

Father, son take plea deals in elk poaching case

East Oregonian

LA GRANDE — A La Grande father and son pleaded guilty last month to poaching a six-point trophy bull elk in the Mount Emily unit.

According to state court records, Kyle Bowen, 26, and his father, Richard "Rick" Bowen, 60, will lose their hunting licenses for three years and serve 18 months probation.

Oregon State Police reported its Fish and Wildlife Division in La Grande investigated the pair and found Kyle Bowen during the 2018 archery elk season killed a trophy class bull elk in the Mount Emily wildlife unit.

The state provides a minimum number of tags for the unit each year for the hunting of branch antlered bull elk. A hunter will need to wait at least 18 years to draw a tag to hunt branch antlered bull elk in the unit, according to state police, and Kyle Bowen only possessed a general season archery elk tag in 2018. The investigation found Richard Bowen



Oregon State Police Photo

A La Grande father and son pleaded guilty last month to poaching a six-point trophy bull elk in the Mount Emily unit.

assisted Kyle Bowen with the poaching.

The Bowens took plea deals on June 10 in Union County Circuit Court. Kyle Bowen pleaded guilty to hunting in violation of the wildlife laws, a class C misdemeanor. In addition to the probation and suspension of hunting license, Circuit

Judge Thomas B. Powers sentenced Kyle Bowen to the following:

- 10 days in jail with work crew eligibility.
- \$7,500 restitution to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- \$100 bench probation fee.
- Forfeiture of equipment

he used to poach the elk, including a Mathews bow, Zeiss binoculars and trail cameras.

- Forfeiture of the six-point bull elk antlers and associated elk meat.
- And the forfeiture of seven-point bull elk antlers that he unlawfully possessed.

State police also reported prosecutors dismissed charges for criminal trespass and unlawful possession of wildlife (the seven-point elk antlers), along with a charge of tampering with evidence as part of the deal.

Richard Bowen pleaded guilty to a charge of aid, assist, counsel or share in the proceeds of a wildlife violation, a class A misdemeanor. Along with the probation and hunting license suspension, his sentence included eight days in jail with work crew eligibility, \$7,500 in restitution, and forfeiture of hunting equipment. The state dismissed charges for criminal trespass and unlawful possession of marijuana, which he also had to forfeit.

Pendleton on OLCC list for listening tours

PORTLAND — The Oregon Liquor Control Commission and staff embark in July on tours to gain a better understanding of the issues and concerns facing the marijuana and wine industries. One of the wine sessions takes place in Pendleton.

The commission, which regulates alcohol and marijuana in Oregon, announced the tours on Friday in a written statement.

The commission wants to hear from the marijuana industry on the moratorium on producer licenses (Senate Bill 218), exporting marijuana products, social consumption and changes to the marijuana program. When it comes to the wine industry, the commission wants information on tonnage tax, labeling standards and content and appointing a rules advisory committee.

Paul Rosenbaum, OLCC chair, said the goal of the sessions is to give people in the marijuana and wine industries the opportunity to meet face to face with commissioners, some of who are new to the role.

The OLCC will hold five listening sessions for the marijuana industry: July 9 in Bend; July 17 in Ashland;

July 30 in Eugene; Aug. 6 in Ontario; and Aug. 12 in Portland. The commission will hold four sessions for the wine industry: July 18 in Ashland; July 29 in Roseburg; Aug. 1 in McMinnville. The last wine session is Aug. 6, 10 a.m. to noon at the Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate, Pendleton.

While Pendleton has three marijuana stores and no commercial vineyards, the town is between Echo and Milton-Freewater, communities that have commercial vineyards.

In conjunction with the listening tours, the announcement stated the commission will hold its regularly scheduled July 18 meeting at Southern Oregon University.

The 2017 Oregon Legislature expanded the commission from five to seven members but only recently has the commission had full membership, thus the listening tours provide an opportunity for the commissioners to interact with licensees and stakeholders.

Licensees and stakeholders can register to attend the tours on the OLCC Eventbrite page at: www.bit.ly/2AGaYUS

Itchy, runny nose, sneezing? It could always be worse

A number of plants with high allergenic potential call Eastern Oregon home

By JESSICA POLLARD
East Oregonian

EASTERN OREGON — The region may have around 30 different plants every summer with high allergenic potential, according to pollenlibrary.com, but things could be itchier.

In the Willamette Valley, where — according to the Oregon Seed Council — 1,500 grass seed farmers employ upward of 10,000 Oregonians, sneezes abound. So maybe it makes sense that the only certified pollen count system is monitored by the Oregon Allergy Associates in Eugene.

Some people in that area,

Dr. Kraig Jacobson of OAA said, see Fourth of July as a day of independence from grass allergies, because that's when the pollen count begins to die down.

Eastern Oregon does have some grass pollen as well.

"There's a lot less (here) than there is on the west side," Jacobson said.

That being said, some plants like sagebrush, juniper, ragweed and wheat can cause allergies in the region. Nearby the Columbia River, Jacobson noted, pollen from birch, alder and cottonwood trees can also provoke allergies.

For those who are sensitive to pollen in Eastern Oregon, it might be hard to find an accurate pollen count. The OAA's count is only representative of Eugene's warm-summer Mediterranean climate, and not the semi-arid climate that makes Eastern Oregon

look like a desert.

Pollen.com provides pollen information, but in the form of predictive models based off of meteorological algorithms. A pollen count, alternatively, reveals how much pollen has been in the air in recent days.

"When we look at pollen.com data with our data side by side, they often don't agree," said registered nurse Judy Moran, who does the pollen count at OAA.

In 2010, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America released a report that warned that rising temperatures and carbon dioxide levels are increasing the amount of high-allergenicity plants like ragweed, which is prevalent in the area. It's possible that a changing climate could

exacerbate the amount of pollen plants generate as well.

The American Academy of Asthma, Allergy & Immunology said as climate change progresses, pollen season could become longer and more intense.

"In the Willamette Valley we probably don't have a statistical difference that we can see in the time that we've been doing our pollen counts," Jacobson said.

He did note that some places, such as the Midwest, are reporting odd weather events and untimely spikes in pollen.

"A lot of people say we're the worst area for pollen, but it depends what for," Jacobson said. "It's highly variable and it's sometimes hard to escape."

BRIEFLY

Organizers will close street for Fourth of July fireworks show in Pendleton

PENDLETON — In anticipation of the Fourth of July fireworks show, organizers are taking some precautions.

As it has in past years, the fireworks will be launched from an empty lot west of Walmart.

To keep people a safe distance, Jerry Imsland of the Pendleton Rotary Club said organizers will be clearing people from the property and police will be closing Southwest Court Avenue from Oxford Suites to the overpass at 9 p.m.

Imsland said the fireworks show will start at 10 p.m., and run for 30-40 minutes. Court will reopen after the fireworks conclude.

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