

February 2024

DALY CREEK Habitat Management Area 2023 Youth Hunt Results

Most of the Daly Creek Habitat Management Area (DCHMA) was open for youths to hunt deer, elk, game birds, cougar, and bear at various times during the fall. This program is outlined on the Idaho Power website at idahopower.com/recreation/fishing-and-hunting/daly-creek-youth-hunt/.

There were 51 access permits (56 including adult Game Bird access participants) available in 2023. Ninety individual applicants applied, and 46 permits were issued to 42 separate youths determined by random draw. Some youth hunters obtained permits for multiple hunts. Youths obtaining permits for deer or elk hunting were also allowed to hunt for cougar and bear during their hunt if they possessed the proper big game tag. Not all youths issued permits hunted on DCHMA. Some hunted on other public or private lands in the Lookout Mountain unit. Most youths who hunted on the DCHMA reported seeing game and had a quality hunting experience.

| Type of Permit | Access Dates | Number of Applicants | Access Permits Available | Harvest |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 164R Buck Deer Archery | 9/2 – 10-1 | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| 164 Buck Rifle | 10/7 – 10/18 | 29 | 3 | 1 |
| One Elk Archery | 9/2 – 10-1 | 16 | 6 | 1 bull |
| 264X One Elk | 11/1 – 11/5 | 11 | 3 | 3 bulls |
| 264Y One Elk | 11/11 – 11/19 | 13 | 3 | 1 bull, 1 antlerless |
| 264A1 Antlerless Elk | 10/21 – 10/26 and 11/20 – 11/30 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| 264A2 Antlerless Elk | 12/1 – 12/20 and 1/1 – 1/31/24 | 5 | 8 | 4 |
| 264A3 One Elk | 12/21 – 12/31 | 9 | 3 | 1 bull |
| Early 264T Antlerless Elk | 8/15 – 8/27 and 11/20 – 12/20 | 11 | 4 | 1 |
| Late 264T Antlerless Elk | 11/20 – 12/20 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Game Bird | 10/27 – 10/29, 11/22 – 11/26, 1/1 – /15/2024 | 13 | 5 (10 with adult) | 5 |
| Cougar | While hunting deer or elk | n/a | Up to 40 | 0 |
| Bear | While hunting deer or elk | n/a | Up to 40 | 0 |

Deer Hunting—Four youths applied for three access permits during the controlled bow season. Two youths hunted DCHMA, and no deer were harvested. There were 29 applications for three access permits for the Rifle Deer Season, up from 28 the previous year. Three youths hunted on DCHMA and one harvested a mature 4x4 buck.

Elk Hunting—Sixteen youths applied for six access permits during the general bow season. Six hunters hunted on DCHMA. One hunter harvested a 6x6 bull elk. Eleven youths applied for four Early 264T access permits. Three of the four hunters hunted and one harvested an antlerless elk. Eleven youths

applied for three permits during the first one-elk rifle season (264X). Three youths hunted on DCHMA and two harvested bulls; one 6x6 and one 6x5. Thirteen youths applied for three permits during the second one-elk rifle season (264Y). Three of the permit holders hunted on DCHMA and harvested one 4x5 bull. Three youths applied for the five antlerless elk hunt access permits for Hunt 264A1. Three youth hunted and two harvested an antlerless elk. Five youth applied for the second season antlerless season (264A2). Four youth hunted and harvested four antlerless elk. Eight youths applied for eight entry permits for the Late 264T hunt. Only one youth hunted on Daly Creek HMA with harvesting one antlerless elk. Nine youth applied for access during the new 264A3 one-elk rifle hunt. Three access permits were issued. Three youth hunted and one harvested a 5x5 bull.

Game Bird Hunting—There were twenty-three youth that applied for five access permits. Four youth hunters and associated adults hunted and harvested one chukar and two California quail.

Cougar and Bear Hunting—Historic hunter surveys found that most youth hunters possessed a cougar or bear tag and would opportunistically harvest one during their elk or deer hunt. One bear and one cougar were sighted by youth hunters this year. None were harvested.

Observations

The youth hunts appeared to go well in 2023. Few if any issues developed during the hunts.

- Elk remained at higher elevations this year due to persistent green-up from late fall rains.
- Information gathered from youth hunting groups indicated most youths participating in 2023 hunts saw game, many had opportunities to harvest game, and all had a good or excellent experience.
- Hunters reported that chukar and Hungarian partridge numbers appeared up from 2022, however they presented challenging targets.
- Rather than competing with other concurrent Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife seasons, access permits were staggered so generally only one type of hunting occurred on DCHMA at a time. Spacing out the hunts over the year allowed for a higher-quality hunting experience.
- The random draws were conducted at the Hitching Post Grocery in Richland and were livestreamed on the Hitching Post's Facebook page.
- Although no one harvested cougar or bear during 2023, one cougar and one bear were sighted by youth hunters.

Changes for 2024

- There are plans for a youth spring turkey access program for 2024. Deadline for application will be April 1, 2024, with a random draw on or about April 3.

- The draw for the rest of the access permits are planned for 3 p.m. Pacific time on July 10 and August 7, respectively, at the Hitching Post Grocery Store in Richland, Oregon, and live streamed on the Hitching Post's Facebook page.

Future Plans

After a new license is received from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for the Hells Canyon Complex, Idaho Power staff expects to develop a public-access program for DCHMA in consultation with agencies and the public as directed by FERC. Information gained during these youth hunts will assist in developing the program.