

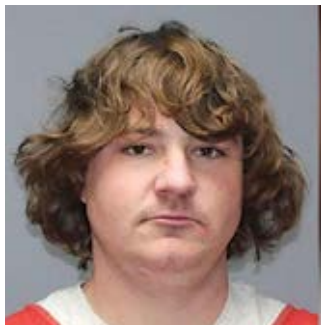
BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB'S

# POACH AND PAY PROJECT

# IN THE NEWS

## KANSAS AND ILLINOIS STAND STRONG AGAINST POACHING

In early February, the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWP) announced on Facebook that a poacher was sentenced to prison and significant fines and restitution. John Blick Jr. of Sharon, Kansas, was found guilty of poaching 60 whitetail and mule deer. He was sentenced to 14 months in prison and fined \$15,000. He was also ordered to pay \$327,641 in restitution for the animals that he stole from the public. Finally, he forfeited all of the equipment used in the commission of these crimes as well as the parts of animals that he had retained for trophies.



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Around the same time, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation Police issued a \$10,000 civil penalty under state statute to a poacher who killed a trophy 12-point whitetail buck after legal shooting time and over bait—it was the poacher's fourth citation for similar wildlife violations. Kudos to the Kansas and Illinois legislatures for passing stringent penalties and restitution for the illegal take of wildlife, the conservation officers for detecting and working the cases, and, in Kansas, the judge and prosecutor(s) that were willing to serve up justice in proportion to the severity of Blick's crimes.

Unfortunately, when it comes to the illegal take of wildlife, the Kansas and Illinois cases are the exception rather than the rule.

While many states have stiff penalties for illegal take codified into statute, detection rates are often low, and the actual detected cases are often considered a "victimless" crime and pushed aside for more "serious" person-on-person violent crimes. This is not to discount violent crimes and the need for quick resolution and proportional

severity of sentencing. However, the theft of public property, in the form of poaching, is frequently neglected. Prosecution of such cases is often deferred or refused. When they are prosecuted, penalties assessed are often minimized, even below statutory minimums, due to judicial discretion, or even dismissed outright. In some states, the

penalties and restitution costs for illegal take of wildlife currently codified into law are still not representative of the true "value" of the animal or animals taken.

This is something that the Boone and Crockett Club is looking to address with Phase II of our Poach & Pay project. Through Poach & Pay, the Club will embark on the





largest, most comprehensive study of illegal take of wildlife in the United States that has ever been conducted. This study will examine poaching on a national level to determine rates of detection, describe what motivates violators to poach, define and break down judicial and prosecutorial barriers to the assessment of proportional sentences and penalties, and craft standard language to ensure that state laws addressing illegal take of

wildlife are adequate. This multi-year study will not only provide governments with the tools to adequately punish acts of illegal take but will also help the public to clearly discriminate between acts of illegal take—which are committed by serious criminals—and legal, regulated hunters, who obey the law and also pay a disproportionate amount of the cost (through licenses, fees, and excise taxes) for the state management of the wildlife they pursue. ■



## POACH AND PAY RESEARCH

SPONSORED BY:



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## OUTDOOR FUND

"As responsible sportsmen and women, we must collectively do all we can to prevent wildlife crime and preserve the integrity of hunting," said Bob Zieher, Senior Director of Conservation at Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's. "We thank our customers who, by rounding up purchases in our stores and online in support of the Outdoor Fund, are directly contributing to the fight against poachers through the Boone and Crockett Club's Poach & Pay project."



LEUPOLD

"In-depth research on poaching and ways to prevent it will help protect both our nation's hunting heritage and the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation itself," said Bruce Pettet, President and Chief Executive Officer of Leupold & Stevens, Inc. "Leupold is proud to support the Boone and Crockett Club on this project."



IWC

INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE CRIMESTOPPERS, INC.

"Our Wall of Shame trailers have proven to be effective in educating young and old alike on the very real problem of poaching and to show newcomers to outdoor sports that there is a right and wrong way to enjoy nature's offerings," said IWC Executive Director Lewis Rafter. "By partnering with the Boone and Crockett Club and their Poach & Pay program, we hope to increase the detection of poaching and the prosecution of poachers, which will benefit wildlife managers and our wildlife resources."

FEDERAL

The Boone and Crockett Club's Poach and Pay Project will show that poaching is not a victimless crime, and that ethical hunters and poachers are not the same. The future of wildlife conservation and our hunting heritage depends on raising the stakes on poachers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.BOONE-CROCKETT.ORG/POACH-AND-PAY](http://WWW.BOONE-CROCKETT.ORG/POACH-AND-PAY)