



**Read the story below  
about this exciting  
Alberta wilderness moose  
hunt!**

## **Tracks™ October 2010**

### **What a Difference a Year Can Make (Greg Ray - OK)**

We've all been there; you start out by trying to decide what to hunt. Is it going to be mule deer in Montana, elk in New Mexico, whitetail in Kansas? I know, let's hunt moose in Northern Alberta. Now you have to find a reputable outfitter. You can do this by spending hours on line searching and making numerous phone calls or you can contact a hunting consultant (happen to know a good one) and ask who he recommends. Now you have your destination picked and it is very far Northern Alberta, only 60 miles from the Northwest Territories border, in a remote tent camp. You've got your hunt booked, purchased new gear (I love getting new gear), booked your flights and overnight accommodations for the night before you arrive and the night after you leave, now the hard part waiting for the trip to get here. If you're like most guys you've booked your trip 10 to 12 months in advance so you've had plenty of time to decide where you're going to hang your B&C moose and probably measured several times to make sure he will fit. It's finally here, your bags are packed, you've boarded your flight, traveled the 2,500 miles to meet your guide, packed in several hours to camp, unpack your gear, and sight in your rifles. What you didn't know is that Mother Nature had different plans for you and decided to send an Arctic Blast your way with driving snow that would last the entire length of your hunt and shut the moose down.

If you've hunted long enough it's happened to you, factors beyond your control and your outfitters control renders your hunt a bust. This is exactly what happened to two of my clients from two seasons ago, not only did they not get an opportunity at a moose, they didn't even see a moose, sign was there but no moose. I booked myself on the exact same hunt for this season and the following is my experience.

The first thing you should know, this is a very remote hunt. In most cases you will fly to Edmonton, stay the night and

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then catch a flight on to High Level where Greg or one of his guides will pick you up, from there expect about a 2 to 2 1/2 hour truck ride to the trail head, nope you're not done yet. You will then unload your gear into a trailer attached to an ATV, hop on another ATV and hang on for the 2 hour ride to camp. So if you are not getting the picture here, camp is very remote, we never saw another person on the entire 10 day hunt (I don't think anyone else wanted to put the effort it takes to get to this area). When you arrive to camp you will notice at least 4 outfitter tents set up, one for every two to three hunters, a mess tent and a tent each for the guides and cooks. Each tent has a wood burning stove with plenty of firewood already cut and stocked in your tent. I should mention here that all of Greg's equipment, tents, ATV's, cooking equipment was all in very good shape.

Just as we arrived to camp from our 2 hour ATV ride it began to snow; Greg and his very entertaining guide, Owen, were very excited about the snow and the temperature, in their words "perfect for moose hunting". I had arrived in camp a day early so technically the next day was not a hunting day for me since Greg and Owen had to go back to the trail head to meet two other hunters that had driven up from the states, but with this "perfect moose weather" they wanted to get me out for a few hours to see what was stirring around.

We took a short ATV ride up a fire line and then hiked into an area with a small lake where we glassed for a couple of hours before it was time to pick up the other hunters. We did not get any response to their calls but there were fresh tracks all over the place in the 4 inches of fresh snow we had received during the night.

The other hunters arrived in camp early that evening, introductions were made and after a hearty meal we all turned in for a good night's sleep in anticipation of all the moose quarters we were going to have to haul the next day. Somewhere in the middle of our 3 hour hike to the valley we were going to hunt we had two different bulls respond to our guides calls. I know we all had to be thinking the same thing "man this is going to be great we are going to be tagged out on the first day!" Little did we know that our "perfect weather" was going to get progressively warmer each day, this combined with the full moon helped the bulls decide that they did not want to play anymore except for night time when we were all sleeping. Over the course of the next week we would see all kinds of sign, rubs, scrapes, and rut pits, but no bulls. After hunting an area all day we would pass through the next morning on our way to a different area and find moose tracks in our tracks! Greg and I found an area that was absolutely torn up by a very aggressive moose; we found numerous fresh rubs and an entire line of scrapes.



We decided to hunt this moose for the next 5 days; we would arrive to his area before first light and get him to respond to Greg's calls every morning for about 1/2 an hour and then nothing, he would just shut down. I never got to see this bull, but according to the picture in my mind he is a brute, Greg has made it his mission to get this bull next season.

I will have to admit somewhere during day seven I started to think this is never going to happen, we are doing the same thing over and over again (kind of like a scene out of Groundhog Day) and still no moose, frustration was starting to creep it's way in. What can you do? These guys are only coming out at night.

The evening hunt of day seven Greg and I sat on the opposite side of a small lake we had hunted on day one, this spot had everything, food source, water and numerous trails leading to the lake with fresh moose tracks. Still no moose that evening.

Greg and I decided that we were going to hunt this same area an hour earlier than normal the next morning to see if we can hear any moose activity. Upon arriving early the next morning (Day 8, 5 am, legal shooting light is around 7am) to the spot we wanted to sit, we busted a moose not more than 50 yards from us, of course it's pitch black so all we can do is listen to the moose make his/her way further away from us. Well, at least we know they are still up at 5 in the morning.

At first light I made my way across the 150 yards of muskeg to the small lake so I could watch the other side. After about 2 hours I decided I had all I could stand and made my way back to Greg to discuss a possible new game plan, I didn't know what, but I had to do something different. During the middle of our conversation we both heard the strangest noise, "Whoop" "Whoop". "What was that"? I asked Greg. To me it sounded like a loon or some type of bird, by the look on Greg's face I could tell he didn't know what it was either.

There is goes again "Whoop, Whoop" but this time it was followed by tree limbs breaking and loud crashing noises. "That's a moose" said Greg. I turned in the direction of the noise and sure enough about 200 yards away was a huge pair of white antlers swaying back and forth through the alders and willows. I stood there in awe watching as the moose was coming straight towards us. Greg yelled at me to get my gun (ok it was a loud whisper, I was so amazed

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## Father's Day Trip (Jim Duberowski - MN)

Mark Robinson's journey started out simple enough...he wanted to take Dad on a trip of a lifetime, sort of a way for him and his brothers to say "Thanks Dad, for everything". As he sifted, sorted, meandered through the plethora of fishing destinations on the World Wide Web, he became increasingly frustrated as he just couldn't seem to find a destination that would deliver. This was an important trip for Mark and his brothers and they needed a reputable destination they could trust would make the trip the special one that Dad deserved. When Mark reached out to a friend from Warroad, she quickly referred him to Hosted Hunts, Inc. and we got to work. Thank you, Laura! We first set out to find the perfect outpost setting for the Robinson family. We were thinking about a classic secluded Canadian getaway. Although we presented some great outpost options, it was one of our lodge based Ontario options that really caught Mark's attention. In the end, it was just too hard to pass up the value and convenience of this trip. The facilities, the staff, the service, the available communication were reason enough to choose this option. The reasonable price was an added value. Of course, our services don't end with finding the right trip. Our job really starts after the booking is made. For this group, we faced unique travel arrangements. Mark's brother Matt, being a licensed pilot, decided it would work best to save Dad some road time, as they would fly in.



Meanwhile, Mark and his other brother John would be responsible for the transport of goods, keeping the plane's weight in check. Hailing from Minneapolis meant that the Robinson family could easily navigate through Warroad en route to their Ontario destination. This made for the perfect extension of our popular VIP program. Mark and John stayed overnight in Warroad and met Matt and Dave, who flew in the next morning, which just happened to be Father's Day. Conway and Nick opened the store to make sure the Robinson family was fully prepared for their upcoming adventure. After gearing up VIP style they were on their way for what turned out to be just the Father's Day experience they were hoping for. Walleyes were an easy catch and they caught the tail end of some solid smallmouth fishing as well. A few large pike made their way into the net as a bonus.

A few large pike made their way into the net as a bonus. You would think on a Canadian fishing adventure shore lunch walleye would be the only thing on the menu. Although the guys enjoyed their share of it, the exquisite dinners of prime rib and lobster were a nice reminder of the quality of the trip they had booked.

So, did we help Mark accomplish what he set out to accomplish?

"Just a quick note to say thank you for all the help with my family trip last week to Canada. It, by far, exceeded all of our expectations. The fishing was great, the resort was great, the staff was great, the food was great, and most importantly my dad loved the trip. We are already talking about doing it again. It is hard to find someone that can deliver on what is promised, and you just happened to over deliver. I have complete confidence in referring people to you. Again, many thanks for helping my brothers and me give our dad an unforgettable experience".

Guess so. *For more information on fishing in Manitoba with **MBF1**, contact your local Outdoor Connection agent.*

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by the moose the thought to grab my gun had not yet crossed my mind) dragging me by my shoulder Greg set me up and told me to aim through a small opening that he said the moose would travel through about 140 yards away. Sure enough that is the exact direction the moose went, looking through the scope I waited for the moose's shoulder to reach the opening and started squeezing the trigger, I squeezed harder, nothing. Dang it, I forgot to take the safety off (I know, I know rookie mistake). I found a second opening, lined up my cross hairs and sent a 180 gr Barnes bullet flying his direction. Man don't you just love the sound a bullet makes when it finds its target? The giant bull humped up for about 2 seconds and kept walking his slow pace just like nothing ever happened. I dropped my shooting sticks at this point, chambered another round and connected with it, on my third shot I blew up a tree about 10 yards in front of the bull (told you this stuff was thick) finally my fourth shot broke his back and brought him down. I had my first bull moose on the ground! I honestly believe Greg was more excited than I was and I was shaking in my boots! After what seemed like an eternity we finally made our way over to my moose, man those things are huge! Like all good moose guides, Greg had a cloth tape measure in his pack and strung it across his antlers (drum roll please) 50" right on the button!



While this hunt may not be for everyone, if you truly enjoy the outdoors, don't mind sleeping in a tent and can handle hiking 4 to 6 hours each day you will without a doubt enjoy this hunt. Greg and Owen know this country very well, had spent a week camped here before our arrival and had numerous hunting areas scouted for us. I can't wait to come back for bear camp.

*For more information on hunting in Alberta with **ABH4**, contact your local Outdoor Connection agent.*

## South Carolina Gator (Billy Roy - PA)

It all started when a good friend, Dr. Bill Wise told me he wanted to do a hunt that was different and unique, joking I said let's go for gators and he said okay. I made arrangements with Jimmy Boone, owner of the lodge, and Doc Bill and Chuck Kiser applied for tags. They did not draw, but Boone had landowner tags so the hunt was on.

We arrived at the lodge on Sept 10th and were greeted by Jimmy, his wife Terri and staff.

After stowing our gear it was off to the range to check our guns as we had six other hunters hunting deer and hogs. After a brief meeting to go over safety and odds and ends on stand locations and what we could expect to see we were ready for our first evening hunt.



I accompanied Doc Bill and Chuck on their gator hunt the first night. We arrived at our first location, a 10 acre lake that Jimmy and guide Bobby Booker had scouted the day before and had seen 20-30 gators. We called in three or four gators but they were too small so they passed. At one time, while Chuck and I were sitting on the bank and trying to film, we heard a tremendous splash and thought (hoped) Doc had not fallen over board. Fear not, it was "the greatest gator hunter in the world" Jimmy Boone, after trying to hook a big gator he fell off the boat.

We got Jimmy dried out and headed for our second location. Here is where the fun began. Before we even launched the boat we spotted a seven footer and the chase was on. Chuck started first and it was not long before Jimmy hooked the gator on his tuna rod and reel with 150 lb test line and Chuck fought the beast for 30 minutes or so and almost had it at the boat when it threw the hook. Ten minutes later Jimmy hooked another gator and to our surprise it was the same one and this time they got it harpooned and bang stuck it. It was 7' 3" and weighed 89 lbs.



It was now Doc's turn and I went with him. We cruised around the lake and it wasn't long before we saw 3-4 good gators and after turning on the call, a recording of baby gators chirping, we had gators all around the boat. Jimmy hooked a good one and handed the rod off to Doc who fought the gator for 45 min. We got the gator to the boat and Jimmy handed Doc the harpoon while I was holding a light on the gator so Doc could stick it. The gator actually came around and saw me and bit the light I was holding, however I managed to come back to PA with all limbs attached. We banged stuck the gator and took it back to the dock. It measured 8' 3" and weighed 110 lbs.

The rest of the hunt we harvested 2 hogs, 2 whitetail bucks and a coyote. Considering the temps ranged from low 70's to mid 90's, which kept movement to a minimum, we did manage to see around 20-40 hogs and ten or so other deer, but no shot opportunity was presented. The accommodations, great southern hospitality and meals make this an awesome destination. And we all want to go back next year. Thanks Outdoor Connection for another super destination!

*For more information on hunting in South Carolina with **SCH1**, contact your local Outdoor Connection agent.*

## One Off My Bucket List... (David Rudolph - IL)

Thanks to Johnny Wellman (IL) for recommending this outfitter in Alberta, Canada. I almost didn't go due to the economy, but as it turned out I'm glad I did. I harvested this beautiful moose (below) on the fifth day of my nine day hunt. I managed to come down with a terrible head cold after my second day in camp. Just great ... coughing, sneezing, runny nose, etc. I had all I could do to muster up enough energy to get out of bed each morning. But on the morning of Sept 29th at 7am I couldn't have felt better. While on our way to a new location to hunt, my guide, Stacey and I spotted this bull trying to cross the road in front of us. He sped up to push the bull back into the field. That's when Stacey said he knew just where the bull wanted to go. So we circled around to intercept him once he crossed the road; it was actually behind the main lodge. We parked the truck and ran across a clear cut. We no sooner got there and Stacey heard him grunt, he gave one cow call and the bull was on a string. I was standing in the open with nothing more than a barbed wire fence in front of me and very little cover behind me. Stacey moved off to (continued on page 4)

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one side and back about 60 yards. He made one more call and the bull stepped out of the bush 40 yards in front of me. At that point he decided to turn and walk parallel to me, the wind was perfect and there were several trees he had to walk behind to cover my draw.



When he got to the last tree I drew back and when his head cleared the last tree he turned to look at me. I figured it was all over at that point, but then he started walking into my shooting lane. Once in the open, Stacey made a grunt call to stop him and my arrow was on it's way. 35 yards later it reached it's target and the bull went down instantly. I knew at that point I had given him too much yardage and hit him in the middle of his spine. I immediately grabbed another arrow from my quiver and crossed the fence to finish the job. I don't remember much about the shot and I'm sure my form was terrible but the end result was a beautiful moose and a hunt of a lifetime. He measured 45 3/4" tip to tip, with 7 points on one side and 8 on the other. I'll have him scored in 60 days, he should easily make Pope and Young. Thanks again and best of luck this season.

For more information about **ABH7** contact your local Outdoor Connection agent.



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