

# Elk Bowhunting & Moose Bowhunting in Alberta, Canada with Mike's Outfitting

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### **1. Do you hunt public or private land? How much land do you have to hunt? Is there much hunting pressure?**

We hunt a mix of private and public land but we don't have exclusive permission on any of the private land and most of the public land has very few hunters. We hunt hundreds of thousands of acres and there is virtually no hunting pressure on any of it during the bow season.

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### **2. What's the country/terrain like? What elevation? Do I need to be in good shape?**

The hunting area is a mix of farmland and thick woods with some fairly deep river valleys. It is at low elevation, 3000 ft. You don't have to be in high elevation, mountain elk hunting shape but you still need to have some decent physical fitness, able to walk several miles each day if you want a good chance for success. The better shape you are in the more likely you are to take your animals too because you will be able to chase after any bugling elk no matter how deep a river valley he goes into. You also won't be afraid to help pack it out of some deep hole too. The success on moose is a bit less dependent on being in great shape but it certainly helps. Moose is more a matter of just getting lucky.

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### **3. How do you hunt them? Do you have good bowhunting guides? Do you hunt the same area for both species?**

On the elk we generally try to bugle the elk in or ambush them going to fields to feed. Yes we have good bowhunting guides who will have you spending most of your time in the trees trying to call elk within range. The moose live in the same areas and you never know when you will run into a bull, it could be a big one too.

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### **4. What size of elk and moose do you shoot?**

You have an excellent chance to shoot a mature, heavy 5 or even 6 point bull scoring up to about 300. Though there are some big 300+ score 6 and 7 point bulls in our area they are very difficult to get because of the large number of cows. Legally you can shoot any bull elk with at least 3 points on one side. We do have some great looking 40 to 50 inch bull moose in our zone and we have had bow shots at them over the years but if you want a good chance of killing a moose we recommend that you shoot the first bull you see. It is pre-rut time for them and it isn't easy to get just one shot in a hunt. A legal bull needs to have just 4 inches of antler on one side.

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### **5. How many shot opportunities can I expect? How far are the shots? What is typical shot distance?**

Basically you need to be a good shot out to 40 yards. Usually it is a range found distance. Though you may have elk often within bow range we are usually hunting in thick trees and you would be doing good to get 3 or 4 shots at elk in a week of hunting. With the moose you are hoping to get one opportunity, occasionally bowhunters get more than that. Just like on all the hunts the further you can shoot the better though.

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## **6 What's your success rate?**

It has varied quite a bit since 2006 depending on the skill and fitness level of the hunters and how the weather has been. If you are in decent shape and the weather is anywhere near normal there is no reason you would not get at least one very good shot and perhaps several shots at good bull elk. A shot at a moose is always a decent possibility

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## **7. How do you handle 2 hunters with one guide?**

It isn't tough to give a good hunt with 2 hunters to the one guide on a rut elk hunt and when you both have moose tags. When calling for elk you can be set up 50 to 100 yds. apart or one hunter could be in ambush watching a field edge or sitting a natural salt lick the other one is with the guide. Both moose and elk come to the fields and licks.

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## **8. If we kill one how do we get it out?**

Most of the country we hunt is fairly accessible to four wheelers and we can use a chain saw to help us get close so we have had good luck getting our elk or even moose out whole or just cut in two. It would be best though if you were willing and able to pack an animal out of a fairly deep river valley. With 2 fit hunters and a guide you could pack an elk out of almost anywhere in a ½ day. There are usually 4 hunters and 2 guides in camp so it can become a big team effort to take the animal out in one trip too. Just don't count on skipping out on the packing part.

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## **9. Do you have a wound policy?**

Yes we do. You are allowed a maximum of 2 wounds per species. That means that if you draw blood on 2 animals and we can't find either one of them then your hunt for that species is over. Of course we always make every effort to recover any wounded animals and we don't encourage unethical shots.

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## **10. How do you deal with the meat, antlers and cape?**

If you don't want the meat it can be donated, at no cost to you, to landowners who let us hunt their land or to needy families. We really appreciate anybody who does this but you certainly don't have to. If you drove up the cheapest way to deal with it is to take the moose home in your vehicle but we have heard of some hunters having trouble getting through the border with spine or brain matter, others have had no trouble at all. Removing the spine would be possible with a saw but that would be up to you to do, we have the saws to do it. Even better though is that we have an excellent butcher who can cut, wrap in paper and freeze your meat. Cost is about \$1 a lb. hanging meat. The average moose is 450 lbs. You could get a whole or half moose done in about 36 hours. You could then load up one or more coolers for your trip home. We have coolers here for a cost of \$30 each. If you are flying the airlines will usually charge for each cooler, about \$100 for a 50 lb. cooler. We take no responsibility though if airlines policy changes or they charge much more than that. It is up to you to figure out before your hunt how much it will cost and what is allowed.

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## **11. What clothes are best, what kind of camo? What temperatures, weather can I expect? Gear list?**

The normal temperature range for September 7th to 14th is about 35 to 80 F. It can be hot and dry or cool and rainy. Be prepared for both. Any bow, arrow and broadhead set up are fine as long as you practice lots with it before the hunt. The biggest problem I often see with bowhunters is not long range accuracy at targets but more a matter of having FUMBLE PROOF equipment that doesn't screw you up while you are in an adrenaline fueled panic to get an arrow on and get a shot. Changing equipment just before the hunt and not practicing enough with it in a variety of hunting type situations is the biggest problem.

**Gear, clothing list:**

Quiet rain gear, pants and jacket with a hood

- Leather, waterproof, ankle high boots.
- Light gloves
- Extra sweaters, long underwear
- Binoculars, range finder, no spotting scope needed.
- Bow and at least a dozen arrows.
- Camo. face mask, practice with it on.
- Dayback
- Camera, if digital, extra battery, charger & memory cards. Sorry, we will not email pictures to you.

Call Mike to book your next Alberta Elk Bowhunting & Moose Bowhunting Adventure

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