

## 7-15-2022 Nevada Hunting Economic Report.mp3

**Speaker 1** Let's foray into Nevada's wild spaces. This is a half an hour adventure with the Nevada Department of Wildlife. This is Nevada Wild.

**Unidentified** Here on this mountain top. I got some wild, wild life.

**Speaker 2** Welcome to Nevada. While brought to you by the Nevada Department of Wildlife. I'm actually Sanchez on Zoom today with Aaron Keller. And we're joined by our regular. Even I mean, he's filled in hosting at this point Bobby Jones. And then we have for the first time ever, we've been working with him a lot lately. Alec Bowman with U.N. Arms Cooperative Extension. Welcome, Alec and Bobby, thank you for joining us on short notice.

**Speaker 3** Yeah. Thanks for having me. Looking forward to it.

**Speaker 2** Well, we're excited to have you here because you two work together on a study looking at how much Nevada hunters spend. And it's important because it looks at how it impacts conservation, outdoor recreation and the economy. So, we thought it'd be good to highlight what you found. And first off, I want to start off with Alec, your background. And then how you ended up getting into the study and starting it. It sounds like you came to Bobby with the idea. So, I know that's a lot. That's a big question. But kick us off and explain your background in what you do, what you in are.

**Speaker 3** Absolutely. Yeah. So, I'm a researcher in the economics department at UNR. You know, I just recently, about a year or two ago got my master's degree and my thesis had a wildlife focused component which was kind of asking using a similar survey instrument to what we did in this project, asking about people's preferences with hunting. So, I kind of became interested in it through the thesis work, and then we saw this as potentially being expandable. So, we reached out to Bobby and yeah. And then there was interested in down to get this type of information, the economics portion of hunting. And so, we moved forward with a partnership to do that and collect data through a primary data collection with the survey instrument. And yeah, it's been a really good partnership and we've learned a lot. So yeah.

**Speaker 2** And Bobby, this was, this is right up your alley. I feel like you've been in the research trying to learn how people feel and think about hunting in outdoor recreation. So how did you feel when it came to you with this idea?

**Speaker 4** Yeah, it's really exciting. I mean, mainly I'm coming it from my position, you know, outdoor recreation in general. And just what do people do? Getting outside in hunting just happens to be a really good example to start from and kind of a basis to see like, Hey, what do people doing? Where are they going? What are they spending, what are they motivated by? We just have a little more information and you know, some of the other activity groups like camping or hiking or things like that, because people purchase licenses and then it's just easier to kind of get to get your arms around, you know, who's out there doing what. So, this was an exciting kind of just insight into to what is and we're getting, you know, an unbiased, you know, perspective from Alec and like putting together something quality so that we could we could speak to a better.

**Speaker 5** How important is it to know kind of what information you have it's likely something like this.

**Speaker 3** Yeah. So, its kind of just what background information is out there.

**Speaker 5** Yeah.

**Speaker 3** That's a good question. And that's actually part of the motivation for doing this at all. So obviously we're doing our due diligence in kind of this more general outdoor like economics of outdoor recreation research. And one thing that was kind of shocking is just the numbers that are out there regarding expenditures in hunting are very limited. So, you know, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in concert with the Census Bureau, does a survey every ten years. However, that has the granularity in that report has been declining over the past few years and their usefulness has been declining as well. So, we felt based on the fact that there weren't great numbers out there, that this was actually a really good opportunity in partnership to get some local numbers for Nevada in particular. And this kind of leads into kind of my more general area of research, which is outdoor recreation, recreation research. So, looking at how outdoor rec is impacting the economy and kind of like Bobby was mentioning earlier, just know we know a lot about hunters because, you know, they have licenses, they apply for tags. So, it becomes a very that wealth of data that already exists was very attractive. And just being able to leverage that was hugely important for this.

**Speaker 4** One thing I think is pretty interesting is if you're a small business owner or you're a person that lives in a community, that there's any kind of outdoor recreation. This is the first kind of like hard and fast data that's really specific to an activity that you can look to and see like, Oh yeah, people are coming and they, you know, they're going to stay here in this county for three nights and they're going to eat at the restaurant and spend this much money, and then they're going to buy this much gear while they're there and they're going to it's we don't have anything like that. And it's also just motivation. So, like, oh, why are so many people going to Elko County? What are they doing there? It's an in-depth view of essentially big game hunting and upland game hunting throughout the state. And then Alec worked at it in a county by county level. So, if you live in these counties or you're interested in any of these counties, you can go look up the information and see what a. Looks like for you locally.

**Speaker 5** So for a long time we've heard, you know, commission meetings or that the hunting or outdoor recreation has a big impact on Nevada. And it's a definitely a part of the economy throughout the state. And I guess I kind of want to dove into some like some of the details of like what you did and like how you went about it. I guess we've given you guys have given talks on it and maybe we'll link to some of those in the description. But just in your words, kind of like how did you go about it?

**Speaker 3** Yeah. So, hunting is a really kind of I mean, outdoor recreation in general is kind of this way where you're either doing it kind of locally or you're doing a little bit of traveling involved in that. What I learned through this is that hunting is a really effective means of moving people around in the state. So, kind of we saw that, you know, a lot of hunters obviously are coming from the urban areas and they're kind of dispersing into the more rural counties, which in and of itself is an important kind of economic development, a piece of information for economic development. But one thing in particular, because of this kind of like traveling and the movement, is that we wanted to observe when and where the expenditures are happening. So where are they spending their money? So, we actually observe kind of expenditures made before leaving for the trip, expenditures made in route, and then expenditures made kind of near the hunt site. And so, within the county, this is

pretty unique compared to some of the similar studies that have happened in other states because we're painting a fuller picture of what where the expenditures are happening. And that has pretty big implications for the economic development aspect of things.

**Speaker 4** I was just going to say we pulled information from a few places to get some of that. So. Well, a lot of what Alex talking about spending is we sent out a survey last summer to about 8000 hunters and about 2000 replied and told us what they did in 2019 and 2020. So that's one piece of it. You know, how many days were you out there? How many people went with you? Did you go scouting? How many days did you spend? Where what did you spend money on? But then there's also things like we used our hunt stat information, hunt stats information to see, you know, harvest info and things because we're not going to survey everybody, but we actually have that information. And then also just our administrative data, how many tags were there? How many tags were there in different areas and you know, number of licenses sold and stuff like that. So, we were able to kind of double check ourselves with what hunters told us about what they were doing and then with the whole kind of plethora of stuff. And then I don't I don't know if we want to jump into this, but just for fun, the first like trivia question of the day, because people ask like, oh, well, what is the impact or what is the dollars and cents of it? And Ashley is very nervous about this. So, I'm going to like put parameters on it.

**Speaker 2** I just want to be way off.

**Speaker 4** That's okay. I'm going to give you like a ballpark, so. How much money did Nevada hunters spend overall on big game hunting in upland game hunting in 2020? And I'll tell you that that number is between \$0 and \$1,000,000,000.

**Speaker 2** So this is like for their tags, for the tag.

**Speaker 4** For their tags for going out like what they spend on gas plus like anything, they bought hunting supplies, a four-wheeler or whatever.

**Speaker 2** Erin, you go first. You're the hunter.

**Speaker 5** I know the answer.

**Speaker 2** Just like gas. You go first.

**Speaker 5** What's your guess? I already know the answer.

**Speaker 2** How did you cheat? I know the answer.

**Speaker 4** This will be the only one that Aaron knows. You won't know the rest.

**Speaker 2** Okay, let me think.

**Speaker 5** That's a big number. What do you think's a big number?

**Speaker 2** \$10,000.

**Speaker 4** \$381 million.

**Speaker 2** We were. Oh, you're saying this.

**Speaker 4** Is for everybody? That's okay. This was this was kind of a test run here.

**Speaker 2** Well, this is what I do want to happen, okay? I think what I was thinking is like the individual hunter.

**Speaker 4** Okay. So. So we can. We can do individual. Hunter. Here's one. So, this is for a specific for an antler bull elk tag. I have a number for what the average resident spends and the average nonresident on that hunt in particular. And the numbers are between zero and \$10,000. So how about for the average bull elk hunter that's in Nevada? RESIDENT What do you think that number is?

**Speaker 2** I'm going to say 4000.

**Speaker 5** Mr. KELLER It's actually it's one thing that I actually noticed that this is all of the numbers are higher than I would have ever guessed. So. Hmm. So, I know it's like 6000 or maybe a little over 6000, right?

**Speaker 4** 6325. How about for a nonresident double? Ashley.

**Speaker 2** I'm going to go with 10,000.

**Speaker 4** 9542. So, you guys are both really close on one or the other. I was going to say.

**Speaker 5** This is a good idea because if my wife listens to this and I have, you know, just how much of.

**Speaker 4** This is a good question for Alex and Alex, what is the most common comment that you got from people?

**Speaker 3** And another is the most common comment, but it certainly wasn't just a one off. We had a lot of comments saying like, hey, don't tell my wife how much I spent on this stuff. I think it's like the first time a lot of people probably like sit down and actually pencil out. How much did I spend, you know, to fill this tag or to go on this trip? And they're like, they're thinking, oh, wow. Yeah. Yeah. We got a couple of those.

**Speaker 4** People spend a lot of money on getting out and about. And what's interesting is Alex previous work on his thesis it actually it measures non-market valuation so essentially what a person would be willing to pay in for all of the hunts across the board even though people pay these like exorbitant, you know, money to go out and do this stuff, they on paper they would pay more. So, they're getting value for the money they spend like it's worth it to them.

**Speaker 2** Yeah. Super interesting. Well, we have to take a quick break, but we will be right back. You are listening to Nevada Wild.

**Speaker 3** On to Saskatchewan, where the game is good. If you get gone, I'm on a bluff.

**Unidentified** Long as you are long gone.

**Speaker 3** And you are.

**Speaker 2** If you enjoy listening to our podcast, leave us a review on iTunes and SoundCloud. For more information on hunting, fishing, boating and all things wildlife, go to npr.org. Now back to the show. Welcome back to Nevada Wild. Today we are talking about hunting and the economics of it, how it impacts conservation in our economy. Important stuff. And we're joined by Alec Bowman with U.N., Ours Cooperative Extension. And we have Bobby Jones here now. Before the break, Bobby gave us a little bit of trivia. In was Erin and I were asked to guess how much hunters spend on a trip hunting. So, Alec, do you want to get a little more into the specifics of it? Well, first off, we might want to review what the answer was and also get into those individual costs. Like what are they actually spending their money on?

**Speaker 3** Yeah, absolutely. So, I think Bobby asked about a bull elk. And so, if you were going to go on a bull elk hunt, you know, all out the door on average, people are spending just around \$6,000 for that entire trip. Most of that money is spent on kind of supplies and gear, which are the things you buy, you know, when you're preparing to go out on that trip. That might be like camp stove fuel. It could be, you know, ammunition. It could be something like a new tent or something along those lines that kind of you need to stock up on before you head out. And then kind of the next biggest one would be fuel. So that's for traveling. So, filling up at the pump before you head out. And then a lot of people use kind of another vehicle as well. So, they've got to put fuel on that, too. And then the you know, interestingly, the next biggest kind of been, of course, for like a bull elk in particular is the guide is a guide service. So, if you elect to do a guide service that is generally the next largest kind of bin of money there. But of course, not everyone's going to do that. And these kinds of values represent the averages. However, they're kind of the share that each one of them makes up for expenditures is pretty similar. So, it goes supplies and gear, fuel guide service if you do it, groceries and then kind of lodging, restaurant, fast food and so on after that.

**Speaker 4** And I think that those numbers might have come off sounding really large. And part of that just because of the scarcity, say, of a blog tag. But in reality, a person like me can't spend 15% of my income on a hunt for a year. So, most people typically are spending less than that. And you see that, especially so on. Many of the other tags that are, you know, more common, say like a mule deer tag or a video analog tag or something like that. And honestly, a lot of the per day costs end up lining up very closely with other forms of outdoor recreation. So, if a family goes camping for the weekend, those per day costs are very similar to if, you know, person went upland game hunting.

**Speaker 3** Yeah, that's right. And what's driving these larger costs is just the number of days that someone spends out there. So, you'll see if you read the report, you'll see that the average per day cost for you know, for a resident hunter for most of these different tags is hovering below \$300 and it just above \$200 there or whatever it is. And the only thing that's kind of driving these large averages up is just that people are spending a lot of time out there. You know, they're enjoying their time out there and they're going to spend more time for kind of the scarcer tags, like Bobby was saying, hoping to fill that tag.

**Speaker 5** Yeah. I think the other interesting thing that I saw in that that dollar amount was taxidermy. That's a big item. But, you know, you don't take that into account until you're successful. So yeah. Had anything mounted or taxidermy knows that it's pretty big, pretty expensive.

**Speaker 3** So yeah that's an interesting point because yeah, we, we report the average but for a lot of people they're just reporting zero because you know, either they didn't fill the tag or that's not what they were out there for. It wasn't it wasn't like a trophy hunter or whatever. I think somewhere in here I in the report we have kind of what was spent on average if they actually elected to do that. So like guide, service and taxidermy in meat processing. But a lot of people just can't get out and they don't need those services as well.

**Speaker 2** So this really does encompass every little detail that you might be spending money on.

**Speaker 3** Yeah, we I'll just list off the categories that people could spend or could report spending in which supplies and gear, fuel, rental equipment, groceries, hotel, motel campsite, restaurants, that's full service, and then we have fast food, bars. We have another other category, taxidermy, meat processing, guide service, licenses and fees. Yeah, so those are all, all those. And then we actually have another section, which is what we call kind of the big ticket or one-time expenditures or I think we call them big ticket expenditures. Those are expenditures for the primary purpose of hunting, but those are ones that you make maybe once every ten years. It's not specific to this hunt. So, when we're doing our kind of accounting for that, we wouldn't say like, oh, someone happened to buy a new side by side this year, so let's throw it into their trip costs. We account for that separately.

**Speaker 2** I just wanted to you kind of gave an example there. What were those big ones, once every, I mean, maybe I want to get into hunting so I'm trying to figure out all the costs.

**Speaker 3** Yeah. And I'd say like, let's see, let me see if I can apply optics. Yeah.

**Speaker 4** So camping equipment, it's, I mean, it's all.

**Speaker 3** Over the map. Yeah, we have clothing, ammunition and firearms equipment, archery equipment, optics, GPS, plus like a service ohv use trailers, RV, camper, camping equipment.

**Speaker 2** Make sense. So those things that maybe when you're first going hunting or you built up over the years, even.

**Speaker 3** And I don't think that you know, I think that, you might not need all of these things in your first one. I think like a lot of these people can say that they're for the primary purpose of hunting, but they're also going to use them for other things as well. So. So I don't know that they're all entirely necessary if you want to go hunting for your first time. Yeah, that's kind of fun. Yeah. Bobby and I talked about, like, sharing equipment and stuff like that, which kind of plays in with this stuff.

**Speaker 4** Yeah. And it was fun that Alec is coming at it from a perspective of a person who doesn't hunt, and I'm coming at it from the perspective of someone who does. We were trying to incorporate a lot of different things. And yeah, the reality is you don't need half of this stuff to go on a hunting trip. Just this is the types of things that people are purchasing for them or to do this stuff. And sometimes it.

**Speaker 5** Admittedly, Bobby, use hunting as an excuse to buy some of these.

**Speaker 4** Exactly. And that's why I like big. Like someone gets antagonistic. Oh, here's my perfect excuse for that wall tent that I've been talking about for ten years, but I've never bought. But here we're going to go spend a week and a half in the shells or something like that. So, we were just trying to go as detailed and honest as possible. So, you know, there's information on like one thing that I think Alec incorporated that's really good is when you have multiple people going on a hunting trip, like people you know, really like to go out with others. There's only so many tags. And then so he tried to build this and it's just it's a very, very in-depth look at something that, you know, before we just didn't have any information on.

**Speaker 2** Yeah, no, I think it's really cool that you do hear everything is considered when putting this together and I didn't realize, Alec, so you were coming from the non-hunter perspective, so that's really interesting how you worked together on this. But overall, we were like, we don't want this to deter people from hunting. Really, you could go as big or small as you need to.

**Speaker 5** Yeah, we definitely don't want people to get sticker shock and thinking that it's going to be 6000 bucks a year to go on a bull elk hunt.

**Speaker 2** But we made the good point earlier. I mean, any type of vacation you go on, I mean, this is probably more affordable than.

**Speaker 5** Anybody ever serious. Well, I got you and Alec, like you can jump in too, how do you guys think that this can be like what are some ways that this going to be used, like in the future, like.

**Speaker 2** But there's something I wanted to ask, too.

**Speaker 4** I mean, I'm so I grew up in Winnemucca, right. A smaller town in northern Nevada. And I just look at this as a from a public perspective or a small business owner perspective or a community perspective is, hey, like, you know, mining in Winnemucca and agriculture are big drivers. But can outdoor recreation hold kind of have a bigger foothold there? It's the kind of thing, you know, outdoor activities, they help, you know, a person's quality of life. So, develop opportunities for the people that you have that live there, as well as people that are visiting and highlight those. And it doesn't have to just be hunting. And essentially, the more you have going into these things, people can serve these places and make it more accessible to others. I just think there's a lot more opportunity there than people realize. Hunting is just a piece of the puzzle in the outdoor recreation space. And, you know, and we have more public land than anywhere else. That's like take advantage of that. And I just think of, you know, these communities of people that, you know, they want a more diverse economy. That was one thing I was going to touch on is that, you know, we took 2019 and 2020 data. So, we have pre-COVID and during COVID and essentially the hunting numbers are unchanged. It's exactly the same.

**Speaker 2** So, Bobby wasn't supposed to be a trivia question?

**Speaker 4** It was, but I didn't want miss out on it.

**Speaker 2** I knew this one.

**Speaker 4** I didn't want to miss out on it. I thought I'd better sneak it in just because everybody talked about things that shut down or things that slowed down. And, you know, people wanted to get outside and they did it just as much as ever before.

**Speaker 3** Yeah. And then, you know, kind of like Bobby said, this is just being able to get this information out there is one thing, but hopefully having it used as another thing. And, you know, I think the more that we can get local, like good quality local data for decision makers out in, like anywhere in Nevada, that just helps everyone kind of having that information. Maybe an entrepreneur is thinking, oh, I didn't, you know, I didn't realize maybe there's a maybe if I opened up a hotel or whatever and geared it towards hunting or outdoor recreation, generally, like that could be something. And then it's an engine for economic development. You know, I think it's interesting that, you know, obviously conservation has a ton of different benefits if you can show that conservation is going to increase the number of tags available in a county. And then you could say, hey, if we increase that number by this number of tags available each year, we could actually bring in X amount of dollars. Then you're getting a lot of buy in from different groups, not just the conservation group, but also the business development side of things. So, I think it kind of it makes a larger tent when it comes to talking about, kind of treating our, how we're going to treat our natural resources and use them to the development of the community.

**Speaker 4** Or you've got things that don't require tags like upland game hunting, right? In that it's accessible to anyone no matter if you have a tag or not.

**Speaker 3** Yeah. Yeah, we saw I mean, one thing we looked at was days spent hunting and in time spent hunting a number of hunters. And, you know, you could certainly tell that, you know, obviously, tags are going to restrict the number of big game hunters, you know, as they should. But Upland Game has a ton of participation and they are getting out there, you know, just as much and enjoying the landscape.

**Speaker 2** I we are pretty much out of time. But I did want to ask where could people see this report? And also, if they're interested in hearing about this and they want to help contribute to getting more data or if they have ideas. Who should they reach out to?

**Speaker 3** Yeah, that's a thanks for asking. So, this report is available on the extension website. So that's the UNR extension website. And it's also linked on the Nevada Economic Assessment Project webpage, which is an extension program. They're the ones who, you know, kind of you know, I'm working with them looking at all this outdoor recreation stuff. So, we have a lot of good information on there. Feel free to reach out to us for information. You know, our email is econdev@unr.edu. So that links to the email. So, if you have questions regarding that stuff and then we have another report that's coming out to be published that looks actually at the economic impact numbers and contribution numbers for each county. So, if you're interested in to seeing what you know, how hunting contributes to the economy that you live in in your county, then I recommend checking that out.

**Speaker 2** Awesome. Well, thank you so much, both of you. That was really interesting. We were trying to we were like, it's going to be like a boring podcast just because we're going over data. But it was actually very interesting. So, thank you both, Bobby and Alec. And Alec, we're going to have to get you back on here for more podcasts with all the work you're doing.

**Speaker 3** I'd love to, thank you.



**Speaker 2** And thanks, Bobby.

**Speaker 4** And thanks for having us. Thanks, Alec.

**Speaker 2** Of course, and that does it for this week's Nevada Wild.

**Speaker 1** No. Join us again next week for our next adventure. Now that a while, it's a production of the Nevada Department of Wildlife.