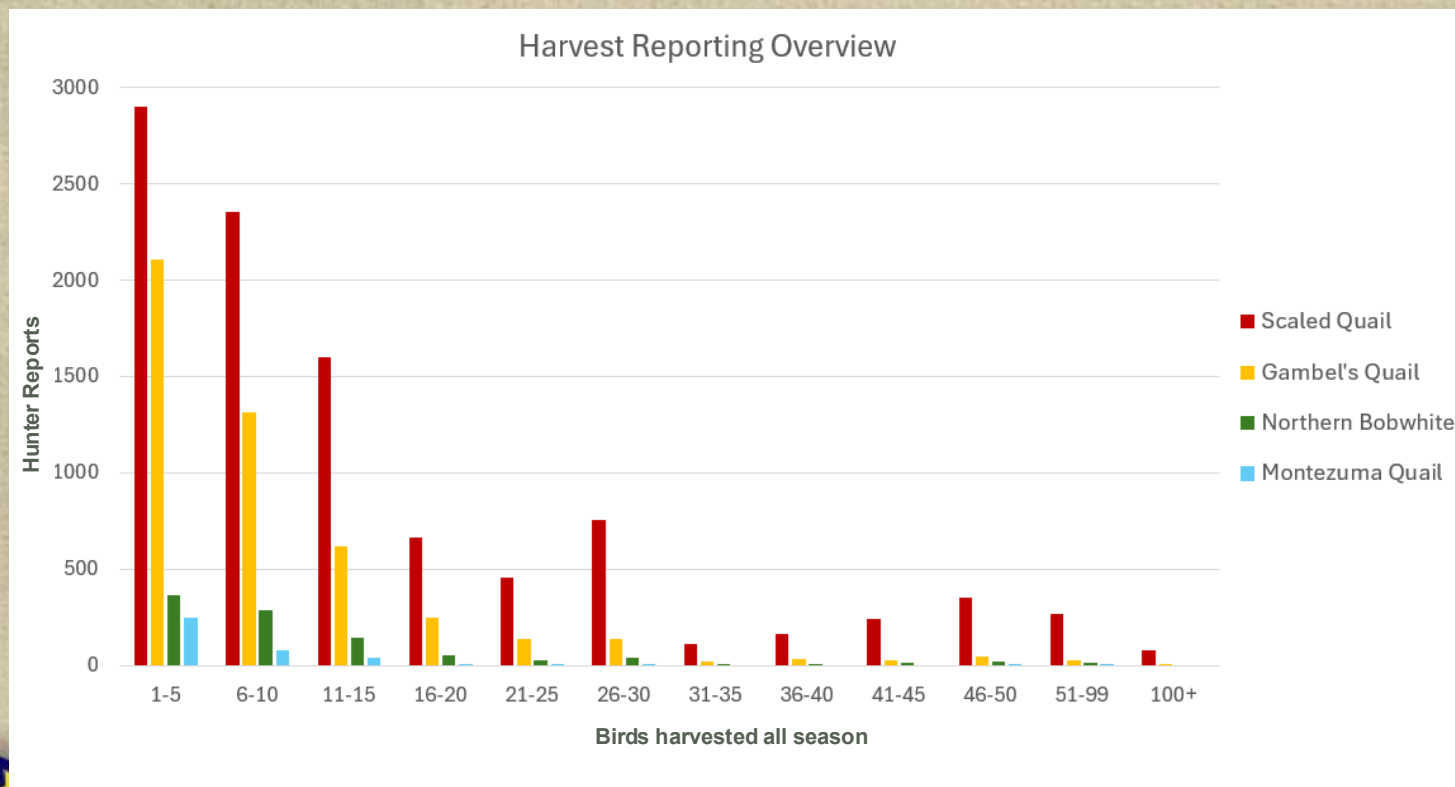
Scaled Quail Population Trends compared to Mean Harvest



Gambel's Quail Population Trends compared to Mean Harvest



Reported Quail Harvested During Season (2014-2024)



Gambel's - 85% harvested 15 or less
Scaled - 70% harvested 15 or less
Bobwhite - 80% harvested 15 or less
Montezuma - 63% harvest 5 or less

Amend: Upland Game 19.31.5 NMAC

- **Adjust hunt dates according to calendar**
- **Divide Dusky Grouse into a North and South Zone**
 - **Use I-40 as the dividing line**
- **Set Bag Limits for Dusky Grouse Zones**
 - **North- 3 Birds/Day; 6 in possession**
 - **South- 1 Bird/Day; 2 in possession**



Amend: Upland Game 19.31.5 NMAC (continued)

- **Add additional special youth pheasant draw hunt on Jackson Lake WMA**
- **Open Bluebird and Pine River WMAs for upland hunting during Squirrel Season/Grouse**
- **Open Double E, LBar, Navajo and River Ranch WMAs for upland hunting during Quail Season**



Public Comment Upland Game 19.31.5 NMAC

- **Hybrid meetings**
 - Albuquerque- May 21- 3 in person, 8 online
 - Las Cruces- May 28- 1 in person, 4 online
- **Virtual Meeting**
 - Quail Forever Virtual Meeting- July 24- 9 online
- **9 Emails received**



Public Comment Upland Game 19.31.5 NMAC

- **Comments received as of August 11, 2025**
 - **Make harvest reporting mandatory for small game hunters (10)**
 - **Create an Upland HIP # or Stamp to track upland hunters/harvest (6)**
 - **Support lower southern grouse harvest limits (6)**
 - **Change SE quail opener date so doesn't overlap with SE deer (2)**
 - **End shooting hours at sunset (1)**
 - **Establish season for American Crow (1)**
 - **Open grouse season Tuesday after Labor Day (1)**
 - **Delineate southern Grouse zone by I-40 on north and I-25 on east (1)**



Public Comment Upland Game 19.31.5 NMAC

- **Comments received as of August 11, 2025**
 - **Reduce grouse harvest limits near Pecos, NM (1)**
 - **Change quail seasons from statewide to regions and set harvest limits by region (1)**
 - **Reduce the quail harvest limits in the state (1)**
 - **8 per day for Scaled, Gambel's and Bobwhite**
 - **3 per day for Montezuma**
 - **Restrict nonresidents to two 5-day hunt periods (1)**
 - **Do not move dates for Bernardo youth pheasant hunt (1)**
 - **Increase the length of the pheasant season to 30 days and require eTag to regulate harvest (1)**
 - **Stock pheasants on public lands (1)**
 - **Do not release non-natives on public lands (1)**



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Update Seasons based on Calendar

Species	Zone	Open	Close
Pheasant	Statewide	Dec. 10, 2026	Dec. 13, 2026
		Dec. 9, 2027	Dec. 12, 2027
		Dec. 7, 2028	Dec. 10, 2028
		Dec. 6, 2029	Dec. 9, 2029



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Update Seasons based on Calendar

Species	2026	2027	2028	2029	Licenses
Middle Rio Grande Valley WMAs Youth-only Pheasant Hunt	Oct. 17	Oct. 16	Oct. 21	Oct. 20	20
W.S. Huey WMA Youth-only Pheasant Hunt	Dec. 5	Dec. 4	Dec. 2	Dec. 1	40
W.S. Huey WMA Pheasant Hunt	Dec. 12	Dec. 11	Dec. 9	Dec. 8	40
Jackson Lake WMA Youth-only Pheasant Hunt (New)	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	10



Questions?

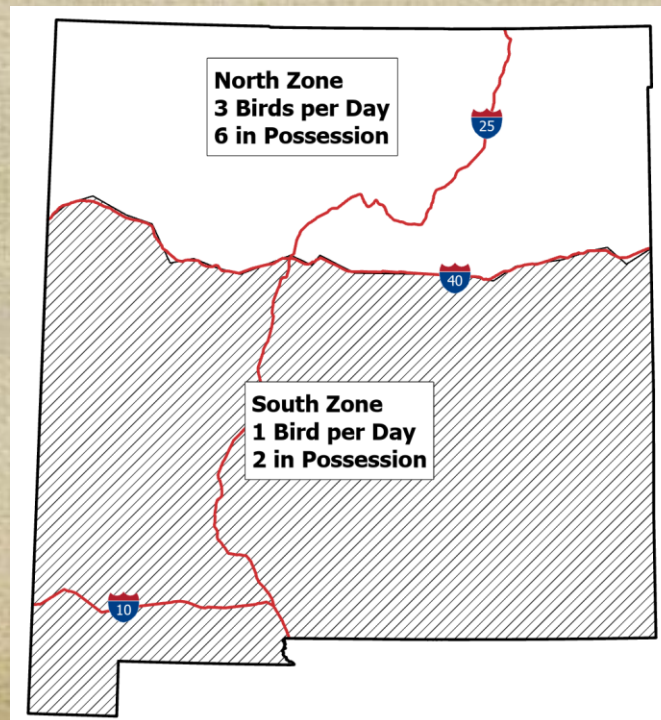


Casey Cardinal



Amend: Upland Game 19.31.5 NMAC

Divide Dusky Grouse into two zones and set harvest limits for zones



Background

New Mexico Quail Seasons

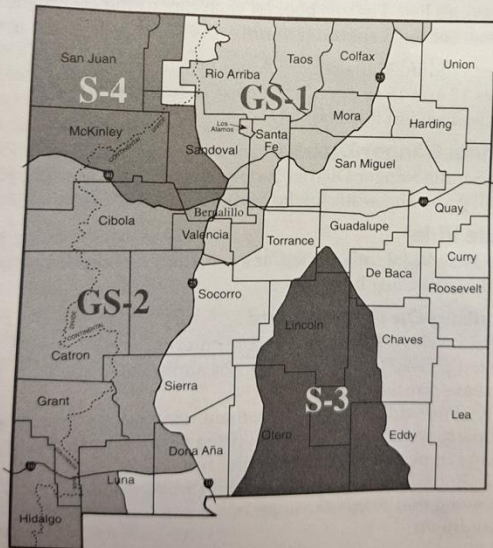
Year	Area	Season Length (days)	Bag Limit	Possession Limit
1977-80	Statewide	60	15	30
1980-82	Statewide	65	15	30
1982-83	Statewide	76	15	30
1983-84	Statewide	79	15	30
1984-85	Statewide	65	10	20
1985-86	Statewide	79	15	30
1986-87	Statewide	92	15	30
1987-88	Statewide	93	15	30
1988-89	Statewide	93	15	45
1989-90	Statewide	93	15	30
1990-92	Statewide	93	10	20
1992-95	Statewide	93	15	30
1995-97	Statewide	93	10 (start of 5 MOQU)	20
1997-2024	Statewide	93	15	30



Background

New Mexico Grouse Seasons

Grouse and Squirrel Hunt Areas

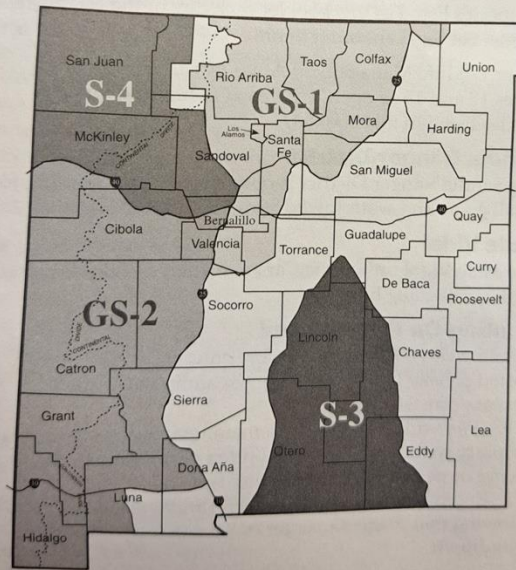


Year	Area	Season Length (days)	Bag Limit	Possession Limit
1973-2004	GS-1	30	3	6
1973-77	GS-2	16	3	3
1977-79	GS-2	20	3	3
1979-83	GS-2	20	3	6
1983-84	GS-2	26	3	6
1984-85	GS-2	28	3	6
1985-2004	GS-2	31	3	6
2004-2012	GS-1	45	3	6
2004-2012	GS-2	31	3	6
2012-2014	Statewide	61	3	6
2012-2014	Statewide	31	3	6
2014-2022	Statewide	91	3	6
2022-2026	Statewide	122	3	6

Background

New Mexico Squirrel Seasons

Grouse and Squirrel Hunt Areas



Year	Area	Season Length (days)	Bag Limit	Possession Limit
1985-95	GS-1 & S-3	30	7	14
1985-95	GS-2	31	7	14
1995-2000	GS-1, S-3 & S-4	30	8	16
1995-2000	GS-2	31	8	16
2000-2014	GS-1, S-3 & S-4	61	8	16
2000-2014	GS-2	61	8	16
2014-2022	Statewide	91	8	16
2022-2026	Statewide	122	8	16

