

## Area Authorities Investigate Horse Shooting in Deep Gap

Written by Adam Hicks

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A 1,500-pound horse was shot in the shoulder late last week in the Deep Gap area and authorities are trying to build a list of suspects.

According to Watauga County officials, the horse's owners noticed the gunshot wound this weekend when the horse was brought in from pasture.

The horse belongs to Chris Mason. Mason told High Country Radio his horse "Jim" looks like he will survive the incident.

Mason said his horse was shot while it was out to pasture near Hardin Road.

Watauga County authorities said neighbors reported seeing hunters spot-lighting and shooting deer in the area, which is illegal. Authorities aren't sure if the shooting was an accident or if someone shot the horse on purpose.

Mason said he contacted the Watauga County Sheriff's Office, Watauga County Animal Control, and the area game warden.

Authorities said they are at a crossroads in the investigation and are seeking information from the public.

Anyone who has information about this incident should contact the Watauga County Sheriff's Office at (828) 264-3761.