

Fort Riley Elk Facts

Historically, elk ranged across much of the Northern Hemisphere, including the plains states. The species was extirpated over most of its range in the late 1800's. A program was initiated in cooperation with Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks in 1986 to reintroduce elk to Fort Riley. This reintroduction effort has restored a native component of the Kansas Flint Hills. Kansas residents and visitors have been provided with the opportunity to enjoy these majestic animals whether their interests are photography, hunting or just being able to view the elk in their native environment.

Likely Places

The elk herd residing on Fort Riley and surrounding lands has grown to the point that they can be found throughout the installation and on private lands. Fort Riley Outdoor Recreation Areas C, F, H, K, L, M, P and Q are the most likely places to find elk.

Daytime bedding areas include parts of timbered areas, which are especially preferred in times of high and low temperatures. Side hills in the prairie provide bedding areas with good visibility. Look for elk on side hills when temperatures are moderate. Drainages (or draws) are sought by the elk when they provide shelter from cold winds. However, it is not unusual to observe elk using open, grassland habitats under all weather conditions.

Food plots on Fort Riley are planted to provide elk and other wildlife with nutrition throughout the year. The best times to see elk feeding are in the early morning or late in the evening. Seasonal changes in food preference do occur with the elk on Fort Riley. Look for "elk sign" in and around food plots. Elk use winter wheat and alfalfa on and off-post when green vegetation is limited, particularly in late winter.

Fort Riley does NOT maintain a list of private landowners who allow elk hunting or viewing on their property. Fort Riley personnel do NOT track the elk off-post.

Hunting Elk on Fort Riley

The Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks establishes annual hunting quotas based on population size and age/sex composition. Applications for Kansas's elk hunting permits for Elk Unit 2 are available from the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks. The state application summarizes the application procedure, number of permits available and state regulations pertaining to elk hunting. All recreationists on Fort Riley are required to use the iSportsman check-in/check-out system. For more information on how to utilize this system please visit <https://fortriley.isportsman.net>. Additional hunting information on Fort Riley is also available at the DPW Environmental Division Office located in Building 407, Pershing Court. **Fort Riley's Hunting and Fishing Regulation requires that all elk hunters obtain a Fort Riley Elk Permit. These are free of charge. Hunters are required to take a 10 minute safety briefing prior to issuance of the Fort Riley Elk Permit. The briefing will familiarize hunters with Fort Riley specific regulations in force.**

Elk begins to rut when cows come into estrus in early to mid-September. During this time, bulls can be heard "bugling" to establish territories and to maintain harems of cows. Cows answer the bugles with calls of their own. An excellent way to get close to elk during this time of the year is to imitate the bugles and cow calls. Elk will often reply to your calls and sometimes will come to them.

Open Areas

NOTE: *Fort Riley Military Reservation or portions of it may be closed at any time without prior notice, due to military activities. Substantial portions of the post are anticipated to be closed to rifle and muzzleloader hunting on any given day. The military mission has precedence over the announced hunting season.*

Hunting and other outdoor recreation on Fort Riley can only take place in areas compatible with the post's military training. These areas may change daily. To find out which areas are open on the day you wish to recreate, go to the Fort Riley iSportsman web page at <https://fortriley.isportsman.net> under the Open Areas tab. Maps showing Outdoor Recreation Areas of Fort Riley and brochures about recreation are available on the webpage and at the Environmental Division Office (Building 407, Pershing Court). The automated check-in-out system is also found at the website. If you need assistance with the system please contact the Environmental Division Office.

Access Control Procedures

All individuals 16 and older must possess a Federal ID Card or a Fort Riley Access Pass or badge to recreate on Fort Riley. Individuals who do not already have the required ID or Access Passes can apply for one at the installation's Visitor Control Center (Bldg. 885), located just south of the Henry Gate Access Control Point (Exit 301, U.S. Interstate 70) Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends and federal holidays. Access Passes are based on the requirement of the visit.

If you know the exact date of your visit, it is highly recommended to get a temporary pass or badge early by stopping by the Visitor Control Center. Any questions can be answered by calling (785) 239-2982 or emailing usarmy.riley.imcom-central.mbx.des-vcc@mail.mil. You will be required to provide a government issued photo identification. For further information concerning access to Fort Riley visit <http://www.riley.army.mil/Units/Garrison-Command/Emergency-Services/Access-Information/>.

Additional Information

Anyone hunting on Fort Riley must comply with Kansas regulations regarding hunter education. Additionally, no one under 17 may hunt unless accompanied by an adult who is 18 years of age or older and has completed the state of Kansas Hunter Education requirement or is exempt from such requirement.

Fort Riley Conservation Permits may only be obtained through the Fort Riley iSportsman web page. Motor vehicles used while recreating on Fort Riley must have their current Fort Riley iSportsman "Vehicle Pass" displayed in the windshield of their vehicle. All Fort Riley permits and briefings can be obtained from the webpage (**including the Fort Riley Elk Permit**).

For further information concerning the upcoming Fort Riley Elk season, contact the Environmental Division Office at (785) 239-6211 or visit its website at <https://fortriley.isportsman.net>.