

On the early morning of September 20, Afton Game Warden James Hobbs was dispatched to a call from an individual who had been awakened by the sound of a gunshot at about 5:30 a.m. They caller saw a car out the window and someone in the field nearby. On his way to the location, Warden Hobbs received a call from the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office informing him that a deputy in the area had made contact with the suspect at his residence nearby. The suspect told the deputy he had been heading to work and saw a 5x5 mule deer in his headlights. He turned around and shot the deer from the road. The deer had been shot in the spine and was paralyzed but still alive. The suspect had returned home to get his truck and returned to the deer. He dragged the live deer to his truck and loaded it by himself. Warden Hobbs arrived on scene and immediately put the deer down. He interviewed the suspect and determined that the deer had been shot from the road by use of artificial light before legal shooting hours and had not been tagged. The suspect told Warden Hobbs that he thought shooting hours were just discretionary as long as you could see the animal through the scope. While seizing the gun out of the suspect's car, Warden Hobbs and the deputy could smell marijuana and located some in the car. The suspect was arrested and taken to jail in Kemmerer, where he was charged with the wildlife violations and possession of marijuana. He pled guilty to all charges and was fined \$1,005 for the wildlife violations and \$255 for the drug charge. He also lost his hunting privileges through the end of 2018 and was placed on probation for two years.