

# Rodeo stars plead guilty to poaching

BY MURRAY CRAWFORD [ADVOCATE STAFF](#)

A Central Alberta man soon to be inducted into the Canadian Rodeo Hall of Fame and his son, a rodeo star in his own right, have pleaded guilty to poaching a moose.

Gregory George Cassidy, 58, and Cody Allan Cassidy, 34, pleaded guilty to several poaching related offences on Monday in Red Deer provincial court.

The two previously entered guilty pleas in Stettler provincial court, but the offences were waived in to Red Deer provincial court for sentencing.

Cody Cassidy pleaded guilty to three charges, including hunting without a licence, possession of wildlife and controlled animals, and providing false or misleading information.

Greg Cassidy pleaded guilty to possession of wildlife and controlled animals.

Greg is a four-time steer wrestling Canadian Rodeo Champion and is a Class of 2015 inductee into the Canadian Rodeo Hall of Fame.

Cody is a three-time steer wrestling Canadian Rodeo Champion.

Cody operates a guiding and outfitting hunting business based out of Donalda called Big Knife Outfitters.

On Sept. 27, 2013, his father Greg — who volunteered with his son's business — took a client who was visiting Alberta from North Dakota on a bow hunt. Crown prosecutor Brittany Ashmore said they had obtained a non-resident alien wildlife identification number for their client.

Big Knife Outfitters had permits to lead guided hunting expeditions on land in four Alberta Wildlife Management Areas, three of which were in Central Alberta near Donalda, Forestburg and Stettler respectively, and one in the Peace Valley area, close to Worsley.

The permits they had allowed for deer hunting in the three Central Alberta wildlife management areas and for moose hunting in the Peace Valley area.

## **POACHING:** *One arrow*

Greg and the client were hunting at one of the Central Alberta locations when they spotted a moose. The client shot the moose with one arrow, which did not kill the moose.

Cody joined the hunt and they tracked the moose for three hours.

When they caught up with the moose, they shot it with a few more arrows, killing it.

The moose was tagged and sent to a taxidermist. It was only when Fish and Wildlife officers went through the outfitting records filed by Big Knife

Out-fitters after the 2013 hunting season that they discovered the moose was killed on land the company did not have a permit to hunt moose on.

Ashmore and defence counsel Mark Grotski had a joint application on sentence for Judge Darrell Riemer on most of the offences. Cody received a \$16,000 fine and a one-year judicial order preventing him from obtaining an outfitting-guide permit.

Greg received a one-year judicial order preventing him from obtaining an outfitting-guide permit and a \$3,500.

Ashmore also sought a two-year recreational hunting suspension for Cody, but Grotski argued against such an order because the offences occurred while Cody was hunting in a commercial capacity and not recreationally.

Riemer issued a six-month recreational hunting ban.

In his decision, Riemer cited Cody's history of these types of offences, including guiding on private property without permission, failing to post signs in an area of black bear bait, unauthorized hunting and discharging a firearm on private property without permission.

The last two offences occurred around the same time, but Cody pleaded guilty to those charges in June 2014 and was given a one-year judicial order preventing him from obtaining an outfitting-guide permit that lasted until June 2015.

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