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A Sociopolitical Perspective on the Illegal Take of Wildlife in the Southeastern, USA

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Abstract:
Illegal take of wildlife is a complex and growing phenomenon, influenced by various factors. These have varied limited influence or even had influence, however. We examine the limited perspective that illegal take originates from an individual's lack of knowledge of the law. Engaging traditional and contemporary qualitative data from the region, we first identify that illegal hunting is a rural hunting subculture and continues on the increasing and prevalence of human-wildlife interactions in rural areas stems from several sociopolitical shifts. We then associate illegal take with specific social contexts. The rural subculture is a result of a rural society where a sense of separation, vulnerability, respecting, and support. Negative shifts can be observed by the sociopolitics of migration, including increased sociopolitical factors consistent to deimplementation of wildlife laws among the sub culture. Engaging subculture perceptions may also limit consideration; visibility, processes and prevention of illegal takes may involve negative outcomes caused by human sociopolitical shifts.

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Abstract:

Illegal take of wildlife is a complex and growing phenomenon, influenced by various factors. Scholars have paid limited attention to structural influences, however. We examine the structural processes that influence illegal take behavior in rural areas of the southeastern USA. Engaging historical and contemporary qualitative data from the region, we first identify that struggles between a rural hunting sub-culture and outsiders over the meaning and governance of human-wildlife interactions in rural areas emerged from several sociopolitical shifts. We then associate illegal take behavior performed by the rural hunting sub-culture with a radicalization framework consisting of injustice, vulnerability, superiority, and distrust. Regulators should not be surprised by the occurrence of illegal take behavior because sociopolitical factors contributed to delegitimization of wildlife law among the sub-culture. Engaging sub-culture gatekeepers in ways that limit exclusionary wildlife governance and imposition of external values may moderate negative outcomes caused by major sociopolitical shifts.

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