

2022 Success Rates

Front Range Lion Hunts

First hunt we had two hunters and killed a large tom and a female.

Second hunt we had one hunter and killed a large tom.

The third hunt we had one hunter, and he killed a decent cat.

The fourth hunter treed three good toms, missed one, ledged out two where we could not get to them, and he did not get one.

The last hunter was a lady. Her husband and brother-in-law were hunting in the wilderness. She was pregnant and chose to hunt in town. She wanted a wolf but not a lion. We hunted for wolves as best we could, but she was 7 months along, so we were pretty limited. She shot a coyote and fox but no wolf.

Wilderness Lion Hunts

We had one hunter and killed a small cat

Second hunt had two hunters and shot one large tom. Heard wolves but did not go after them.

Third hunt we killed a small tom and record book tom.

Fourth hunt killed a wolf and shot at them three other times. They also missed a coyote.

Spring Bear

We had eight hunters and killed 6 bears.

Fishing trips

We caught numerous fish. The Bull Trout fishing this year was unreal.

Cast and Blast

We had four hunters total and killed one bear and missed one bear. Weather was extremely hot, and bears were nocturnal.

Early Season Deer Hunter

This year we did not take a deer on the early season hunt. We saw three shooter bucks and almost killed one but did not get the shot before it bounded away. The hunter was one of the nicest guys I have met and said he was happy even though he did not get one. We saw lots of deer but with the hot weather and smoke, deer were shading up before 8 am each day.

Archery Hunts

The first archery hunt had two hunters. It was hot and smokey. Both hunters made stalks on deer but did not shoot. The one hunter passed on a small four point at 30 yards and the other was thirty-two yards from a 165 buck but could not get the shot before it heard him. Bugling was slow but we heard some bulls in the dark.

The second hunt had three hunters. They killed a 4x5 buck with double drop tines in full velvet and missed a six-point bull at 40 yards with his cross bow (he was handicapped).

The third hunt we had four hunters. They shot two 5-point bulls, a spike bull, missed a rag horn bull, a 3x4 buck and a 3-point buck. The one hunter who did not get anything had a close call. We bugled a bull into twenty-five yards broadside, but he did not have enough time to release the arrow. The one hunter who shot the spike bull and larger buck works for Hoyt Bows. He was an incredible shot.

The last hunt we had a father/son on a 2x1 hunt. The son was in great shape, but the father was not. He was well worn out after the first day. The guide bugled in a spike on day one to 7 yards and day two bugled another spike to 5 yards. He then bugled in three more bulls in the next four days all within thirty-five yards. The largest was a 300 bull which is the one they were chasing all week. The hunter said everything went perfect. The bull came right in while he was at full draw but when he tried to blow his cow call to stop it, his cow call would not work, and the bull walked right on by. My youngest son was the guide and he said he learned a lot from this hunter. The hunter works for Hoyt Bows and is an avid hunter.

The one thing about bow hunters is there is a large separation between the boys and the men. The hunters who are good do well, and the wannabes usually have some good excuses and close calls. I don't care as long as everyone has fun with a smile on their face and wounded animals are kept to a minimum.

Rifle Wilderness

The first hunt we had four hunters and killed four bulls. The largest was a 5 point. We also killed a 3x3 buck and a bear and missed a bear. One hunter wrote to us and said he should not have to pay for his meat to fly out. All four hunters said they had a wonderful time when they left but when one received a bill for flying his meat, he was upset with us. I guess he couldn't read the price sheet or contract. He also complained that much of his hunt was spent riding on the trail instead of hunting. He was from Maryland and had never hunted elk before. His friend was embarrassed and offered to pay his flying bill for him. I wouldn't let him do it but thanked him for his honesty. When I sent the hunter the quotes from our website explaining how elk hunting worked, he begrudgingly sent in his money.

The second hunt we had five hunters and two canceled out. One was frustrated with us because we did not reimburse him his money. We tried to resell his hunt, but he did not send us the paperwork to reissue his tags until a week before his hunt started. The guides spotted a good bull a long way off and spiked out. The big bull disappeared but they shot a smaller 6

point. Wolves visited them several nights in camp, but they did not get one because we did not have a nighttime kill permit. None of the hunters had deer tags. The weather turned warm again.

The third hunt we had six hunters. They shot two small bucks, a 5-point bull, missed a 6-point bull and saw another raghorn bull.

The fourth hunt we had two hunters, and they shot a 6 point bull and missed a bull.

The fifth hunt we had two hunters. They shot a bull and wounded a bear. They were terrible shots and between the two of them, they shot ten times at their bull.

The sixth hunt we had two hunters. They both missed a raghorn bull at 550 yards. They were concerned that I was going to print this in my success rates and immediately produced excuses on why they missed so I told them I would no longer call this page the "success rates page". It is now the "excuse page." They were nice guys, had a wonderful time and said if they could afford it, they would be back every year. They saw mule deer but were looking for a big one, but the big ones had not shown up yet.

The seventh hunt, we had ten hunters in four different camps. The first camp had a 4x1. They shot four bucks including a whitetail spike. We have never taken a whitetail before in this area. Two years ago, a whitetail doe showed up and had a fawn last year. The other three bucks were 150-165 bucks. They also missed some bulls. One hunter lost his license and tags and could not hunt for a day until the plane came in with replacement tags. The other three camps had 2x1 hunters. Two of the camps were fogged in for most of the hunt. They each shot a buck. One of the hunters was short and fat and could not get around very well. Two of the hunters killed their bucks in the first 3 days and were done. One of the bucks was a mature, heavy 4 point and the other guy shot the wrong one. They tried to fly out early but weather the day before backed the air taxi up and they had to stick to the schedule. Overall, killed eight bucks for 10 hunters.

The eighth hunt had eight hunters and they shot 7 bucks. Most bucks scored between 150-165. One hunter missed a bull and passed on some bucks but was looking for a big one that he never saw. We saw a group of bulls we could not get to including a large 6-point bull. With the snow, trails turned slick, and we had to be careful.

The last hunt we had eight hunters but tragically, one of the hunters passed away a month before the hunt. We tried to rebook their hunt but could not find anyone to take it. These hunters did not have trip cancelation insurance. I was able to reschedule the guides to other hunters to keep them busy. Of the other six hunters, the two who did not have elk tags passed on a 150 buck and several small ones. A father/son missed two bucks, one hunter missed a very large buck and had several other opportunities. He killed a smaller buck on the last day. The last hunter shot a 165 buck on the last day that kept eluding them all week. Everyone seemed happy at the end. The temperature turned into the negatives.

Front Range Rifle

We had five guided deer hunters: all of them first time hunters with us. The weather was very warm. They shot a 28.5-inch heavy buck, a large and heavy 3x4 buck, a 4-point buck and saw multiple other bucks. Two friends left disappointed. They missed a large buck and the guide pointed out another large buck at 189 yards, but the other hunter could not see it. That hunter complained to me that the guide took a nap from 11:30 to 1:30. I told him it was a good thing it wasn't me or I'd have slept until at least 3:00. I don't think he liked my answer. My guides and I take naps all the time. We have never been timed before. It was hot that week and I tried to explain that all hunting would take place in the first two hours of daylight and that is why we were getting up at 3am to get where we wanted to be at daylight. I hurt his feelings when I let him know my guide was working his ass off, he had some very unreal expectations, and he was welcome to leave at any time. Oh well. The other three hunters were very prepared, comfortable with their weapons and have already booked back.

Elk/deer combo hunt: The first hunt we had seven guided hunters. Two friends shot a 198 buck and saw some elk but passed on them because they were small, a father/son-in-law shot 2- 4-point bucks, two buddies shot a forked horn buck, large 3-point buck and a 6-point bull. A single hunter shot a 4-point buck and a spike bull on the first two days. He left early because he was feeling guilty about leaving his wife and kids at home- a true family man. We also had a goat hunter, and he shot a 10 1/8" Billy that should make book or be close. He passed on a young Billy 2 hours before. He told me, "You can't shoot a big one if you shoot a small one". The hunter was not in good shape, so I was a little nervous about our chances but, in the end, he made the right choice. He did throw me off guard when he asked where the cabin was. He didn't even bring a sleeping bag. He forgot to read our website. He was a nice guy but very ill prepared.

The second combo hunt we had seven hunters. They shot 2- 5point bulls, three raghorn bulls, 5 bucks (one hunter chose not to get a deer tag but saw a big buck on the last day of the season. He and his friends have hunted with us before and I guarantee he will hunt with us again and next time will have a deer tag), saw lots of elk and either passed on small bulls or could not get to them. One of the hunters passed at least eleven bulls because he was looking for something special. He found it the last day then shot the wrong one. Sadly, while stalking elk close to the road, some pigs (I refuse to call them hunters) started shooting over 1000 yards from the road. They wounded two elk and a buck and did not try to retrieve them. Although most hunters are true sportsmen that obey the laws, there continues to be poachers that drive ATV's and motorcycles on closed roads and cross country. Fish and game are in a tough situation trying to give all newcomers to our state hunting opportunity without overcrowding. Idaho is going through very tough growing pains right now. Political refugees from California have created turmoil and lack of enforcement by both forest service and fish and game have created a flood of competition on who can break the law quicker. I find it ironic that someone who touts themselves as being a law-abiding hunter has no qualms with driving on closed roads if that gets them closer to the wildlife.

The last hunt we had four hunters. A father and son came and left after 3 days because it was physically more than they could handle. They were nice but got in over their heads. The other two hunters were an uncle and nephew. They missed a 6-point bull at 150 yards, then a spike at 250 yards, then a spike at 350 yards. After that day was over, they went to town, watched the world series, and drank a few cold ones. They came back the next day with a different rifle and shot a small 5-point bull. It took the nephew ten shots. At the end of the hunt, he asked if he could come back, and I told him "no". As I get older, I lose my patience with hunters who cannot even sight their rifles in to prepare for a hunt.

We have one late deer tag. The hunter shot a 3x6 that scored maybe 180. The hunter was an old guide friend of mine who was going through some life struggles. The hunt was not about the size of deer we killed but rather the comradery of being together. It had been 25 years since we worked together and it was good to reconnect.

Rifle Drop Camps

The first hunt we had two groups of four hunters. Each group shot one deer, but I do not know the size.

The second group of three hunters didn't get anything but said they had a great time.

The third group of four shot two small bucks and saw a large buck the day after the season closed. They asked what the odds were of getting caught shooting a buck the day after the season. Made me think that I have been writing my success rates all wrong. They were nice guys, but it did bring up the value of ethics and how each hunter could probably break the law and get away with it, but he would still have to live with his choices. I wouldn't be surprised to see that group of nice young men back again sometime. Having a big buck show up at the end is just job security for me.

The last group of four drop camp hunters chased some wolves and tracked some elk including a lone bull but could not make it work.