

# AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

## A DIVE INTO THE REASONING OF OUR UPDATED CELLULAR TRAIL CAMERA POLICY

TROPHY TALK



JUSTIN SPRING  
B&C PROFESSIONAL MEMBER  
Director of Big Game Records

**Fair chase hunting is a cornerstone of the Boone and Crockett Club. From the beginning, it was required of potential members for inclusion into the organization. Throughout the history of the records program, it has been a steadfast requirement. The inundation of not only hunting with technology, but our entire world, shows no signs of reversing or even slowing down. With all these considerations, where does an organization steeped in history, while currently active in ensuring wildlife for future generations, fall with respect to these new tools?**

First, we must define fair chase. Many folks over time have read the entry affidavit and assumed it was a definitive list of prohibited methods. If one follows these guidelines, has their hunt taken place under fair chase conditions? To some extent it has, but the list is not the end-all, be-all of fair chase. If your tactics violate one of those

stipulations, there is no doubt the hunt took place outside of fair chase, but even following all those guidelines doesn't ensure a "fair hunt." Consider a skylined buck at last light. Nothing in the fair chase rules for entry says you can't shoot—perhaps state law even comes short of prohibiting the shot—but most hunters' personal code of conduct understands it violates the basic firearm safety principle of knowing your target and what is beyond it. Just because the Boone and Crockett Club doesn't prohibit the practice doesn't make it right.

For Boone and Crockett's entry requirement purposes, fair chase is defined as the animal is afforded an equal or slightly elevated chance of avoiding detection and ultimately harvest by the hunter.

The fair chase requirements for entry are meant to be the very minimum standards you must abide by to consider yourself a fair chase hunter. Our hope is that you treat it as a starting point and expand your personal ethic from there. The fair chase ethic is a personal code by

which you conduct yourself. The Boone and Crockett Club never intended to be the enforcer of what is and is not allowed in all cases—only to put sidebars on the discussion.

So, why all the buildup on fair chase? It is the root of the discussion that was held around cellular trail cameras. The Club—in this case Clubs because the Pope and Young Records committee worked in concert with Boone and Crockett's to develop this position—maintains that this technology has a great potential to be abused, but does that warrant it being banned? Your ability to monitor an area for a particular animal remotely via cell phone technology then use that real-time location information on the animal to ensure a kill gives you an unfair advantage. The animal has no chance of detecting you because you aren't there. This situation is clear-cut and still prohibited. Though what if a cellular camera is used in the fall after season and a large buck shows up? Does this simple situation prohibit that deer from ever being entered if harvested?

In our previous wording it did. The committee decided this needed to be addressed.

As cellular camera technology became more commonplace throughout the country, both organizations were getting asked more questions on cellular camera usage. While discussing this trend we found we differed slightly in our interpretation of what use was appropriate. As we started discussing the technology, we agreed that in no circumstance should a real-time location be delivered to a hunter that they immediately act on. The wording on which we agreed states that if the technology elicits a real-time response from the hunter then it is prohibited. The technology isn't banned, purely the inappropriate use of the data it produced.

So, what is real time? Obviously if you get an image text at work and tell the boss



**"If a person allows hunting to become too easy, too predictable, and less challenging, they risk losing the special nature of the hunting experience itself. Hunting tests a person's abilities in difficult conditions and their developed skills in finding and taking wildlife. Most hunters agree that the physical and mental challenges, and the uncertainty of hunting are its most powerful attractions."**

Excerpt from the B&C position statement 'Technology and Hunting' that was adopted December 1, 2021.

# Associate Sign-Up Incentive Program Leader Board

\*As of January 17, 2022

you must go kill the buck that just stepped in front of your blind, then that's real time. What if you check your camera Thursday remotely then plan to go hunt Saturday morning? This is why I tried to explain that a fair chase ethic is personal. Each hunter must answer whether or not camera technology was used to elicit an immediate response resulting in the harvest. I am guessing most would answer no if two or three days passed—and the committee would agree. Now, hunters are asking whether or not the technology is unfair and further developing their

personal code. At the end of the day, this is what the Club intended to do with these requirements in the first place.

For more information on the Boone and Crockett Club and technology, see our new position statement approved at our December annual meeting on the website. While there, be sure to read "What Is Your Fair Chase" from PJ DelHomme, a new regular contributor to Boone and Crockett media outlets. ■



## CONGRATS TO OUR TOP 10 PRIZE WINNERS!

1. Philip A. Herrnberger – 152
2. Bucky Ihlenfeldt – 139
3. Stanley Zirbel – 133
4. Ken Witt – 112
5. John Bogucki – 46
6. Dale Weddle – 44
7. Jerry E. Lunde – 38
8. Robert Wood – 29
9. Charlie Adams – 23
10. Eric Stanosheck – 20

SEE THE COMPLETE LISTING IN THE COMMUNITIES SECTION AT [BOONE-CROCKETT.ORG](http://BOONE-CROCKETT.ORG)

*Each time an OM signs up a B&C Associate we'll put a credit by their name.*

### HERE'S THE BREAKDOWN

- 3 Associates – \$25 off any item in the B&C store
- 5 Associates – Buck Knife
- 10 Associates – B&C Boyt sling
- 25 Associates – OM Wool Vest
- 50 Associates – SITKA Gear (value up to \$350)
- 75 Associates – YETI cooler and rambler package (value up to \$500)
- 100 Associates – KIMBER RIFLE
- 150 Associates – \$800 Gift card to BASS PRO SHOPS/CABELAS!
- 200 Associates – VORTEX OPTICS GEAR! (value up to \$1400)



## LEARN MORE ONLINE

Technology and Hunting Position Statement



All essays on Fair Chase



Fair Chase Statement



"What Is Your Fair Chase"



[WWW.BOONE-CROCKETT.ORG](http://WWW.BOONE-CROCKETT.ORG)

**Want to Become an Official Measurer?** Fill out the Official Measurer Application at [Boone-Crockett.org](http://Boone-Crockett.org)!

**Current Associates!** Would you like to give an Official Measurer credit for your renewal? Let them know when it is your time to renew and they will provide their OMID number to include with your renewal so they will receive credit.