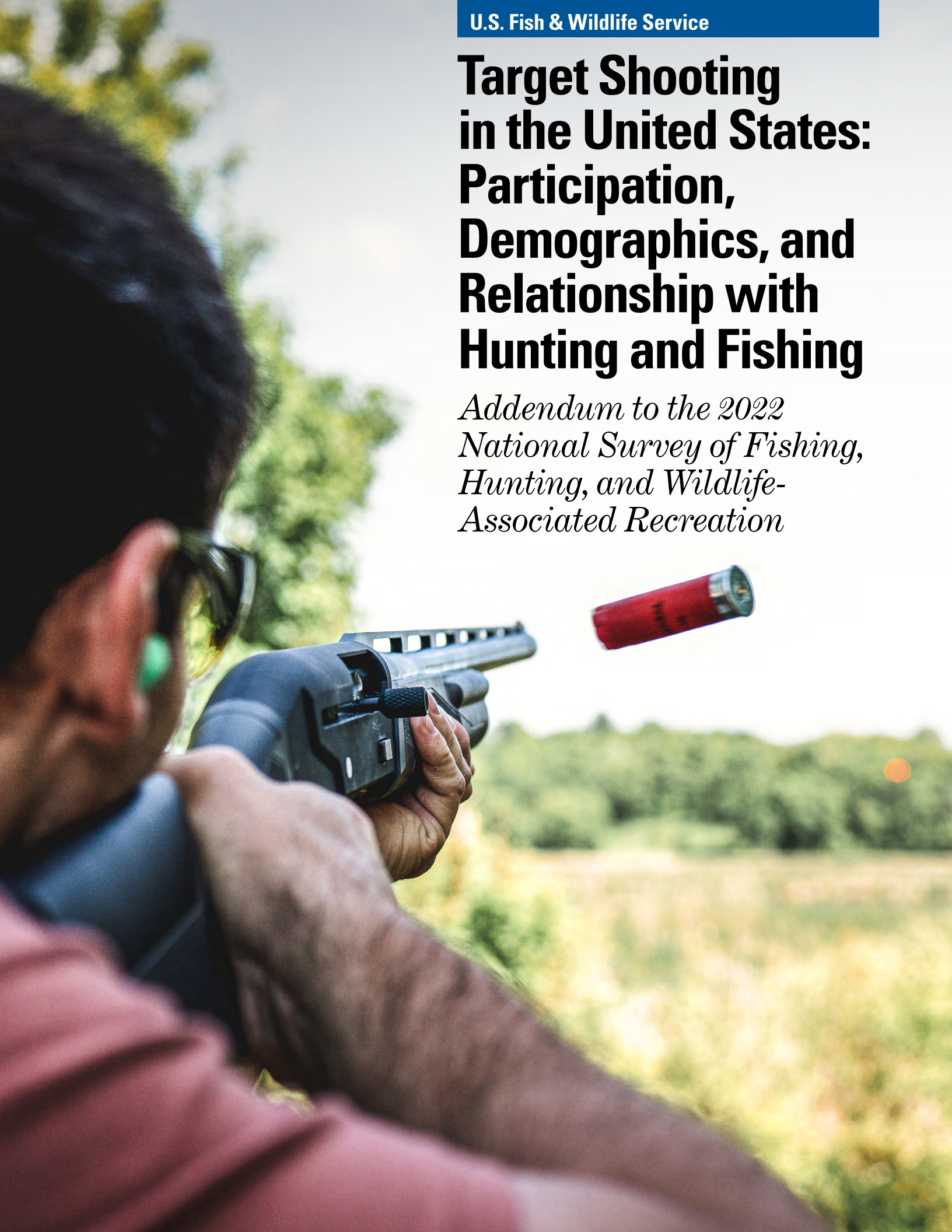


# Target Shooting in the United States: Participation, Demographics, and Relationship with Hunting and Fishing

*Addendum to the 2022  
National Survey of Fishing,  
Hunting, and Wildlife-  
Associated Recreation*







# Target Shooting in the United States: Participation, Demographics, and Relationship with Hunting and Fishing

*Addendum to the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*

Report 2022-7 | February 2025



Office of  
**CONSERVATION  
INVESTMENT**

**By Jerry Leonard, *Economist***

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Conservation Investment

This report complements the *2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*. The conclusions in this report are the author's and do not represent official positions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The author thanks Bob Byrne, Tom Decker, Charles "Swanny" Evans, and Craig Springer for valuable input on this report.

Photos courtesy of 2024 National 4H Championship; 2024 National USA Clay Target Shooting Championship; Ryan Armbrust — Sniper Photo, LLC; Joe Dickie/Savage Arms; Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports; Dustin Samplawski/Savage Arms; Mossy Oak; Michigan USA Clay Target Shooting Championship 2024; National Archery in the Schools Program; National Shooting Sports Foundation; Northeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; and Joseph Weiser/2024 National USA Clay Target Shooting Championship.



This project was supported by Multistate Conservation Grant F20AP00134, funded from the Wildlife Restoration Fund and the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, and jointly managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

---

The U.S. Department of the Interior protects and manages the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated Island Communities. The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service is responsible for national programs of vital importance to our natural resources, including administration of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration grants. These two grants provide financial assistance to the states, commonwealths and territories for projects to enhance and protect fish and wildlife resources and to ensure their availability to the public.

#### **Suggested Citation**

U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, *Target Shooting in the United States: Participation, Demographics, and Relationship with Hunting and Fishing*.



# Contents

Introduction .....	5
Data and Definitions.....	7
Demographic Characteristics .....	8
Conclusion .....	18
References.....	20









# Introduction



The 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation (Survey) was the first one of its kind, since 1955, to estimate the number of firearm target shooters in the United States, and with 47 million participants, it is clearly a widely popular activity. Not only do many people enjoy the activity, evidence suggests that it is growing fast (Duda, 2021). The rapid rise in firearm target shooting has resulted in a shift in Pittman-Robertson federal excise tax funds being paid for purposes not related to hunting (Duda, 2021). The firearms and ammunition for non-hunting purposes was estimated in one recent study at 74.2 percent (Southwick Associates, 2021). Prior to 2022, the Survey could not be used to examine the population of firearm target shooters in detail. Prior Surveys did collect information about the number of target shooters, but only collected it from people who were likely hunters and anglers who were 16 years old and older. The change collected firearms target shooting information from the whole U.S. population six years of age and older, regardless of whether they also engaged in hunting and fishing.

Another change to the Survey in 2022 also enables us to examine archery target shooting in detail, and with an estimated 19 million participants, it too is a widely popular activity. Participation rates in archery target shooting are highest among those under 18. This may be in part due to the growth in organized youth archery programs such as National Archery in the Schools Program, S3DA, and 4-H Shooting Sports. One of these programs alone has had about 21 million participants and now has nearly

9,000 schools participating across the United States. (National Archery in the Schools Program, 2023). The likely influence of these programs can be seen in the Survey results, which indicates that a quarter of all archery target shooters are under the age of 18. This is substantially higher than either firearm target shooting or hunting.

This report sheds light on numerous questions regarding the firearms and archery target shooting population and their associated behaviors. What percent of target shooters are active hunters and anglers? What percent of target shooters have never been hunting? How does the target shooting population differ from that of hunters? Do hunters who engage in firearms target shooting spend more on rifles than those who don't? These are just a sample of the numerous shooting-related questions that are addressed in this report.

To answer these questions, this report will perform a data exploration based on Survey point estimates. This report examines target shooting across numerous characteristics that are also correlated with one another. For example, people who identify as African American are more likely to live in urban areas. To examine the relative relationship between these characteristics and target shooting, an appropriately specified model is needed to help account for these cross correlations. This is a suggestion for further research, but it is not addressed here. The results presented in this report should be considered an exploratory data analysis.







# Data and Definitions



All reported data contained herein are from the 2022 Survey, and the report makes extensive use of data from the *screen* phase of the Survey, which is where the target shooting data were collected. Like prior versions, the 2022 Survey had a two-phase construction. The first was the *screen* phase, which was used to locate individuals who will likely participate in hunting, fishing, or wildlife watching. The second was the *detail* phase in which those selected from the *screen* phase were given detailed interviews about their activities. Unlike prior years of the Survey, the questions relevant to target shooting were asked on the *screen* phase in 2022. The practical effect of this change was that we obtained information for the entire U.S. population six years and older, not just those who were likely to participate in fishing or hunting. It is important to note that because of the heavy use of the *screen* phase, some of the information in this report will not match that reported in the final report for the 2022 Survey. That report primarily focused on participation and expenditures in 2022, but this report also considers participation and behaviors beyond 2022 alone. Importantly, the target shooting question pertains to 2021 activity, not 2022, which was the data year for the *detail* phase. For consistency with target shooting data, we will utilize 2021 hunting data, which also comes from the *screen*.

A firearms target shooter is someone with a yes response to the following question. “Did you do any target shooting or sport shooting with a firearm such as a rifle, shotgun, muzzleloader, handgun, or air gun in 2021, not including hunting? Please include any informal target shooting or sport shooting.”

An archery target shooter is someone with a yes response to the following question. “Did you participate in archery activities using a bow and arrow, compound bow, or crossbow in 2021, not including hunting? Please include any informal archery activities.”

In the ‘Hunting and Fishing Participation of Target Shooters’ section below, an ‘active’ hunter or angler is someone who participated in the respective activity at least once over a three-year window from 2019-2021.

Most information in this report comes from the *screen* and pertains to the six and over resident population in the United States. Rather than mention six and over repeatedly, this qualifier will be dropped. Deviations in the population addressed will be clarified where necessary.



# Demographic Characteristics

With 47 million firearms and 19 million archery, target shooting is a popular activity among virtually all population segments for which the Survey collects data. Target shooters are from low-income households, high-income households, urban and rural areas, males and females, etc. This section will examine the firearm and archery populations by demographic characteristics that have been routinely collected by the Survey since 1991. Additionally, it will make comparisons to the 2021 hunting population because it improves our understanding of how these target shooting populations differ. As will be shown, the demographic characteristics of firearms and archery target shooters are more similar in many respects to each other than either is to the population of hunters. The one notable difference among the population of firearms and archery target shooters is age, archers being the younger of the two. Table 1 presents the demographic findings.

The analysis in this section utilizes both distributional percentages and participation rates. Distributional percentages indicate the composition of the population of participants with respect to characteristics. Distributional percentages are in the “Percent” columns of Tables 1. For example, in Table 1, the ‘Firearms Percent’ column for the characteristic ‘Sex’ indicates 70 percent of shooters are male and 29 percent are female. Participation rates indicate the share of the population for a particular characteristic, shown in the ‘Rate’ columns. For example, the ‘Participation Rate’ column for firearms indicates that 22 percent of males and 9 percent of females are firearm target shooters. The distributional percentages and participation rates are useful to describe the makeup of a given population.





**Table 1. Distribution and Participation Rates of Target Shooters and Hunters in 2021***(Population 6 years and older)*

	Firearms			Archery			Hunters (2021)		
	Number (thousands)	Participation Rate	Firearms Percent	Number (thousands)	Participation Rate	Archers Percent	Number (thousands)	Participation Rate	Hunters Percent
<b>Sex</b>									
Male	32,704	22	70	13,276	9	70	12,386	9	82
Female	13,593	9	29	5,548	4	29	2,628	2	17
<b>Population Density of Residence</b>									
Urban	30,792	13	65	12,879	5	67	7,272	3	48
Rural	16,228	27	35	6,347	11	33	7,979	13	52
<b>Population Size of Residence</b>									
1,000,000 or more	20,980	12	45	9,180	5	48	4,778	3	31
250,000 to 999,999	10,811	17	23	4,385	7	23	3,263	5	21
50,000 to 249,999	5,359	19	11	1,953	7	10	2,147	8	14
Micropolitan (10,000 to 49,999)	5,640	23	12	2,074	9	11	2,596	11	17
Outside MSA	4,230	25	9	1,634	10	8	2,467	15	16
<b>Annual Household Income</b>									
Less than \$25,000	5,610	11	12	2,603	5	14	1,993	4	13
\$25,000 to \$49,999	7,992	14	17	3,282	6	17	2,551	4	17
\$50,000 to \$74,999	8,227	17	17	3,217	6	17	2,622	5	17
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7,277	18	15	2,751	7	14	2,373	6	16
\$100,000 to \$149,999	8,112	18	17	3,050	7	16	2,430	5	16
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4,043	19	9	1,630	8	8	1,265	6	8
\$200,000 or more	3,675	16	8	1,848	8	10	1,149	5	8
<b>Age</b>									
6 to 15	4,820	12	10	4,198	10	22	1,791	4	12
16 to 17	1,167	14	2	792	9	4	439	5	3
18 to 24	4,175	16	9	1,947	7	10	1,264	5	8
25 to 34	8,063	19	17	3,338	8	17	2,155	5	14
35 to 44	7,583	18	16	2,932	7	15	2,241	5	15
45 to 54	6,687	17	14	2,237	6	12	2,275	6	15
55 to 64	6,938	17	15	1,971	5	10	2,414	6	16
65 and over	6,733	13	14	1,435	3	7	2,379	4	16
<b>Race</b>									
White	37,237	18	79	14,696	7	76	13,119	7	86
African American	4,207	10	9	1,969	5	10	844	2	6
Asian American	2,192	21	5	1,011	10	5	763	7	5
All Other Races	6,614	10	14	3,369	5	18	1,277	2	8

## Sex

Males have higher participation rates and represent a higher share of both firearm and archery target shooters than females, but the discrepancy between males and females is lower than it is for hunters. Twenty-two percent of all males participated in firearm target shooting. In other words, nearly one in four males in the United States engage in firearms target shooting. For females this rate falls to nine percent. Nine percent of males participate in archery target shooting, compared to four percent of females. Examining the distributional percentages reveals females represent a higher share of both firearm and target shooters than hunters. Females are 29 percent of both target shooter populations compared to 17 percent of hunters.

## Population Density and Size of Residence

Residents of rural areas and small metropolitan areas are more likely to participate in both firearms and archery target shooting. However, residents of urban areas and large metropolitan areas comprise considerably more of both firearms and archery because the urban resident populations are so much larger. For both firearms and archery, the participation rate of rural residents is more than twice as high as the urban counterparts. The rate for firearms target shooting is 27 percent compared to 13 percent in urban areas. For archery, the rural rate is 11 percent compared to 5 percent for urban. The same pattern follows for outside metropolitan versus large metropolitan areas. Despite the lower participation rates of urban and large metropolitan areas, they account for a high share of both firearms and archery target shooters because their total resident populations are so much larger. Sixty-five percent of firearms and 67 percent of archery target shooters live in urban areas. Similarly, the largest share of firearms (45 percent) and archery (48 percent) target shooters live in the largest of metropolitan areas of one million or more residents. Considering the shares of target

shooters with that of hunters reveals that both firearms and archery target shooters are more heavily urban: 65 percent firearms and 67 percent archery compared to 48 percent of hunters.

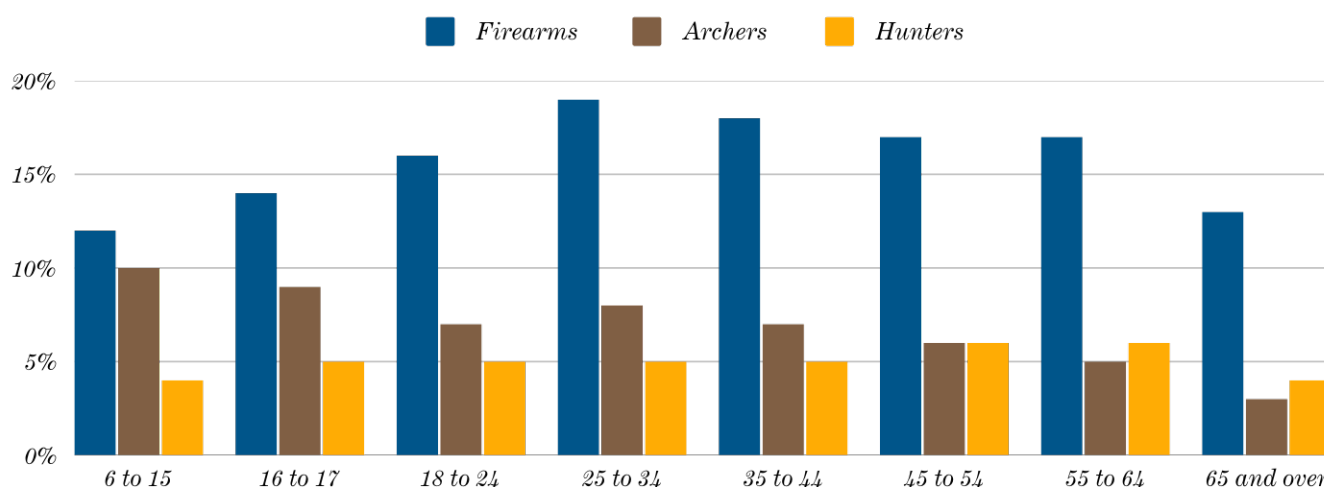
## Annual Household Income

Participation rates of both firearms and archery target shooting tends to go up as incomes increase, and the share of both by income category is nearly identical to that of hunters. The lowest participation rates are among those with household incomes under \$25,000. The rates rise consistently until the highest income level where participation goes back down. Summing the share percentages from the lowest income level up to \$149,000 indicates that nearly 80 percent of all firearms and archery target shooters have less than \$150,000 in household income. This is nearly identical to hunters, and the shares in each income bracket are also nearly identical, so target shooters don't differ much from hunters with respect to income.

## Age

Age is the one demographic characteristic where firearms and archery target shooting differ considerably, and as one might expect, firearms target shooters are older than archery shooters. For firearms participation, the participation rate is highest among young adults 25-34, and for archery the highest is among 6-15-year-olds (Figure 1). Again, this is likely indicating, at least in part, to the impact of youth archery programs. Their distributional percentages also indicate that archery target shooters are younger. Thirteen percent of firearms target shooters are under the age of 18 compared to 26 percent for archery. Firearms target shooters are more like the distribution of hunters than archery target shooters (Figure 2). The hunter and firearms target shooters are quite similar. Hunters have slightly higher concentrations on the ends of the age distribution 6-17 and 45 years and over. Firearms target shooters have slightly higher concentrations from 18-44.

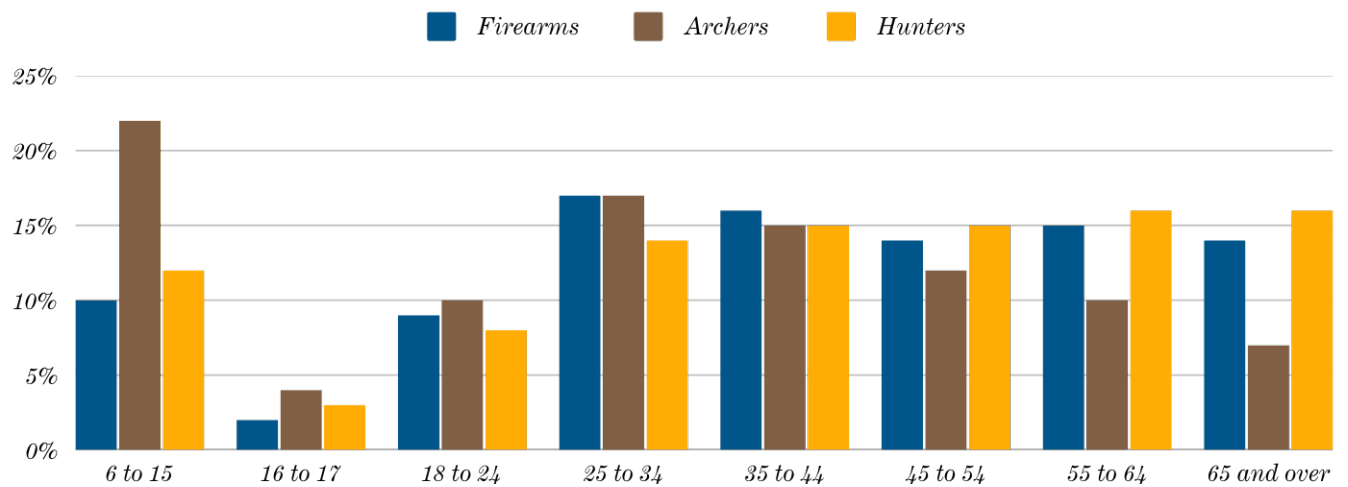
**Figure 1. Participation Rates of Firearms Target, Archery Target, and Hunters by Age**







**Figure 2. Distribution Percentages of Firearms Target, Archery Target, and Hunters by Age**





## Race

The highest participation rate in firearms and archery target shooting is among Asian Americans with Whites close behind, and compared to hunting, Whites comprise a lower share of target shooters. Asian Americans have a 21 percent participation rate in firearms target shooting, followed closely by Whites at 18 percent. Similarly, for archery target shooting, the participation rate for Asian Americans and Whites are 10 percent and seven percent respectively. Both firearms and archery target shooting populations are comprised of fewer Whites than hunting. Both populations are also more heavily African American and All Other Races than hunters.

## Other Activities of Firearms and Archery Target Shooters

Examining the population of firearms and archery target shooters by hunting and fishing status reveals

some interesting and perhaps counterintuitive information. Table 2 presents the population of firearms target shooters along with their status with respect to hunting and fishing participation. Table 3 does the same for archery target shooters. If someone had participated in hunting or fishing over a three-year window from 2019 to 2021, that individual is considered an active hunter or angler respectively. Beyond the three-year active window, there are a few lapsed categories, and a category for 'Never'. What is shown in this row is the percentage of all firearms or archery target shooters who have never tried hunting or fishing respectively. For example, the 'Distribution Percent' column in Table 2 indicates that 52 percent of target shooters have never tried hunting. On down the column, the Table indicates that 27 percent have never tried fishing. Figures 3-6 help convey the story with respect to hunting and fishing participation.

**Table 2. Firearms Target Shooting Participation Rates and Distribution by Hunting and Fishing Status**

(Population 6 years and older)

	<i>Number (thousands)</i>	<i>Participation Rate</i>	<i>Distribution Percent</i>
<b>Hunters</b>			
<i>Active (within 3 years)</i>	12,368	66	26
<i>Lapsed (4-5 years)</i>	1,984	47	4
<i>Lapsed (6 or more years)</i>	8,302	31	18
<i>Never</i>	24,289	10	52
<b>Anglers</b>			
<i>Active (within 3 years)</i>	23,465	36	50
<i>Lapsed (4-5 years)</i>	3,166	22	7
<i>Lapsed (6 or more years)</i>	7,785	15	17
<i>Never</i>	12,606	7	27

**Table 3. Archery Target Shooting Participation Rates and Distribution by Hunting and Fishing Status**

(Population 6 years and older)

	<i>Number (thousands)</i>	<i>Participation Rate</i>	<i>Distribution Percent</i>
<b>Hunters</b>			
<i>Active (within 3 years)</i>	6,620	35	34
<i>Lapsed (4-5 years)</i>	704	17	4
<i>Lapsed (6 or more years)</i>	1,920	7	10
<i>Never</i>	9,955	4	52
<b>Anglers</b>			
<i>Active (within 3 years)</i>	10,768	16	56
<i>Lapsed (4-5 years)</i>	1,210	8	6
<i>Lapsed (6 or more years)</i>	2,016	4	10
<i>Never</i>	5,232	3	27



The participation rate of hunters in firearms and archery target shooting is higher than fishing (Figures 3 and 4). Among those who are active hunters, 66 percent of them also participate in firearms target shooting. Similarly, 35 percent of hunters also participate in archery target shooting. The participation rate in both falls as recency to hunting declines. Forty-seven percent of those who were hunters but lapsed four to five years participate in firearms target shooting. This rate falls to 31 percent among those who lapsed six or more years and 10 percent among those who have never tried hunting. While the rates are lower among archery target shooters, the pattern is the same. The participation rate among those who have lapsed four to five years, more than six years, or never tried hunting declines from 17 percent to 7 percent to 4 percent respectively. These results indicate that those who hunt are more likely to be both firearms and archery target shooters than those who do not.

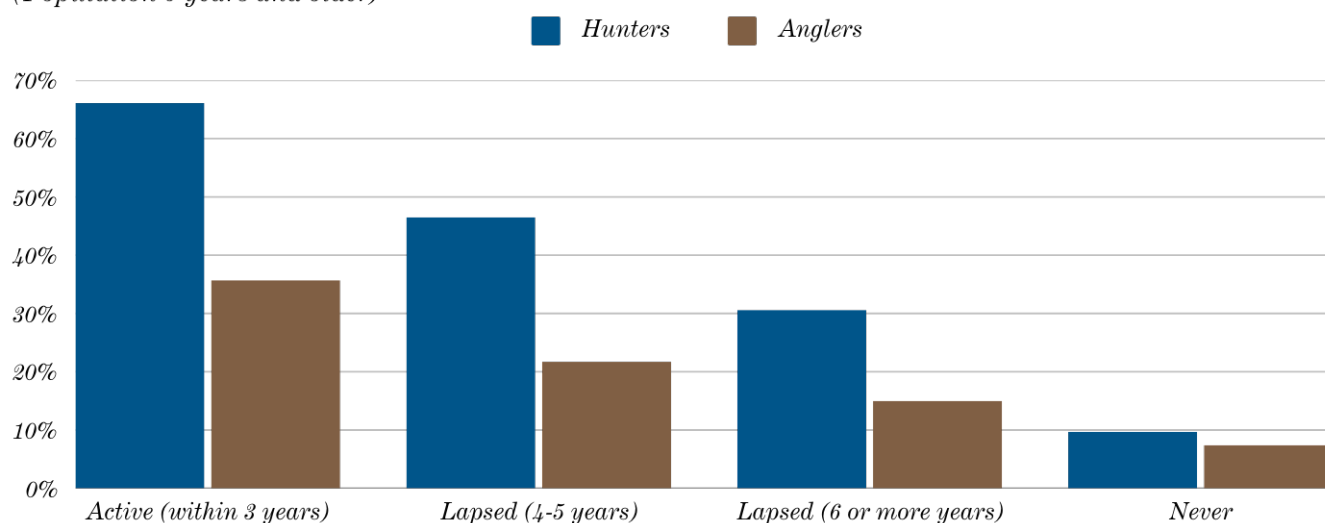
**Table 4. Other Activities of Firearms and Archery Target Shooters**

(Population 6 years and older)

	<i>Number (thousands)</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<b>Firearms Target by Other Activities</b>		
<i>Active Angler</i>	23,465	50
<i>Active Hunter</i>	12,368	26
<i>Archery Target</i>	11,862	25
<i>Boater</i>	16,032	34
<b>Archery Target by Other Activities</b>		
<i>Active Angler</i>	10,768	56
<i>Active Hunter</i>	6,620	34
<i>Firearm Target</i>	11,862	62
<i>Boater</i>	7,719	40

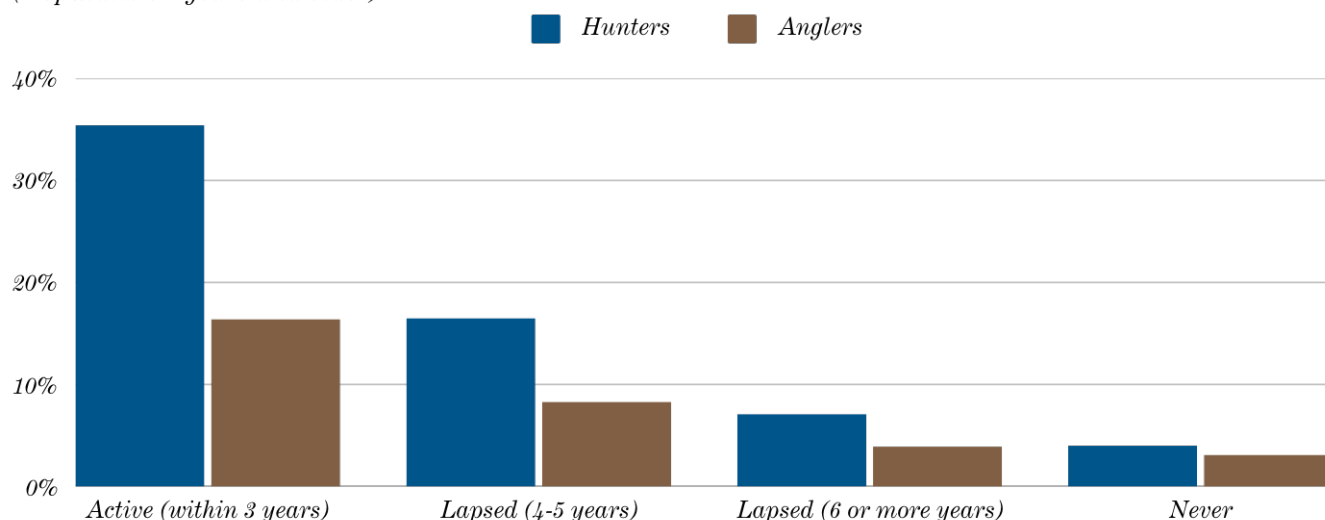
**Figure 3. Firearms Target Shooters Participation Rates by Hunting and Fishing Status**

(Population 6 years and older)



**Figure 4. Archery Target Shooters Participation Rates by Hunting and Fishing Status**

(Population 6 years and older)





We cannot assess causality with these results. It is unknown whether hunters who do not target shoot are more likely to give up hunting, or if participants who give up hunting are more likely to give up target shooting, or if they give up hunting and target shooting at the same time. Unfortunately, the data are not well suited to address this question. What is known is that both firearms and archery target shooting are highly correlated with hunting.<sup>1</sup>

No category of fishing participation has as high an archery or firearms target shooting participation rate as a comparable hunting category. The participation rate among active anglers in either target shooting activity is about half that of active hunters. Choosing 100 active hunters at random would, on average, yield 66 firearms target shooters, and choosing 100 active anglers at random would yield about 36. Similarly, choosing 100 active hunters at random would yield 35 archery target shooters on average, while choosing 100 active anglers would yield 16.

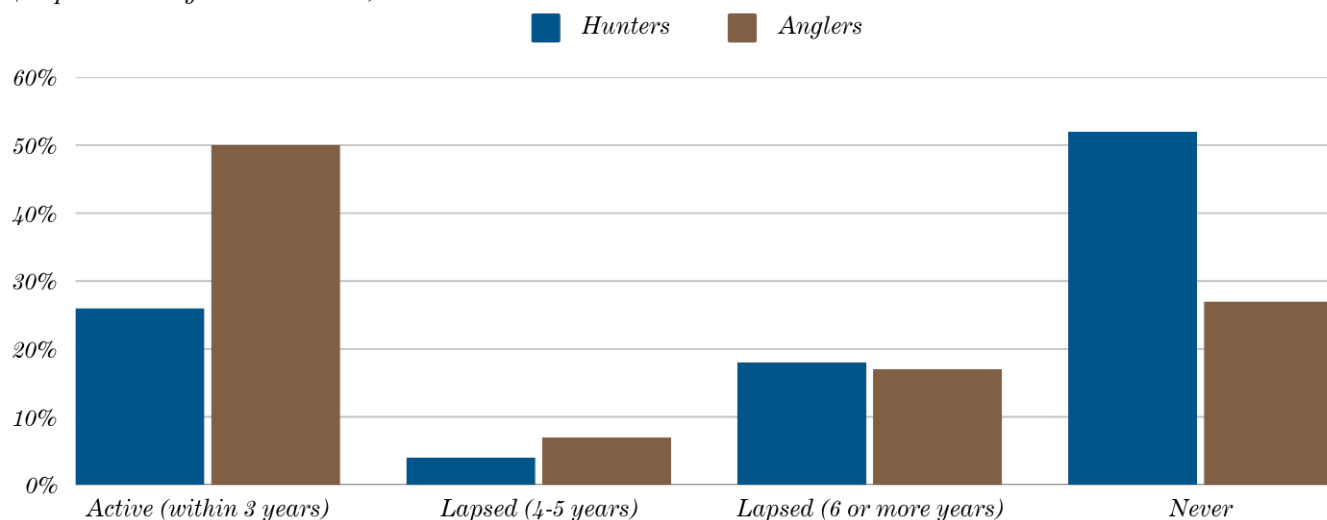
Despite the lower participation rate of anglers in firearms and archery target shooting, there are many more of both who are active anglers than hunters (Figures 5 and 6). Half of all firearms target shooters are active anglers, whereas about a quarter of them are active hunters. Similarly, 55 percent of all archery target shooters are active anglers, and 34 percent are active hunters. The reason why, despite the lower participation rate of anglers in target shooting, they comprise substantially more of the firearms and archery target shooting population is that the pool of active anglers is much bigger than active hunters. This is similar to the Urban/Rural result discussed above. Figures 4 and 5 also show the share of target shooters who have never tried hunting or fishing. As previously mentioned, 52 percent of firearms target shooters have never tried hunting, and 27 percent have never tried fishing. The percentages are the same for archery target shooting, 52 percent have never tried hunting and 27 percent have never tried fishing.

1 The relationship between target shooting and hunting retention is examined in further detail in Leonard, J. (2024) Fishing and Hunting Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation in the U.S. <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-09/2022-fishing-and-hunting-recruitment-retention-and-reactivation-in-the-us.pdf>

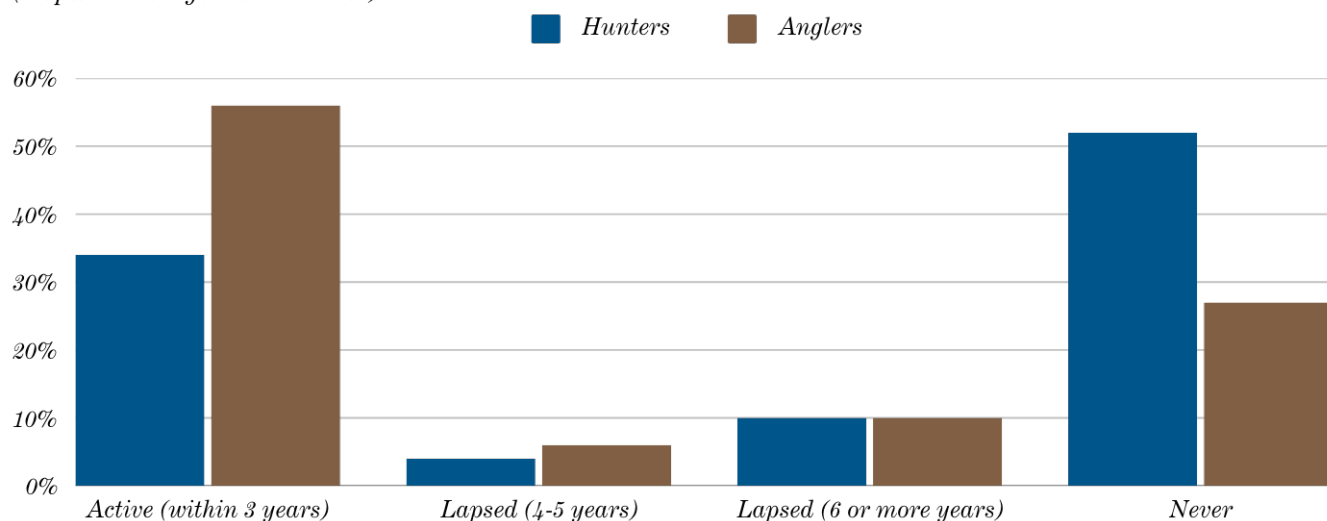




**Figure 5. Firearms Target Shooters Distribution Percentages by Hunting and Fishing Status**  
(Population 6 years and older)



**Figure 6. Archery Target Shooters Distribution Percentages by Hunting and Fishing Status**  
(Population 6 years and older)



## Hunting-Related Equipment Expenditures

While the Survey does not have information about spending for target shooting, it does have information about hunting-related trip and equipment spending. This information is only collected from hunters. As shown above, the majority of target shooters do not hunt, so the data does not permit a full accounting of expenditures by target shooters. However, we can inquire whether hunting-related spending differs among those hunters who participate in firearms target shooting from those who do not. This section examines these spending differences but only for firearms target shooters not archery target shooters. It will shed light on questions such as the following: Do hunters who firearms target shoot spend more on rifles on average than those who do not? Do hunters who firearms target shoot spend more on handguns?

Some data features make this examination less than ideal, and further research would be necessary to validate or confirm these findings. First, the target shooting and hunting-related behavior information are from one year apart. Firearm target shooter information is for 2021 activity, and hunting-related spending is for 2022. Second, respondents to hunting-related spending questions were instructed to only report spending that was for the 'primary purpose' of hunting. Items that satisfy these criteria could, and probably were, used for both activities. A person who bought a shotgun and reports that the primary purpose of the purchase was for hunting may also have used the shotgun at a shooting range. With two activities that are so closely related, it was probably difficult for respondents to accurately discern spending pursuant to target shooting and spending pursuant to hunting. Additionally, some hunters probably viewed target shooting as activity they engaged in for the ultimate purpose of preparing for days afield hunting. Hence, disentangling spending pursuant to hunting and target shooting was likely a difficult proposition. Nevertheless, even if there are dual uses for equipment, all purchases were identified by respondents as being for the 'primary purpose' of hunting.

Hunters who engage in target shooting do spend more on average than those who do not for numerous types of equipment. Figure 7 shows mean hunting spending for several equipment types where spending among hunters who firearms target shoot is considerably higher than those who do not. Hunters who target shoot with firearms spend twice as much (\$112) on rifles as those who do not (\$52). They also spend considerably more on handguns (\$76) compared to (\$44). They also spend more on average for shotguns, scopes, and ammunition. A legitimate follow-up question is whether hunters who target shoot with firearms engage in more days of hunting than those who do not. According to the mean days afield information, hunters who also engage in firearms



target shooting go about three more days per year: 19 days a year on average compared to 16 days.

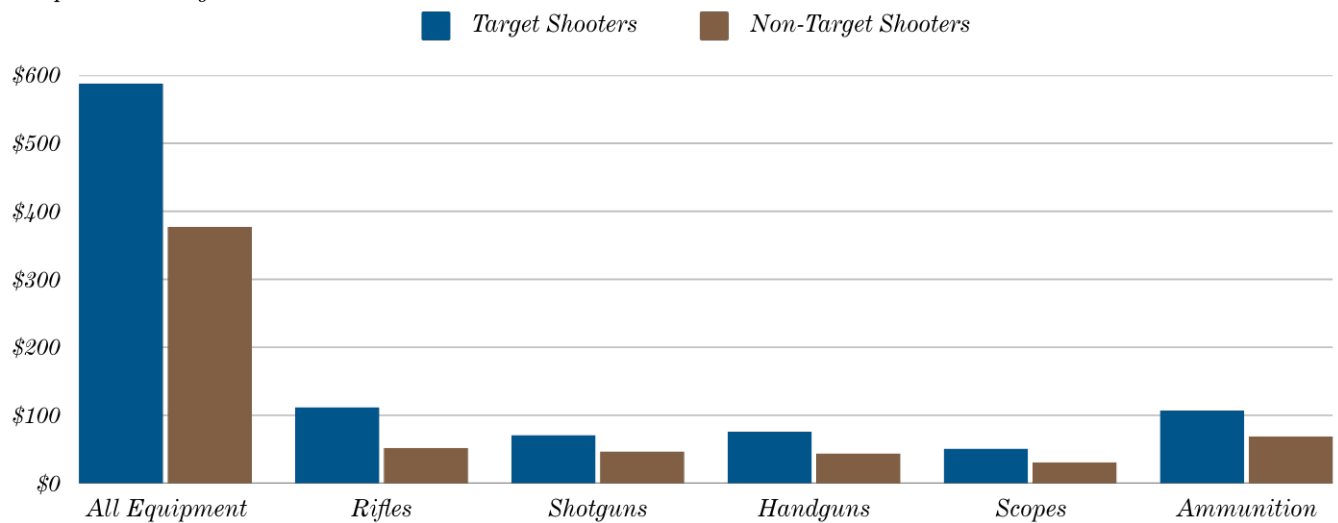
For some uses, attempting to control for differences in spending based on avidity is not necessary or even desired, but for other uses, it may be important to discern whether differences persist after avidity is considered. Figure 8 attempts to factor in the avidity difference by examining expenditures on a per hunting day basis. Controlling for number of days afield does reduce the relative differences between those who engage firearms target shooters and those who don't, but the differences persist. Spending per hunting day is higher for all the equipment categories shown. It is important to note using days afield is one approach to control for differences between those who engage in firearms target shooting and those who don't. However, it's not the only factor that is correlated with the differences. Certainly, other factors like income, urban/rural, region of residence, etc. explain some of the differences.





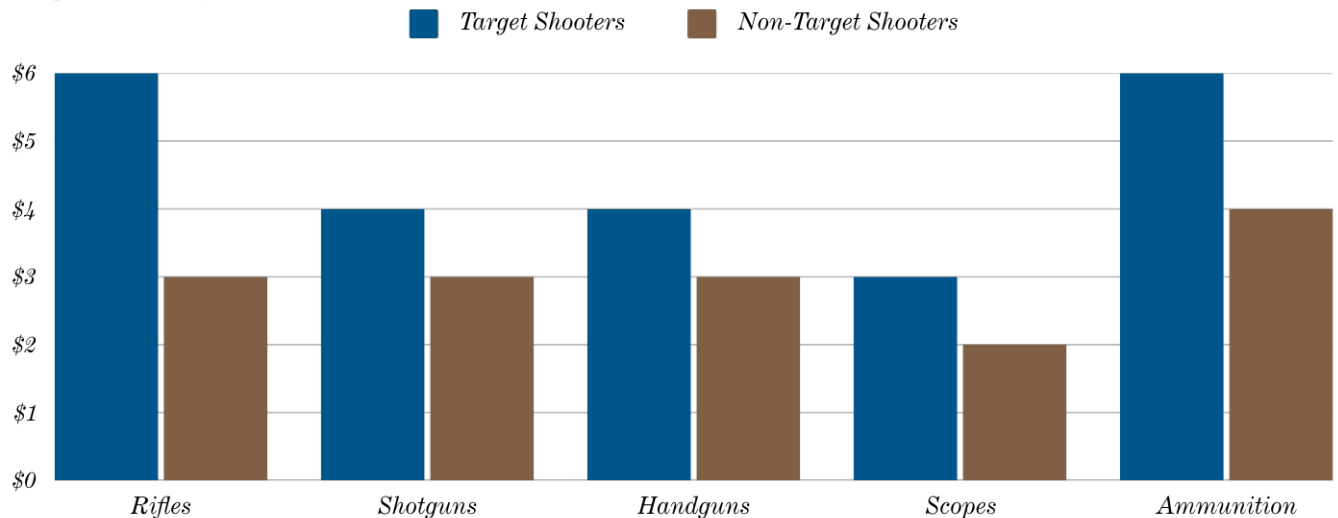
**Figure 7. Mean Hunting Equipment Spending of Hunters by Target Shooting Status**

(Population 16 years and older)



**Figure 8. Mean Per-Hunting-Day Equipment Spending of Hunters by Target Shooting Status**

(Population 16 years and older)





# Conclusion



This report utilized data from the 2022 *Survey* to explore both firearms and archery target shooting populations. The number of people aged six and over who engage in firearms target shooting was 47 million people. To put this in context, consider that in 2018, prior to the Covid pandemic, there were 46.9 million people in attendance at all the NCAA football games over the entire season (NCAA, 2019). This is not just large Division I schools. It includes attendance for all 618 college football teams, Divisions I through III. Also consider that attendance at the football games are not unique individuals. Many, perhaps most people, attend multiple games. There are people who go game after game, particularly students, and these people are being counted multiple times to get to the 46.9 million attendees. Here is the difference: the 47 million firearms target shooters reported here are unique individuals. Individuals are not counted more than once. So, if you're given pause to think of how many firearms target shooters there are, think of every college football stadium on game day, and multiply that amount by the 12-17 games they each play in a single season. The number of people aged six and over who engage in archery target shooting is likewise impressive at 19 million people. To put this number in context, consider that there are 8.6 million registered motorcycles in the United States (NHTSA, 2021). Every time you see a motorcyclist, consider that there are more than twice as many archery target shooters.

Both firearms and archery target shooting were popular activities for numerous demographic segments in the United States. They were popular among young and old, urban and rural residents, low and high incomes, males and females, and all races. The demographic profile of firearms and archery target shooters were very similar. The one notable difference was age—archery was the younger population. The profile of firearms and archery target shooters resembled that of hunters, but there are some noteworthy differences. The hunting population was more heavily male than target shooting. Archery target shooters were younger than hunters. Compared to firearms target shooters, hunters were slightly higher on ends the of the age distribution 6-17 and 45 years and over, and firearms target shooters higher from 18-44. The income distribution of both firearms and archery target shooting was nearly identical to hunting. Firearms and archery target shooters were less heavily White and more heavily African American and All Other Races.

While firearms and archery target shooters often engaged in hunting and fishing, a large number had never tried hunting or fishing. The participation rate of hunters in firearms target shooting was high, with 66 percent of active hunters being target shooters. This was higher than the participation rate among anglers, as 36 percent of anglers were also





firearms target shooters. The participation rate of archery target shooters in hunting and fishing was lower, but as with firearms, hunters had a higher participation rate in archery target shooting than anglers (35 percent compared to 16). Despite this higher participation rate of hunters than anglers in target shooting, when looking at the entire population of target shooters, many more were anglers than hunters. Twenty-six percent of firearms target shooters were anglers compared to 50 percent who were hunters. Thirty-four percent of archery target shooters were active hunters, and 56 percent were active anglers. The reason for this was that the total population of anglers was much larger than that of hunters, so despite the lower rate of anglers in target shooting, they comprised a much larger share of the population of firearms and archery target shooters. An examination of the lifelong hunting and fishing activities of target shooters revealed that half of all firearms and archery target shooters had never been hunting, and a little over a quarter of them had never tried fishing.

The Survey did not collect information about how much firearms target shooters spent on trips and

equipment such as rifles, handguns, shotguns, scopes, and ammunition. However, it did collect that information from hunters, making it possible to examine how hunting-related spending differed among hunters who target shot and those who did not. These data had limitations, but the available evidence suggested that hunters who target shot with firearms spent more on hunting equipment than those who did not. Some of this was attributable to avidity. However, even after adjusting spending by days of hunting, hunters who target shot still spent more on equipment than those who did not.

The findings in this report will be of use to natural resource managers, demographers, tourism and visitor bureaus, the firearms and archery industries, advertisers, and those concerned with expanding access to the outdoors.

Readers are encouraged to refer to this addendum's source material, the *2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*.

<https://www.fws.gov/media/2022-national-survey-fishing-hunting-and-wildlife-associated-recreation>





Image courtesy of NSSF, Copyright © 2011, National Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc., all rights reserved

## References

Duda, M. D., Beppler, T., Austen, D. J., & Organ, J. F. (2021). The precarious position of wildlife conservation funding in the United States. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, 27(2), 164–172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10871209.2021.1904307>

Southwick Associates. (2021). Proportions of Excise Taxes Generated by Hunting and Non-Hunting Activities. Fernandina Beach, Florida, USA.

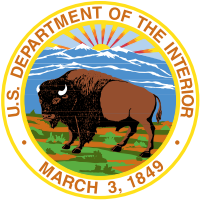
NCAA. (2019). 2018 Football Attendance. [http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/stats/football\\_records/Attendance/2018.pdf](http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/stats/football_records/Attendance/2018.pdf)

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (2021) “Motorcycle Statistics.”

National Archery in the Schools Program. (2023). *2023 Annual Review*. National Archery in the Schools Program. <https://www.naspschools.org/download/nasp-annual-review/?wpdmdl=19409>







Office of  
**CONSERVATION  
INVESTMENT**

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Office of Conservation Investment  
<https://www.fws.gov>**

*February 2025*

