



Adventures above the rest.

General Hunting Information Packet | 2021

IN THIS PACKET: (click on what you're interested in viewing or print this packet)

The Species We Hunt:	1
What We Offer:	1
Archery Season	1
Archery Hunting in the Wilderness - Elk, Deer, Black Bear, Wolf	2
Archery Hunting on Private Land - Elk, Deer, Antelope	2
Requirements for Purchasing Bow & Arrow licenses	2
Rifle Seasons	3
Early Season Rifle Hunting in the Wilderness - Elk, Deer, Black Bear, Wolf	3
General Season Rifle Hunting in the Wilderness - Elk, Deer, Black Bear, Wolf	3
General Season Rifle Hunting on Private Land	4
Big Timber Ranch Hunts - Elk, Deer and Antelope	4
Lazy E-L Ranch – Roscoe, MT – Elk and Deer	4
Yellowstone Ranches – Big Timber, MT – Hunt/Fish Option	4
Other Species Hunts	5
Bighorn Sheep	5
Mountain Goat	6
Black Bear	6
Moose	6
Wolf	6
Fair Chase Hunting	7
License & Permit Information	8
Application Prices & Deadlines	9
Non-resident License And Permit Prices	9



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Secure Your Spot	10
Steps to Receive Your License	11
For All Hunters	11
Non-Resident & Resident General Licenses and Special Permits for Elk and Deer	11
Non-Resident & Resident Special Permits for Other Species	12
Deposit & Payment Policy	13
The MOGA Hunter/Angler Defense Fund	14
About the MOGA Hunter/Angler Defense Fund	15



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The Species We Hunt:

Elk, Deer, Antelope, Black Bear, Wolf, Moose, Bighorn Sheep, Mountain Goat, Turkey, Duck and Geese.

What We Offer:

We offer archery and rifle hunting on public land and private land. The wilderness land we hunt is in the Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness, located in the Custer Gallatin National Forest in Southwestern Montana. We have two wilderness hunting tent camps, Hellroaring and Independence. Our private land hunting takes place on select ranches near Big Timber, Montana. We also have access to sections of public land adjacent to the ranches. Headquarters for Absaroka Beartooth Outfitters is in Big Timber, Montana and our Big Timber Ranch hunters are housed in the lodge at ABO Headquarters. Whether you are looking for the challenge of a wilderness hunt or the exclusive opportunity to hunt on private land, Absaroka-Beartooth Outfitters is committed to giving you the best possible hunting experience.

Archery Season

Archery Only Season Dates for Elk/Deer: September 4 - October 17

Archery Only Season Dates for Antelope: September 4 - October 8

Archery 900 Serives Dates for Antelope: August 15 -November 14

(Season dates subject to change due to MFWP release of 2021 Hunting Information in early March.)

We offer wilderness and private land archery hunts. **Archery only season begins the 1st Saturday in September and runs through mid October.** If you are an archer, we can show you some excellent archery country. Archery hunters must have a "bow and arrow license" for the archery only season. To purchase a bow and arrow license, a hunter must be able to provide a certificate showing completion of the National Bowhunter Education Foundation Course, OR provide any prior years' bow hunting/archery stamp, tag, permit, or license from any state or province.



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Archery Hunting in the Wilderness - Elk, Deer, Black Bear, Wolf

ABO's archery wilderness hunts are run out of our backcountry tent camp, Independence. Independence is located up the Boulder Drainage, 55 miles south of Big Timber, MT. These are 7-day hunts (day in, 5 days hunting, day out). Our permitted wilderness archery areas are hunted with a General Elk/Deer License. For more information about dates, prices and offerings for our wilderness archery hunts, refer to the Wilderness Hunting Information Packet.

Archery Hunting on Private Land - Elk, Deer, Antelope

ABO's private land archery hunts are on select ranches near Big Timber, MT and the Lazy EL Ranch in Roscoe, MT. These ranch hunts are 7-day hunts (arrival day, 5 days hunting, departure day). Most of the Big Timber Ranches are hunted with a general elk/deer license. We have the opportunity to hunt a few ranches around Big Timber that are special elk permit areas. If you are interested in hunting one of these ranches you will need to apply for a special elk permit at the same time you apply for your general elk/deer license. Do not worry, if you do not draw a special elk permit, we still have plenty of ranches you can hunt with your general elk/deer license. Lazy EL Ranch hunters will only need a general elk/deer license to hunt on the Lazy EL. Antelope hunting requires a special permit. Accommodations in both locations are in comfortable lodges. For more information about dates, prices, offerings, and special permit areas refer to the Private Land Archery Hunting Information Packet.

Requirements for Purchasing Bow & Arrow licenses

Hunter Education Requirements for Archery & Rifle Hunters - If you were born after **January 1, 1985**, you are required to show proof of completing a [Montana hunter safety and education course](#) or an approved hunter safety course from any other state or province prior to applying for or purchasing a hunting license, whether the hunting license is for the rifle or archery season. **When you apply online for your license, you will need to have your certificate number, the date you received it and the state in which you received it as proof that you have completed a hunter safety course.**

Bow Hunter Education requirements: To purchase a Montana Bow and Arrow license, a hunter must: provide a certificate of completing the [National Bowhunter Education Foundation course](#), or provide any prior year's bowhunting/archery stamp, tag, permit, or license from any state or province in which you hunted, date issued and state from which it was issued.



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Rifle Seasons

Season dates subject to change due to MFWP release of 2021 Hunting Information in early March.

There are two seasons for big game rifle hunting in Montana. There is an early season for wilderness rifle hunting that begins every year on September 15th and a general season for public and private land rifle hunting that begins in late October. The general season dates vary from year to year and are determined by MFWP in early March of the season year. Absaroka Beartooth Outfitters offers wilderness rifle hunting during the early season and private land and wilderness rifle hunting during the general season.

Early Season Rifle Hunting in the Wilderness - Elk, Deer, Black Bear, Wolf

We offer early season rifle wilderness hunting from our backcountry camp, Hellroaring. This is a primary target elk hunt. However, if you have a deer, bear or wolf license/permit they are fair game with no extra charge. This hunt books very early!

Our early season rifle combo wilderness hunt is a 7 day (1 day in, 5 days hunting, 1 day out) hunt. We hunt 1 guide to 2 hunters. Camp consists of 6-8 hunters, 4-5 guides and a cook. This is a challenging hunt in rough terrain and requires long hours in the saddle.

Early Season Begins - September 15

(Refer to the Wilderness Hunting Packet for more information.)

General Season Rifle Hunting in the Wilderness - Elk, Deer, Black Bear, Wolf

The general season rifle elk and deer wilderness hunts are run out of our backcountry camp at Independence or from a lodge in the wilderness hunting area.

General Season dates: October 23 - November 28.

The Independence/Boulder Drainage hunt is a 7-day (day in, 5 days hunting, day out) hunt. We hunt 1 guide to 2 hunters and take 4-6 hunters on a trip. Wilderness hunts from the backcountry camp or lodge typically take place the first week of the general season but can extend into other weeks, weather permitting. Refer to the Wilderness Hunting Packet for hunt dates, pricing and additional information.



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General Season Rifle Hunting on Private Land

Big Timber Ranch Hunts - Elk, Deer and Antelope

Thousands of acres of private ranch land with rolling hills, flowing creeks, elk, deer, and antelope describe the many local Big Timber ranches whose owners have been gracious enough to offer ABO an opportunity to hunt on their properties. Most of these ranches are hunted with a General Elk/Deer License. We also hunt a few ranches that require a special Elk permit. Additionally, ABO offers a trophy opportunity ranch that can be hunted with a General License. (For more information on these ranches, see the Private Land Rifle Hunting Packet.)

4-8 hunters, 7 days (arrival day, 5 days hunting, departure day)

Accommodations – ABO Lodge

Rifle Season Dates for Elk/Deer: October 23 – November 28

Rifle Season Dates for Antelope: October 9 – November 14

To apply for a special draw permit for elk and deer you must also apply for a general draw elk/deer license. Antelope licenses require a Special Permit as well. (Please refer to the Private Land Rifle Hunting Information Packet for information on applying for special permit areas.)

Lazy E-L Ranch – Roscoe, MT – Elk and Deer

The Lazy E-L Ranch Hunt is an elk only hunt on 12,000 acres of pristine private land, bordering the wilderness with 5 miles of river frontage and abundant with wildlife.

6 hunters – 7 day hunt (arrival day, 5 days hunting, departure day)

1 guide – 2 hunters

Accommodations: Lodge

(For hunt dates, prices and more information refer to the Private Land Rifle Hunting Packet.)

Yellowstone Ranches – Big Timber, MT – Hunt/Fish Option

This unique hunting and fishing opportunity allows you to plan your own combination hunting and fishing adventure. These two ranches are conveniently located just 5 minutes from Big Timber and offers eight miles of Yellowstone River frontage with brush &



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cottonwood trees, lots of water & channels, a holding place for deer, abundant turkey & waterfowl population and phenomenal fishing.

Combination Hunts Available: Deer, Turkey, Duck & Geese
Archery or Rifle
Seasonal Custom Hunts

Licenses Required:

Deer – Apply in general draw online, www.fwp.mt.gov , for license.

Turkey, Duck and Geese – Purchase licenses online through MFWP www.fwp.mt.gov

Season Dates: MFWP will post 2021 turkey, duck and geese dates, Spring 2021. Please see www.fwp.mt.gov to check dates.

For more information refer to the Private Land Rifle Hunting Packets.

Other Species Hunts

Bighorn Sheep

Our **Bighorn sheep hunts** are in an unlimited sheep area north of Yellowstone National Park. An unlimited sheep permit area guarantees you a license. Bighorn sheep permits can be purchased online from Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, 406-444-2950, www.fwp.mt.gov.

The deadline for purchasing a bighorn sheep permit is May 1.

You must specify a sheep area when applying for your sheep permit. If you are booking a Bighorn sheep hunt with Absaroka-Beartooth Outfitters, please contact us (406-579-3866) for information on our sheep area before you apply for your permit. The area and the expertise of our guides make it the best opportunity in the lower 48 to kill a ram.

Our bighorn sheep hunt out of Independence is 8 days (day in, 6 days hunting, day out.) This is a progressive backpacking hunt. We hunt 1 guide to 1 hunter and book a limited number of sheep hunters a year for this area. These hunts often book 2 years out. Hunt dates are scheduled with the Outfitter at the time of booking.

2021 Bighorn Sheep Season Dates: September 15–November 28



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Mountain Goat

Mountain goat permits are by special drawing. Go online to Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks (406-444-2950, www.fwp.mt.gov) to apply for this special permit draw. **Make sure you apply for Area 323-20 or Area 329-20.** These two areas have the highest probability in the state for drawing a goat permit. **The application deadline for a mountain goat permit is May 1.** Drawings are the third week in June. There is a \$50 non-refundable fee to apply. See the [Applications, Prices & Deadline section](#) for permit cost if you draw a goat permit. Our goat hunts are 7 days (day in, 5 days hunting, day out.) We hunt 1 guide to 1 hunter. Please contact us (406-579-3866) before you apply for a mountain goat permit and we will confirm our permitted areas for you. Once you draw a mountain goat permit we will be glad to schedule your hunt.

2021 Mountain Goat Season Dates: Sept 1- November 28

Black Bear

Black Bear licenses are available for purchase through Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, www.fwp.mt.gov . **A Black Bear Identification Test is required to purchase a license. The deadline for purchasing a fall black bear license is August 31. The deadline for purchasing a spring black bear license is April 13.** A Black Bear License purchased after April 14 for the spring season or after August 31 for the fall season may not be used until 24 hours after the license is issued.

Fall Black Bear Season: Sept 15-Nov 28

Spring Black Bear Season: April 15-May 31

Archery Black Bear Season: Sept 4-14

Moose

Moose permits are by special drawing. **The application deadline for a moose permit is May 1. Our permitted moose area is 516.** However, there are a very limited number of moose permits available for this area so it is not easy to draw a moose permit. Our moose hunts are 7 days (1 day in, 5 days hunting, 1 day out.) We hunt 1 guide to 1 hunter.

2021 Moose Season Dates: September 15- November 28

Wolf

Wolf permits are available for purchase through Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, www.fwp.mt.gov .

2021 Wolf Season: September 15-TBA

Season dates subject to change due to MFWP release of 2021 Hunting Information in early March.



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Fair Chase Hunting

Fair chase hunting in the Montana wilderness is a challenging and memorable experience. We have experienced guides who know the area and very good horse and mule stock for packing and riding in the mountains. From September to mid-October ABO operates two backcountry tent camps, Hellroaring and Independence. Hellroaring is located in Bull Moose Meadow, 8 miles north of Yellowstone National Park. Independence is located 55 miles south of Big Timber at the head of the Boulder River. Our backcountry camps are some of the best in Montana including comfortable accommodations and a great cook. During the general season, which begins in late October, we hunt in the backcountry from a tent camp at Independence or from a lodge bordering the wilderness hunting areas.

Fair chase hunting on private ranches with ABO offers our hunters a unique variety of species in distinctive settings. The opportunity to hunt elk, mule deer, white-tail deer, antelope, black bear, duck, goose and turkey is provided to a limited number of hunters. You can choose to hunt on the picturesque Lazy E-L Ranch (www.lazyel.com) just outside Roscoe, Montana or a variety of select Big Timber Ranches which include a trophy opportunity elk and deer ranch. Each of these elite locations offers rolling hills, creeks, river frontage and an abundance of game.

Whether you are looking for the challenge of a wilderness hunt or the exclusive opportunity to hunt on private land, Absaroka-Beartooth Outfitters is committed to giving you the best possible hunting experience.



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License & Permit Information

If you choose to hunt with our outfit, we will handle the application process for you for all of your licenses with the exception of black bear, which you must take a bear identification test on MFWP website to purchase a black bear license.

Montana uses a draw system for general elk and deer licensing for non-resident hunters. Non-residents who want to elk and deer hunt in Montana must **apply for either a General Big Game Combination, General Elk Combination, or General Deer Combination License during the month of March. The application deadline is April 1. The drawing takes place mid-April.** Hunters can go online to Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, www.fwp.mt.gov, to learn more about drawing elk and deer licenses. Do not be discouraged; your chances of drawing a combination elk/deer license are quite good. Buying preference points will improve your chances of drawing a general combo license. Buying bonus points will improve your chances of drawing special permitted areas. The preference and bonus point systems are explained on MFWP website. You are also allowed to apply as a “party” for the draw if there are two or more of you wanting to hunt together. We are happy to provide clarification or answer any questions you may have about licensing, preference points and party application.

Special Elk & Deer Permitted areas are also part of the draw system of which both non-residents and residents participate. Hunters can **apply for a special elk or deer permit at the same time they apply for a general license during the month of March.** Online applications are available during March. **The deadline for applying is April 1. The drawing takes place mid-April.**

Mountain goat, moose, Bighorn sheep and antelope are part of the draw system as well. **Applications are available online on March 1. The application deadline for these species is May 1, with the exception of antelope which is June 1. The mountain goat, sheep and moose drawings are mid-May, antelope drawings are early August.** Check Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks, www.fwp.mt.gov, (406-444-2950) for more details.

Note: ABO's Bighorn sheep area is an unlimited area which means it can be purchased, not drawn. The deadline for purchase is the same as the application deadline, May 1. These deadlines apply for both residents and non-residents.

Black bear and wolf permits can be purchased over the counter. If you purchase them after the deadline, then you must wait 48 hours before using them.



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Application Prices & Deadlines

Non-resident License And Permit Prices

Dates & Prices for 2021 are released by Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks in early March. Check MFWP website www.fwp.mt.gov for date and price confirmation.

ANIMAL	PRICE (non-resident)	DEADLINE
BIG GAME ELK/DEER COMBO General Draw	\$1,052.00	April 1
ELK COMBINATION General Draw	\$888.00	April 1
DEER COMBINATION General Draw	\$614.00	April 1
ANTELOPE Special Draw	\$205.00	June 1
MOOSE Special Draw	\$50.00 to apply, \$1,250.00 if successful	May 1
BLACK BEAR Guaranteed Permit	\$350.00	Spring: April 14 Fall: August 31
WOLF Guaranteed Permit	\$50.00	August 31
MOUNTAIN GOAT Special Draw	\$50.00 to apply, \$1,250.00 if successful	May 1
BIGHORN SHEEP Guaranteed Permit	\$50.00 to apply, \$1,250.00 if successful	May 1
Youth Combination License Youths 12-15 years of age – hunt with a sponsor (natural or adoptive parent, grandparent of, adult brother or sister) who possesses a general elk or deer license.	\$526.00 (OTC @ MFWP only)	



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Licenses and permits are not guaranteed but the license/permit price is refundable if not drawn. Unsuccessful applicants will receive a refund check for the license price minus the \$5 application fee, base hunting license (\$15), aquatic invasive species prevention pass (\$7.50) and conservation license (\$10). The preference point fee is not refunded but the preference point is retained as are bonus points for future drawings. Contact the MFWP Special Licensing Department at 406-444-2950 if you do not receive one of these notifications in the mail by the end of May.

Secure Your Spot

If you are sure of the hunt you want to pursue with Absaroka Beartooth Outfitters, you can secure your spot with a \$1000 deposit. We take a limited number of hunters per hunt so this is the best way to secure your spot and avoid the chaos at the time of the draw. Most hunters put in for the Big Game Combo license which allows you to hunt both elk and deer. Please check with us before you apply for the draw to make sure this is the right license for the area you plan to hunt and for bonus and preference point updates. If you have questions about the online application process we will be glad to assist you.



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Steps to Receive Your License

For All Hunters

All non-resident elk and deer licenses and special permits are available through a draw system. You can visit Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (www.fwp.mt.gov) in March of the hunt year to apply for the elk/deer draw. If you are new to applying for the Montana Elk/deer draw, or would like help applying, we are available for you.

Non-Resident & Resident General Licenses and Special Permits for Elk and Deer

For elk/deer, apply online with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, 406-444-2950, www.fwp.mt.gov. You can use a General Elk/Deer License to hunt in most of our hunting areas. We offer a few ranches that require a special Elk Permit so please check with us before you apply. **Non-residents** can apply for a special Elk or Deer Permit at the same time they apply for their General Elk/Deer License. **Residents** must purchase a General Elk or Deer License in order to apply for a special Elk or Deer Permit. Be sure to buy a preference point when applying for your General License and a bonus point when you're applying for a special permit license. You can find more information on preference points and bonus points on MFWP website www.fwp.mt.gov.

APRIL 1st IS THE DEADLINE FOR APPLYING FOR THE GENERAL ELK/DEER DRAW AND FOR SPECIAL PERMITS FOR ELK AND DEER. The drawings for the general licenses and special elk and deer permits take place mid-April. You can check to see if you have drawn by setting up a [MyFWP account](#) on the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks website. Licenses drawn or purchased requiring a harvest tag or decal, you now have two options for receiving them. Option 1 - You can have them mailed to you, and you should receive them within 10 days. Option 2 - You can have them emailed to you. If emailed you will receive a link to print your license. You will only be able to print your license one time. For all license applications or purchases,, you will need to print copies at the end of the transaction and/or send them to your email for later printing. If you draw a license and do not receive your license either by email or in the mail by May 1, please contact MFWP at (406) 444-2950.



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Non-Resident & Resident Special Permits for Other Species

For mountain goat Bighorn sheep and moose apply online for the draw with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, 406-444-2950, www.fwp.mt.gov. **The deadline for applying for these species is May 1.** Our special permit areas for mountain goat are 323-20 and 329-20. Special permit area for moose is 516. **Permit drawings for these species are announced Mid-May.** If you draw a special permit, please contact us to set up dates for your hunt. Once the dates are confirmed, you book your hunt by sending us a \$1000 deposit.

For antelope, apply for the special permit draw beginning March 1 online with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, www.fwp.mt.gov, 406-444-2950. **The deadline for applying for antelope is June 1.** The drawing takes place early August. Check with us for our antelope areas.

For black bear or wolf, apply online with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, 406-444-2950, www.fwp.mt.gov to purchase a guaranteed permit. **A hunter must take and pass a "Black Bear Identification test" before purchasing a Black Bear hunting license.** The test is available online at: fwp.mt.gov/hunt/education/bear-identification
A free Black Bear Identification Test Certificate is required to obtain a license.
A hunter must present a certificate of completion issued by FWP at the time of purchase.
A Black Bear License purchased after April 14 for the spring season or after August 31 for the fall season may not be used until 24 hours after the license is issued.

For Wolves, check the MFWP website for the most current information on rules and regulations, season dates and application deadlines. Currently, wolf permits can be bought over the counter and are \$50 for non-residents, \$19 for residents.

For Bighorn sheep, purchase online with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, 406-444-2950, www.fwp.mt.gov. Absaroka Beartooth Outfitters is permitted for sheep hunting in an unlimited sheep area. Be sure to check with Absaroka-Beartooth Outfitters (406-579-3866) before applying to verify our bighorn sheep area.



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Deposit & Payment Policy

A partial deposit of \$1000 is required to book your hunt. The \$1000 partial deposit will be rolled over or refunded if you do not draw a license. The drawing takes place in mid-April. The remainder of the deposit (50% of the cost of the hunt) is due when the draw is posted and is non-refundable. The balance of the hunt is due 30 days prior to your hunt and is non-refundable. Hunts not fully paid by this date will be considered cancelled. We recommend Trip Cancellation Insurance. Montana Outfitters & Guides Association suggests Global Rescue travel insurance. <http://www.montanaoutfitters.org/travelersinsurance/>

We accept Credit Cards (Visa/MasterCard only) and Checks
Make Checks Payable to: Absaroka-Beartooth Outfitters, Inc.

All hunts will include an additional fee of \$50 for the Hunter/Angler Defense Fund.

This fund was set up by Montana Outfitters & Guides Association for the purpose of defending non-resident hunting and fishing rights in the State of Montana. (Information on HADF can be found in the General Hunting Information Packet.)



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The MOGA Hunter/Angler Defense Fund

In 2012 Montana Outfitters and Guides Association established the Hunter/Angler Defense Fund to ensure that non-resident sportsmen would be able to continue to have the opportunity to hunt and fish in Montana. As members of MOGA, we believe our establishing the Hunter/Angler Defense Fund (MHADF) is the best way to support our industry in the fight for your right to hunt and fish in Montana. When you book a hunt with Absaroka Beartooth Outfitters, the \$50 additional fee added to your hunt goes to the MOGA Hunter/Angler Defense Fund. Thank you for your participation!

The following is information provided by Montana Outfitters & Guides Association

Hunter/Angler Access Defense Fund: Outfitters Defending Nationwide Right to Hunt and Fish in Montana

“In a civilized and cultivated country, wild animals only continue to exist at all when preserved by sportsmen. The excellent people who protest against all hunting and consider sportsmen as enemies of wildlife are ignorant of the fact that in reality the genuine sportsman is by all odds, the most important factor in keeping the larger and more valuable wild creatures from total extinction.” - Theodore Roosevelt

The MOGA Hunter/Angler Defense Fund (MHADF) was established to ensure that non-resident sportsmen will continue to have the opportunity to hunt and fish in Montana.

Trophy hunting and sport fishing, particularly by non-residents, is under increasing pressure in Montana from radical groups both within the state and animal rights activists outside of the state. Although these groups differ in their composition and tactics they both seek the same outcome; reduced hunting and fishing opportunity. The in-state contingent, who purport to be “sportsmen” seek to fracture the hunting and angling community along lines of residence and then significantly restrict non-resident hunting and fishing opportunity. The anti-hunting group just seeks to reduce hunting opportunity and will take what gains they can. In both cases, success is measured by a net loss in opportunity in Montana. Unfortunately, they are both making gains.



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The anti-hunting pressure from the “anti-everything” organizations is strong and well organized. They have unlimited resources and are using new strategies and building alliances to lobby their agendas. Their relentless efforts to prevent delisting of wolves and grizzly bears and thwart effective and professional management for these species are but one example.

Fringe groups, led by the Montana Wildlife Federation, believe that outfitting services equate to the commercialization of wildlife and profess it to be the same as the outlawed practice of market hunting of years ago. They claim that fees paid for Outfitter services, leasing of land for quality hunting and fishing access, and the purchase of outfitters services for fishing constitute a breach of the Public Trust and that jeopardizes the public’s opportunity to enjoy the natural bounty of Montana.

They see reducing the guided non-resident opportunity as a means to enhance their personal opportunity at the expense of others. They ignore the huge contribution to Montana’s wildlife and fisheries management system that non-residents make and the vital economic contribution they sustain. Their tactics of misinformation and fear mongering fracture and weaken the overall hunting community; jeopardizing funding for effective management of natural resources in Montana.

Unfortunately, much of the public are misinformed or under informed. As hunters and anglers, we must be vigilant and diligent about relaying the benefits of hunting and fishing to the 70% of people who sit “in the middle”. MOGA will continue to take the lead in supporting sound, scientifically based resource management, and our members will continue to serve as active stewards of Montana’s natural and cultural heritage.

MOGA is the only organization within Montana that is dedicated to preserving sporting opportunities for nonresidents, including the opportunities for guided hunts, floats, and fishing trips.

If we want hunting to be around for future generations we must have our story told; that hunters and anglers, regardless of where they live, are the true conservationists because hunters pay for conservation and have willingly done so for years. It is a certainty that our opportunity to hunt and fish will be lost if we are fragmented by where we are from, the equipment we use, the species we pursue or the reasons we hunt.

About the MOGA Hunter/Angler Defense Fund

MOGA members charge their sportsmen clients a \$50.00 fee. This contribution is collected by the outfitter, held in-trust for MOGA, and remitted at year end.