Introduction

The Royal Bighorn Lodge is located 23± miles south of Hardin, Montana, and is a little over a one-hour drive from Billings - Montana’s largest city. Consisting of 37± acres the property offers excellent sporting amenities in an end-of-the-road setting. Currently utilized as a private hunting/fishing camp retreat and base of operations, the property features approximately one-quarter mile of frontage on the Bighorn River - arguably one of the finest tailwater trout fisheries in the world. There are six cabins for guests and a central “lodge” building complete with commercial-style kitchen and bar, where the owners take meals and socialize about days in the field chasing trout and game birds. The property is managed and maintained by full-time, on-sight caretakers, ensuring excellent upkeep and maximum convenience for the owners. A private boat ramp adds to the convenience of using jet and drift boats to navigate the river. The river riparian area provides good cover habitat for both pheasants and Sharptail grouse, as well as whitetail deer, which are frequently seen on the acreage.
Introduction (Cont’d)

Due to the tailwater nature of the river, the Bighorn remains essentially ice-free in winter. This feature combined with the fact that the surrounding country has scattered farms growing small grains, sugar beets and corn, creates a major draw for waterfowl. The duck and goose hunting on the Bighorn is some of the finest that can be found anywhere. The opportunity to acquire deeded acreage in this locale is extremely rare, as the majority of land in this area is tribal-owned. For the avid upland wingshooter, waterfowler and fly fisherman looking for a smaller, low-maintentance property that offers a high-caliber sporting location, Royal Bighorn Lodge merits serious consideration.

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At an elevation of approximately 3,000 feet, Royal Bighorn Lodge consists of 37± deeded acres lying about 1.5 miles north of St. Xavier, Montana. The property is situated on the east bank of the Big Horn River with an estimated 1/4 mile of frontage. Aside from some landscaping and grass lawn around the buildings, the majority of the property consists of wetland and river riparian bottom land habitat - native grasses, various brush species, cattails, Russian olive and large cottonwood trees - providing good cover habitat for upland bird species and deer. The Lodge ownership is comprised of several like-minded people that relish the hunting/fishing lifestyle. These “members” reserve time slots at the Lodge throughout the year, using the facilities as a base of operations to pursue trout on the river, chase upland birds and hunt waterfowl.

Acreage
THE 37 ACRES VARIES FROM WATER FRONT TO HUNTABLE GRASS LAND.
Wildlife & Hunting

Some of Montana's best hunting opportunities are found in the southeast portion of the state. The mountains and plains comprising the region harbor big game species that include elk, whitetail and mule deer, antelope, black bear, mountain lion, and moose. Waterfowl and upland wingshooting is superb in this area with the possibility of decoying ducks and geese in the morning, then hunting for hungarian partridge, pheasant and grouse in the afternoon of the same day.

The Royal Bighorn Lodge supports a wildlife community that includes pheasant, sharptail grouse, whitetail deer, and a variety of waterfowl types. Given the limited hunting opportunities on the property due to acreage size, the owners also lease additional acreages in the immediate area to hunt on. The waterfowl hunting in this region is outstanding. The Bighorn River is a traditional major migratory route for the central flyway portion of Montana. Given the tailwater nature of the river, open water is available to birds even during the coldest portion of the hunting season. Ducks and geese migrating south from Canada find abundant sources of food in the agriculturally rich, Big Horn Valley. All of these factors lead up to huge numbers of birds using the area during the waterfowl season. Mallard, gadwall, widgeon and teal are the most common duck varieties with Canadian geese as the staples.

The Big Horn Valley also has a tremendous wild pheasant population - one of the best in the state - due to factors associated with climate and preferred food sources available, such as corn, beets and small grains. Native Sharptail grouse are also found in abundance in the area, as are Hungarian partridge. One cannot overstate the tremendous wingshooting options available in this area of Montana.

The Montana upland bird hunting season is one of the most generous in the country in terms of season length and bag limits. With the exception of pheasant, the general upland bird season runs from September 1 - January 1. The pheasant season runs from October 8 - January 1. Daily bag limits for pheasant, sharptail and huns are 3, 4 and 8 birds, respectively. On Crow tribal lands, the pheasant limit 4 birds daily. The waterfowl season runs from October 1 to October 9, then reopens on October 22 and runs to January 17 for ducks, and ends on January 25 for geese in the central flyway.
The main lodge is an open concept facility, consisting of a combined great room/dining area with large stone fireplace, newly remodeled kitchen and handicapped accessible restroom. It was constructed in 1994 and is approximately 1,152sqft. The layout emphasizes the river riparian setting which may be appreciated from the attached screened porch, from the cozy interior of the lodge which features large windows that focus on the river and wildlife activity that is in continual motion, or from the well-manicured irrigated lawn stretching to the river edge. The second building consists of six guest rooms/sleeping quarters laid out in motel fashion. This structure was built in 1989 and is a total of 1,998sqft. The rooms are of similar design, each equipped with a new bathroom, a queen and double bed. The complex has at its center, a shared laundry room, bird cleaning station, and storage accommodations for guest hunting and fishing equipment. The third building is the caretaker residence. This one-level structure is in good condition, having been well cared for and continually updated, and includes three bedrooms and two baths. The stand-alone garage offers a covered area to work on boats, hunting, and fishing equipment needing repair, and currently is set up for decoy and hunting equipment storage. As well, there are a few other outbuildings and dog kennel facilities on the property. Royal Bighorn Lodge is being offered turn-key, with all furnishings and appliances, as well as a few of the drift boats and jet sleds utilized by the owners for fishing and hunting.

Improvements

The three main structures on the property are clustered together, overlooking a beautiful stretch of the Bighorn River.
Southeast Montana is synonymous with big, wide-open country, contrasting landscapes, historical richness, premier recreational opportunities, friendly people, and agriculture. The area displays varying geography; productive irrigated river valleys, timbered foothill and bench country, large expanses of rolling farm ground, prairie and rangeland, and isolated mountain ranges. The region is the ancestral lands of several Native American Indian tribes, including the Crow, Cheyenne and Sioux, who hunted the Mule deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, Big Horn sheep and the millions of bison that inhabited the area. Lewis and Clark passed through this area in 1806, navigating the Yellowstone River on the return journey from their exploration of the Louisiana Purchase and quest to find an inland passage to the Pacific Ocean. In 1807, Fort Remon Ramon was established at the confluence of the Bighorn and Yellowstone Rivers, paving the way for white settlers to venture into the area. First established in 1865, Big Horn County was one of the nine original counties that comprised the Montana Territory, and at that time, ran from the Canadian border to Wyoming, comprising most of eastern Montana. Reorganized in 1913, the county now is the fifth largest Montana in land area, comprising some 3.2 Million acres or 5,000 square miles, and is sparsely populated with only 2.5 people per square mile, making it one of the least populated counties in Montana. Approximately 65% of the county is Crow Indian Nation lands. Today, agriculture and mining is far and way the primary economic activity in the region. Once part of a gigantic inland sea, there are vast coal deposits in southeast Montana, although most are located east of the Big Horn basin. Agriculture in the area revolves around commercial cattle ranches, as well as large-scale feed crop - alfalfa, corn, sugar beets and grain farming operations. Prominent mountain ranges in the region include the Big Horn, Prior and Wolf Ranges. Major drainages in the area include the Bighorn and Yellowstone Rivers.

Billings, the largest community in the region with a population of some 110,000, is the largest city in Montana and is considered the major trade center for all of southeast Montana serving some one-half million people. Billings offers all major shopping and service related opportunities, many small specialty businesses, art galleries, historic buildings, sporting goods stores, fine restaurants, and myriad cultural amenities. The city is home to the Yellowstone Art Museum, Zoo Montana, the Metra Park Arena, and two state universities - Rocky Mountain College and MSU-Billings. Billings Logan International Airport is the second largest in Montana, providing jet service to the area with numerous arrivals and departures daily, facilitated by seven commercial carriers - Delta, Delta Connection, Alaska, United, United Express, Cape Air and Allegiant Airlines. One FBO also caters to private aircraft.
Hardin

Located on Interstate-90 and with a population of some 3,500 residents, Hardin, Montana provides most services for the surrounding farming community and provides both elementary and high schools as well as a hospital.
Live Water

Montana’s trout streams are legendary in quantity, quality and scale, and the state arguably contains more premier water than could probably ever be fished in a lifetime. Seven rivers in Montana have the distinction of being considered the best of the best; designated “Blue Ribbon” status. While the majority of great trout rivers in Montana geographically lie west of Billings, there is one very notable exception.
Situated in a region of Montana where the fisheries primarily consist of warm water species such as crappie, smallmouth bass, catfish, walleye, sauger and northern pike, the Bighorn is recognized in serious trout fishing circles as one of the finest tailwater trout fisheries in the world. Originating in the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming, the river flows north through two major reservoir impoundments on its 460 mile journey to the confluence with the Yellowstone River east of Custer, Montana. At the town of Ft. Smith, Montana, the river is backed up by Yellowtail Dam forming the 70-mile long Bighorn Lake, which extends south into Wyoming. Yellowtail Dam was built in the 1960’s to create a hydro-electric, flood control and irrigation reservoir. As a beneficial by-product of Yellowtail Dam, the river downstream began a transition from a fishery dominated by warm-water species to the world-class trout fishery that exists today. The Bighorn was originally stocked with rainbow and cutthroat trout in the mid-60’s; brown trout were native to the system. Today the river supports a self-sustain population of wild brown and rainbow trout, with populations densities superior to almost every other trout stream in Montana. With a population dynamic of roughly 60% Browns and 40% rainbows, the upper stretches of the river are estimated to support as many as 6,000 trout per mile - almost twice that of Montana's Madison River, which is considered one of the most prolific freestone trout streams on the planet. The Bighorn River is a tailwater fishery, that is, the river is released through a bottom-discharging dam, ensuring cold water flows in the summer and warmer water discharge in the winter. With a relatively stable year-round water temperature, the aquatic biomass - insects and fish in the river - tend to proliferate year-round. Average size of Bighorn trout is considered to be in the 14-16 inch range, with many fish running close to 20 inches, and the big fish being as large as 28 inches. The high alkalinity and consistent water temperature support a very diverse and prolific food base for trout, that consists of midges, various mayfly and caddis and sow bugs, aquatic worms, leeches and minnow beetles and ants are also important food items that months. Insect hatches on the river are intense, in both The river is open to angling all year, but April through of the year are midges, followed by Blue-winged Olive stoneflies, Tricorythodes mayflies, and ending with the of available food, trout can be very selective at times, the angler to be completely dialed in with regard to size, shape and color. On other occasions, trout feed opportunistically and will take a variety of fly presentations, including emerger, adult and spinner patterns, nymphs and streamers. Whether high-sticking riffle water with nymphs for opportunistic trout, fishing for selective surface feeders with emergers or duns, or throwing weighted streamer patterns into bank runs, the fly fisherman will find a variety of conditions to pursue trout while employing a multitude of skill sets and tactics. The 35-mile stretch of river downstream from Yellowtail Dam is considered the most prolific trout water, with the upper 13 miles receiving the vast majority of angling pressure. The lower part of the river has fewer fish per mile, but the trout tend to be bigger on average. This lower portion of the river is characterized by deeper bank runs, riffles and pool tailouts, and numerous islands which create opportunities to fish side-channels. While the upper river runs clear year-round, the lower river can experience more fluctuating water levels and some occasional turbidity issues due to irrigation return. There are 5 fishing accesses on the 35-mile upper stretch of the river. The Royal Bighorn Lodge is located about 20 highway miles downstream from the Afterbay Fishing Access at Ft. Smith, 17 miles downstream of the Lind/3-Mile Fishing Access, and 8 miles from the Bighorn Fishing Access. The Mallards Landing and Two Leggins Fishing Accesses are downstream of the property. Strictly looking at river miles, the property is situated roughly 16 miles downstream of Yellowtail Dam.
The seller will convey/transfer all appurtenant water and mineral rights, if any, at closing, however the seller makes no representations or warranties concerning current status or validity of any of these rights. Independent investigation of both these items is recommended to any prospective purchaser.
Other Recreation

Southeast Montana offers an overwhelming bounty of natural resources. The area is blessed with millions of acres of mountain ranges and forests, river riparian ecosystems, vast expanses of prairie and plains, and a wildlife community that in terms of density and variety, most likely exceeds any other region in the continental United States. Whether the pursuit is fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, or any number of other similar activities, the possibilities are limited only by the imagination, and thousands of people flock to Big Sky Country every year to experience outdoor pursuits amidst some of the most magnificent scenery found anywhere in the world.

In addition to trout fishing on the Bighorn, alternative fishing opportunities for smallmouth bass, walleye, sauger, catfish, pike and paddlefish can be found in Bighorn Lake and the Yellowstone River, about a 20 and 55 minute drive, respectively from the Royal Bighorn Lodge. A marina with boat ramps, seasonal boat storage and boat rentals are located at the dam. As well, there are many state parks, recreation areas and historical venues to explore in the area - like the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument and the Bighorn Lake National Monument. Skiing opportunities at Red lodge Mountain are only 46 miles southwest from Billings. The region also offers countless acres of public lands in the form of National Forest, State of Montana and Bureau of Land Management that is easily accessible to hikers, campers, horse enthusiasts, and other outdoor adventurers.
Summary
Royal Bighorn Lodge combines an end-of-the-road location, live water, existing improvements, and high-end sporting attributes, into a compact and easy to maintain property. The property is perfectly suited for the outdoor enthusiast looking for a private or group hunting and fishing camp, that is located within reasonable proximity to excellent air service and all service and shopping amenities. The facility is being offered turn-key for a smooth and convenient transition for a new owner. The caretakers are even amenable to staying on, given the right set of circumstances. Deeded acreage available for purchase at the southern end of the Bighorn Valley is relatively scarce, and this acreage represents an exciting and unique purchase opportunity at an excellent price point.

OFFERING PRICE: $700,000
TAXES: $9,082 IN 2018

CONTACT
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Royal Bighorn Lodge - Aerial Map

*Maps are for visual aid only accuracy is not guaranteed.*
Royal Bighorn Lodge Location Map

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