









Hunt ID: 5093-S-L-MElkDeer-CO-LI2DASA-L1T-ME2SJA- Flexible Hunting Options

Welcome to the world that elk call “their world” in the heart of Colorado pin pointed down to hunting in the Gunnison National Forest, GMU551.

When you are at the top of the world everything is below you. Well we are not at the top of the world but we are close enough to touch it. We are located as the crow flies south east of Gunnison Colorado.

We provide elk hunting lodging \$ 2000 for a 5-day hunt discounted down to only \$ 1095, and for a continental breakfast, a sack lunch and a hot evening meal it is only \$ 100 more per person.

Hunters around the world come to Gunnison every year to hunt "big bucks and bulls". These bulls and bucks grow to trophy sizes if you don't get them first. The success rate is high for this area because of the multiple means of access.

The whole area is covered with hiking, biking, ATV and 4-wheel drive vehicle access mostly during the summer use. Hunters that know which road take them to the right area and have a map or GPS in ha are rewarded. The area is large so to get the value of access to so much deer and elk habitat you must be able to do more than just hike although plenty of deer and elk have been taken a short distance away.

We are blessed best with the number of elk in the area but since from here you can go all the way up to timberline on different passes the larger animal tend to stay in the area. Deer are there during the early seasons but by the 3rd season they are down at the 7,500-foot altitude areas so you hunt downhill for them. Elk will also be mixed in that area as well.

By the 4th season the elk have usually moved down to the lower access altitude and the deer have continued down to their wintering grounds. The key to hunting this much ground is to find the altitude driven area is to see at what altitude the elk or deer are when you are here and hunt at that approximate area. Much like fish in a lake when the sun is cold they go deeper if the water temperature is colder they go up closer to the surface.

The area has several flowing streams, dark timber shelter, and open meadows. The elk are scattered across the range with the average larger bulls as high as above timberline to about 8000 feet during the early seasons. The 3rd and the season where you will find the elk is where the snow and weather push them. Above us is Horseshoe creek bowl, and area known for big buck and bulls because of its ideal mix of habitat, mountain bowls, water and timber cover for safety and thermal protection. We do have an occasional moose most of the time spotted in the creek bottoms.

What we provide is a semi-guided hunt. We explain what is there and some good areas to check but when you are hunting you are without us with you.

We provide you with lodging no matter what size your group is in 4 different rooms and can sleep as many as 10 people. There are two cabins, 1 is where the manager stays and the other is for large lodging. 5 days and nights with or without meals are the options. We will work with you to provide the best lodging arrangement. The Lodge and cabin is all done in natural pine timbers to give it the rustic cabin look but with hot water and showers, along with all of the essentials, as flush toilet and heat it is quite comfortable. For your game, there is a hanging pole or two in the yard by the lodge and you are in the middle of 10 private acres.

Plan from 70 degrees and dry to 20 degrees and snowing, we get both and it can change in a day which is what the advantage comes for success the animals are always moving. We recommend bringing chains for wheel drive vehicles. It may snow when you are here and some roads are steeper than others. Cell signal is available in certain areas of the general location and the lodge does have a landline.

Deer and Elk Licenses

The hunting unit is GMU551 for deer and elk licenses. GMU551 stands by itself in Deer and for elk sharing regulations with no other unit. Deer licenses are available for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th seasons but I recommend the second seasons for several reasons. The deer are migratory and migrate by the moon. They are here for the 2nd season but move down to the 7,500 level and lower for the later seasons. The deer license can be drawn with 1 point for the 2nd season.

Since Deer is 100% Draw and leftover availability then Archery requires 2 points for a resident and 4 points for a non-resident. For Muzzleloader 3 points for a resident and 5 points for a non-resident. The 2nd season Rifle only required 2 points for a resident or non-resident. The 3rd season for a resident with 9 for a non-resident as the big buck around the lodge are migrating towards their wintering grounds. The 4th season deer is 8 for a resident and 15 for the non-resident pointing out that the high-country bucks that we have during the summer to 2nd season move down lower during the 4th season with some impressive racks. With a running average of a 74% success rate it is one of the deer highest success rates in the state. Early there are a lot of deer and later there are a lot of big deer. It is all about drawing the license then filling is an easy one once you locate the Mule deer that you want.

GMU551 for elk has all 4 rifle seasons along with the September archery and muzzleloader. Elk are here in September and are usually here at the 10,300-foot altitude level of the lodge. If a heavy snow comes in they may be pushed down to the 7,500-foot hunting areas. Unlike deer Archery 2nd and 3rd season are over the counter licenses. The 1st usually draws out seldom with leftover licenses. The 3rd season has the unlimited over the counter and usually has leftover cow elk licenses that go on sale in August. As for the 4th season there is an either sex license and a cow license. There are usually leftover cow elk licenses that can be purchased in early August. The August sale is first come first serve so it is do-able but there is always a risk, that they won't be available unless you submit your application before April 1st. We will assist you in getting your license applications or you August license and they are extremely good at getting licenses. The elk success rate is lower than the extremely high deer success rate. Much of it must do with locating 1 of the 10,000 elk in the GMU551. There is a lot of timber which allows the bulls to live past a 3rd or 4th year elk season, many 5-8 years. The outcome is huge bulls. On the other hand, they are in enough cover that when they get this smart they are difficult to locate. The hunter that will go the extra mile, work the wind and cover the ground will come home with a wall hanger.

Many areas in Colorado the success rate is high but the bull size is extremely low because of the lack of age in these bulls. The habitat cover and the migration route have a lot to do with it. Many areas that have the small bulls have areas that are known as "Migration Areas."

In those areas if you have a snowy fall the elk will be there before you are. If you have a warm fall they may not even show until December, after the 4th season is over. In the hunt detailed above you don't have to be concerned that you are waiting for the elk to get to you, the elk are already here you just must locate the bull of your life.

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