

Smith was then asked about two FWS law enforcement officials' trip to Houston to meet with the taxidermist in October 2003. When asked what the purpose of the meeting had been, Smith said that, as far as he could remember, it had something to do with a new port policy that had recently gone into effect.

Smith said he recalled some questions being raised by brokerage firms and individuals in the Houston area concerning the new policy. Smith stated, "I don't know who, if anyone, told them" to meet with the taxidermist. Smith advised that he did not have a conversation with either of the two FWS law enforcement officials about meeting with the taxidermist. Smith stated that it was possible the taxidermist would have contacted him and that he, in turn, would have contacted Kevin Adams about the issue for Kevin to handle, but that he could not fully remember how it happened.

Smith was asked about his relationship with the taxidermist. Smith advised that he has known him for a long time and that they are friends. Smith said he was also his personal taxidermist. Smith was asked if he was a member of SCI, to which he replied, "I am." Smith elaborated, saying that he had entered some of his trophies in the SCI record books going back three years ago and that he had started receiving magazine subscriptions and e-mails from the organization. According to Smith, after the initiation of this investigation, he met with Shayla Simmons, Director, Department of Ethics, and explained the situation. According to Smith, it was then that he decided to pay the 3 years' worth of membership fees to SCI to avoid any appearance of conflict. Smith advised that his annual fee paid to SCI was \$55, totaling \$165 for the past 3 years. According to Smith, Simmons advised that it was not a problem that he was an SCI member. Smith was asked if he had ever participated in any SCI-sponsored hunts, to which Smith said "no," although he had been on hunts with members of SCI, for which he had paid his own way. *Agent's note: A subsequent interview of Shayla Simmons yielded the same information – specifically that Smith met with her the week of September 20 – 27, 2005, to discuss his concerns. Simmons said Smith mentioned his friendship with the taxidermist and his free membership with SCI. According to Simmons, she advised Smith that she did not see a problem with him maintaining a membership with SCI and that she did not disagree with Smith's intention to reimburse SCI for the past 3 years' membership.*

Smith was asked about the annual SCI meetings at a Texas ranch. According to Smith, the rancher is someone he has known for years, and they are good friends. Smith stated that since 2002, he has been invited to his friend's ranch every December to meet with some individuals on conservation issues and to relax, visit with friends, and do a little hunting. Smith stated that this is not an SCI-specific event and that he considered these invitations to be of a friendly nature. Smith was asked if he reimburses his friend for the hunting at his ranch, to which Smith responded that the ranch is not used for commercial purposes and that no one is charged to hunt at the ranch. Smith was asked if he had ever taken anything for free or as a gift from the ranch, and he stated that he had always made it a point to settle his debts with his friend.

Smith was asked if any of these personal trips to the ranch were ever billed to the government, and Smith advised that both the trip in 2002 and 2003 were over a weekend when he had other meetings in Houston, so he had billed his airfare to the government. Smith advised that he did not collect per diem for the days he was at his friend's ranch. Smith stated that he purchased his own plane ticket for the 2004 meeting at the ranch and did not bill anything to the government for that trip. *Agent's note: A subsequent review of Smith's travel vouchers supported Smith's statements. For example, a voucher dated for the first week of December 2003 advises the purpose for the trip was for*