

Big Fines For Illegal Elk

Robert F. Mason, 53, ranch manager in Tie Siding, was assessed \$18,000 in fines and restitution by Albany County Circuit Court Judge Robert Castor and lost his hunting privileges for 6 years for the illegal killing of two trophy-class elk near Laramie in 2008.

Laramie game warden Bill Haley received a tip, that, in 2008, Mason had illegally killed a large bull elk during the archery season. Haley uncovered enough information to obtain a search warrant and, with the help of fellow wildlife officers John Demaree, Kelly Todd, and Jason Sherwood, found the antlers of the elk. The search revealed Mason had also illegally harvested a second bull in 2008.



Haley's investigation showed that Mason held a general license when the elk were taken, but the two elk were killed in elk hunt area 8, which is a limited-quota area where general elk licenses are not valid.

Haley said Mason had shot the larger elk, which was scored at 394 points on the Boone and Crockett trophy measuring system, on one of his hunting trips, but didn't find the animal until a week later. In the meantime, he had killed another trophy-class elk. Because he was hunting in a limited-quota area with a general license, both of the kills were illegal. Mason was charged with taking a trophy-class big game

animal without a proper license and an over-limit of elk.

Haley said it was a terrible waste that two trophy class animals were removed from the population, depriving legal hunters of an opportunity to harvest a once-in-a-lifetime trophy.

"Judge Castor remains a strong supporter of wildlife law enforcement efforts," Haley said. "Hopefully, the fines levied will send a message to illegal hunters that their actions will not be tolerated."

