



# CODY REGION newsletter

## Hunting with Heroes in Thermopolis



Veteran Mike Guile of Casper (right) and Ken Smith of Thermopolis (left) after a successful antelope hunt in Hunt Area 67.

Recently, Information and Education Specialist Tara Hodges had the opportunity to join veteran Mike Guile of Casper and volunteer guide Ken Smith of Thermopolis on a pronghorn antelope hunt. Guile was one of ten hunters that was recently provided an opportunity to hunt in the Thermopolis area through Hunting with Heroes, a non-profit organization that provides hunting, fishing and other unique outdoor experiences to disabled veterans.

“Before dawn of opening day, the three of us met in Thermopolis and climbed into Smith’s truck, excited for the upcoming hunt,” Hodges said. “We had about an hour drive to Hunt Area 67 and passed the time quickly as we got acquainted with one another.”

### Inside this month’s issue:

#### On the ground

In the field with Game and Fish

In the right place at the right time

#### In the water

Biologists build beaver dam analogs

Sampling the North Fork drainage

#### Of interest

Mud creates sticky situation for access

Game and Fish promote safety with bear spray giveaway



## Hunting with Heroes in Thermopolis continued

Ken Smith, a police officer and volunteer firefighter in Thermopolis, volunteered his time to serve as guide for the hunt. Guile, a husband and father of three is retraining to become an electrician after a 12 year military career that included three tours in Iraq and one tour in Afghanistan. Guile said that he first learned of Hunting with Heroes by reading an article in Wyoming Wildlife. "Hunting with Heroes provides a greater opportunity for hunting that I would otherwise not have," Guile said. "Since living away from Wyoming for 12 years, I no longer have a strong network of friends who hunt or know many landowners for access."



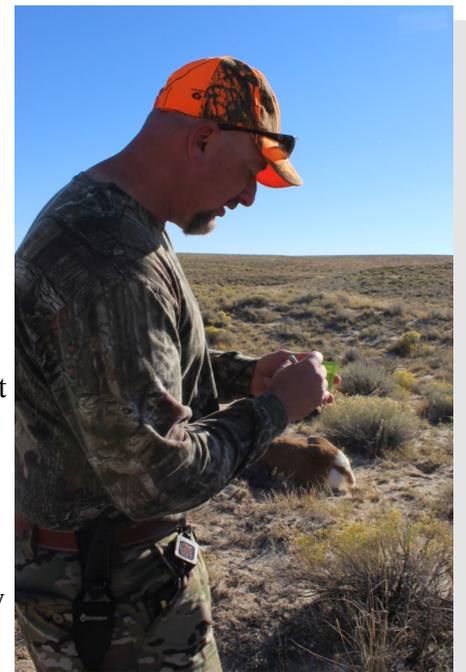
**Guile and Smith glass for antelope in Hunt Area 67.**

Hodges said the group arrived early to the hunt area and awaited daylight to begin pursuit of a buck antelope. "We saw many quality antelope bucks but mostly, I think we all felt lucky to just be out admiring the beauty of the sagebrush and the wildlife the landscape supports," Hodges said. "When Guile decided on one, we pursued the animal and set up on him several times before coming into a reasonable range. Guile made a perfect 250 yard shot and cleanly harvested a great buck."

Guile and nine other veterans hunting with Hunting with Heroes obtained licenses through the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's license donation program. The program allows the holder of any valid big game license to surrender the license to Game and Fish for reissuance to a veteran with disabilities or a permanently disabled person who uses a wheelchair.

Co-founder of Hunting with Heroes Dan Currah said that this was the first year the organization was in Thermopolis. "Hunting with Heroes was established in 2013 and has provided hunts for veterans in the Casper region for the last three years."

Jim Collins, Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation board member and past president was instrumental in bringing Hunting with Heroes to Thermopolis. Collins recruited volunteer guides, obtained permission for access on private land, and helped secure local donations that included everything from lunch to hotel rooms for the veterans. The Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation also donated money to Hunting with Heroes to support hunts in Wyoming that will even include two bighorn sheep hunts this fall. "Special thanks go out to the community sponsors and conservation organizations that helped make this happen," Collins said. Sponsors included Briess Malt & Ingredients, Herring Taxidermy, Hot Springs State Park Days Inn, Lynn Steward Taxidermy, Reese & Ray's IGA, Thermopolis Gun Club, Thermopolis VFW Legion Post, Wind River Processing, Wedding of the Waters Pheasants Forever Chapter and Wyoming Whiskey.



**Guile validates his license after harvest.**

## On the ground

### In the field with Game and Fish

South Cody Game Warden Grant Gerharter spent much of September in the field patrolling and contacting hunters and outfitters.



Gerharter checked these Area 4 bighorn sheep hunters south of the Thorofare Buttes.

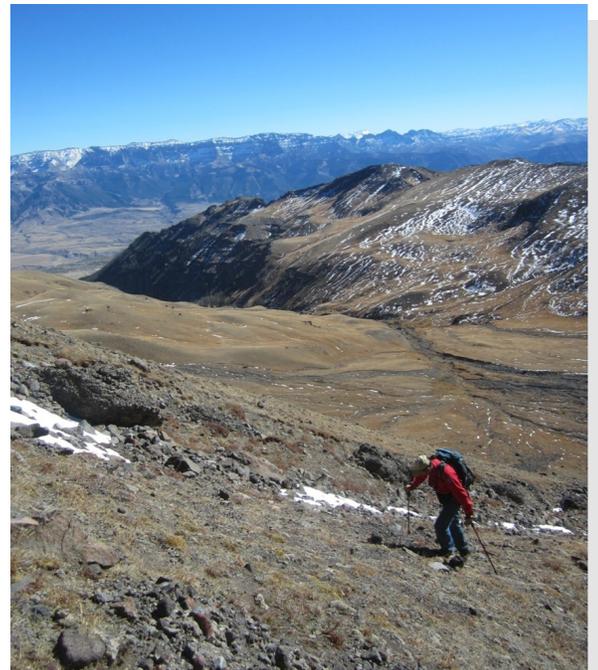


Above: Elk hunters Gerharter contacted in the Thorofare.

Below: Biologist Doug McWhirter and Gerharter retrieve a bighorn sheep collar in Bobcat Creek.



Gerharter snapped this shot as he was coming over Deer Creek Pass



### In the right place at the right time

Hunting season is upon us and this is the time of year when Game and Fish personnel spend a significant amount of time in the field. Although their primary job is to enforce hunting laws and collect biological data, often they happen to be at the right place at the right time to provide hunters with some much needed assistance. Last month for example, North Cody Game Warden Travis Crane came upon the individual who was lying in the middle of the road that was involved in an ATV accident on the Monument Hill Road. Crane was able to contact the Sheriff's Department and medical personnel were dispatched to the area. The individual was transported by a life flight helicopter to Billings, MT.

While patrolling the Greybull River area, Warden Coordinator Scott Werbelow contacted two hunters who had just harvested an elk. After speaking to the individuals, Werbelow learned that one of the hunters had seriously cut himself while field dressing the animal and was in need of medical attention. Werbelow was able to assist by transporting the hunter to the nearest medical facility.

## In the water

### Biologists build beaver dam analogs



**Above: Aquatic Habitat Biologist Laura Burckhardt and Biologist Technician Juliann Terry construct a beaver dam analog.**

**Left: BLM Range Management Specialist Adam Stephens constructs a beaver dam analog in Eaglenest Creek.**

Last month, biologists partnered with The Nature Conservancy, the Bureau of Land Management and Wyoming Disabled Hunters to install beaver dam analogs on Heart Mountain Ranch east of Cody. These man-made dams are designed to mimic beaver dams with the objective of raising the water table and slowing water flow around creek bends to reduce erosion. Beaver dam analogs are constructed by driving posts in a line across a creek, then weaving willow branches through the posts. Long-term objectives of the project are to establish willows and cottonwoods which will be more feasible with a raised water table, so that the creek is suitable to support beavers.

## Sampling the North Fork drainage



**Above: A grizzly bear the fisheries crew briefly encountered while sampling Sweetwater Creek.**

**Left: Fisheries Biologist Jason Burckhardt and Fisheries Technicians Jake Scoville and Riley Gallagher process genetic samples after electrofishing.**

Recently fisheries biologists with the Game and Fish collected genetic material from trout in tributaries of the North Fork of the Shoshone River to determine where non-hybridized Yellowstone Cutthroat trout might still persist. During the first two weeks of September, all major tributaries to the North Fork were sampled using backpack electrofishing. Cody Region Fisheries Biologist Jason Burckhardt said that the objective of the study is to determine the extent of Yellowstone cutthroat trout and rainbow trout hybridization within the North Fork drainage and evaluate the relationship between hybridization in tributary populations and environmental variables such as water temperature, discharge and slope.

## Of interest

### Mud creates a sticky situation for access

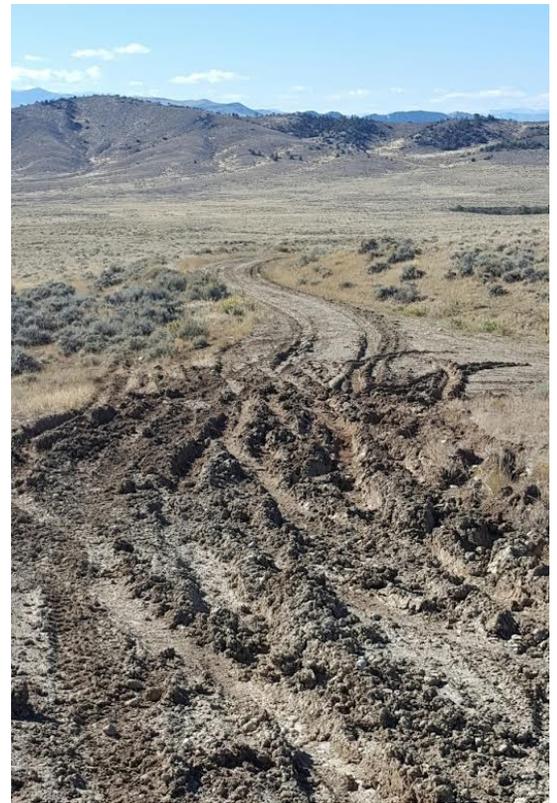
Hunters are reminded to be respectful and avoid driving on muddy roads when hunting on property enrolled in the Access YES program. “It’s important to remember that Hunter Management Areas and other Access YES properties are private property, and permission to hunt can be discontinued at any time if hunters abuse the privilege of access,” said Access Coordinator Dan Smith.

“One of the biggest complaints from landowners enrolled in the program this fall has been torn up roads and deep ruts caused by hunters who constantly drive around on muddy roads,” Smith said. “When roads are damaged during muddy periods, the landowner has to repair them, or live with the damage. Repairs can be costly and time consuming.”

“Defining a muddy road is difficult, but with a little common sense, you can make the determination if it is too muddy to drive on,” said Smith. “If the road is too muddy, wait for another day to hunt.”



Road damage on the Absaroka Front HMA south of Meeteetse.



Road damage on private land enrolled in the Greybull River HMA south of Cody.

### Game and Fish promote safety with bear spray giveaway



Joe Kondelis president of Yellowstone Country Bear Hunters Association hands a can of bear spray to a hunter.



Bear Wise Community Coordinator Dusty Lasseter surveys hunters waiting in line for a free can of bear spray.

In cooperation with Bowhunters of Wyoming, Wyoming Outdoorsmen, and Yellowstone Country Bear Hunters Association, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department distributed bear spray to hunters at no cost on Sept. 20.

Dusty Lasseter, bear wise community coordinator for Game and Fish said that 100 cans of bear spray were given away to hunters who possessed a current Wyoming hunting or fishing license on a first come, first serve basis. The bear spray was purchased with monetary donations from Bowhunters of Wyoming, Wyoming Outdoorsmen, and Yellowstone Country Bear Hunters Association.

“Bear spray is an effective deterrent in an aggressive bear encounter and we hope this effort raised awareness and reminded those hunting in bear country to be prepared and stay safe,” Lasseter said. “This was a prime example of Wyoming sportsmen stepping up to increase awareness and safety in bear country.”