

Mangelsen picked for griz hunt

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Nature and wildlife photographer Tom Mangelsen won one of 22 tags to hunt a grizzly bear this fall. Mangelsen, who drew tag number 8 in the draw announced Thursday, said he does not plan to use the tag to harvest a grizzly bear.

BRADLY J. BONER

A famous and fiery critic of grizzly bear hunting who's made a career photographing the big bruins will have a chance to partake in Wyoming's first hunt for the species in 44 years.

That person is Images of Nature wildlife photographer Tom Mangelsen, who beat very long odds, drawing No. 8 on an issuance list that will allow up to 10 grizzly hunters into the field starting Sept. 15. Mangelsen learned of the results Thursday morning, when he took a call from his friend and assistant Sue Cedarholm.

"When Sue told me that I got No. 8, I about fell off my chair," he said. "I just thought, 'How can that be possible?'"

He was up against 3,500 Wyoming residents and 2,327 nonresidents vying for a shot at the coveted tags.

Mangelsen was among scores of folks from around the country who applied for Wyoming's grizzly hunting licenses as a means of civil disobedience intended to slow the hunt.

Instead of a firearm, he'll be taking his shots with a camera.

Wyoming wildlife managers say the tactic is legal, though they're not thrilled that it's taking away opportunities from hunters.

"Definitely, we have no problem welcoming anybody who buys a license," Wyoming Game and Fish Department spokesman Renny MacKay said.

If it's not first bogged down by lawsuits, the grizzly hunt in which Mangelsen's possible tag is valid will close down after the first female bear is killed. Up to 10 male grizzlies can be killed.

He's skeptical there won't be a gender mix-up before his No. 8 slot on the "issuance list" earns him a phone call to head into the field.

"I've watched a hell of a lot of bears over my adult life, and I cannot tell the difference between males and females at 100 yards, 50 yards even," Mangelsen said. "I don't know how they're going to do it."

A group of five Jackson Hole women mounted a campaign, "Shoot 'em with a camera," that attracted other nonhunters to apply for the hunt. Lisa Robertson, one of the co-founders, called Mangelsen's luck in the draw a "miracle."

"We're hoping for more wins," Robertson said. "We'd love to see a woman."

The draw results, which are made public upon request, show that one other Jackson man lucked into a chance at hunting grizzlies this fall. Men won the overwhelming majority of the tags.

Mangelsen, meanwhile, thanked his lucky stars Thursday for the lottery results, which he isn't chalking up to some divine ursine intervention.

"Dumb luck is all I can say," Mangelsen said. "It'd be nice to think it was karma or something, but I don't know that that's true."