

State Cries 'Wolf' But Hutchinson Gets Acquitted

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The state of Alaska brought charges last week against William Hutchinson, formerly of Fairbanks and now manager of the airport in Bettles and maintenance supervisor in eight other villages.

Mr. Hutchinson was charged with hunting wolves without an aerial permit and failure to seal wolf hides on demand when ordered to do so by State Trooper Maurice Christie of Bettles.

The six-man jury, composed of three men and three women, found Hutchinson not guilty on both counts.

The four-day trial brought a raft of witnesses in from the bush to testify on the charges.

It was alleged by the defense that Mr. Hutchinson was being harrassed by the Fish and Game Department, and by witnesses that they had heard Fish and Game were "out to get him."

While the jury was out in deliberation, State Troopers anticipating a guilty verdict impounded Mr. Hutchinson's airplane on the charge that it had been used in illegal aerial hunting. They released the plane the following day.

On the night he was asked to tender the wolf hides for sealing, Mr. Hutchinson and other witnesses testified he was engaged in a rescue operation for two hunters whose plane had gone down in an adjoining area, Dan Saylor of the Weather Service and Allen McKibben.

McKibben was reported to have very little survival gear. Considered by many people to

be an expert pilot, Hutchinson flew out and rescued the two men, after being requested to help in the search by Mrs. McKibben.

McKibben then turned state's

witness, testifying that Hutchinson asked he and Saylor to claim the two wolves tied to the wing seats when the plane returned to Bettles. McKibben stated

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