

Boone and Crockett's Big Game Awards



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SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 DAWNED cold and clear in the mountains of northern New Mexico. The bull elk were getting more active in their bugling and my friends and I were caught up in the intensity of the hunt and the majestic beauty of the mountains in autumn. My hunting partner shot a beautiful six-point that morning. We were in the process of retrieving it from the mountain when my wife happened to turn on the radio in the pickup and learned of the terrorist attacks. We were as stunned as all Americans were on that day, but given the limited communications in camp we did not fully realize the significance of the events until we saw the television and newspaper accounts when we returned home.

New York City has always been a "special place" for the Boone and Crockett Club. Theodore Roosevelt was born in New York City, and founded the Club there in 1887. During the early years of the Club, the "city" was the hub of the Club's activities. For many years the majority of the Club's Members were from the New York area. The Club has selected New York City as the site of its annual meetings more often than any other locale, affording Club Members the opportunity to stay connected with our founder. The Club's 2001 annual meeting, scheduled for New York in December, included a dinner at Windows of the World at the top of the World Trade Center. A number of our Members worked in the City and some had offices in or adjacent to the Trade Center. These special personal connections made the events of September 11th even more significant.

Nevertheless, the Club must consider how these events have impacted our country and how we will live from now on. Hunting and conservation will not be the same in the future. Rollie Sparrowe, in his column, *Capitol Comments*, addresses the post-terrorist situa-

tion in Washington, D.C., as we attempt to ensure that wildlife and natural resources issues will not be overlooked as we move forward in this new era. Chronic wasting disease and other impacts to wildlife are current and continuing issues that will require careful thought and attention.

On a brighter note, the availability of trophy-class North American big game animals is currently at an all-time high. The Club has recognized nine new World's Records in the past six months (our cover shows a photo, taken in 1999, of the ram that is the new World's Record bighorn). The total trophies entered in the 24th Awards Program is four times the number entered in the 18th Awards Period, with the whitetail deer category leading all others in total number of entries. This growth in trophy-class animals is expected to continue well into the 21st century. Quality management techniques will receive continuing attention as we work to improve the overall quality of our big game herds. The article on Quality Deer Management in this issue by Coates, Sime, and Williams is a good example of this important aspect of the Club's work. Selective hunting for quality animals coupled with effective game management practices both on private and public lands may well make these early years of the 21st century the true golden era of hunting in North America.

No matter what area of the Boone and Crockett Club's mission we think about, the one thing we can all agree upon is that the coming days, months, and years will be different for all of us and all that we do. But, the Club will continue to do the same good work for wildlife and wild places that we have always done. ▲▲▲

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