

2023-2024 Fort Carson Harvest Summary



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Introduction

Fort Carson (FC) is an active training Army installation and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) state game management unit (GMU) 591. This summary focuses on the big game species' harvested on Fort Carson with a text summary of small game harvests.

Military training occurs downrange five days a week and frequently occurs seven days a week. Other than military training, there are Department of the Army and Department of Defense civilians and contractors working downrange five days a week including, but not limited to, biologists, archeologists, law enforcement, land rehabilitators, firefighters, and range control staff.

Hunting and other downrange recreation are allowed on the weekends, some holidays, and some weekdays as safely allowed and when required staff is available to support the open recreation areas. Temporary and permanent velocity and weapon restrictions occur on FC and are enforced regardless of the hunting season.

Because military training and official duties always take priority, there are velocity and weapon restrictions despite the hunting season, and limited dates and available open areas for hunting activities, this can create special challenges to hunters who choose to buy GMU 591 specific tags or choose to fill their tag on FC with a multiple GMU tag.

Purpose

As we collect more data, we will begin to look for emerging trends and patterns and show long term information for big game harvests on FC and recreational access data such as number of hunters and downrange access passes issued per activity. This summary is the first full year of big game harvest data we've been able to collect in the recent years.

We issued a total of 5,654 downrange access passes from April 1st, 2023 to mid-February, 2024 for recreational access. The number of total downrange passes reflects the availability of all activities, including hunting for small and big game, scouting, downrange cycling, and other recreation (hiking, photography, dog training) for that timeframe. Some of the downrange pass numbers for individual hunters reflect their ability to check in and out of multiple blocks of training areas in one day as they move around in different areas. Big game passes and harvest data for specific seasons will be summarized in the sections below. Data does not include information on non-participants or for youth hunters who harvested and reported under a mentor.

Summaries for the 2023-24 Big Game Seasons on Fort Carson

Mule Deer

Deer archery and muzzleloader draw tags included multiple game management units (GMUs) to include 59, 511, and 591. Because we don't know which GMU hunters chose to hunt in for those seasons, only the GMU 591 specific deer rifle tags will be shown as percent of tags filled for the purposes of the FC harvest summary report.

The total number of mule deer harvested for all seasons on FC was 71 animals, with bucks accounting for 75% of the harvest and does accounting for 24% of the harvest. The total number of individual hunters for all mule deer seasons on FC was 134 individuals with 1,120 downrange passes being issued for access. Summary of mule deer data is in table one below.

Season	Mule Deer		Multiple GMU Tag	Hunters	DR Passes	% of hunters harvested
DRAW Archery	1	175 tags	59, 511, 591	12	86	N/A
DRAW Muzzleloader	0		59, 511, 591	1	1	N/A
DRAW Rifle	70			121	1033	58%
Sex	Rifle Draw Tags	Harvested	% of tags filled			
Buck	100	54	54%			
Doe	35	17	49%			

Table 1. Summary of all mule deer data for 2023-2024 on Fort Carson

Deer Archery - September, 2 through 30, 2023

For deer archery season, one buck was harvested on FC and CPW issued 175 tags between GMU's 59, 511, and 591. There were a total of 12 individual hunters who checked into FC and we issued 86 downrange passes during this season.

Deer Muzzleloader - September, 9 through 17, 2023

For deer, either sex, muzzleloader season, no deer were harvested on FC. CPW issued 60 buck tags and 30 doe tags between GMUs 59, 511, and 591. There was one hunter and one downrange pass issued during this season.

Deer Rifle - October 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024

From the data we received, 58% of hunters with a deer, either sex, rifle tag were able to fill their tag. CPW tags issued for deer rifle season were 100 for bucks and 35 for does. Of the 70 deer harvested on FC, 53 were bucks and 17 were does. 121 individual hunters participated and 1,033 downrange passes were issued to those hunters during deer rifle season.

Elk

All bull elk harvested from FC, in all seasons, are required to have four points or more on one antler or a brow tine of five inches or more. Elk archery, and 2nd and 3rd rifle seasons were over the counter (OTC) tags and included multiple game management units (GMUs). Because we don't know which GMU hunters chose to hunt for those seasons, only the GMU 591 specific elk tags for late cow, rifle, and muzzleloader will be shown as percent of tags filled for the purposes of the FC harvest report.

The total number of elk harvested for all seasons on FC was 37 animals, with bulls accounting for 62% of the harvest and cows accounting for 38% of the harvest. The total number of individual hunters for all elk seasons on FC was 346 individuals with 2,217 downrange passes being issued for access. Summary of elk data is in table two below.

Season	Elk		Multiple GMU Tag	Hunters	Passes	% of hunters harvested
OTC Archery	9			150	1308	6%
DRAW Muzzleloader	0		59, 511, 581, 591	10	44	N/A
DRAW Rifle late (cow)	14			78	471	18%
OTC 2nd bull	8			78	299	10%
OTC 3rd Bull	6			30	95	20%
				346	2217	
Sex	Draw Tags	Harvested	% of tags filled			
Cow	45	14	31%			

Table 2. Summary of all elk data for 2023-24 on Fort Carson

Elk OTC Archery - September, 2 through 30, 2023

For elk, either sex, archery season, nine bull elk were harvested on FC. There were a total of 150 individual hunters who checked into FC. We issued 1,308 downrange passes with 6% of those hunters harvesting this season.

Elk Muzzleloader - September, 9 through 17, 2023

For elk, either sex, muzzleloader season, no elk were harvested on Fort Carson with CPW issuing 100 bull tags and 120 cow tags between GMUs 59, 511, 581 and 591. There were 10 hunters and 44 downrange passes issued during this season. On September 15th, 2023 there was unexpected, heavy snowfall. The roads downrange on FC deteriorated quickly the next morning and some hunters chose to leave downrange due to poor access and road conditions from the snow storm.

Elk OTC 2nd Rifle - October, 28 through November 5, 2023

For elk 2nd rifle season, eight bull elk were harvested on Fort Carson. There were 78 hunters and 299 downrange passes issued during this season with 10% of those hunters harvesting.

Elk OTC 3rd Rifle - November 11 through the 17, 2023

For elk 3rd rifle season, six bull elk were harvested on Fort Carson. There were 30 hunters and 95 downrange passes issued during this season with 20% of those hunters harvesting.

Elk late season Cow - October 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024

From the data we received, 31% of hunters with a cow rifle tag were able to fill their tag. CPW issued 45 draw tags for cow rifle this year, of which 14 were harvested. 78 individual hunters participated in this season and we issued 471 downrange passes. 18% of those individual hunters harvested this season.

Pronghorn

Season	Pronghorn			Hunters	Passes	% of hunters harvested
OTC Archery	1			10	33	10%
DRAW Muzzleloader	1			7	31	14%
DRAW Rifle	10			17	65	59%
	Draw Tags	Harvested	% of tags filled			
Muzzle loader						
Doe	5	0	0%			
Buck	5	1	20%			
Rifle						
Doe	10	4	40%			
Buck	15	6	40%			

Table 3. Summary of all pronghorn data for 2023 on Fort Carson

Archery OTC - August 15 through September 20, 2023

For buck archery, one pronghorn was harvested on Fort Carson. There were 10 hunters and 33 downrange passes issued during this season. 10% of those hunters harvested.

Muzzleloader - September 21 through 29, 2023

From the data, 10% of hunters with a pronghorn, either sex, muzzleloader tag were able to fill their tag. CPW tags issued for pronghorn muzzleloader were five for bucks and five for does. The one pronghorn harvested was a buck, seven individual hunters participated, and 31 downrange passes were issued. Of those hunters who participated during the season, 14% harvested.

Rifle - October 7 through 15, 2023

From the data we received, 40% of hunters with a pronghorn, either sex, rifle tag were able to fill their tag. CPW tags issued for pronghorn rifle were 15 for bucks and 10 for does. Of the 10 pronghorn harvested on FC, six were bucks and four were does. 17 individual hunters participate and 65 downrange passes were issued to those hunters during pronghorn rifle season. Of the 17 hunters, 58% were successful in harvesting.

White-tailed Deer

OTC Rifle - December 1 through 31, 2023

White-tailed deer season is OTC and shares multiple state GMUs. On FC, three white-tailed deer does were harvested this year. There were 33 hunters and 233 downrange passes issued during this season with 9% of those hunters harvesting. Summary of all white-tailed deer data is in table four below.

Season	White-tailed Deer	Hunters	Passes	% of hunters harvested
OTC Rifle		33	233	9%
Buck	0			
Doe	3			
Total	3			

Table 4. Summary of white-tailed deer data for 2023 on Fort Carson.

Turkey

OTC Spring - April 8 through May 31, 2023

For spring turkey season, we had 11 male turkeys harvested on FC. There were 63 individual hunters who participated and 289 downrange passes issued. Of the 63 hunters, 17% were successful in harvesting during spring turkey season.

OTC Fall - September 1 through October 1, 2023

For fall turkey season, we had one adult male turkey harvested on FC. There were nine individual hunters who participated and 26 downrange passes issued. Of the nine hunters, 11% were successful in harvesting during spring turkey season. The summary of turkey season data is in table five below.

Season	Turkey	Hunters	Passes	% of hunters harvested
Spring OTC	11	63	289	17%
Fall OTC	1	9	26	11%
Total	12			

Table 5. Summary of spring and fall turkey seasons for 2023 on Fort Carson.

Other Game Summary

Various small game species were also harvested this year to include: seven coyotes, 67 mourning dove, three mallard ducks, one wood duck, one cotton-tailed rabbit, and one badger.