

Prineville man arrested for 20 wildlife crimes

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

A Prineville man was charged with 20 crimes following an investigation into the killing of four deer for the sole purpose of removing their heads for their antlers. The investigation of the suspect, whose hunting privileges were suspended for previous hunting-related crimes, led to two other suspects who were cited for other wildlife violations including one for the illegal killing of a cougar. Steven "Wade" York (above - CCJ photo) is charged with 20 wildlife-related crimes including killing four deer out of season for the sole purpose of taking their antlers (below - OSP photo). On November 18, Oregon State Police (OSP) Fish & Wildlife Senior Trooper Amos Madison began an investigation after elk hunters found three dead deer with heads removed on private property about 15 miles north of Prineville. A suspect identified as Steven "Wade" York, 21, of Prineville, was developed related to the investigation. A fourth dead deer with head removed was found five days later, about 35 miles southeast of Prineville. As Madison was examining the deer, another trooper in the area spotted York driving and stopped him. As York was being questioned, he allegedly admitted to killing the deer, troopers said. A rifle, spotlights, knives and a saw with fresh deer blood were found in York's vehicle.

Further investigation revealed that York and another person, 21-year old Jared Zeigler of Prineville, allegedly illegally killed a cougar a month ago and disposed of it over an embankment. According to OSP, York's hunting privileges were on a two-year suspension, and he had been charged during the past two years for illegal hunting activities. He was taken into custody and lodged in the Crook County Jail, and was charged with first-degree theft, four counts of taking deer during closed season, four counts of waste of deer, four counts of unlawful possession of deer parts, unlawful taking of a cougar, five counts of hunting while suspended, and second-degree criminal trespass.

Zeigler was cited to appear in Crook County Circuit Court for unlawful taking of a cougar. A third person, Justin O'Daniel, 21, also from Prineville, was cited to appear on a single count of aiding in a game violation. Information indicated he was present with York during the last deer killing, troopers said.

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