



A Proud Franchise

TRIP NEWS



For a lot of people the first time they hunt "Out West" it's for Pronghorn, which are, of course, better known by their nickname, the Antelope. For good reason, Antelope tags are generally easier to come by and the trip, as a whole, is far less expensive than many other western big game hunts. It was no exception for me, as my first western trip was in pursuit of the unique animal that we often refer to as a speed goat. The problem for me was I had so much fun the first time that I just keep going back.

Antelope are truly one of a kind. In fact they have no relatives anywhere on earth. They are only called Antelope because they were mistakenly thought to be related to the antelope found in Africa. The graceful animals not only make a beautiful trophy mount, but if properly cared for, they are also excellent table fare.

In Montana, applications are usually out in April and must be submitted by June 1st. You can apply as an individual or in a group of up to 5 people. I didn't really think we'd draw buck tags sending in as a group, and with the fall schedule filling up, none of us were really set on going. We had nothing to lose. That being the case I talked my dad, uncle and cousin into applying with me. Having hunted BLM land many times, we have a pretty good handle on the ranches and where we can find animals. This year, however, I was a little nervous. Since I convinced two rookies to come along, I felt a sense of responsibility to make sure they had a good trip. Reports were coming in that the population had been devastated by spring snow storms. I knew the chances of us getting 4 mature bucks on BLM land would be slim so we opted to go with one of Outdoor Connection's Approved Outfitters for the region. (MTH2)

The drive out was treacherous, as we hit a snow storm that had us crawling on I-94 from Fargo to Jamestown. Everyone was very tired and a little tense after that white knuckle trip. I could just sense that they were thinking: what have I gotten myself into!

Well, two days of great antelope hunting definitely helped to relieve the stress of that overnight trip. Funny how hunting can do that to a person isn't it? The population was certainly down, but thanks to the great instincts and knowledge of our guide, "Dinosaur Don," we had no problem bringing home four nice bucks in the 13-15 inch range. The trip home was a treat and the uneasy feelings of the guys heading west had been turned into smiles and good stories for a much better ride home.

Hunting Antelope is a great experience and if you are thinking about heading west but don't know where to start, just give us a call. There are many options available from 'on your own' to 'fully guided'. Just don't be surprised if you find yourself in my shoes, going back time and again!



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