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Three cited for poaching violations in southern Illinois

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – Three southern Illinois residents face criminal charges and penalties for poaching deer, bobcat and turkey on private land and other violations following an investigation by the Illinois Conservation Police.

Cited were Justin Bauersachs and Greg Cottom, both of Pinckneyville, and Sally Albers of Breese.

In January, the Illinois Conservation Police received a complaint in Perry County about a potentially poached large white-tailed buck. Conservation officers from the Southern Zone, District 14, began an investigation into the allegation and identified Albers as the hunter who harvested the deer. She did not have a hunting license or habitat stamp as required to lawfully take the deer.

A photograph was provided to conservation police indicating potential additional violations, including unlawfully hunting on properties without the landowner's consent. Through initial interviews, police determined Bauersachs assisted Albers with unlawfully taking the deer. Search warrants were obtained through Perry County, and police discovered multiple violations and additional suspects during the investigation.

On Dec. 10, conservation officers arrested Bauersachs for criminal trespass to private property and multiple conservation violations in Jackson and Perry counties. The criminal trespass complaints were ongoing from different landowners in Perry and Jackson counties.

Additionally, Cottom and Albers were each issued citations for conservation violations as a result of the investigation.

Conservation citations issued for hunting offenses in Perry County:

- Bauersachs: unlawful hunting without the consent of a landowner (two counts); unlawful possession of a migratory game bird during closed season; unlawful possession of a protected species during a closed season; unlawful take of a turkey after legal shooting hours; unlawful possession of wildlife unlawfully taken; unlawful possession of wild turkey (two counts); failure to tag wild turkey immediately after harvest; failure to report harvest of wild turkey; falsification of deer harvest report; contributing to the unlawful take of an eight-point buck; and accessory to hunting without a valid hunting license.

- Albers: unlawful hunting without the consent of landowner (two counts); unlawful hunting without a hunting license; and unlawful take or possession of deer.

In addition, Bauersachs faces criminal charges in Perry County for criminal trespass to private property (two counts) and criminal trespass on a motor vehicle to a field capable of growing crops. Additional criminal charges are pending review by the Perry County state's attorney.

In Jackson County, the following conservation citations were issued:

- Cottom: failure to register a bobcat harvest; unlawful possession of a bobcat pelt not tagged per federal regulations; unlawful possession of an unlawfully taken bobcat; and unlawful take of a bobcat without a valid permit.
- Bauersachs: possession of unlawfully taken wildlife; hunting without the consent of landowner (two counts); and unlawful hunting of a protected species more than a half-hour after sunset.
- Albers: Hunting without consent of landowner (two counts).

All subjects are considered innocent until found guilty in a court of law.

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