

# Get the hunting rig ready



## Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay



If you are going to use “Old Hoss” this hunting season, you might want to pay him a bit of attention before you head for the high country. (Photo/Mark Rackay)

For myself, and for most hunters and huntresses, the typical hunting season ends on the afternoon of the final day of the hunting season and begins again the following morning. This leaves the average person almost 12 hours to visit with their spouse, meet any new members of the family who may have arrived in the meantime, stop by work, and return a few calls and open some mail, and perhaps catch a little sleep.

Getting ready for a big game hunt, especially if you are going on a self-hunt, without an outfitter, can be a monumental task. Rifles need to be checked over and sighted in, clothes readied, tents, lanterns, and cook gear needs to be packed. Then there is the trip to the grocery store where you buy enough food to outfit a platoon of hungry Marines and worry that you did not bring enough.

You probably spent a great amount of time studying maps, going over regulations, and purchasing the necessary licenses.

Hopefully, you spent some time getting into shape for climbing the mountains. The one thing most often overlooked is the hunting rig, the 4-wheel chariot to get you there and back, haul all your stuff, tow the ATV on a trailer, and sometimes serve as a hunting vehicle on the trip.

The last thing you need is a vehicle breakdown on the road, or anytime on the trip for that matter. As old Murph, of Murphy’s Law Fame will gladly tell you, the breakdown is going to happen at the worst time, in the remotest place possible. Murph just loves unprepared hunting rigs.

Start with the obvious things, like your car battery. I purchase new batteries for my truck every 2 years, regardless of the length of the warranty. Batteries never die in town or in your garage,

rather they fail when you park your truck up in the mountains, a 120 miles northwest of nowhere. All that warranty is good for up there is kindling for your survival fire. Buy new and get good quality batteries with lots of cold cranking amps.

It does not hurt to bring along one of those portable jumper packs. The extra power will jump an ATV if needed, and it is good insurance for your rig battery. Many of these power packs also have to ability to charge cell phones, so it makes sense to have it along.

Be sure to keep up on the regular maintenance of your vehicle. We don’t do tune-ups with the frequency of cars from years gone by. This does not mean you should forget about checking plugs, fuel filters and wires.

Winter is a good time

to put on some new wiper blades. Fill up your coolant reservoir and top off the windshield cleaning fluid with the winter formula that won’t freeze in cold temps.

Condition, inflation, and type of tires should be obvious, and don’t forget to check the spare. I remember my grandfather always having to put on his snow tires in the fall. He was usually one snowstorm late. Highway tread or standard radials are fine for around town, but not when you head into the backcountry. Start out with good snow tread tires and be sure they are properly inflated. Bring along a tire inflator and a plug kit in case you get a nail on the way. It is not like there are many tire shops in the woods.

A good set of chains is a must, especially if you get off the beaten paths.

Make sure the chains fit your tires. I carried a set around for 2 years that were too small for my tires. I got a larger set of tires and never thought to check the chains. Be sure yours are in good condition, have tighteners and spare links, and are the right size for your car. I carry several sets of tighteners to keep the chains snug and not rattling around.

Colorado has a traction law. When weather conditions warrant, Colorado Division of Transportation (CDOT) implements the Passenger Vehicle Traction and Chain Laws. CDOT can implement the law on any state highway. During a Traction Law, all motorists are required to have either:

1. 4WD or AWD vehicle and 3/16” tread depth
2. Tires with a mud and snow designation (M+S icon) and 3/16” tread depth
3. Winter tires (mountain-snowflake icon) and 3/16” tread depth
4. Tires with an all-weather rating by the manufacturer and 3/16” tread depth
5. Chains or an approved alternative traction device

I mention this for the folks who may plan on just using their vehicle to get them and their equipment to the hunting area because they plan on using an ATV or going on foot, figuring they don’t need chains.

You will probably have plenty of extra warm clothes, boots, shovel, and

lots of food, so having a pack in the rig with emergency supplies is probably not necessary.

For those of you hunting with an outfitter and using the vehicle as transportation to and from the hunting camp, you should probably check through some emergency rations and snacks. Time to throw out those melted candy bars, expired snack bars, and a few other items I am no longer able to identify. I once found a sandwich that had evolved into an intelligent life form. The “hybrid sandwich” was grazing on an outdated power bar. I threw the whole pack away on that one.

With the many big seasons Colorado has to offer, many folks will hunt multiple species and different seasons. So, if you will excuse me, I have to get back to my own preparations. Opening day is closing in.

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press, Delta County Independent, and several other newspapers, as well as a feature writer for several saltwater fishing magazines. He is an avid hunter and world class saltwater angler, who travels around the world in search of adventure and serves as a Director and Public Information Officer for the Montrose County Sheriff’s Posse. Personal email is elkhunter77@icloud.com For information about the Posse call 970-765-7033 (leave a message) or email info@mcspi.org

# CPW is now accepting applications for the Sportsperson’s Roundtable

SPECIAL TO THE MDP

DENVER — Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) is accepting applications from hunters, anglers and trappers to join the Sportsperson’s Roundtable. The application period is open from Sept. 16 through Oct. 17, 2025.

Volunteering for the Sportsperson’s Roundtable is an opportunity to share insights with CPW on critical wildlife management and recreation issues.

CPW aims to maintain a geographically diverse membership on the Roundtable, ensuring that all regions of the state are represented. The Sportsperson’s Roundtable is currently accepting applications from sportspeople in the Northwest, Southeast and Southwest regions.



Volunteering for the Sportsperson’s Roundtable is an opportunity to share insights with CPW on critical wildlife management and recreation issues. (Courtesy photo/CPW)

### How to Apply

Complete the CPW Sportsperson’s Roundtable Membership Application online before the deadline of Oct. 17, 2025, at 5 p.m. MT.

CPW staff will make selections and notify you about whether or not you are selected. For more information about the process, email Jonathan Boydston at jonathan.boydston@state.

co.us or Ben Sharp at benjamin.sharp@state.co.us.

### Sportsperson’s Roundtable

CPW depends on feedback and advice from our state’s hunters and anglers

to make the best decisions about managing fish, wildlife and habitat. The Sportsperson’s Roundtable fosters information sharing between the hunting, angling, and trapping community and CPW on issues related to wildlife recreation and management in Colorado.

Roundtable members serve two-year terms. Responsibilities of members include:

- Participating in a half or full-day in-person meeting twice a year and occasional virtual meetings. Travel to in-person meetings is at the member’s expense.
- Attending regional CPW Sportsperson’s Meetings and other meetings with hunters, anglers and trappers in

your area.

- Maintaining strong relationships with fellow sportspeople and staying informed about current events and emerging issues.

- Identifying topics for discussion at Roundtable meetings. Actively sharing information and ideas with Roundtable members and CPW staff during and between meetings.

- Providing your contact information on the CPW Roundtable webpage and being available to sportspeople around the state to discuss information pertinent to the Roundtable.

To learn more about the Sportsperson’s Roundtable and open seats, visit EngageCPW.

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