



BIG GAME FEATURE

Soon after joining GSCO, **Stephen Boyer** (AR) sent us this great report entitled “Calling for the Rutting Moose: Up Close and Personal.” We’ll let Stephen take it from here:

*After researching Alberta outfitters, I decided to sign up with **Ghost River Outfitters** in the Little Smoky River area. I found that they provide professional, personalized guided hunts. Their outfitter facilities are located northwest of Edmonton and southeast of Grande Prairie and bounded by the Little Smoky River for excellent moose habitat.*

*On September 29, 2012, I landed in Edmonton. Since it was a late evening arrival, I stayed the evening at one of the local hotels on the west end of Edmonton. As planned earlier with **Dan Moore**, my guide and outfitter, he informed me that his son, Travis would be picking me up at my hotel around 8 a.m. When we arrived in Little Smoky, Dan’s wife, Danielle, was preparing lunch for everyone including Ken, another moose hunter from Wetaskiwin, Alberta.*

Ken and Dan had been hunting the past two days and had seen where the moose had been traveling near the rivers in the area. To my welcome surprise, Dan informed me that Ken would be hunting from a well-traveled ground stand this afternoon and we would head out for Bull Ridge near the Little Smoky River. Dan stated he was going to try to have me in the field as much as possible since the rut was in full swing.

After lunch, Dan, Ken, and I drove approximately 25 minutes to drop off Ken at the ground stand where there were several rubs and numerous tracks. Dan then took me to private land near the Little Smoky River where he had permission to hunt. During the next hour, we traveled several trails and ridgelines. It was not long before we started to see massive bull moose tracks and rubs. Dan told me we were headed for Bull Ridge, which had received its name due to his encounter with several large bulls over the years.

As we entered into the Bull Ridge area, Dan kept pointing out to me all the fresh moose sign. When we came to the top of Bull Ridge, Dan was approximately ten yards in front of me and was waving to me to come forward quickly. I bent over and tried not to make too much noise as I moved forward rapidly toward Dan, as

he was slightly bent over also.

When I reached Dan, I could not believe my eyes. I was facing straight ahead at a huge bull moose at approximately 25 yards. The top of his back was seven feet tall. I distinctly remember seeing his antlers and palms. The bull moose was looking directly at me and not moving. Dan then whispered in my ear to get ready. He started calling the bull and racking the bushes in front of us. The bull kept looking straight at me as I carefully raised my .340 Weatherby .Mag on my monopod Primos Trigger Stick I purchased at Cabela’s during the grand opening of their Rogers, Arkansas store. After Dan finished calling and racking the bushes, he quietly told me that the bull would be moving toward us shortly and to be ready. I could not believe this hunt was happening so fast.

*As the large bull moved, I saw a second smaller bull and cow within 25 yards. As Dan expected, the larger bull moved up toward us within 18 yards of where we were standing. This was truly an “up close and personal” significant emotional hunting event of my lifetime, especially with an animal that was towering over me. I remember watching this kind of an encounter with a moose happen on a bow hunting show on TV while sitting in my recliner at home. Now, I was witnessing it first-hand. [Editor’s Note: Was that a **Tom Miranda** show, Stephen?]*

Since I did not want to shoot this magnificent bull in the head, I decided to wait until I had either a broadside or quartering shot at the bull. Dan kept racking the bushes. As the bull started to move toward us, he moved around a large tree on the top of the ridge where we were standing. As I looked through my scope, I saw the bull’s massive paddles coming toward us. Dan stated quietly, “Let me know when you are going to shoot.” No sooner did he get those words out of his mouth, the bull turned broadside and I shot. Immediately, the bull dropped in its tracks. I was overwhelmed with excitement and immediately apologized to Dan for shooting so fast. I told him that as he was talking, the bull gave me an excellent position to take the shot.

As I looked at this massive fallen bull moose, I could not believe how these events happened on the first day and first hour of my hunt. After hugging Dan, I just stopped to take in this whole expe-



Stephen Boyer (AR) took this Canada moose on the first day of his September 2012 hunt. He hunted with Dan Moore of Ghost River Outfitters.

