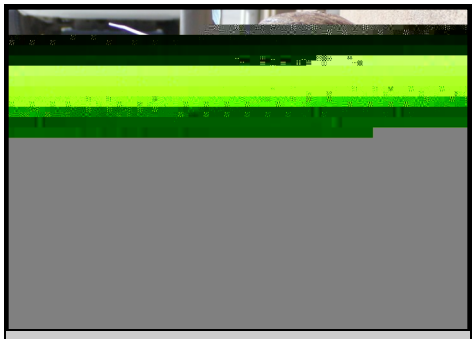
SHEEP RIDGE BIGHORN RAM POACHING



Poached bighorn sheep ram

Information received following a rash of bighorn sheep poachings near Dubois in November 2006 resulted in the conviction of a Dubois man for his involvement with killing a ram illegally and an arrest warrant being issued for a Tennessee man alleged to have played the major role in the crime.

In a recent plea agreement with the Fremont County Attorneyôs Office, Kelly J. Grove, 22, pleaded gui without a license and waste/abandonment of bighorn sheep. In addition, the investigation revealed Grove, who currently works on a drilling rig, was involved in the illegal take of an elk and deer. He also pleaded guilty to two counts each of waste of a big game animal and false oath to obtain resident big game licenses.

Ninth Circuit Court Judge Robert Denhardt fined Grove $2,490, ordered him to pay $1,500 restitution for the ram and revoked his hunting privileges for three years. In addition, he was sentenced to probation for one year, a 30-day suspended jail sentence and ordered to forfeit a .243 bolt action rifle used in the crimes.

The primary defendant in this bighorn sheep case, Roger E. McKean, 26, of Knoxville, TN did not appear for his court appearance, nor did his attorney. A warrant was issued for his arrest and he faces three charges for his role in the crime, including knowingly taking a ram out of season and without a license, waste and abandonment of a bighorn sheep and taking a bighorn sheep from a vehicle. McKean also faces five charges for violations involving an illegally killed doe mule deer and has outstanding violations on the Wind River Indian Reservation regarding two antelope that were illegally killed.

As a result of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department requesting information about four bighorns being illegally killed in area 10 of the Whiskey Mountains, a tip was received that Grove may have been involved in illegally killing a ram. On Dec. 9, 2006, Dubois Game Warden Cole Thompson and Lander Investigator Scott Browning were unable to locate Grove, but discovered blood on his pick-up truckôs spare tire. The b by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department laboratory to be from a bighorn ram.

Continued

Ram carcass on Sheep Ridge at Dubois

Blood on spare tire rim