

2023 PCMS Hunting Report



February 2024

2023 Executive Summary

- PCMS received good snows from mid-January thru mid-February of 2023. However, it remained dry until late May and early June. This was followed by another extremely dry period in July and most of August. In late August and early September, PCMS finally received some good soaking rains which were the remnants of two Tropical Storms. While many of the dirt tanks in Training Area (TA) 1, 2, 16 and Range 9 had retained water from previous years until mid to late summer, the tropical moisture wasn't enough to recharge them and most of these tanks were very low or dry by the peak of the hunting season.
- Spring turkey season was allowed again in 2023. The hunt took place on weekends (Fri-Sun) in April and several hunters were successful. There isn't much demand for Spring turkey hunting and the weekend only schedule seemed adequate to accommodate the low number of hunters.
- PCMS Campground was open for one weekend in August. The campground officially opened Sept 1 and closed on January 1. New signage was placed at the campground entrance with some basic campground rules and a reminder for hunters to check out at the end of the day. There were no known issues with its operation this year and no failed checkouts.
- Since phone checkin/out was implemented in October of 2022, the kiosk is rarely used and will be retired. Recreation checkin/out in 2024 will be exclusively by phone, PC or tablet. Previously, recreationists were allowed to check in via phone, PC or kiosk, but were required to check out via kiosk only. This has streamlined the check in/out process and alleviates the need to return to the hunter check station at the PCMS entrance to change TAs. However, the TA checkin system at PCMS is universally disliked based on comments left in iSportsman and in the hunter survey. Much of this stems from poor cell coverage across PCMS which results in more time spent trying to find a signal and less time spent recreating.
- November was again the busiest month of the year based on number of downrange passes issued due to the 3 elk seasons and the archery deer season. However, downrange passes issued in September and October were nearly equal and just slightly less than November.
- Prescribed burns were conducted on the Squad Live Fire Range within the Small Arms Range below Dillingham Ridge in mid-October and on the east side of Range 9 in mid-November. These areas were temporarily closed to recreation for 2-3 days during each burn period. Additionally, range reseeding work was scheduled in late November and early December during the weekdays, but not

on the weekends. However, the work was cancelled and rescheduled for Spring 2024 due to equipment repairs.

- The number of total downrange passes issued for calendar year (Jan – Dec) 2023 greatly exceeded previous years. This is likely due to the requirement for recreationists to check into TAs rather than the entire PCMS. Approximately 3800 downrange passes were issued during the calendar year. This is approximately 1300 more downrange passes than were issued in 2022 and approximately 2000 more than the 6 year average from 2016-2021.
- The total number of individual recreationists at PCMS in 2023 was 403 while the average number of recreationists per year during the time period of 2016-2023 is 378.
- Number of hunters participating in Over-The-Counter (OTC) archery pronghorn & OTC archery elk increased significantly from the previous year. The number of OTC archery pronghorn hunters quadrupled from 6 in 2022 to 24 in 2023 and the number of OTC archery elk hunters more than doubled from 23 in 2022 to 50 in 2023. It is likely that the hunting closures in Northwest CO in 2023 that were a result heavy winter snow and big game die off may have caused many hunters to shift their hunting plans and come to PCMS because it is an OTC unit for these two hunts.
- Harvest numbers remained steady for bighorn sheep (BH) with a 100% success rate again among the 4 hunters. The Boone & Crockett (B&C) average for the 4 sheep this year was 142 3/8. This was 12 points below the 12 year average of BH sheep B&C scores.
- 90% of the hunters at PCMS are civilians. The other 10% are active duty.
- The 12 year trend of pronghorn B&C scores is downward. More pronghorn are being harvested now than 10 years ago because the pronghorn muzzleloader season is now before the rifle season and during the peak of the rut. Although the success rate between the two hunts was nearly the same in 2023 (70% muzzleloader Vs 71% rifle), almost as many trophy type animals were taken during the muzzleloader season as the rifle season. Additionally, the number of preference points required for muzzleloader season is inequitable compared to the number required for rifle season.
- The 12 year trend of elk B&C scores is also downward. The increase in elk hunters the last 5-6 years has corresponded with an increase in elk harvest. With no antler point restriction in place and more hunters, the B&C score of bulls has gone down because younger animals are being taken. In 2023, a significant

percentage of bulls harvested were 4 pts or smaller (32%). The percentage of bulls harvested with 5 pts or less was 50%. Additionally, many elk hunters are from out-of-state and therefore have more incentive to shoot any bull they see so as not to go home with an expensive unfilled tag. The result is younger animals being harvested.

- Mule deer B&C scores have remained steady with a 12 year average of approximately 150 across all seasons.

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IMPORTANT NOTES:

- All Boone and Crockett (B&C) data were collected by the individual hunter, not PCMS biologists. Therefore, B&C scores are subject to variation. All B&C scores and calculations are reviewed by PCMS biologists and the calculations are corrected when necessary.
- All B&C numbers used in this report are derived from the gross scores and not the final (adjusted) scores. Final scores are usually lower than gross scores because points are deducted for asymmetry in the final score. The exception to this is when scoring an atypical animal. When considering management options, the PCMS biologists focus more on overall size rather than symmetry.
- The average was calculated using all the acceptable B&C scores. For elk, spike animals were not included. This year 100% of hunters turned in their B&C data.
- This report was prepared solely to share hunting data collected on PCMS and not to provide any statistical analysis. Statistical analysis was not performed because the sample sizes (n) were generally too small, and there was too great a degree of variation in the data collection method to provide accurate statistical analysis.
- Calendar Year is Jan 1 – Dec 31
- Hunt Year is Apr 1 – Mar 31

PCMS 2023 Harvest Data Summary

MULE DEER

Rifle Data (142 only)

Total number of buck permits	19
Total number of hunters that showed	19
Percent of hunters that showed	100%
Rifle bucks harvested	16
Rifle buck success rate	84%
Average B&C	159 2/8

Total number of doe permits	20
Total number that showed	14
Percent of hunters that showed	70%
Rifle does harvested	10
Rifle doe success rate	71%

Muzzleloader (142 only)

Total number of buck permits	15
Total number that showed	14
Percent of hunters that showed	93%
ML Bucks Harvested	6
ML buck success rate	43%
Average B&C	168 3/8

Total number of doe permits	15
Total number that showed	6
Percent of hunters that showed	40%
ML does harvested	3
ML doe success rate	50%

Archery (142 only)

Total number of tags (either sex)	35
Total number that showed	31
Percent of hunters that showed	89%
Archery bucks harvested	9
Archery does harvested	1
Hunter success rate	32%
Average B&C	143 4/8

All Seasons

Total # bucks harvested	31
Average size	156 0/8
% with B & C > 180	13%
Total # does	14

ELK

Rifle Data (2nd & 3rd season OTC multi-unit)

Total number of bull elk permits	OTC
Total number of bull hunters	46
Percent of hunters that showed	n/a
Rifle bulls harvested	15
Rifle bull elk success rate	33%
Average B & C	211 0/8

Rifle Data (4th season multi-unit draw)

Total number of bull elk permits	30
Total number of hunters at PCMS	19
Percent of hunters at PCMS	63%
Rifle bulls harvested	5
Bull elk (4 th season) success rate	26%
Average rifle B & C	178 4/8

Rifle Cow elk (142 only)

Total number of cow permits	25
Total number of cow hunters	23*
Percent of hunters that showed	92%
Cows harvested*	8
Cow elk success rate	35%

* Includes 3 youth hunters. There were 25 adult tags.

Muzzleloader (multi-unit)

Total number of permits	19
Total number that showed	5
Percent of hunters that showed	26%
ML bull elk harvested	0
ML cow elk harvested	0
ML success rate	0
Average B&C	NA

Archery (multi-unit OTC)

Total number of permits	OTC
Total number of hunters that showed	50
Archery bulls harvested	2
Archery cows harvested	0
Archery success rate	4%
Average B&C	212 1/8

All Seasons

Total # bulls harvested	22
Average size	211 0/8
% with B & C > 300	0%
Total # cows	8

PRONGHORN

Rifle (142 only)

Total number of buck permits	30
Total number that showed	24
Percent of hunters that showed	80%
Rifle bucks harvested	17
Rifle success rate	71%
Average B&C	69 0/8

Total number of doe permits	25
Total number that showed	22
Percent of hunters that showed	88%
Rifle does harvested	15
Rifle doe success rate	65%

Muzzleloader

Total number of buck permits	20
Total number that showed	17
Percent of hunters that showed	85%
ML bucks Harvested	12
ML buck success rate	70%
Average B&C	72 5/8

Total number of doe permits	20
Total number that showed	9
Percent of hunters that showed	45%
ML does harvested	4
ML doe success rate	44%

Archery (multi-unit OTC)

Total number of tags (either sex)	OTC
Total number that showed	26
Percent of hunters that showed	n/a
Archery bucks harvested	4
Archery does harvested	0
Hunter success rate (bucks)	15%
Average B&C	63 6/8

All Seasons

Total # bucks harvested	33
Average size	69 5/8
% with B & C > 75	24%
Total # does	19

BIG HORN SHEEP

Rifle (Unit S-61)

Total number of ram permits	4
Total number of hunters that showed	4
Percent of hunters that showed	100%
Rams harvested	4
Ram success rate	100%
Average B&C	142 4/8
% with B&C > 160	0%

OTHER GAME

As of 29 Feb 2024 other game harvested on PCMS includes:

coyotes - 18
bobcats - 4
gray fox - 0
rabbits - 3
turkey - 4
badger - 0
scaled quail - 0
mountain lion - 1
bear - 0
dove - 0

PCMS Historical B&C Data and Harvest Numbers for Pronghorn

	Archery Pronghorn		Muzzleloader Pronghorn		Rifle Pronghorn		Total Pronghorn	
	n	Gross Avg	n	Gross Avg	n	Gross Avg	n	Gross Avg
2011	2	*	5	*	14	*	21	*
2012	2	72	2	60	13	70 7/8	17	67 5/8
2013	2	64	1	70 4/8	**	**	3	66 1/8
2014	3	65 3/8	5	65 6/8	11	70 6/8	19	68 2/8
2015	1	58 6/8	10	71	15	73 3/8	26	71 7/8
2016	4	54 1/8	14	63	***	***	18	58 4/8
2017	4	55 6/8	28	67 2/8	19	72 3/8	51	68 2/8
2018	***	***	32	69 5/8	14	67 5/8	46	68 6/8
2019	2	70 6/8	19	72 1/8	13	68 3/8	34	70 5/8
2020	3	75 4/8	16	65 7/8	3****	70 5/8	22	67 7/8
2021	3	64	13	65 3/8	14	65 4/8	30	65 3/8
2022	2	64 2/8	11	68 5/8	9****	65 6/8	22	66 2/8
2023	4	63 6/8	12	72 5/8	17	69 0/8	33	69 5/8

* No B&C score collected. ** No rifle hunt due to government shut down. ***No hunt due to training. ****Limited season

Rifle Pronghorn Horn Length 1989-1997									
Year	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
# Pronghorns Measured	27	38	33	41	36	37	36	n/a	28
Avg. Horn Length	10 4/8	12	12 1/8	12 1/8	12 4/8	12 4/8	12 2/8	n/a	12 2/8

Rifle Pronghorn Horn Length 2012-2020									
Year	2012	2013*	2014	2015	2016**	2017	2018	2019	2020***
# Pronghorns Measured	13	n/a	11	15	n/a	19	14	13	3
Avg. Horn Length	12 7/8	n/a	13 3/8	13 3/8	n/a	13 3/8	12 4/8	12 6/8	12 3/8

Rifle Pronghorn Horn Length 2021-2029									
Year	2021	2022***	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
# Pronghorns Measured	14	9	17						
Avg. Horn Length	11 7/8	12 4/8	12 4/8						

*Cancelled due to government shutdown. **Cancelled due to training. ***Partial Season due to training

NOTES:

From 1989 to 1997 the B&C scores were calculated by adding the horn lengths, basal circumferences and length of prongs.

The B&C score method eventually changed to include the above, and also the circumferences at four points along each horn, tip to tip spread and the inside spread. In order to compare this historical data and the current data, only the horn lengths are used.

PCMS Historical B&C Data and Harvest Numbers for Deer

	Archery Deer		Muzzleloader Deer		Rifle Deer		Total Deer	
	<i>n</i>	<i>Gross Avg</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Gross Avg</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Gross Avg</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>Gross Avg</i>
2011	2	137 2/8	-	-	12	136 7/8	14	137 1/8
2012	7*	112 3/8	7	132 1/8	10*	137 1/8	24	127 2/8
2013	3	142 1/8	3	131 3/8	10	168 2/8	15	156 2/8
2014	7	141 7/8	4*	114 4/8	9	153 5/8	18	142 6/8
2015	9	159 2/8	2	140	14	167 1/8	25	162 1/8
2016	5	131 7/8	5	155 6/8	10	159 1/8	20	151 4/8
2017	7	150 4/8	11	148 4/8	17	164 2/8	35	156 5/8
2018	7	123 5/8	6	124	17	137 1/8	40	131 3/8
2019	6	128 2/8	6	154 3/8	19	166 7/8	31	149 7/8
2020	7	140 4/8	**	N/A	5	171 5/8	12	153 4/8
2021	8	149 5/8	7	166	15	153 2/8	30	151 3/8
2022	6	161 5/8	3	160 7/8	6	140 3/8	15	153
2023	9	143 4/8	6	168 3/8	16	159 2/8	31	156

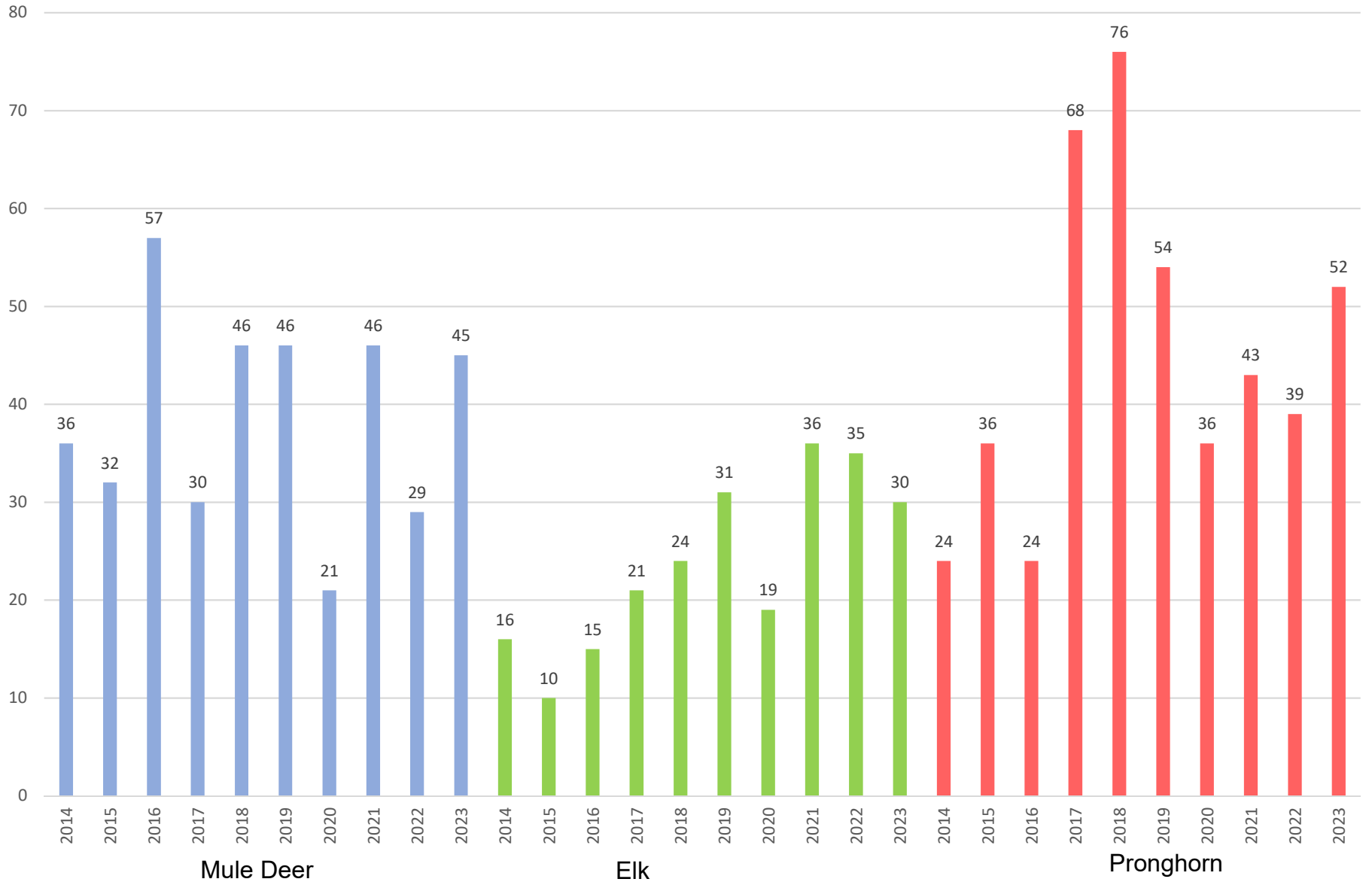
*Some scores were missing. **No hunt due to training

PCMS Historical B&C Data and Harvest Numbers for Elk

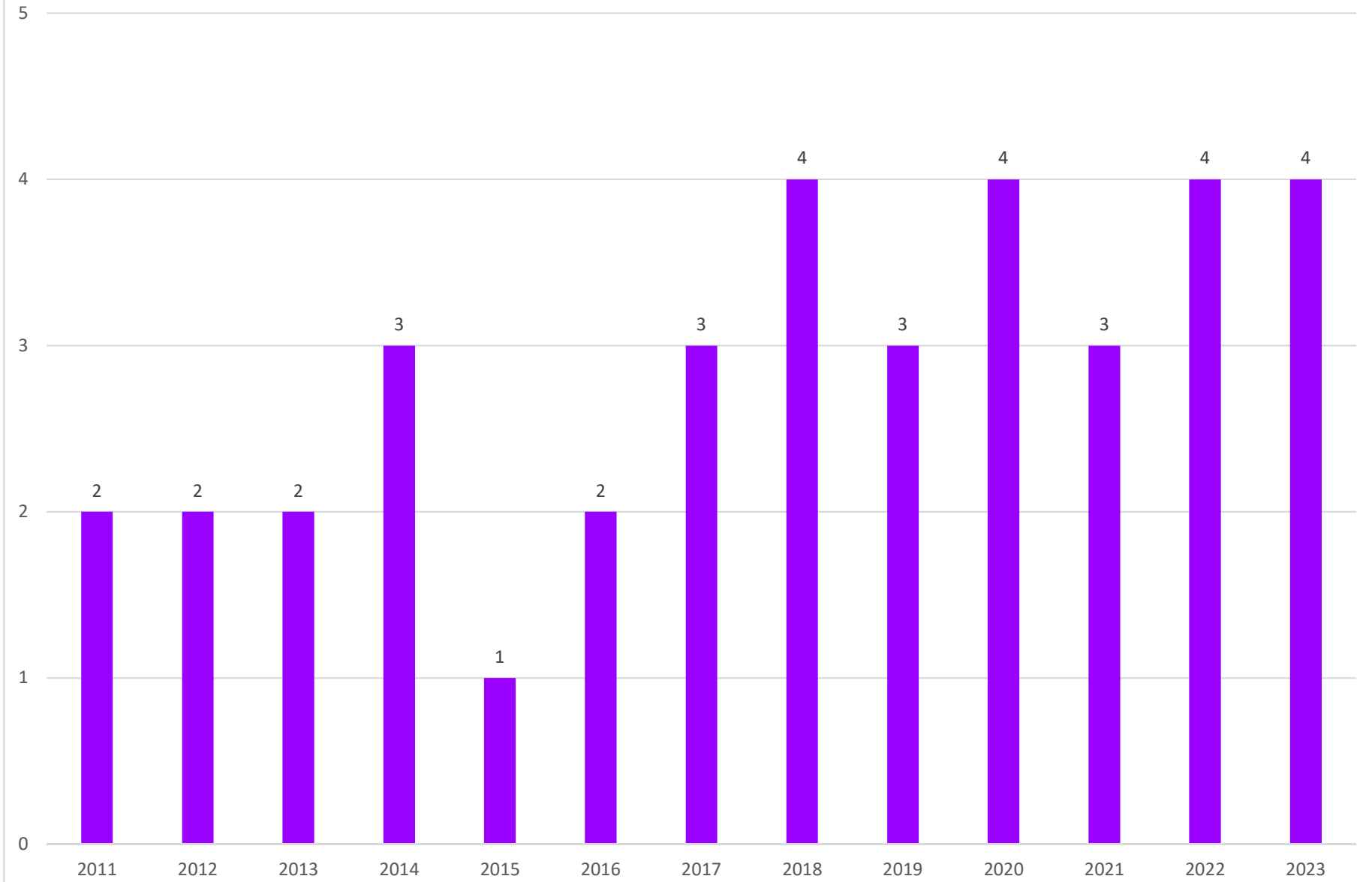
	Archery Elk		Muzzleloader Elk		OTC & Draw Rifle Elk		Total Elk	
	n	Gross Avg	n	Gross Avg	n	Gross Avg	n	Gross Avg
2011	1	*	1	*	2	*	4	-
2012	1	258	1	297 4/8	9	235	11	263 4/8
2013	0	0	2	272 6/8	5	241 2/8	8**	255 4/8
2014	1	281 6/8	0	0	12***	253 7/8	13	257
2015	0	0	1*	*	9	244 1/8	10	244 1/8
2016	1	172	1	205 2/8	13	238 5/8	15	232
2017	1	226 5/8	0	0	10	202 4/8	11	204 6/8
2018	2	261 2/8	****	****	20***	226	22	230 1/8
2019	2	278	1	205	20***	222 5/8	23	227 4/8
2020	2	212 4/8	0	0	8	224 2/8	10	222 7/8
2021	2	182	0	0	22	219 1/8	24	215 5/8
2022	2	297 4/8	0	0	20***	192 2/8	22	203 7/8
2023	2	212 1/8	0	0	20***	201 7/8	22	211

*No B&C scores collected **Some scores were missing
 *** Includes spikes (no B&C) ****No hunt due to training

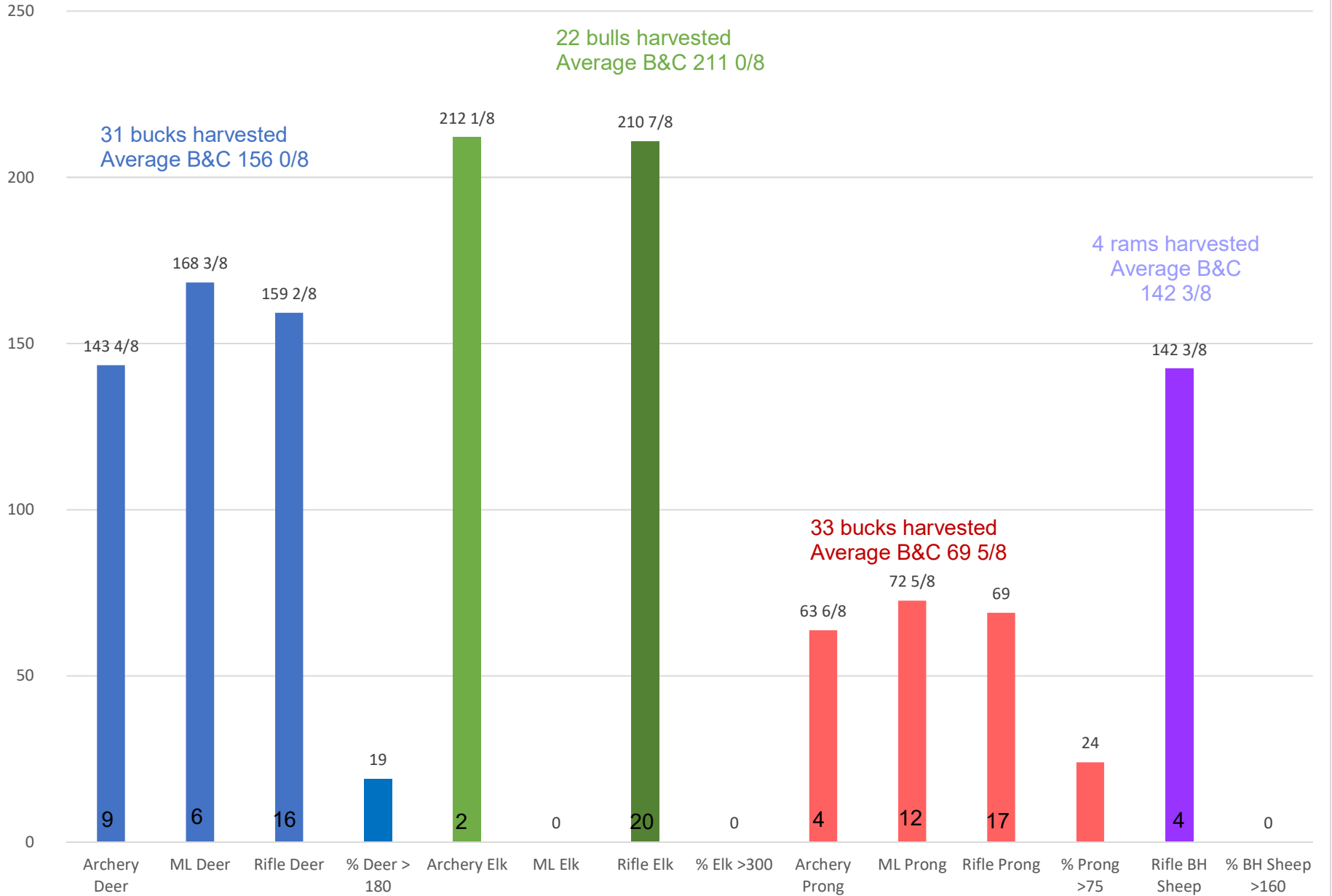
All PCMS Mule Deer, Elk & Pronghorn Harvested 2014-2023 (Male & Female)



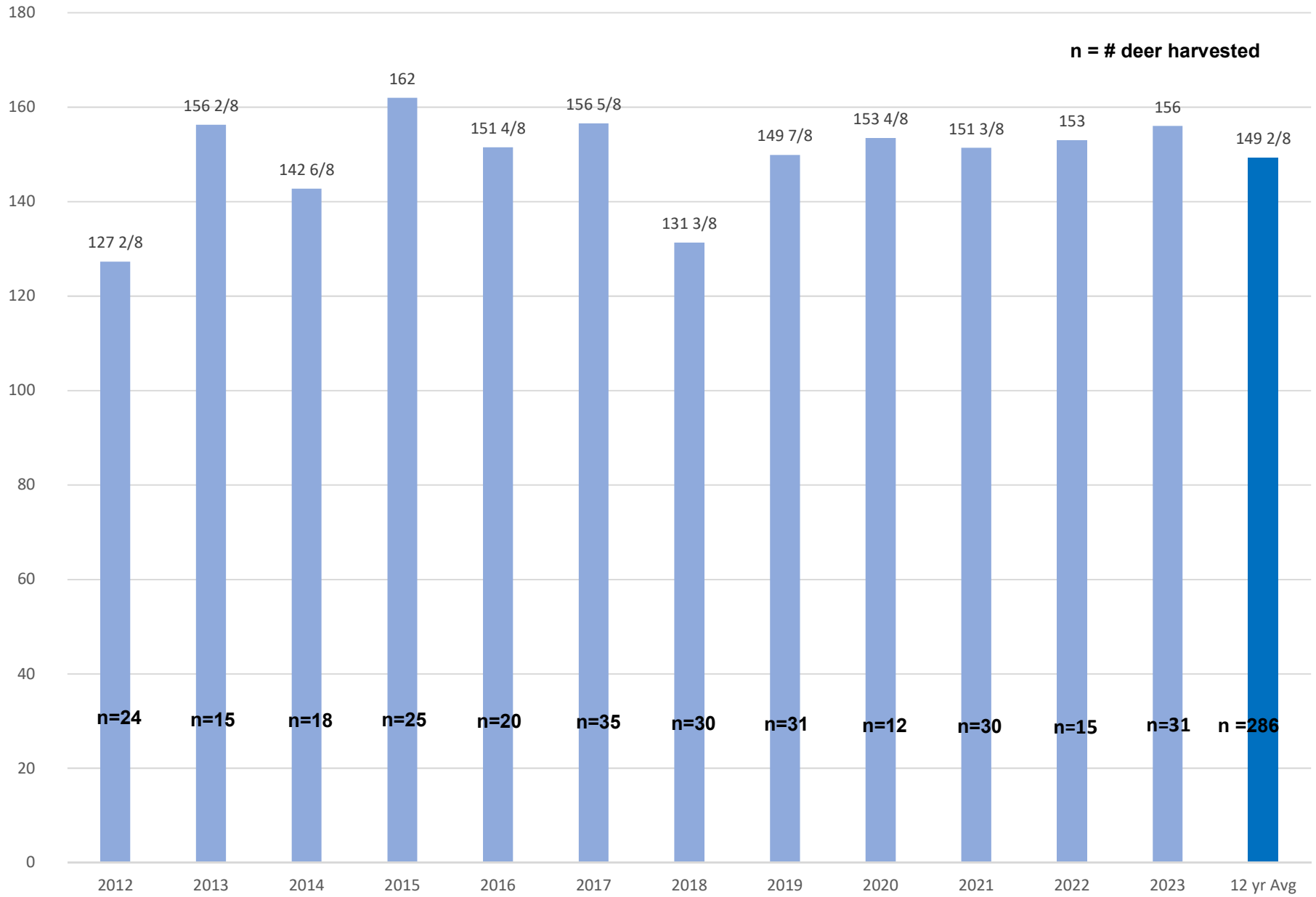
Bighorn Sheep Rams Harvested 2011-2023



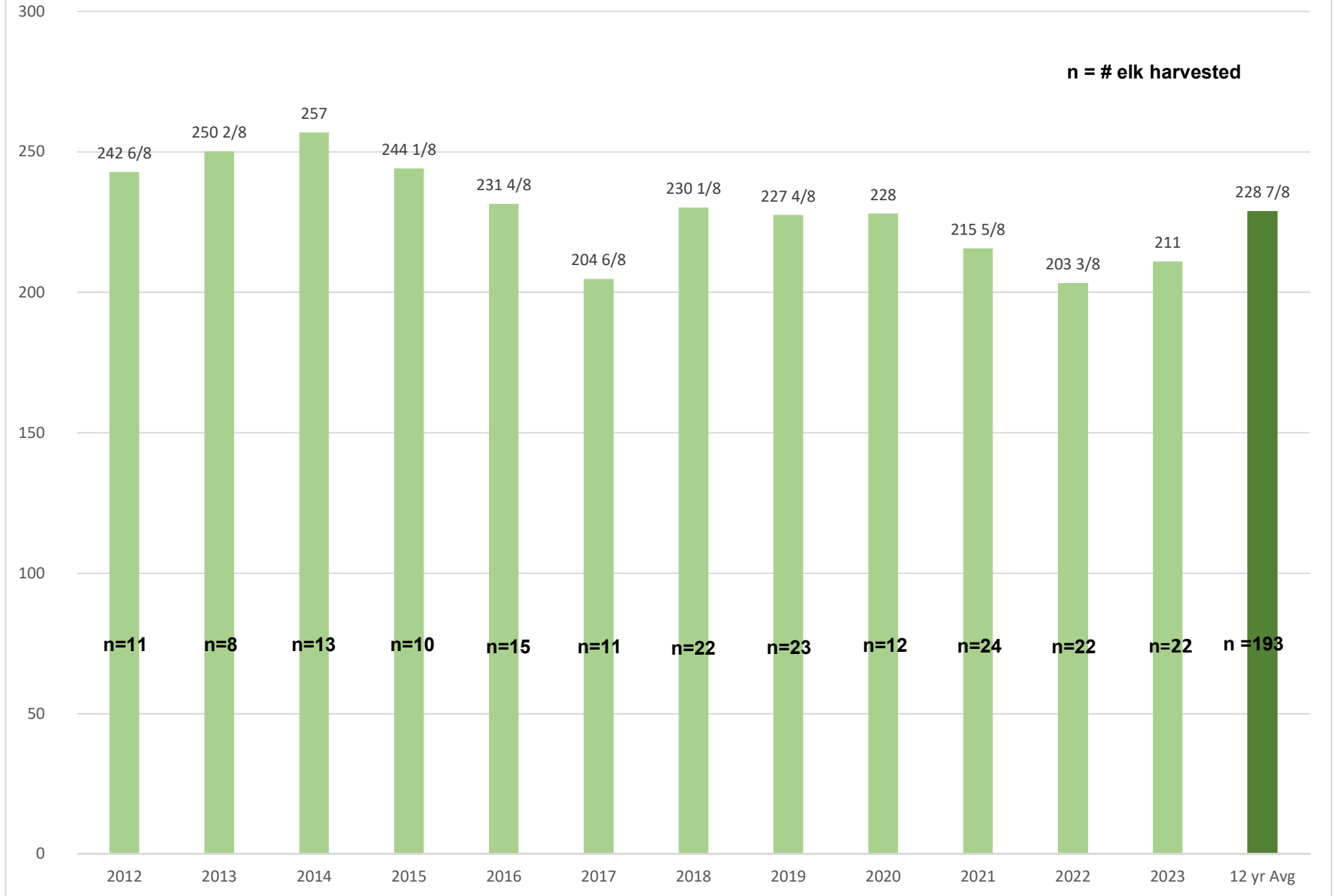
2023 Average B&C of PCMS Big Game Species by Season



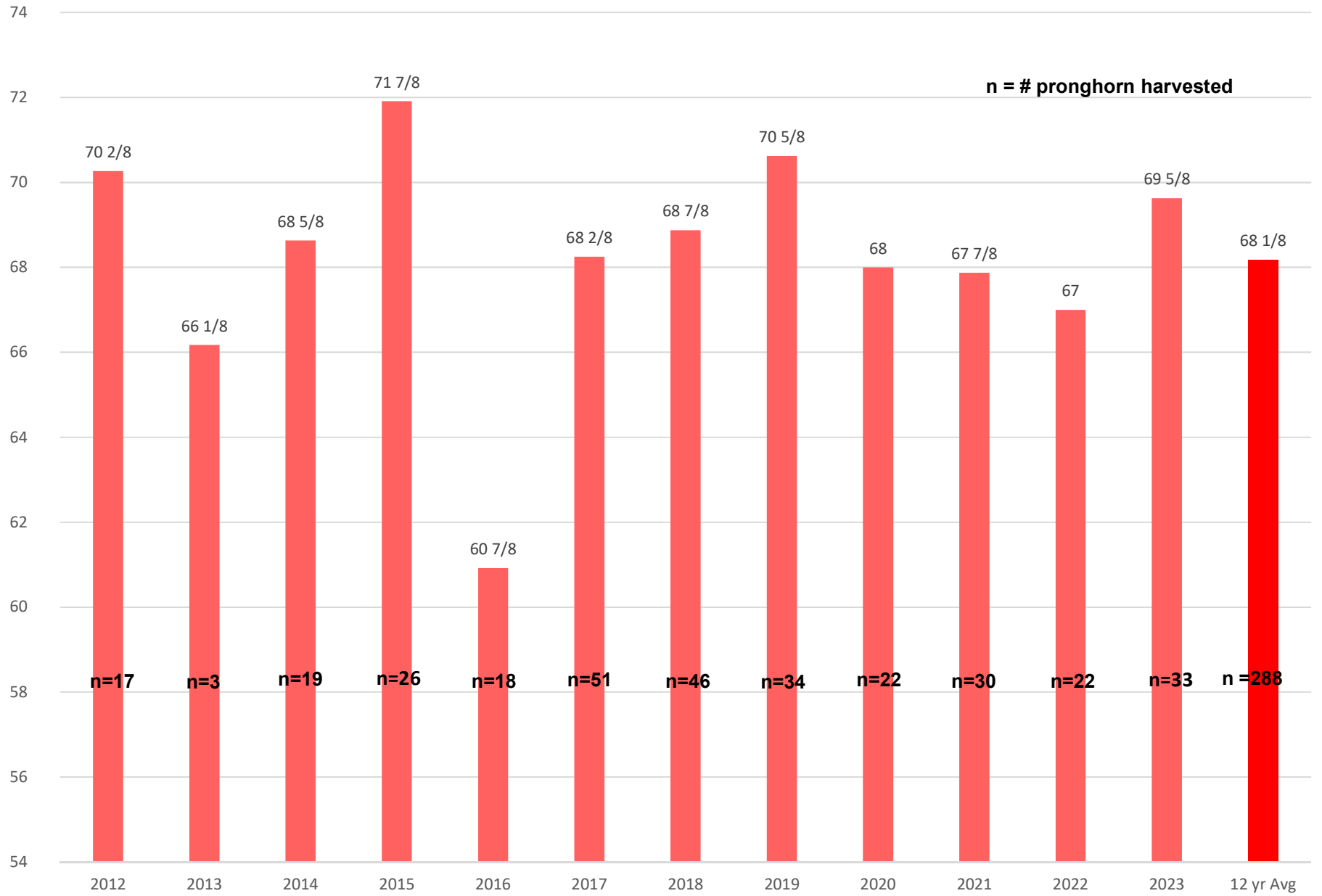
Average B&C of All PCMS Mule Deer (2012-2023)



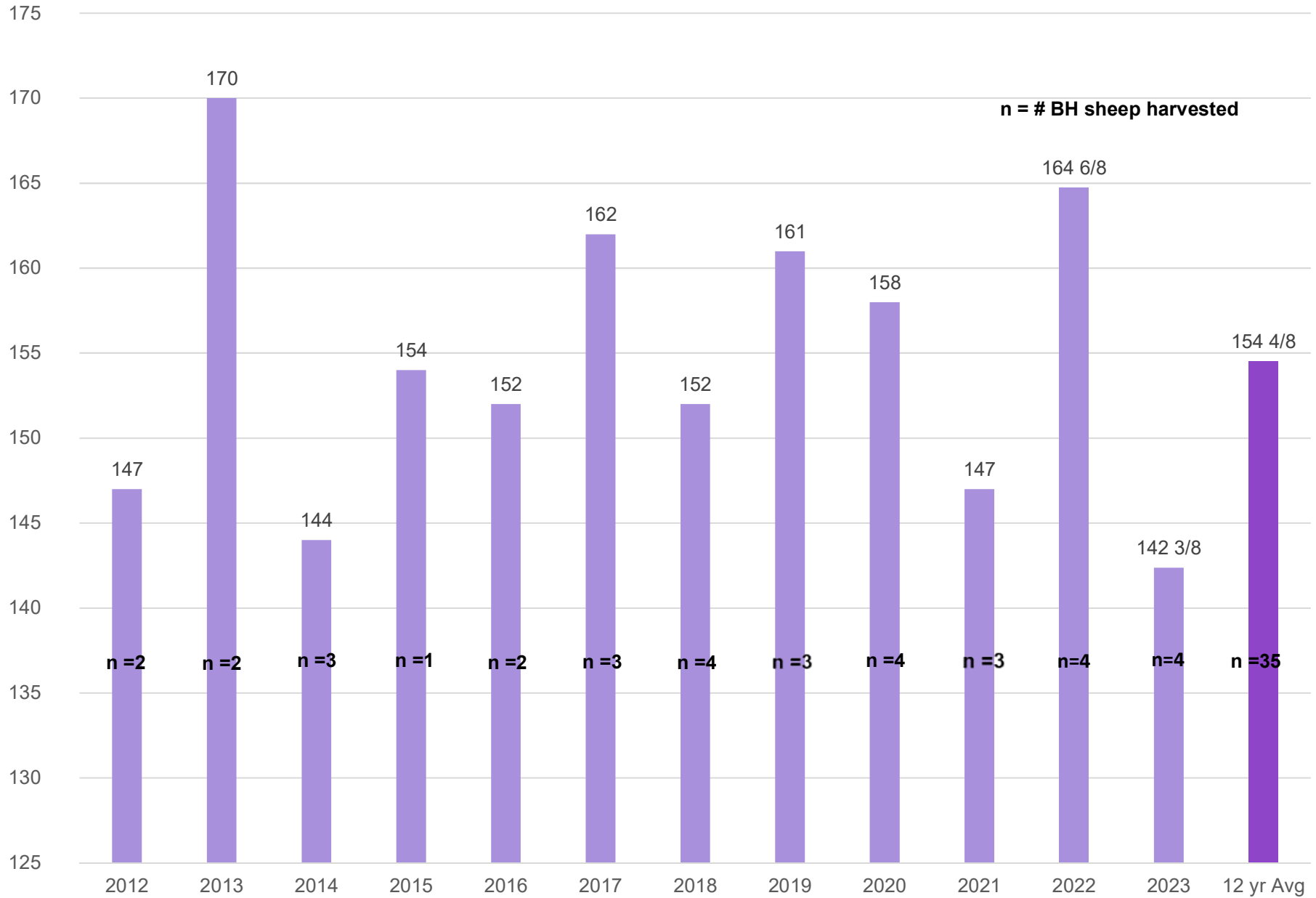
Average B&C of All PCMS Elk (2012-2023)



Average B&C of All PCMS Pronghorn (2012-2023)



Average B&C of All PCMS Bighorn Sheep (2012-2023)



2023 Boone & Crockett Scores (Gross)

Archery Pronghorn (4)

73 0/8

63 6/8

73 0/8

45 0/8

63 6/8 Avg

Muzzleloader Pronghorn (12)

71 6/8

75 4/8

77 0/8

72 7/8

65 7/8

71 5/8

72 2/8

68 6/8

84 4/8

73 7/8

67 4/8

70 2/8

72 5/8 Avg

Rifle Pronghorn (17)

68 6/8

65 2/8

66 3/8

74 1/8

70 5/8

54 2/8

65 4/8

77 2/8

77 0/8

64 6/8

78 2/8

75 0/8

80 5/8

68 7/8

71 1/8

52 0/8

63 2/8

69 0/8 Avg

Combined (Archery, Muzzleloader & Rifle) B&C Average: 69 5/8

Pronghorn Bucks Harvested: 33

2023 Boone & Crockett Scores (Gross)

<u>Archery Mule Deer (9)</u>	<u>Muzzleloader Mule Deer (6)</u>	<u>Rifle Mule Deer (16)</u>	
111 4/8	203 2/8	176	165
162 6/8	176 4/8	187	163
115 2/8	180 3/8	158	91 4/8
158 4/8	151	173 6/8	151 3/8
175 6/8	141 2/8	140	175 4/8
111 6/8	156 7/8	189 7/8	180
123 2/8	168 3/8 Avg	143 4/8	158
150 2/8		166 7/8	148
182			159 2/8 Avg
143 4/8 Avg			

Combined (Archery, Muzzleloader & Rifle) B&C Average: 153*

Mule Deer Bucks Harvested: 31*

***Does not include Plains Deer**

Plains Mule Deer (5)

72 109 4/8
 143 7/8 167
 112

Plains White-tailed Deer (3)

Hybrid
 Broken – No Score
 150 6/8

2023 Boone & Crockett Scores (Gross)

Elk Archery (2)

233 7/8

190 2/8

212 1/8 Avg

3rd Bull Elk Rifle (1)

193 0/8

193 0/8 Avg

Elk Muzzleloader (0)

2nd Bull Elk Rifle (14)

270 1/8

235 0/8

149 0/8

288 0/8

Spike

240 2/8

139 6/8

198 4/8

130 2/8

253 2/8

288 4/8

228 6/8

Spike

256 4/8

223 1/8 Avg

4th Bull Elk (5)

145

Spike

170

137

262 1/8

171 4/8 Avg

Plains Elk (4 bulls)

224

235

234

Spike

Combined (Archery, Muzzleloader & Rifle) B&C Average: 211 0/8*

Bull Elk Harvested: 22*

*** Does not include Plains Elk**

2023 Boone & Crockett Scores (Gross)

Rifle Bighorn Sheep (4)

146

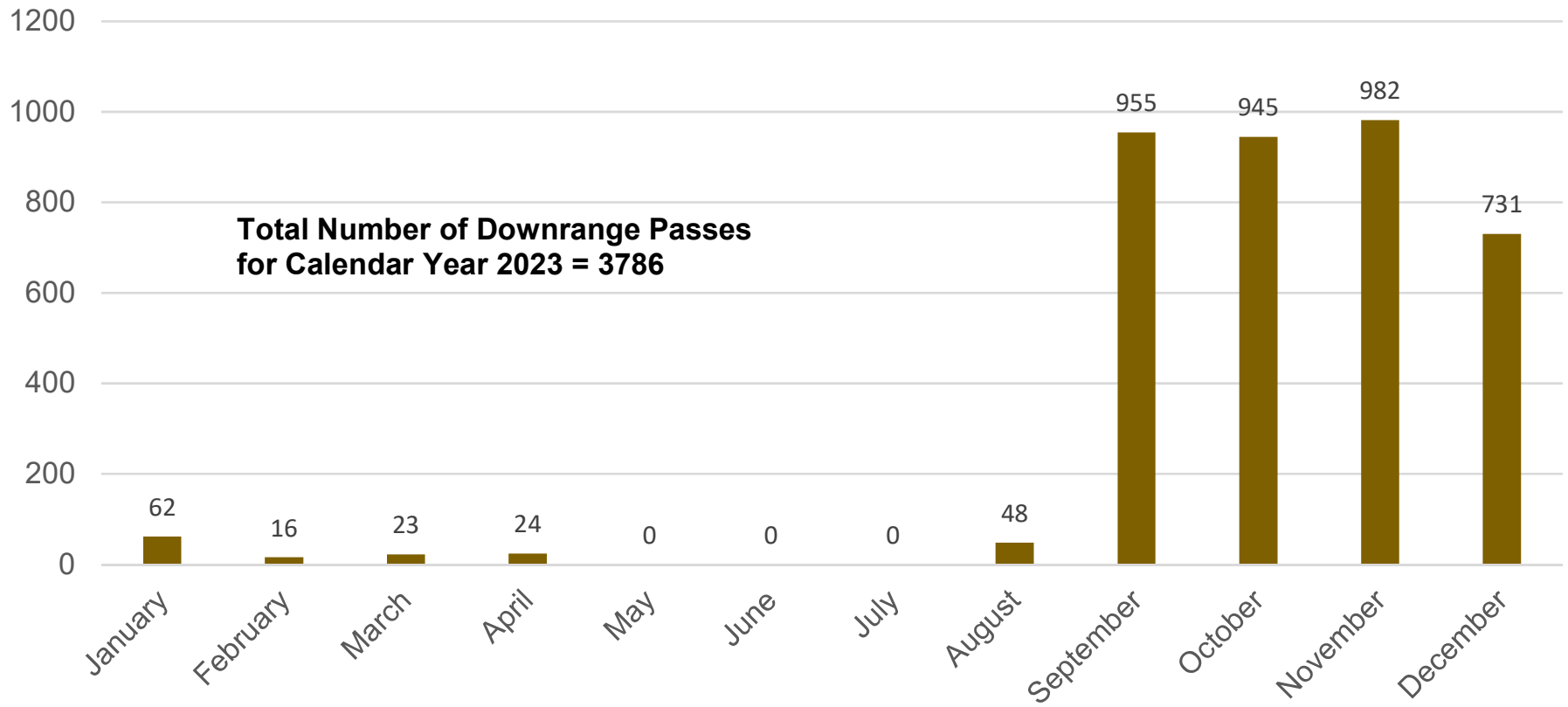
150

131

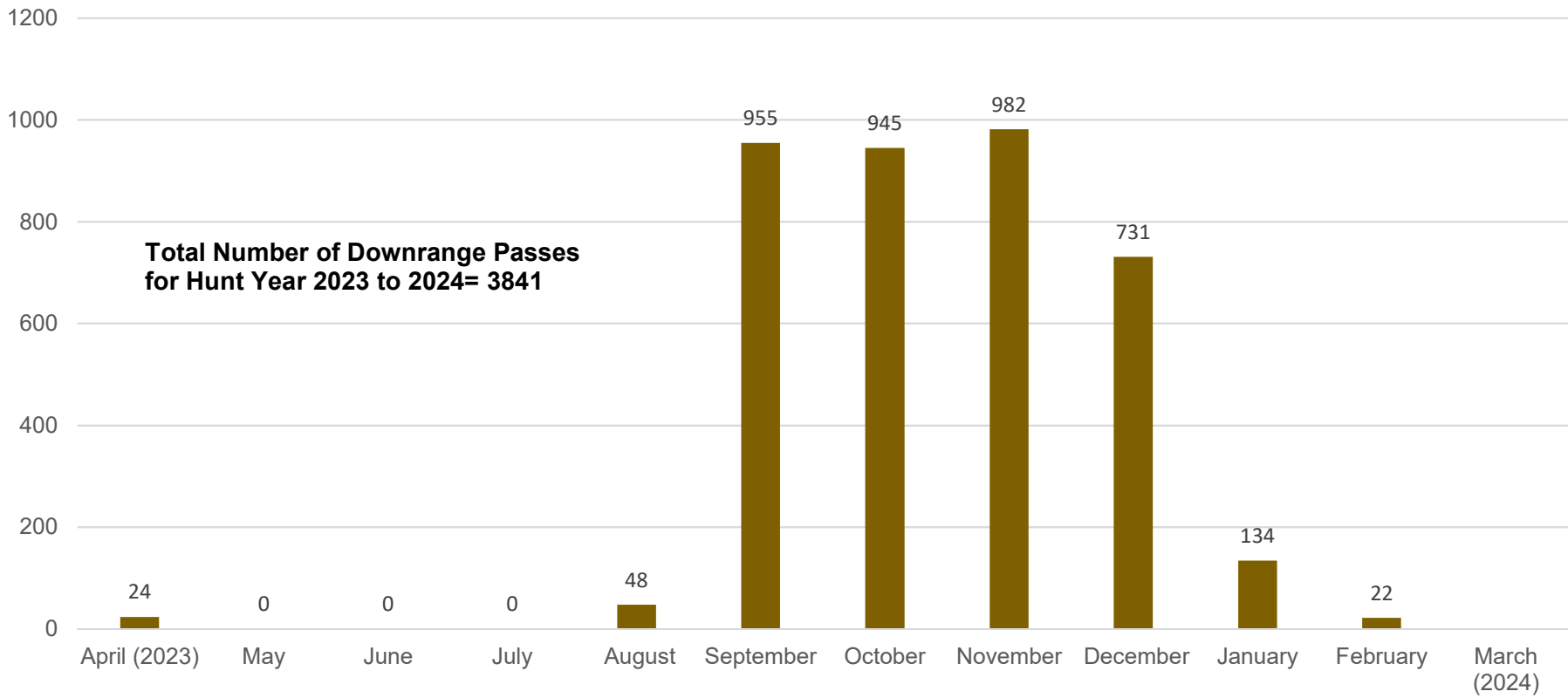
142 $\frac{4}{8}$

142 $\frac{3}{8}$ Avg

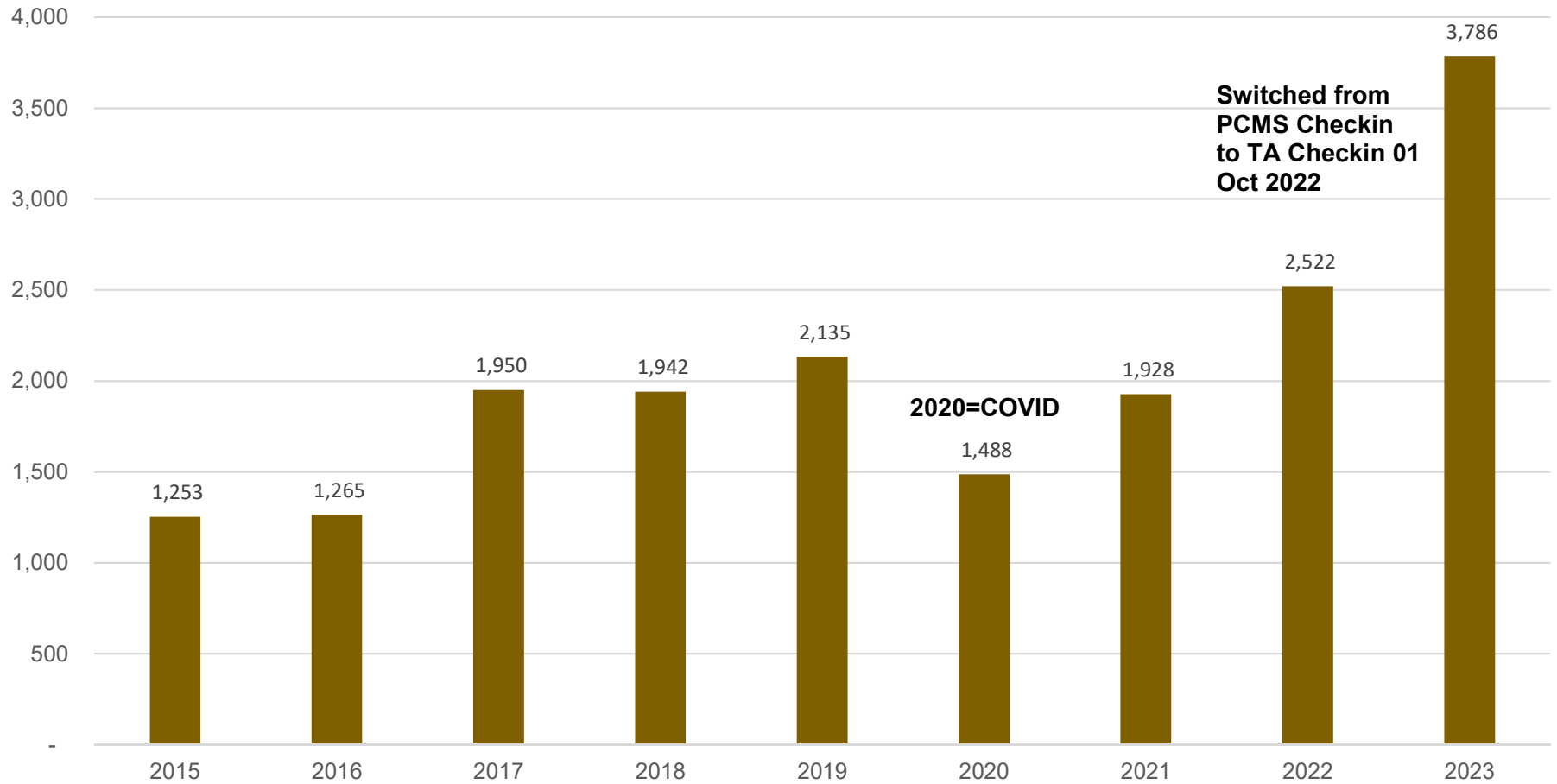
Downrange Passes by Month (Calendar Year 2023)



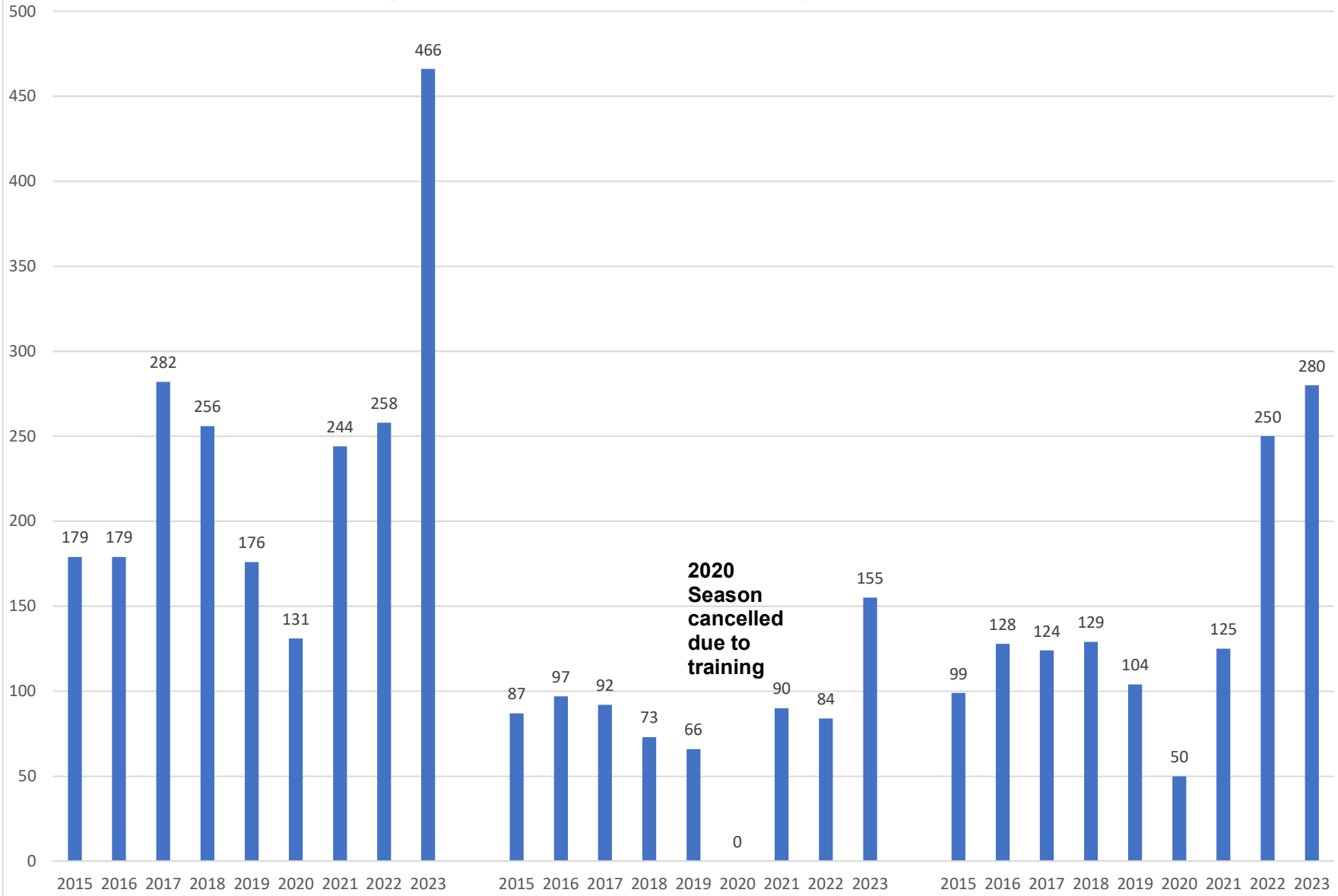
Downrange Passes by Month (Hunt Year 2023-2024)



Total Downrange Passes by Calendar Year 2015-2023



Downrange Passes for PCMS Deer by Season (2015-2023)

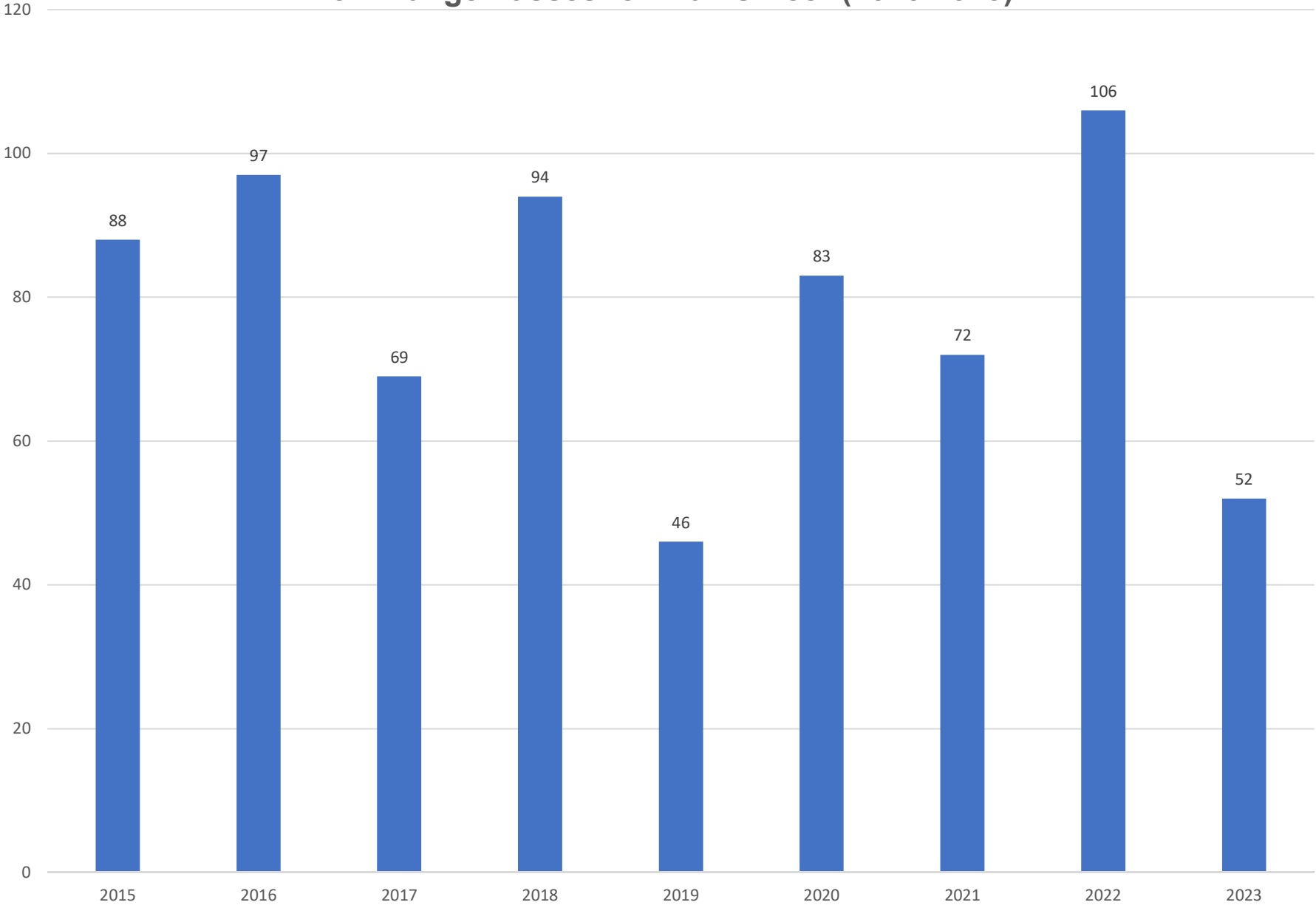


Archery

Muzzleloader

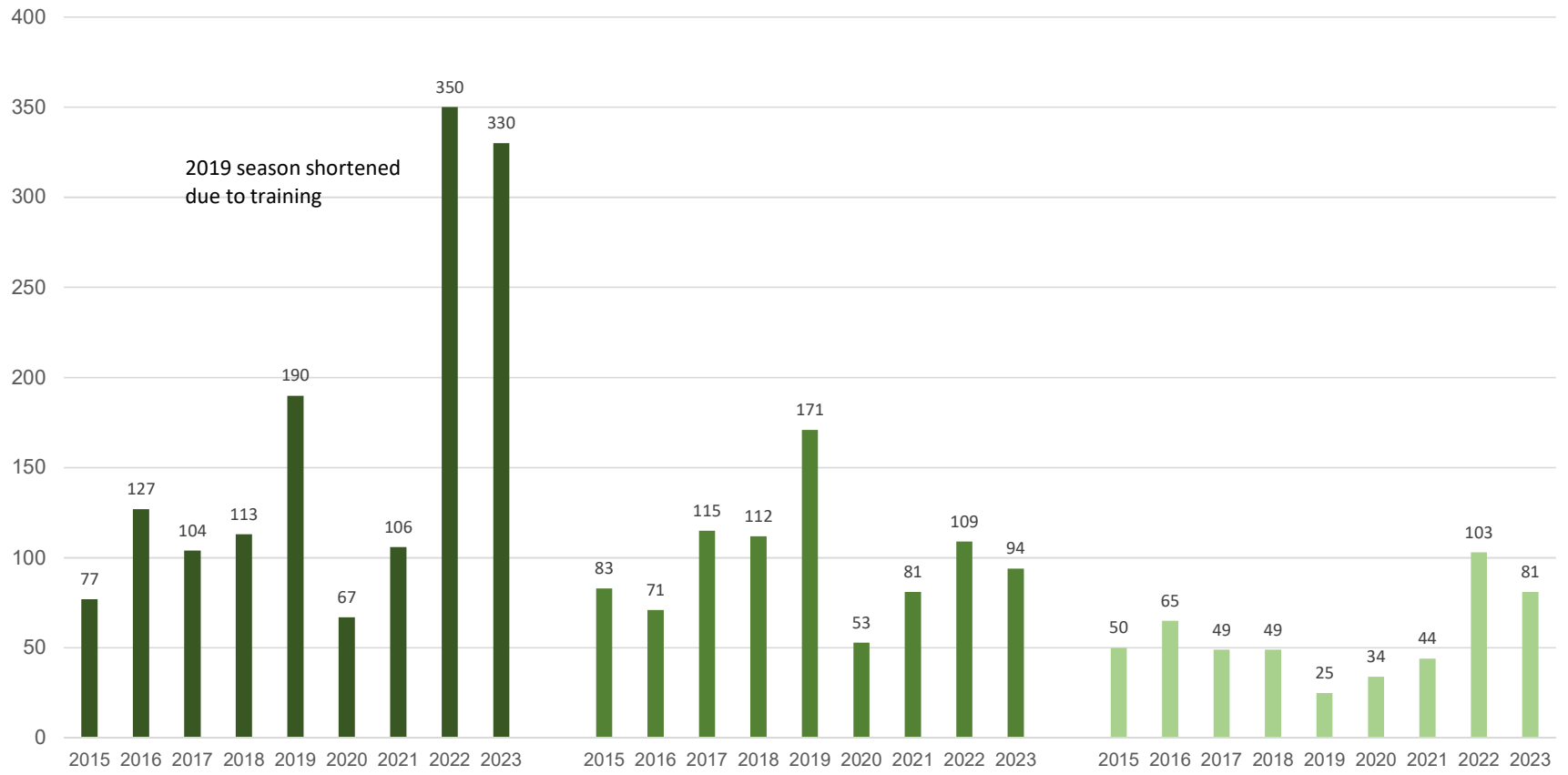
Rifle

Downrange Passes for Plains Deer (2015-2023)



Plains Deer

Downrange Passes for Elk by Season (2015-2023)

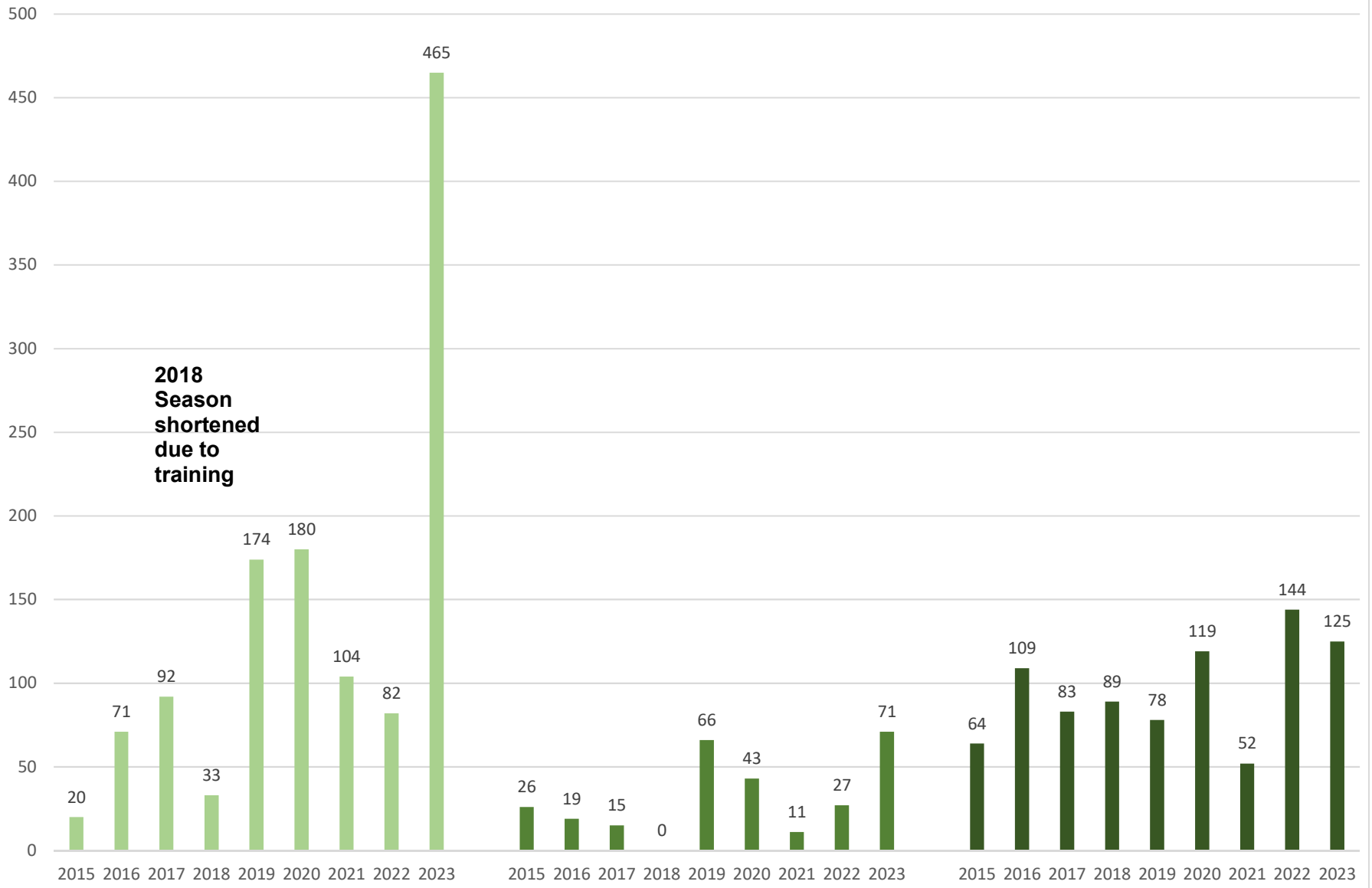


2nd OTC Rifle

3rd OTC Rifle

4th Rifle Draw

Downrange Passes for Elk by Season (2015-2023)



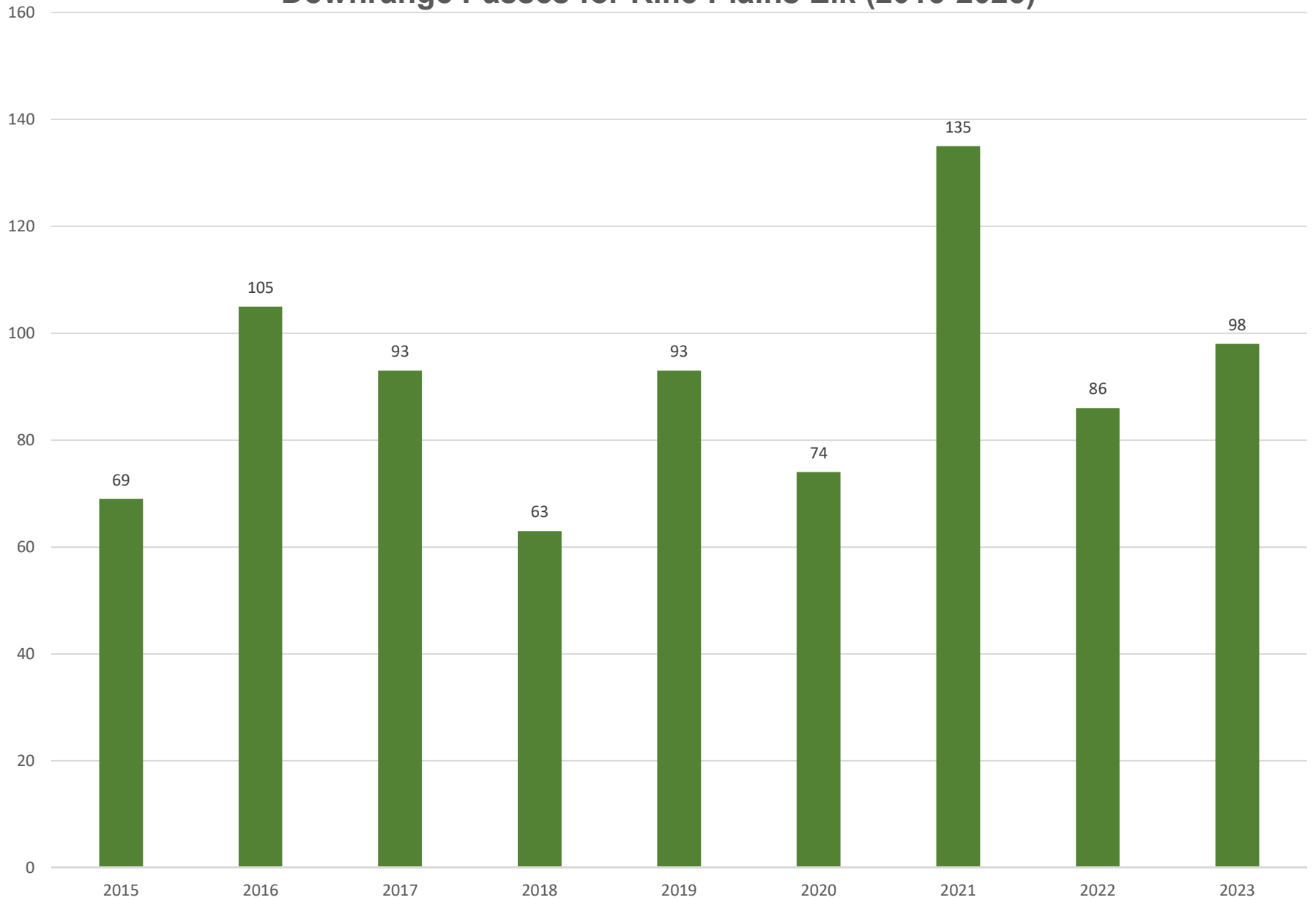
**2018
Season
shortened
due to
training**

Archery

Muzzleloader

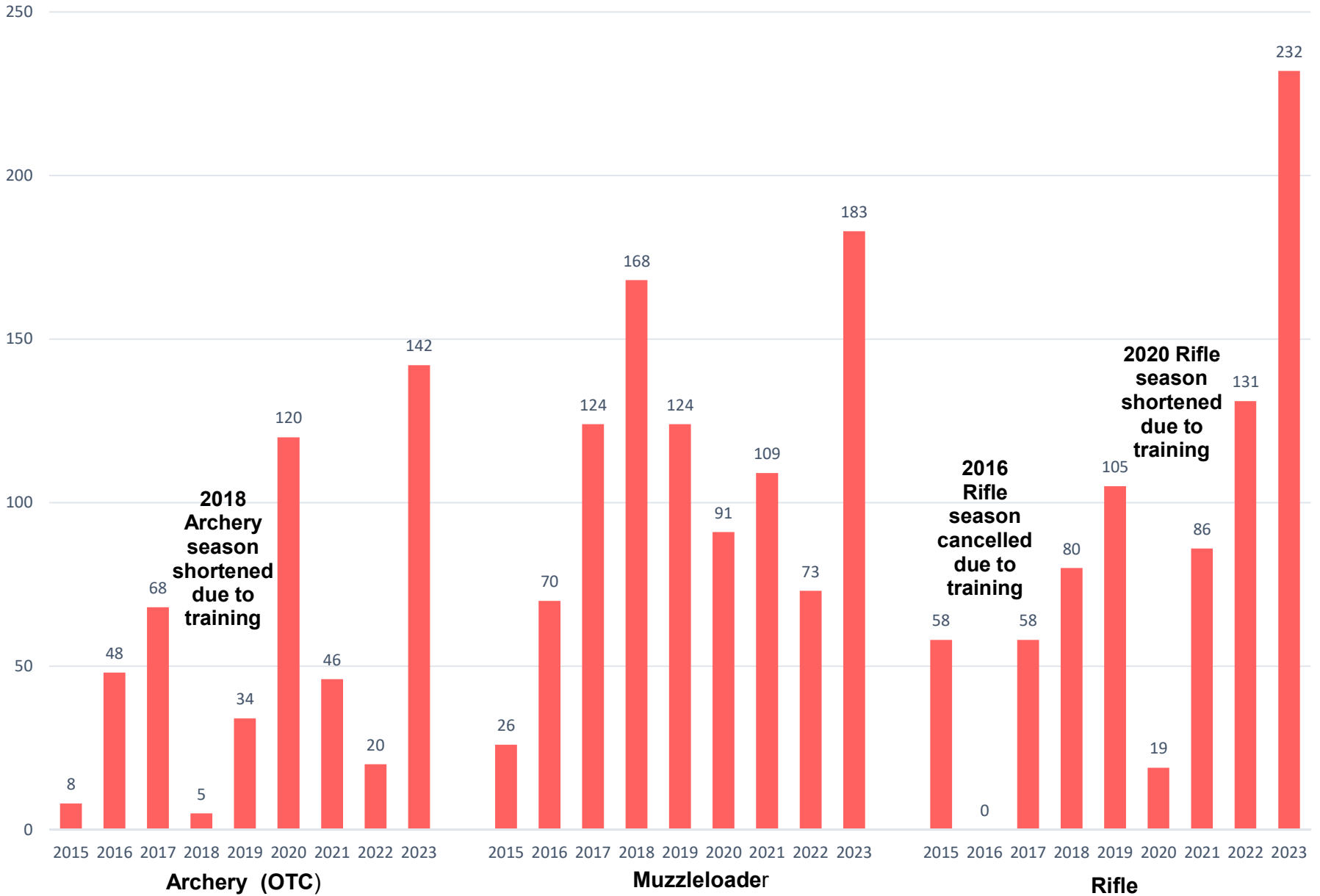
Late Rifle Cow

Downrange Passes for Rifle Plains Elk (2015-2023)



Rifle Plains Elk

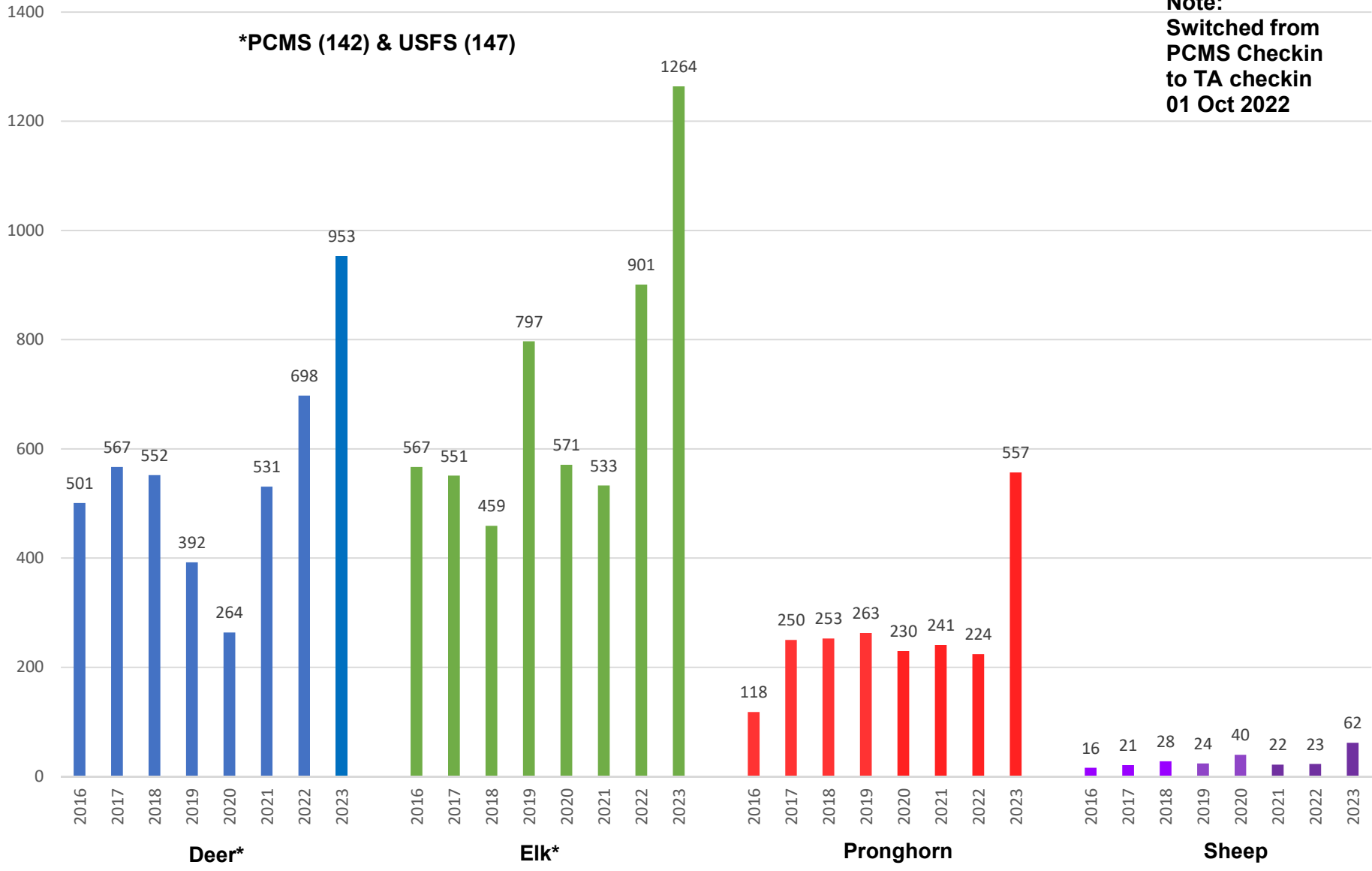
Downrange Passes for Pronghorn (2015-2023)



Downrange Passes for Big Game (2016-2023) (Hunt Year: Apr 1 - Mar 31)

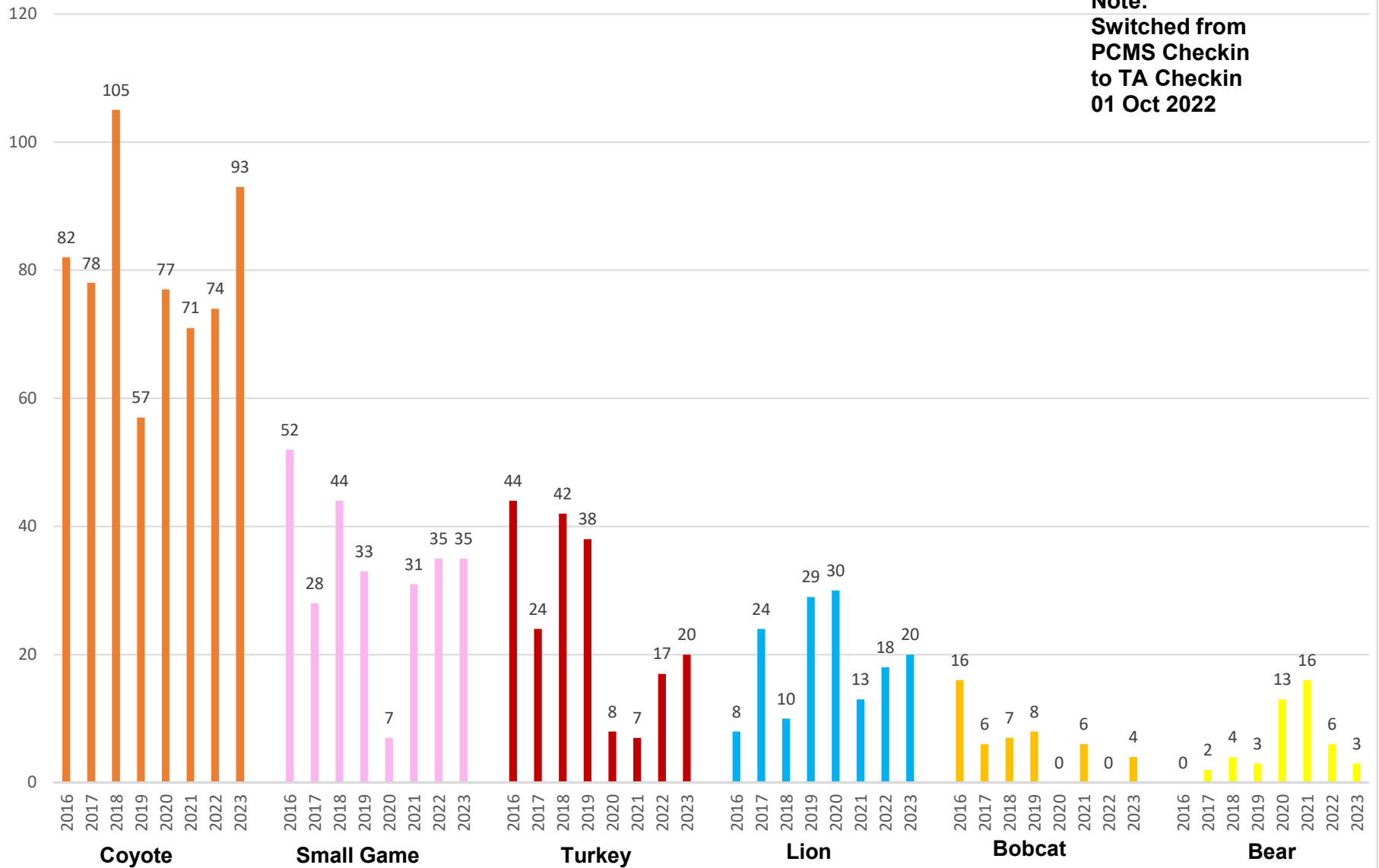
Note:
Switched from
PCMS Checkin
to TA checkin
01 Oct 2022

***PCMS (142) & USFS (147)**



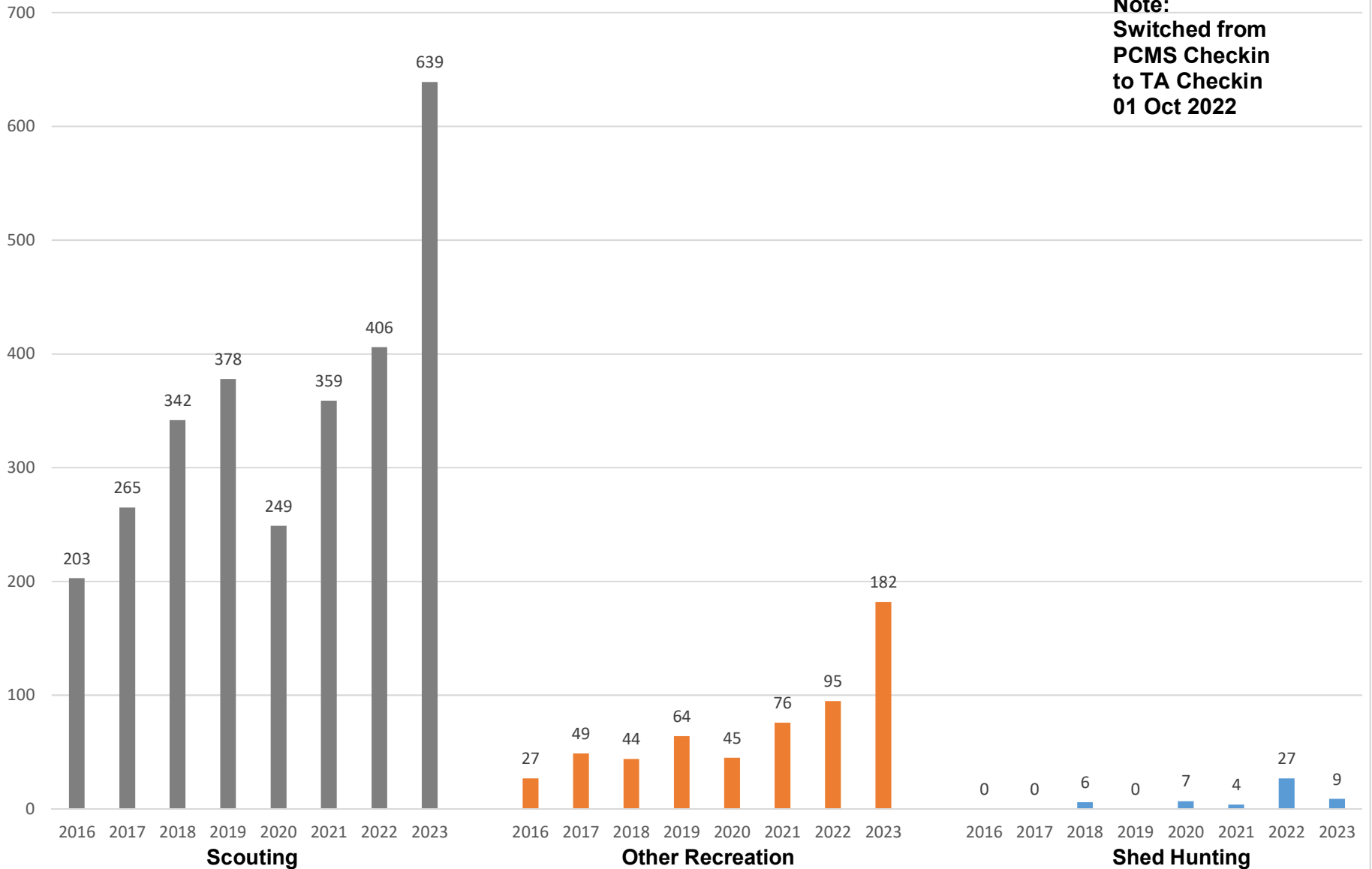
Downrange Passes for Other Game Animals (2016-2023) (Hunt Year: Apr 1- Mar 31)

**Note:
Switched from
PCMS Checkin
to TA Checkin
01 Oct 2022**

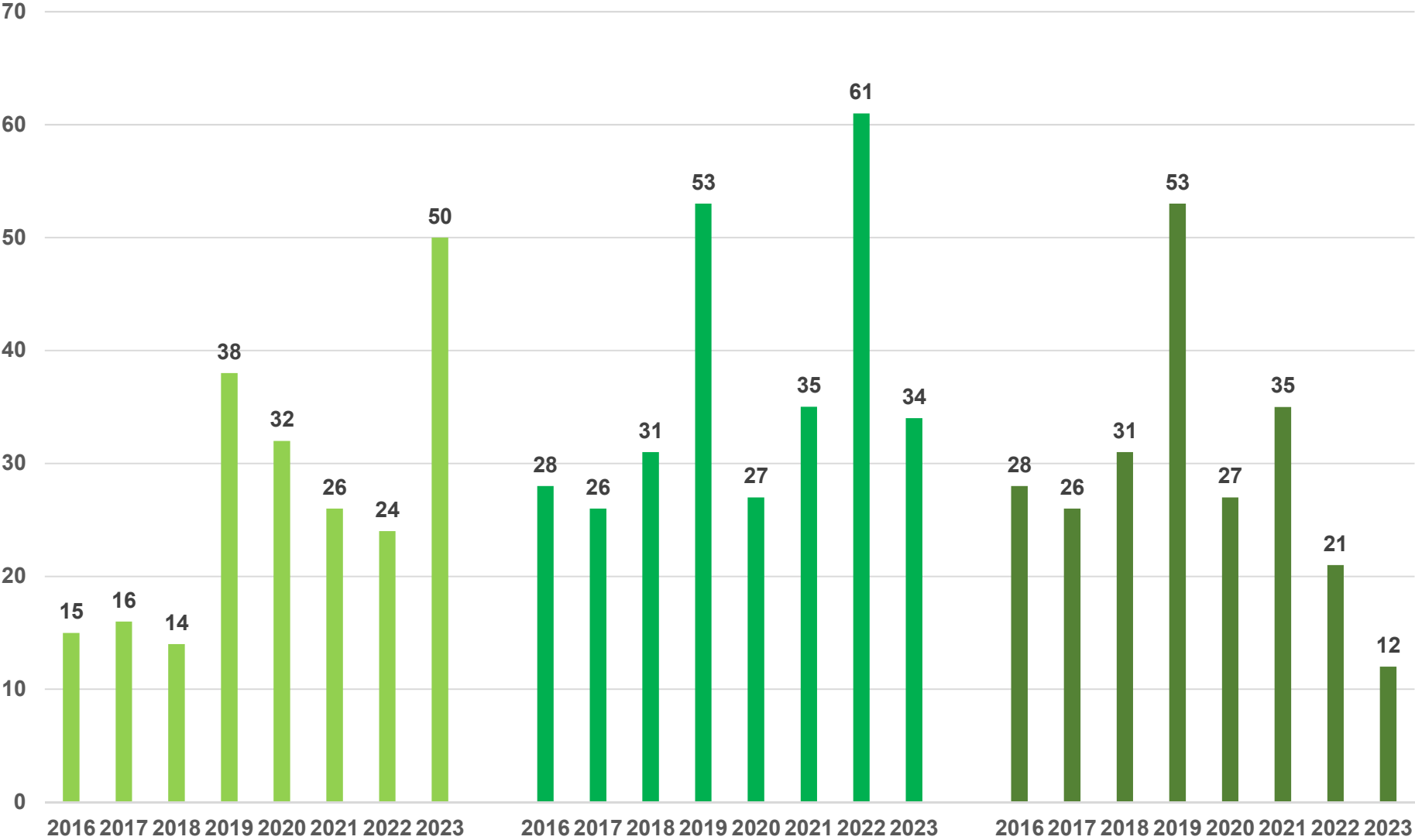


Downrange Passes for Scouting & Other Activities (2016-2023) (Hunt Year: Apr 1 - Mar 31)

Note:
Switched from
PCMS Checkin
to TA Checkin
01 Oct 2022



Number of OTC Bull Elk Hunters by Season (2016-2023)

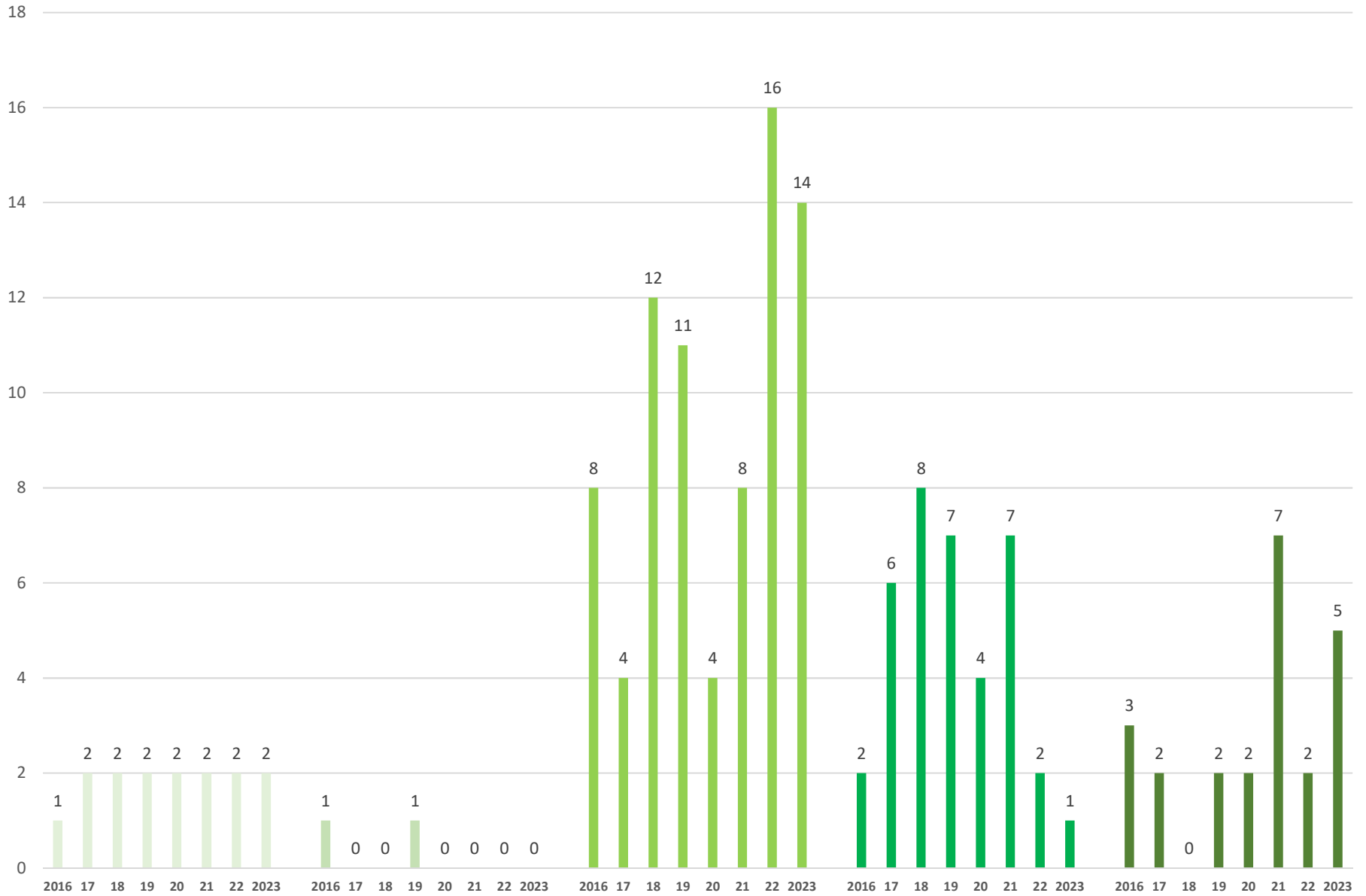


Archery

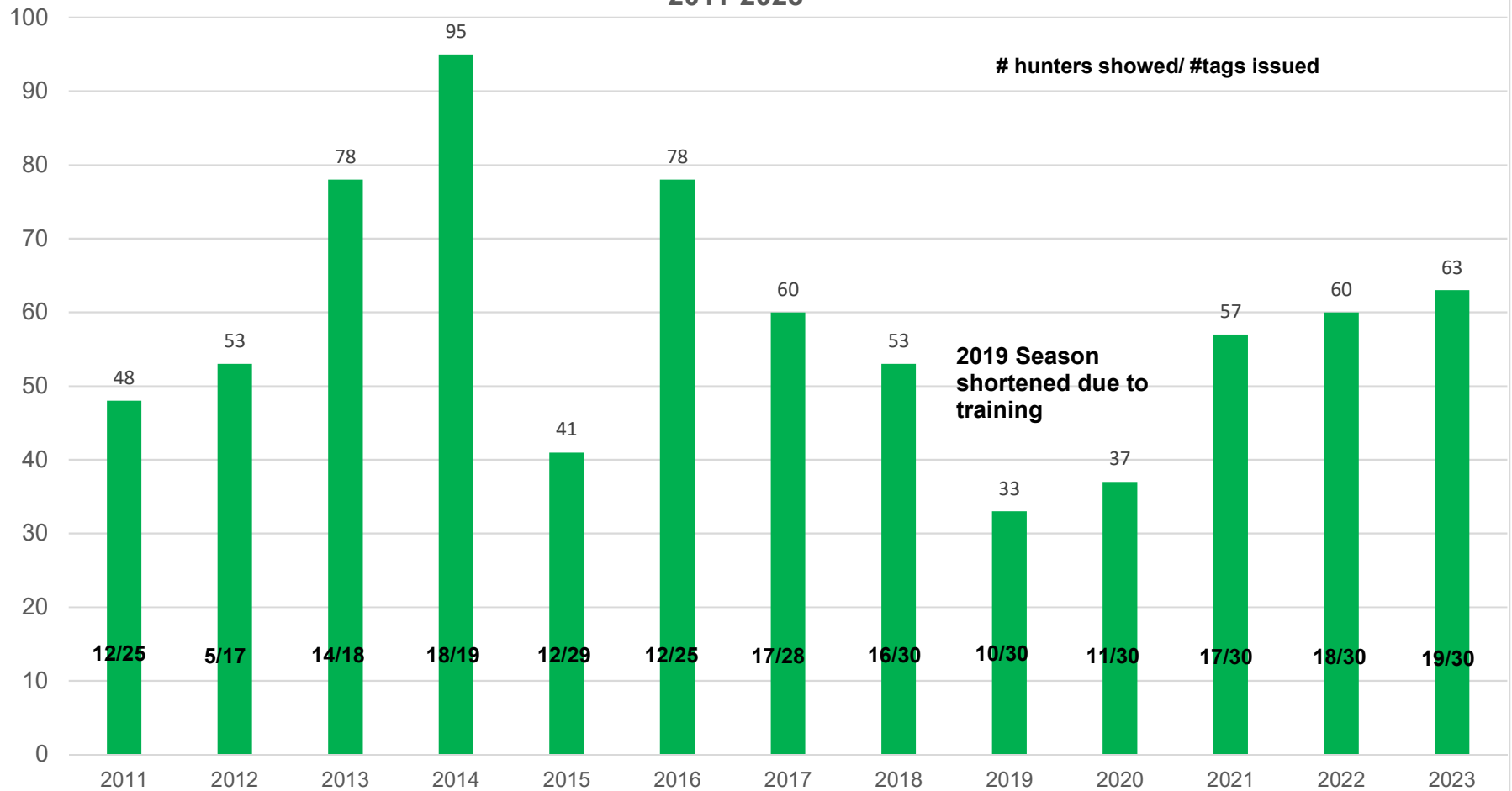
2nd Rifle

3rd Rifle

Number PCMS Bull Elk Harvested x Season (2016-2023)

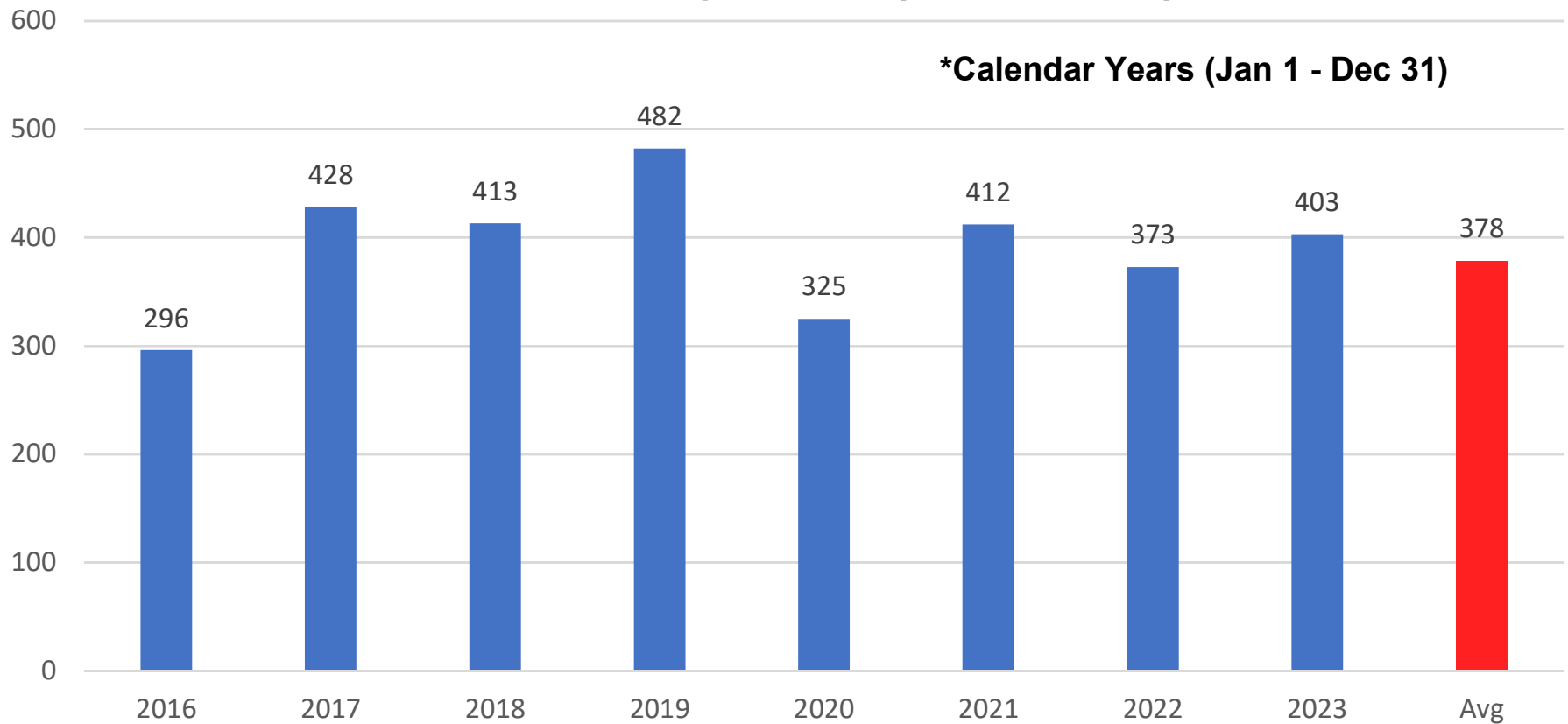


Percent of 4th Season Multi-Unit Bull Elk Hunters at PCMS 2011-2023



Number of Individual Recreationists at PCMS by Year* (2016-2023)

*Calendar Years (Jan 1 - Dec 31)



Daily Number of Recreationists Aug 15 – Jan 31

Date	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
1		12	2	32	43	4
2		12	0	27	47	0
3		15	0	28	36	0
4		12	0	24	31	0
5		8	0	14	30	0
6		11	23	0	23	9
7		10	54	0	21	9
8		10	42	0	16	0
9		23	35	0	15	0
10		30	7	7	18	0
11		21	7	17	10	0
12		24	12	18	11	2
13		24	28	11	10	8
14		21	36	8	2	4
15		15	28	8	0	4
16		14	14	12	5	0
17		16	14	16	4	0
18	7	9	10	16	5	0
19	6	10	9	14	2	4
20	9	17	12	14	2	8
21		28	5	17	7	6
22		18	3	25	4	0
23		23	0	0*	2	0
24		18	0	29	0*	2
25		9	0	35	0*	0
26		12	0	34	2	0
27		12	16	24	4	2
28		9	40	19	8	3
29		10	33	29	13	0
30		5	37	29	9	0
31			39		6	2
Totals	22	458	506	507	386	67

Red = weekends *Closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Number of Customer Types at PCMS (2018-2023*)

Customer Type	Years						Grand Total
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Active Duty - at Fort Carson	33	111	107	109	110	166	636
Active Duty - Reservist	15	12	20	14	50	64	175
Active Duty - Stationed other than Fort Carson	42	48	57	81	85	217	530
Civilian	1,457	1,459	982	1,182	1,732	2,489	9,301
Civilian - DOD Civilian Employee	36	44	23	59	40	46	248
Civilian - Retired DOD Civilian Employee	21	32	1	11	8		73
Civilian - Retired Military		1	1	30	90	62	184
Colorado Veteran (Discounted Permit) - Combat Wounded Soldier in WW Program			10	11	17	8	46
Colorado Veteran (Discounted Permit) - Possess CPW Veteran's Lifetime Combo License	92	141	147	186	112	259	937
Colorado Veteran (Discounted Permit) - Purple Heart Recipient	2	14	14	27	34	44	135
Senior Discount - Senior (64 to 79 y/o)	201	212	95	192	178	373	1,251
Youth Discount - Youth (ages 12 to 17 years)	24	66	47	47	66	58	308
Grand Total	1,923	2,140	1,504	1,949	2,522	3,786	13,824

*Calendar Years (Jan 1 – Dec 31)

Percent of Customer Types at PCMS (2018-2023*)

Customer Type	Years						Grand Total
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Active Duty - at Fort Carson	2%	5%	7%	6%	4%	4%	5%
Active Duty - Reservist	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Active Duty - Stationed other than Fort Carson	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%	6%	4%
Civilian	76%	68%	65%	61%	69%	66%	67%
Civilian - DOD Civilian Employee	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Civilian - Retired DOD Civilian Employee	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Civilian - Retired Military	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%	2%	1%
Colorado Veteran (Discounted Permit) - Combat Wounded Soldier in WW Program	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Colorado Veteran (Discounted Permit) - Possess CPW Veteran's Lifetime Combo License	5%	7%	10%	10%	4%	7%	7%
Colorado Veteran (Discounted Permit) - Purple Heart Recipient	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Senior Discount - Senior (64 to 79 y/o)	10%	10%	6%	10%	7%	10%	9%
Youth Discount - Youth (ages 12 to 17 years)	1%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Calendar Years (Jan 1 – Dec 31)

2023 Hunting Photos





















