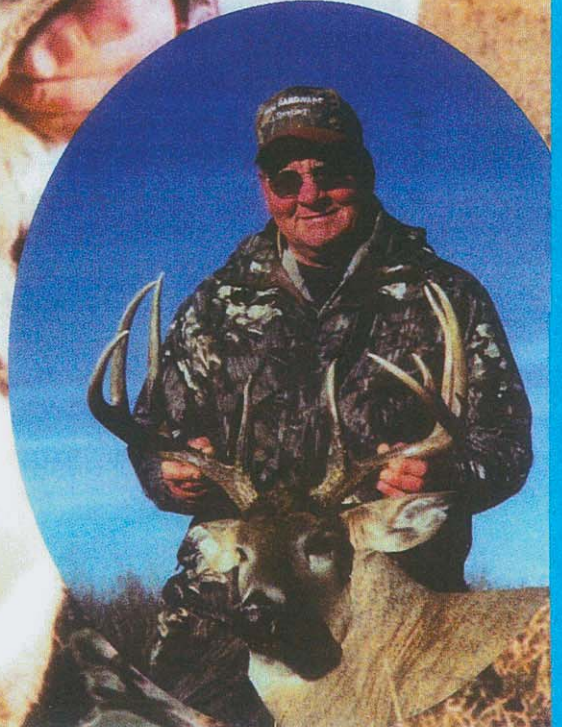


Blue Bronna
Outfitting 2002
403-443-5718
bluebronna@kneehill.com



To all previous clients, friends and future hunters,

It is amazing at how we look forward to the hunt as we just do not know what it will bring. I have played a lot of different sports and there is none like this one. It seems like one is continually on an emotional roller coaster. Your adrenaline surges at the sight of a great animal then plunges into despair when he walks out of sight before you have time to pull the trigger. It surges again as you put a stock on and then plunges as you cannot find the animal then surges when he appears out of nowhere followed by depression when shots are fired and the animal runs off. At the sight of blood hope is again formed only to be dashed when you lose the trail and sores again when the animal is found.

2002 turned from a poor year into an average year into better than average. We finished off 2001 with a number of missed shots at some very good animals and started our spring bear hunts in the same manner. We had excellent guys in camp but the number of misses and woundings just seemed not to stop. Our bear kill ratio was the poorest we have ever had, yet we saw and shot at some excellent bears. On 7 hunters we only killed 7 bears yet I felt we had some of the most fun times ever thanks to our clients Jeff Marg, Tom Cimino, John Makara (who did take a very magnificent bear) and his brother Jerald, John Sale, Michael Welch and his son Scott (our most avid fisherman). Most of the old guides were there Brad Brown, Mark Cooper, Jamie Reynolds, Dan Adkins, and one new guide Terence Poirier.

In the fall our bow hunts were doomed to failure. Generally we have had very high success rates on bow elk but this year the weather did not want to cooperate and we got skunked. We had a couple last minute cancellations only ending up with Jim Vavra, Dave Jenson, and Nick Brantner braving the lousy weather with all of us getting skunked. I guess that's what happens when you get cocky. I was getting pretty sure of our elk calling tactics but now it is back to the drawing board.

With the rifle hunters our luck finally started to improve as Dario Rocca killed a nice 6*6 and Glenn Hochstettler after hunting for nine days and just not quite getting a chance killed a nice bull on the very last second of his hunt. I always say that killing an animal on the first day is a good way to wreck a perfectly good hunt and Glenn took me literally. We actually had to almost run a mile to get close to a bull we had spotted only to have him disappear without a trace. He would not bugle and we kept trying until all of a sudden we literally felt him come in behind us. After what seemed like an eternity (we were caught in the middle of a meadow with no place to hide) he finally walked in front of us and Glenn made a perfect shot.

Stuart Morrison and myself had another roller coaster hunt with a couple misses at a nice big bull, followed by a big 6*6 getting shot on us by another hunter (I have never had this happen to me before on this remote mountain) who totally fluked into the set up we had going without even knowing we were calling this bull in (he was at least a half mile away and coming hard). We ended up shooting a booner tree at thirty yards in order to educate the bull who was coming in behind the tree. All in all it was a very thrilling hunt.

We had 4 bow hunters trying for moose this year with all hunters getting within shooting range of fifty inch plus moose. We even fired four or five shots at the big bulls but the moose did not play by the rules. Normally if you have a blood trail eight inches

wide that runs for 800 yards you should find a dead moose at the end of it but not this time. We did not get any of the big boys however we were able to take two consolation bulls. Our hunters Ed Quye, Stephen Mathews, Ed DeYoung and Duane Stephens were all excellent hunters who truly exhibit a mature sportsmanship ethic in trying to take these big animals with a bow.

John Mcknight and Tony Urwick came at the end of October to try their luck at a real challenge, mountain muleys. John and his guide Jamie Reynolds spotted a good buck after braving some serious cold and snow only to shoot the wrong buck after a long stalk. Tony turned down quite a few bucks with guide Brad Brown until they finally spotted the buck of a lifetime only to have it spot them. They tried several long shots but it was not to be.

In the first 10 days of November both Randy Buher and Mark Thompson took shiras moose with a rifle and a nice muley each. Mark and I had a great day riding horses after his moose, shooting at wolves and just enjoying a very gorgeous day in the mountains. It was very refreshing to hunt with a person who was just there to enjoy his hunt come what may. Thanks Mark you don't know how rare this is for us as guides. We do enjoy the pressure of trying to get a trophy animal but it sure is nice to relax and just hunt for the sake of hunting sometimes.

Our Californian friends showed up about this time to hunt whitetails. The whitetail hunting was not great as we missed a couple and turned down a couple small ones however Ed Silva, Richard & Scott Cook did manage to each get a nice muley even though the whitetails were not interested in cooperating.

Jim Nick from Wisconsin came back again to find a good whitetail and after some serious hunting managed to get a booner. His two other partners Dave Cooper and Brad Myszka each shot 170 class muleys as well (unfortunately the day after Dave and I got his buck we saw three 190+ monsters). Two other Wisconsin boys, Ken Hoffman and Claude Riselmon showed us some excellent shooting with Ken taking a great muley and an excellent whitetail and Claude getting a coyote and putting in a ton of time on white tails with very warm weather. His only chance at a good buck was a 400 yard shot and Claude elected not to take it. (I was going to say "like the true sportsman he is" but that would really be giving him too much credit). He just couldn't hold the gun still or forgot to pull the trigger or something like that.

Mark Cooper (who is in the process of taking on my southern allocations) ran a mule deer hunt with four other clients turned friends with all taking nice bucks. At the same time we had Jim Finch and Bill Nash trying for muleys and whitetails in our northern camp. Jim got a couple shots at the kind of buck we all want but it wasn't to be and Bill got himself a mule deer.

Harry Henderson came the last week of the season and shot a solid old muley buck which I believe had been a big 3 point for most of his life and only put on the extra fourth points as an after thought in his old age. We ended off the year with David Dybvig shooting a nice whitetail, Jim Travis shooting an excellent wide muley and Lanny Rominger taking the biggest muley an excellent 6*6.

That's our year in review and I hope to have the pleasure of hunting with you some time soon.

Sincerely,

