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### **Big Game Guiding Business Owner Pleads Guilty To Multiple Charges**

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) – A big game guiding business owner pleaded guilty on Jan. 24 to multiple guiding violations stemming from a series of hunts in different parts of Alaska in 2010. Michael C. Vanning, 45, of Verdale, Wash., entered into a plea agreement with the Department of Law, Office of Special Prosecution, for multiple misdemeanor charges that had been filed separately in several jurisdictions – Kotzebue, Fort Yukon, Fairbanks and Sand Point courts – over two years. Vanning pleaded guilty to multiple registered guide-outfitter related offenses including wanton waste by a guide, fail to salvage game and failure to supervise and participate in contracted hunts with clients and assistant guides in the Fort Yukon and Kotzebue cases. In the agreement, Vanning’s registered guide-outfitter license is permanently revoked. Vanning was also fined \$90,000 with \$80,000 suspended, and placed on probation for 10 years where Vanning is prohibited from hunting, guiding or outfitting. Vanning’s hunting privileges were revoked for a total of 12 years from the combined charges. The state agreed to dismiss the Sand Point and Fairbanks cases accusing him of guiding a hunt on private land, failing to report a violation and possessing or transporting illegal taken game in return for guilty pleas in the Fort Yukon and Kotzebue cases.

Vanning owned Gateway Guiding Inc. and had operated sheep hunts in the Brooks Range, brown bear hunts in Western Alaska and moose hunts near the Seward Peninsula. This is Vanning’s third guide related sentence. The first was in 1998 when Vanning was charged with guiding outside his use area and placed on probation for two years. The second was in 2007 where multiple violations related to a client taking a sublegal sheep, use of a non-commercial pilot for hunter transporting and guiding outside Vanning’s use area. In April of 2011, Vanning’s registered guide-outfitter license was revoked for two years and his plane, a PA-18 Supercub, was forfeited.

Vanning’s father, Michael H. Vanning, 65, worked for the business as a guide. In January 2011, [the elder Vanning was sentenced](#) to pay \$2,500 and his registered guide-outfitter license was revoked for charges related to altering sublegal sheep horns to make them appear legal and for submitting accompanying paperwork with false information.

These investigations were conducted over several years by the Alaska Wildlife Troopers in multiple areas of the state.

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