



NEWS RELEASE

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**YAKUTAT MEN, MISSOURI MAN SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT
FOR ILLEGAL BROWN BEAR GUIDING AND WITNESS TAMPERING**

Anchorage, Alaska – United States Attorney Karen L. Loeffler announced that two Yakutat men and a Missouri man were sentenced in federal court in Anchorage for illegal brown bear guiding and witness tampering.

On August 24, 2011, David M. Demers, 56, and Reginald D. Krkovich, 67, both of Yakutat, Alaska, and Daniel Lee Hertzog, 52, a resident of Pleasant Hill, Missouri, were sentenced by United States District Judge Timothy M. Burgess.

Demers was sentenced to pay a fine of \$5,000, forfeit his hunting rifle and was placed on three years probation with a no hunting condition as well as six months home confinement, for conspiring to violate the Lacey Act and witness tampering.

Krkovich was sentenced to a term of three years probation, no hunting for the three-year term and ordered to pay a fine of \$10,000, for a felony violation of the Lacey Act and a felony violation of witness tampering.

Hertzog was sentenced to two years probation, a fine of \$10,000, no hunting for two years and forfeiture of the illegally killed bear and his hunting rifle, for committing a violation of the Lacey Act.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven E. Skrocki, who prosecuted the case, Demers and Krkovich admitted that they conspired with each other to illegally guide and transport two Missouri hunters for brown bear. Both later tampered with one of the non-resident hunters by calling him and asking the hunter to destroy evidence.

Skrocki informed the court during these proceedings that Krkovich and Demers, neither of whom was a registered guide, transporter or outfitter, conspired with each other to assist Missouri residents Daniel and Jerry Hertzog in the illegal take of a brown bear in 2007. Skrocki explained that in September 2007, the Hertzogs cancelled a contracted hunt after receiving negative reports of the contracted guides' services. Krkovich offered to let Daniel Hertzog use his recently acquired brown bear tag, while Demers acted as an unlicensed transporter for the groups gear. Over a period of several days, Krkovich and Demers were present in the field, specifically the Esker Stream area of Wrangell-St. Elias National Preserve, when Daniel Hertzog killed a brown bear. As part of his plea, Krkovich admitted that the brown

bear was killed by Daniel Hertzog who then, with Krkovich's knowledge, used Krkovich's bear tag to tag the brown bear. In connection with his plea of guilty, Krkovich admitted to falsely tagging the bear with his tag and providing false information to the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game for stating falsely on a brown bear sealing certificate that he (Krkovich) shot the brown bear. For his part, Demers admitted to acting as an unlicensed transporter carrying gear for the hunting party to the field.

As to the second count of witness tampering, Krkovich and Demers admitted to contacting Daniel Hertzog by phone on several occasions with the intention to corruptly persuade him not to cooperate with federal agents investigating the case and to conceal incriminating evidence.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service led the investigation of this case with significant the support of Alaska Wildlife Troopers.

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