



Bowhunting Principles

ETHICS

Our ability to hunt, to be hunters, is natural and well-earned. But, in this day and age, we must never forget that it is a privilege that could, in theory, be lost. In the 21st Century and beyond, hunting's continued existence will depend much on how we conduct ourselves as hunters...in other words, our ethics.

Ethics are a moral code of conduct. They pertain to what is considered right and wrong. Such a collection of principles and values can be both on an individual personal level, and as part of a shared group belief system.

Aldo Leopold wrote, "A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than a mob of onlookers. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact."

In his book, *Beyond Fair Chase*, Jim Posewitz noted, "The most important measure of hunting success is how you feel about yourself..."

Accepting an ethical code will naturally bring you greater satisfaction in what you do. As time goes by, and as an ethical code is exercised, it will grow stronger and "higher." This is what we should all aspire to do FAIR CHASE

Simply defined, fair chase is the ethical, sportsmanlike, and lawful pursuit of free-ranging wild game animals in a manner which does not give the hunter an improper or unfair advantage over the animal.

The Rules of Fair Chase

The term "Fair Chase" shall not include the taking of animals under the following conditions:



- Helpless in a trap, deep snow or water, or on ice.
- From any power vehicle or power boat.
- By “jacklighting” or shining at night.
- By the use of any tranquilizers or poisons.
- While inside escape-proof fenced enclosures.
- By the use of any power vehicle or power boats for herding or driving animals, including use of aircraft to land alongside or to communicate with or direct a hunter on the ground.
- By the use of electronic devices for attracting, locating or pursuing game or guiding the hunter to such game.
- Any other condition considered by the Board of Directors as unacceptable.

The fair chase concept does, however, extend beyond the hunt itself; it is an attitude and a way of life based in a deep-seated respect for wildlife, for the environment, and for other individuals who share the bounty of this vast continent’s natural resources.

Crossbow Policy Statement

For the purpose of ABAM, a bow shall be defined as a longbow, recurve bow or compound bow that is hand-held and hand-drawn, and that has no mechanical device to enable the hunter to lock the bow at full or partial draw. Other than the energy stored by the drawn bow, no device to propel the arrow will be permitted.

Consequently, ABAM does not consider the crossbow to be a hunting bow and will not accept any trophies for awards collected by crossbow hunters. Further ABAM considers the use of crossbows during bowhunting seasons to be a serious threat to the future of bowhunting.

ABAM therefore states the crossbow should not be considered for use in any bowhunting only season. Also, the Club enforces that crossbows for hunting be restricted to firearms or Muzzleloader seasons in Manitoba.

EQUIPMENT

ABAM has established the following standard definitions of bowhunting equipment.

I. Hunting Bow

A. A hunting bow for big game shall be a longbow, flat bow, recurve bow, compound bow or any combination of these designs meeting the following requirements and restrictions:

- 1. A device for launching an arrow, which derives its propulsive energy solely from the bending and recovery of two limbs.**
- 2. The bow must be hand drawn by a single and direct, uninterrupted pulling action of the shooter. The bowstring must be moved from brace height to the full draw position by the muscle power of the shooter's body. The energy used to propel the arrow shall not be derived from any other source such as hydraulic, pneumatic, mechanical or similar devices. These limitations shall not exclude the mechanical leverage advantage provided by eccentric wheels or cams so long as the available energy stored in the bent limbs of the bow is the sole result of a single, continuous, and direct pulling effort by the shooter.**
- 3. The bow must be hand-held. One hand shall hold the bow and the other hand draw the bowstring. The bowstring must be moved and/or held at all points in the draw cycle entirely by the muscle power of the shooter until release. The bowstring must be released as a direct and conscious action of the shooter's either relaxing the tension of the fingers or triggering the release action of a hand-held release aid.**
- 4. A Bowhunter hunting big game must not be in possession of a long bow or recurved bow requiring less than 18.1 kg (40 lbs.) draw weight at 71 cm (28 in.) draw; or a compound bow set at less than 18.1 kg (40 lbs.) peak draw weight.**

B. Except under the authority of a Disabled Crossbow permit, no person may hunt with a bow drawn, held, or released by a mechanical device, except with a hand-held mechanical release attached to the bowstring such that the person's own strength draws and holds the bowstring.

C. Exclusions:

1. The following shall not be considered a hunting bow:

- a) A crossbow.
- b) Any device with a gun-type stock or incorporating any device or mechanism that holds the bowstring at partial or full draw without the shooter's muscle power.

II. Hunting Arrow

A. A hunting arrow shall have the following characteristics:



1. Fletching shall be attached to the aft end.
2. A broadhead shall be mounted on the fore end.

B. Exclusions:

1. No poison, drug, or explosives shall be attached to the arrow.

III. Hunting Broadhead

A. The broadhead for big game shall meet the following requirements:

1. Possess two or more sharp cutting edges, fixed or movable, that can be sharpened and/or replaced.
2. Be at least 7/8 inches wide at the widest point of the sharp cutting edges.