

2018 success rates

2017/2018 winter lion hunts

We had two hunters and killed two cats.

Spring bear

We had 5 hunters and killed 2 bears. The first two hunters left early and were going to come back but the timing did not work out. The third hunter killed a large sow. The last two hunters killed a 6' 3" boar. We had lots of bears hitting baits but they were sporadic this year and timing them was tough.

Cast and Blast hunts in the wilderness

The first hunt we had two hunters. They shot two bears, lots of grouse and caught some fish. The second hunt we had one hunter. He shot a bear, wolf, grouse and caught some fish out of our high mountain lakes.

Archery hunts front range

The first archery hunt we had 4 hunters. They missed a 300 bull, wounded another 6 point (I bugled him in two weeks later for my son), missed two bucks and passed on numerous cows and small bucks.

The second hunt we had 2 hunters. They killed a 6 point bull.

The third hunt we had two hunters cancel out and one hunter came hunting. He killed a 6 point bull.

Wilderness bugle hunts

The first hunt we had 4 hunters. They missed a 330-340 bull opening day (you can see a picture of him on our facebook page), missed a 5 point bull, shot two 6 points.

The second hunt we had 4 hunters. We had a husband and wife that were 80 years old. He shot a 6 point bull. The other two hunters shot a 6 point and a 5 point bulls. They also missed two wolves.

The third hunt we had 4 hunters. They killed 4 average bulls.

Front range rifle hunts

We had two deer hunters. One guide saw a group of 4 bucks with a 200 inch buck but the hunter could not see it. They got on the deer two days in a row. Of the four bucks, they killed the 2nd smallest. It scored about 140. The other hunter left early because he found out the hard way he was not in shape.

We had two goat hunters. One shot a 8.5" billy and the other shot a 9" nanny in the fog and a 29.5" mule deer.

The next hunt was a combination elk/deer hunt. We had 6 hunters and shot 3 bulls, missed 4 or 5 bulls, shot two bucks and missed 2 or 3 bucks. Sorry I did not keep better track but there were lots of opportunities. One of the bucks missed would have scored in the 190-200 inch range.

The second hunt we had 7 hunters. They shot 2 small 6 point bulls, passed on a small 6 point bull because he was chasing a large bull, passed on a 5point bull, passed on some small bucks, missed two large bucks, and saw numerous other elk that were very high for that time of year and difficult to get to. The elk were hanging above the mountain goats and above timberline. It was kind of crazy.

The last elk hunt we had 3 hunters and a non hunter. Two hunters did not get many opportunities. They almost had a shot at a 5 point and passed on a spike bull because the guide was out of sight over the hill and they did not want to accidentally shoot him. Safety always comes first and I thank them for that. The other two were brothers and Vietnam vets, hard of hearing with somewhat marginal eyesight. I had the privilege of guiding these two. The older, non hunting brother was 80 years old but the hunting brother was much younger. He was 76. The non hunting brother had his mule go down with him the first day. When he rolled off, he broke his ribs. They spent the second day going to the doctor. The third day we got on a group of elk that had two spikes and a 4 point bull with about 30 head of cows. The hunter, who had a mortar go off next to him in Vietnam, was hard of hearing and spoke very loud. We communicated by pointing. When the bull was in the open, I signaled him. He had a good rest over his bipod, pulled the trigger and a cow rolled down the hill. It was an honest mistake. The hunter was upset with himself and was disappointed that he would not be able to take some elk meat back to give to his veteran friends in the homeless shelter where he lives. We spent the next day getting the bull to the game warden. Game wardens have a lot of latitude implementing citations for violations. After explaining our story, our local game warden issued a warning and allowed the hunter to keep the meat. It meant a lot to me and the hunter that our game warden did such a good deed. Just so you know, the hunter asked if he could come back. I told him I would hunt with him anytime. Neither hunter complained about pain, even with broken ribs; however, I have guided much younger hunters who complained a lot. It was a good way to end the season in the front range.

Wilderness elk/deer

We had 18 hunters total in the three hunts and all 18 killed deer in November but nothing over 180. Their elk success is as follows.

The first hunt we had 5 hunters. They missed a 6 point bull, shot a 5 point bull and missed a large 330-340- 6x7 bull, shot a 315- 6x6 bull, a raghorn bull and missed 4 bucks.

The second hunt we had 6 hunters. They shot a raghorn 6x7 bull, raghorn 4 point bull, two 6 point bulls and missed a large 6 point bull and a large buck.

The last hunt we had 7 hunters. They shot two 6 point bulls, missed a 4 point bull, a 5 point bull and a 5x6 bull. They passed on some spikes. One hunter left early after shooting his buck because of a family emergency. One hunter, after shooting one of the 6 point bulls, looked across from camp and saw the same 340-6x7 that the hunter had missed two weeks prior. Also, a good way to end the season.

We had two late deer hunters in the front range. The first hunter and I agreed that he would hunt for a large buck. He wanted something in the 200 inch range. The first day he shot a 160-170 buck. He later

called me and complained because I oversold the hunt. I am not sure why he shot the buck but he has seen enough bucks to know that what he shot was not 200 inches. He is not coming back.

The second hunter shot a 178 buck. He has been hunting with us for 20 years and was very happy. We can't wait to hunt with him again.

I probably did less guiding this year than ever. I did get to hunt with my kids more. They took two 6 point bulls, 3 large bucks, a small buck (you can get a second deer tag in some units) and my oldest son drew a California Bighorn sheep tag. We brought my dad along and had a great time. You only get so many hunts with your dad so take advantage of them while you can.

We had two hunters miss this year because of turrets moving on their scopes. Long range shooting is fun and challenging but you need the right equipment. Both turrets were on Leopold Scopes and the windage turrets did not have a cover so they moved while in the scabbard on the mules. If you are going to shoot long range, I recommend getting turret covers for your scopes. Once again, the two things that played the biggest part in whether hunters were successful was the amount of shooting practice they chose to do before their hunt and how well they prepared physically. ALL hunters tell me they are in good shape but we tend to weed out the wannabees fairly quickly.