

# HUNTER EDUCATION QUARTERLY

California Department of Fish And Wildlife

Fall 2015, V.18 No. 3

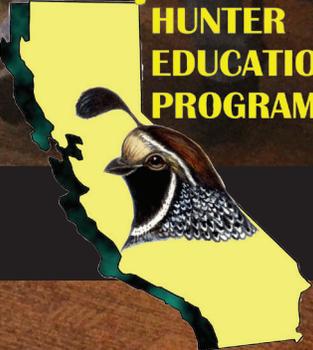
Sneak a Peek!  
2016 Conference Dates!

SQUAW VALLEY  
PICTURES



**California**  
HUNTER  
EDUCATION  
PROGRAM

2015 Hunter Education Conference  
SQUAW VALLEY, CA



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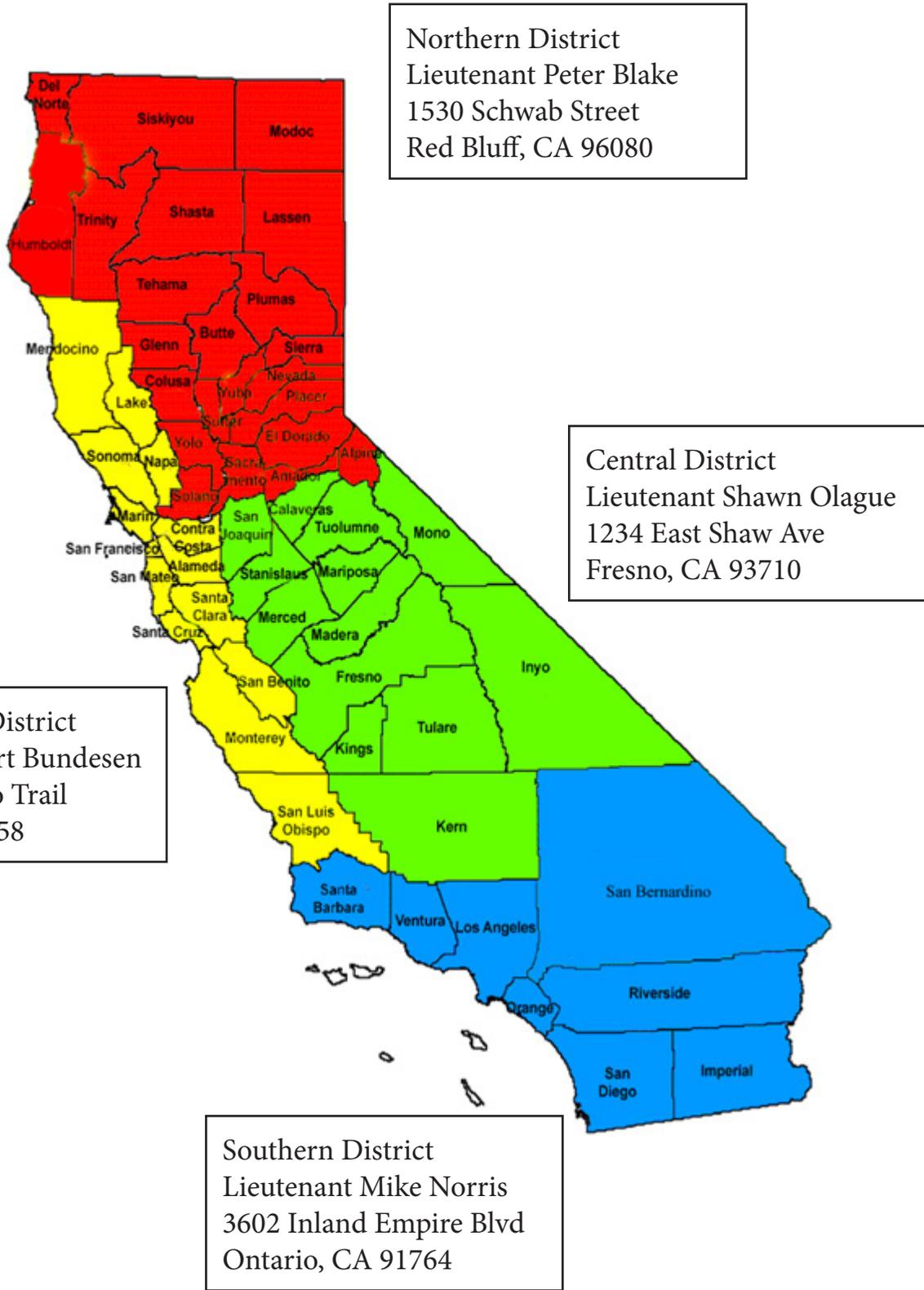
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# HUNTER EDUCATION DISTRICT MAP



# Robert Pelzman



My son, Colby with a grouse on his 5th birthday hunting trip

It's November 3, 2015 and our new event manager program Register Ed is up and running. Go to the Hunter Education webpage (<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunter-Education>) and have a look. Select a link for a class after January 1, 2016 and you'll see how students will get their information in Register Ed. Additional class posting will soon be added by staff and before you know it you'll be trained and managing your own events / classes. It's user-friendly and very adaptable. Without any training, Lt Gregory created a dozen Advanced Hunter Education classes in about 15 minutes. Obviously, more information and training will follow in the months ahead including in person training at the District Conferences and computer based training by email. Please make sure your Samaritan account is up to date with your current email address.

Also, you may have noticed the URL or web address for Hunter Education webpages have been changed from "dfg.ca.gov" to "wildlife.ca.gov". This change was part of a Department wide update that allows for improved usability and performance on smartphones and other mobile devices. Links with the older URL should automatically redirect to the current wildlife.ca.gov page.

No deer for me this year, but I did manage to spend some quality time in the woods with my son and daughter. We managed to get some grouse, quail, and squirrels.

Thanks for all you do,

Robert

## Legal or not?

Hypothetically, if the deer pictured was taken within the hunt boundary and season by a J-17 tag holder – would it be legal? It appears there is no tag attached; for the sake of discussion, let's assume the deer is tagged.

What are the relevant laws or regulations? Check the next Quarterly for the answer to see if you are correct.



# Peter Blake

Many of you have questioned what is going on with the Hunter Ed. program over the past couple of years? Furthermore some of you have even questioned your continued involvement or even made the decision to leave the Hunter Ed. family. There are many reasons for this ever-growing attitude but I have observed one common theme amongst all the criticism is, "change". The Hunter Ed. program is definitely in a period of change. I can tell you all the changes, past, present and future, are with the best of intentions. Unfortunately the reality is the road has been bumpy and not without our fair share of setbacks.

One of the biggest issues is the perception of a lack of confidence in the current direction of the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Recent laws that have been passed, political policies which have affected the hunting community and decisions made by the State Fish and Game Commission have been the source of much worry and discussion. Despite how we may personally disagree with what is going on in the political climate here in California, it is where we all live and work. I would ask all of you, where would we be if it wasn't for your hard work and dedication to the preservation of the hunting heritage through your involvement with the Hunter Ed. program? It doesn't take much imagination to see where we could be.

Another big hurdle has been your Hunter Ed. administrative staff or lack thereof. Four of our nine staff members have left leaving some gigantic holes in the support system utilized by all you instructors. We all stepped up and have kept the ship from sinking but not without a little inconvenience to all involved. The good news is that by the time you read this all of those posi-

tions will have been filled and we will be 100%. We still have the issue of the learning curve presented to these individuals and I can tell you from personal experience Hunter Ed. presents a very steep curve. The new staff members are nothing less than phenomenal and I have every confidence they will ultimately surpass the service level you are currently accustomed to.

By far the biggest form of discontent presented by instructors is Hunter Ed's recent move towards the computer generation. Now I completely understand that for many of you this is

a completely foreign subject which you have absolutely no interest in. Unfortunately for that group of individuals this is the world we live in today. Hunter Ed. is way behind the times and unfortunately this perceived drastic change is a direct result of the programs reluctance to evolve gradually. The Scan-Tron technology we have been using since the late 60's no longer fulfills the program's needs. To put this into perspective, I wasn't even alive in the 60's and frankly I'm not all that young. Last year out of the 32,000 student



Scan-Tron's submitted by all the instructors, half had to be manually entered, creating a backlog and ultimate stop of information being entered into the department's automated license and data system. This is a huge disservice to our hunting constituents and completely unacceptable. The good news is that once we all get over the initial shock of, "change" and accept the new technology being presented, your lives as Hunter Ed. Instructors should become easier. Now granted, there will be some bumps in the road and potential

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setbacks but if you are open-minded, a little patient and dedicate yourself to embracing a little change I think you will see this is the direction we need to be going as a program.

As to whether or not you personally choose to embrace all the changes we are currently facing or to allow yourself to be eaten up by attrition is a question only you can answer. I will tell you that without you, the individual Hunter Ed. Instructor continuing to do what you do; there is no future for hunting. I am fully dedicated to the continuance of our hunting heritage

and pledge to help and assist you in any way I can.

To the vast majority of you who continue to go forward and fight the good fight I personally thank you for all that you do!!!! Unfortunately this year will be my first year since joining the Hunter Ed. family I will see the Northern District Instructor Roster fail to grow. Not only did we not grow but we are losing over 20% of the 350 instructors we had at the beginning of 2015.



## ISE Sacramento 2016

**WHAT:** 29th Annual Sacramento International Sportsmen's Exposition (ISE)  
**ONLINE:** SportsExpos.com and Facebook.com/SportsExpos  
**WHEN:** January 21 – 24, 2016  
**HOURS:** Thurs & Fri-11a-8p; Sat-10a-7p; Sun-10a-5p  
**WHERE:** Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95815

If you are interested in helping out at the Hunter Education booth and enjoying one of the best outdoor shows around please contact:

HEI Bill Adams  
916-599-3794  
buffaloadams40@sbcglobal.net

Or

Lt. Peter J. Blake  
Northern District HE Coordinator  
530-865-7972  
Peter.blake@wildlife.ca.gov

This opportunity is open to all HE Instructors and is not limited to just those in the Northern District.

# Bart Bundesen

Hopefully the fall hunting seasons are treating everyone well. I know my A zone season is a thing of the past and not a very successful one at that. I saw a lot of bucks pre-season, but the consensus is they “brushed up” even heavier this year once the season started. In my area they also moved on to greener pastures as there wasn’t much feed left due to the drought.

From the Coordinators view this was a pretty successful class season. I say that now as many of our instructors are enjoying their hunting time, fall football season and other activities. A few of you continue to beat the drum and have them banging at the door for November/December courses. Leading up to now I can judge a lot based on the call volume in my office. Very few calls this year from folks who couldn’t find courses, and usually when I had a call the student had simply overlooked available classes on the schedule.

Another thing I’m proud of is the response to yearly training by NCD Instructors. We threw you a curveball this year with a statewide confer-

ence and no satellites. In the end you came through and as it sits the number of HEI’s we will lose this year for not completing yearly training appears to be general attrition. I added about enough new instructors to replace the ones who have moved on.

Reminder next year’s conference is Saturday, March 12th. As I write this I’m moving forward in the process attempting to secure the Marin Rod and Gun Club as the location. I think all who attend will find the location and stunning views a treat.



There will be two satellite conferences in the North Coast District, but I won’t be planning dates and locations until after press time. Notifications will come via

email and the next Quarterly.

I don’t always take the time to address new instructor individually in these correspondences but I think it’s important to encourage them to attend main conferences or satellites. Take the time to join us and I think you will find it a pleasurable experience. If you are a new instructor sitting around waiting to teach your first class or unattached to a team, get back in touch with me. We have many HEI’s willing and waiting to help you get started.

I’d be remiss if I didn’t finish up by addressing the new Event Management system. NCD HEI’s were on the ball on this one. We started our soft roll out with general information and time lines and you folks were ten steps ahead wanting to log onto the system and get started. A district full of driven instructors’ kudos! There is plenty of information coming and I am here to guide you, but you need to reach out to me.

The changes haven’t been free of complaints and skepticism. Event Manger is not as big of a change as some think. It is very adaptable to almost all instructor preferences. It does not distance you from the students; it does not take away from the older school traditions of Hunter Education. It can, if that’s what the instructor

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wants, but that is not what it is meant to do. When the system is taken advantage of it will free up your time to do what you love, teach students.

I have had hour long conversations with instructors easing their minds and presenting options of how to adapt their system with Event Manager. I cannot reiterate enough that I'm here willing and waiting to help if need be. The Hunter Ed team will be doing the bulk of the work until you receive formal training at next year's conferences, but if you want to get a jump get ahold of me now.

I'll close the Event Manager subject with my worries. I'm afraid it will be too easy to post and plan classes. The system is simple, and I'm afraid instructors in their enthusiasm will post more classes than they can follow through with. Either way I don't think it at all will change the bedrock of what makes California Hunter Education special.

As always thank you for all that you do! My door is always open and if you need anything I'm only a phone call or email away: (415) 892-0073 or [bart.bundesen@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:bart.bundesen@wildlife.ca.gov)

Now go out and enjoy some time in the blind or field.

## ***2ND ANNUAL CHEIA TRAIN THE TRAINER RENDEZVOUS***

Join CHEIA on March 18th and 19th 2016 at the Nevada County Sportsman's Club. All Instructors are welcome as we offer various teaching techniques ranging from Ethics in the Classroom to Technology. Last year space filled quickly, so enroll early. We plan to have a potluck dinner Friday night and will provide breakfast and lunch on Saturday.

The Nevada County Sportsman Club is located in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in Nevada City. It offers rifle, shotgun and Archery and we will be incorporating this into our training.

This is an opportunity to learn new techniques or brush up on your existing skills. We welcome all instructors regardless of your tenure. It also allows instructors to meet from other areas,

Price is to be determined, if you have any questions please contact Scott Mc Intyre [huntin-scott@gmail.com](mailto:huntin-scott@gmail.com) (916)812-3508 or Bill Adams [buffaloadams40@sbcglobal.net](mailto:buffaloadams40@sbcglobal.net) (530)622-3794.

# Shawn Olague



**“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new”  
-Socrates**

**H**opefully this quote is a bit of encouragement to those of you who may have doubts and a little resentment with our new direction. We are actually trying to give you a little more power and control to make your class posting and record keeping easier to do. We may have some aches and pains, but we will carry on.

Our 2016 main training conference will be held on April 9 at the Los Banos Sportsmen’s in Los Banos. There will be an optional fun day on the 8th with some shooting and Dutch oven cooking opportunities available. I would also like to have a rummage sale that will allow you guys to get rid of some old hunting and fishing equipment you may not be using anymore. If you have some stuff, bring a table and set up shop. Who better for this stuff to go to than your fellow hunter education instructors?

I am writing this before going on my first hunting excursion in the state of Utah. I will be accompanying Roy on a much anticipated Elk hunt. He is calling it “Elkapalooza” and is

expecting it to be “Epic!” Knowing Roy, I am sure it will be a memorable event and he will have some pictures to show and stories to tell.

As some of you are winding own your class opportunities for the year, remember if any money is charged on the student you must turn in an Income and Expense statement. They are due January 31st of every year, but I will take them early if you are done with 2015 classes. I have already received several. Thanks.

I just had my first two duck hunting days and have shared them with my son and a long-time friend. This is truly my most favorite time of year. I hope you too are also having some opportunities in the field with friends and family. You are continuing to make opportunities possible with your great service. Thank you and Happy Holidays.

I hope to see a few of you at the duck club this year. I am trying not to schedule too many things on a shoot day. If you get the call, I hope you can make it.

# Mike Norris

You've heard that before. Although it seems pulled from one of those 1990s-era inspirational corporate-speak posters that were all the rage, it dates back to when the earth had just cooled off, from a wise old guy named Heraclitus.

But it sounds like something one of those motivational speakers The Company brings in to placate cube dwellers, agitated over being force-fed yet another change for change sake.

While I don't often dwell in a cube, when I do, I don't prefer change—nor do you. Yet while we can't always get what we want, if we try sometimes, we get what we need and while I hope we won't get fooled again, we've got to turn and face the change.

Why am I stringing together pop clichés? Because a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.

(I know, I know—Mary Poppins, really? Sorry, I couldn't help myself.)

But it's true. If I have got you to smile along thus far, you are more likely to take the medicine that follows. Change is (yet again) coming at us, this time in the form of (another) software package meant to make your lives easier.

Event Manager is here and it truly is a better mouse trap—no more Scantrons for you to collect and mail;

no more delays in posting or changing your class schedules; on-line class registration for the student, real-time access to upcoming class rosters for HEIs; automatic, electronic reporting of HE Certificate numbers into the DFW licensing system, and more.

But predictably and understandably, HEI howls were heard from Weed to Winterhaven, so I thought it worth reprinting a portion of my response to several instructors

in my district alarmed at the prospect of letting go of old the old ways:

**The reality is that the Internet is here to stay and will continue to play a larger and larger role in society. As you know, the Internet is how bills are paid, bank statements are viewed, investment accounts are managed, student grades are reported, and, yes, how Hunter Education data will be handled. (Cont. Pg. 11)**



**“Change is the only constant.”**

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This change will be like going from a musket to a .270 wsm— data will fly faster and straighter, and the gun—the HE system—will be cleaner and easier to maintain.

Take, for instance, the Scantron Forms used by Hunter Education: unless each and every mark is placed correctly by the student/HEI within the bubbles, the data being sought will not be read by the scanning machine because they are obsolete and increasingly hard to maintain in working condition. As a consequence, each and every form that comes into Sacramento from HEIs statewide has to be looked over by someone prior to being fed into the scanner—last year more than 30,000 students took HE.

On-line registration can eliminate the Scantron forms used by those 30,000+ students and the 900+ HEIs each year (that's a lot of forms!), resulting in quicker, easier, and more accurate processing of information. That is just one benefit of going to a system such as Event Manager.

“But not everyone can use the Internet...people won't be able to register!”

I can tell you that for several years now, individual HEIs throughout the state have been using their own on-line registration mechanisms without issue and report great success. My neighbor, HEI Brian Haack, with help from a HEI group in the Bay Area, designed his own Google-based registration system for his monthly class—it works so well it was promptly copied by a neighboring group of HEIs teaching at the Compton Hunt-

ing & Fishing Club.

And they can keep on using their systems.

One option HEIs will have is to include a note to prospective students. This could include payment instructions (“Bring \$10 to the first class” or a link to the HEI's supplemental website where they can pay) or a requirement that they communicate by phone/email with the HEI prior to the class. In this way, HEIs can have the personal contact many wish to establish prior to class.

Also regarding the loss of “old school” ways of doing things—at your next class, ask for a show of hands from those who learned of the class thru the Internet vs. other means. I have asked this question repeatedly at both large (Bass Pro) and small (Lakewood Masonic Lodge) classes and 90%+ say they found the class on the Internet, at the DFW schedule of classes. Flyers in local newspapers, at gun clubs, sporting goods stores, and country markets are great and encouraged—they just aren't as effective.

HEIs will of course be provided instructions prior to the system being implemented, and the designers of the system will conduct live training for HEIs at the regional training conferences—ours will be Feb. 27, in Ventura.

Us old guys have found ourselves living in a Brave New World, and for many of us it's disconcerting. But, like going to sea, in time most everyone gets used to the floor moving all the time and I know you old salts can do the same.

Myself and the other Coordi-

nators are here to answer questions and help with this transition, email or call and we'll help you out.

In closing, I urge you to take heart and hang in there. My dad was a small businessman and had a sign, in Latin, posted in his little office. I always wondered what it meant and so many years after his passing I used the Internet to translate for me--*Illegitimi non carborundum*.

OK, still with me? Good, 'cause here's one of those are-you-reading-this quiz opportunities.

The first five HEIs who email the names, in order, of the singer/group responsible for each of the songs I referenced, and what that Latin nugget means, will be sent a semi-fantastic Hunter Ed goodie. Good luck!

# Alan Gregory

Well, Fall has officially arrived and it seems that every day I am getting some sort of trophy picture of a successful hunt. There have been pigs, deer, elk, quail, and, grouse pictures sent to me. I love it, keep them coming. I would really like to add more pictures to my articles. One piece of advice, if you send in a picture of an animal that requires a tag, please take a picture with the tag attached to the animal in the legally required way. We can't print pictures that do not meet this requirement. If you did this, don't feel bad. I am guilty of this as well with a buck I shot in Nevada in September. Although hunting, especially successful hunting can be a bloody and messy undertaking, pictures showing open body cavities and the infamous deer tongue hanging out might not be used. Our goal is to respect the animal and non-hunting folks.

The 2015 Advanced Hunter Education Clinics are winding down as there is only two left

for this year, Wilderness First Aid in Yolo County and Waterfowl at Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. There are still some spots left in both clinics. If you would like to attend one of the clinics, send me a registration form. As stated in my last article, I am looking to bring back the cooking and hunter marksmanship classes and also bringing some new classes to the table with Extended Hunt Planning and Intro into Horseback Hunting. I am also going to have a Basic Game Processing clinic where we'll delve into the art of in-home processing of your harvest. Processing your game at home can be an intimidating venture for the hunter, but with a few inexpensive tools you can take that deer or pig and turn it into useable portions and package it for later use. It will be a full hands-on class. We plan to cover equipment, to age or not to age, packaging philosophy, storage, and more.

Again, I want to thank all the instructors that have assisted me in my first year with the Advanced Hunter Education clinics. It would be near impossible or impossible for me to do this on my own. As you all plan for your fall adventures, take stock that we still have quality opportunities in this state and country to pursue our passion for the outdoors. Good luck.



# Our Grizzly Island Cow Elk Hunt

By: Lorrie Ambrosino

September 2015



Just another day in July. Decided to check on line with the Department of Fish & Wildlife to see if we were drawn for the Elk or Antelope hunts that we applied for. I entered my information. Up came the screen for Grizzly Island Cow Elk Period 5. As I checked down the "Successful" column, I fully expected to see what I always see....."successful - NO". Much to my amazement, there was a YES in that column. Oh my God! I am jumping up and down. Totally got the attention of my 2 Black Labs that were quietly laying next to my desk chair. I immediately put in Johnny's information. Knowing good and well, there was no way we both would be drawn for this hunt. Well, I nearly brought the house down. Johnny was drawn as well. Now the dogs are up and wondering whether to run or just hang out to see what happens next! I printed out the "Congratulations" letters and ran out the door to find Johnny. 2 Labs right behind me. You can imagine the excitement for both of us. We have been putting in for this hunt since before the lottery began. Finally, here is our hunt of a lifetime and we get to do it together.

My first emails were to Lt. Bart Bundesen, Capt. Roy Griffith, Capt. Robert Pelzman and our former Lt. James Kasper. Lots to do. Lots of planning. September will be here before we know it. We would each be allowed to take a non-hunting partner with us. In fact, it is advised that you do have a partner with you. We phoned our son, Michael Ambrosino, who is a Captain at the Patterson Fire Department. Asked him if he wanted to go Elk hunting. Wow! He said yes right away. Wanted the dates so he could put in for that time off. Next, we told our daughter, Terri Perry. When we told her we could have a non-hunting bud-die with us, she immediately threw her hands into the air and yells out..."ME! ME! I want to go!". So it came

to be. This was going to be a family affair. Our son-in-law, Michael Perry, offered to haul their Fun Runner trailer up to Grizzly Island for us to stay in instead of tent camping. Wow! We were going first class!

In the weeks to follow, Johnny and I were busy finding the non-lead ammo that we needed for this hunt. Dom's Outdoor Outfitters in Livermore had exactly what we needed. We took our 30.06 rifles up to the Livermore-Pleasanton Rod & Gun Club rifle range and made sure we were sighted in with the new ammo. Terry Ludlow and Ed Schultz gave us a ton of pointers. We are sighted in for 100 yards. They gave us all the ballistic info we would need to allow for closer or longer shots. I embedded this information into my brain.

Lt. Bart gave me the names of a couple of gentlemen up on Grizzly Island that I could phone and get whatever information we would need. These folks on Grizzly are so helpful. I talked to Orlando Rocha. He told us we could drive up and do some scouting around the island to get familiar where everything was. We had to do this before they close the Island to the public for the early period hunts. So, Johnny, Terri and I took a day and drove up to the Island. We drove all over where we were allowed and kind of got a feel for everything. They had assured me that the day before our hunt, there would be signs directing us to the "Elk Pen" area. Which are not really pens at all, but a staging and camping area. We did not see any elk that day. However, looking back on it now, they were there. We just didn't realize how far away they would be and we just didn't recognize them so far off in the distance. Good binoculars are a must!

Plans made. Lists checked and re-checked. Rifles sighted in. Food packed. Time to head for Grizzly Island. We arrived on Monday, September 14th, the day before opening day of Period 5. Mike got the trailer all set up and then left for home. Our son Mike, could not come up until Tuesday afternoon. He had a job promotion interview he had to attend. We had made arrangements for him to check in and get his orientation and pass upon arrival.

There were 8 cow elk hunters and partners. We had to attend a mandatory orientation that evening. Orlando, Pat Graham and Fish & Wildlife Warden Jesse Kizer, presented a really interesting orientation and answered everyone's questions. Firearms and ammunition were checked by Warden Kizer. They handed out blaze orange vests that we were to either wear or tie onto our backpacks. We walked over to the staging area, which included a livestock scale, two excavators with bucket loaders and 4 hoist set ups for skinning and dressing. Plus a water trailer for washing off carcasses and whatever.

We were up before dawn on Tuesday morning. (During the night we were serenaded by a group of coyotes). Downed some Cherrios, gathered our peanut butter sandwiches and waters, binoculars, rifles and my tripod shooting sticks. Out the door and on our way. We decided to hike to Field 13 & 14. The wind blew that day like crazy. One good thing about the wind, no mosquitoes! We hiked and hiked. We saw plenty of elk. Groups of cows and spikes. Scattered bulls. This was a day of learning. Believe me. They are out there, but getting close to them is another story. They are very wise. The rut was going on. If you were hunting bulls, your task would be a little easier. They had their minds on other things. We never tried to sneak up close to them because our tags were for cows. One beautiful bull in particular, Terri named "Landmark". We kept using him as a landmark for where we were. He was big and beautiful for a reason. He was smart. I would be willing to bet that he tops the scales at the top of the Tule Elk bull weight of between 750 and 800 pounds. He looked like a Quarter horse with antlers! The spikes would be all over and kind of spread out here and there. The cows have a tendency to stay grouped together and get into huddles. Which, does not make for an easy shot. We did a lot of sneaking and getting in as close as we could. We tried to stay down wind of the groups, but that is not always an easy thing to do with the wind blowing as hard as it was that day. We finally made our way back to camp after stopping to eat our PJ sandwiches. Johnny measured our walk-about on the map that they gave to us. We had walked over 6 and ½ miles. Did we learn anything? Yes we did. We kind of got the idea of what their behaviors are. We knew what we had to do different on the next day's hunt.

If I remember right there were 4 cows taken on Tuesday. What is really nice, once you have harvested your elk, you call into headquarters. Orlando and a wildlife technician come out on an ATV's and trailer. By then, you will have taken your photos and filled out your tag. We were instructed to roll the tag and put it into the cows ear. Wrap the ear around the tag and tie it securely. They wench the animal up onto the trailer and head back to the

elk pen area. They prefer that you do not field dress in the field unless absolutely necessary. They want to weigh the elk fully intact. They have the most complete records anywhere for what they call “live weight”. The elk are weighed. Measurements are taken of a hind hoof, hind leg, body length nose to tail and around the girth. They extract an incisor tooth which will go to the biology lab for aging. If you want the “ivories” which are the remnants of an ancient canine tooth, they will extract those for you. In the case of bulls and spikes, the antlers are measured. They then drag it over to one of the hoists and you are now on your own to skin, field dress, bone out, whatever.

Mike arrived late in the afternoon. Got him all set up. Had a nice supper, and made plans for the next day. We decided that we need to be out in the field before day light to get situated and have the advantage of darkness to get further into the fields. So, Wednesday we were up at 5:30 am, and out the door by 6:05. We each grabbed a dry bagel, water, our peanut butter sandwiches and I believe Mike had a sandwich bag full of Coco Crispies! Johnny and



Mike began walking the levee road along the slough of Field 13. Terri and I were just across the slough in Field 14. We had our sunrise times noted. (They had given us a sheet of sunrises and sunsets for each day.) Terri and her brother had taken Hunter Education back in 1982. Terri, although a big lover of the out doors, never became a hunter. She did go with us a few times. Mike and his 3 boys all hunt. Terri was an awesome spotter for us. Both her and her brother were into this hunt big time! We were working our way down this levee road when she quietly said, “Mom! Cows!” and we both went down on our knees on the ground. I looked through my binoculars, and sure enough, a group of about 6 or 7 cows. We stalked them for what seemed like forever! They were grazing in this tall wheat kind of coarse grass that was

as tall as us. Whenever they put their heads down to eat, we would get up, stay hunched over, and gain as much ground toward them as we could before going back down to the ground. I had set up my shooting sticks twice. And both times I chose not to take the shot. Was too far or the elk was not in the right position. All I wanted was a clean, one shot kill. I would rather miss than wound one. This was a case of raging emotions. Excitement! Stress! Got to outsmart these animals. We are in their world. If you are playing by the rules, they have every advantage. I finally decided. I have to make this shot work. It’s not going to get any easier. We are not going to be able to get much closer before they know we are here. Johnny had his range finder with him, but my guess I was now looking at at least a 200 yard shot! I set up my sticks again. Kneeling on the damp ground. Terri along side of me watching through her binoculars. I told her that I had the cow in my sights. I was going over in my mind everything Terry and Ed had told me at the gun club. I put my cross hairs on her and the next thing I heard was my rifle going off and Terri yelling “YOU GOT HER! YOU GOT HER! I see blood running down her leg!” I jumped to my feet. I can’t see her in my binoculars. Mike and Johnny were across the slough from us. Mike yells out that he saw blood running down her leg as well. We began heading toward her. We kept counting 6 cows standing. They only ran off a short distance. Johnny was going to try to take a shot at one of them, but they were too bunched together and by now they saw Terri and I, plus Johnny and Mike coming across a “pass-over” bridging the slough between the 2 fields, and they began to move further away. Finally, Terri spotted the cows cream colored rump. They so blend in with the grasses on Grizzly. She had only staggered about 30 feet from where I shot her. I got my clean one shot kill! I was so excited and proud at the same time. She was a beautiful yearling. I checked her teeth. She had her secondary incisors, but still had her baby teeth on each side of them. Terri called headquarters and Orlando was on his way to find us and help retrieve my elk. Needless to say we took tons of photos. Filled out my tag, and wrapped it up in her ear as instructed. All this took place at 7:15 am. All I kept saying is “I don’t believe it!” Mike was saying, “Believe it! Believe it! She’s laying there”! Johnny did a range finder scan, and I had made a 200 yard shot.

Back at the elk pen, my cow weighed in 323 pounds. They took all her measurements. Dragged her over

to one of the hoists and the work began. My shot had hit her heart and both lungs. I was pleased at the results of the Federal Vital Shok non-lead ammo that we used. Everyone was a little skeptical about the non-lead ammo. But, it did the job for me. When we finished skinning, dressing, and cleaning my cow, we got a game bag over her and jammed her cross ways into the back of our pickup under the tonneau lid. Mike and Johnny went into town and bought four 20 pound bags of ice. We put two into her body cavity and two over the top. Covered her with extra blankets that we keep in the truck. I was just plain walking on air the rest of the day! I worked so hard for this animal and it was worth every step we took and every bit of concentration I had to do to accomplish my goal. Guys at home kept telling us what an easy hunt this was going to be. They made it sound like you just went out a ways, picked out an animal, and bingo! Got your elk. WRONG! These guys have never hunted on Grizzly Island, and that's a fact. Yes, there are plenty of elk on Grizzly. It's certainly not like having to search for them in the mountains. However, this is no canned hunt. You need to practice stealth, strategy, exert a lot of muscle and energy. Getting close to them takes a lot of hard work and skill. Do your homework, learn their behaviors. Have respect for these animals. I would not have wanted it any other way.

That evening, we had a great supper. Mike cooked one of his firehouse specials. Pork chops. BBQ. Yum. Breakfast and lunches were a little weird on this trip, but suppers were great. We went back out for an early evening hunt for Johnny. One of the Fish & Wildlife Resource workers told us to check over near Parking Lot 2 and go behind the corporation yard. We did. Hiked quite a ways. Saw a pretty large group of bulls, spikes and cows. However, they were over 400 yards away and the wind was blowing just enough to carry our scent. We literally crawled on our hands and knees to get to an area where we could get a closer look at them. Easy for me now, because I was finished carrying a rifle. Every time we crept up to look at them, they were looking straight at us. At one point, a group of cows began coming closer, but something scared them from somewhere else, and they took to running. We decided to save our energy for the next day's hunt. Needless to say, this was already a pretty exciting day.

Up at 5:30 am Thursday morning. Really! Ants on the sink and counter top. Terri and Mike dove into these ants like you cannot imagine. Johnny and I are getting everything else ready to get on our way. Believe it or not, we only left the trailer 7 minutes later than the day before in spite of chasing Grizzly Island Ants!! We decided the action had been good in Fields 13 & 14. This morning it was unbelievable! For whatever reason, the bulls were bugling from all directions. I mean, bugling consistent and loud. They were extremely active. Eating our crazy breakfasts of dry bagels while walking. Mike was eating his left over Coco Crispies and a cold pork chop from Wednesday night's supper. Unbelievable!! Daybreak was upon us. A large group of elk were in Field 13. All kinds of activity. Two big bulls got into a fight! Amazing!! It's one thing to see this kind of action on television. It's another to witness it first hand in real life. These two boys are shoving, pushing, crashing into each other. One knocks the other down. He springs back up and keeps on fighting. They were about 350 yards out. The spikes in the group were off to one side staying out of the way. The cows were all grouped together except for one. She was almost in the middle of this war-zone. We were laughing. We figured she was cheering them on hoping to make off with the winner! Finally, we decided we would try to make our way over toward them. There was a huge brush row between us and them. Johnny and Mike went ahead. We hiked quite a ways out. Mike and Johnny got up on this slight rise, hidden by that tall wheat kind of grass. Terri and I hunkered down in the damp grass. Johnny had the shooting sticks set up. Terri & I hearts racing, stayed quiet and just let the boys take care of this one. A group of spikes and cows broke away from the large group and came walking through a break in the bushes. A little over 200 yards out. Now Terri and I are just about laying down in the grass. There was a cow coming up the rear and she stopped. At that split moment Johnny fired. Must have been just a second before he fired, the spikes broke into an easy trot. The cow went from a standstill to a trot. She kind of wavered but kept going. We were not sure if she was hit or not. Mike was sure she was. They ran across the field and through another row of bushes. Johnny, Terri and I hung back and let Mike stalk her alone to see if she went down. He signals that she was about 60 feet in front of him. Down. With one of the spikes standing with her! The spike is looking right at Mike. Mike is afraid to move for fear the cow would get up and take off again. I wasn't at all sure that maybe the spike might charge at Mike and all he had was the shooting sticks for a weapon. This drama went on for a few moments, and then the spike left. We kind of figured later, that maybe she was in heat or perhaps the spike was her calf from last year. No way of

knowing for sure. Mike motioned for Johnny to come up with him in hopes of taking another shot. The cow got up, Johnny shot, she went down and then got up again. This drama went on for nearly an hour and a half. We just took our time so as not to push her any farther or faster. Finally, Terri and I got up out of the grass and made our way across the field. There was another row of bushes. We knew she was hit because Mike found some blood on the grass. We decided to split up to try and find her. Mike and Johnny would go through the brush. Stickers and all. Terri went right and I went left. I didn't walk 10 feet and there she was. Literally tucked in this little kind of a alley way trail into the brush. She was down and looking at me over her shoulder. I yelled to Johnny that I found her, come and dispense her. He ran over, took a shot to her head and finally Johnny bagged his cow! Needless to say, we were very impressed with Mikes stalking and helping to find this cow. We knew we had to verify whether she was hit or not. We needed to find her and that's all there was to it. And, we did it. Terri called Orlando on her cell phone to come and get us. We tied ropes to the cows hind legs and really had to tug and pull to get her out of this brush. Took photos. Johnny filled out his tag. I'm jumping up and down because we were both successful and coming home with our elks. I swear, this was a text book example of a hunter's responsibility to find their wounded animal. We never could have done it without Mike and Terri's help. There was a lot of ground to cover. Johnny had the perfect heart/lung shot before she moved on him. His first shot ended up entering the hind gut. You could have drawn a straight line from her heart/lung area back to where the bullet finally entered. His second shot went through the lungs at an angle and we later retrieved the bullet between the bone and muscle of her right front shoulder.

Orlando loaded up the elk and us, and we headed back to the elk pen. As we are traveling along the levee road, here comes the entire group of elk that Johnny harvested his out of. The were running and began to cross the road in front of us. There was a bull in front and a bull behind. Half of them crossed the road, waded through the slough and entered Field 14. The other half turned around and followed the other bull back to where they came from! WOW! Nature at it's best! Not sure what that was all about, but it sure wasW fun to watch.

Johnny's cow weighed in at 429 pounds. Big girl. They did all the measurements, pulled teeth and ivories, and again, we began working on skinning and dressing. I wasn't sure that we were going to get the second elk in the back of our truck, but we did! Back to town for more ice. Got the cows all packed in ice and covered up to stay cold. We would leave to go home on Friday.



In fact, Johnny and I would be heading straight for Manteca to Fagundes Meats to have our elk processed.

Captain Mike provided another great supper for us. Bacon wrapped chicken, sautéed rice, fried zucchini and wine. What a way to end a great day of hunting with lots of laughs and stories reliving the events of the last 3 days.

Our cow hunt was from Tuesday, Sept. 15th through Friday the 18th. The bull and spike hunters hunted from Thursday through Sunday. By Thursday late afternoon, the 2 spikes and 2 bulls had been harvested. One bull had to be dragged out of the flooded marsh. We met some really nice hunters. Everyone was cheering and congratulating each other on their success and sharing stories. I cannot say enough about the Fish & Wildlife folks at Grizzly Island. They were so nice and so very helpful. I had spoken to Shirley, in the office, on the phone a couple of time. It was so much fun to meet her in person. I learned so much from Orlando, who is the Wildlife Biologist on Grizzly. Patrick gave us more great information. They wanted us to be successful. We feel like we made new friends on Grizzly Island. This was a wonderful family outing for us. Just the way everything fell into place. Terri and Mike, like us, are still talking about our experience. We saw lots of wildlife besides the elk. An almost all back raccoon. Coyotes, all kinds of waterfowl. Red Tail Hawks, Turkey vultures, River Otters. In fact, Wednesday morning one came to the surface in the water with a pretty good size fish in it's mouth. Not to mention, mosquitos and Grizzly Island Ants!!

Also, there are other things to consider while hunting on Grizzly Island. You have to keep in mind how far your ammunition can travel. There are roadways open to the public. There are buildings belonging to various duck clubs and residences. These fields that the elk habitat are huge. They seem to go on forever. Acres and acres. There are lots of marshes. They are flooding even more right now getting ready for Duck season. But, you have to think about the direction you are shooting and how far that bullet can travel. There were a couple of times we just gave up on heading in a certain direction because of safety reasons. The elk would win that round. It's never worth taking a foolish chance.

We will always be grateful for this wonderful hunting experience. This is a well managed beautiful healthy herd on Grizzly Island. It was the perfect example of hunters being allowed to be a big part of Wildlife Management. We enjoyed every minute of it. The roller coaster of emotions. The hard work. Dealing with nature on her terms. We are so thankful for this opportunity. So much to share with my Hunter Education students. Thank you so much Department of Fish & Wildlife for pulling both Johnny and I out of the hundreds of applicants for this hunt. It must have been meant to be. A great family hunt. Lots of laughs, sore muscles and memories to share and last a lifetime.

# SQUAW VALLEY 2015



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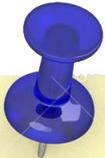
# SAVE THE DATES!

## 2016 CONFERENCES



FEB 27

SED  
VENTURA COUNTY



MAR 12

NCD  
MARIN COUNTY



APR 9

CED  
KINGS COUNTY



APR 23

NED  
TEHAMA COUNTY

**\*\*UPDATE\*\*** NOTE CHANGES IN COUNTY LOCATIONS AS OF 12/17/2015.  
SEE MORE DETAILS IN NEXT QUARTERLY