

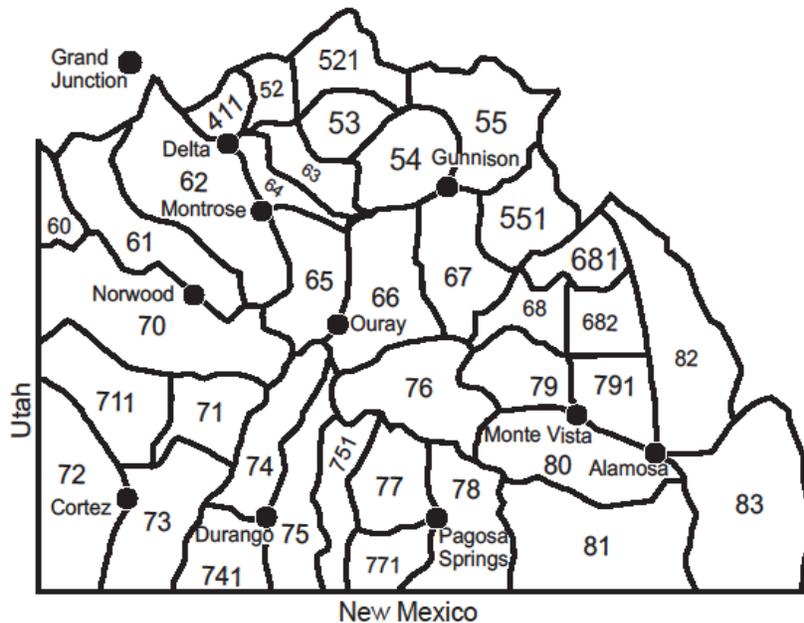


# 2020

## Big Game Hunting in Southwest Colorado

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## 2020 Elk & Deer Season Information

Season Dates	Deer	Elk	License Fees*		Deer Buck/Doe	Elk	
						Bull/ Either-sex	Cow
<b>Archery</b>	Sept. 2 - Sept. 30		<b>Resident</b>	Adult	\$40.24	\$55.43	\$55.43
<b>Muzzle</b>	Sept.12-20			Youth	\$15.68	\$15.68	\$15.68
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Rifle</b>		Oct. 10-14					
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Rifle</b>	Oct. 24 - Nov. 1		<b>Non-Resident</b>	Adult	\$401.83	\$670.25	\$670.25
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Rifle</b>	Nov.7-13			Youth	\$102.78	\$102.78	\$102.78
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Rifle</b>	Nov. 18-22		Leftover licenses on sale Aug. 4 at license agents and by phone 1-800-244-5613 or on-line. Prices include 25 cent search/rescue fee, \$1.50 cent wildlife education fund fee; Non-residents also receive a fishing license. Prices do not include \$10 habitat stamp fee.				
Leftover licenses on sale Aug. 4 at license agents and by phone 1-800-244-5613 or on-line.							

## SW Region Mandatory Chronic Wasting Disease Checks for Deer

Colorado Parks and Wildlife is expanding its sampling significantly for CWD this season. The agency has instituted a mandatory CWD check for deer harvested in most units in the Southwest Region. Those who drew limited licenses will be receiving information in the mail about the program. Information on locations of check stations will be provided as they are established.

The Southwest Region has had few CWD detections, all in the Montrose area and all but one on private land. CWD can devastate deer herds over the long-term and CPW needs to gather data about areas where the disease might be taking hold. The data will be used to help inform future management strategies.

CWD testing for deer is mandatory for these Game Management Units in the Southwest Region: **411, 52, 521, 53, 54, 55, 60, 63, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 681, 682, 711, 741, 751, 771 and 791.**

### Bring the following items with you when you submit your head for testing:

1. **Hunting License.** You must bring your license so that CPW can scan the bar code and obtain your address and phone number.
2. **Location of Harvest.** GPS coordinates (Lat/Long or UTM) of where you harvested your animal, or map location.
3. **The hunting unit (GMU) and date of harvest.**
4. **If someone else submits your animal:** They must bring a copy of your hunting license or Customer Identification (CID) number, but the carcass tag that came with your license should remain with the carcass.

### Take these precautions when field dressing big game

CWD is a neurological disease that can be found in deer, elk and moose. There is no evidence that humans can contract the disease but hunters are advised to take the following 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.

To learn more about CWD and public health call the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment at 1-303-692-2700, [www.colorado.gov/cdphe](http://www.colorado.gov/cdphe)

## Colorado State Park camping opportunities

Four state parks in the Southwest Region offer outstanding camping facilities close to good hunting areas. Campgrounds include showers and electricity. Some also offer cabins and yurts. The parks include: Mancos State Park, located in Montezuma County, 970-882-2213; Ridgway State Park in Ouray County, 970-626-5822; Crawford State Park, in Delta County 970-921-5721; Navajo State Park, in Archuleta County, 970-882-2208. All campers must make a reservation, go to <https://www.cpwshop.com/> to make a reservation.

## 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, <https://cpw.state.co.us/> or call 970-882-2213.

## 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.

Hunters can purchase a license to hunt only bears.

In the Southwest Region, hunters can obtain two bear licenses in Units 71, 72, 73, 74 and 711. Licenses for Colorado residents are \$38, down \$10 from last year. Non-resident licenses cost \$100.

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.

## Beware of dead timber

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

## 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 <https://cpw.state.co.us/> or call 1-303-791-1920 for information.

Federal "Travel Management Plans" 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 last page.

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 and bows 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 San Juan National Forest 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 areas, cross streams slowly, don't spin tires, avoid other hunters. To obtain a map, call the Dolores Public Lands office, 970-882-7296.

## **Hunt, camp the Colorado way**

## Report Hunting Violations

CPW depends on the public to report wildlife crimes. Hunters are in a unique position to witness wildlife violation; and every year hunters do report suspicious activities to Colorado Parks and Wildlife. If you witness activity that appears to violate wildlife laws or appears to be unethical, CPW requests that you gather as much information as possible, including: location, vehicle description, license plates numbers, date and time of the incident and description of people involved. However, you should not attempt to confront others about the situation. After you've gathered the information, **contact the nearest CPW office of call Operation Game Thief at 1-877-265-6648.**

Reports can be made anonymously. If a report leads to a conviction, you will be eligible for a cash reward.

## 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.

## 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 harvest 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 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.”

## 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 won't 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 Safe Hunting section on the CPW web site.

### Where do I buy my Colorado hunting license?

Licenses are available at CPW offices, at licensing agents, on-line at [cpwshop.com](http://cpwshop.com) and by phone at 1-800-244-5613.

### 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.

### 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, 791 and 83.

### What are “Private Land Only” licenses?

Also called PLO licenses, they require the holder to hunt in a specific 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).

[2020 Big Game Brochure](#)

## Hunting ethically

Hunting is an integral part of wildlife management in Colorado. Remember, you are not only participating in a recreational activity, you 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 while hunting**

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 Colorado Big Game brochure; obtaining a good map of your hunting area; 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 69 of the 2020 Big Game brochure. You can find the brochure on line at the CPW web site.

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 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 vehicle, camp and other hunters.

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

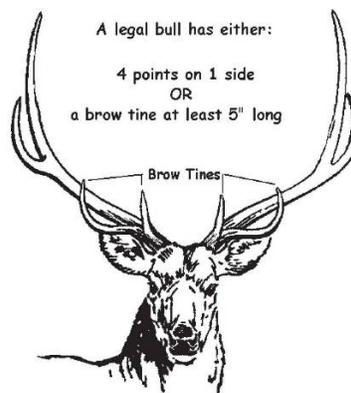
Concerns have been raised about potential health risks of exposure to lead from eating wild game harvested with lead bullets. Health officials say children under 6 and pregnant women should avoid this meat.

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 up.

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.

## 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 you start hunting.
- 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 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. Minimize trampling of 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 on ground.
- 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.

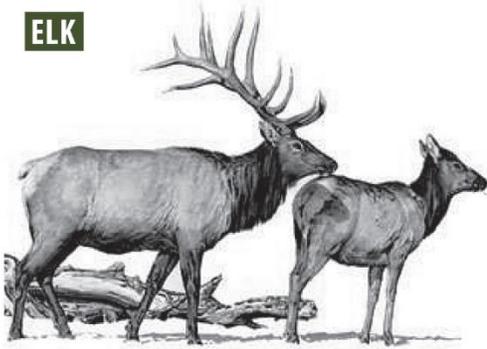
## Don't shoot a moose!

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. But bulls are also mistaken for elk because their antlers are not allows developed into a full paddle shape. Please, be sure of your target. Moose are much darker in color than elk but their antlers can look similar from a distance. Identifying a moose or elk can be very challenging in low-light conditions. 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.

**ATTENTION!** Moose can be found in the same habitat as elk in Colorado. Elk hunters must know the difference between the two species to avoid accidentally killing a moose.

## ELK



### TRAITS

- **BODY:** reddish, lighter brown, darker legs
- **NECK:** chestnut brown
- **SNOUT:** slender
- **RUMP:** pale yellow
- **BULLS:** antlers aren't palmated and have obvious brow tines coming off main beam

Illustrations © Robert Neaves. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Used with permission.

## MOOSE



### TRAITS

- **BODY:** black or dark brown with paler gray legs and belly
- **NECK:** large bell (beard) on throat
- **SNOUT:** overhanging, bulbous nose
- **BULLS:** palmated antlers with tines

Illustrations © Robert Neaves. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Used with permission.

## Hunter's Checklist

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

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.

## 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 420,000 deer. During the 2019 seasons, for all manners of take, 92,400 hunters harvested 36,380 mule deer for a 39 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, migrating herds will move to winter range areas by late October 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 2019 seasons was 17 percent and an estimated 37,000 elk were harvested. A total of 283,000 hunters stalked elk last season. It's estimated that there are about 283,000 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 of 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 is 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.

Hunters who harvest an elk, especially in a remote area, must be prepared for an extended period to field dress and move the animal.

## 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 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 more information, call the Colorado Department of Agriculture at 1-303-239-4149; or for a list of regulations and vendors, see: <https://www.colorado.gov/agmain>.
- 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.

## 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 herd objectives.

## Using a Guide Service in Colorado

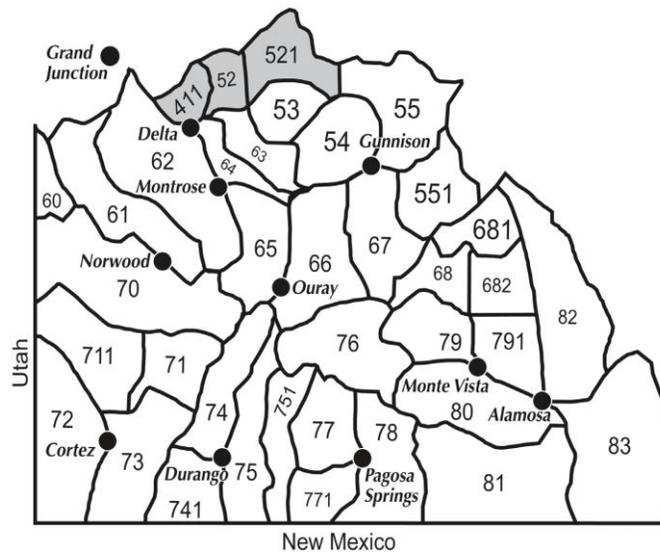
Here's what you need to know if you're planning to use a guide service for your hunt:

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, <http://www.coloradooutfitters.org/> or call 1-970-824-2468.

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## Southwest Colorado Hunting Outlook, Harvest Statistics



### 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 buck licenses were increased slightly as well as PLO licenses for private land. 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: 8,300**

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

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
411	Archery	0	0	0	0	14	0	25	17
411	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	2	0	36	30
411	2nd Rifle	18	0	0	18	93	19	21	32
411	3rd Rifle	13	0	0	13	31	42	40	48
411	4th Rifle	3	0	0	3	3	100	100	67
52	Archery	21	0	0	21	65	32	37	35
52	Muzzle	10	0	0	10	33	30	33	45
52	2nd Rifle	137	0	0	137	238	58	48	52
52	3rd Rifle	90	0	0	90	172	52	54	61
52	4th Rifle	20	0	0	20	20	100	74	80
521	Archery	8	0	0	8	75	11	23	26
521	Muzzle	23	0	0	23	42	55	42	41
521	2nd Rifle	149	0	0	149	225	66	58	54
521	3rd Rifle	22	0	0	22	31	71	55	63
521	4th Rifle	3	0	0	3	3	100	90	81

### Elk Hunting

Elk in these GMUs are part of the greater Grand Mesa herd area that includes GMUs 41, 42 and 421 to the north. The herd is stable, well distributed and hunting is rated as good. Hunter crowding is becoming a concern. 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 average estimated sex ratio: 24 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

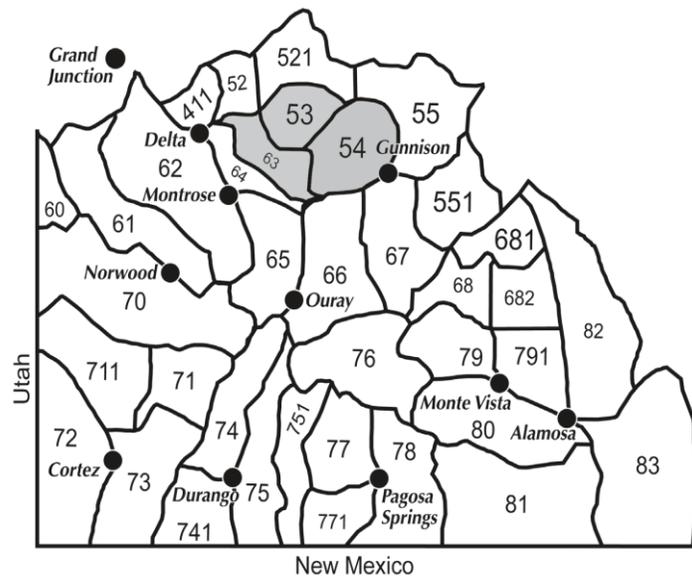
Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
411	Archery	17	16	0	33	215	15	11	11
411	Muzzle	6	0	0	6	24	25	12	9
411	1st Rifle	10	0	0	10	23	43	23	30
411	2nd Rifle	4	2	0	6	190	3	11	10
411	3rd Rifle	17	13	0	30	144	21	15	16
411	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	31	0	21	19
411	Late	0	30	0	30	75	40	38	47
52	Archery	13	6	0	19	375	5	7	7
52	Muzzle	12	6	0	18	98	18	7	11
52	1st Rifle	11	3	0	14	215	7	18	18
52	2nd Rifle	22	23	0	45	559	8	10	10
52	3rd Rifle	20	19	0	39	304	13	10	9
52	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	53	0	6	11
52	Late	0	14	0	14	48	29	21	39
521	Archery	81	41	10	132	1255	11	13	13
521	Muzzle	31	33	0	64	253	25	21	21
521	1st Rifle	112	26	0	138	486	28	22	28
521	2nd Rifle	57	15	0	72	675	11	15	15
521	3rd Rifle	28	14	0	42	379	11	15	17
521	4th Rifle	5	2	0	7	98	7	11	17

## Gunnison Area

Gunnison CPW: 970-641-7060

Map: Gunnison National Forest

## Gunnison elk hunting outlook and statistics



## GMUs 53, 54, 63

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 variation in elevations and the topography creates volatile weather at all times of year. These GMUs are comprised almost entirely of public land. 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.

A new management plan has combined these units with the aim of increasing the elk population to about 8,300 animals. The plan directs the growth of the population to primarily occur in GMU 54, to grow moderately in GMU 53 and for no growth in GMU 63. To achieve those goals, limited cow licenses were cut by 26 percent this year. This will lead to a better distribution of elk across all three GMUs. Bull tags were reduced for the early seasons in GMU 54 to help decrease hunting pressure on public lands that may be driving elk to harbor on private property.

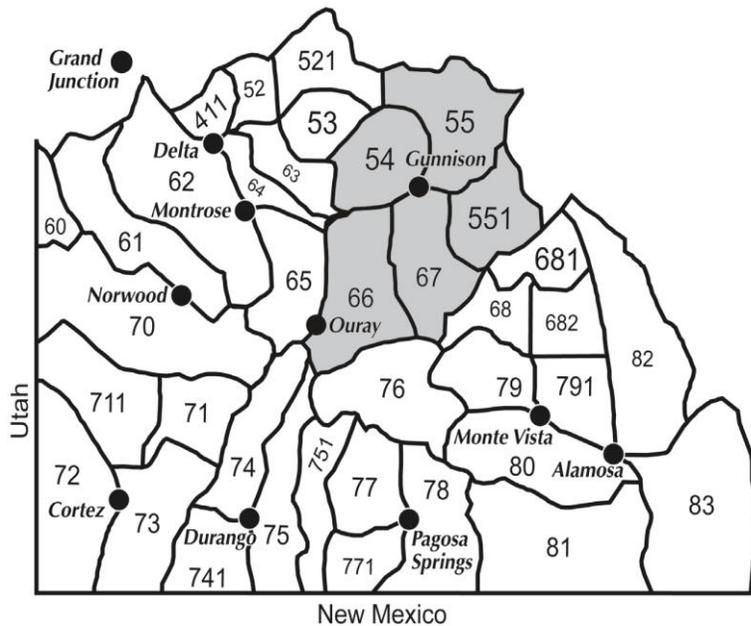
If there is no snow, elk will likely be scattered throughout the high-elevation landscape. By November, animals will start to move lower; hunters should be aware of private land and National Park boundaries, particularly in GMU 63 west of Highway 92. Expect heavy pressure in the Black Mesa area of GMU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

**Estimated elk population: 7,700**

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

### 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
53	Archery	89	30	3	122	1045	12	13	13
53	Muzzle	11	3	0	14	106	13	22	20
53	1st Rifle	23	13	3	39	156	25	30	28
53	2nd Rifle	57	10	0	67	447	15	17	18
53	3rd Rifle	20	9	0	29	292	10	11	12
53	4th Rifle	4	9	0	13	75	17	22	21
53	Late	0	18	0	18	48	38	28	51
63	Archery	31	24	0	55	338	16	14	13
63	Muzzle	6	7	0	13	68	19	15	20
63	Early	0	55	0	55	144	38	36	35
63	1st Rifle	32	24	8	64	269	24	31	32
63	2nd Rifle	18	15	4	37	279	13	13	12
63	3rd Rifle	17	13	0	30	235	13	16	14
63	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	46	0	9	14
63	Late	0	6	0	6	42	14	24	29
54	Archery	21	18	10	49	266	18	15	14
54	Muzzle	18	10	0	28	116	24	23	20
54	Early	0	0	0	0	60	0	26	32
54	1st Rifle	56	21	2	79	325	24	24	21
54	2nd Rifle	68	12	0	80	757	11	14	15
54	3rd Rifle	61	4	4	69	544	13	15	14
54	4th Rifle	18	0	0	18	157	11	22	20



## GMUs 55, 551

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, open roads should be signed; please consult the current Motor Vehicle Use Maps available from the USFS and BLM. Off-route game retrieval with OHVs is prohibited on all public lands.

The number of licenses for these units are being held steady while CPW biologists prepare a new herd management plan. The new plan will determine the appropriate herd objective population range.

During the 2019 elk season harvest was above the statewide average in all seasons. Depending on the weather, success rates should be similar this year.

Road access into these units is good and habitat types are varied – from sage brush to alpine. Hunters are urged to hunt well away from roads.

**Estimated elk population: 4,700**

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

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success 2019	% Success 3 years	% Success 5 years
55	Archery	18	4	0	22	303	7	13	12
55	Muzzle	11	10	0	21	164	13	14	16
55	1st Rifle	15	2	0	17	311	5	17	19
55	2nd Rifle	94	28	0	122	1165	10	11	12
55	3rd Rifle	44	12	0	56	939	6	13	13
55	4th Rifle	0	2	0	2	64	3	27	33
551	Archery	19	9	0	28	173	16	19	18
551	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	81	0	13	15
551	1st Rifle	11	6	1	18	118	15	20	19
551	2nd Rifle	56	16	0	72	552	13	12	11
551	3rd Rifle	39	54	2	95	579	16	18	15
551	4th Rifle	0	4	0	4	30	13	26	32

# GMUs 66, 67

These units, located south of U.S. Highway 50 between Gunnison and Lake City, are limited for elk hunting. Much of the terrain is rugged and varies from sage brush up to alpine. Forests in the southern portions of these units have been impacted by a beetle kill epidemic, which started approximately a decade ago. Thus, impacted trees have started to fall and that is expected to continue. Hunters need to be careful in the beetle-kill area and should check with the U.S. Forest Service and BLM for travel restrictions on backroads.

The management plan was revised a few years ago to encourage population growth in the elk herd. So far the plan is working as the population is growing steadily and is projected to continue growing for at least three more years.

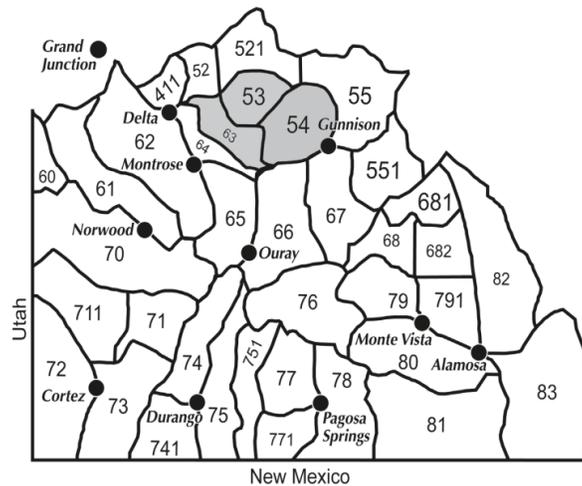
**Estimated elk population: 5,350**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 17 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
66	Archery	47	0	0	47	136	35	32	30
66	Muzzle	8	6	0	14	71	20	31	33
66	1st Rifle	100	13	8	121	372	33	34	33
66	2nd Rifle	78	18	0	96	346	28	28	25
66	3rd Rifle	38	25	2	65	284	23	35	32
66	4th Rifle	7	19	0	26	140	19	37	37
67	Archery	25	4	0	29	86	34	30	27
67	Muzzle	10	4	0	14	67	21	21	23
67	1st Rifle	42	14	0	56	328	17	21	21
67	2nd Rifle	19	29	5	53	351	15	13	12
67	3rd Rifle	30	16	0	46	267	17	28	24
67	4th Rifle	11	8	0	19	202	9	24	27

## Gunnison deer hunting outlook and statistics



## GMUs 53, 63

The population is at the low end of the objective range but the herd is growing steadily. A mild winter helped improve fawn survival and recruitment. The buck-to-doe ratio at 30 to 100 is favorable for hunters looking for big bucks. Relatively few licenses are available for deer hunting in the Gunnison Basin. In these units only 730 license were available through the draw this year.

**Estimated deer population: 7,400**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 30 bucks per 100 does**

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
53	Archery	21	0	0	21	47	45	36	29
53	Muzzle	5	0	0	5	19	26	32	31
53	2nd Rifle	76	0	0	76	123	62	67	68
53	3rd Rifle	82	0	0	82	109	75	84	84
53	4th Rifle	9	0	0	9	10	90	79	85
63	Archery	21	0	0	21	42	50	56	57
63	Muzzle	12	0	0	12	25	48	59	60
63	2nd Rifle	56	0	0	56	116	48	54	60
63	3rd Rifle	54	0	0	54	121	45	64	71
63	4th Rifle	4	0	0	4	6	67	69	81

## GMU 54

The deer population in this unit is growing given the higher than average fawn recruitment last winter (2020). Using radio collars and helicopter surveys, deer in this area are monitored very closely. The monitoring shows that the population is growing. CPW places collars on a sample of the current fawn crop every year to monitor survival.

The buck-to-doe ratio is very high at 40 bucks per 100 does. Ratios that high can be detrimental to deer herds in the long run; consequently, the number of buck licenses was increased by 14 percent for this season. More buck licenses may be available in the future if this herd keeps producing high buck-doe ratios and good fawn recruitment.

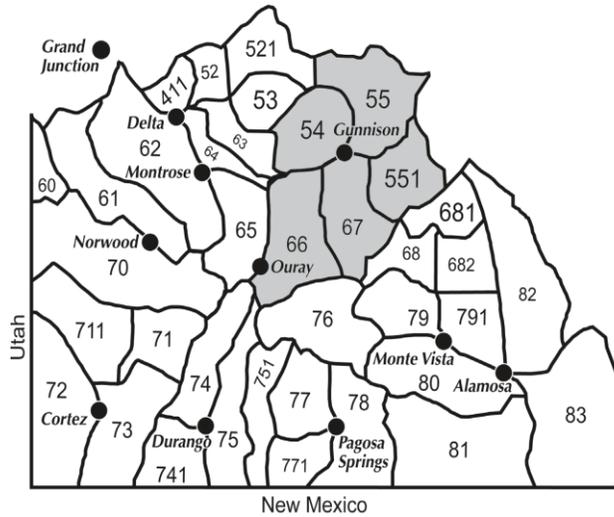
The weather during the deer seasons last year was unusually warm, so that made it tough for hunters to find bucks. Hunters must be willing to go into dark timber and well away from roads to find animals.

**Estimated deer population: 3,800**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 42 bucks per 100 does**

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
54	Archery	11	0	0	11	30	37	17	19
54	Muzzle	13	0	0	13	26	50	46	41
54	2nd Rifle	100	0	0	100	238	42	54	54
54	3rd Rifle	37	0	0	37	53	70	74	77
54	4th Rifle	3	0	0	3	10	30	53	68



## GMUs 55, 551

The deer population in this unit is growing given the higher than average fawn recruitment last winter (2020). CPW conducts intensive monitoring of this herd by using radio-collars and helicopter surveys. The monitoring shows the heard is healthy and growing. CPW places collars on a sample of the current fawn crop every year to monitor survival. Low fawn survival in the harsh winter of 2017, and the three winters prior (for unknown reasons) caused delays in this herd’s growth. However, the herd is now bouncing back with record high fawn production going into the winter the last two years and average winter fawn survival. The population growth allowed CPW to add licenses, including 60 doe tags.

Some hunters said last year that they couldn’t find bucks during the hunting season and asked if the deer herd was in trouble. The herd is healthy, but the warm fall season kept deer at higher elevations, in thicker timber and further from roads than normal. If the weather is warm this season, hunters must go to higher elevations and hunt in the trees.

**Estimated deer population: 5,300**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 41 bucks per 100 does**

## 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
55	Archery	16	0	0	16	48	33	53	47
55	Muzzle	22	0	0	22	38	58	60	52
55	2nd Rifle	87	0	0	87	153	57	61	62
55	3rd Rifle	38	0	0	38	86	44	63	78
55	4th Rifle	14	0	0	14	20	70	71	71
551	Archery	16	0	0	16	34	47	40	34
551	Muzzle	10	0	0	10	31	32	35	42
551	2nd Rifle	54	0	0	54	114	47	56	63
551	3rd Rifle	21	0	0	21	34	62	64	72
551	4th Rifle	8	0	0	8	19	42	50	63

## GMUs 66, 67

The deer population in these units is growing given the higher than average fawn recruitment last winter. Intensive monitoring of deer in this herd with radio collar monitoring and helicopter surveys shows that the population is growing quickly and is now over-objective in population size. CPW places collars on a sample of the current fawn crop every year to monitor survival. Low fawn survival in the harsh winter of 2017, and the three winters prior (for unknown reasons) caused delays in this herd's growth. However, the herd is now bouncing back with record high fawn production going into the winter the last two years and average winter fawn survival. The population growth allowed CPW to add licenses, including 60 doe tags.

Some hunters said last year that they couldn't find bucks during the hunting season and asked if the deer herd was in trouble. The herd is healthy, but the warm fall season kept deer at higher elevations, in thick timber and further from roads than normal. If the weather is warm this season, hunters must go to higher elevations and hunt in the trees.

**Estimated deer population: 6,450**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 49 bucks per 100 does**

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
66	Archery	21	0	0	21	44	48	39	38
66	Muzzle	22	0	0	22	31	71	63	58
66	2nd Rifle	87	0	0	87	118	74	72	72
66	3rd Rifle	47	0	0	47	52	90	85	86
66	4th Rifle	14	0	0	14	17	82	78	85
67	Archery	11	0	0	11	41	27	41	37
67	Muzzle	12	0	0	12	33	36	45	42
67	2nd Rifle	60	0	0	60	122	49	62	65
67	3rd Rifle	30	0	0	30	55	55	68	75
67	4th Rifle	16	0	0	16	18	89	91	92

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# 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 farmland 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 refuge land.

Deer hunting in the San Luis Valley has been improving recently due to limits on buck licenses. Success rates are high for hunters who draw a buck tag. Due to the 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.

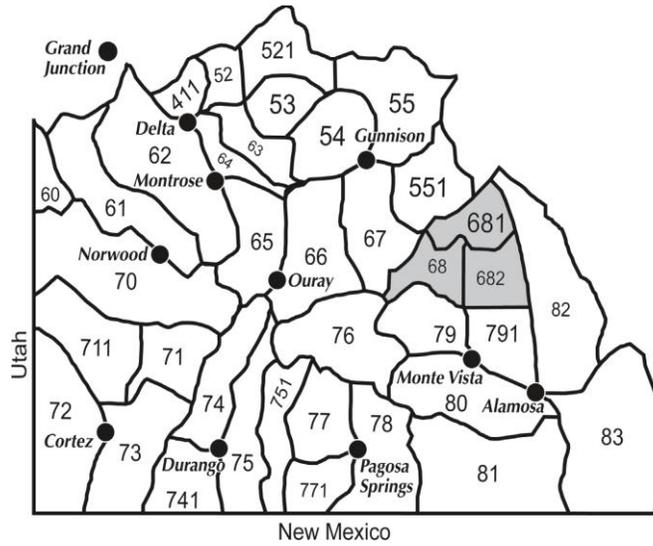
Weather is a dominant factor for hunters. Higher snow loads may cause elk herds to move down early from higher elevations. Success for elk hunters in the later seasons increases with winter weather. However, small amounts of snow can make travel difficult. Hunters are urged to check weather conditions 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 number of elk on the valley floor. There is concern that the elk could cause damage to high-value agricultural lands. The population objective in that area is 0 (ZERO) – the only such designation in the state. Bulls are hunted May 15-July 31 on private property. The bull and cow fall hunt is Aug. 15 through February. A subsequent either sex fall hunt takes place from Aug. 15 through the last day of February. All licenses are distributed through landowner vouchers. Hunters must get permission from the landowner to hunt on private land. Contact CPW's Monte Vista wildlife office for more information, 719-587-6900.

**Continue to next page**



## Saguache

GMUs – 68, 681, 682, 791  
 Monte Vista CPW: 719-587-6900  
 Map: Rio Grande National Forest

Public lands dominate the area 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 and in line with the objective range. Fawn survival and recruitment has been strong, so the deer herd in this area is healthy. The future outlook for deer in these units is good.

**Estimated deer population: 6,000**

**3-year average estimated sex ratio: 32 bucks per 100 does**

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
68	Archery	5	0	0	5	64	8	17	19
68	Muzzle	6	0	0	6	37	16	33	28
68	2nd Rifle	90	0	0	90	160	56	52	51
68	3rd Rifle	63	0	0	63	104	61	55	58
68	4th Rifle	3	0	0	3	10	30	50	42
681	Archery	7	0	0	7	52	13	15	15
681	Muzzle	31	0	0	31	82	38	36	41
681	2nd Rifle	38	0	0	38	113	34	64	66
681	3rd Rifle	72	0	0	72	123	59	67	69
681	4th Rifle	10	0	0	10	13	77	55	68
682	Archery	5	0	0	5	5	100	71	71
682	Muzzle	2	0	0	2	2	100	100	40
682	3rd Rifle	0	0	0	0	4	0	43	60
682	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
791	3rd Rifle	3	0	0	3	6	50	40	55

## Elk Hunting

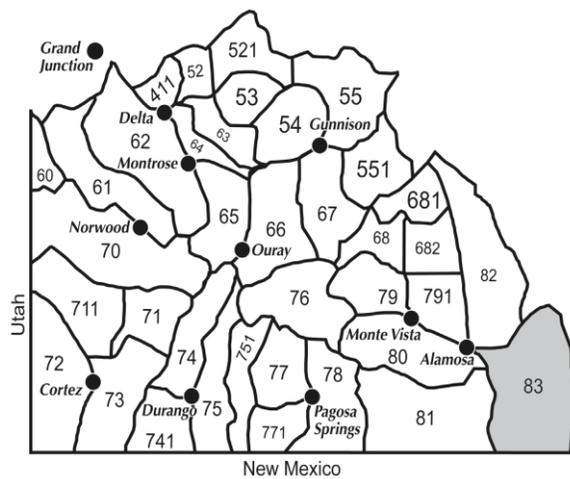
The population of elk in these units is within the objective range. In the past few years, CPW reduced the number of cow licenses to help increase the population. According to the modeled population, the reduction in cow licenses curbed the downward trend and showed the estimated population climbing back to the objective range set in 2019. Hunter success rates are lower than most other parts of the state because it is challenging to find these animals. Hunters willing to go into tough terrain can be rewarded.

**Estimated elk population: 4,200**

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

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
68	Archery	17	3	0	20	427	5	7	7
68	Muzzle	12	0	0	12	60	20	10	9
68	Early	0	2	0	2	7	29	40	32
68	1st Rifle	18	0	0	18	216	8	16	16
68	2nd Rifle	26	0	0	26	527	5	7	7
68	3rd Rifle	44	0	0	44	585	8	7	8
68	4th Rifle	5	0	0	5	76	7	8	12
681	Archery	30	0	0	30	413	7	6	6
681	Muzzle	7	0	0	7	30	23	9	8
681	1st Rifle	6	0	0	6	124	5	7	10
681	2nd Rifle	22	0	0	22	410	5	8	7
681	3rd Rifle	17	0	0	17	385	4	7	6
681	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	77	0	16	14
682	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
682	Early	0	18	0	18	38	47	51	57
791	Archery	0	0	0	0	6	0	12	8
791	Muzzle	0	2	0	2	2	100	20	18
791	Early	0	16	0	16	32	50	49	57



## 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 property owners – including in subdivisions where landowners may not be present. Trespassing is a significant issue in this area. Elk hunting in this unit is limited.

The Trinchera Ranch dominates this unit. The ranch is enrolled in the Ranching for Wildlife program and offers a limited number of license for deer and elk hunting. Deer and elk hunting on the ranch are excellent. For information about hunting on the ranch, see the 2019 Colorado Big Game Brochure or go to the CPW website and type “Ranching for Wildlife” into the search bar.

### Deer Hunting

The population of deer in this unit is at the lower end of the objective range but biologists believe it to be stable. Fawn survival and recruitment is strong. The buck-to-doe ratio is higher than most units in the Southwest Region. There are only 205 limited licenses, all on private land, issued for this area.

**Estimated deer population: 1,200**

**3-year average estimated sex ratio: 38 bucks to 100 does**

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
83	Archery	3	0	0	3	3	100	69	68
83	Muzzle	6	0	0	6	7	86	65	77
83	2nd Rifle	10	0	0	10	10	100	89	93
83	3rd Rifle	9	0	0	9	9	100	94	90
83	4th Rifle	3	0	0	3	3	100	85	70

### Elk Hunting

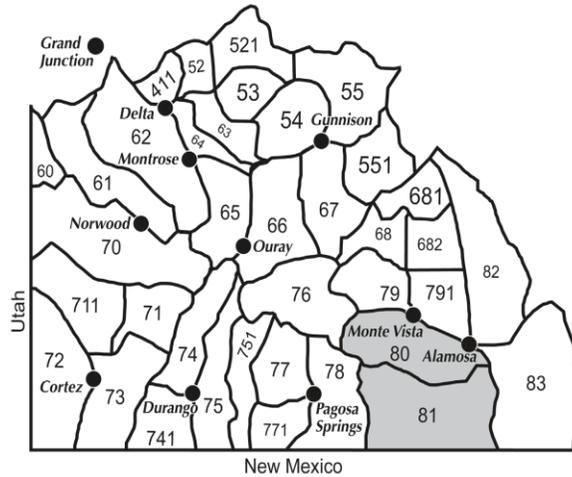
The population estimate for this herd includes GMUs 85, 851 and 140 on the east side of the Sangre de Cristo range. There is no individual population estimate for GMU 83 only.

This year, GMU 83 was changed from an over-the-counter unit to limited-license only. The change was made because of significant trespass issues and over-crowding of hunters. The change was made, largely, to improve safety for property owners and hunters.

An either-sex tag on the Trinchera Ranch, which participates in the Ranching for Wildlife program, requires a minimum of 14 preference points.

### 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
83	Archery	31	0	0	31	204	15	18	14
83	Muzzle	8	2	0	10	61	16	14	15
83	1st Rifle	12	8	0	20	60	33	44	44
83	2nd Rifle	45	0	0	45	286	16	20	19
83	3rd Rifle	18	4	0	22	512	4	17	18
83	4th Rifle	4	7	0	11	87	13	53	49



## Lower Rio Grande

GMUs – 80, 81

Map: Rio Grande National Forest

Monte Vista CPW office: 719-587-6900

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 into federal refuge areas.

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

### Deer Hunting

The population is within the objective range, growing slightly and the buck-to-doe ratio is above the objective range. Licenses were increased by about 10 percent – 100 licenses – to reflect the upward population trend. 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: 5,700**

**3-year average estimated sex ratio: 28 bucks per 100 does**

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
80	Archery	18	0	0	18	105	17	21	20
80	Muzzle	26	0	0	26	96	27	34	33
80	2nd Rifle	65	0	0	65	163	40	46	44
80	3rd Rifle	31	0	0	31	188	16	39	45
80	4th Rifle	27	0	0	27	39	69	50	60
81	Archery	21	0	0	21	119	18	20	18
81	Muzzle	35	0	0	35	104	34	27	27
81	2nd Rifle	42	0	0	42	89	47	56	49
81	3rd Rifle	44	0	0	44	103	43	49	44
81	4th Rifle	9	0	0	9	16	56	47	48

## Elk Hunting

This population is relatively stable and moving toward the lower end of the objective range. An entirely accurate estimate on this herd is difficult because many of the animals migrate south into New Mexico during the winter – that’s the time when CPW conducts its survey flights. Elk also face hunting pressure in New Mexico. Bull harvest has been strong in these units during the last few seasons, and CPW expects the same for 2020. 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.

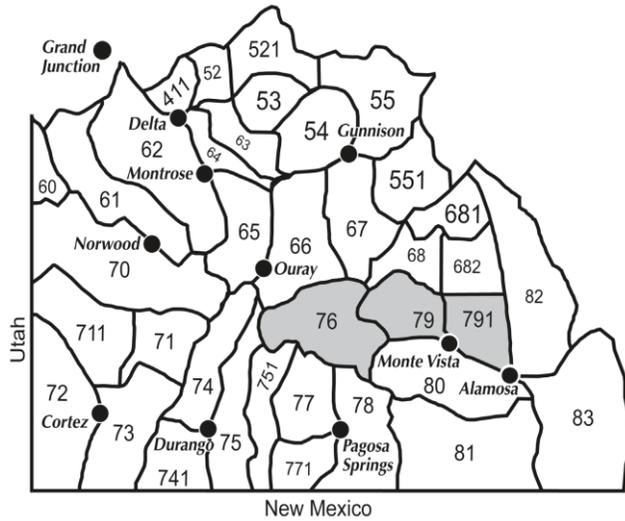
**Estimated elk population: 11,200**

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

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
80	Archery	112	27	3	142	1209	12	13	12
80	Muzzle	5	10	0	15	86	17	13	15
80	Early	0	11	0	11	19	58	43	52
80	1st Rifle	40	0	0	40	211	19	20	16
80	2nd Rifle	93	5	2	100	821	12	12	11
80	3rd Rifle	59	8	0	67	676	10	11	10
80	4th Rifle	3	0	0	3	61	5	18	20
81	Archery	166	85	10	261	1803	14	14	14
81	Muzzle	21	0	2	23	67	34	21	20
81	Early	0	14	0	14	20	70	46	35
81	1st Rifle	65	0	0	65	247	26	30	24
81	2nd Rifle	104	7	0	111	910	12	13	12
81	3rd Rifle	43	8	0	51	662	8	8	7
81	4th Rifle	0	13	0	13	66	20	24	24

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## 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. It 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 increasing slowly. The buck-to-doe ratio is higher than the state average; hunters can find mature bucks. Fawn recruitment remains strong so it's expected that the population will continue its upward trend. The number of licenses is the same as last year. GMU 79 has significant winter range and holds deer and elk during the late seasons, depending on the snow accumulations.

GMU 76 consists primarily of summer range for deer, with very few animals wintering there. Hunters can find mature bucks in both GMU 76 and GMU 79.

**Estimated deer population: 2,500**

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

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
76	Archery	15	0	0	15	25	60	45	48
76	Muzzle	14	0	0	14	19	74	64	70
76	2nd Rifle	10	0	0	10	25	40	54	59
76	3rd Rifle	6	0	0	6	18	33	55	46
79	Archery	2	0	0	2	7	29	9	17
79	Muzzle	9	0	0	9	21	43	34	39
79	2nd Rifle	53	0	0	53	80	66	71	69
79	3rd Rifle	77	0	0	77	109	71	74	72
79	4th Rifle	4	0	0	4	8	50	56	71

## Elk Hunting

Unit 76 is limited. Habitat is excellent and the elk population is on an upward trend and slightly above objective. 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 winter severity and snow pushing animals into the area. Harvest success rates are not as high in GMU 79, but hunting conditions are favorable.

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

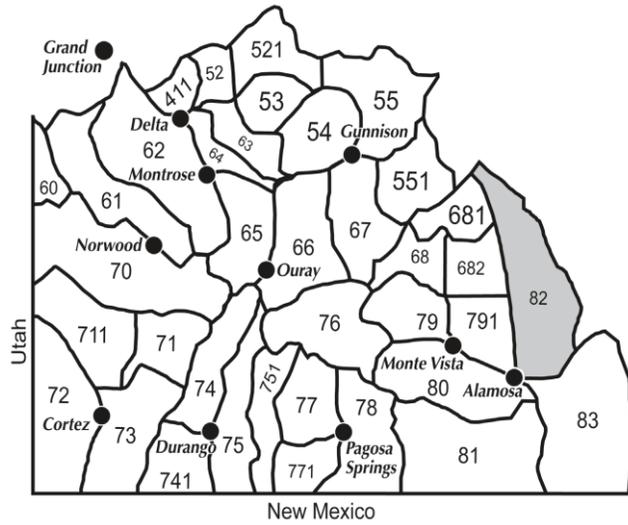
**Estimated elk population: 6,500**

**3-year average estimated sex ratio: 32 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
76	Archery	64	2	0	66	159	42	41	40
76	Muzzle	50	1	0	51	85	60	50	52
76	Early	13	0	0	13	19	68	83	76
76	1st Rifle	103	0	0	103	183	56	60	57
76	2nd Rifle	30	33	0	63	244	26	30	30
76	3rd Rifle	12	37	4	53	188	28	29	29
76	4th Rifle	0	17	4	21	128	16	27	25
79	Archery	13	0	0	13	262	5	4	4
79	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	32	0	12	8
79	Early	0	14	0	14	20	70	45	45
79	1st Rifle	17	0	0	17	180	9	11	9
79	2nd Rifle	8	9	0	17	186	9	11	9
79	3rd Rifle	16	0	0	16	161	10	8	7
79	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	77	0	2	3

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## Sand Dunes

GMU 82

Monte Vista CPW 719-587-6900

Map: Rio Grande National Forest

Hunting is prohibited in Great Sand Dunes National Park which is located within this unit. The national forest and national park preserve, where hunting is allowed, adjoin the park and Baca National Wildlife Refuge. When hunting pressure starts deer and elk move 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

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 in this unit.

### Deer Hunting

The population is stable, increasing slightly and is above the objective range. The upward trend could be based on having no doe licenses available for this unit, and relatively strong, consistent fawn recruitment observed. To curb the increasing sex ratio trend, buck licenses were increased slightly throughout all seasons for the 2020 season, for a total of 100 additional licenses available. The increase in licenses (only bucks) will not impede the population growth. The buck-to-doe is high and hunter success is good for those who draw a license.

**Estimated deer population: 2,827**

**3-year average estimated sex ratio: 39 bucks per 100 does**

### 2019 Deer Hunting Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
82	Archery	5	0	0	5	32	16	15	16
82	Muzzle	13	0	0	13	46	28	32	33
82	Early	7	0	0	7	16	44	65	50
82	2nd Rifle	45	0	0	45	109	41	53	53
82	3rd Rifle	37	0	0	37	83	45	44	51
82	4th Rifle	5	0	0	5	5	100	83	81

## Elk Hunting

Elk hunting is allowed on the Baca National Wildlife Refuge for those holding a limited tag for GMU 82. Over-the-counter licenses are also available for the archery, muzzleloader and rifle seasons. Call the refuge for details, 719-256-5527. Camping is not permitted and access is allowed only during daylight hours.

Private land is located on the southern boundary of the Baca, so shots should not be taken in the direction of homes or roads. Access is good in the northern portion of GMU 82, but hunting can be poor because animals quickly move south when hunters arrive. Either-sex PLO licenses are available on private property on the valley floor section of GMU 82.

Public land in Unit 82 is tough to hunt because elk can easily move to the national park and federal wildlife refuge.

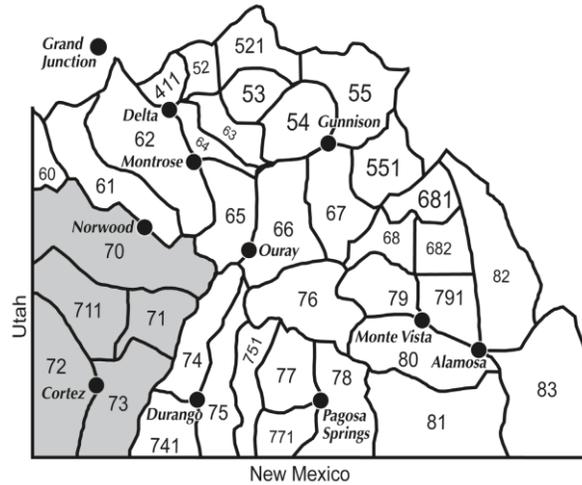
**Estimated elk population: 5,400**

**3-year average sex ratio average: 51 bulls to 100 cows**

## 2019 Elk Hunting Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
82	Archery	50	17	0	67	656	10	10	10
82	Muzzle	18	5	0	23	92	25	26	26
82	Early	0	87	0	87	110	79	82	85
82	1st Rifle	42	13	0	55	262	21	32	29
82	2nd Rifle	56	34	0	90	469	19	13	15
82	3rd Rifle	41	16	2	59	489	12	17	15
82	4th Rifle	19	3	3	25	87	29	23	25

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## Dolores, Dry Creek, Norwood, Groundhog

GMUs 70, 71, 711, 72, 73  
 Montrose office 970-252-6000,  
 Durango office: 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 New Mexico. 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 where public land access is easy. 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.

### Deer Hunting

Deer populations are slightly below objective in the northern units (70, 71, 711) and at objective in the southern units (72, 73). The area has experienced a slight decline in buck populations. This year, 50 buck tags were cut from Unit 70. Buck-to-doe ratios, however, are still healthy. A mild winter probably helped fawn survival this year.

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 range 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: 21,800 (includes all five GMUs)**

**3-year average sex ratio: 26 bucks per 100 does (GMUs 70, 71, 711)**

**3-years average sex ratio: 33 bucks per 100 does (GMUS 72 and 73)**

## 2019 Deer Hunting Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
70	Archery	32	0	0	32	126	25	28	25
70	Muzzle	23	0	0	23	83	28	29	31
70	2nd Rifle	217	8	0	225	535	42	55	57
70	3rd Rifle	276	9	0	285	633	45	56	59
70	4th Rifle	28	0	0	28	74	38	54	57
71	Archery	19	0	0	19	74	26	26	22
71	Muzzle	6	0	0	6	51	12	24	23
71	2nd Rifle	27	0	0	27	150	18	40	43
71	3rd Rifle	36	0	0	36	194	19	35	33
71	4th Rifle	3	0	0	3	6	50	48	51
711	Archery	11	0	0	11	55	20	31	30
711	Muzzle	6	0	0	6	25	24	31	34
711	2nd Rifle	103	0	0	103	219	47	46	47
711	3rd Rifle	152	0	0	152	302	50	55	57
711	4th Rifle	20	0	0	20	33	61	70	65
72	Archery	22	0	0	22	56	39	44	39
72	Muzzle	28	0	0	28	56	50	54	54
72	2nd Rifle	133	0	0	133	206	65	66	69
72	3rd Rifle	161	0	0	161	267	60	67	63
72	4th Rifle	18	0	0	18	32	56	51	58
73	Archery	11	0	0	11	52	21	33	40
73	Muzzle	10	0	0	10	37	27	36	35
73	2nd Rifle	26	0	0	26	125	21	37	48
73	3rd Rifle	73	0	0	73	154	47	57	59
73	4th Rifle	20	0	0	20	27	74	59	56

## Elk Hunting

Elk numbers are low and hunters will be challenged especially when the weather is warm and dry. The elk population has suffered during the last decade as calf recruitment rates are low. The issue is similar across most of southern Colorado. CPW is conducting a long-term research study in an attempt to determine the low rate of calf recruitment. The study started in 2018 and is expected to last five more years.

For the first time, CPW limited the number of archery licenses in these units. Archery hunting has grown significantly during the past decade and wildlife managers hope this will reduce hunting pressure early in the season and decrease the number of cow elk harvested during the month-long bow season. The increase in archery hunters and the use of calls has resulted in bulls becoming call-shy. Other strategies such as spot-and-stalk or sitting in a high-activity area will yield a better chance for success. Expect elk to be in small groups of 4-5 animals until snow accumulates. Hunting smart is better than hunting hard. GMU 711 becomes better as the season progresses. Elk will move quickly into thick aspen, evergreens and rugged terrain with hunting pressure.

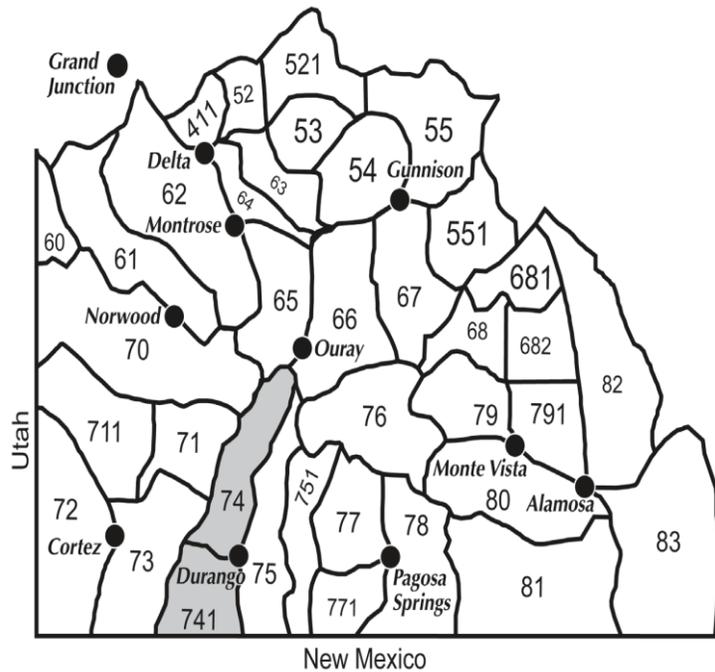
**Estimated elk population: 16,900**

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

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
70	Archery	89	54	0	143	886	16	18	16
70	Muzzle	34	19	4	57	197	29	28	27
70	1st Rifle	96	100	0	196	541	36	43	44
70	2nd Rifle	142	53	5	200	884	23	22	24
70	3rd Rifle	114	57	12	183	991	18	17	19
70	4th Rifle	16	37	0	53	196	27	24	31
70	Late	0	38	4	42	102	41	31	50
71	Archery	72	27	6	105	1264	8	11	12
71	Muzzle	40	0	2	42	226	19	16	17
71	1st Rifle	45	3	0	48	530	9	21	24
71	2nd Rifle	53	10	0	63	722	9	12	14
71	3rd Rifle	31	2	0	33	528	6	8	10
71	4th Rifle	2	0	0	2	60	3	14	25
711	Archery	51	24	0	75	325	23	17	15
711	Muzzle	4	2	0	6	82	7	11	16
711	Early	0	0	0	0	35	0	10	26
711	1st Rifle	57	5	0	62	199	31	21	25
711	2nd Rifle	30	3	0	33	371	9	15	14
711	3rd Rifle	41	17	0	58	716	8	11	11
711	4th Rifle	12	10	0	22	111	20	24	31
72	Archery	7	3	0	10	159	6	9	8
72	Muzzle	9	0	0	9	63	14	16	14
72	Early	0	27	8	35	118	30	26	23
72	1st Rifle	5	0	0	5	55	9	5	10
72	2nd Rifle	15	0	0	15	162	9	13	11
72	3rd Rifle	8	7	0	15	166	9	8	9
72	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	36	0	20	15
73	Archery	17	10	3	30	325	9	16	14
73	Muzzle	14	0	4	18	63	29	20	21
73	Early	0	0	0	0	30	0	23	24
73	1st Rifle	0	0	0	0	91	0	18	26
73	2nd Rifle	12	2	0	14	187	7	4	8
73	3rd Rifle	8	0	0	8	134	6	6	6
73	4th Rifle	0	3	0	3	22	14	14	23

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## Hermosa

GMUs 74, 741

Durango office: 970-247-0855

Map: San Juan National Forest

A forest fire north of Durango in 2018 burned the area in a mosaic pattern favorable to big game. In the burn area, fresh vegetation continues to grow and could be a draw for deer and elk. But be careful around dead trees. 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.

Some 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.

### Deer Hunting

This population is holding steady and is within the objective population. 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: 4,500**

**3-year average sex ratio: 32 bucks per 100 does**

## 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
74	Archery	17	0	0	17	110	15	23	24
74	Muzzle	34	0	0	34	100	34	34	35
74	Early	17	0	0	17	35	49	65	70
74	2nd Rifle	21	0	0	21	113	19	22	25
74	3rd Rifle	20	0	0	20	49	41	29	28
74	4th Rifle	9	0	0	9	15	60	30	30
741	Archery	11	0	0	11	54	20	30	30
741	Muzzle	8	3	0	11	30	37	29	37
741	2nd Rifle	84	9	0	93	198	47	58	63
741	3rd Rifle	108	21	0	129	247	52	60	60
741	4th Rifle	25	6	0	31	66	47	51	58

## Elk Hunting

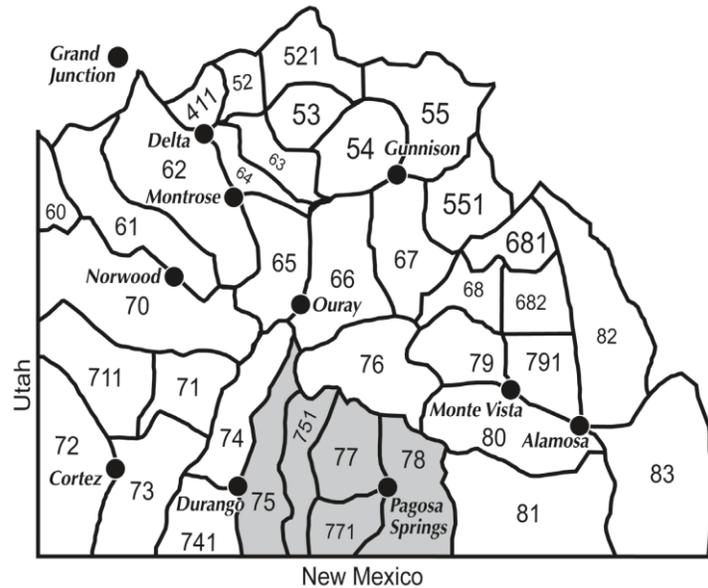
The elk herd is within the population objective and holding steady at the low end of the range. Archery licenses are now limited in these units. Most elk in GMU 74 are at higher elevation areas until snow accumulation - a foot or more - pushes them down. Hunters willing to go into rugged terrain could be rewarded. Consider hunting in the burn area above the Hermosa Creek drainage, near Engineer Mountain, 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: 4,800**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 28 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
74	Archery	81	21	0	102	1007	10	10	11
74	Muzzle	26	6	0	32	167	19	19	20
74	Early	0	7	0	7	22	32	39	43
74	1st Rifle	57	2	0	59	271	22	17	21
74	2nd Rifle	42	6	0	48	479	10	12	14
74	3rd Rifle	34	3	0	37	237	16	11	13
74	4th Rifle	5	0	2	7	39	18	16	15
741	Archery	17	10	0	27	92	29	21	21
741	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	14	0	23	23
741	Early	0	44	0	44	100	44	47	32
741	1st Rifle	10	0	0	10	39	26	36	33
741	2nd Rifle	41	2	0	43	141	30	23	23
741	3rd Rifle	12	0	0	12	68	18	17	16
741	4th Rifle	7	2	0	9	36	25	14	15



## San Juan Basin

GMUs 75, 77, 78, 751, 771  
 Map: San Juan National Forest  
 Durango CPW office: 970-247-0855

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**

The population is growing in these units and the buck-to-doe ratio is high. Deer hunting should be excellent and hunters will be able to find quality bucks. The areas with the best prospects on public lands: the HD Mountains; the drainages of the Piedra River, Florida River and Los Pinos River; and areas 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: 22,900**

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

## 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
75	Archery	29	40	0	69	173	40	30	32
75	Muzzle	32	0	0	32	124	26	33	39
75	2nd Rifle	146	20	0	166	406	41	43	46
75	3rd Rifle	116	5	0	121	331	37	46	51
75	4th Rifle	53	3	0	56	123	46	62	67
751	Archery	15	7	0	22	81	27	19	21
751	Muzzle	13	2	0	15	84	18	23	30
751	2nd Rifle	78	0	0	78	272	29	36	40
751	3rd Rifle	104	2	0	106	258	41	45	48
751	4th Rifle	34	4	0	38	96	40	52	56
77	Archery	28	0	0	28	151	19	27	31
77	Muzzle	35	2	2	39	153	25	33	32
77	2nd Rifle	208	12	1	221	575	38	41	45
77	3rd Rifle	141	0	0	141	361	39	41	47
77	4th Rifle	44	3	0	47	97	48	60	65
771	Archery	16	5	0	21	40	53	34	36
771	Muzzle	3	0	0	3	22	14	7	23
771	2nd Rifle	40	2	0	42	143	29	40	47
771	3rd Rifle	138	0	0	138	262	53	54	59
771	4th Rifle	47	2	0	49	96	51	59	63
78	Archery	15	32	0	47	148	32	32	32
78	Muzzle	32	2	0	34	106	32	33	37
78	2nd Rifle	193	7	0	200	499	40	44	48
78	3rd Rifle	101	0	0	101	312	32	43	43
78	4th Rifle	20	2	0	22	54	41	59	61

## Elk Hunting

Population in these units is increasing slightly after several years of license reductions. Archery licenses in these units are now limited. Hunters must be prepared to walk into remote and heavily-forested areas to find animals. Do not expect to see elk near roads or areas open to OHV use. During the early seasons stick to north facing slopes in the spruce/fir and aspen forests. Elk will move lower when snow accumulation is significant. During 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, and so does the Mosca Road (FS Rd 631) and FS Road 634 in GMU 77.

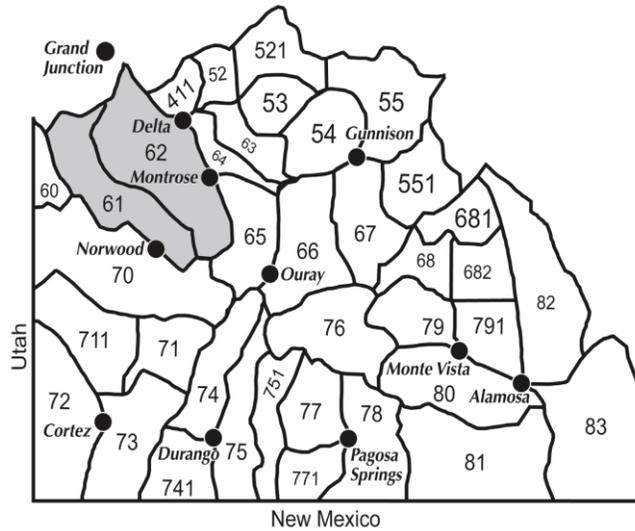
**Estimated elk population: 18,950**

**3-year estimated sex ratio: 13 bulls per 100 cows**

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success 2019	% Success 3 years	% Success 5 years
75	Archery	23	10	0	33	426	8	9	9
75	Muzzle	9	2	0	11	85	13	20	20
75	Early	0	7	0	7	60	12	26	31
75	1st Rifle	30	6	0	36	233	15	19	18
75	2nd Rifle	30	3	0	33	378	9	10	10
75	3rd Rifle	55	9	0	64	486	13	13	17
75	4th Rifle	6	7	0	13	63	21	20	23
751	Archery	47	10	0	57	423	13	11	10
751	Muzzle	9	1	2	12	76	16	20	18
751	1st Rifle	31	0	0	31	143	22	17	21
751	2nd Rifle	22	4	0	26	309	8	11	11
751	3rd Rifle	25	3	0	28	375	7	15	18
751	4th Rifle	0	3	3	6	71	8	15	18
751	Late	0	50	0	50	57	88	59	58
77	Archery	41	6	0	47	849	6	7	8
77	Muzzle	16	7	0	23	134	17	16	17
77	Early	0	2	0	2	15	13	11	29
77	1st Rifle	82	13	0	95	570	17	25	28
77	2nd Rifle	72	0	4	76	988	8	16	14
77	3rd Rifle	54	9	3	66	863	8	12	13
77	4th Rifle	0	4	0	4	84	5	21	23
771	Archery	3	3	0	6	94	6	10	9
771	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	31	0	10	11
771	Early	0	3	0	3	11	27	38	32
771	1st Rifle	0	0	0	0	38	0	19	31
771	2nd Rifle	19	3	0	22	173	13	16	15
771	3rd Rifle	27	0	0	27	237	11	12	12
771	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	39	0	5	7
78	Archery	112	27	3	142	1320	11	13	13
78	Muzzle	33	2	0	35	149	23	23	21
78	Early	0	7	3	10	10	100	63	49
78	1st Rifle	41	2	3	46	269	17	27	31
78	2nd Rifle	136	14	0	150	871	17	18	16
78	3rd Rifle	110	6	0	116	697	17	17	16
78	4th Rifle	18	14	2	34	77	44	37	39

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## Uncompahgre Plateau

GMUs 61, 62

Montrose CPW: 970-252-6000

Maps: GMU 64, 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.

Chronic Wasting Disease in deer has been detected in the low elevation of GMU 62 in the Uncompahgre Valley, primarily on private land.

### Deer Hunting

The deer population has been struggling in these units for many years. Drought conditions over the last decade have had negative effects on fawn survival and the overall population is only about half of the objective. The drought outlook continues as winter snowfall was low and the summer was dry with little rain.

Deer infected with Chronic Wasting Disease were found in this unit in 2016. Hunters are required to have their animals tested for CWD. To help bolster the population, license allocation still remains very conservative at 1,565.

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: 14,900**

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

## 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
61	Archery	5	0	0	5	39	13	20	22
61	Muzzle	9	0	0	9	18	50	58	51
61	2nd Rifle	39	0	0	39	81	48	51	51
61	3rd Rifle	46	0	0	46	100	46	56	59
62	Archery	57	0	0	57	169	34	29	27
62	Muzzle	7	0	0	7	33	21	26	33
62	2nd Rifle	186	19	5	210	490	43	46	50
62	3rd Rifle	225	15	0	240	450	53	58	62

## Elk Hunting

The elk population has stabilized after three years of reduced cow and antlerless licenses. Drought conditions during the last decade, however, have affected calf survival which has been in decline. CPW biologists are also conducting a long-term study in an attempt to determine the causes. Elk are widely distributed and often move within the boundaries of Unit 61 which is a totally limited unit. Be sure you know the location of the boundary line that separates GMU 61 and 62. Elk also move into canyons and onto private property with hunting pressure.

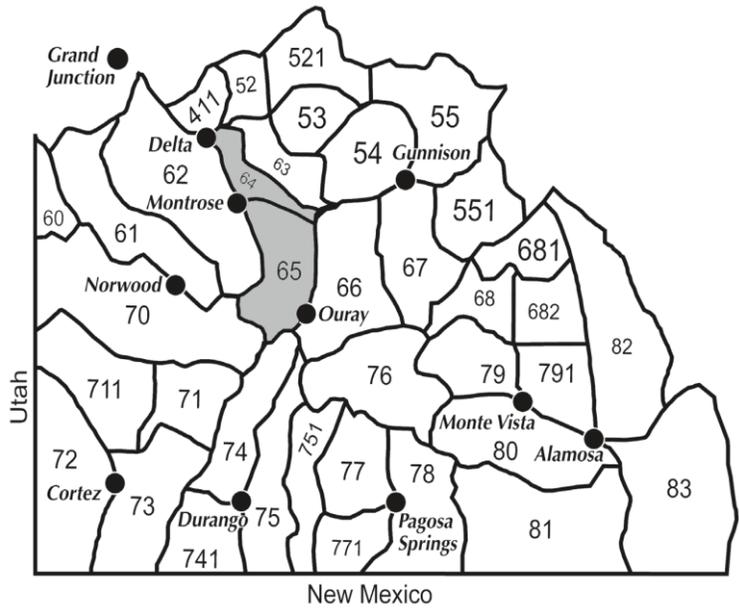
It's recommended that hunters start at high elevation, especially in the early seasons. But those who venture into the tough canyon terrain could be rewarded. Be sure to stay on public lands in the canyon areas. Hunters should also move well away from roads to improve chances of success. If your tag is for GMU 62 be sure that you are hunting on the northeast side of the Divide Road.

**Estimate elk population: 10,400**

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

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
61	Archery	49	5	3	57	90	63	45	45
61	Muzzle	20	17	0	37	84	44	46	48
61	Early	19	0	0	19	28	68	74	78
61	1st Rifle	47	25	0	72	167	43	51	56
61	2nd Rifle	44	41	0	85	262	32	43	46
61	3rd Rifle	30	98	0	128	226	57	51	51
61	4th Rifle	9	55	5	69	216	32	34	45
61	Late	0	15	0	15	17	88	56	74
62	Archery	125	48	3	176	1724	10	12	13
62	Muzzle	19	7	0	26	173	15	15	15
62	1st Rifle	68	23	8	99	386	26	28	29
62	2nd Rifle	161	35	3	199	1431	14	15	15
62	3rd Rifle	52	15	7	74	929	8	11	11
62	4th Rifle	13	25	2	40	202	20	21	29



## 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.

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

**Deer Hunting**

The deer herd is substantially below objective but appears to be stable at this time. Drought conditions are having a negative effect on this population. In the low country of the Uncompahgre Valley on private land some deer with CWD have been detected. Only one of the infected deer, however, was harvested on public land.

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: 6,950**

**3-year estimate sex ratio: 30 bucks per 100 does**

## 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
64	Archery	9	0	0	9	32	28	28	27
64	Muzzle	4	0	0	4	14	29	31	35
64	2nd Rifle	91	0	0	91	198	46	42	45
64	3rd Rifle	42	0	0	42	194	22	37	44
64	4th Rifle	6	0	0	6	14	43	50	46
65	Archery	14	0	0	14	79	18	28	31
65	Muzzle	12	0	0	12	29	41	37	39
65	Early	14	0	0	14	21	67	70	72
65	2nd Rifle	101	0	0	101	269	38	37	41
65	3rd Rifle	91	0	0	91	343	27	42	48
65	4th Rifle	7	0	0	7	8	88	91	82

## Elk Hunting

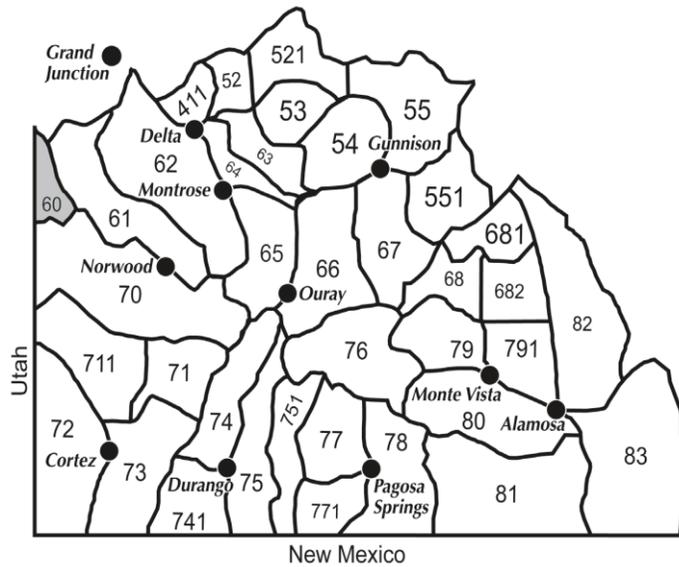
The population is slightly above objective and appears to be growing slowly, so hunting prospects are good. Because of the extent of wilderness area in these units, elk find plenty of lush meadows for summer grazing. The elk will stay high until hunting pressure or weather force them down. If you hunt public land be aware that it is 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: 5,770**

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

## 2019 Elk Hunting Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
64	Archery	17	0	0	17	115	15	15	11
64	Muzzle	6	3	0	9	51	18	15	20
64	1st Rifle	52	32	0	84	202	42	27	30
64	2nd Rifle	31	22	0	53	390	14	14	14
64	3rd Rifle	4	7	0	11	274	4	10	12
64	4th Rifle	6	25	0	31	104	30	23	30
64	Late	0	7	0	7	19	37	35	32
65	Archery	112	13	0	125	860	15	13	13
65	Muzzle	19	5	0	24	140	17	15	15
65	1st Rifle	120	45	6	171	529	32	35	33
65	2nd Rifle	87	14	0	101	672	15	18	18
65	3rd Rifle	36	58	0	94	602	16	19	19
65	4th Rifle	21	36	0	57	213	27	36	36



## 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, accurate population or sex-ratio 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.

**Estimated deer population: 1,460**

### 2019 Deer Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Buck	Doe	Fawn	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3-year	5-year
60	Archery	0	0	0	0	41	0	24	28
60	Muzzle	7	0	0	7	7	100	46	39
60	2nd Rifle	29	0	0	29	69	42	48	45
60	3rd Rifle	25	3	0	28	71	39	38	45
60	4th Rifle	0	0	0	0	5	0	57	55

### 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.

## 2019 Elk Harvest Statistics

Unit	Season	Bull	Cow	Calf	Harvest	Hunters	% Success	% Success	% Success
							2019	3 years	5 years
60	Archery	3	0	0	3	44	7	2	7
60	Muzzle	0	0	0	0	17	0	4	9
60	Early	0	10	0	10	34	29	42	41
60	1st Rifle	10	0	0	10	53	19	32	33
60	2nd Rifle	19	3	0	22	89	25	20	22
60	3rd Rifle	17	0	0	17	104	16	15	13
60	4th Rifle	3	4	0	7	60	12	15	24

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# 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 on Colorado Parks and Wildlife website:**

[https://cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/DrawResults\\_PreferencePoints.aspx](https://cpw.state.co.us/thingstodo/Pages/DrawResults_PreferencePoints.aspx)

# 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

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/https://www.fs.usda.gov/>

\*RD=Ranger District

<b>GRAND MESA-UNCOMPAHGRE-GUNNISON National Forests</b>	<b>Delta</b>	<b>970-874-6600</b> <a href="https://www.fs.usda.gov/gmug">https://www.fs.usda.gov/gmug</a>
Gunnison ranger district	Gunnison	970-641-0471
Norwood ranger district	Norwood	970-327-4261
Ouray ranger district	Montrose	970-240-5300
Paonia ranger district	Paonia	970-527-4131
<b>SAN JUAN National Forest</b>	<b>Durango</b>	<b>970-247-4874</b> <a href="https://www.fs.usda.gov/sanju an/">https://www.fs.usda.gov/sanju an/</a>
Pagosa ranger district	Pagosa Springs	970-264-1500
<b>RIO GRANDE National Forest</b>	<b>Monte Vista</b>	<b>719-852-5941</b> <a href="https://www.fs.usda.gov/riogrande">https://www.fs.usda.gov/riogrande</a>

## 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 field office	Del Norte	719-657-3321
Tres Rios field office	Dolores	970-882-7296
Gunnison field office	Gunnison	970-641-0471
La Jara field office	La Jara	719-274-8971
Saguache field office	Saguache	719-655-2547

Suggestions for this guide? Contact: [joe.lewandowski@state.co.us](mailto:joe.lewandowski@state.co.us) or 970-375-6708

# Thanks for hunting Colorado!

See a wildlife crime? Call Operation Game Thief  
1-877-265-6648

*Need hunting information?  
Call a Hunt Planner at 1-303-291-7526*

For more details about hunting in Colorado:

<https://cpw.state.co.us/>

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Where They Belong™**



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