

\$72,500 in fines for illegal activities at lodge

Eleven people have pleaded guilty to a total of 68 charges and been fined \$72,500 for offences that took place at a hunting and fishing lodge in northwest Ontario.

Steve Herbeck, former owner and operator of 1216818 Ontario Inc., carrying on business as Andy Myers Lodge, on Eagle Lake, west of Dryden, was fined a total of \$7,500 and his business was fined a total of \$27,000 for 22 offences. He is not allowed to hunt in Ontario for ten years.

Danny Herbeck and Chris Federman, both lodge employees, were fined \$7,000 each for their offences and cannot hunt for the next four and eight years respectively. At the time of the offences, all three men lived in Mineral Point, Wisconsin.

Andy Bouchard of Waldhof, Ontario, pleaded guilty to three hunting offences and was fined \$4,000. He is not allowed to hunt in Ontario for one year.

Scott Munford of Vermilion Bay, Ontario, pleaded guilty to six charges under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act and was fined \$7,000. He is not allowed to hunt in Ontario for two years.

Calum Ritchie of Waldhof, Ontario, pleaded guilty to two charges and was fined \$2,000. He is not allowed to hunt in Ontario for one year.

Tammy Pelletier of Waldhof, Ontario, pleaded guilty to two charges and was fined \$2,500. She is not allowed to hunt in Ontario for one year.

Bouchard, Munford, Ritchie and Pelletier were all lodge employees at the time of the offences.

George Lindsay of Wedderburn Ranfurly, New Zealand pleaded guilty to three hunting offences and was fined \$3,000. He is not allowed to hunt in Ontario for one year.

Travis Runde of Mineral Point, Wisconsin, pleaded guilty and was fined \$1,000 for two firearm offences. He cannot hunt in Ontario for one year.

Don Rabideau Jr. of Morrisonville, New York, pleaded guilty to four hunting offences and was fined \$3,000. He is not allowed to hunt in Ontario for one year.

Lindsay, Runde, and Rabideau Jr. were all lodge guests.

Ron Jaeger of Eagle River, Ontario, pleaded guilty to one offence and was fined \$500.

The 11 people listed above pleaded guilty to a total of 68 charges under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, Ontario Fishery Regulations and Migratory Birds Convention Act. Their offences included:

? unlawfully hunting wolf

? unlawfully using a hunting licence belonging to another person

? making a false statement in a document

? making a false statement to a conservation officer

- ? having a loaded firearm in a vehicle
- ? possessing uncased firearms at night
- ? discharging a firearm from a roadway
- ? unlawfully selling game wildlife
- ? unlawfully selling migratory birds
- ? fishing with more than one fishing line
- ? failing to comply with the requirements for an Ontario Hunting and Fishing Licence Issuer, and
- ? possessing an over-limit of Canada geese.

The court heard that Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources conservation officers conducted a two-year covert investigation in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the departments of Natural Resources for Wisconsin, Michigan, New York and Minnesota, and the New Zealand Commission of Wildlife. Conservation officers discovered that Steve Herbeck and his staff encouraged clients to hunt wolves without a licence. Staff then used their own resident licences to validate the wolf or arranged for guests to buy licences afterward. Steve Herbeck allowed guests to fish without a licence and later sold them backdated fishing licences. As part of their package, guests were fed grouse and mallard duck and advised they were fed American elk, all of which the lodge was not allowed to sell. Steve Herbeck also took guests muskellunge fishing and used more than the allowable amount of fishing rods.

Justices of the Peace Daisy Hoppe and Edith Baas heard the cases between January 15 and December 17, 2013, in the Ontario Court of Justice, Dryden.

To report a natural resources violation, call 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667) toll-free any time or contact your local ministry office during regular business hours. You can also call Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).