



Alberta has a long history of outfitting, ranging back to the early 1900's when guiding trips began in the eastern slopes of the Canadian Rockies.

Today the industry has over 446 licensed big game and bird-game Outfitter-Guides and 1500 licensed Guides in Alberta. An Outfitter-Guide is the holder of an Outfitter-Guide Permit, and in the case of a Big Game Outfitter-Guide Permit, enables the corporation or individual to contract hunts with non-resident and non-resident aliens through a regulated allocation system. In the case of bird game, there is waterfowl privilege system, allowing the Bird Game Outfitter-Guide to contract hunts throughout the province to residents, non-residents or non-resident aliens. Every outfitter is required to carry a \$5,000,000 comprehensive liability insurance policy and a \$10,000 deposit indemnity bond.

Outfitting is an important component of Alberta's tourism opportunities, providing tourist income during off-peak tourist seasons and to parts of Alberta that normally receive fewer tourism benefits. Outfitted hunting in Alberta generated an estimated \$118 million of economic activity province wide in 2001. The economic impact of the industry's sustainable expenditures is estimated to exceed \$63.1 million annually. Collectively, the outfitters, the Society and tourist clients spent over \$54.1 million on food, accommodation, travel, utilities and insurance in Alberta in 2001.

Through regulation, all licensed Outfitter Guides must be a member of the Alberta Professional Outfitters Society (APOS). This organization has two mandates; the first is to fulfill the duties, functions and responsibilities of its delegated regulation, as directed by the Alberta Government. The second is to provide leadership and direction in the continued development of Alberta's outfitted-hunting industry, as a member driven organization.

APOS has established a Legacy Fund as a way for Alberta's outfitted-hunting industry to play a significant role in *reinvesting* back into wildlife conservation initiatives. This reinvestment is crucial in the long-term viability of game populations in Alberta. To date, APOS has distributed over \$530,000 to over 73 projects province-wide. Project examples include:

Alberta Conservation Association Elk
Planning

Alberta Fish & Game Association

Alberta Conservation Association

A Wildlife Management Fund was established in 2003 from annual outfitters reconfirmation fees, resulting in \$1.2 million. Those funds have been used for aerial surveys and research projects.

APOS has a strong disciplinary mandate to manage the outfitted-hunting industry. Members are required to adhere to a comprehensive code of ethics.

It is illegal for **anyone** (resident hunters and outfitters) to pay for access to hunt on private land.

APOS is a member of the Alberta Conservation Association, the Alberta Access Coalition and the Canadian Federation of Outfitters Association.

APOS GRiP Program—The Alberta Professional Outfitters Society has initiated the GRiP program which encourages Licensed Guides to report suspected violations of Alberta's wildlife, fish and habitat regulations. This program is delivered in cooperation with the [Report A Poacher](#) Program (RAP); The Alberta Conservation Association and The Fish and Wildlife Division. Since its inception, GRiP has paid rewards totaling \$8000.

The table below is a comparison between non-resident and resident license sales as well as harvest data for 2007. (Information supplied by Alberta Sustainable Resource Development). (**Includes Big Game antlered species only, except for bear and cougar.*)

Frequently Asked Questions (From the APOS Website):

Can outfitters pay landowners for exclusive access to private land?

Paid access (leasing) is a common practice in many countries. In Alberta, this process is illegal. Within our province, we believe that hunting should be accessible by all people – regardless of their financial status. No one is allowed to pay a landowner for access – nor is a landowner allowed to solicit for access.

2. How are the numbers of Non Resident (NR) and NonResident Alien (NRA) hunters controlled?

The Outfitter/Guide Policy is designed to balance our privilege to hunt abroad by providing NR and NRA limited opportunities here. This policy (evaluated every 5 years) takes into consideration wildlife populations, resident demand, outfitter success, and several other factors. It varies by species and area. Averaged over the last 10 years, slightly under 90% of all hunters in Alberta are residents – the remainder NR and NRAs.

3. What impact does outfitted hunting have on resident hunting opportunities?

The Outfitter Guide Policy, which is reviewed every five years, is designed to provide a balance between resident and NR/NRA hunting opportunities. The policy considers resident demand, population estimates, harvest rates, draw success, etc., and generates an allowable NR/NRA harvest as a percentage of the allowable resident harvest. Where resident opportunities are very restricted (such as goats & turkey), there is no outfitted hunting. For species where residents are on a limited draw entry (ie. mule deer), NR/NRA may be allocated a small percentage (3-5%). For species like black bears, where the harvest goal is not achieved by resident hunters, a greater percentage is allocated to the outfitting industry.

5. What issues are currently before the outfitting industry?

The biggest concern is always the health of our wildlife and environment. Disease, industrial land use, and unsound wildlife management practices can jeopardize nature. Secondly, there are issues regarding access to the resource. Thirdly, anything that creates undue hardships for traveling clients is also a concern.

6. How do Albertans benefit from the outfitting industry?

Wildlife is a renewable resource – much like timber, grain or cattle. Proper management requires a carefully planned harvest, and offering a limited number of opportunities for non-Albertans is more than simply neighborly. The outfitted hunting industry generates over \$100 million of economic activity, and over 1500 people owe their permanent jobs to the operational expenditures of outfitters. Most importantly, our “open door” policy is reciprocated to all Albertans who wish to enjoy hunting opportunities in other jurisdictions.

Alberta Professional Outfitters

Society

(APOS)

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