

Reports Indicate Wildlife Officer Acted in Self-Defense

Written by Adam Hicks
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More information has been released about the Saturday morning shooting in Wilkes County.

According to several regional media outlets, Wildlife Officer Mark Minton was patrolling the area for the opening of turkey hunting season. Minton was checking for bait traps, bag limits, and hunting licenses when a confrontation occurred with a 76-year-old hunter, Clyde Coffey (pictured above).

Captain Rusty Hunter with the North Carolina Wildlife Commission told WXII, Minton acted in self-defense when he shot and killed the 76-year-old.

Hunter said there is no evidence that suggests Minton confused the Coffey with an animal. Hunter told WXII, "It appears, from all information gathered the officer was protecting himself. And I don't know any further details than that."

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Minton has worked with the North Carolina Wildlife Commission for 12 years.

Coffey's family told WXII that the hunter was shot on his own land.

Minton is on administrative leave while the State Bureau of Investigation continues looking into the shooting.

(Photo courtesy of WXII-12)