



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## NEWS RELEASE

### LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION



Visit us on Facebook, Twitter & YouTube

Contact:

Mark McKinnon, Public Affairs Officer

Office: (706) 557-3106 Cell: (404) 387-7780

[mark.mckinnon@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:mark.mckinnon@dnr.ga.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 8, 2018

## Lake Allatoona Game Warden Wins Top Georgia DNR Boating Award



SOCIAL CIRCLE, GA – In late 2016, Game Warden First Class Mark Puig seized an opportunity to transfer from Fulton County, where he was assigned, to Lake Allatoona in order to gain more boating safety experience. Now, just 14 months later, he has been named Georgia DNR Law Enforcement's 2017 Boating Safety Game Warden of the Year.

“Volunteering to work a lake such as Allatoona requires a selfless attitude and a true desire to serve the public,” said DNR Law Enforcement Director Colonel Eddie Henderson. “I am very proud of Mark and his commitment to boating safety on the state's waterways.”

In his first year on one of the busiest lakes in the nation, Puig led the entire northwest Georgia region in the detection of Boating Under the Influence (BUI) violators. His efforts resulted in 16 BUI arrests for alcohol and netted eight that were drug-related. Throughout the year, he spent 267 boating enforcement hours on Allatoona and the Etowah River, logging 35 water patrols, 336 boat checks and 150 boat check assists. Additionally, he worked three reportable boat incidents, was involved in the investigation of two drownings, and responded to two search and rescue missions.

In February of 2017, Puig assisted in the investigation of a double fatality boat incident on Allatoona. He worked tirelessly in helping the investigators reconstruct the incident by downloading GPS data from both boats. He was then able to determine direction of travel, speed, and location of each of the vessels before, during, and after the collision. That data and a map overlay of the scene enabled the investigation team to determine exactly how the incident occurred.

Puig began his career with DNR Law Enforcement in 2013 after serving several years as a Recon Marine in the U.S. Marine Corps. His training in the Corps, along with more extensive training he pursued as a Game Warden in water survival, made him the perfect choice to help develop and implement a water survival course to be used in the DNR Game Warden Academy. This training will better ensure that all Georgia Game Wardens have the knowledge and training to carry out their water patrols safely.

“I truly appreciate your dedication to public safety and your work with the boaters at Lake Allatoona and on the Etowah River,” said DNR Commissioner Mark Williams. “What you do on the lake, day in and day out protects Georgia's greatest assets – its citizens.”

Puig will receive recognition from the Southern States Boating Law Administrators Association this spring, and will be a candidate for further honors from that organization as well. He is also eligible for the Butch Potts “Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year” honor from the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators.

Game Warden First Class Puig resides in Cobb County.

###

TRUST, FAIRNESS, PROFESSIONALISM

*Law Enforcement Off the Pavement*