

## **2017 Black Bear Harvest**

Arkansas black bear hunters harvested 417 bears during the 2017 season.

### **Season Framework**

Arkansas's 2016 black bear seasons were:

Bear zone 1 and 2	
Sept. 23 - Nov. 30	-- Archery
Oct. 21-29	-- Muzzleloader
Nov. 4-5	-- Modern gun youth hunt
Nov. 11-30	-- Modern gun
Bear zone 5	
Nov. 25 – Dec 3	-- Modern gun
Bear zone 5A	
Nov. 18 -Dec. 3	-- Modern gun

As in previous seasons, the use of dogs to hunt bears was prohibited. Baiting was allowed on private land in zones 1, 2, 5 and 5A from 30 days before the opening of bear season until the end of bear season. The season bag limit was one bear by any method. The Bear Zone 1 (including all WMAs within Zone 1) quota was 205 bears for the archery season, 45 bears for the muzzleloader season and 45 bears for the modern gun season. Bear Zone 2 the quota was removed. In bear zone 5 the quota was 10 bears and in bear zone 5A the quota was 5 bears.

### **Results**

Four hundred seventeen (417) bears were legally harvested during the 2017 season. Two hundred forty-five males (59%) and 172 females (41%) were harvested statewide. Most of the bears were harvested with archery equipment at 277 (66%) followed by modern gun 96 (23%) and muzzleloader 44 (11%).

Bear zone 1 produced 299 (72%) of the total harvest (Table 1). There were 188 males and 111 females harvested in Zone 1. Bear zone 2 provided 25 percent (105) of the total harvest. There were 52 males and 48 females harvested Bear Zone 2. Bear zones 5 and 5A produced 13 bears or 3% of the total harvest.

Sixty one bears (14%) were killed on public land and 379 (86%) were killed on private land. The top five counties for bear harvest were: Newton, Yell, Madison, Johnson and Washington (Figure 1).

### **Discussion**

The 2017 statewide bear harvest was a tremendous improvement over the 2015 season. The increased in harvest was no doubt attributed to lack of hard mast availability making more bears susceptible to harvest over bait. This is reflected by the fact that 86% of the bears were harvested on private land. Bear zone 1 maintained a harvest quota of 250 bears total (205 Archery, 45 Modern Gun). The bear zone 2 quota was removed. Bear Zones 1 and 2 moved to

the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in September as the archery opener. The earlier opener on a Saturday probably provided better hunter success early.

**Figure 1. Arkansas black bear harvest by county, 2017.**

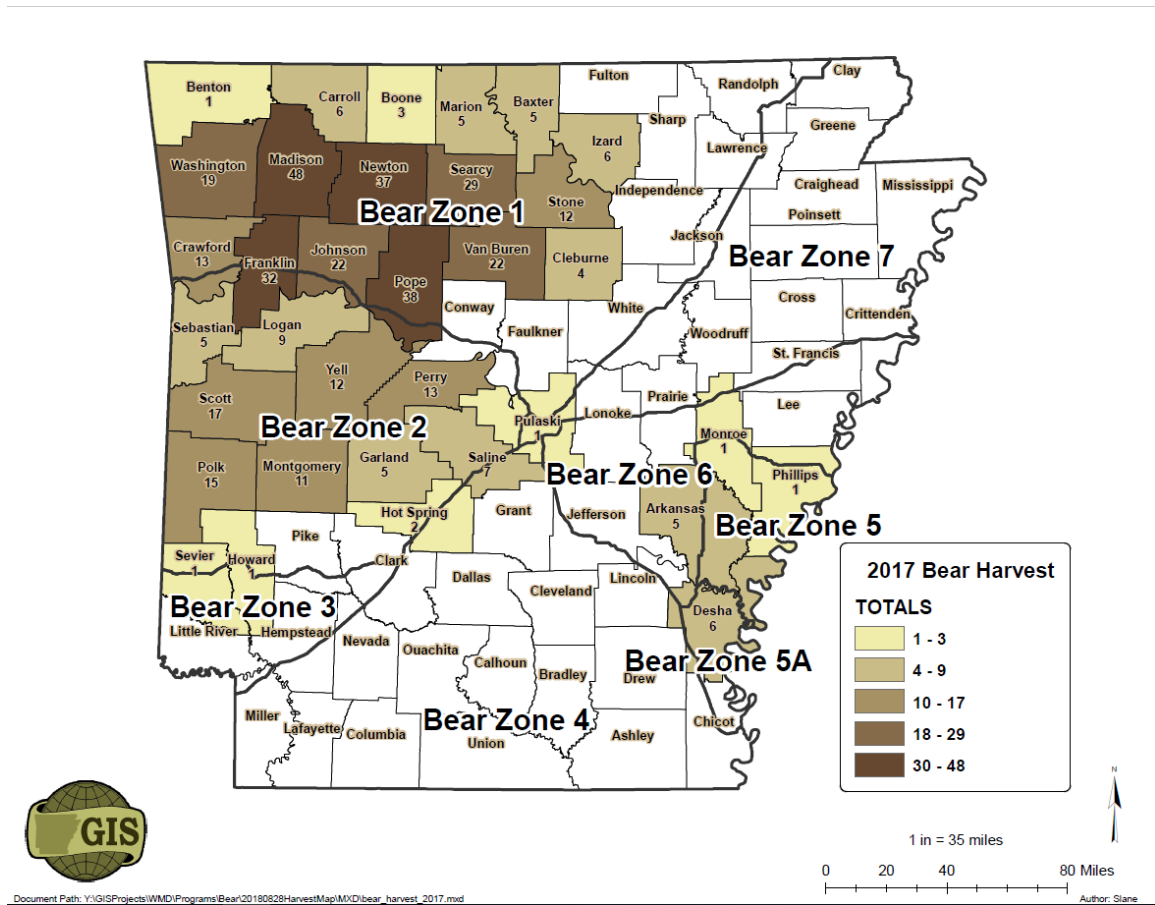
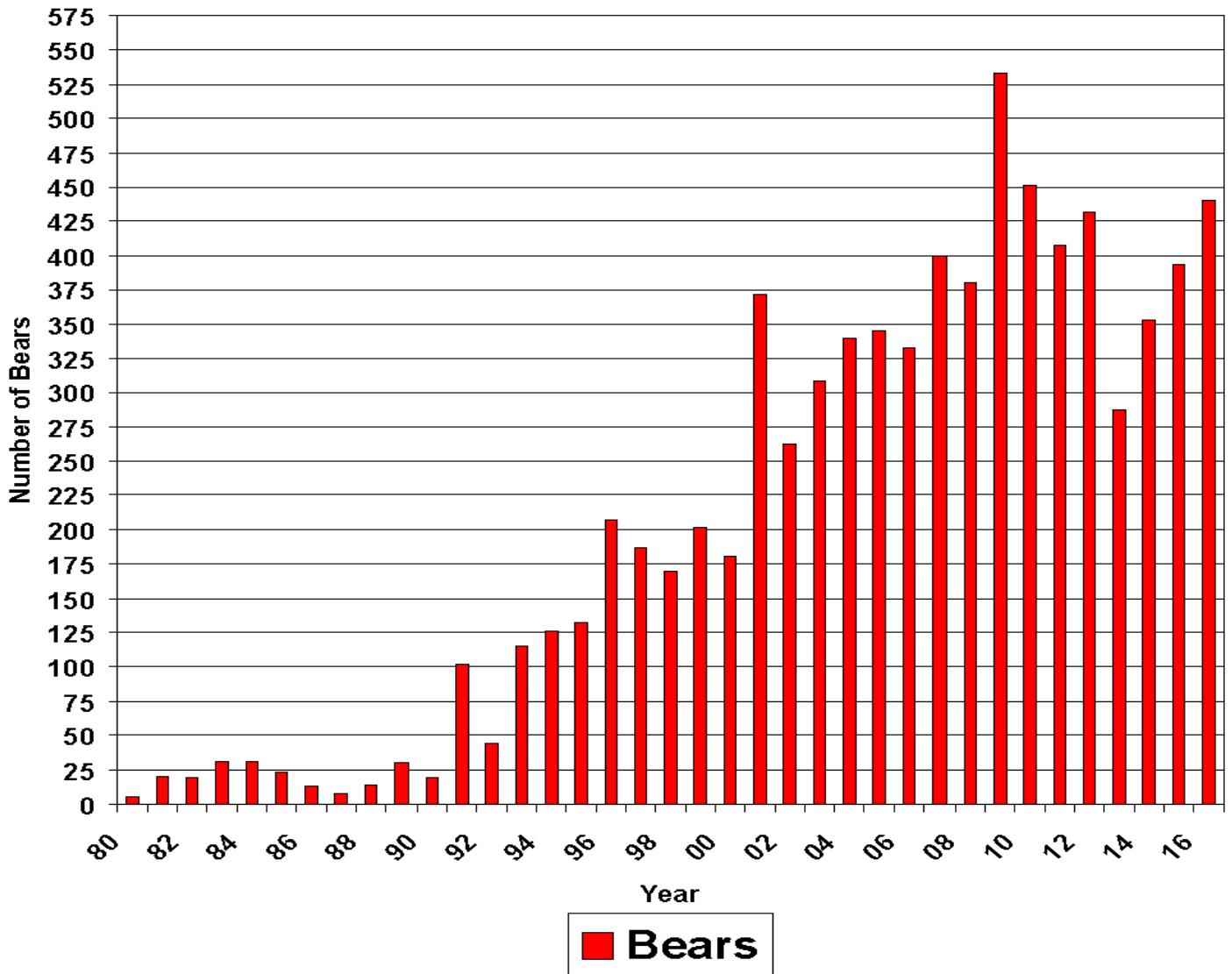


Figure 2. Arkansas black bear harvest, 1980-2017.



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**Table 1. Arkansas black bear harvest by bear zone, sex, and method, 2017.**

	<i>Total Harvest</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Archery</i>	<i>Muzzle-loader</i>	<i>Modern Gun</i>
<i>Zone 1</i>	<b>299</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58</b>
<i>Zone 2</i>	<b>105</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>
<i>Zone 5</i>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Zone 5A</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>

**Table 2. Arkansas black bear harvest by county and method for 2017.**

<i>County</i>	<i>Total Harvest</i>	<i>Archery</i>	<i>Muzzleloader</i>	<i>Modern Gun</i>
<i>Arkansas</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Baxter</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Benton</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Boone</i>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Carroll</i>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>Cleburne</i>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<i>Crawford</i>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Desha</i>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Franklin</i>	<b>31</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Garland</i>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Hot Springs</i>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Howard</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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<i>Izard</i>	5	3	0	2
<i>Johnson</i>	21	12	2	7
<i>Logan</i>	9	6	0	3
<i>Madison</i>	48	37	3	8
<i>Marion</i>	5	2	1	2
<i>Monroe</i>	1	0	0	1
<i>Montgomery</i>	11	5	3	3
<i>Newton</i>	37	25	5	7
<i>Perry</i>	13	7	1	5
<i>Phillips</i>	1	0	0	1
<i>Pike</i>	3	1	2	0
<i>Polk</i>	15	9	3	3
<i>Pope</i>	38	18	7	13
<i>Pulaski</i>	1	1	0	0

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<i>Saline</i>	7	5	0	2
<i>Scott</i>	16	10	1	5
<i>Searcy</i>	29	23	2	4
<i>Sebastian</i>	5	4	0	1
<i>Sevier</i>	1	1	0	0
<i>Stone</i>	12	9	1	2
<i>Van Buren</i>	22	19	1	2
<i>Washington</i>	19	16	0	3
<i>Yell</i>	12	9	2	1

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