Elk Wasted by Florida Man

An interesting case of shooting from the road, trespass and waste of a cow elk was investigated and solved in September. A call to Buffalo Game Warden Jim Seeman by an archery hunter on the evening of September 13 began the investigation. The archer had observed a vehicle driving slowly on the Hazelton Road in Elk Hunt Area 49 and stop mostly out of sight. Within seconds the archer heard three gun shots. Knowing that the shooter could not have exited the vehicle, the archer drove to the location and recorded the license plate of the Florida vehicle, which was parked in the same spot with no one around. Warden Seeman arrived at the location about an hour later but no one was there. At 6:30 the next morning, Warden Seeman was back, assuming the shooter had hit something and would return to recover the animal. Sure enough, the white Florida vehicle was at the same location, but when Seeman asked the occupant if he was looking for his elk from the night before, the man said he was just there taking photographs. Warden Seeman questioned the Florida man, but he would not admit to anything and left the area. A short time later while looking for a dead elk, Warden Seeman noticed orange flagging on the right-of-way fence leading from the road up a ridge about 300 yards. He searched and still could not find a dead animal. Later that evening, Warden Seeman went to where the Florida man was staying and noticed orange flagging on the console of his vehicle. At that time, the man finally admitted to shooting from the county road and trespassing but not hitting an elk. He was issued citations for the violations before returning to Florida. Two days later, some hunters found a dead cow elk within 200 yards of the orange flagging on the fence. The Florida man was sent an additional citation for waste of big game and ordered to appear in court in Johnson County. Through an agreement reached with the county attorney's office, the subject lost his hunting privileges for one year and paid a $750 fine.