

The Elks Would Like To Tan Your Hide

As Big Game season approaches, I am writing to ask you for your support of the Elks Veterans Leather Program again this year. The support of your organization will be very valuable in the success of this program and we would like to count on you to help get the word out to hunters. We have expanded our collection centers this year and have added Lodges in areas of the state that have not participated in recent years. In addition Wyoming, Nebraska and New Mexico Lodges are also collecting hides for the program. We are collecting Deer, Elk, Moose, Antelope and other tailable hides to provide Wheel Chair Gloves and Leather kits to Our Country's Veterans.

The Elks National Veterans Service Commission is the major source of hides and tanned leather used for recreational and occupational therapy throughout the Veterans Administration health care system. The Elks have a program in place where tanned leather is cut and sewn into specially designed fingerless gloves, which are furnished to veterans confined to wheelchairs to protect their hands. Leather also provides a form of relief by keeping minds active as well as providing exercise for injured and unused muscles and is distributed in craft kits to make wallets, clothing, belts and moccasins for personal use or to enter in arts and crafts shows.

Since the government does not budget for wheelchair gloves for veterans, it falls upon the Elks to keep the supply line open and filled.

Hunters have the opportunity to stretch out a helping hand to veterans in need by saving the hides from the animals they harvest and donating those hides to the Elks Veteran Leather Program. The drive is part of a nationwide leather program that the Elks have been operating since 1948. The motto of the Elks National Veterans Service Commission is: "So Long As There Are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Will Never Forget Them."

Once donated, please fold hides flesh to flesh to prevent drying, volunteers clean, salt, fold and stack the hides. They are then transported to tanneries for processing. The program is funded by the Elks at no cost to veterans or the government. When saving hides, please make sure to fold them flesh to flesh with hair side out, this keeps the hide from drying until salted and prepared for shipment.

Our veterans responded willingly to our call, and now it is only fitting that we respond to their needs.

All it takes to participate is the willingness to make people aware of the program or collect and salt hides, which at the end of big game season the Colorado Elks Association will make arrangements to have them shipped to the tannery for tanning. This program is a great way for Elks and hunters to unite to give back to the veterans that have sacrificed for our country.

If you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact myself or any of our District Chairman throughout the state or contact Lodges that are designated as collection points this year. Currently we have over 20 Elks Lodges around Colorado that are collecting hides for this program.

With your support we can make this one of the most successful years for the B.P.O.E. Veterans Leather Program.

I have attached a copy of our informational brochure and poster to help spread the word.

Our goal is to make sure that every veteran who needs a pair of wheelchair gloves has them available to them. The only way we can make this happen is with your help and support.

Thank-you in advance for your support,

Sincerely,

We can also be found at www.facebook.com/ElksVeteransLeatherProgram