

Home » Briefing Room » Justice News

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Professional Duck Hunter Charged with Guiding Illegal Waterfowl Hunts in Central Illinois

WASHINGTON – A federal grand jury in Springfield, Ill., returned a 23-count felony indictment today charging Jeffrey B. Foiles with conspiracy, wildlife trafficking, and making false writings in connection with the illegal sale of guided waterfowl hunts, the Department of Justice announced today.

The indictment charges Foiles, 53, of Pleasant Hill, Ill., with conspiracy to violate the Lacey Act and the federal false writings statute, 12 substantive violations of the Lacey Act, and ten counts of making false writings in a matter within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Lacey Act is a federal law that makes it illegal to knowingly transport or sell wildlife taken in violation of federal law or regulation. The act defines the sale of wildlife to include the sale of guiding services for the illegal taking of wildlife.

The indictment alleges that from 2003 to 2007, Foiles conspired with others to knowingly transport and sell ducks and geese that had been hunted and killed in violation of federal laws protecting migratory birds. In particular, Foiles is alleged to have sold guided waterfowl hunts at the Fallin' Skies Strait Meat Duck Club in Pike County, Ill., for the purpose of illegally hunting and killing ducks and geese in excess of hunters' individual daily bag limits. Foiles and his associates are also alleged to have falsified hunting records at the club in order to conceal the excesses, and to have filmed the illegal hunts for inclusion in commercial hunting videos.

An indictment is merely an accusation, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

The maximum penalty for a felony violation of the Lacey Act or the federal false writing statute includes up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the government of Canada. The case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Central District of Illinois and the Justice Department's Environmental Crimes Section.

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Environment and Natural Resources Division