



Guide Charlie with Brian Knockemus' goat

Mark Weber with Paul Katovich's moose

Mike Friebis

Justin Thomas

Jon Thomas

Brothers Vince and Matt Thompson

Guide Matt with Matt Thompson's Goat

Ron Worley

Keith Redding with lake trout

Guides Tim and Garth with Antonious Boeselagers' goat and son Paul

Trina with Nitro

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British Columbia



Reese Vail with nice Moose

Chance Wessner with his grizzly and guide Sam

Winter in September

Vince Thompson with brother Matt's goat

2015

SCOOP LAKE NEWS

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The New Corral Gates



Huge River Boat



The 2015 season started off a month earlier than usual. The beginning of April found several of us in camp rebuilding corrals and fences. The original corrals were built thirty years ago and have been slowly sinking back into the earth for the last ten. Last season when we brought in a wild horse after six days of chasing and it took one look at the corral before jumping over it and taking off we finally decided it was time for a new one. Richard, Sam and Travis spent a week sketching and re-sketching designs before ripping (or rather lightly pushing) the old corrals down. We lit a raging fire and roasted hotdogs to commemorate its passing. The shiny new corrals look incredible and should hold even the wildest of ponies for the next thirty years.

Spring arrived several weeks early this year, the ice coming off the lake almost three weeks before usual. The upside being that when it came time to start our range and ungulate enhancement burns the valley lit up like a box of matches. Unfortunately one of the government-lit enhancement burns went a little too well and burnt down one of our camps. At around the same time a wild fire took off near another camp while Richard and Thyra were doing a kitchen renovation. We had to pull them out and set up sprinklers around the camp. For close to a month we had to fly down every couple of days to re-gas up the sprinkler pumps until the rain finally came and put it out.

In the middle of all this, we hired a big boat to haul the new horses we bought up the river. It made two trips with fencing supplies before one of its three engines blew up.

Suddenly hunting season was around the corner and we still didn't have the horses in. So, ten days before opening day, we managed to acquire a boat. Murphy's Law, the day we started moving horses, both up the river and into the mountains, the near drought that we had been experiencing for the previous three months broke... and the heavens opened.

We think the door might have gotten stuck up there because it rained until it snowed in September. August was easily one of the wettest in memory. Sheep hunters quit, missed shots, spent whole days huddled around fires while the water just kept coming down. Rivers rose to raging torrents while hunters and guides tested rain gear to the max.



Ungulate Enhancement Burn



Forest Fire Threatening Island Lake Camp

You could say it was weather that separated the men from the boys. Hats off to our backpack hunters Bob and Ryan, and their guides Tyler, Trina and Brodie. They stuck it out in their tiny tents in the rain, sleet, snow, fog and cold for the full two weeks of their hunts and both harvested nice rams. Dave and Al returned, neither had been successful in 2014, and both took home great rams. Steve Brandt took a great ram with Sam Black. Throughout the season seven lucky rams were shot at and missed for various different reasons, the weather certainly being a large factor.

The cabin that was burnt down in May was one of our main elk hunting camps. So, in the last week of August, Charlie after going on a successful backpack sheep hunt with his son, along with John, Tim, Angus and Catherine buckled down and in less than a week managed to erect a new and much improved cabin.

Our elk hunting is quite tougher mentally than most hunters expect. It's incredibly thick so the only way to see them is to call them in. We have some huge bulls, but laying eyes on them can be a challenge, and unfortunately this year was one of those years that the big guys didn't want to come in. The biggest harvested was in the 320 class, and the elk overall were not up to our usual standards. One of our elk hunters was looking for an elk bigger than he already has, and was disappointed when the eleven legal bulls he turned down weren't big enough.

Meanwhile, back up in the mountains, by mid-September the crew was dealing with snow and cold and ice. This made for exceptionally good moose and goat hunting, the moose rutted like crazy and the goats haired up like it was mid November.



Bob McGee



Trying to keep the lake open for float plane



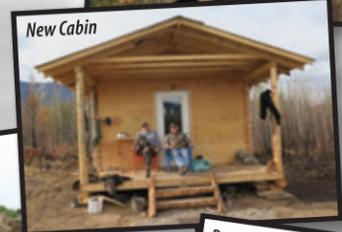
Ryan Cannon with Tyler, Brodie, and Trina



Reese Vail and Mike Goschinski



Dean with a Beauty



New Cabin



Steve Brandt and Sam



David Harrison



David Morris with Typical Elk



Keith Redding



Winter Wonderland



See you at Scoop Lake, Darwin, Wendy, Tiffany and Trina

Thank goodness for global warming, eh? By the 25th of September our higher lakes were starting to ice over. We quickly reorganized and pulled hunters and cooks out in case it froze over for good. A big thanks to Tim and Sam for spending hours out on the lake in the canoe bashing up the ice with the paddles so we could get Reese and Mike, the last hunters, in. They hunted their way back to base camp on horseback.

October arrived, and much to our surprise, the weather improved. The last hunters had great weather and great success. Most moose were on the ground by the third or fourth day of the hunt, which turned out to be lucky, because seemingly overnight they stopped rutting and went quiet.

Nearly everyone was back in camp for Thanksgiving dinner: twenty-five people! We set up extra tables and chairs, everybody donned their traditional turkey hats, and there weren't many leftovers from the twenty-seven pound turkey.

All in all it was a great season... as long as you had rain gear in August, long johns in September, and suntan lotion in October.

Thanks to all the hunters who took their time and hard earned money to come up into the boonies and let us drag them around through the rain and the snow in pursuit of their trophies. And, of course, a huge thanks to all of our amazing crew for once again making the season run so smoothly.