



The Ethics of Big Bore Hunting: Power, Precision, and Humane Kills

Few topics in the hunting world generate as much discussion as ethics. Every responsible hunter shares the same core objective: a clean, quick, and humane harvest. The equipment we choose plays a significant role in achieving that goal, and in many hunting scenarios, big-bore firearms offer a compelling ethical advantage.

Big-bore rifles are often misunderstood as simply “more power.” In reality, when paired with

skill and discipline, they represent something more important: confidence in terminal performance and the ability to end a hunt quickly and responsibly.

At [Big Horn Armory](#), that philosophy is central to everything we build.

**Ethics Begin With
Responsibility**

Ethical hunting starts long before a shot is fired. It begins with preparation, understanding the capabilities of your firearm, and selecting appropriate equipment for the game you pursue.

Responsible hunters prioritize:

- Shot placement
- Adequate cartridge power
- Reliable firearm performance
- Understanding realistic engagement distances

The goal is simple: minimize suffering and maximize the likelihood of an immediate, humane kill.

That's where big-bore firearms enter the conversation.

Why Big Bore Matters

Big-bore cartridges—such as .454 Casull, .460 S&W, or .500 S&W—deliver significant bullet weight and energy. That combination translates to deep penetration, large wound channels, and decisive terminal performance when shots are placed correctly.

From an ethical standpoint, this matters because it helps reduce the

likelihood of wounded game escaping and suffering unnecessarily.

In practical terms, big-bore rifles offer several advantages:

1. Greater Penetration

Large, heavy bullets maintain momentum through bone and dense tissue. This is especially important when pursuing large or tough animals such as elk, moose, bison, bear, or large hogs.

2. Immediate Energy Transfer

Big-bore rounds deliver substantial energy on impact, increasing the probability of rapid incapacitation when vital organs are hit.

3. Reliability at Practical Hunting Distances

Most ethical hunting occurs within moderate distances where shot placement can be controlled with confidence. Big-bore rifles excel in this domain.

Power Without Precision Is Not Ethical

While big-bore rifles offer tremendous capability, power alone does not make a hunt ethical. The hunter's skill remains the deciding factor.

Ethical big-bore hunting requires:

- Practicing regularly with your rifle
- Understanding recoil management
- Knowing your effective range
- Passing on marginal shots

Big-bore cartridges are designed to reward disciplined shooters, not compensate for poor judgment.



Lever-Action Heritage Meets Modern Performance

Big Horn Armory rifles were built with this philosophy in mind: deliver exceptional power with the reliability and control hunters need in the field.

The [flagship Model 89 lever-action rifle](#), chambered in .500 S&W Magnum, represents the pinnacle of modern big-bore lever gun design. It

was engineered specifically to handle the massive cartridge safely and reliably, combining classic Browning-inspired lever action mechanics with modern metallurgy and CNC precision manufacturing.

The result is a rifle capable of delivering serious stopping power in a fast-handling platform, ideal for large game or dangerous game situations where decisive performance matters.

Other rifles in the Big Horn Armory lineup extend that philosophy:

- [Model 90 \(.460 S&W\)](#): tremendous reach and energy for large North American game.
- [Model 90A \(.454 Casull\)](#): versatile power in a manageable package.
- [AR500 \(.500 Auto Max\)](#): a semi-auto platform delivering massive .50-caliber performance for hunters who prefer modern ergonomics.

The AR500, chambered in the proprietary .500 Auto Max, was designed to bring .50-caliber big-bore power to the AR platform while maintaining practical hunting capability.

Every rifle Big Horn Armory produces is built around the idea that power should be paired with reliability and precision, because ethical hunting demands both.

Matching the Rifle to the Hunt

Choosing a big-bore firearm does not mean every hunt requires maximum caliber. Ethical hunters select tools based on the specific conditions of the hunt.

Situations where big-bore rifles shine include:

- Dense timber hunting
- Dangerous game encounters
- Large-bodied animals
- Follow-up shot scenarios
- Close to moderate range hunting

In these environments, the combination of large-caliber impact and fast follow-up capability—especially in a lever gun—can make a meaningful difference.



Respect for the Animal

At its core, ethical hunting is about respect.

Respect for wildlife.

Respect for the land.

Respect for the responsibility hunters carry.

Choosing equipment that delivers decisive, humane performance reflects that respect. Big-bore rifles are not about excess—they are about certainty.

When the moment arrives, and the shot presents itself, the ethical hunter wants one thing above all else: a clean harvest and a quick end.

That's the standard responsible hunters hold themselves to.

And it's the standard Big Horn Armory builds for.

Learn More About Big Horn Armory Rifles

Big Horn Armory specializes in powerful, precision-built rifles designed for hunters who demand serious performance in the field—from

classic big-bore lever guns to modern .50-caliber platforms.

Explore the full lineup and learn more about our rifles at:

<https://www.bighornarmory.com>.



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