

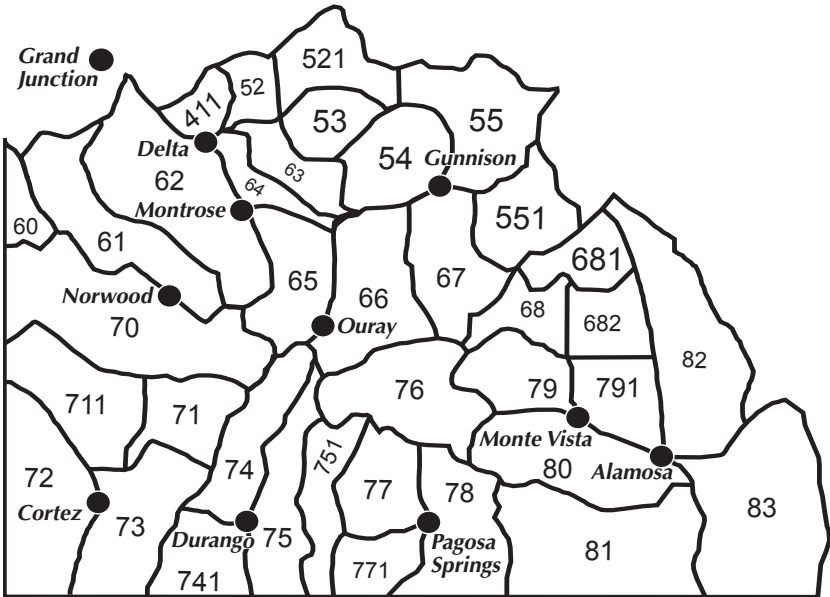
2017

# Big Game Hunting in Southwest Colorado



**Contents:**

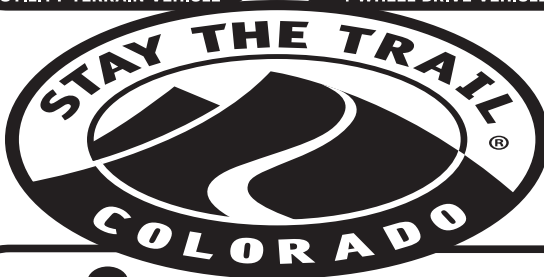
- Hunting tips and outlook
- 2016 season harvest statistics
- Camping information
- Travel information
- Important phone numbers and web sites



# 2017 Elk & Deer Season Information

Season Dates	Deer	Elk	License Fees***		Deer Buck/Doe	Elk	
						Bull/ Either-sex	Cow
<b>Archery</b>	Aug. 26 - Sept. 24		<b>Resident</b>	Adult	\$34	\$49	\$49
<b>Muzzle</b>	Sept. 9 - 17			Youth	\$13.75	\$13.75	\$13.75
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Rifle</b>		Oct. 14 - 18					
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Rifle</b>	Oct. 21 - 29		<b>Non-Resident</b>	Adult	\$389	\$644	\$484
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Rifle</b>	Nov. 4 - Nov. 12			Youth	\$103.75	\$103.75	\$103.75
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Rifle</b>	Nov. 15 - 19						
Over-the-counter licenses on sale July 25, 9 a.m.; leftover licenses Aug. 1 at CPW, license agents, phone 1-800-244-5613, on-line. Aug. 2.			***Prices include \$3 nonrefundable on-line application fee, 25 cent search/rescue fee, 75 cent wildlife education fund fee; does not include \$10 habitat stamp fee. Non-residents now also receive a fishing license.				

## Keep Your Wheels Where They Belong™



For info and tips visit  
[www.staythetrail.org](http://www.staythetrail.org)

## **New for 2017 - [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us) for details**

2018 LICENSE APPLICATIONS: Paper applications for limited licenses have been discontinued. To apply for a license starting in 2018, hunters must have an e-mail address and access to the Internet.

CWD TESTING FOR DEER: Chronic Wasting Disease has been detected in southwestern Colorado. To determine if the disease is widespread CPW is requiring mandatory testing for all deer harvested in GMU's 61, 62, 64 and 65. Hunters who drew licenses will be notified.

## **Colorado State Park camping opportunities**

Four state parks in the Southwest Region offer outstanding camping facilities, including showers and electricity. Some also offer cabins and yurts. For information, call: Mancos State Park, 970-882-2213; Ridgway State Park, 970-626-5822; Crawford State Park, 970-921-5721; Navajo State Park, 970-882-2208. Or go to the web site at [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us). for information and to make reservations.

## **State Park offers exclusive hunting experience in GMU 711**

For a unique hunting opportunity, anyone who draws a license for GMU 711 is eligible for a chance to hunt at the 12,000-acre Lone Mesa State Park. Located northwest of Dolores, the park is undeveloped and currently only open to the public for big game hunting. The number of hunters is limited, from 12 to 25 depending on the season. The access fee is \$100 or \$200 for residents, and \$200 or \$300 for non-residents depending on the type of license. The park is located in prime big game habitat and hunter success is high. For more information, go to the Lone Mesa State Park page on the CPW web site, [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us), or call 970-882-2213.

## **Know the Rules for off-highway vehicles (OHVs)**

Inappropriate and illegal use of OHVs causes conflicts among hunters and can cause resource damage to public lands. Hunters must be aware of the laws and regulations governing OHV use.

All OHVs must be registered and permitted annually in Colorado. Permits cost \$25.25. Non-residents using OHVs must obtain a Colorado permit. Permits and regulations can be found on-line at [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us), or call 1-303-791-1920 for information.

Federal "Travel Management Plans" are written to ensure protection of resources. If you are hunting on public land, contact the local U.S. Forest Service or BLM office to obtain current regulations. Phone numbers are on the inside back cover of this booklet.

Colorado wildlife officers, USFS officers, BLM rangers and other local law enforcement agencies are authorized to ticket OHV users who violate rules. Those riding in unauthorized areas face fines and penalties of \$100 from CPW, and \$250 from federal agencies. Hunters, anglers or trappers

using OHVs illegally will receive 10 penalty points against their hunting and fishing privileges. The fine for riding in federal wilderness areas is \$500 and 15 penalty points. Please, observe these rules and guidelines:

- **Rifles carried on OHVs must be in a case and completely unloaded.**
- Be considerate of other hunters. OHV noise disturbs big game animals.
- OHVs cannot be driven into designated wilderness or roadless areas.
- OHVs are generally prohibited from most streets in towns and on some county roads. Check local regulations.
- Explain these rules to young hunters and those unfamiliar with using these vehicles on public lands.

## **OHV game retrieval in GMU 711**

An OHV may be driven off road for one mile to retrieve game in a section of GMU 711 as described on the USFS travel map. The hunter who killed the animal must be in the retrieval party. Vehicles must be no more than 50 inches wide. Two OHVs may be used, but they must travel together and can only make one trip in. If one OHV is used, two trips are allowed. Avoid passing over the same track twice. Avoid wet area, cross streams slowly, don't spin tires, avoid other hunters. To obtain a map, call the Dolores Public Lands office, 970-882-7296.

## **Beware of dead timber**

Fire and beetles have killed timber in some areas of southwest Colorado. Trees can fall without warning. Exercise caution in areas of dead-standing timber, especially when it's windy and during heavy rain.

## **Hunting Q & A**

**Do I need a Hunter Education Card?** Hunters born after 1948 must present a hunter education card to buy a license. License agents will accept cards issued by other states, but not accept a previous year's license or photocopies. CPW's apprentice license allows a one-year waiver of hunter education requirements for those who hunt with a mentor. An opt-out option based on a test is available for those over 50 and for U.S. military personnel. For information on hunter education classes, apprentice licenses and the opt-out program, go to the CPW web site.

**Where do I buy my Colorado hunting license?** Licenses are available at CPW offices, at licensing agents, by telephone at 1-800-244-5613, and on-line.

**Can I hunt both deer and elk?** Yes, and you no longer need to hunt them during the same season. See the Big Game Brochure or the web site for details.

**Can I have more than one elk and deer license?** Yes, but only in specific GMUs. See the web site or the Big Game Brochure for details.

**Where can I hunt with an unlimited rifle license?** Unlimited licenses are sold only for bull elk hunting during the second and third seasons. The licenses can be used in any GMU in Colorado, except those listed on page 36 of the Big Game brochure. Excluded Southwest Region units are: 61, 66, 67, 682, 76, 79 and 791.

**What are “Private Land Only” licenses?** Also called PLO licenses, they require the holder to hunt in a specific and GMU and are valid only on private land. You must obtain permission from a landowner. It is recommended that you secure permission from a landowner before purchasing the license. For more information, go to the CPW web site: [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us).

## Hunting ethically

Hunting is an integral part of wildlife management in Colorado. Remember, you are not only participating in a recreational activity, you also play an important role in managing big-game herds. With your license comes a responsibility to hunt and conduct yourself in an ethical manner. Please, take a few moments to answer the following questions. It’s up to you to remember the answers when you are out in the field:

- Are your hunting actions providing a “fair chase” scenario for the animal?
- Would you behave the same way if you were hunting with a wildlife officer or being videotaped for the news?
- Do you know exactly where you are hunting? Are you in the right GMU?
- Do you know the habits of the animal you are hunting?
- When you take aim at an animal do you know for certain that it is the right sex and species?
- Are you physically able to hunt in mountainous terrain and retrieve a harvested animal?
- Do you know how to properly field dress a big-game animal?
- Do you minimize the impacts of your camp on the landscape?
- Do you pack out all of your trash?
- Will you report rule violations—yours and others—to a Colorado wildlife officer?
- Have you read the Colorado Big Game Brochure to check for specific regulations for the GMU in which you are hunting?

Ethical behavior is critical to the future of hunting. Please, consider how your actions impact wildlife, fellow hunters and the general public.

## If you make a mistake

Every year people make mistakes while hunting. Hunters occasionally: shoot the wrong animal, accidentally kill more than one animal, hunt in the wrong GMU, etc. Many errors can be prevented by carefully reading this publication and the Big Game brochure, obtaining a good map of your hunting area and by being diligent in the field. Hunters who make errors can be penalized with fines, suspension points, felonies and misdemeanors, loss of meat, license suspension or confiscation of equipment. Penalties can be much more severe for those who purposefully attempt to hide mistakes from wildlife officers.

If you make a mistake while hunting, the best course of action is to report the incident to the closest CPW office immediately. Be prepared to explain to a wildlife officer what happened and why. While you still may be subject to penalties, they could be less severe if the officer determines that you are cooperative, the error was not intentional, or it was unavoidable given the circumstances. Follow the officer's orders on caring for the meat, leaving the animal at the scene or bringing it to an agreed upon location, etc. If you are unable to contact an officer immediately, field dress the animal on the spot and don't move it.

## Know where you're hunting!

It is your responsibility to know exactly where you are hunting. If you harvest an animal in the wrong GMU you will be subject to penalties, and you will not be allowed to keep the animal. Location descriptions of each GMU can be found starting on page 61 of the Big Game brochure.

Buy a high-quality topographic map, read the boundary description in the brochure carefully and outline the boundaries on your map. If you have questions, call the CPW office in the area where you are hunting.

In Colorado, landowners are not required to post or fence their land. It is your responsibility to know the location of private property. You must obtain permission to hunt on private land. If you hunt on private land without permission you may be charged with trespassing, be required to appear in court and fined.

## Simple rules for hunting safely

Hunting accidents have declined significantly since the passage of two laws in 1970 that require hunter education for all hunters born on or after January 1, 1949, and require rifle hunters to wear at least 500-square-inches of fluorescent orange or pink clothing above the waist—including a head covering visible from all directions. **“Camouflage” orange or pink is not legal.** Hunters should review safety rules each time they go into the field.

Remember: **One moment of carelessness can mean a lifetime of consequences.**

Before the season, go to a shooting range to sight-in your rifle and practice. You'll get re-acquainted with your gun and you'll improve your chances of success.

Most accidents occur near vehicles. Load and unload your gun at least 100 feet from your car or truck.

No matter how long you've been hunting, always observe these basic safety rules:

- Treat every firearm as if it is loaded and keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times.
- Be sure of your target--what is in front of it and what is beyond it. Once you take a shot, you can't take it back. If you are in doubt, don't shoot.
- Keep the safety on and your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
- Never place your hand over the muzzle of a gun.
- Don't hurry while loading or unloading.
- Talk about safety with youngsters and inexperienced hunters.
- Stop to rest when you are out of breath; fatigue often contributes to accidents.

## **Lead bullets and game meat**

Concerns have been raised about potential health risks of exposure to lead from eating wild game harvested with lead bullets. Children under 6 and pregnant women should avoid this meat.

Because lead bullets fragment, the lead can scatter beyond the wound. Trim meat liberally when processing an animal. Discard damaged meat, meat that is discolored or bruised, and that shows dirt, hair or bone fragments. Lead is soft and can be spread when meat is ground.

Lead fragments can also sicken birds, such as eagles and hawks, that scavenge on gut piles.

More and more hunters are using copper bullets. They are accurate and deadly. Copper bullets cost a little more, but hunters can use lead bullets of similar weight at the range to sight-in their rifles and to practice.

## **A challenge for hunters: Bears**

Black bear populations are healthy throughout the Southwest Region. Colorado Parks and Wildlife encourages hunters to try their hand at stalking the native ursines.

In late summer and into the fall, bears are gorging on berries and acorns in order to fatten up for winter hibernation. Bears are most likely to be found in patches of scrub oak brush, and in moist areas where there are berry bushes.

Archers and muzzleloaders can purchase a license to hunt only bears. During the rifle seasons, however, bear hunters must also have a deer or elk license in the GMU where they're hunting. All licenses are sold over-the-counter. But there is a cap on these licenses so they are sold on a first come-first served basis

Those who harvest a bear must personally present the carcass for inspection and sealing at a CPW office within five working days of harvest. Carcasses must not be frozen. Agency staff will also remove a premolar tooth for research purposes.

## **Tips for hunting mule deer**

A large mule deer buck can reach 400 pounds; however, most mule deer range from 200-300 pounds. It is estimated that Colorado is home to about 435,000 deer. During the 2016 seasons, for all manners of take, about 80,000 hunters harvested 37,000 mule deer for a 45 percent success rate.

In the mountains and foothills, mule deer don't spend much time in heavy timber. They are primarily browsers and prefer aspen and forest edges where there are plenty of low shrubs, small trees, oak brush and varied vegetation types.

Mule deer are most active at night and can often be found in meadow areas during low-light hours. During the day they'll bed down in protective cover.

In warm weather, look for deer along ridge lines where wind is consistent and helps to keep them cool.

During the low-light hours of evening and morning, hunt in openings at the edge of thick cover. If you see where they are feeding during times of low-light, it's likely they'll move into nearby timbered areas to rest for part of the day. Deer tend to move during the middle of the day toward the areas where they feed in the evening.

A slow stalk is recommended. Spend a lot of time scanning slowly with binoculars--a deer can appear at any time.

Pay attention to the wind direction. If the wind is blowing in the direction you are moving, a deer will likely pick up your scent. Deer avoid going to creeks in daylight so there is no advantage to hunting near moving water sources during the day.

One advantage mule deer give to hunters is their curiosity. When mule deer are spooked they'll often run a short distance then turn to determine if they are being pursued. That may give you one good chance for a shot.

A small amount of snow will get deer moving quickly out of high-altitude areas. Usually by late October, migrating herds will move to winter range areas even if there is no snow.

Hunters should aim at the vital organ area which presents a small target--about the size of a dinner plate--just behind and low on the front



quarter. Hunters, no matter how good they are at the range, should never try to make a head shot. Many animals are injured and die slowly because of attempted head shots.

## **Tips for hunting elk**

The popular hunting magazines often display colorful photographs of huge bull elk standing in open meadows presenting easy targets. The reality in the mountains of Colorado, however, is far different.

Stalking these animals is challenging and most hunters won't get easy shots. You're more likely to find elk on a steep hillside, in a dark ravine or in thick timber than out in the open.

The hunter success rate for all manners of take in Colorado during the 2016 seasons was 18 percent, and an estimated 39,000 elk were harvested. A total of 224,000 hunters stalked elk last season. It's estimated that there are about 276,000 elk in Colorado, the most of any state.

If weather is warm, elk stay spread out over vast areas at high elevations at and above timberline. In those conditions hunters need to work extra hard. When snow falls, elk start to move, bunch up, and look for food sources at lower elevations or on slopes where vegetation is exposed. Elk movement will start in earnest when a foot or more snow falls.

Hunters must get off their OHVs and hunt slowly and quietly far from any road. Elk are very smart, move quickly at any hint of danger and hide in rugged terrain. Compounding the challenge for hunters is the fact that elk typically gather in groups of 10 or more. If one is spooked they all move and they can run easily for a half-mile or more.

Elk are most active at night and are likely to be grazing in transition areas--meadows and openings next to heavy timber where different types of vegetation meet, and just above or below ridge lines. Hunters should watch these areas at first light and at dusk.

During the day, hunters need to move into the dark timber and not be hesitant to hunt in difficult areas. Hunters should move as quietly as possible for short distances and then scan the woods for 10 minutes or more before moving again. Even in dense forest it's a good idea to use binoculars so you can discern subtle movement or colors in the trees.

If you find the areas where animals graze at night it's likely that you'll find them in adjacent areas during the day.

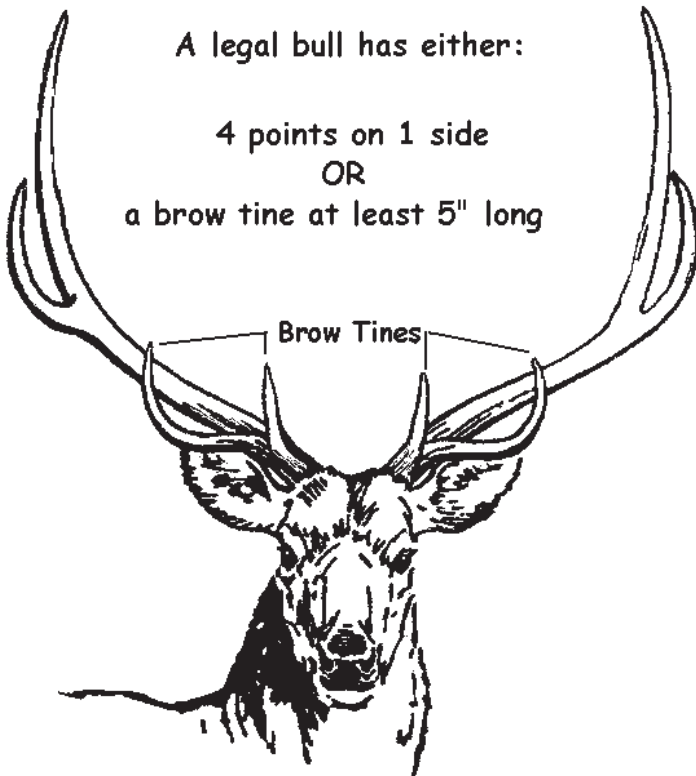
Line up your shot carefully because elk are difficult to knock down. The best shots are delivered in the critical area of the lungs and heart just behind and below the front quarters.

## Antler requirements

To allow bull elk and mule deer bucks to reach maturity, animals must grow to an acceptable size before they can be harvested. Size is determined by the antlers. Be sure to clearly identify the size of the antlers of a bull or a buck.

**Mule deer bucks** -- No antler point restrictions; but antlers must be at least 5 inches long.

**Bull elk** -- For all GMUs in the southwest region except 61 and 76: A legal bull must have antlers with at least 4 points on one side OR brow tines that are 5 inches or longer. In GMUs 61 and 76 a legal bull must have antlers that are at least 5 inches long. There are no point restrictions. If you are unsure while taking aim, do not shoot. Be aware that the spikes of young bulls are difficult to see. If you have an antlerless permit be sure the animal is indeed antlerless. Mistakes often occur in the low light hours at dawn and dusk.



## **Know your physical limits**

Hunting in the mountains of Colorado is physically demanding. Even if you are in good shape you will still feel the effects of the altitude. Consider these tips as you head to the high country:

- To acclimate, plan to arrive at your hunting area a couple of days before hunting season begins.
- Drink lots of water. Dehydration can cause severe headaches, muscle cramps and loss of energy. Carry water purification tablets so that you can refill your bottles at creeks. Limit alcohol--it causes dehydration.
- If you experience severe headaches or difficulty breathing, move to lower altitude immediately. These symptoms could be signs of pulmonary edema or cerebral edema, both of which can be fatal.
- When hunting, move slowly and stop to rest often. Accidents are more likely to occur when you're tired. If you are feeling very tired and you are far from camp, unload your gun before continuing to walk.
- Discuss any health issues with your hunting partners.

## **Caring for your campsite**

Camping can cause significant impacts on public lands. Minimize impacts with advanced planning. Please, follow these guidelines:

- When possible, use established camping areas. Occupy as small of an area as possible.
- Campsites must be at least 100 feet from streams, lakes or riparian areas. Avoid trampling grass and shrubs.
- Do not dig a trench around your tent site.
- Check for public land fire restrictions; keep fires small, put fires out every night; burn only paper trash items.
- Use a stove for cooking to reduce impacts.
- Collect all cooking grease and carry it out. Do not dump.
- Collect deadfall for campfires. Do not cut down trees.
- When you leave camp for the day, store all food and garbage securely inside a vehicle. Food and garbage attracts animals, including bears.
- Strain dish water before throwing it out and put debris in the trash. Small bits of food accumulate significantly over time.
- Pack out human feces. Sanitary products are available in which waste can be deposited and then disposed of properly in town.
- If you must, dig a latrine. Dig a hole about three-feet deep; be sure that it is at least 100 feet from the nearest water source. Spread soil on top after each use. Restore area to natural condition when you break camp.
- Pack out all trash. Do not bury trash.
- Inspect your camp carefully after it is packed up. Leave your camp cleaner than how you found it.

# Don't shoot a moose!

Moose are present throughout the Southwest Region. Moose favor wetlands -- but they can be found in any terrain where elk live.

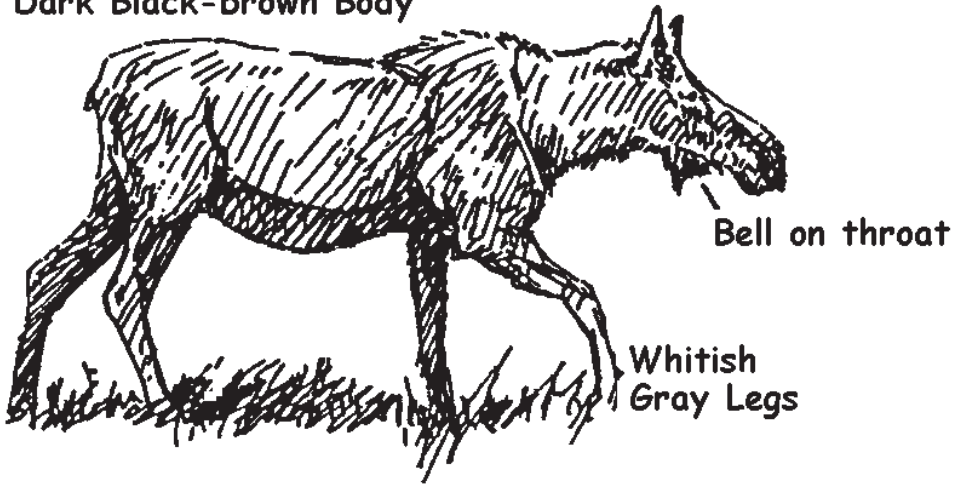
Too often, hunters mistake moose--especially cows--for elk.

Please, be sure of your target. The fine for accidentally killing a moose is \$1,370. If the animal is killed illegally and the carcass abandoned, the shooter can be charged with a Class 5 felony.

## Hunter's Checklist

### Cow Moose

#### Dark Black-brown Body



Preparing for a hunting trip is a major effort. Be sure to leave information about where you'll be hunting and camping, license plate numbers and cell phone numbers with folks at home.

Listed below are a few common items that hunters often forget as they get ready to go into the backcountry.

- First aid kit, sunscreen, toilet paper, water bottles.
- Hunting license, compass and maps.
- Flashlight, lantern, extra batteries.
- Rain gear, tire chains.
- Knife sharpener, bone saw, game bags.
- Blaze orange or pink vest and cap. Extra camp-stove fuel, cleaning supplies, trash bags, shovel.
- List of family/friends with contact information.

# Are you using horses?

If you plan to use horses on your hunting trip, please be aware of the following:

- You must have a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection issued by an accredited veterinarian 30 days prior to entry into Colorado. Include the physical address of where the horse is kept in your state and the location where the horse will be in Colorado.
- A negative equine infectious anemia test is required 12 months prior to entry. Date of the test, results, the lab and the accession number must be listed on the veterinary inspection form. For questions, contact the State Veterinarian's Office, 1-303-239-4161.
- Horses are required to have a brand inspection when transported over 75 miles totally within the boundaries of Colorado, and every time they leave the state. Contact the Brands Office at 1-303-869-9160.
- Hay, straw and mulch must be certified as "weed free." Only the following products are allowed on national forests in Colorado: cubed and pelletized hay, steamed grain, treated/steamed mulch from tree fibers. For information, call the Colorado Department of Agriculture at 1-303-239-4149; or for a list of regulations and vendors, see [www.colorado.gov/ag](http://www.colorado.gov/ag).
- Don't tie horses to trees in camp. This causes tree damage and vegetation around the tree to be trampled.
- Highline or picket your stock. If you use a highline, please use tree-saver straps to avoid damaging trees.
- Move horses often to keep them from trampling vegetation or overgrazing an area.
- Keep stock 100 feet or more from lakes, streams, wetlands and trails.
- Restrictions on horse travel in wilderness areas are often greater than in other areas. Be sure to read notices at trailheads. Many wilderness areas carry maximum group size limits which regulate the number of livestock and people that are allowed to travel together.

Contact the U.S. Forest Service or BLM in the area where you are hunting for complete information.

## Pack Animals

Some people use animals other than horses to pack in gear to hunt camps. **Please, do not use goats.** These animals can spread disease to Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Llamas, however, are acceptable.

***Report Hunting Violations: 1-877-265-6648***

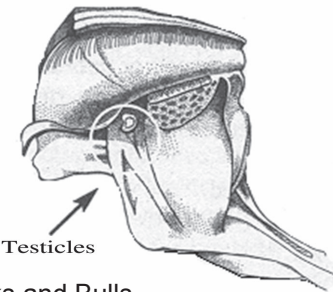
## Evidence of sex

After harvest, evidence of sex must remain naturally attached to the carcass. You can use either the head or sex organs, but they **must** be naturally attached to the carcass.

Leaving the evidence attached to one-quarter of the carcass is acceptable--so long as all four quarters are being transported together.

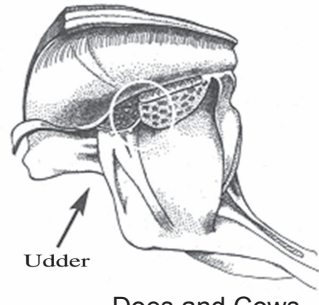
The head or skull plate with both antlers naturally attached must accompany the carcass of a buck or bull while it is in camp or being transported--even when the testicles are used to meet proof of evidence of sex.

If you are working with a taxidermist, obtain a written receipt from the taxidermist before transporting the carcass home or to a meat processor. The receipt must list the following: date delivered and description of antlers.



Bucks and Bulls

Attached head with antlers or attached testicle, scrotum or penis



Does and Cows

Attached head or udder

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## Tagging the carcass

Improperly attaching the carcass tag is a common violation and can result in a fine. Make sure that everyone in your hunting party knows how to properly attach the tag. You can be held liable for illegally transporting big game even if someone else made an error. Please, follow these guidelines:

- Sign your license as soon as you buy it or receive it in the mail.
- Immediately after harvesting the animal, detach the carcass tag from your license, sign it and punch the holes indicating sex, month and day of kill. Put the carcass tag in your pocket while taking the animal to camp or to your vehicle.
- When you arrive at camp or at your vehicle, immediately attach the carcass tag to the body of the animal. Do not attach to antlers. Attach the tag to the animal's leg or the hide.
- Place the tag where it can be easily inspected by a wildlife officer.
- If the carcass is cut up, keep all the pieces together for inspection.

- If you bone out the animal, be sure to leave sexual organs attached to a large piece of the meat.
- Retain the top portion of your license during all transport of the animal. If you are shipping the meat via commercial carrier, the meat must be accompanied by one of the following: the hunter's license, a photocopy of the license, or the carcass tag.

## **The “easy” way to field dress your animal**

More often than not, harvested animals must be cared for in remote areas far from roads. That requires hunters to pack out meat and antlers. To help lighten the load for hunters, Colorado Parks and Wildlife has produced two helpful videos that provide instructions on how to field dress an animal and how to bone-out meat.

Go to the CPW web site, enter “hunt videos” in the search window to view “How to Field Dress a Big Game Animal.”

Available on DVD is “Down to the Bone” which explains methods for deboning in the field. By removing the bones and other inedible portions of the animal, you can reduce the weight you carry out of the backcountry by more than 50 percent.

Order a copy of the DVD on line. Go to the CPW website click on the “Buy and Apply” link at the top of the home page and go to “Retail Products.”

## **Chronic Wasting Disease detected in SW Colorado**

CWD has been detected in deer in southwest Colorado. To determine if the disease is widespread CPW is requiring mandatory testing for all deer harvested in GMUs 61, 62, 64 and 65. Hunters will receive notification.

CWD is a neurological disease that can be found in deer, elk and moose. CPW provides optional CWD testing for \$25 through all area wildlife offices. To learn more about CWD and public health, go to <http://cpw.state.co.us/learn/Pages/ResearchCWD.aspx>, or call Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment at 1-303-692-2700.

### ***PRECAUTIONS***

- Do not shoot, handle or consume any animal that appears sick.
- Wear disposable rubber gloves when field dressing and processing.
- Bone out the meat from your animal.
- Minimize the handling of brain, spinal tissues, and viscera.
- Wash hands and instruments thoroughly after field dressing is completed.
- Avoid consuming brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils, pancreas and lymph nodes of harvested animals. Normal field dressing, coupled with boning out a carcass, will remove most, if not all, of these body parts.
- Do not consume meat from animals known to be infected with CWD.
- Knives, saws and cutting table surfaces can be disinfected by soaking in a solution of 50 percent unscented household bleach and 50 percent water for an hour. Afterward, rinse thoroughly and allow them to air dry.
- Submit harvested animals for testing at a CPW-CWD testing station.

# Managing Colorado's big game herds

To manage the state's big game populations, CPW uses a "management by objectives" approach. Big game populations are managed to achieve population and sex-ratio objectives established for Data Analysis Units (DAUs). Each DAU represents a geographically distinct big game herd.

Game management units are subsets of DAUs. The GMU groupings in this booklet are based on DAUs. However, because big game herds travel wide areas throughout the year, the population of each GMU cannot be estimated.

The DAU planning process incorporates public input, habitat capabilities, and herd considerations into management objectives for each of Colorado's big game herds. The general public, hunters, federal and state land management agencies, landowners and agricultural interests are involved in determining DAU plan objectives through questionnaires, public meetings, and by giving input to the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission. License numbers and season recommendations result from this process.

Each DAU plan establishes post-hunt herd objectives for the size and structure of the population. The DAU objectives then are compared with modeled population estimates. Model inputs include:

- Harvest estimates determined by hunter surveys.
- Post-hunt sex and age ratios determined by aerial classifications.
- Estimated wounding loss, illegal kill and survival rates based on field observations and studies.

The information is entered into a specialized computer program which then estimates the population size. The final step in the process is to calculate harvest recommendations that will align population estimates with the herd objectives.

## Using a Guide Service in Colorado

Here's what you need to know if you're planning to use a guide service for your hunt. Outfitters in Colorado must be licensed by the state Department of Regulatory Agencies (<http://www.dora.state.co.us>), and by the U.S. Forest Service or BLM if they operate on federal land. Ask guides for licensing information and check their records through the state and federal agencies. Ask for references for at least three other past clients. Before paying any money, require a contract that stipulates: types of services, dates of service, cost of service, lodging/camping/transportation arrangements, ratio of clients to guides, cancellation policy, and other items you believe are necessary. Guides who provide so called "finders fees" for locating animals also must be licensed. Using an unlicensed outfitter is illegal.

The Colorado Outfitters' Association requires members to be licensed, bonded and to adhere to a code of ethics. For information, [www.coloradooutfitters.org](http://www.coloradooutfitters.org), or call 1-970-824-2468.

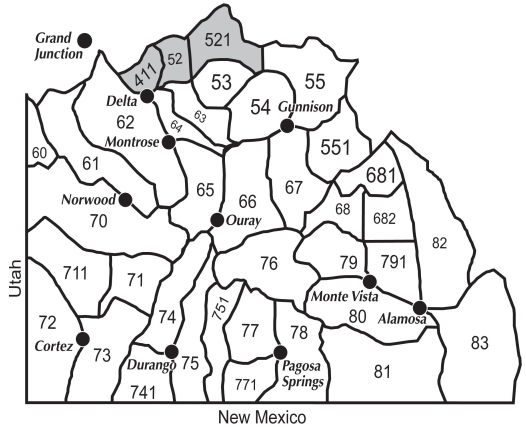


# Southwest Colorado Hunting Outlook

## South Grand Mesa

GMUs 411, 52, 521  
 Gunnison CPW: 970-641-7060  
 Maps: Grand Mesa and Gunnison  
 National Forest

The Grand Mesa is heavily forested and offers a wide variety of terrain: from the spruce, fir and aspen forests up to 11,000 feet, to the pinon-juniper woodlands at about 4,800 feet. Weather can vary as widely as the terrain. Motorized access is good but roads can become muddy. Hunters should obtain maps to avoid trespassing or unintentionally crossing private land. Respect motorized closures on public lands. Lower elevations are mainly private, especially in GMUs 411 and 52.



## MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE – BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!

### Deer hunting

The deer population in these units is stable and license numbers are unchanged from 2016. Deer are found on high-elevation public land and private land during October. Some deer stay in lower elevation agricultural lands year-round. In late October, deer generally migrate to lower elevation as the weather cools. During the later seasons many deer will be found on private land, so hunters should plan accordingly. Hunting in aspen and oak brush can be productive. Hunters should obtain land ownership maps of this area.

**Estimated deer population: 8.400**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 26 bucks per 100 does**

### 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	% Success
							2016 / 5 yr.
411	Archery	2	0	0	2	119	11 / 40
411	Muzzle	2	0	0	2	2	100 / 38
411	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	41	0	0	41	74	55 / 60
411	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	31	0	0	31	52	60 / 64
52	Archery	16	0	0	16	57	28 / 31
52	Muzzle	15	0	0	15	30	50 / 56
52	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	138	0	0	138	254	54 / 56
52	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	99	0	0	99	130	54 / 71
52	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	7	0	0	7	7	100 / 81
521	Archery	16	0	0	16	57	28 / 28
521	Muzzle	8	0	0	8	24	33 / 35
521	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	90	0	0	90	189	48 / 49
521	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	49	0	0	49	63	78 / 70

## Elk Hunting

Elk in these GMUs are part of the greater Grand Mesa management area that includes GMUs 41, 42 and 421 to the north. The herd is stable, well distributed and hunting is rated as good. Most elk will be at higher elevations during the seasons – above 8,500 feet in thick timber and oak brush. Distribution changes in relation to weather and hunting pressure; so hunters should be prepared to adapt to conditions.

Elk will generally move into more remote areas in response to pressure. Successful hunters generally stay well away from motorized access areas, especially in GMU 521. These units are managed for hunting opportunity, so most bulls are young. Hunting pressure is lowest during the limited first season.

**Estimated elk population (includes six GMUs): 14,500**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 24 bulls per 100 cows**

### 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
411	Archery	7	6	0	13	144	9 / 12
411	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	7	0 / 0
411	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	31	0	0	31	104	30 / 23
411	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	22	6	0	28	204	14 / 12
411	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	20	6	6	32	198	16 / 13
411	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	11	0	11	43	26 / 15
52	Archery	17	10	0	27	460	6 / 10
52	Muzzle	43	15	5	63	300	21 / 15
52	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	0	11	9	20	140	14 / 24
52	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	26	21	3	50	559	9 / 16
52	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	7	12	4	23	387	6 / 11
52	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	17	2	0	19	72	26 / 12
521	Archery	65	34	0	99	956	10 / 15
521	Muzzle	43	15	5	63	300	21 / 19
521	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	103	56	18	177	558	32 / 28
521	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	94	61	6	161	1326	12 / 23
521	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	22	46	15	83	601	14 / 21
521	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	20	3	23	237	10 / 26

# Safe Hunting is No Accident!

# Crawford-Fruitland Mesa

GMUs 53, 63

Gunnison CPW: 970-641-7060

Map: Gunnison National Forest

Winter weather is almost guaranteed during any season in this area which includes the high country of the West Elk Wilderness.

Altitude ranges from 5,400 feet near Hotchkiss

to more than 12,000 feet in the wilderness. The range in elevations and the topography create volatile weather at all times of year. These GMUs contain abundant public land: 90 percent of GMU 53, 60 percent of GMU 63. When snow falls, herds move quickly to lower elevations on the western ends of the units.

GMU 53 contains rough terrain and access is on rugged 4WD roads and foot/horse trails. Hunters should be prepared to hunt in difficult terrain. Packing an animal out in this area is challenging. Do not count on moving a vehicle close to the kill site. Access is easier for GMU 63; but be sure to study the map closely to avoid trespassing. West of Highway 92 most of the land is private. Motorized travel is limited to designated routes.

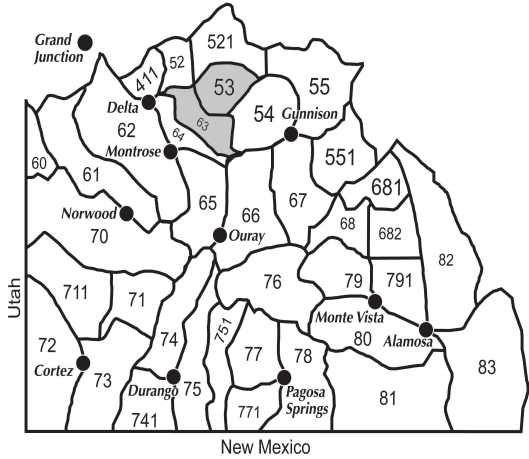
**MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE – BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!**

## Deer Hunting

The deer herds in GMU's 53 and 63 are currently stable. License numbers are holding steady at about 800. Deer are well distributed. As the season progresses and hunting pressure increases, deer move to lower elevations to the west in GMU 63 where private land is abundant. Hunting can still be good on public lands throughout GMU 63 if the weather is mild.

**Estimated deer population: 12,000**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 35 bucks per 100 does**



***Need information?***

***Call a hunt planner at 1-303-291-7526***

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
53	Archery	5	0	0	5	44	11 / 22
53	Muzzle	9	0	0	9	27	33 / 49
53	2 <sup>nd</sup> rifle	99	0	0	99	137	72 / 69
53	3 <sup>rd</sup> rifle	100	0	0	100	115	87 / 85
53	4 <sup>th</sup> rifle	10	0	0	10	10	100 / 88
63	Archery	30	0	0	30	48	63 / 52
63	Muzzle	8	0	0	8	21	38 / 69
63	2 <sup>nd</sup> rifle	84	0	0	84	119	71 / 68
63	3 <sup>rd</sup> rifle	98	0	0	98	122	80 / 76
63	4 <sup>th</sup> rifle	9	0	0	9	9	100 / 95

## Elk Hunting

The elk population in these units is growing and there are a good number of bulls. To help increase the herd size, the number of cow licenses has been reduced slightly.

If there is no snow, elk will likely be scattered throughout the high elevation landscape. Hunters will be most successful by walking along transition areas up high. By November, animals will start to move lower; hunters should be aware of private land and National Park boundaries, particularly in GMU 63 west of Highway 92. Expect heavy pressure in the Black Mesa area of GMU 63.

**Estimated elk population: 2,800**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 20 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

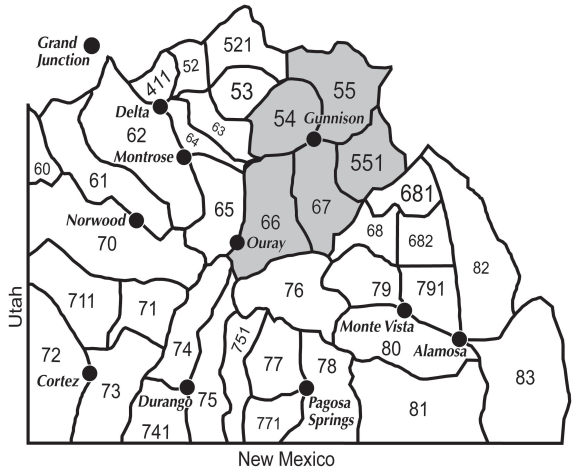
% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
53	Archery	61	27	10	98	779	13 / 15
53	Muzzle	10	4	2	16	152	11 / 20
53	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	51	43	8	102	395	26 / 26
53	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	75	25	0	100	444	23 / 24
53	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	15	29	0	44	316	14 / 14
53	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	4	7	4	15	105	14 / 23
63	Archery	7	13	3	23	265	9 / 15
63	Muzzle	69	13	0	22	83	27 / 22
63	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	16	29	3	48	151	32 / 33
63	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	40	2	4	46	326	14 / 17
63	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	21	10	5	36	200	18 / 17
63	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	5	15	0	20	71	28 / 30

# Gunnison Basin

GMUs 54, 55, 551, 66 and 67  
Gunnison CPW: 970-641-7060  
Map: Gunnison National Forest

Public land in the area is abundant and varied—from sage brush hills to alpine tundra. Be prepared for cold and snowy weather during all seasons. Motorized travel is limited to designated routes; please consult the current Motor Vehicle Use Maps available from the USFS and BLM.



Deer populations throughout the Gunnison Basin have been on a declining trend due to a tough winter in 2017 and because of several years of below average fawn survival. Elk populations have been reduced over that last 10 years and managers are currently evaluating and updating management plans.

## MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE – BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!

### Deer Hunting

Because of the difficult winter in 2017 and declining fawn survival during the past few years, deer licenses have been cut by 40-60 percent throughout the basin. But those who drew a license for any of these units will still see good numbers of deer and many mature bucks. Relatively few deer licenses are made available in these GMUs.

These units are managed for high buck-to-doe ratios. Success rates for those who draw a license are typically above the statewide average. The herd is distributed throughout the vast basin, so excellent deer hunting opportunities are found in all five game management units. However, deer in the northeast units, GMU's 55 and 551, were hit hardest by this winter's weather. Hunt higher ground during the early seasons and monitor weather conditions. Deer generally start moving to lower elevations in mid-to-late October.

**Estimated deer population: 13,000**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 47 bucks per 100 does**

**Report Hunting Violations to:  
Operation Game Thief 877-265-6648**

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
54	Archery	10	0	0	10	41	24 / 23
54	Muzzle	13	0	0	13	37	33 / 34
54	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	145	0	0	145	266	63 / 58
54	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	57	0	0	57	69	83 / 71
54	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	7	0	0	7	9	78 / 78
55	Archery	22	0	0	22	53	42 / 31
55	Muzzle	14	0	0	14	33	42 / 50
55	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	126	34	0	160	253	63 / 65
55	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	55	38	3	96	111	86 / 83
55	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	9	0	0	9	15	60 / 82
551	Archery	9	0	0	9	22	41 / 39
551	Muzzle	14	0	0	14	20	70 / 49
551	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	82	29	0	111	156	71 / 69
551	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	29	28	0	57	74	77 / 78
551	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	8	0	0	8	9	89 / 94
66	Archery	11	0	0	11	32	34 / 75
66	Muzzle	13	0	0	13	25	52 / 59
66	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	76	45	6	127	176	72 / 84
66	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	42	32	0	74	82	90 / 89
66	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	13	0	0	13	13	100 / 94
67	Archery	11	0	0	11	34	32 / 30
67	Muzzle	11	0	0	11	26	42 / 47
67	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	75	41	3	119	183	65 / 78
67	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	40	31	0	71	85	84 / 81
67	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	14	0	0	14	14	100 / 90

## Elk Hunting

Elk populations are stable to growing throughout the Gunnison Basin. In the northern units – 54, 55 and 551 – populations are now being managed for increased populations and license numbers have been reduced during the last couple of years. Aggressive herd reduction during the 2012 and 2013 seasons was implemented to address agricultural damage issues. This year the number of licenses for the archery season and first rifle season was reduced with the aim of keeping elk from moving to private land refuges.

The southern units – 66 and 67 – have seen some license reductions over the last few years in bull and cow licenses during the last few seasons. Based on new management plan objectives, CPW has again cut the number of cow licenses in these units with the aim of increasing the population by 18 percent. These licenses are totally limited and the area is

managed to maintain a low-density of hunters.

In all of these units, hunters are advised to be in good shape and to hunt well away from roads. Elk will move to difficult terrain when hunting pressure starts; so be prepared to hunt canyons or thick timber. If the weather is warm, hunt at higher elevations and in heavy timber.

**Estimated elk population: 15,000**

**3-year estimated sex ration: 22 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

**% Success**

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
54	Archery	34	12	0	46	319	14 / 15
54	Muzzle	9	3	0	12	123	10 / 11
54	Early	0	18	3	21	50	n/a
54	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	42	9	0	51	423	12 / 20
54	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	65	7	0	72	497	14 / 20
54	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	54	9	0	63	623	10 / 14
54	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	34	7	2	43	196	22 / 29
55	Archery	34	12	0	46	319	14 / 14
55	Muzzle	11	36	0	47	280	17 / 13
55	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	41	55	8	104	565	18 / 20
55	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	116	45	0	161	1322	12 / 14
55	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	36	20	6	62	1138	5 / 12
55	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	25	6	31	151	21 / 27
551	Archery	16	3	0	19	195	10 / 16
551	Muzzle	7	11	3	21	125	17 / 18
551	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	17	18	0	35	173	20 / 23
551	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	59	18	0	77	685	11 / 10
551	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	20	30	6	56	591	9 / 13
551	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	1	21	0	22	64	34 / 24
66	Archery	36	3	0	39	162	24 / 22
66	Muzzle	10	7	4	21	62	34 / 31
66	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	77	18	3	98	388	25 / 30
66	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	45	23	2	70	377	19 / 26
66	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	26	24	0	50	323	15 / 30
66	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	14	27	3	44	154	29 / 36
67	Archery	15	3	0	18	62	29 / 24
67	Muzzle	7	5	0	12	69	17 / 25
67	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	44	24	0	68	366	19 / 23
67	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	21	3	0	24	370	6 / 15
67	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	7	46	11	64	332	19 / 26
67	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	9	27	7	43	243	18 / 30

# San Luis Valley Area

Monte Vista CPW: 719-587-6900

Map: Rio Grande National Forest

GMUs - 76,79, 68, 681, 682, 791, 80, 81, 82, 83

The San Luis Valley is a vast 8,000-square-mile area that provides a wide variety of terrain at elevations that range from 7,500 feet to 14,000 feet. The rugged Sangre de Cristo Mountains define the valley's east side. The middle of the valley is flat farm land that is privately owned. The Rio Grande and the Conejos River provide long riparian areas that cut through high-elevation alpine forests to lower elevation cottonwood and willow stands. The west is bordered by the Rio Grande National Forest and the San Juan mountain range.

Throughout the area, access varies from moderate to very difficult. Hunting can be good for those willing to go into tough terrain. Hunting is also challenging because animals in many areas can move quickly to large areas of private or federal land.

Deer hunting in the San Luis Valley has been improving recently due to the limit on buck licenses. Success rates are high for hunters who draw a buck tag. Due to overall low deer population, doe hunting is allowed only on private land in specific areas to address game damage issues.

GMU 68 buck licenses can also be used in GMU 681 and 682; GMU 79 buck licenses can also be used in GMU 791. Private Land Only doe tags are available for GMU 79 and 791, mainly for game damage issues.

Elk hunting is good but requires hunters to pursue animals in challenging terrain. Overall success rates for elk hunters in unlimited units in the San Luis Valley are generally lower than the statewide average.

Weather is a dominant factor for hunters. Snow will cause herds to move down quickly from high elevation. Success for elk hunters in the later seasons increases with winter weather. However, small amounts of snow can make travel difficult. Hunters are urged to check weather conditions regularly.

You must have permission to hunt on private land. Trespassing is a significant issue in the valley.

## **North Valley Floor Special Elk Units (GMUs 682, 791)**

A special management area north of Highway 160 was created in 2006 to address the growing elk population which could cause damage on high-value agricultural lands. The population objective in that area is 0 – the only such designation in the state. Bulls are hunted May 15-Dec. 31 on private property. All licenses are distributed through landowner vouchers. Hunters must get permission from the landowner to hunt on private land. Contact the Monte Vista office for information, 719-587-6900.

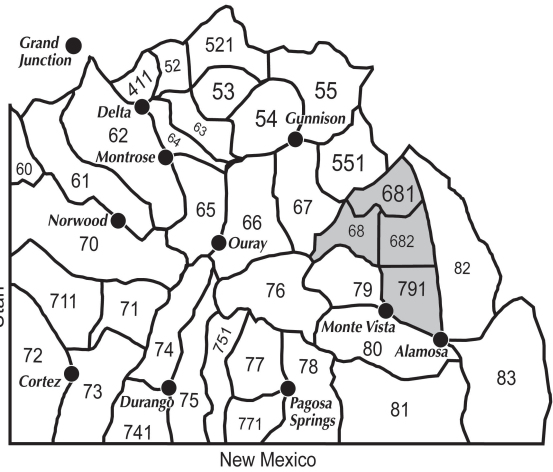


# Saguache

GMUs – 68, 681, 682, 791  
 Monte Vista CPW: 719-587-6900

Map: Rio Grande Nat. Forest

The area is dominated by public lands and hunting access is excellent. Vegetation types range from heavy timber to vast areas of grass and low shrubs. Public lands dominate GMUs 68 and 681. These units hold good summer and winter habitat.



**MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE -- BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!**

## Deer Hunting

The deer population is growing slowly, but because of the high elevation of the valley and lack of abundant winter range, the population will never grow substantially above the current level. But this herd is healthy and nearly at objective. The buck-to-doe ratio is high for this area, so older age-class quality bucks can be found.

**Estimated deer population: 5,070**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 27 bucks per 100 does**

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
68	Archery	12	0	0	12	33	36 / 16
68	Muzzle	10	0	0	10	47	21 / 25
68	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	35	0	0	35	83	42 / 50
68	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	58	0	0	58	112	52 / 56
68	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	2	0	0	2	11	18 / 32
681	Archery	6	0	0	6	30	20 / 21
681	Muzzle	17	0	0	17	44	39 / 44
681	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	86	0	0	86	116	74 / 72
681	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	61	0	0	61	93	66 / 67
681	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	12	0	0	12	12	100 / 69
682	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	0	0	0	0	2	0 / 40
682	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	0	0	0	2	0	0 / 31
791	Archery	0	0	0	0	2	0 / 0
791	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	2	0 / 13
791	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	5	0	0	5	5	100 / 60

## Elk Hunting

Population of elk in these units is well below objective but is growing slowly. License numbers were not changed for 2017. Hunter success rates are lower than most other parts of the state because it is challenging to find these animals. Elk move to refuge areas on private and public land when they face hunting pressure. Hunters willing to go into tough terrain can be rewarded.

**Estimated elk population: 3,400**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 20 bulls per 100 cows.**

### 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

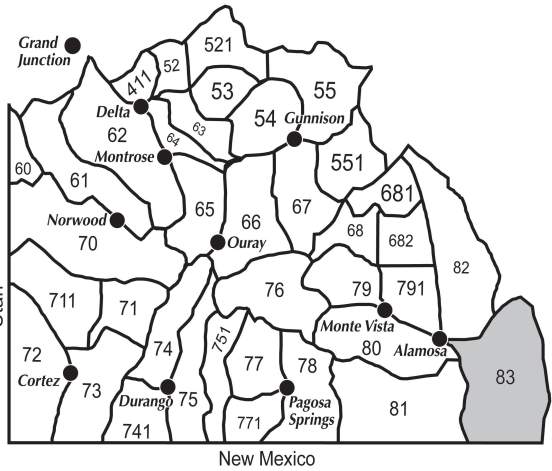
% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
68	Archery	20	0	0	20	328	6 / 9
68	Muzzle	6	6	0	12	123	10 / 9
68	1st Rifle	42	0	0	42	266	16 / 16
68	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	18	17	2	37	579	6 / 6
68	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	24	11	0	35	579	6 / 6
68	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	8	0	0	8	196	4 / 22
681	Archery	20	0	0	20	344	6 / 7
681	Muzzle	3	2	0	0	3	0 / 7
681	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	12	0	0	12	99	12 / 15
681	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	14	9	0	23	397	6 / 7
681	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	15	2	0	17	348	5 / 5
681	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	0	0	0	89	0 / 20
682	Archery	0	0	0	0	3	0 / 22
682	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	3	0 / 0
791	Archery	0	0	0	0	7	0 / 20
791	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	1	0 / 0

# Safe Hunting is No Accident!

# Costilla

GMU 83  
 Monte Vista CPW:  
 719-587-6900  
 Map: Rio Grande  
 National Forest



This entire GMU is private land. Hunters must obtain permission from land – including in subdivisions where landowners may not be present. Trespassing is a major issue in this area.

The unit is dominated by the Trinchera Ranch. The ranch is enrolled in the Ranching for Wildlife program. Deer and elk hunting on the ranch are excellent. For information about hunting on the ranch, see the 2016 Colorado Big Game Brochure or go to the CPW web site and type “Ranching for Wildlife” into the search bar.

## Deer Hunting

The herd is stable but slightly below the population objective. The buck-to-doe ratio is higher than most units in the southwest region.

**Estimated deer population: 1,572**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 46 bucks per 100 does**

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	% Success
							2016 / 5 yr.
83	Archery	5	0	0	5	7	71 / 77
83	Muzzle	8	0	0	8	8	100 / 93
83	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	28	0	0	28	30	93 / 87
83	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	23	0	0	23	26	88 / 93
83	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	5	0	0	0	5	100 / 72

**Report Hunting Violations to:  
 Operation Game Thief  
 1-877-265-6648**

## Elk Hunting

The population estimate for this herd is 16,000 and includes GMUS 85, 851 and 140 on the east side of the Sangre de Cristo range. There is no population estimate for GMU 83 only, although the population appears to be trending down on the west side of the range. An either-sex tag for this Ranching for Wildlife area requires a minimum of 14 preference points.

## 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	% Success
							2016 / 5 yr.
83	Archery	17	14	0	31	268	12 / 12
83	Muzzle	3	2	0	5	52	10 / 6
83	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	16	8	0	24	64	38 / 36
83	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	37	18	3	58	313	19 / 17
83	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	43	26	7	76	544	14 / 20
83	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	12	10	0	22	82	27 / 45

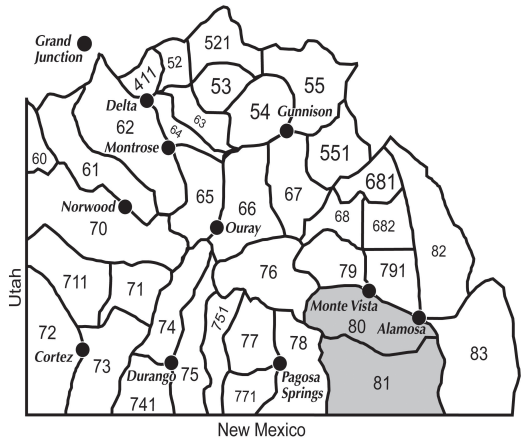
## Lower Rio Grande

GMUs – 80, 81

Monte Vista CPW: 719-587-6900

Map: Rio Grande National Forest

This area has a large amount of public land, easy access via roads and, consequently, heavy hunting pressure. Elk and deer move to areas of rough terrain hidden from roads when the season starts. Hunters who want to get far away from vehicle traffic can go to the South San Juan Wilderness Area located in the southern portion of GMU 81. Hunting quality is good, especially in early seasons before winter weather pushes animals out.



## Deer Hunting

The population is increasing and the buck-to-doe ratio is favorable. Those who are willing to pass up younger bucks should be able to find a more mature buck to harvest. Deer are found throughout both units. This unit is gaining popularity with deer hunters.

**Estimated deer population: 5,550**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 22 bucks per 100 does**

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
80	Archery	7	0	0	7	97	7 / 22
80	Muzzle	23	0	0	23	74	31 / 31
80	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	81	0	0	81	177	46 / 48
80	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	66	0	0	66	142	46 / 52
80	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	22	0	0	22	31	71 / 63
81	Archery	16	0	0	16	116	14 / 20
81	Muzzle	11	0	0	11	70	16 / 28
81	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	36	0	0	36	110	33 / 47
81	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	47	0	0	47	140	23 / 42
81	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	2	0	0	2	11	18 / 40

## Elk Hunting

This population continues to grow and is over objective by 3,000 animals. Big-game managers are now evaluating the management objectives. Bull harvest has been strong in these units during the last few seasons, and the same is expected for this year. Cow harvest is low so this population is expected to continue growing for the foreseeable future. These units get significant hunting pressure, so elk can be difficult to find. Hunters who work hard to get away from roads and into thick timber and challenging terrain have the best chance of filling their tags.

**Estimated elk population: 10,000**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 15 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
80	Archery	161	41	6	108	1031	10 / 12
80	Muzzle	10	16	0	26	125	21 / 16
80	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	30	0	0	30	425	7 / 19
80	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	84	0	0	84	879	10 / 11
80	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	47	0	0	47	533	9 / 7
80	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	30	0	30	225	13 / 19
81	Archery	85	58	0	143	1392	10 / 15
81	Muzzle	10	16	0	26	91	29 / 23
81	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	57	0	0	57	368	15 / 25
81	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	92	0	0	92	927	10 / 12
81	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	35	0	0	35	593	6 / 8
81	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	4	43	16	63	212	30 / 15

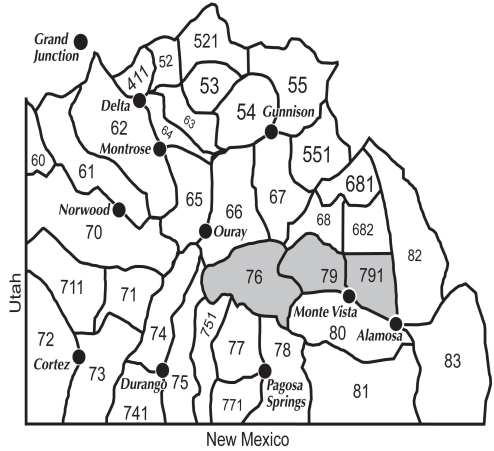
# Upper Rio Grande

GMUs – 76, 79, 791

Monte Vista CPW: 719-587-6900

Map: Rio Grande National Forest

GMU 76 has the highest percentage of public lands in the San Luis Valley; and also includes portions of wilderness areas for hunters who want to pack in. While GMU 79 contains some private land, there is plenty of room for hunters to roam on public land in this unit. GMU 791 is entirely private land.



## Deer Hunting

The deer population is healthy and the buck-to-doe ratio is higher than the state average, so it is possible to find mature bucks. GMU 79 has important winter range and holds deer and elk in the late seasons, depending on the snow accumulations.

GMU 76 is primarily summer range for deer, very few animals winter there. Mature bucks can be found in these units.

**Estimated deer population: 2,330**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 29 bucks per 100 does**

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

							% Success
GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
76	Archery	13	0	0	13	16	81 / 30
76	Muzzle	13	0	0	13	15	87 / 60
76	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	14	0	0	14	23	61 / 59
76	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	10	0	0	10	20-	50 / 48
79	Archery	2	0	0	2	8	25 / 20
79	Muzzle	10	0	0	10	15	67 / 34
79	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	52	0	0	52	75	69 / 58
79	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	49	0	0	49	77	55 / 66
79	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	10	0	0	10	10	100 / 85

## Elk Hunting

Habitat is excellent and the elk population is stable. Population is within the objective range and older bulls have been observed thanks to excellent forage conditions over the last few years. The West Fork fire of 2013

continues to provide long-term habitat benefits for this population. GMU 79 is primarily winter range for elk and success is highly dependent on snow pushing animals into the area.

These units are totally limited for elk hunting. GMU 79, however, can be hunted with a general elk license during archery season. GMU 76 offers great bull hunting for those willing to wait to draw a license. The unit, however, doesn't produce trophy-quality animals that are found in other limited units in Colorado.

**Estimated elk population: 5,200**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 30 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
76	Archery	55	0	0	55	153	36 / 38
76	Muzzle	34	4	2	38	81	47 / 46
76	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	994	0	0	94	186	51 / 46
76	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	25	56	0	81	251	32 / 28
76	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	12	30	6	48	188	26 / 30
76	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	12	0	12	168	7 / 29
79	Archery	7	0	0	7	158	4 / 5
79	Muzzle	2	0	0	2	35	6 / 8
79	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	7	4	0	11	171	6 / 7
79	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	8	6	0	14	180	8 / 7
79	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	12	0	0	12	146	8 / 7
79	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	2	0	2	57	4 / 10

## Sand Dunes

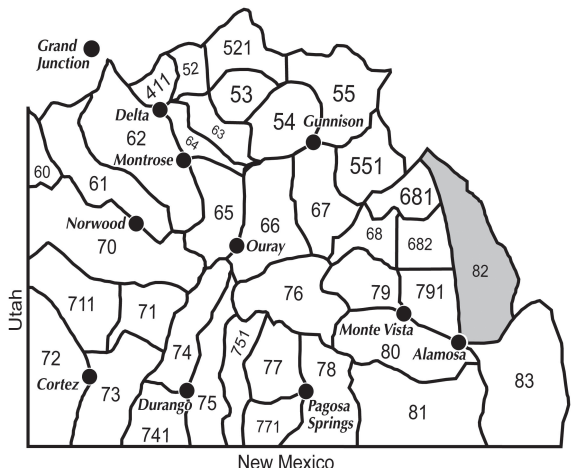
GMU 82

Monte Vista CPW

719-587-6900

Map: Rio Grande N.F.

Hunting is prohibited in Great Sand Dunes National Park and the Baca National Wildlife Refuge which are located within this unit. National forest and national park preserve, where hunting is allowed, abuts the park and refuge so when hunting pressure starts deer and elk move down quickly to the safe havens. There is also private land with residential development



in the northern half of the unit so be sure to know what's behind your target.

Hunters are allowed to pass through the national park to hunting areas, but some restrictions apply. Call the National Park Service at 1-719-378-6399, or go to the web site, [www.nps.gov/grsa](http://www.nps.gov/grsa) for information.

Much of the Sangre de Cristo mountain range is U.S. Forest Service wilderness. This range is extremely rugged and road access is limited. It is accessible mainly by foot or horseback. Hunters should be in good shape if they plan to hunt here.

## Deer Hunting

The population is stable and offers a high buck-to-doe ratio. Hunter success is good for those who draw a license. A limited number of licenses are issued for this area -- only about 400 licenses are issued for all seasons.

**Estimated deer population: 2,300**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 24 bucks to 100 does**

### 2016 Deer Hunting Statistics

**% Success**

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
82	Archery	8	0	0	8	30	27 / 18
82	Muzzle	12	0	0	12	42	29 / 35
82	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	49	0	0	49	125	39 / 55
82	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	54	0	0	54	92	59 / 61
82	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	3	0	0	3	5	60 / 88

## Elk Hunting

Even though there are high-density concentrations of elk in portions of this area, once the seasons start the animals quickly move to places where hunting is prohibited – federal wildlife refuges and the national park. When hunting in this area be sure to know the federal boundary locations. Access is good in the northern portion of GMU 82, but hunting can be poor because animals quickly move south when hunters arrive.

**Estimated elk population: 5,600**

**3-year sex ratio average: 45 bulls to 100 cows**

### 2016 Elk Hunting Statistics

**% Success**

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
82	Archery	37	7	0	44	464	9 / 9
82	Muzzle	26	0	0	26	91	29 / 17
82	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	27	29	8	64	255	25 / 19
82	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	66	18	0	84	505	17 / 13
82	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	32	32	5	69	492	14 / 11
82	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	11	11	3	25	98	26 / 20



# Dolores – Dry Creek

GMUs 70, 71, 711, 72, 73  
Montrose CPW 970-252-6000,  
Durango CPW: 970-247-0855  
Maps: GMUs 70, 71, 711, 72,  
73 – San Juan National Forest;  
GMU 70 - Uncompahgre National  
Forest

This area covers a 2,800-square-mile landscape from the west side of the Uncompahgre Plateau to the Utah state line and south to the New Mexico border. Habitat throughout these GMUs is favorable for big game. With altitudes from 5,000 feet to more than 12,000 feet, the vegetation ranges from desert shrubs to alpine tundra. Weather can change quickly, so be prepared for all conditions. There is good vehicle access in these areas; consequently, hunting pressure can be heavy in areas of easily accessible public land. An exception is the Lizard Head Wilderness Area, GMU 71, which is accessible by foot and horseback only.

Be aware of private land in the northern sections of GMUs 71 and 711, and in the southern section of GMU 70. The southern half of units 72 and 73 is tribal land. Hunting by non-tribal members is prohibited. Hunting is also prohibited at Mesa Verde National Park.

**MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE -- BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!**

## Deer Hunting

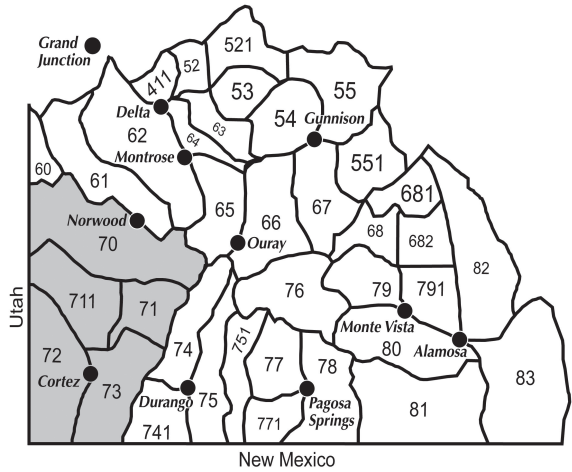
The deer population, after several years of decline, has bounced back and is growing again. In the northern units, the buck-to-do ratio is high so more buck licenses were allotted for 2017.

In the early seasons, deer are evenly distributed, mostly above 8,000 feet. Deer begin migrating to lower elevations, generally from east to west, in mid-October. Snow will cause them to move to lower elevations earlier. Deer concentrate on winter ranges in Dry Creek Basin, Disappointment Valley and along the rim of the Dolores River canyon. GMU 70 in Dry Creek Basin is recommended in the third and fourth seasons.

**Estimated deer population: 23,000 (includes all five GMUs)**

**3-year average sex ratio: 30 bucks per 100 does (GMUs 70, 71, 711)**

**3-year average sex ratio: 28 bucks per 100 does (GMUs 72 and 73)**



## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
70	Archery	8	0	0	8	108	7 / 20
70	Muzzle	19	0	0	19	65	29 / 31
70	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	270	8	0	278	503	55 / 62
70	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	339	9	2	350	521	67 / 65
70	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	19	0	0	19	37	51 / 67
71	Archery	23	0	0	23	93	25 / 25
71	Muzzle	11	0	0	11	40	28 / 27
71	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	99	0	0	99	201	49 / 35
71	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	65	0	0	65	225	29 / 35
71	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	6	0	0	6	14	43 / 39
711	Archery	10	0	0	10	46	25 / 22
711	Muzzle	7	0	0	7	19	37 / 33
711	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	121	0	0	121	172	70 / 58
711	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	169	0	0	169	315	54 / 55
711	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	15	0	0	15	27	56 / 52
72	Archery	20	0	0	20	52	22 / 27
72	Muzzle	23	0	0	23	36	64 / 48
72	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	121	0	0	121	172	70 / 65
72	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	119	0	0	119	214	56 / 58
72	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	28	0	0	28	32	88 / 60
73	Archery	21	0	0	21	47	45 / 46
73	Muzzle	15	0	0	15	46	33 / 43
73	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	90	0	0	90	129	70 / 58
73	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	124	0	0	124	201	62 / 59
73	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	9	0	0	9	20	45 / 52

## Elk Hunting

The elk population is holding steady, but calf recruitment is very low and big-game managers are working to determine the reasons. If you hold a cow tag be sure you're hunting in the correct GMU. Animals are distributed widely throughout the eastern portion of these units. Generally, GMU 71 is better early in the season, but will hold elk on south-facing slopes during the later seasons. GMU 711 becomes better as the season progresses. Elk will move quickly into thick aspen, evergreens and rugged terrain with hunting pressure. Hunt the edges of timbered areas slowly at first light and at sundown when elk are most active. There are many young bulls in this unit so be careful not to shoot a spike. Hunt away from roads and OHV trails for the best chance of success.

**Estimated elk population: 19,200**  
**3-year average sex ratio: 16 bulls per 100 cows**

**2016 Elk Harvest Statistics**

**% Success**

<b>GMU</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Bulls</b>	<b>Cows</b>	<b>Fawns</b>	<b>Harvest</b>	<b>Hunters</b>	<b>2016 / 5 yr.</b>
70	Archery	82	31	0	113	752	15 / 19
70	Muzzle	26	24	3	53	263	20 / 21
70	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	154	60	9	223	518	43/ 46
70	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	118	107	26	251	1135	22 / 29
70	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	64	80	8	152	1127	13 / 23
70	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	5	75	7	87	354	25 / 37
71	Archery	61	37	98	1049	1027	15 / 16
71	Muzzle	17	34	3	54	279	19 / 17
71	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	79	62	0	141	524	27 / 27
71	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	116	33	0	149	850	18 / 17
71	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	41	11	3	55	928	5 / 12
71	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	1	16	3	20	57	35 / 25
711	Archery	38	10	0	48	306	16 / 13
711	Muzzle	3	10	0	13	76	17 / 21
711	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	23	32	0	55	222	25 / 29
711	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	50	11	2	63	441	14 / 15
711	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	27	23	0	50	928	5 / 11
711	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	12	32	0	44	209	21 / 37
72	Archery	13	0	0	13	173	8 / 13
72	Muzzle	4	0	0	4	28	14 / 14
72	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	13	0	0	13	48	27 / 27
72	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	11	0	0	11	147	7 / 12
72	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	13	0	0	13	154	8 / 12
72	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	2	3	5	31	16 / 21
73	Archery	24	10	0	34	327	10 / 14
73	Muzzle	3	0	0	3	42	7 / 20
73	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	23	11	0	34	137	25 / 28
73	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	18	4	0	22	212	10 / 13
73	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	0	3	0	3	222	1 / 10
73	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	3	3	0	6	41	15 / 40

**See a wildlife crime? Call Operation Game Thief**

**1-877-265-6648**

# Hermosa

GMUs 74, 741

Durango CPW: (970)247-0855

Map: San Juan National Forest

Elevations range from about 6,000 feet near the New Mexico border to well over 12,000 feet near Silverton. An abundance of vegetation provides good summer range, but winter range on the south is declining because of development. Public land is abundant in GMU 74 with much of it quite remote. Expect hunting pressure where road access is good.

Most of the land in GMU 741 is private or part of the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. Only members of the tribe can hunt on the reservation.

No hunting is allowed around Nighthorse Reservoir which is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation. Hunting is allowed on the 3,000 acres owned by CPW in the adjacent Bodo State Wildlife Area.

**MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE – BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!**

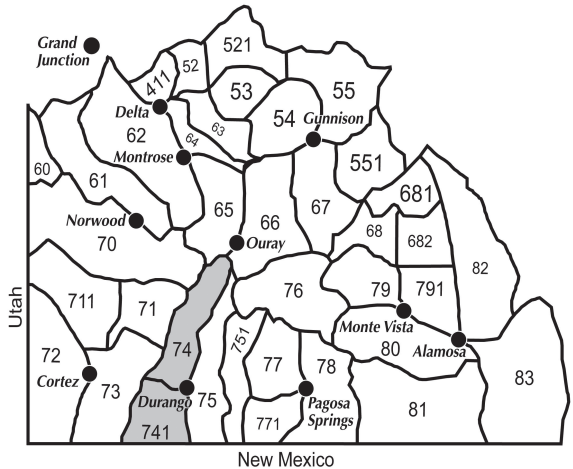
## Deer Hunting

This population is holding steady, and the buck-to-doe ratio is high, so it is possible to find quality bucks. In October, deer move from summer range at high elevations in the north to southern winter range.

In the early seasons deer hunting can be good near timberline. As deer begin to move to winter range they can be more difficult to find. Look for timbered areas with a good mix of open meadows or undergrowth. Deer will head to winter range, usually 8,500 feet and below, during the third rifle season in a typical year. The lower portions of Junction Creek and areas further south can provide good deer hunting in the later seasons.

**Estimated deer population: 4,600**

**3-year average sex ratio: 33 bucks per 100 does**



# Safe Hunting is No Accident!

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
74	Archery	25	0	0	25	102	25 / 30
74	Muzzle	40	0	0	40	99	40 / 39
74	Early	9	0	0	9	13	69 / 76
74	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	38	0	0	38	195	19 / 31
74	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	39	0	0	39	116	34 / 30
74	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	10	0	0	10	44	23 / 33
741	Archery	15	4	0	19	52	37 / 35
741	Muzzle	13	1	0	14	32	44 / 49
741	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	96	24	2	122	165	74 / 63
741	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	127	12	0	139	219	63 / 64
741	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	37	18	0	55	68	81 / 74

## Elk Hunting

The elk herd is at the low end of the population objective and calf recruitment is well below average. CPW is working to increase the population and has reduced cow harvest in this unit over the past several years and again this year. Most elk in GMU 74 are at higher elevation areas until snow accumulation pushes them down. Hunters willing to go into rugged terrain could be rewarded. Consider hunting near Engineer Mountain, in the Hermosa Creek drainage west of the Purgatory ski resort and up Junction Creek northwest of Durango. Finding bulls is tough. They have survived by knowing how to avoid hunters. Concentrate on rugged terrain away from other hunters. Weather often dictates the success rate in this area

**Estimated elk population: 5,000**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 19 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
74	Archery	79	34	3	116	853	14 / 13
74	Muzzle	14	11	2	27	112	24 / 16
74	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	69	31	7	107	297	36/ 28
74	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	58	22	0	80	555	14 / 17
74	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	27	5	0	32	314	10 / 16
74	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	4	4	0	8	69	12 / 14
741	Archery	3	10	0	13	75	17 / 17
741	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	2	N/A
741	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	9	2	0	11	32	34 / 28
741	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	9	0	2	11	84	13 / 20
741	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	17	0	0	17	101	17 / 13
741	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	3	0	3	28	11 / 9

# San Juan Basin

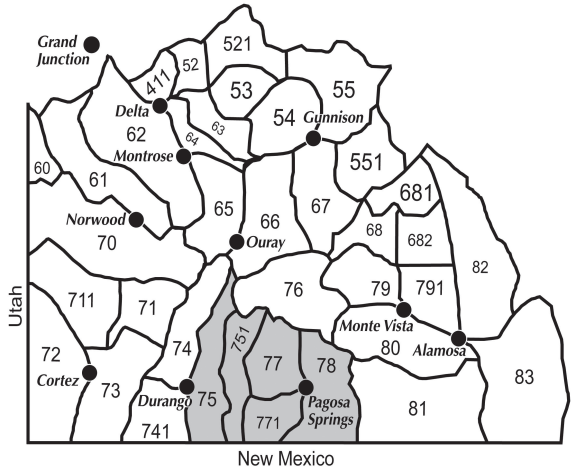
GMUs 75, 77, 78, 751, 771

Durango CPW: 970-247-0855

Map: San Juan National Forest

Public land and road access is good at mid- to high elevations in these units which lie between Durango and Wolf Creek Pass. Elevations range from about 6,500 feet to more than 12,000 feet. Weather can change quickly and be severe.

If the weather is warm, animals will be scattered widely in the vast alpine terrain. Hunters should concentrate their efforts away from roads. Two wilderness areas – the Weminuche on the north, and the South San Juan in the southeast corner – offer good back-country hunting opportunities. If you're hunting the backcountry during earlier seasons, get a harvested animal out and into a cooler quickly. Temperatures in early seasons are often in the 70s and meat will start to spoil within a day. South of U.S. Highway 160 much of the land is privately owned or part of the Southern Ute Indian Reservation. To access pockets of public land within the Southern Ute boundaries you MUST obtain a crossing permit (\$25) from the tribe. Call (970)563-0125 for information. Hunting is not allowed on tribal lands.



## MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE – BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET!

### Deer Hunting

After a few years of cutting licenses the population is growing. License numbers were increased in 2016 and will hold at those levels this season. Deer hunting will be excellent in all GMUs and hunters should be able to find bucks. The areas with the best deer hunting on public lands are: the HD Mountains, the Piedra River, Florida River and Los Pinos drainages, and lands southeast of Pagosa Springs. A large percentage of the deer in these units initiate north-to-south migration in mid-October. After the first week of November deer are typically on winter range. Much of the winter range occupied by this herd is on private land or tribal property.

**Estimated deer population: 22,550**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 34 bucks per 100 does**

# 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
75	Archery	41	25	0	66	170	39 / 32
75	Muzzle	51	1	0	52	115	45 / 42
75	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	155	4	0	159	302	53 / 52
75	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	129	3	0	132	253	52 / 62
75	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	84	4	0	88	113	78 / 65
751	Archery	6	6	8	20	83	24 / 30
751	Muzzle	31	1	0	14	32	41 / 38
751	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	121	5	0	124	250	50 / 46
751	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	108	4	0	112	193	58 / 41
751	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	26	2	0	28	46	61 / 63
77	Archery	39	12	0	51	119	43 / 33
77	Muzzle	28	2	0	30	114	26 / 30
77	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	188	3	0	191	441	43 / 45
77	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	130	0	0	130	287	45 / 47
77	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	54	0	0	54	65	83 / 69
771	Archery	9	5	0	14	31	45 / 26
771	Muzzle	10	0	0	10	39	26 / 38
771	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	65	0	0	65	103	63 / 46
771	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	151	0	0	151	188	80 / 53
771	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	52	0	1	53	69	77 / 70
78	Archery	10	19	0	29	92	32 / 35
78	Muzzle	48	2	0	50	119	42 / 38
78	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	204	0	0	204	345	59 / 51
78	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	83	1	0	84	223	38 / 41
78	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	38	1	0	39	57	77 / 64

## Elk Hunting

Even though cow licenses have been reduced in the last few years, this herd is not growing and license numbers have been reduced by about 10 percent for last year. Hunters must be prepared to walk into remote and heavily-forested areas to find animals. Do not expect to see elk from roads or areas open to OHV use. In the early seasons stick to north facing slopes in the spruce/fir and aspen forests. Elk will move lower when snow accumulation is significant. In late seasons, ponderosa pine forests and oak brush are usually productive.

The wilderness area boundary north of Pagosa Springs often holds elk when snow pushes them down. Areas south of Pagosa Springs and east of Highway 84 can provide good hunting as snow begins to accumulate. Access is provided by the Mill Creek Road (FS Rd 302), Rio Blanco Road (FS Rd 657) and Buckles Lake Road (FS Rd 663). Hunters who don't mind working in rough country can be successful in the hills on either side

of the Piedra River north of Highway 160. The Missionary Ridge Road (FS Rd 682) and Beaver Meadows Road (FS Rd 135) provide access into good elk country in GMUs 75 and 751 as does the Mosca Road (FS Rd 631) and FS Road 634 in GMU 77.

**Estimated elk population: 19,00**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 14 bulls per 100 cows**

**2016 Elk Harvest Statistics**

**% Success**

<b>GMU</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Bulls</b>	<b>Cows</b>	<b>Fawns</b>	<b>Harvest</b>	<b>Hunters</b>	<b>2016 / 5 yr.</b>
75	Archery	27	3	0	30	508	6 / 10
75	Muzzle	11	10	0	21	81	26 / 14
75	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	48	14	13	75	420	18 / 22
75	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	26	9	0	35	371	9 / 18
75	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	88	34	3	125	474	26 / 17
75	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	6	14	0	28	105	19 / 25
751	Archery	31	6	0	37	364	10 / 12
751	Muzzle	4	3	0	7	48	15 / 6
751	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	42	29	0	71	205	35 / 28
751	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	18	0	2	20	203	10 / 14
751	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	35	29	0	64	330	19 / 20
751	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	3	0	0	3	69	4 / 19
77	Archery	24	21	3	48	632	8 / 13
77	Muzzle	10	7	0	17	118	14 / 12
77	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	85	27	7	119	365	33 / 30
77	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	91	12	3	106	796	13 / 16
77	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	103	8	2	113	886	13 / 14
77	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	12	6	0	18	92	20 / 26
771	Archery	3	0	0	3	99	3 / 10
771	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	14	0 / 0
771	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	0	19	0	19	43	44 / 31
771	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	7	7	0	14	143	10 / 14
771	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	35	0	0	35	278	13 / 12
771	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	0	0	0	18	0 / 12
78	Archery	78	37	0	116	926	13 / 16
78	Muzzle	8	8	0	16	79	20 / 14
78	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	54	82	0	136	344	40 / 35
78	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	87	8	4	99	713	14 / 16
78	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	79	6	0	85	727	12 / 15
78	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	16	14	0	30	68	44 / 31



# Uncompahgre Plateau

GMUs 61, 62

CPW Montrose: 970-252-6000

Map: Uncompahgre National Forest

The plateau encompasses 2,300 square miles of terrain that includes large, relatively flat mesas bisected by deep, rugged canyons. The elevation ranges from 4,600 feet to 10,300 feet. Be prepared for sudden weather changes.

Numerous roads provide easy access to the plateau, but many canyons are accessible only by foot or horseback. Bow hunters and muzzleloaders should concentrate on U.S. Forest Service lands along the top of the plateau. The highest success rate for bull hunters occurs in GMU 62 during first season. License reductions in GMU 62 the last few years

have decreased hunting pressure significantly. GMU 61 is managed as a quality elk unit and licenses are totally limited. Overall, these units provide hunters a wide variety of terrain and good opportunity.

Chronic Wasting Disease in deer has been detected in these units. CPW is mandating testing for all deer harvested in 61, 62, 64, and 65.

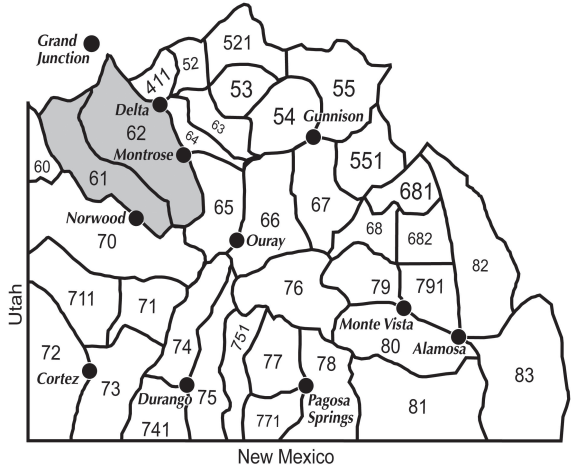
## Deer Hunting

After a significant population decline from about 2007 to 2012, the deer population in these units has stabilized and appears to be growing moderately, but is still far below objective. Mild winters during the past few years have helped to promote strong doe and fawn survival. Good moisture during the past couple of summers and last spring also helped to reduce the effects of prolonged drought. The number of buck tags was increased by about 10 percent this year.

To help bolster the population, license allocation still remains very conservative at 1,530. The opportunity to see mature bucks is good throughout the plateau. During the early season deer are concentrated in the aspen and oak brush. As fall progresses, deer will move lower into the pinon and juniper winter range.

**Estimated deer population: 18,600**

**3-Year estimate sex ratio: 31 bucks per 100 does**



## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
61	Archery	12	0	0	12	46	26 / 38
61	Muzzle	5	0	0	5	14	36 / 39
61	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	46	0	0	46	111	41 / 50
61	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	64	0	0	64	109	59 / 60
62	Archery	46	0	0	46	167	28 / 26
62	Muzzle	16	0	0	16	30	53 / 45
62	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	222	33	4	259	442	58 / 55
62	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	241	20	0	261	371	70 / 70

## Elk Hunting

The elk population has been declining during the last few year and antlerless licenses have been reduced for the last few years, including a 10 percent cut this year. Biologists hope the move will stabilize the populations. Elk are widely distributed. License reductions has helped reduces hunting pressure so elk are not being forced from GMU 62, an over-the-counter unit, to GMU 61, a limited unit. Elk move into canyons and private property with hunting pressure. To minimize crowding, some licenses in GMU 61 have been shifted to later seasons. It's still recommended that hunters start at high elevation, especially in the early seasons. But those who venture into the tough canyon terrain could be rewarded. Be sure to stay on public lands in the canyon areas. Hunters should also move well away from roads to improve chances of success. If your tag is for GMU 62 be sure that you are hunting on the northeast side of the Divide Road.

**Estimated elk population: 8,600**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 18 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
61	Archery	33	2	0	35	83	42 / 44
61	Muzzle	25	17	2	44	79	56 / 53
61	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	95	34	3	132	178	74 / 58
61	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	44	95	3	142	261	34 / 47
61	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	27	83	2	112	237	47 / 48
61	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	11	98	6	115	225	51 / 52
62	Archery	157	75	10	242	1799	13 / 14
62	Muzzle	20	10	0	30	178	17 / 15
62	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	101	33	3	137	412	33 / 27
62	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	142	64	6	212	1611	13 / 15
62	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	62	62	2	112	237	47 / 15
62	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	13	61	2	76	185	41 / 27

# Cimarron River Drainage

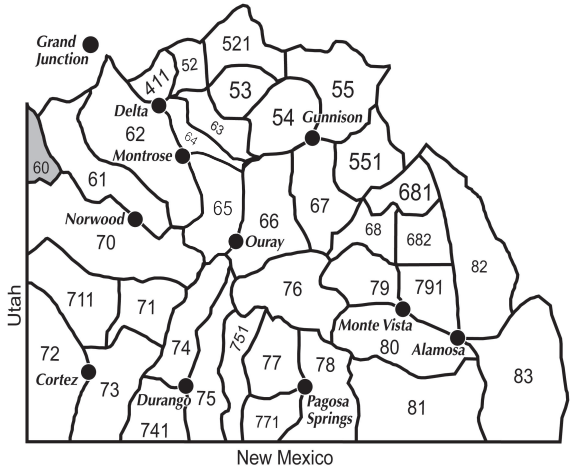
GMUs 64, 65

Montrose CPW: 970-252-6000

Maps: GMU 64, Uncompahgre National Forest

Map: GMU 65, Gunnison National Forest

These units include some of the most diverse terrain in Colorado, from 4,700 feet in the dry desert lands near Delta to 14,309-foot Uncompahgre Peak. Warm weather at the low elevations will cause meat to spoil very quickly, so be prepared to pack out fast. Weather is variable and unpredictable at the higher elevations.



Most of GMU 64 is private land or part of Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park where hunting is prohibited. Parts of GMU 65 are easily accessible by road, so hunting pressure near roads is significant. Hunters must be willing to walk well away from roads if they expect to be successful. The Uncompahgre and Mount Sneffels wilderness areas at the south end of GMU 65 offer challenging terrain, but hunters willing to go there could be rewarded.

Chronic Wasting Disease has been detected in these units. All deer harvested in GMUs 64 and 65 must be tested for CWD.

**MOOSE ARE PRESENT HERE - BE SURE OF YOUR TARGET**

## Deer Hunting

After declines for several years, the deer population is growing again. Consequently, license numbers have been increased again for this year – from 935 last year to 1,175 for this season. Buck licenses were increased by 20 percent over last year. The buck-to-doe ratio is showing noticeable improvement. For the best bucks, hunt at high elevations early. Go lower as the season progresses. Deer move lower and/or to private land as hunting pressure increases. During the second season, deer favor aspen/oak brush/serviceberry areas; they move lower to pinon/juniper during the third season. Access is relatively easy in the lower terrain; but rewards can be great for hunters willing to go into higher and more challenging terrain.

**Estimated deer population: 8,300**

**3-year estimate sex ratio: 36 bucks per 100 does**

## 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

% Success

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
64	Archery	6	0	0	6	26	23 / 20
64	Muzzle	6	0	0	6	12	50 / 44
64	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	74	0	0	74	138	54 / 57
64	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	97	0	0	97	156	62 / 59
64	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	0	0	0	3	0 / 38
65	Archery	25	0	0	25	78	32 / 31
65	Muzzle	9	0	0	9	15	60 / 51
65	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	96	0	0	96	209	46 / 48
65	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	147	0	0	147	232	63 / 60
65	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	11	0	0	11	15	73 / 81

## Elk Hunting

The population is slightly above objective, growing and the hunting prospects are good. Because of the extent of wilderness area in these units, elk find plenty of lush meadows for summer grazing. The elk will stay high until hunting pressure or weather force them down. If you hunt public land, be aware that they are bordered by numerous private ranches – especially near Cimarron, Ridgway and Dallas Divide. Elk will move to private land quickly, so know your location. Try the Cimarron and Billy Creek state wildlife areas in later seasons or after snow has pushed the elk down.

**Estimated elk population: 6,000**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 20 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2016 Elk Hunting Statistics

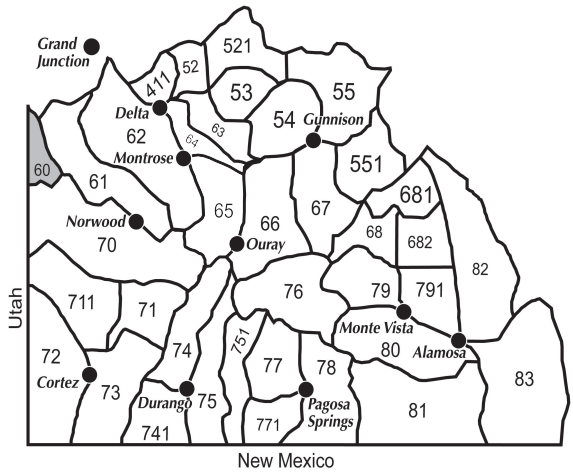
% Success

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	2016 / 5 yr.
64	Archery	3	0	0	3	153	2 / 10
64	Muzzle	18	0	0	18	68	27 / 17
64	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	53	16	3	72	212	34 / 35
64	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	14	11	0	25	252	10 / 20
64	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	12	20	0	32	233	14 / 18
64	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	0	3	0	3	61	5 / 25
65	Archery	75	20	3	98	802	12 / 13
65	Muzzle	7	8	3	18	117	15 / 16
65	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	70	36	18	124	471	26 / 32
65	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	69	26	3	98	654	15 / 20
65	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	43	23	13	79	521	15 / 20
65	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	10	34	4	48	165	29 / 33

# Paradox

Montrose CPW:(970)252-6000  
 GMU 60 Maps: Manti-La Sal  
 National Forest, Delta-Nucla  
 BLM.

This unit along the Utah line is primarily winter range. Elevations range from 4,500 feet along the Dolores River to 8,600 feet near the Utah line. The GMU is primarily BLM land. The majority of the Big game migrates in from Utah; harvest success depends on the weather. Because of migration patterns, population estimates for this GMU are not possible. Chronic wasting disease has been found in deer and elk in Utah.



## Deer Hunting

Success depends on the weather in Utah. Harvest is generally better for mule deer in the later seasons around the Paradox and Sinbad valleys.

### 2016 Deer Harvest Statistics

GMU	Season	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	% Success
							2016 / 5 yr.
60	Archery	17	0	0	17	41	41 / 38
60	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	5	0 / 20
60	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	25	1	0	26	69	38 / 45
60	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	43	5	0	48	72	67 / 52
60	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	1	0	0	1	4	25 / 36

## Elk Hunting

The elk population is healthy, but success is dependent on the weather in Utah. Harvest success is better in the later seasons and away from roads, with animals being found near Carpenter Ridge, Buckeye Reservoir, and John Brown Canyon.

### 2016 Elk Harvest Statistics

GMU	Season	Bulls	Cows	Fawns	Harvest	Hunters	% Success
							2016 / 5 yr.
60	Archery	3	0	0	3	64	5 / 17
60	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	17	0 / 16
60	Early	0	14	0	14	41	34 / 34
60	1 <sup>st</sup> Rifle	15	4	0	19	48	40 / 28
60	2 <sup>nd</sup> Rifle	21	2	0	23	67	34 / 28
60	3 <sup>rd</sup> Rifle	4	0	0	4	97	4 / 10
60	4 <sup>th</sup> Rifle	12	8	0	20	48	42 / 38

## Understanding Colorado's Preference Point System

When applying for a limited license, a preference point is awarded when an individual is unsuccessful in drawing their first-choice hunt code. Preference points provide a mathematical advantage when applied to future drawings.

Some things to remember:

- Preference points are awarded by species, not hunt code. A point can be used to apply for any type of license available for that species.
- A preference point is awarded only for an unsuccessful application for a first-choice hunt code.
- Always apply for the unit that is your first choice if your goal is to accumulate points for use toward a future quality hunt. Points needed can change significantly from year to year.
- For bear, elk, deer and pronghorn, you will accumulate preference points until you are successful in drawing a first-choice license. If you draw your first choice, your preference points drop to zero. There is no “banking” of preference points.
- If you do not apply or hold a license at least once within 10 consecutive years for a bear, elk, deer or pronghorn, your preference points for that species will be lost.
- For bighorn sheep, moose and mountain goat, an applicant can accumulate a maximum of three points. Future applications are pooled with other three-point applicants. If you are unsuccessful in the pooled drawing, a “mathematically weighted” point is awarded to increase the probability of drawing a future license. You must apply at least once in a consecutive 10-year period to keep your points.
- Nonresident allocations are determined by the average number of preference points a Colorado resident needs to draw a specific license during a 3-year period. For hunt codes that require six or more points for a Colorado resident to draw an elk or deer license, up to 20 percent of licenses may go to nonresidents. For elk and deer hunt codes that require fewer than six points for a Colorado resident to draw, up to 35 percent may go to nonresidents.
- A Colorado Habitat Stamp is required to buy or apply for a license. The Habitat Stamp may be purchased online, by phone or at any Parks and Wildlife Service Center or license agent.

### How long will it take to draw a license?

Statistics from previous years may be used to estimate the approximate time required to draw a license. For example: If a unit allowed 20 licenses with 60 applicants, zero preference points required, 40 were unsuccessful. These 40 are awarded a preference point. Assuming that the quota for this unit remained the same for the next season, and 40 apply, 20 will draw a license using their preference point and 20 will be awarded a second point. An applicant with no points could expect to draw a license in three years.

**Preference-point requirements can be found at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife website: [cpw.state.co.us/Hunting/BigGame/Statistics](http://cpw.state.co.us/Hunting/BigGame/Statistics).**

# Travel Planning Resources

## Colorado Parks and Wildlife

[www.wildlife.state.co.us](http://www.wildlife.state.co.us)

Durango Service Center	GMUs 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 711, 771, 741, 751,	(970) 247-0855
Montrose Service Center	GMUs 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 70	(970) 252-6000
Gunnison Service Center	GMUs 52, 53, 54, 55, 63, 66, 67, 411, 521, 551	(970) 641-7060
Monte Vista Service Center	GMUs 68, 681, 682, 76, 79, 791, 80, 81, 82, 83	(719) 587-6900

## U.S. Forest Service Directory

[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

\*RD=Ranger District

<b>GRAND MESA- UNCOMPAHGRE-GUNNISON National Forests</b>	<b>Delta</b>	<b>(970) 874-6600 www.fs.fed.us/r2/gmug</b>
Gunnison RD	Gunnison	(970) 641-0471
Norwood RD	Norwood	(970) 327-4261
Ouray RD	Montrose	(970) 240-5300
Paonia RD	Paonia	(970) 527-4131
<b>SAN JUAN National Forest</b>	<b>Durango</b>	<b>(970) 247-4874 www.fs.fed.us/r2/sanjuan</b>
Pagosa RD	Pagosa Springs	(970) 264-1500
<b>RIO GRANDE National Forest</b>	<b>Monte Vista</b>	<b>(719)852-5941 www.fs.fed/r2/riogrande</b>

## Bureau of Land Management Directory

[www.co.blm.gov](http://www.co.blm.gov)

\*FO=Field Office

Southwest Center	Montrose	(970) 240-5300
Del Norte FO	Del Norte	(719) 657-3321
Tres Rios FO	Dolores	(970) 882-7296
Gunnison FO	Gunnison	(970) 641-0471
La Jara FO	La Jara	(719) 274-8971
Pagosa FO	Pagosa Springs	(970) 264-2268
Saguache FO	Saguache	(719) 655-2547

Questions, suggestions for this book?

Contact: [joe.lewandowski@state.co.us](mailto:joe.lewandowski@state.co.us). or 970-375-6708



COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE  
Southwest Region Service Center  
415 Turner Drive  
Durango, CO 81303

**First Class Mail**