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From the WYOGA President **SY GILLILAND**

Dear fellow hunters and outdoor enthusiasts:

Wyoming outfitters and guides are busy wrapping up the 2021 seasons as many hunting seasons extend through the end of the year. 2021 presented many challenges to our industry, one of which was drought in many areas of Wyoming. Our state did receive some significant fall moisture which resulted in a fall green up. This fall green up will be key in helping our wildlife populations build up fat reserves for the coming winter.

WYOGA continues to be at the forefront in defending and preserving our states winter elk feed grounds. The Wyoming Game & Fish Department recently entered into a collaborative effort with representatives from all interested stakeholder groups to study and work towards a management plan for the 22 state run elk feed grounds. How we manage wintering elk in north western Wyoming will be critical in maintaining elk populations. In addition to the elk feed ground issue, we continue to work on wolf management issues, grizzly bear de-listing, CWD and resident/non-resident big game licensing quotas. All of these issues present challenges to our wildlife and how we distribute opportunity to hunt our big game animals.

WYOGA recently hired Southwick Associates to update the Big Game Hunting & Outfitting Economic Contributions study originally conducted in 2015. The update was requested by the members of the Wyoming Wildlife Task Force which is studying several issues including how Wyoming distributes license quotas between resident big game hunters and non-residents. Here are some highlights from the economic study:

- The entire economic study can be found on our website.
- In 2020, the total economic contributions to Wyoming's economy was \$339,215,678.00.
- State & local taxes collected from big game hunting activity was \$31,866,737.00.
- Big Game hunting activity in Wyoming results in creating and maintaining 3,497 jobs.
- Outfitters contribute significantly to the revenue stream for landowners to the tune of \$11 million annually.
- Elk is the most targeted species for guided non-resident hunters.

It's obvious the decisions that affect the allocation of big game licenses must carefully consider the far-reaching economic benefits that are created to ensure optimal economic benefit for all Wyoming residents. The task force over an 18 month period will be sending proposals to the Wyoming Game & Fish Commission and the Wyoming Legislature for their considerations.

If you're considering a future hunt in Wyoming, it's very important to plan ahead. The Wyoming Outfitting industry has seen a huge increase in demand for our services. The pandemic changed many things in society and the outdoors have been rediscovered. Our summer tourism season this past summer was a record setter and our outfitters were booked full with pack trips, guest ranch stays, fishing, float trips and trail rides. It's expected that the 2022 season will at the very least equal last summer. WYOGA outfitters are reporting record setting phone calls, emails and bookings for the hunting trips they offer. Sportsmen and sportswomen are looking towards the mountain west for their future hunting trips like never before. The Wyoming Game & Fish Department reported record numbers of license applications from traveling sportspersons. This bodes well for our industry and our state as these dollars are a very important part of our thriving tourism economy.

When planning your hunt in Wyoming, always use a member of WYOGA as they are the very best in the business.

Good luck and happy hunting,

Sy Gilliland, President

2020 STATISTICS

Total WY Outfitters: 312

Stats represent 2019 outfitted clients

Species	#of Clients	Successful	%
Deer	2553	2107	83%
Antelope	2656	2464	93%
Elk	3014	2034	67%
Black Bear	74	35	47%
Moose	39	35	90%
Sheep	62	52	84%
Mountain Goat	14	11	79%
Mountain Lion	94	67	71%
Wolf	10	1	10%
Total:	8516	6806	80%



Introduction from Author **C.J. BOX**

Dear Fellow Hunters and Outdoor Enthusiasts,

I've been writing about hunting, fishing, and outdoor pursuits in Wyoming since the publication of my first novel, Open Season, in 2000. I'm a Wyoming native and I've fished and hunted in all corners of our state. I'm also an executive producer on two television series based on my novels: BIG SKY on ABC and JOE PICKETT, soon to air on the Spectrum Originals channel. I've celebrated hunting and fishing in Wyoming throughout twenty-eight books. I'm also the chairman of the Wyoming Tourism Board, and I consider the outfitting industry an important part of our tourism economy.

It's an honor to have been asked to write this introduction on behalf of the Wyoming Outfitters and Guides Association. My experience with many of the outfits in this publication has been excellent across the board. They not only contribute millions to Wyoming's economy but they're our best ambassadors when it comes to demonstrating the right way to experience and enjoy the very special natural resources of our state. No one values our natural resources and big game herds more than our outfitters.

For many residents in Wyoming, hunting is more than an activity or diversion: it's a way of life. Hunting trips for small and big game are a family tradition, and there are still many towns where residents greet each other in the fall by asking, "Did you get your elk yet?" Wyomingites are fierce about maintaining the health and welfare of their herds as well as filling their freezers for the winter. Nutritious and natural protein from wild game is the ultimate in locally sourced food.

Management of the incredible wildlife resources in Wyoming are largely paid for by non-resident hunters and anglers through licenses and the purchase of outdoor gear and products.

Visitors should enhance their hunting experience and increase their opportunity to have a successful experience by contracting with a certified outfitter or guide from the Wyoming Outfitters and Guides Association (WYOGA). In addition to a worthwhile hunting trip, many guides and outfitters offer fishing excursions, horse-pack trips, back-country wilderness adventures, and accommodations. Even non-hunters can see wildlife in its natural state and experience Wyoming's breath-taking scenery and wild spirit by hiring these local experts.

You won't go wrong by hiring the professionals in the WYOGA and your outdoor pursuits in Wyoming.

Sincerely,
C.J. Box



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