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News Release



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Landowner, Hunters Fined for Violating Migratory Bird Treaty Act *Penalties in 10 cases total \$14,145*

A Sunnyside, Washington landowner plead guilty to charges stemming from a mourning dove hunt on his property, during which he admitted baiting with wheat and barley to attract birds.

Calvin R. Howe was fined \$5,000 and banned from hunting in the United States for two years by Magistrate Judge Michael W. Leavitt after Howe pleaded guilty April 20, 2007, to misdemeanor charges in U.S. District Court in Yakima. Howe admitted to unlawfully placing bait on an area for the purpose of allowing any person to take (shoot) mourning doves, unlawfully possessing migratory birds in excess of the daily bag limit on opening day, and unlawfully taking mourning doves by the aid of baiting. All offenses are violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The case originated from a joint investigation by officers with the Enforcement Branch of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Special Agents with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The investigation and affidavits filed with the court revealed that on opening day of the mourning dove hunting season (September 1, 2006), officers observed numerous hunters on Howe's property near Sunnyside. Later that day, officers contacted ten hunters, including Howe. Further investigation revealed that Howe's fields were baited with wheat and barley. Officers issued citations to nine hunters for numerous violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act including: exceeding the bag limit for doves, possession in excess of the bag limit, hunting with shotguns capable of holding more than three shells, unlawfully transferring custody of birds of another without a tags and taking migratory game birds on or over a baited area.

Hunters have a responsibility to understand and obey federal laws and regulations governing waterfowl baiting and dove baiting. You can be cited for hunting over bait if you know or reasonably should have known that the area you hunt has been baited. Take the time to inspect your hunting area and ask the landowner about any potential bait before beginning a hunt. For more information about the hunters' responsibility governing the hunting of migratory birds please visit the following website: <http://www.fws.gov/hunting/whatres.html>

Without admitting or denying guilt, nine of the hunters paid fines for the violations issued to them. Howe was charged separately by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Spokane. This investigation has resulted in the imposition of \$14,145 total in fines and assessments.

The following individuals were also issued violations:

Dale Bullock: Battleground, WA -- Unplugged shotgun, exceeding bag limit, hunting over bait \$1525
John Gilmore: Vancouver, WA -- Having custody of migratory game birds of another, hunting over bait \$700
Scottie Gregg: Battleground, WA--Leaving untagged migratory game birds with another, hunting over bait \$700
Timothy Hay: Battleground, WA -- Exceeding bag limit, hunting over bait; \$1150
Eric Jenkins: Olympia, WA -- Exceeding the bag limit, hunting over bait; \$950
Martin Jenkins: Ocean Park, WA-- Exceeding bag limit, hunting over bait; \$1250
Robert Jenkins: Battleground, WA-- Exceeding bag limit, hunting over bait; \$1000
Richard Liddle: Battleground, WA--Leaving untagged migratory game birds with another, hunting over bait \$700
Steven Uptagrafft: Sammamish, WA -- Unplugged shotgun, exceeding bag limit, hunting over bait: \$1125

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 547 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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