



NEWS RELEASE

**KAREN L. LOEFFLER
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
DISTRICT OF ALASKA**

Federal Building & U.S. Courthouse • 222 W. 7th Avenue • Room 253 • Anchorage, AK 99513-7567 • (907) 271-5071

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, May 22, 2013**

**Contact: Stephen Cooper
Assistant U.S. Attorney
907-456-0245**

DALL SHEEP GUIDE SENTENCED FOR ILLEGAL HUNTING IN ALASKA

Anchorage, Alaska – U.S. Attorney Karen L. Loeffler announced today that a Canadian man was sentenced in U. S. District Court in Fairbanks, Alaska, for the sale of two unlawfully taken and possessed Dall sheep.

Patrick J. Downey, 67, of Turner Valley, Alberta, Canada, pled guilty in May 2012, and was sentenced May 10, 2013, by U.S. District Judge Ralph R. Beistline after admitting that he guided two hunts that resulted in taking under-sized Dall sheep. Downey was sentenced to pay a \$20,000 fine, was placed on probation for five years, during which Downey may not hunt or guide in the United States. The charges arose from Downey's service as a licensed Alaska assistant guide in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in 2008 and 2009. For approximately twenty years, Downey had guided hunters in the Brooks Range while employed by Master Guide-Outfitter Joe Hendricks, co-owner of Fair Chase Hunts (FCH).

According to Assistant U. S. Attorney Stephen Cooper, who prosecuted the case, the facts Downey admitted to in court showed that in 2008, he guided client Thomas McGann of Longmont, Colorado, who shot a Dall sheep mistakenly believing it was of legal size. To obscure the fact that one horn of the Dall sheep was less than the legal minimum full curl, Master Guide Joe Hendricks and Downey altered the horn by hammering it with a rock. The horns passed the required Fish and Game inspection in Fairbanks, but after further investigation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, agents seized the horns from McGann.

Similarly, in August 2009, Downey's client Delbert Oney of Lockwood, Missouri, mistakenly shot a ram with under-length horns. Downey and Oney then altered the tips of both horns by hammering them on a rock to conceal their sub-legal size. The horns failed state inspection and were seized.

For his part in these and other guiding offenses, Hendricks was sentenced in U. S. District Court in Fairbanks in August 2012 to pay a fine of \$125,000 and was restricted from hunting and guiding for five years. Hunting clients McGann and Oney were sentenced in February and April 2013, for transporting their unlawfully-taken Dall sheep and each paid a fine of \$10,000, was restricted from hunting for one year and forfeited their sheep.

To date, this investigation led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement, has resulted in the convictions of nearly a dozen FCH guides, employees and clients. Registered guide Christopher Cassidy, co-owner of FCH, pled guilty in June 2011, to two felonies and eleven misdemeanors for guiding hunts that involved failing to salvage all edible meat of a Dall sheep, possessing an untagged grizzly bear, and guiding outside Cassidy's authorized guide use area in ANWR.

Ms. Loeffler commends the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement for Northern Alaska, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge staff, and Alaska Wildlife Troopers for the investigation of this case.

###

usao/ak/13-056

Prepared by: Tom Funke, 907-271-5071, USAAK.PressRelease@usdoj.gov