

OVERCROWDING BY NON-RESIDENT HUNTERS CANCELS COLORADO OTC ELK HUNTS

👤 Brandon Siegfried 🕒 January 19, 2023 📁 General, Regulations 👁 6,235 Views



Over the Counter (OTC) Elk tags sold in Colorado

*Includes cow only OTC archery elk (cow only Archery numbers for 2021, 954 nonresidents, 2017 residents)

Year	OTC Resident Total Sold (Archery+Rifle)	OTC NonResident Total Sold (Archery+Rifle)	Total	OTC Resident Archery	OTC NonResident Archery	Total	OTC Resident 2nd and 3rd Rifle	OTC NonResident 2nd and 3rd Rifle	Total
2002	45,287	38,190	83,477	8664	10,497	18,461	37,243	27,723	64,966
2009	49,604	36,467	86,071	18,179	15,545	33,724	31,430	28,902	60,332
2014	34,693	35,808	70,501	20,660	14,984	35,644	36,670	28,834	65,504
2019	32,408	41,609	74,017	17,813	18,558	36,371	34,638	22,701	57,339
2021	49,076	44,408	93,484	34,492	19,209	53,701	32,589	25,159	57,748
% change since 2002	8%	16%	12%	125%	84%	60%	-12%	-9%	-12%
% change since 2009	-15%	22%	9%	-9%	24%	6%	-6%	20%	10%
% change since 2014	-13%	24%	15%	-20%	28%	0%	-10%	21%	2%

Trends/Notes

1. Archery numbers have basically doubled since 2002, 125% residents, 84% nonresidents.
2. Resident archery hunters down 20% since 2009, Nonresident archery hunters up 28% since 2009.
3. More nonresident archery hunters than residents. **Red**
4. 1/19/21 the nonresident OTC rifle numbers suggest for 2021, Nonresident tags were \$371.23 in 2021.
5. Rifle trend since 2014 to residents down 12%, non-residents up 21%.
6. Total Resident OTC numbers down 18% since 2014, Total Nonresident OTC numbers up 24% since 2014.

Observed thru CDMA reports.

Mr. Siegfried contacted Eastmans' Hunting Journals via email regarding his opinion on what the state of Colorado is doing with OTC Archery Elk Tags. This blog is an op-ed article from a Colorado resident hunter's perspective. We welcome responses and other opinions as well.

Hunting is not a right in Colorado, our legislators do not promote equity in resident tag allocation like other western states. Most western states cap non-residents at 10% of limited big game tags, Colorado gives 20-35% of limited elk and deer tags to non-residents and this does not take into effect the soft cap

loopholes or landowner vouchers that are sold back to non-residents. If you read the bios of the **CPW Commissioners**, you won't see many folks passionate about hunting and fishing and you will see that no one is defending resident hunters when it comes to tag allocation and OTC hunting opportunities. One of the few CPW Commissioners that is a "Sportsperson" is an outfitter named Marie Haskett, and last I checked outfitters largely represent non-residents, since that is who pays their bills.

During the **January 17, 2023 CPW Commission meeting** a couple members of the Colorado Resident Hunter Association (Facebook Group) testified to try and save OTC archery hunting in the five E14 / Grand Mesa units (41, 52, 411, 421 and 521). CPW was responding to overcrowding complaints over the past few years. The attached Grand Mesa Archery CPW graph that was shared with the commission this fall shows that non-resident archery hunters are up 250% (1200 to 3000) since 2014 and that resident hunters are actually down 20% (2400 to 2000) since 2014. The surge in hunting pressure is the result of non-residents, in fact, 3 out 5 archery elk hunters on the Grand Mesa are non-residents. No state in the country has numbers like this, where residents of the state are run out of the woods by non-residents, yet that is the trend in archery OTC units and rifle OTC units across Colorado. I have submitted a couple CORA requests over the years to get the following stats. Statewide since 2014 archery OTC resident hunters are down 20% and rifle OTC resident hunters are down 10%. Meanwhile, all statewide OTC hunts (rifle + archery) in Colorado have seen an increase of over 24% by non-residents, from 35,818 in 2014 to 44,409 in 2021.

Most western states like Wyoming, Utah and Idaho would respond to this non-resident surge by capping non-resident OTC tags and keeping OTC elk hunts open to residents to promote the sport to future generations of resident hunters. Not Colorado, on January 17th the CPW Commission with no objection to the facts, ruled to limit all archery elk tags on the Grand Mesa next year and then Commissioner Marie Haskett doubled down and proclaimed that they needed to change **all archery to statewide draw in 2024 to meet biological and social management objectives**. That's right, *social management objectives*, I guess that does not include resident hunter equity compared to other states.

Colorado's population has doubled from 3 million in 1990 to over 6 million today. At a time when the CPW should be researching why resident hunters are dropping out the past 10 years, they are actually looking to remove OTC opportunities that should be protected for residents exclusively. **No state treats resident hunters worse than Colorado.**

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