

When the Glove Fits

On October 29th, 2016, a Bonnyville District Wildlife Officer was conducting a hunter compliance patrol of Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) 514, north of La Corey, Alberta. During the patrol, the Officer located evidence of a moose kill on vacant Crown Land. The Officer photographed the kill site and the associated vehicle tire tread pattern, collected DNA samples, and a pair of leather work gloves left at the location with Curtis .W written on the cuff.

The subsequent investigation led Wildlife Officers to Curtis WENTZ. A query of the Active Works Recreational Licence database was conducted revealing that WENTZ possessed a 2016 Resident Antlerless Moose Special Licence valid only in WMU 501. The Wildlife Officer attended the WENTZ residence near Cherry Grove, Alberta, observing a vehicle tire tread pattern on the driveway entrance consistent with the vehicle tire tread pattern photographed at the kill site.

Further investigation and interview identified that on October 27th, 2016, WENTZ, Gene BALLACHAY, and Jason CATTERSON were hunting White-tailed Deer within WMU 514; at approximately 1030 a.m. the three men located an Antlerless Moose. WENTZ decided to kill the moose, also telling BALLACHAY he could shoot it. BALLACHAY fired one shot and WENTZ fired two shots at the moose killing it. Wildlife Management Unit 514 does not have season for the harvested of Antlerless Moose. WENTZ attached his WMU 501 Antlerless Moose Special Licence tag to the moose in an attempt to cover the illegal kill. Wildlife Officers seized and recovered the skinned out moose carcass from the Wentz property, charging the three men accordingly.

On March 28th, 2017, in Bonnyville Provincial Court, Curtis WENTZ, Gene BALLACHAY and Jason CATTERSON entered guilty pleas and were assessed the following penalties:

Curtis WENTZ

- Hunting During a Closed Season - \$1,897.00 fine and 1 year recreational hunting suspension.
- Unlawful Possession of Wildlife - \$977.00 fine.

Gene BALLACHAY

- Hunt During a Closed Season - \$1,552.00 fine and 1 year recreational hunting suspension.

Jason CATTERSON

- Unlawful Possession of Wildlife - \$345.00 fine.



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