



Fish River Lodge

316 Old Main Street
Eagle Lake, Maine 04739
(207)444-5207

fishriverlodge.com




BEAR HUNT PLANNER






Thank you for choosing Fish River Lodge for your black bear hunt! We will work with you as a team every step of the way to increase your odds for a successful hunt. Our work begins in January when we secure bear bait for the coming season. Two months before your hunt we confirm our site locations with landowners and begin brushing out our sites, installing and labeling tree stands. Tree stands will be set in the range of 20-60 yards from the “target.” A month before your hunt we will begin placing bait. We will check the baits twice a week until they are getting hit, then we bait every-other-day, and 10 days prior to your hunt we will place bait every day.

Your preparations begin today! The following “time line” and suggestions are offered to help you increase your odds for a successful hunt...



TODAY!

-  Go through your camo clothing. You should have at least a camo shirt, pants (or coverall), cap, gloves, and face mask (or face paint). Wash these in a non-scented detergent. Since the temperature in northern Maine during September can range from 40-80 degrees, plan accordingly. Also plan on rain.
-  We recommend you bring your own tree stand harness. If you do not have one, now is the time to start looking for one.
-  Select the firearm or bow you will use on the hunt.

SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE YOUR HUNT:

-  Practice shooting and check the accuracy of your sights. Shoot as often as you can while using the arrows or ammunition you have selected for the hunt. If you are bringing archery equipment, check bow strings for wear and repair questionable strings (in fact, pack a spare, “just in case”).
 - Since tree stands are set roughly 20-60 yards from the “target” and are roughly 10 feet high, you should be comfortable shooting at that distance. Archers will be placed in “20 yard” stands. **NOTE: Contact us well in advance of your hunt if you require a stand set closer than 20 yards.**
-  Scent control is very important to your success. Shop for scent-free soap, shampoo, and deodorant to use during your hunt.
-  Obtain required licenses. They are available on-line at the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife web site: <http://www.state.me.us/ifw/index.html>

ONE WEEK BEFORE YOUR HUNT:

-  Practice shooting daily if you can, at 20-40 yards and 12 feet from the ground.
-  Begin packing your gear, checking and double checking that you have all your camo wear, firearm or bow, ammunition or arrows, harness, scent-free personal products, licenses, camera and film.

THE WEEK OF YOUR HUNT WILL ARRIVE...

You will meet us at Fish River Lodge on the Sunday prior to your hunt. We will greet you and show you to your camp. All camps have a full kitchen and bathroom with a shower stall. You may choose to bring snacks and beverages of your choice, but all meals are included with your hunt package and prepared by our enthusiastic and experienced “chef”, Wayne Bennett. The lodge is yours to use during your stay. We have DirecTV with access to sports channels, NASCAR and a variety of other programming. We have a library of Maine and sporting related literature, board games, cards, cribbage boards, bumper pool table, and plenty of room to congregate, relax, and socialize. We have internet and email access if needed in the lodge office. Cell phones do not work here at the lodge but calls can be successfully placed closer to town. You are welcome to use the lodge phone to make calls if necessary and you may choose to leave the Fish River Lodge number (207-444-5207) with family at home. Our email address is frlodge@ainop.com.

We will “brief” all hunters in the lodge on Sunday at dinner time. We’ll review a typical daily schedule, bear hunting laws, various scenarios at the bait site and then hand out transportation tags and a radio to communicate with your driver during the hunt and finally answer any questions you might have. Cheers! Your first day of bear hunting is about to begin!

While we will enjoy a drink or beer in the evening *AFTER* the hunt, we ask that you refrain from drinking alcohol or using judgment-impairing drugs during the day of your hunt. We will not transport hunters to tree stands whose judgment is impaired. Since we will have done and will continue doing everything we can to make your hunt a success, we simply ask that you respect the hunting ethic of not mixing judgment-impairing substances with hunting.

TYPICAL HUNTING DAY:

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m. – noon	Free time: practice shooting, read, go fishing, relax...
Noon – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 – 1:30 p.m.	Dress for the hunt and meet at the lodge
1:30 – 2:00 p.m. (or so):	Transportation to your tree stand
2:00 (or so) – “quitting time”:	Sit at your site
9:00 p.m.	Dinner

When it’s time to hunt, you will be transported to your tree stand (roughly 30-45 minute drive). Once the vehicle is parked all is quiet... You will walk 300-500 yards to your stand and quietly get settled in as bait is placed. You will be left to hunt alone until “quitting time” (1/2 hour after sun set). The most successful bear hunters realize the importance of scent-control and minimize odors (no gum chewing or smoking!). Since you will seldom hear a bear approaching the bait site the most successful bear hunters sit quietly and motionless in their stand. They do not urinate from the stand (they urinate in a container and carry it out). At “quitting time” you will quietly come down from your stand and walk out, 300-500 yards to await your ride.

If you have taken a shot at a bear, *REMAIN IN YOUR STAND* for at least 45 minutes. Assistance is close by so *NEVER* go in to the woods after your bear, even if you can see it. Call your driver on the radio or walk out to the road and wait. You will be escorted back to the site to retrieve or track your bear. We will work on tracking an injured bear for an hour or more after dark if there is a good blood trail. If there is not a good blood trail or we are not successful after an honest effort we will quit for the night and return at first-light to resume the search. However, every effort will be made to recover a downed bear the same evening it was shot.

You will attach your transportation tag to the bear. We may or may not field dress it where it is found. We may choose to remove the bear and field dress it at another location to preserve the bait site. In either case, it will be transported to the tagging station before arriving at the lodge.

If, after three days on the same site, you have not been successful you will be moved to a fresh site.

If you are lucky enough to “tag out” early in the week, you may want to go fishing – we have landlocked salmon, brook trout, and lake trout in Eagle Lake and surrounding waters. You can fish for muskellunge on the nearby St. John River. Therefore, you may want to pack your favorite fishing gear. Or maybe you’d prefer to just kick back and relax for the remainder of the week. Once you arrive at Fish River Lodge you can leave your worries behind and enjoy your hunt!

Between now and then, should you have any questions, please give us a call. We can be reached at (207)444-5207.

We look forward to seeing you for bear season!

Sincerely,

Tenley Bennett, Master Maine Guide