



Maine Guide Tips

“Moose Trophy Care”

Complimentary Information from the Maine Professional Guides Association

Trophy Care

Proper care of trophy heads is extremely important. If you plan on having a moose head mounted, get specific instructions on skinning and care from your taxidermist before you go hunting. A less expensive alternative to a full head mount is to mount just the antlers and the skullcap.

If you want a head mount, avoid shooting your moose in the head, and don't cut its throat. When field dressing, try to get the animal's head uphill to prevent any blood or body fluids from getting on the head or cape. Field dress the moose in the normal manner except do not cut any further up the underside than between the front legs. The windpipe and any other material can be removed after the animal has been caped out.

If the weather is warm, and you plan to have a head mount or a “fur on” rug made from the hide, you must remove the skin, salt the flesh side thoroughly, and roll up the hide, flesh side in. Keep it in a cool place (never in a plastic bag) and get it to your taxidermist as soon as possible. Delay may cause “slipping,” a condition in which the hair falls off the hide after the tanning process, ruining it for its intended use.

To skin for a head and shoulder mount, cut in a straight line down the back of the neck, stopping between the shoulder blades, and cut skin off behind the front legs. An alternative is to bring the whole skin, with head attached, to the taxidermist. He will want the measurements, and the skinning is included in the mounting charge.

Hide Care

Remove all flesh and fat, and then salt the flesh side well. Moose hides spoil very rapidly in warm weather. Take the hide to a taxidermist within 24 hours after skinning.

Fine table salt is best for use on hides. Capes will take about 30 pounds of salt. Flat skins will take 50 to 80 pounds. As a guide, figure on using half the weight of the skin in salt. About 24 hours after application, the salt will be wet and will have lost its efficiency - shake it off and re-salt.

Transport the hide rolled up, flesh side out.

Other Moose Trophies

Moose hooves and legs can be used for making gun racks. The bones from the dewclaws make interesting letter openers which can be prepared simply by cutting the bone out, removing the meat, and drying. “Fur off” moose hide can be tanned like buckskin and used to make gloves or other items.

Suggested Equipment

First-time moose hunters should be aware that field care of moose is a LOT of work. Nothing will make it easy, but certain equipment and a bit of know-how will make it much less difficult. Make sure your equipment list includes the following:

- Sharpening stone
- Black pepper – ½ pound can
- 2 or 3 large plastic bags
- Cloth wiping rags
- 1/4” to 1/2” nylon rope
- Sharp axe or hatchet
- Sharp, stout knife - at least one
- Large sheet of polyethylene
- Sturdy hand saw, preferably a boning saw
- Game bags, large quantity of cheesecloth, or several old bed sheets
- Heavy-duty pulley and/or a winch or come-along --1 ton minimum capacity

Planning Your Hunt

Licensed Maine guides who specialize in moose hunts will be fully prepared to assure that your hunt is successful and your trophy and meat are properly preserved.

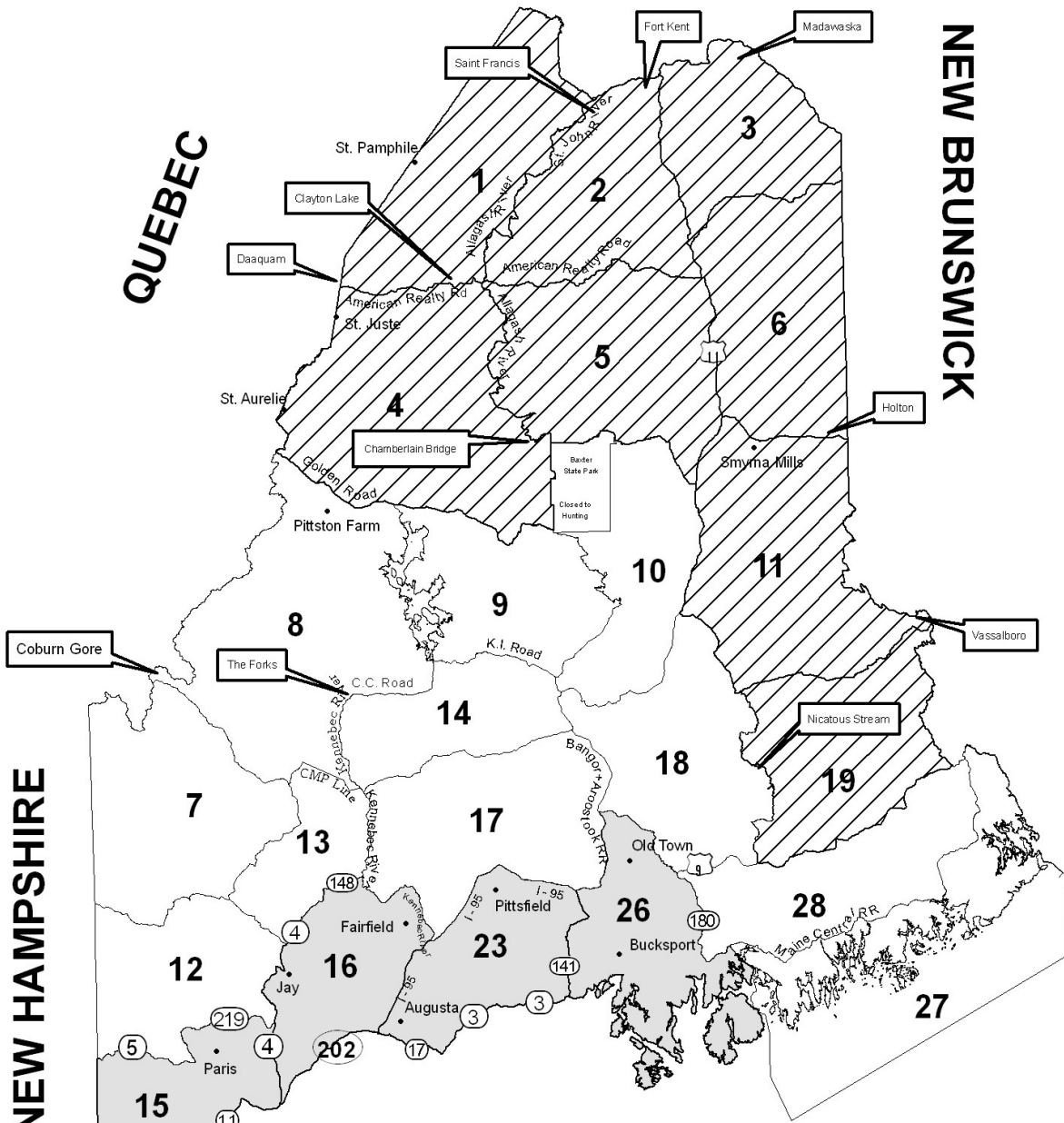
Guides will not only scout areas in advance, they will have the specialized equipment needed to retrieve the moose, and to bring it to a qualified processor for butchering and freezing.

For additional assistance in planning your moose hunt, you may want to contact:




Maine Professional Guides Association
www.maineguides.org

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
www.maine.gov/ifw/

2009 Moose Hunting Districts



Legend

-  September and October Season
-  October Only Season
-  November Only Season