



MICHAEL LEON WADE

Mike Wade of Big Piney, Wyoming continued his journey of exploring whatever lies over the next ridge and departed his earthly home on May 21, 2019.

He was born November 17, 1958 in Douglas, Wyoming to Everett (Jack) and Ellen Benshoof Wade, and grew up on a cattle ranch homesteaded by his grandfather near Prairie Center, Wyoming. He attended the Prairie Center School and went on to graduate from Lingle-Ft. Laramie High School. Mike married Bobbie Jo Hladky, daughter of Bob and Shirley Hladky of Lusk, Wyoming on June 15, 1979, and they have two daughters, Amanda Kelsey and Emily Mariah.

From a young age, Mike was intrigued with hunting, wildlife, and most especially, the mountain wilderness west of his childhood home on the prairie. His first elk hunting trips with his dad and brother Pat were on Randolph Mountain in the Buffalo River valley, with a view of the Tetons to the west. After high school graduation in 1977, Mike returned to the Tetons to begin the life of a wilderness packer and hunting guide. His early experiences were in the Teton Wilderness, departing with packstrings of mules and horses from the Turpin Meadows trailhead to work full seasons of pack trips into the upper Yellowstone country and wilderness elk hunting camp at Pass Creek. His career also took him into the Washakie, Shoshone, and Bridger wilderness areas, as well as the Thorofare River, Greys River, and the Wyoming Range. He was truly in his element in the wild mountain country and the wilderness was sacred to him. A highly respected antelope and deer guide over a vast part of central and eastern Wyoming, he spent many years trapping fur in the winter as another part of his livelihood.

With his wife Bobbi, Mike started his own outfitting business in 1988 west of Big Piney, Wyoming and continued as a hunting and pack trip guide for the next twelve years. During this same time, he guided snowmobile tours out of Jackson, Wyoming, taking guests into Yellowstone National Park, around Togwotee Pass, the Gros Ventre, and Granite Creek areas. In 2000, he came up with the concept for High Wild & Lonesome Cowboy Adventures, an active horseback riding adventure company, later renamed Blue Sky Sage

Horseback Riding Retreats. At the time of his death, he and Bobbi were preparing to enter their 20th season of operation.

Mike spent his lifetime as a horseman. He worked with hundreds of horses throughout the course of his career, and had a special affection for mules. He owned half interest in a mammoth jack for a time and raised several nice mules out of his dad's broodmares. As his career progressed, Mike sought out opportunities to learn a better way with horses, and he adopted the horsemanship philosophies of Ray Hunt, Buck Brannaman, and Kevin Stallings. A great teacher to the many riders he led on rides with Blue Sky Sage, Mike was well-respected for his skills and knowledge. He had the same approach to farrier work, which he enjoyed, and his practice with horseshoeing led him to learn the Gene Ovnicek methods of natural balance hoof trimming and shoeing.

A man of many and diverse interests and a highly evolved seeker of the truth, Mike's passions included hunting, reading, history, Native American spirituality and being in the mountains.

Mike is survived by his life partner/wife Bobbi of Big Piney, Wyoming; daughter Amanda (Dusty) Stath of Casper, Wyoming; Emily Wade of Big Piney and the Alaskan wilderness. Sisters Beverly (Tim) Harmon, Portland, Oregon and Jeanine Wade, Jay Em, Wyoming; brothers Patrick (JoAnn) Wade of Hat Creek, Wyoming, and Shawn Wade, of Jay Em; nieces Bethany Taylor of Boise, Idaho and Sarah Ankenbrand of Spokane, Washington; nephews Joseph Overstreet of Loveland, Colorado and Monte Wade of Kaycee, Wyoming; great-niece Jordan Overstreet and great-nephew Gavin Ankenbrand. He was preceded in death by his parents and his grandparents.

A Remembrance Gathering will be held at the Blue Sky Sage camp at the Little Sandy Crossing on the Lander Cutoff, Sublette County Rd. 23-132, 35 miles southeast of Boulder, Wyoming or 22 miles northwest of South Pass, Wyoming. Memorials can be made to the Wyoming Wilderness Association or to the family.

Cremation has taken place with a private scattering of his ashes later in the fall.