



Rob Robb

The Hunting Lease Network

by Bob Robb

Looking for prime hunting land that you can also have a little control over? Not sure where to start? Get online and give the Hunting Lease Network a look.

Serious whitetail hunters dream of controlling their own hunting property. They'd love to be able to plant food plots and improve the habitat for deer and other wildlife, and when hunting season rolls around, not to worry about other hunters screwing up their plans.

Today, when knocking on a farmer's door and getting permission to hunt is becoming more and more difficult, those of us who don't have a family farm or secret offshore bank account wonder how we can make this happen. I had almost given up hope until last fall, when my friend John Brown invited me to hunt on a farm in southeastern Illinois. "It's a new lease I have," Brown said. "I think you'll love it."

I have known John, one of the country's best hunting videographers and half the BOSS Productions team, a long time. I knew I could trust him, and as expected, he was right. The property was outstanding, and though we didn't punch my tag — we did have a 160ish 9-pointer within 40 yards but couldn't coordinate the camera and bow, so no shot was taken — I knew John was on to something.

That something is the Hunting Lease Network (HLN).

What It Is

Hunting Lease Network is an internet-based service for landowners and hunters that makes it easier to find quality, affordable land for hunting and other outdoor pursuits. The goal of this unique system is to arrive at a fair hunting lease arrangement. Landowners contact HLN to inspect their property, and if a property meets HLN's criteria for a good hunting lease, the property is posted on the HLN Web site along

"If you find a hunting lease you like, you can submit a bid to lease the property, starting at a minimum set by the landowner."



Leasing quality land for hunting is easier than ever — just log on, look around the site, find some land you're interested in leasing, and make a bid.

with quality aerial maps, property photos and other property details. If you find a hunting lease you like, you can submit a bid to lease the property, starting at a minimum set by the landowner. Added to this minimum bid is the cost of a \$1 million liability insurance policy covering the landowner, anyone named on the lease and their guests. It's that simple. There are no hidden fees and no cost for the public to register, to view property information or to submit a bid.

HLN has created 88 franchise territories, breaking some states into multiple territories based on factors like population and size, the amount of private land available and how much money is spent on hunting and fishing in that state or region. The landowner pays a \$100 fee per property that's listed on the Web site.

Hunting Lease Network

1-800-346-2650

www.nationalhuntingleases.com

"Bringing Landowners and Sportsman Together"



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"The really great thing about our relationship with Hunting Lease Network is that no longer are we put at the mercy of someone else's timetable, rules or regulations," Brown says. "For the first time in my 16-year career I'm now able to decide when we hunt, where we hunt and who we take hunting. We're now able to plant food plots, institute quality deer management programs and have year-round access to the properties. No longer is



John Brown of BOSS Productions bagged this wide 8-pointer on land leased through HLN.

it a one-shot deal where I've got three to five days of hunting to get a show produced."

How It Works

The first year is always a one-year lease; the program is designed that way to make sure that the landowner, lessee and HLN are all on the same page. After that, if you desire, HLN can help you set up a long-term lease. Once you secure a lease, you have the right of first refusal when the lease comes up for renewal. However, anyone can bid on the property. If your



One of the advantages of leasing land is that you can set stands in areas you have pre-scouted.

lease is up and another party comes in and bids more money for it, you have the opportunity to match that bid and keep the lease. Also, when he signs up with HLN, the landowner agrees that your group will have the exclusive rights to hunt the property. Exceptions to this rule will be detailed in the property description on the site.

Lessees are not limited to hunting whitetails. Out West, for example, there are properties available that have elk and mule deer. Some people lease properties for waterfowl or upland bird hunting. HLN records show that demand is greatest for waterfowl- and deer-hunting areas. As a testament to client satisfaction, over 80 percent of all leases are renewed.

While hunting HLN land in southeastern Illinois, I met Mark Lyon, the area's HLN franchisee and an avid hunter. "We go out of our way to acquire rights to prime tracts of land, not land that's marginal," Lyon told me. "I know that as a serious hunter myself, I

wouldn't want to be hunting poor land, but only the best. That's one reason we work with our landowners to make it possible for lessees to create food plots and do some quality deer management. As long as it doesn't interfere with a farmer's crop plans, I've yet to see that be a problem."

This fall I'll definitely be back to the southeast Illinois farm where John and I had our close encounter in 2007. After I left, he and his crew took a couple of very nice bucks on film and had several other close encounters. While I was there, Brown and I found some scary-good rublines, and we know that the farmer will be planting corn in a certain field that sets up to be a redhot honeyhole. This summer, food plots will be planted and stand sites prepared. Come mid-October we'll start checking it out, and when the Halloween moon rises in the sky, we'll both be as nervous as a pair of young bird dogs when they see Daddy head for the gun cabinet.

If you're interested in learning more about how to obtain exclusive access to your own piece of hunting ground, check out the Hunting Lease Network, www.nationalhuntingleases.com.

For more information, please contact:

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