



Pine Grove Programs is offering a limited number of FREE three day Fall Black Bear Hunts over bait for the 2020 Maine Black Bear Hunting season to Active Duty Service Members, Veterans, First Responders and Gold Star Family members. This is a premiere once in a lifetime hunting experience and as such requires the participants to meet the following conditions:

1. Have a valid 2020 Maine Hunting license with a Bear Tag.
2. Have a rifle, bolt action, or semi-automatic in caliber 30-30 Winchester, 308 Winchester, 30-06 Springfield, 243 (100 Grain), 7mm, 6.5 Creedmoor, ... with which they are competent.
3. Provide your own ammo.
4. Provide your own head to toe camouflage clothing. Ensure you have layers of clothing so that you can adapt to variable weather conditions likely to be encountered in Maine fall.
5. Provide your own casual clothing and toiletries
6. Be prepared to spend up to three days at Pine Grove Lodge arriving the night before the first day of the hunt, e.g. Sunday evening for a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Hunt or Wednesday evening for a Thursday, Friday, Saturday hunt. Pine Grove Programs will provide all meals and lodging.
7. Be prepared to spend long hours in a stand remaining motionless, quiet, and alert.
8. Be prepared to stay in the stand after dark until our Guide comes to get you. The most productive time for a bear to come to bait occurs frequently just before the end of legal hunting time which is 30 minutes after sunset and which often is very low light condition.
9. Bring a seat pad (recommended) to cushion your seat during the hours you sit.
10. Bring a cell phone if you have one.

This is what you can expect.

Arrive by 4:00 PM at the Lodge on the evening before your scheduled hunt to meet your fellow hunters over supper after which you will settle into your accommodations.

On the morning of day 1, a safety briefing followed by a rifle sight in will be conducted. This will ensure that your rifle is sighted in properly and the sights were not knocked their sight in settings during transport.

Bob Howe will make a presentation providing tips on a successful bear hunt and answer questions about what to expect during your hunt.

You will be introduced to your Guide(s).

Lunch will be provided. After which your Guide(s) will take you out to your bait site and put you on stand.

Follow your guide's instructions and pay particular attention to being safe during your hunt.

Remain on stand until your guide comes to pick you up. If you shoot a bear, remain in your stand and call your guide on your cell phone. Your guide will come and you both will locate the bear and drag it out of the woods.



It cannot be overstressed that these hunts are an extraordinary opportunity for the hunters able to participate. The Program expends considerable resources to lease and maintain the bait sites as well as providing food, accommodations, and Guides. A no show not only wastes the resources expended but also denies another worthy candidate from participating in this once in lifetime experience.

As the Outlook Coordinator for Pine Grove Programs and an Army Veteran, I was afforded the opportunity to participate in a successful bear hunt during the 2019 Maine Bear Hunt season. I provide the following as a glimpse into the experience. I was indeed fortunate that a bear came to my bait site relatively early and can attest that one can spend many hours without seeing a bear.

On Thursday August 29, 2019, I was treated to a Black Bear Hunt over bait by Pine Grove Programs as a guest of Bob and Andrea Howe. If you are not familiar with all they do for veterans and first responders, check out their website (<http://www.pinegroveprograms.org>) or their Facebook page.

I went into the stand at 2:37 PM. The woods were quiet and for the most part shady with patches of sunlight. A slight wind from the northwest was crossing over my left shoulder. Visibility to the bait barrel was good, but the periphery to both sides had significant foliage to block any long view.

While I sat quietly, keeping any movement to a minimum, I heard the usual scurrying of red squirrels, the occasional bird call and the chattering of a nearby raccoon.

As the afternoon wore on toward evening, I appreciated the fact that Bob had recommended I bring a pad to sit on in the stand. But even that, as the hours passed, it left me with a tired butt and an increasing desire to move to relieve the effects of remaining motionless.

About 6:15, I heard motion behind me, nothing very loud, but definitely something was moving there. I caught no movement out of the sides of my vision and remained quiet and still. Later, Jeff and I found a fresh bear track on the road behind where I sat. Possibly, the noise I detected was the bear scouting the area.

At about 6:28, I spied a black form in the trees behind and to the right of the bait. The bear moved past the bait and over to the left side and then circled back behind the bait. He presented a nice clear broadside to me and I placed the crosshair of my scope just behind his shoulder as he moved that forward leg to the front. I squeezed off the shot. He turned and dashed off to the left, dropped and let out several haunting death moans. Then everything was silent, no sound of thrashing or movement through the woods. I felt that the bear was likely dead and close in to where it had been shot. I turned on my cell phone and called Jeff and told him that I had a bear down and thought that it was dead. I indicated that I would wait at the stand. It was 6:31.

While waiting for Jeff, I unloaded my rifle, packed my gear, and let the adrenaline rush subside. Jeff arrived and we went to find the bear as expected only a short distance from where it was shot with its head lodged between two tress where it had dropped. A small bear, it has a nice thick coat and will make a nice bearskin rug. I think Jeff was as excited for me as I was to bag the bear. This was his first time guiding for Pine Grove Programs and all his efforts are greatly appreciated for making my hunt a great success.



My Guide Jeff congratulating me on a successful hunt.

Sincerely,

Paul E. Violette
Colonel (USA Retired)
Pine Grove Programs Outreach Coordinator

IF, AFTER READING THIS, YOU'D LIKE TO REGISTER FOR ONE OF THE DATE SEGMENTS, PLEASE EMAIL ANDREA AT <mailto:info@pinegroveprogram.com?subject=Bear Hunt 2020>