

**(406) 223-7863**

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web site: <http://www.wilderness-connection.org>

# HUNT MONTANA



***New For 2023...***

**Licenses Available for  
Drawing until April 1st**

***Visit Montana...***

**Yellowstone  
Vacation Rentals  
See pgs. 8 & 9**

## ***We Offer:***

- Yellowstone Area  
Elk & Mule Deer  
Combination Hunts
- Guest Ranch Services

## ***Inside:***

- Pg. 2** Combo Elk & Deer Hunts
- Pg. 4** Where to see us this Winter
- Pgs. 7-10** See Yellowstone Special Pull-out Section
- Pg. 13** We barter for Hunts!
- Pg. 16** Montana Licensing Information

# WILDERNESS CONNECTION



# WELCOMES YOU TO MONTANA

**Your Hosts:**  
**Rob and Stacy Stermitz**



Wilderness Connection started leasing the historic Stermitz Ranch nearly 37 years ago. Hundreds of hunters have fulfilled their hunting dreams here since that time. Rob and Stacy Stermitz acquired the hunting business from the previous owners, joining the hunting business to the ranch that helped make the business so successful. Rob and Stacy over the previous years have drastically reduced hunter numbers to increase hunter opportunity and success.

Those that haven't hunted here in a few years will still recognize the country - it hasn't changed a bit. And, unless you were born before 1900, you will still recognize the name on the ranch. The name hasn't changed, but the generations have. Rob and Stacy's four sons are the fifth generation to call the ranch in Cinnabar Basin home.

The owner of the Stermitz Ranch, Lorayne

Stermitz would also like to welcome you and hope your stay is a pleasant experience. The ranch was started in 1883, and is one of the oldest ranches in the Yellowstone area. Joseph Stermitz, a coal miner from Slovenia immigrated to the area in 1892, and purchased the ranch in 1900. Over the years he expanded the ranch into a viable cattle operation. In the 1970's elk began to be competitive with

cattle on the ranch. Cognizant of the detrimental effects on the natural resources, the ranch cut back on cattle numbers.

Working together with Wilderness Connection, Jim and Lorayne implemented a habitat program that would maximize hunter opportunity for game while at the same time maintaining the lowest possible environmental impact. We are proud of the fact that the landscape looks much like it did over 100 years ago.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
WILDERNESS-CONNECTION.ORG**

## YELLOWSTONE AREA (GARDINER) HUNTS



2023 hunt price is \$4600. 2024 hunt price is \$4700. Good hunting is weather dependent.

**SEE BOOKING INSTRUCTIONS - PG. 16**



Joel Dietrick with guide Bryson Stermitz with Joel's 2022 bull.



On the cover: Ted Vanderbeek with his 2022 opening week bull.



Left: Harry Williams' 2022 bull. Above: Harry Williams' 2021 buck.



Bill Morris' opening week 2022 bull.



Dennis Armbruster had a great year in 2022.



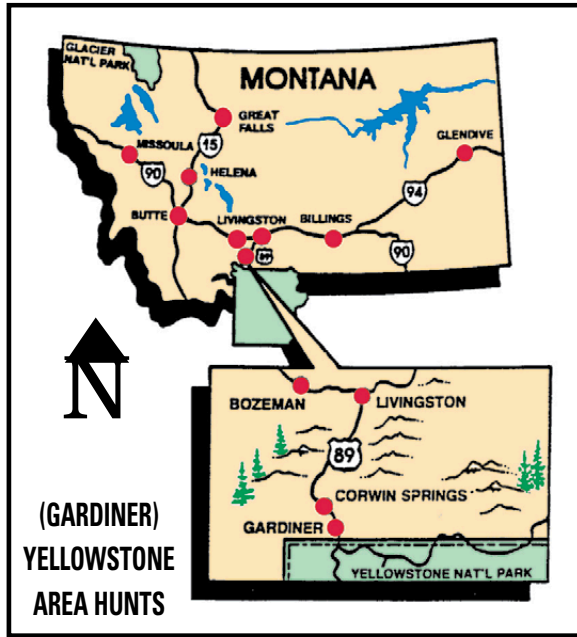
Bob Merchant's 2021 bull. Bob first hunted with us in 1993, and although he doesn't kill one every year, he has killed a few trophy bulls here.



Ryan Healy's 2021 bull.

**Call 406-223-7863 or e-mail: [rsstermitz@gmail.com](mailto:rsstermitz@gmail.com)**

# Fully Guided Hunts in the Yellowstone Area



## USUALLY THE LAST WEEK OF OCTOBER THROUGH THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

for the first couple hours before continuing the day's hunt. We often come in for a bowl of hot soup and a sandwich (and a nap) at mid-day, and continue the hunt in the afternoon. We typically spend some time and attention in the afternoon with a spotting scope locating game for the next morning.

price of your hunt includes pick up and delivery back to the airport in Bozeman, Montana. Please schedule your flight to arrive no later than 2:00 PM the day before your hunt begins. We will mail you directions if you wish to drive.

Even though the Yellowstone area has been hammered in the hunting press for it's wolf population, we still have one of the best elk populations in the state due to the fact that private ranches provide year-round food and secure habitat. Look at our pictures in this brochure. If the Yellowstone herd were decimated, would we still be shooting bulls? Not only that, but I would argue that this may be the golden age of shooting large bulls in the Yellowstone region. I personally have seen pictures of ten 380-410 B&C class bulls taken in the last two years! To get that big bulls have to get old, and Yellowstone National Park provides the thick timber that allows an animal to mature. Our average mature mule-deer bucks are 20-24 inches wide, although we have taken several in the 30" class.

THE HUNTING is done in a variety of manners, on both private and public land. We provide one guide for each 2 hunters, unless you are booking a semi-guided hunt (call 406-223-7863 for more information on our semi-guided hunts). If you don't have a partner, we can provide one for you. Generally, we try to be where we think the elk will be at daylight, and we get there by horse, 4-wheel drive, on foot, or a combination of the above. We often go on a stand

The accommodations are comfortable, but not plush; this is a lodge-type ranch hunt. The food is outstanding. You can get a shower or borrow a phone if you wish. And, you can sleep in a warm bed every night.

You can drive to our location, or arrive by air. The

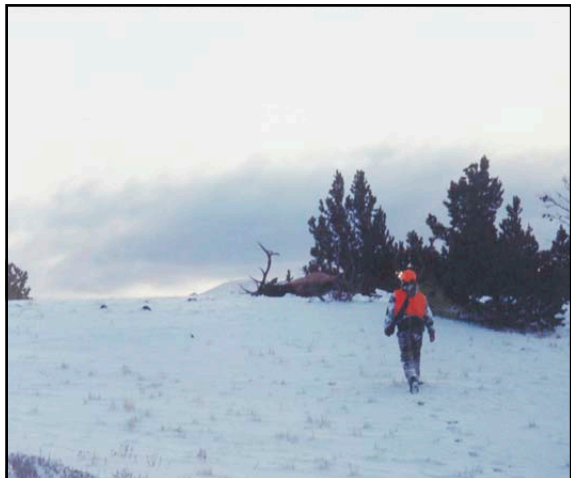


## Where is Wilderness Connection this winter?

Put these dates on your calendar, and come see us. I'll personally be at the Harrisburg show, and you can call me at 406-223-7863.

Mike Hoops from Two Harbors, MN will represent Wilderness Connection at the Minnesota and Wisconsin shows.

You can reach Mike at (218) 391-4003.



Craig Chandler, 6x6 bull.

## IS WILDERNESS CONNECTION THE RIGHT OUTFITTER FOR YOU?

This is the time of year when outfitters put the finishing touches on their fall bookings. It is also the time of year when it really pays for clients to do their homework on the outfitter they're either booking with or researching. Wilderness Connection Outfitters takes pride in our honesty, service, and the family nature of our business. To us, a client isn't just another hunter through the door, he (or she) is a potential returning client as well, so we make every effort to treat them as such.

It seems that every year we hear nightmare stories from clients who have hunted with So-and-So outfitter in Pickatown, Montana. Unfortunately they were promised more than the outfitter could deliver, or they were told one thing and showed up in camp and were delivered another. This is difficult for us, because sometimes these outfitters ruin a good client by leaving them with the sour impression that every outfitter is the same. I've come up with a few pointers for prospective clients to either ask their potential outfitter, or observe while they talk with an outfitter.

1. Beware the outfitter that spends a lot of money on flashy booths or personnel manning their booth. These outfitters have a lot of overhead, and they have to run a lot of hunters through camp to pay for it.
2. What percentage of returning clientele does the outfitter have? An outfitter who treats their clients right will often get a client returning in subsequent years, even if they don't harvest an animal. At Wilderness Connection we believe we can guarantee service, and we can guarantee that we won't lie to you or overstate the facts. Our brochure is also extensive so you can get a more thorough insight into what type of business we run. An outfitter who runs last minute deals might not have very many returning hunters.
3. How much time will the client spend in a vehicle getting to their hunting area? If you have to travel more than an hour in a vehicle to get to your hunting area, you've spent an hour not hunting.
4. How old are the outfitter's guides? At Wilderness Connection we have a mix of ages. Some are retired from their career, others are young and hike a lot, but the important thing is that this is your hunt, and being able to share it with a guide with similar life experiences is important.
5. How decent are the accommodations? Wilderness Connection has a bed for every hunter with sheets and blankets. And the food?.....Outstanding!

### YELLOWSTONE AREA HUNT REFERENCES

Alan Shughart 717-448-2489	Ed Hann 717-834-5100	John Healy 412-491-2545	Joel Dietrick 717-697-0773
Ken Weber 570-460-7153	Harry Williams 360-592-5903	Bruce Pitcher 406-587-0949	Matt Virgin 412-600-2304

**DEC. 8-10, 2023**  
**Arrowhead Icefishing and Winter Show**  
**DECC - Duluth, MN**

**FEBRUARY 9-12, 2023**  
**Lacrosse Sport Show**  
**Lacrosse Center Booth #4**

**FEBRUARY 4-12, 2023**  
**Great American Outdoor Show**  
**PA Farm Show Complex**  
**Harrisburg, PA Booth #5115**

**FEBRUARY 16-19, 2023**  
**Northland Outdoors**  
**Duluth Deer Classic - DECC**  
**Duluth, MN Booth #845**

**March 10-12, 2023**  
**Minnesota Deer and Turkey Classic**  
**Canterbury Park**  
**Shakopee, MN Booth #433**

Have a good winter,  
Rob and Stacy

# Yellowstone bulls have great genetics

## Occasionally a bull comes along that just takes your breath away.

I first saw this bull Thanksgiving week 2010 on a piece of property owned by a non-resident landowner – a piece of property that we don't have hunting rights on. I next saw him in February 2011, and he wasn't looking very good. I took some pictures of him, and you can see his hips and ribs showing. I kept hoping for our vicious winter to break, but unfortunately it didn't. Stacy and I saw him almost every day from that point on. I last saw him on a Sunday late-March morning while I was feeding horses. Stacy didn't see him that week. My oldest son, Bryson, and I went hiking the next weekend and found him dead. The 12 year old bull just didn't have enough fat reserves to make it through the winter. In Montana it is legal to pick up winter-killed bulls.

The bull isn't very heavy horned. We occasionally shoot a heavy-horned old bull

that has circumference measurements over 10". This one only has two measurements over 7". This bull put all his energy into growing length, and he put it on everywhere. This bull is the 20th highest scoring typical bull in Montana, and the 3rd highest scoring typical bull in Park County, Montana. And, it isn't from the turn of the 20th century. The bull has 12-3/8" of deductions, but if you add up the right antler and compare it to the left antler, it only differs by 1/8"!

I've hunted our ranch for many years, and I've seen a couple other bulls that would compare to this one, but they were both non-typical bulls. Their genetics are still here, as are the genetics from this bull. They're rarely seen, but this bull proves that they are here.

## TALE OF THE TAPE

No. points on right antler: 6  
Length of right antler: 58-3/8  
No. points on left antler: 6  
Length of left antler: 54-7/8  
Inside spread: 49-1/8  
Length of first point: 15-3/8 (Right), 15-3/8 (Left)  
Length of second point: 16-4/8 (R), 20-1/8 (L)  
Length of third point: 17-4/8 (R), 19-6/8 (L)  
Length of fourth point: 24-6/8 (R), 24-0/8 (L)  
Length of fifth point: 17-4/8 (R), 16-2/8 (L)  
Circumference #1: 6-7/8 (R), 7-2/8 (L)  
Circumference #2: 6-2/8 (R), 6-2/8 (L)  
Circumference #3: 7-0/8 (R), 6-6/8 (L)  
Circumference #4: 6-6/8 (R), 6-3/8 (L)

**Total Right Antler: 176-7/8**

**Total Left Antler: 177-0/8**

**Total Deductions: 12-3/8**

**Total Net Score: 390-5/8**

**Total Gross Score: 403-0/8"**



I took pictures of this bull while he was still alive. Notice how little fat he had left in early March, 2011.



This bull unfortunately isn't alive anymore, but his genetics are. We know of a couple bulls that were harvested in the Yellowstone area recently that rival him in inches, but not in his typical frame and beauty.



Wilderness Connection has partnered with **Antlers by Klaus** of Wisconsin to make reproductions of this 403" bull. We searched the nation to find the best company for the job, and Klaus and his outfit have done an amazing job! When we put the original beside a reproduction Klaus made, we couldn't tell the difference between the two. There are many people out there that can copy antlers, but no one can paint the intricacies, the wrinkles, the divets, or the character of antlers like Klaus! The reproductions are priced at \$2500 each. Give me a call and I can put you in touch with them.



Harry Williams' 2019 buck.



Harry Williams' 2018 buck.



Harry Williams' 2016 buck.



Doc's buck.



Saul Ramirez's 2021 buck.



Brett's buck.



Alan Shughart's beautiful mountain buck.



Ed Williams' buck.



Ed Williams' buck.



Stat buck.




JZ buck.



I wish I knew what was going on here. Dennis Armbruster's 2022 buck.

## Mule Deer hunting with



As you can see in this brochure, our hunting area produces some decent mule deer. We shoot nice bucks for a couple reasons. Firstly, we've had a "reverse trophy fee" management program here since 1997 that strongly discourages harvest of small bucks. We don't think a forked horn buck should ever be harvested just because someone has an empty tag in their pocket. Secondly, our hunting season ends just as the mule deer rut kicks in, so a lot of our mature bucks live to breed.

I've done some looking around, and you can go on a deer only hunt in Montana for \$3000-\$8000. You'd probably see more deer on those hunts, than you see here, but you'd probably still shoot the same class of bucks we shoot here. I still don't consider our mule deer "trophy-class", but for the same price of those deer only hunts, you can hunt with us and harvest both elk and deer.



Boy #3 (tyler) on Hawken surveying his domain.

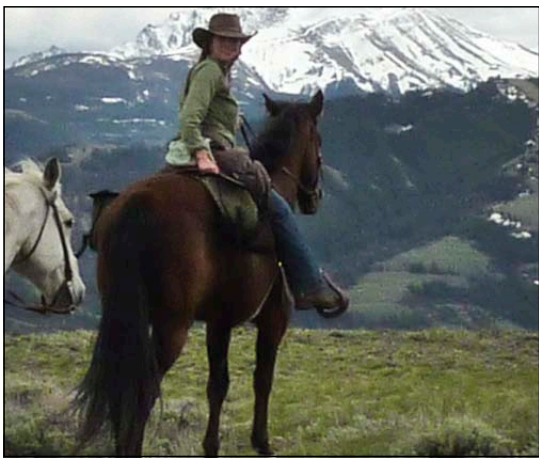
# SEE YELLOWSTONE

## While staying on the historic Stermitz Ranch

Yellowstone National Park is rapidly becoming one of the premier family destinations in the United States. Our three vacation rentals provide guests with an opportunity to lodge in a quiet location and visit Yellowstone National Park on day trips. Two cabins are historic, our Creekside Cabin was built in the 1930s, and the 1916 Schoolhouse was built in 1916. Both are perfect for honeymooners, couples, or those with a couple small children. They have been beautifully and painstakingly remodeled for modern use.

For those with larger parties, the Aspen Cabin accommodates 10 people.

If you're lodging elsewhere in the Yellowstone area, Wilderness Connection on the historic Stermitz Ranch is also a highly acclaimed outdoor adventure company. We partner with rafting companies. The zip-line on the ranch that boasts of Montana's longest zip and has 7 lines through old growth Douglas Fir forests and 2 adventure elements. The views on our horseback rides are unbelievable.



Get away from the hustle and bustle and join us in the mountains for an unbelievable trail ride.



The Stermitz Ranch has been in operation since 1900.

The historic schoolhouse then.  
Turn to page 9 to see it now!



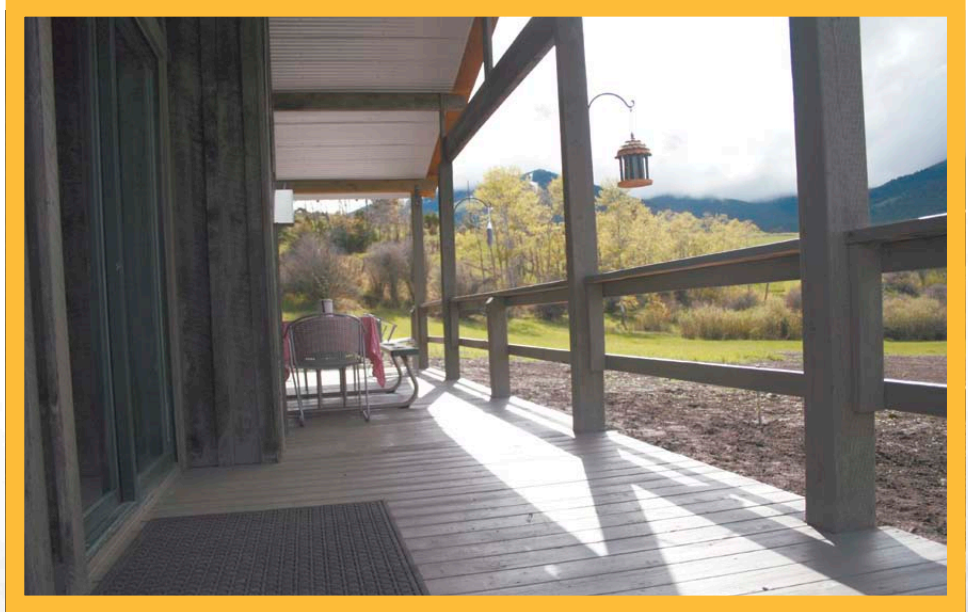
Winter has always been fun on the Stermitz Ranch!



# Visit Montana YELLOWSTONE AREA VACATION CABINS

## ASPEN CABIN

Our cabins rent for \$250-\$350 per night. I did some calling around to the hotels in Gardiner, MT which is a bedroom community for Yellowstone National Park and they rent for \$200-\$300 per night, but don't have kitchens and only hold 2-4 people. Our vacation rentals are not only a bargain, but offer room for more family time and a place to cook meals.



The covered porch is a relaxing place.

The Aspen Cabin sleeps 10 and has a full kitchen with pots/pans, utensils, etc., a cozy propane fireplace and comfortable seating in the living room, covered deck, covered porch with space for dining, and a huge outdoor space to recreate in. The 4 bedroom cabin has 3 full bathrooms. It has 2 master bedrooms (each with a king sized bed and private bath) and 2 additional bedrooms – one with a double bed and a bunk, and one with a bunk. Both bunk rooms share a bathroom down the hall. VRBO# 171379



The great room offers comfortable seating and breathtaking views.

## CREEKSIDE CABIN



1930s rustic log on the outside, thoroughly modern on the inside.



Creekside Cabin sleeps 4 and is truly a unique experience. Located at the confluence of two small creeks, the sound of rushing water will lull you to sleep. Great hiking trails await you just steps from your door. The building, built in 1932, and remodeled recently, is in its

original location on the Stermitz Ranch. It has a king bed, 2 twin pull outs for kids, a full kitchenette, a cozy propane fireplace in the seating area, and a full bathroom. VRBO# 364237



# THE 1916 SCHOOLHOUSE

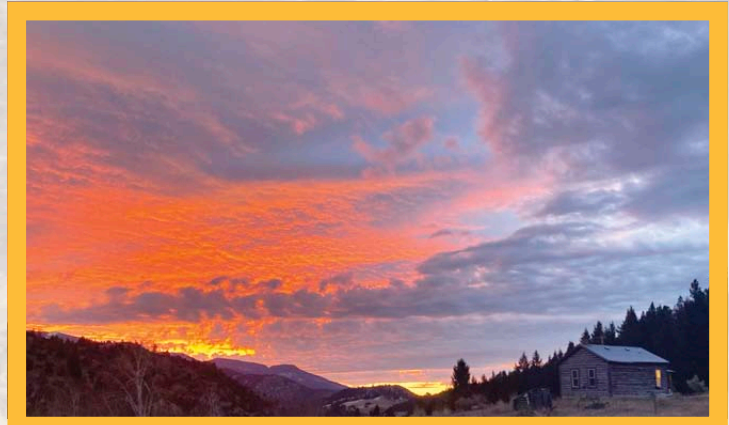
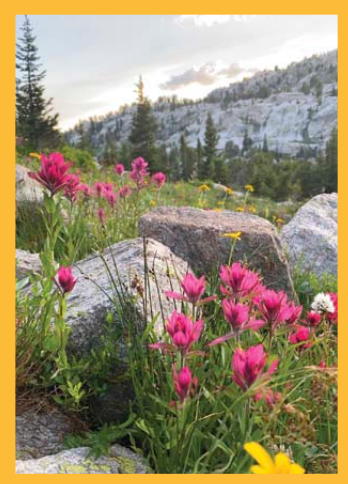
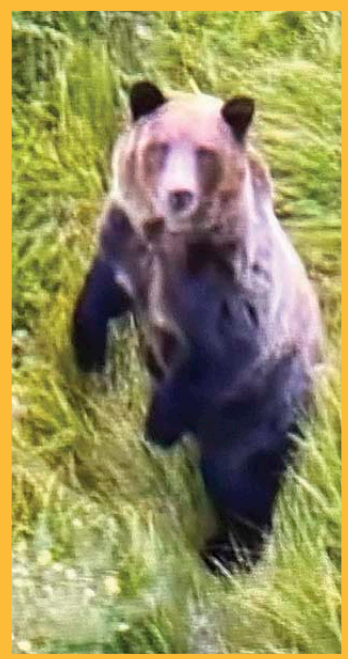


The 1916 schoolhouse is in its original location on the historic Stermitz Ranch. It has recently been beautifully renovated to preserve many of the original time period pieces. The schoolhouse has a full kitchenette, charming

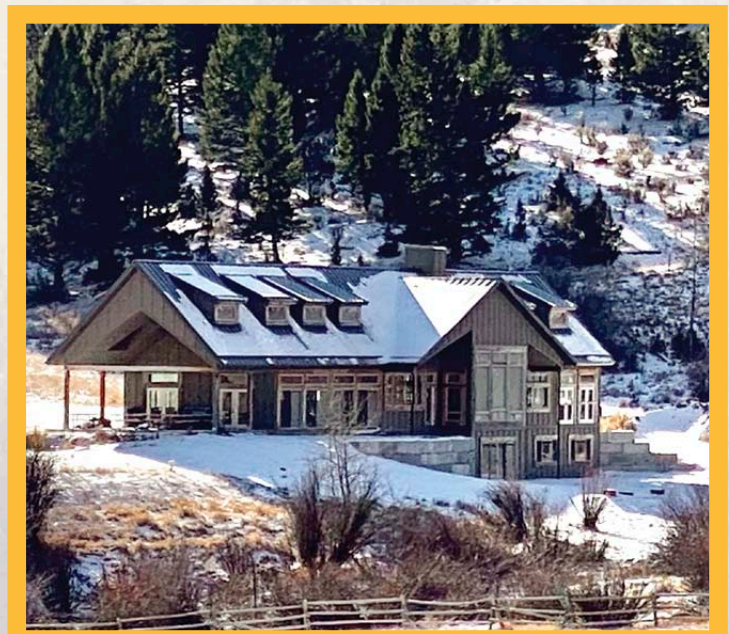
propane fireplace, cozy seating area, and tile bathroom. With its king bed and 2 pull-out twin beds for kids, the schoolhouse comfortably sleeps 4. VRBO# 294232

**In 2012 USA-Today voted our 1916 schoolhouse as #2 in the top 10 renovated schoolhouses to stay in.**

These vacation rentals are located 30 minutes from Yellowstone National Park, 30 minutes from Chico Hot Springs, 15 minutes from world-class fishing on the Yellowstone River, and mere minutes from recreating with us on the historic Stermitz Ranch. In the summer you can trail ride with our wranglers or take long mountain hikes enjoying our songbirds, abundant wildlife, wildflowers, and vast open views. In the winter you can cross-country ski and snowshoe from the backdoor. We are 2 hours from snowmobiling in the world-renowned Cooke City area. If you prefer a more laid back vacation, you can spend hours sitting on the deck drinking coffee and watching wildlife.



Sunrise over the schoolhouse



# Things to do in the area while staying on the Stermitz Ranch



Go zipping on our zip line.



Go wading in the creek.



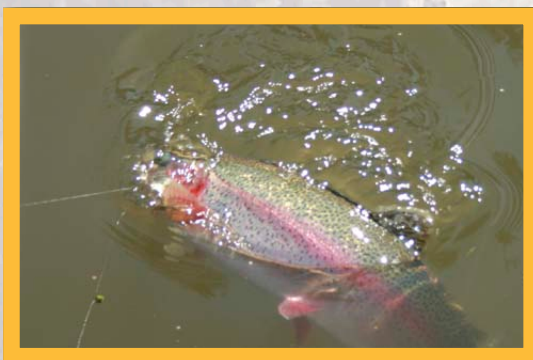
Watch babies be born in May.



Relax, and smell the flowers.



Go hiking on the ranch.



We're only 15 minutes from the Yellowstone River



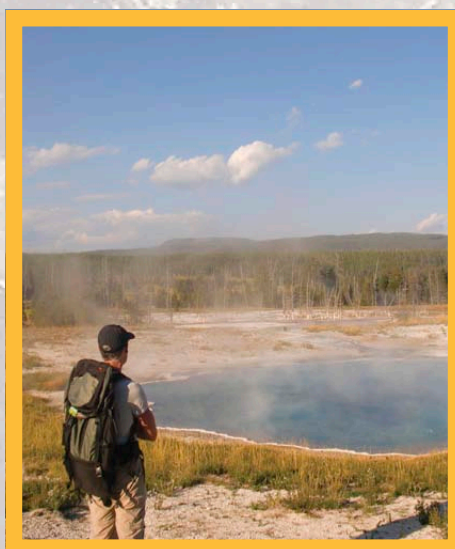
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 FAQs- Wilderness Connection Inc.  
 (wilderness-connection.org)



Take a snow coach into Yellowstone in the winter.



Go canoeing in Yellowstone.



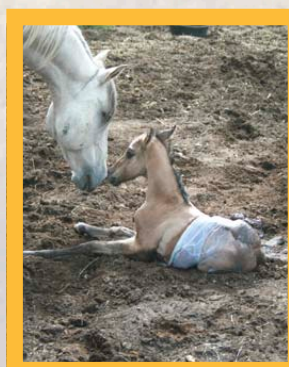
Go hiking in Yellowstone.



Relax, and read a book.



Watch a foal be born on the ranch.





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web:  
<http://www.wilderness-connection.org>

# 2022 Year in Review

We had an unbelievably wet summer. Just when we were drying out, a storm would make an appearance and green things up.

On June 12th a large amount of rain hit our snowpack, causing massive flooding in the Northern Yellowstone area. Our dirt road was washed out in a few places, and we were trapped on the ranch for a



**New lodge fireplace.**

a couple weeks. The road into Yellowstone washed out and was impassable. We quickly learned that without Yellowstone, the bedroom community of Gardiner doesn't have any guests. Our vacation rentals guests quickly all cancelled, leading us to stop our horseback rides and send our employees home. Any small business owner probably can imagine what it's like to instantly lose 2/3 of your business. Construction crews instantly started on an alternate highway into Mammoth, Wyoming and into Yellowstone National Park, so the

good news is that there's now access to Yellowstone for the 2023 season. Want to see the Park? Go onto VRBO.com and search for rental numbers 171379, 294232, and 364237. The quality of Stacy's rentals is unbeliev-

able! And, you can stay on an historic ranch that is only 10 years newer than Yellowstone National Park.

I got to do a little hunting myself this fall. After applying for a sheep tag for over 20 years, I beat the .3% odds and got drawn for a Rocky Mountain Bighorn license in



**The lodge snow-covered.**

the Missouri River Breaks. I harvested a 187" ram an hour and a half into the season. My oldest boy Bryson was with me and his packing was invaluable when it came time to pack the ram out of the hole it fell into.

We only had 2 archery hunters this fall, and while Matt Virgin and his brother Dan didn't harvest any bulls, they were into elk every day of their 5 day hunt.

When the general rifle season began, the bulls that were around for the rut were still here, and we had an incredible opening week, killing 6 bulls during the hunt. The second hunt was a little slow, but temperatures dipped into the -20 degrees range. Cold temps always causes critters to move, and by our 3rd and 4th hunts we were getting several hunters "tagged out".

Finally, I can't thank my bride of 27 years enough for getting up at 3AM and going to bed at 10 PM and putting on incredible meals. Stacy is truly a blessing and is friendly to everyone she meets.



**Dining room, 2021.**

## 2023 Outlook

Our 2023 season is looking good. We've had ample snow in 2022 which translates into adequate grass and feed in 2023. Elk counts are showing a more than healthy cow: calf ratios,

Our local cow elk population is doing very well. Elk counts last winter showed our calf:cow ratio in the upper-20s range, which is the best I've seen since the wolf was reintroduced to our landscape in the 1990s.

Wolves? Yep, we've got 'em! However, we only saw them on one hunt this hunting season. And....if they've "supposedly" wiped out our elk herd, why do we have so many cows? Cows attract (and make bulls).

Grizzly bears continue to be a concern here. Some hunters are very concerned about the presence of grizzly bears in the west while they're hunting. I suppose I have a little different take on them. The "white" bear was here when Lewis and Clark visited Montana, and Teddy Roosevelt and company wrote volumes about the animal when he hunted the west.

They're a large factor in why the northern Rocky Mountains are so special. Montana is still a wild, wildlife-rich state. If you've ever hunted in Alaska, Wyoming, Idaho, British Columbia or Alberta, you've hunted amongst grizzly bear populations not much different (or most instances higher) than ours. To be successful at elk hunting here you just have to pay attention and be "bear-aware". It has been my experience that if you're doing a good job hunting, you're also doing a good job watching for bears. As a business, we are being as proactive as possible concerning bears. We're working closely with bear biologists and other Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks personnel to not only protect our clients' safety, but to also mitigate their effects on our operation.

As of December 2022, as I sit in front of the lodge fireplace writing this, we've finally received a foot of snow, and the temperatures have been fairly mild. The bulls are showing up on their winter range. The bulls I'm seeing are nice looking bulls and are in great condition. We shouldn't have any winter-killed elk this year, and the type and class of bucks that we're seeing and shooting right now is better than we've had since the "glory days" of the mid-1980s. Most hunters go on a mule deer-only hunt and don't see the class of buck that we see right now.

If you didn't hunt with us in 2022, come see us in 2023. Our new lodge is spectacular, and has a couple rooms for couples, so bring your wife or son/daughter.



**Dining room, 2021 Hunt #4.**

For some, hunting is a hobby. For Wilderness Connection Outfitters hunting is a passion.

# A guide to tipping on your hunt

It seems that every year, a lot of our guests get me aside and ask me about our tipping policy. I tend to be pretty awkward about explaining my feelings, as I don't want to seem to be too mercenary, nor do I want anyone to think that tips are the driving force behind the everyday courtesies and considerations afforded our guests. On the other hand, gratuities are quite important to our guides and kitchen help, so let me take a shot at making you aware of what I think — and why.

At Wilderness Connection, we play “team ball” — which means to the degree possible, everybody on our staff is encouraged to help everyone else. If you are fortunate enough to get a buck or a bull, it is quite possible that one or more of the other guides will assist in packing

out your meat. Often, your guide might call on the radio for help, which means that pack animals can come right away to bring the animal in the same day, rather than making a whole separate project out of game retrieval. Practically translated, this means more hunting time for you.

Guides share in servicing vehicles, saddling horses, picking up hunters for each other, as well as hauling carcasses to the butcher, etc., etc., etc. You will usually hunt with a number of different guides during the course of the hunt, but may not be aware of the effort expended by the guide you never hunted with - effort in your behalf!

For this reason, I think that at least part of your tip \$ (probably 1/4 to 1/2) should go into a

“group” tip.

The other question most asked is — how much should I tip? I don't believe there is a hard and fast answer for this one, as it partially depends upon your ability to pay and the kind of service you feel you have received. Judging upon past tipping, most hunters tip between \$300 and \$400. Assuming you are tipping \$350 a reasonable approach might be to tip the guide you were with the most \$100, \$125 to the cooks, and another \$125 towards the “group” tip that is shared equally by the guides, packers, and camp tenders.

Of course, a successful elk hunt always produces more work, and it is common for a hunter to tip \$200 to the guide that helped him successfully harvest an elk.



Daryl Jones bull.



Larry and Shane Bubacz.



Dave Mielke.



Chris Zupancich.



Saul Ramirez.



Great father/son time with Wilderness Connection.



Gary Schlien.



Jay Zullinger's 28 1/2 (!) inch 5x5 buck.



Lee Shughart's bull.



Keric Seck, 2016.

## List of what to bring

- Montana hunting license.
- Rifle-with sling- .270-30.06 minimum caliber sighted in at 300 yds. and ready to go.
- Ammunition - at least 1 full box, two is better.
- Enough underwear for at least a week before laundering.
- Soap and towels-enough for at least a week.
- Polypropylene underwear or equal— at least 2 pair.
- Wool pants-1 pair light, one heavy.
- Wool shirts-1 of which is big enough to wear as an outer layer over your nylon or gore-tex jacket.
- Several pairs of wool socks.
- Small seat cushion to sit on while you're in the woods.
- One good, warm coat, “quiet type”.
- Mittens and wool hat.
- Orange vest-quiet-no plastic or nylon please.
- Good quality daypack, quiet.
- Sleeping Bag
- Matches in water-proof case, Bic lighter, candle.
- Flashlight.
- Toiletries, including towel and washcloth.
- Alarm Clock.
- Pocket knife.
- Rain gear-poncho or saddle slicker preferred.
- Binoculars.
- Compass or GPS.
- Camera.
- Hunting knife and pocket steel.
- 2-3 water bottles.
- Bring your own candy stash, enough for your hunt.
- Footgear- 1 pair casual shoes, 1 pair leather hunting boots, 1 pair “Schnees” feltpacks with 1 extra pair of liners.
- Pre-paid calling card for long distance phone calls
- The kind of weather you want.
- Two blank checks for meat processing.

— We provide bear spray —



Tyler's first animal, a great eating 5x5 taken during the second hunt of 2020.



Levi Byler.



David Wengerd.



Ervin Byler's buck.



Kevin Roosma.



Kevin Roosma's 6x7.



Hal Homan's bull.



Tim Rife's bull.



Chase Main.

We hunt these animals on their terms. Sometimes we're successful, sometimes we're not. This is fair chase.



Rick Nelson with his 28 1/2" unique 4x4 buck.



Tracey Anderson, 2020.



Ed Williams' buck.



Keith and Warren Kalnbach.



Great times at Wilderness Connection.



# Hunt trade:

Are you having a hard time financially justifying an outfitted elk/mule deer hunt this fall? Would you like to barter for a hunt? In the summer of 2021 we finished building our new lodge and are living in it. We are currently looking for someone to form up and pour concrete on two patios. Purchase a license, come in April and May for a couple weeks and earn a no-cost hunt in October or November. We are also looking to barter for a used UTV, a 4-wheeler, hunting blind, e-bike, or tropical place to take a vacation. If you're interested in this please phone Rob at 406-223-7863.

# Secret to our Success Revealed!



Photo courtesy of Bruce Pitcher Photography.

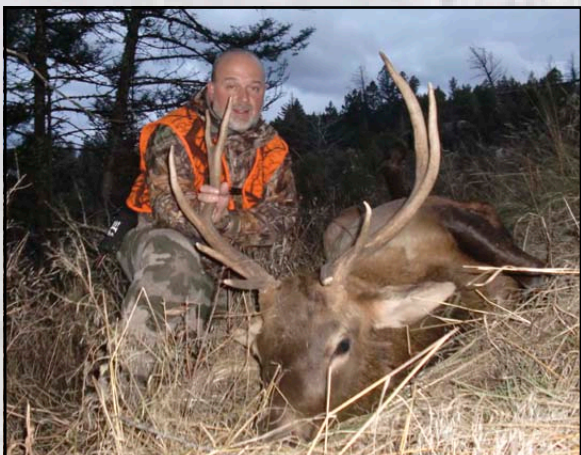
This year, as in the past, our clients again repeatedly commented on what they felt was perhaps the single most outstanding ingredient in their hunt with Wilderness Connection.....**OUR GUIDES, COOKS, and HELP.** We recognize the value of these very special people to our operation and wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to them for a job well done.

For our 2022 season we'd like to thank the following for a job well done:

**2022 Hunting Guides:** Mike Hoops (guide and packer), Harry Williams, Ken Sinay, Rick Adkins, Rocky Leavitt, Bryson Stermitz, David Hanne and Ladan Ricketts. I'm eternally grateful for my bride of 27 years Stacey who was our 2022 cook.

Lorayne Stermitz (mom) deserves special thanks for helping us in the kitchen.

Thanks to Mike Hoops and Nancy Mancini for representing us at all the Minnesota and Wisconsin sport shows. It's a ton of work and a lot of driving.



Andy Riemenscheider 2015.



Brett Blankenship 2015.



Brett Blankenship 2015.



Mike Peat's 2014 bull.



Mike Peat's 2014 buck – a hunt #2 dandy.



Jay always kills a nice buck, this is his 2014 version.



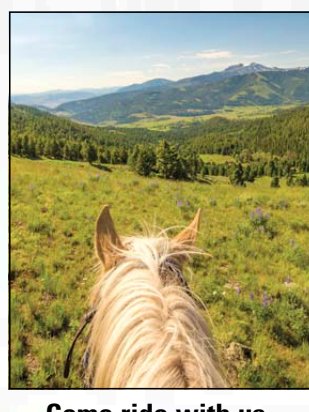
Jay Zullinger's 2014 bull.



Rob's 2013 10" goat.



John Healy's 9 1/4" goat.

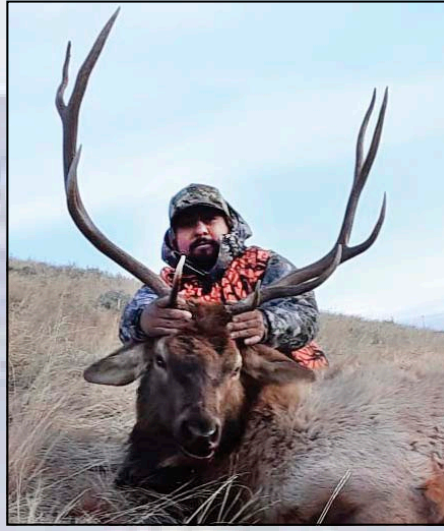


Come ride with us next summer.

It's impossible to guess what the weather is going to do. Any hunting in the west depends strongly on ideal weather conditions. Remember, this is not a high-fence hunt!!! If the "success" of your hunt can only be measured in meat and horns, elk hunting is probably not for you – I know some outstanding outfitters and guide services that can take you caribou or antelope hunting. However, if you come with the mind set that you are going to hunt hard, do your best, and enjoy your hunt, regardless of outcome, you will never go home disappointed.

## Mule Deer \$500 Reverse Trophy Fee

As you can see, we shoot some nice bucks. A major reason is that for almost 20 years we have been encouraging clients to pass up immature mule deer bucks. By charging our clients age 16 and over \$500 for shooting immature bucks, our "gentlemen's agreement" has been very successful. To qualify as a mature mule deer buck, it must have at least 4 points on one side or be more than 22" wide inside the main beams.



Saul Ramirez's 2019 bull.



"Uncle" Arnie Ramirez with his 2019 6x6 bull.



Jim Volmer and his 2020 bull.



Doc Sheaffer's bull.



Brian Shambach's 2021 bull.



Ken Weber's 2020 buck.



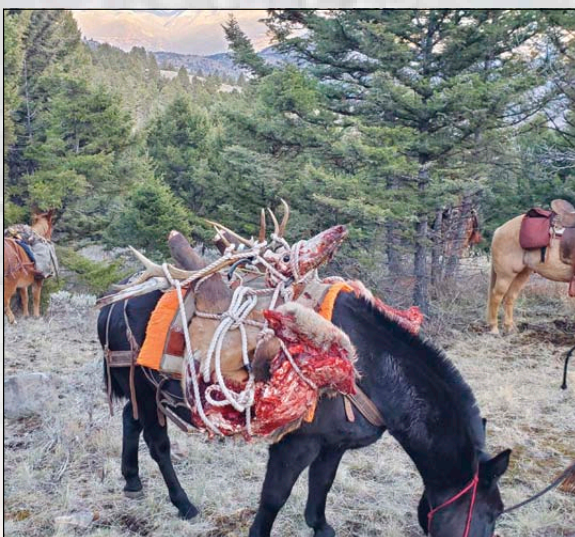
David Hanne's 2021 bull.



This is what happens when two hunters both tag out within 5 hours of the start of their hunt. Saul Ramirez and Kevin Roosma, 2015.



Mike Englert's 2014 8-year-old bull.



Brian Shumbach's 2021 bull loaded and ready to pack out of the woods.



Saul Ramirez 2015.



Bryson's bull.



Keenan Zentz 2015 6x6.



Ed Williams' 2015 bull.



Chuck Slemmer's 5x5 buck.



Steve Arnold's 9 3/4" billy.



Our boys - Luke's first mule deer a handsome young 4x5.

**2023  
Hunt  
Price  
\$4600**

# HUNT MONTANA WITH WILDERNESS CONNECTION, INC.

## LICENSING IN MONTANA

**2023 MT license prices were not available at press time.**

Montana's deadline for licensing is April 1st, 2023. The licenses go on sale on March 1st, 2023. Montana has a new licensing category for those who have booked with an outfitter. Those that have can now purchase 2 preference points at the time of license application. Coupled with the preference point purchase period of July 1-September 30. A non-resident hunter can now go into the drawing with 3 preference points, making the license drawing almost guaranteed. In fact we only had 2 gentlemen not get drawn last year, for a 95% success rate.

Montana's deadline for licensing is April 1st, 2023. The licenses go on sale on March 1st, 2023. Montana has a new licensing category for those who have booked with an outfitter. Those that have can now purchase 2 preference points at the time of license application. Coupled with the preference point purchase period of July 1-September 30. A non-resident hunter can now go into the drawing with 3 preference points, making the license drawing almost guaranteed. In fact we only had 2 gentlemen not get drawn last year, for a 95% success rate.

**The drawing success in 2020 was 95% for those that had purchased a preference point.**



Rob and Stacy and their 4 boys. It's a family thing...



### 2023 YELLOWSTONE AREA (Gardiner) SCHEDULE

All 2023 hunts are priced at \$4600 each.

- HUNT #1 ..... OCT. 21 - OCT. 25
- HUNT #2 ..... OCT. 27 - OCT. 31
- HUNT #3 ..... NOV. 02 - NOV. 06
- HUNT #4 ..... NOV. 08 - NOV. 12

(GOOD HUNTING IS WEATHER DEPENDENT)

- HUNT PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE LICENSE PRICE -

### 2024 YELLOWSTONE AREA (Gardiner) SCHEDULE

All 2024 hunts are priced at \$4700 each.

- HUNT #1 ..... OCT. 26 - OCT. 30
- HUNT #2 ..... NOV. 01 - NOV. 05
- HUNT #3 ..... NOV. 07 - NOV. 11
- HUNT #4 ..... NOV. 13 - NOV. 17

(GOOD HUNTING IS WEATHER DEPENDENT)

- HUNT PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE LICENSE PRICE -

## BOOK NOW FOR 2024!!

You can book now for 2024. A 25% deposit is required to hold the dates of your choice until May 1, 2024. Upon successful drawing of a license your remaining 25% deposit is due.

Call for more information  
406-223-7863 OR

e-mail:

rsstermitz@gmail.com

## BOOKING INSTRUCTIONS

CALL (406) 223-7863 or e-mail: rsstermitz@gmail.com

A 25% non-refundable deposit is required to hold your hunt reservation for 2022. Upon successful drawing of a license in late April, another 25% is due bringing the total hunt deposit to 50%. Fill out the reservation form below and enclose the required deposit. Your final payment will be due October 15th of your hunting year.

### REFUND POLICY

All deposits are non-refundable. If unsuccessful in the drawing, your 25% deposit will hold a spot for you in next years' hunt schedule. Your 25% deposit will continue to hold a spot for you as long as you: 1) continue to apply yearly (and on-time) for a license and retain proof of application, 2) continue to purchase bonus points, and 3) continue to provide updated address, phone number information, and e-mail addresses to Wilderness Connection. Under some conditions we will allow transferring of deposits to another hunter not previously booked. However, Montana drawing bonus points are not transferable.

### REPLY FORM



492 CINNABAR BASIN ROAD  
GARDINER, MT 59030  
(406) 223-7863  
e-mail: rsstermitz@gmail.com

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_

MOBILE #: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

KEEP  REMOVE ME FROM YOUR MAILING LIST

ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND THE \$ \_\_\_\_\_/PERSON DEPOSIT REQUIRED TO HOLD THESE DATES. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS DEPOSIT IS NON-REFUNDABLE BUT IS APPLICABLE TO A FUTURE HUNT ACCORDING TO WILDERNESS CONNECTION'S DEPOSIT POLICY. I UNDERSTAND THAT ALL HUNTS ARE WEATHER-DEPENDENT FOR BEST SUCCESS - OPPORTUNITIES ARE NEVER GUARANTEED. FINAL PAYMENT IS DUE OCTOBER 15TH.

YOUR SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

1/23

#### I WISH TO BOOK THE FOLLOWING 2023 HUNT:

- ( ) Hunt #1...Oct 21-25
- ( ) Hunt #2...Oct 27-Oct 31
- ( ) Hunt #3...Nov 2-6
- ( ) Hunt #4...Nov 8-12
- ( ) 2024 season. Hunt # \_\_\_\_\_

### Rob and Stacy are licensed or permitted by the following agencies:

- Montana Board of Outfitters license #7260
- Montana Department of Health
- Montana Department of Labor
- USDA Gallatin National Forest - Gardiner Ranger District

### In addition, Rob and Stacy are members of the following organizations:

- American Quarter Horse Association lifetime member
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Outfitter - donating member
- Gardiner, Montana Chamber of Commerce
- Montana Outfitters and Guides Association
- Gallatin National Forest Outdoor Recreation Association
- National Rifle Association lifetime member
- Boone and Crockett Club lifetime member