

## Prineville Man Arrested in Illegal Elk Shooting

by Cheryl McDermott

Suspect arrested for being an ex-convict in possession of a firearm, additional charges possible

A Prineville man may face charges for poaching two elk out of season after the investigation of a drunken driving incident led to two arrests, according to a news release from the Oregon State Police (OSP) Fish and Wildlife Division.

Billy Wade Wells, Photo by Crook County Sheriff's Office Billy Wade Wells, 42, was arrested Wednesday, October 4, for suspicion of being an ex-convict in possession of a firearm. He was lodged in the Crook County Jail and may face additional charges of aiding the unlawful taking of a big-game animal; and two counts each of the illegal taking of a big game animal during closed season, and wanton waste of a big game animal.

Wells was arrested after an investigation that began with the arrest of Anthony Cipriano, a 51-year old Prineville resident, on Tuesday about 8:15 p.m. for driving under the influence of intoxicants. Crook County deputies learned that Cipriano's vehicle may have been involved in a shooting complaint at Highland Flats, about 25 miles north of Prineville.

The following day, the sheriff's office provided information to the OSP Fish and Wildlife Division, and troopers located two dead elk, an adult bull and a calf, in the area of the shooting complaint. Further investigation of the shooting led to the arrest of Wells, said the news release.

The Crook County District Attorney's office is reviewing the case, and residents are urged to report a fish or game law violation by calling the OSP tip hotline at 1.800.452.7888.

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