

# A PLACE TO HUNT

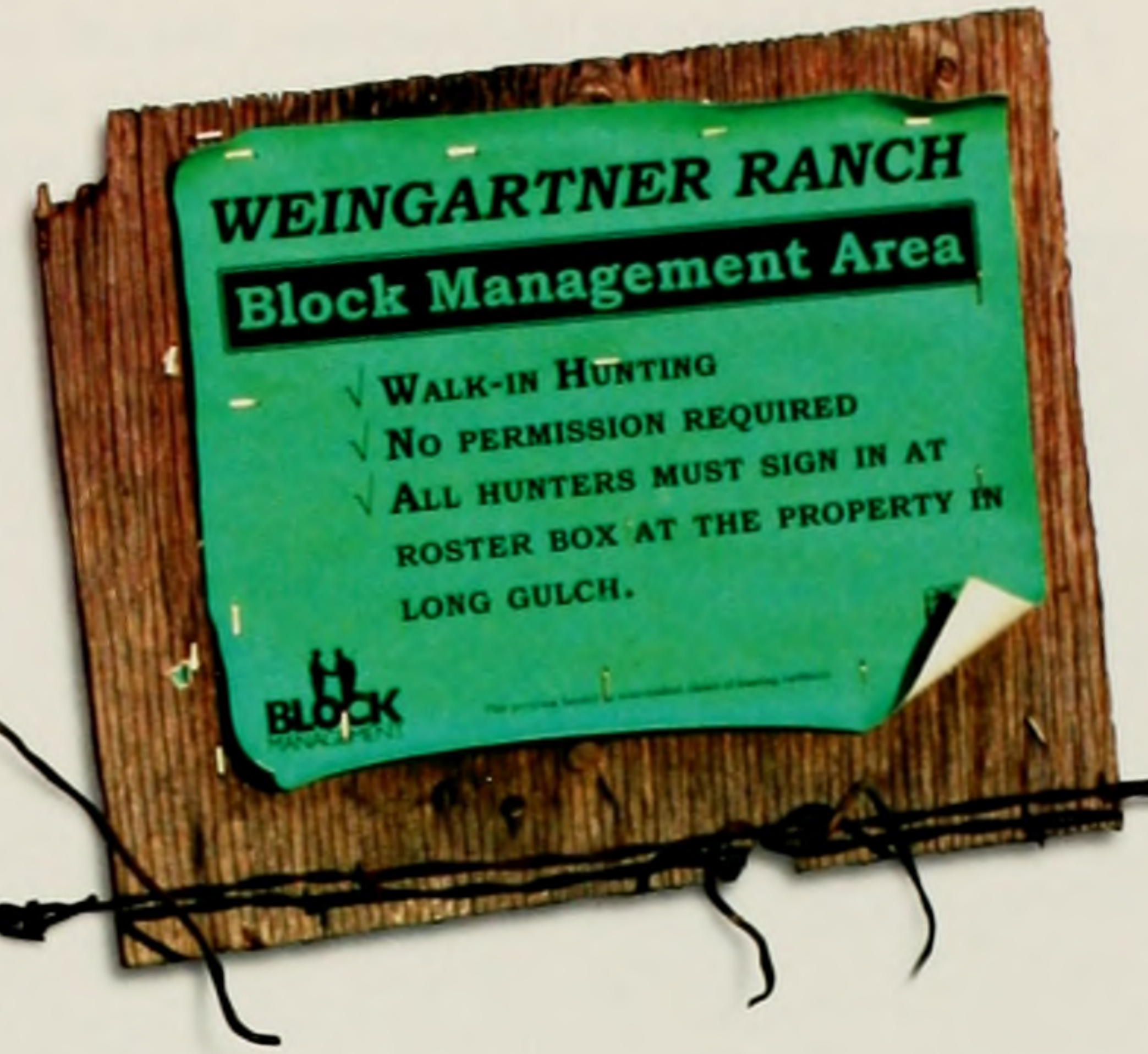


PHOTO ESSAY BY DALE C. SPARTAS

I grew up out East, and the places I used to hunt when I was a kid are all gone now, developed and turned into housing and shopping malls and golf courses. What Montana has with its Block Management Program is incredibly valuable, because it provides people with a place to hunt—lots of places to hunt—while giving something back to the landowner.

These are photographs I've taken over the years of block management areas, hunters on BMAs, and block management cooperators. I hope that by looking at these images, people will see why this program is so important for preserving Montana's hunting heritage.

—DCS



◀ Hunter Mike Ross, rancher Daryl Stutterheim, and FWP regional block management coordinator Coleen O'Rourke discuss which areas of Stutterheim's ranch are open to public hunting.

▲ Block management opens more than 8.5 million acres of private property and isolated public land to free public hunting for deer, elk, antelope, upland birds, and more.

- ▼ FWP helps landowners manage public hunting on property enrolled as block management areas. Department staff install hunter sign-in boxes and help mark BMA boundaries. They also provide landowners with signs, permission books, and area maps, and they give hunters information on ranch rules and provide maps showing area boundaries. On some BMAs, hunters administer their own permission, allowing the landowner to tend to chores. On others, hunters need to get permission directly from the landowner.



- ▲ Many block management areas also offer big game hunting opportunities for elk and other animals moving out of higher mountain country ahead of winter storms. Whether it's in the mountains or grasslands, wetlands or foothills, the Block Management Program provides hunting access for thousands of hunters each year. Use the program like a menu to sample the type of hunting experience you want—and then get out there!

▼ Montana's prairies and croplands offer hunters a wide variety of block management hunting opportunities for pheasants, sharptails, and other upland birds.



▲ Waterfowlers and others who pursue game along rivers will find more riparian block management areas than they could hunt in a lifetime.



  
**BLOCK  
MANAGEMENT**

▶ A major goal of the Block Management Program is to preserve Montana's hunting heritage by providing residents and visitors, young and old, with a place to hunt.