Seneca makes Outdoor Life magazine's top 200 towns

Ranking based on sporting opportunities, quaility of life; Lewiston, Idaho, takes top honor

Staff Reports

NEW YORK, N. Y. — Outdoor Life magazine ranks the top towns for hunters and anglers to live in its June/July 2009 issue, and Seneca has made the list at No. 47.

The magazine used extensive data to score 200 towns on available sporting opportunities and quality-of-life for its second annual ranking.

"Outdoorsmen want world-class hunting and fishing, but like everyone else, they also want to have a high quality of life," says Todd Smith, editor-in-chief of Outdoor Life. "The towns on this list offer the best of the outdoors as well as decent homes and schools and good-paying jobs. They are truly dream towns for sportsmen."

Last year's second-place finisher, Lewiston, Idaho, moved up one place to score the top spot on Outdoor Life's 2009 list. Lewiston heads a list of three Idaho towns in the top 10 — more than any other state. Lewiston's score was elevated by the town's access to world-class hunting and fishing, as well as the economy and industry of the Pacific Coast and Asia.

Marquette, Mich., the easternmost town in the top ten, jumped five spots to No. 2 on the list. At No. 3 (tied), Rawlins is one of two Wyoming towns in the top 10; Sheridan, which moved down four spots to No. 7 due in part to rising cost of living, is the second.

To determine the 2009 "Best Places to Live," Outdoor Life started with the 200 towns from the previous year's list and added 50 additional locations from readers and colleague suggestions. Towns were ranked based on more than 20 criteria, with Outdoor-related factors given slightly heavier emphasis in computing the results than Quality-of-Life factors.

Outdoor factors considered included gun-friendliness of each town's state, huntable and fishable species nearby, the town's proximity to public hunting land and fishable waters, and the potential for taking a trophy-caliber game animal or fish nearby.

Quality-of-Life factors considered included population growth since 2000, median household income, median home value, cost of living, unemployment rate, mean commute time and amenities (schools, hospitals). Certain socio-economic categories were weighted more than others to determine the overall Quality-of-Life score, which was combined with the overall Outdoor score to reach each town's rank.

For detailed rankings including all 200 towns visit http://www.outdoorlife.com/bestplacestolive.

Type "top 200 towns" in the search box. Then click on the first story shown to get the complete list of 200 towns.