

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
August 18-24, 2013

This report is a broad sampling of events that have taken place in the past week, but does not include all actions taken by the Law Enforcement Division.



Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

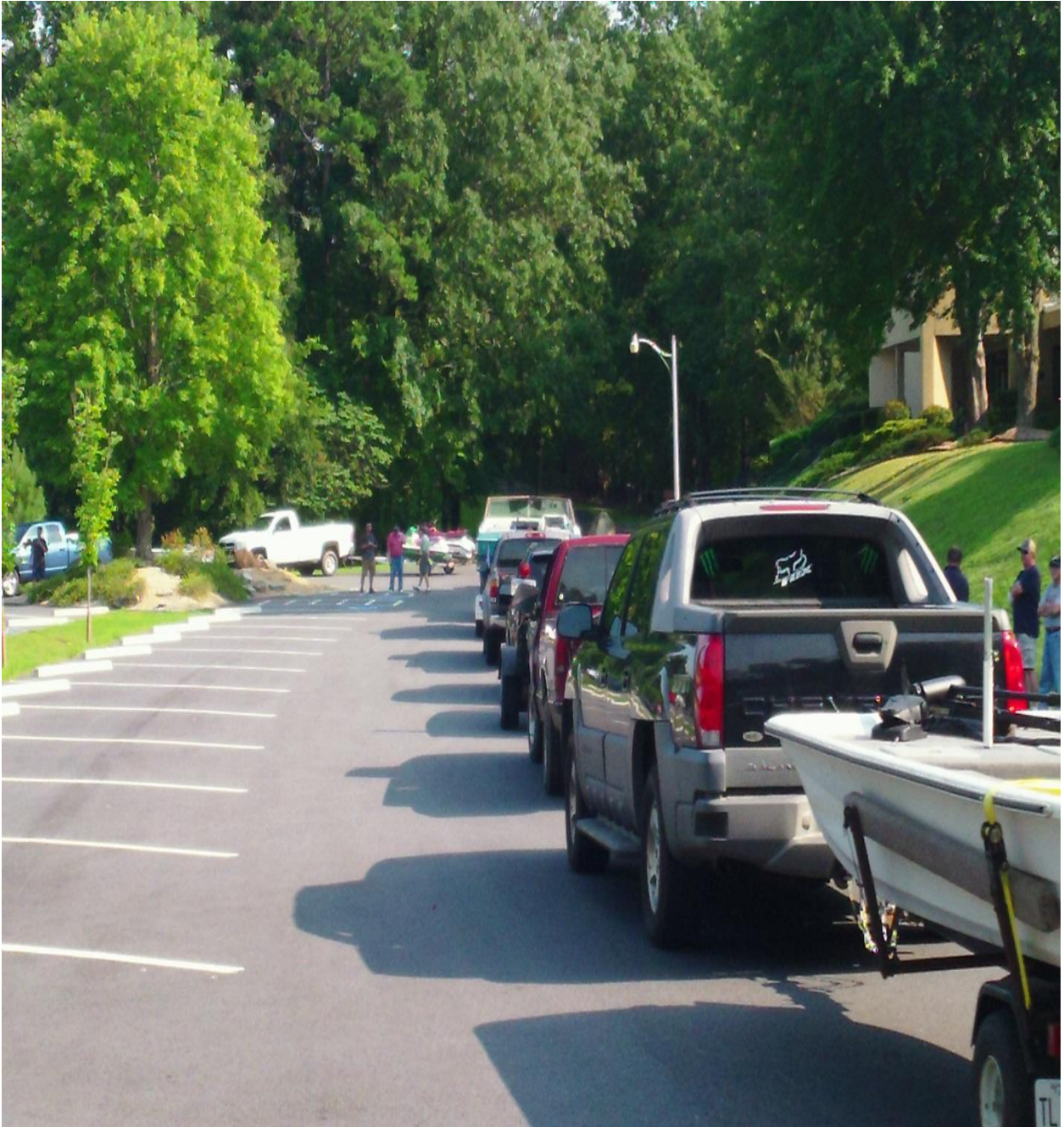
BARTOW COUNTY

On August 18th, Sgt. Mike Barr and RFC Zack Hardy went to Allatoona Landing Marina to inspect marine toilets on house boats. The Rangers were ensuring that no marine toilet was capable of dumping sewage overboard and that vessels containing a marine toilet had a marine toilet certificate and updated pump out log. For more information on marine toilets, go to www.goboatgeorgia.com



RFC Zack Hardy completes a house boat marine toilet system check at Allatoona Landing Marina.

On August 23rd, Sgt. Mike Barr, RFC Bart Hendrix, RFC Brooks Varnell, and RFC Zack Hardy worked at the DNR Hull Identification Number (HIN) inspection site at the Corp Office on Allatoona Lake. Persons needing assistance registering their boat came to the inspection site for officer viewing and assistance. 52 boats came through the inspection site in 3 hours keeping the officers very busy. The DNR officers also gave advice on boating safety for those new to boating and handed out boating safety guides.



A long line developed as people waited to have their boat inspected and completed the process of registering their vessel with the assistance of a DNR Ranger.



DNR Rangers Bart Hendrix, Zack Hardy and Brooks Varnell are shown assisting the public with registering their boats.

On August 24th just after midnight, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Bart Hendrix responded to a call from a boater in reference to teenagers on Allatoona Lake in paddle boats and kayaks. The caller stated that eight paddle boats and kayaks were in the area of Harbor Town Marina without lights and were almost ran over by the boater. Cpl. Young and RFC Hendrix searched by water and were unable to locate the teens. While on patrol the officers observed a distress light flashing from another boat. The officers located a family with an engine problem. The family had sat through a thunderstorm and asked the officers for help. Cpl. Young and RFC Hendrix towed the vessel back to the campground around 2:00 A.M.

MURRAY COUNTY

On August 19th, Sgt. Brian Keener and Capt. Johnny Johnson were patrolling around the Carter's Lake area when they observed a truck backed up to a large stream that flows into Talking Rock Creek and Carter's Lake. The two occupants of the truck were using a shovel to discard a large amount of rotten food products, plastic and other items from the bed of the truck down an embankment and into the stream. The adult driver was arrested for unlawful dumping of egregious litter into state waters and transported to the Murray County Jail. The other passenger, a juvenile, was released to his mother.



Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HART COUNTY

On August 22nd, RFC Brandon Pierce responded to a complaint of possible illegal burning. Officer Pierce arrived at the scene and found the illegal burn and spoke with the owner of the residence. It was determined that the subject had lit the fire the previous night. By utilizing his computer, Officer Pierce found that the subject was wanted out of Hart County. The subject was arrested and taken to the Hart County Jail. The subject was also issued a citation for unlawful burning of egregious litter.

On August 24th, RFC Brandon Pierce along with three volunteer hunter safety instructors taught a ten hour Hunter Education Class at Oak Bower Baptist Church. A total of forty-four students attended the course and all were certified.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

On August 24th, Cpl. Bill Bunch and Sgt. Stan Elrod patrolled Lake Hartwell. During the patrol ten boats were checked and eight fishing licenses were checked. One citation was issued for no life jackets and one warning for no boat registration.

RABUN/HABERSHAM COUNTIES

On August 22, Cpl. Jesse Cook, Cpl. Derek Dillard, RFC Chad Chambers and Intern Chad Ledford assisted South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service and the Georgia Power Company with the annual cleanup of Lake Tugalo. The lake borders both Georgia and South Carolina. There are no homes on the lake but the lake gets a lot of visitation due to the extreme white water rafting and kayaking opportunities from the Chattooga River. The Tallulah River also empties into Lake Tugalo. The participants removed over 800 pounds of trash from the lake during their annual clean up.



RABUN COUNTY

On August 23, Corporal Derek Dillard was patrolling the area of Black Rock Mountain State Park Lake and noticed 2 men that were drinking beer and fishing. Corporal Dillard approached the men and asked to see their fishing licenses which neither of the men had with them. Corporal Dillard ran a check and confirmed that one of the men had a lifetime honorary license since he was over 65 years old and the other man did not have a license. Corporal Dillard informed the men that it was illegal to consume alcohol on a state park. Both subjects were issued citations for consuming alcohol on a state park and one was also issued a citation for fishing without a license.

DEKALB COUNTY

On August 20th, Cpl. Eric Sanders executed a search warrant on a house searching for a motor involved in the stolen boat, motor, and trailer case that he is working. Cpl. Sanders has already made one arrest with this case.



DAWSON COUNTY

On August 24th, RFC Mitchell Crump and Wildlife Technician III David Shattuck patrolled Dawson Forest WMA. The rangers issued citations and warnings for hunting without a WMA license, illegal target practicing on a WMA, unlawful consumption of alcohol on a WMA and for entering area without a GORP.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On August 24th, RFC Barry Britt and Ranger Shane Brown patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. The rangers issued written warnings for operating a vessel without wearing a PFD, operating vessel within 100' of an object and for fishing without a license.

LUMPKIN COUNTY

On August 20th and 22nd, RFC Mitchell Crump with the assistance of the Lumpkin County Sheriff Stacy Jarrard conducted a 10 Hour Hunter Education Class. During this class a total of 58 students were certified in Hunter Education.

ROCKDALE COUNTY

On August 24th, Cpl. Eric Sanders participated in the Big Haynes Wildlife Festival in Conyers. Cpl. Sanders set up a booth utilizing the fishing simulator. Cpl. Sanders answered questions relating to hunting, fishing, boating and Hunter Education.

HALL COUNTY

On August 22nd, Corporal Jason Roberson and RFC Mark Stephens ran the fishing simulator at a wild game supper at Blackshear Place Church in Oakwood. Approximately 750 people attended the event.

On August 24th, Corporal Jason Roberson and RFC Mark Stephens arrested a subject for operating a vessel under the influence in Shoal Creek on Lake Lanier.

On August 20th and 21st, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk and Cpl. Jesse Cook along with rangers from every region in the state met in Milledgeville for training on the Kongsberg MS1000 Sector Scan Sonar and the Videoray Remote Operated Vehicle. These two pieces of equipment are some of the newest cutting edge technology that will be used to assist Rangers with the recovery of drowning or boat accident victims, assist in locating submerged vehicles, vessels or aircraft and assist local agencies with locating evidence from crimes that occur throughout the state.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

RICHMOND COUNTY

On August 24, Cpl. Ben Payne patrolled the Savannah River at the Lock and Dam monitoring water levels. He checked fishing licenses at the dam. Fishermen were not catching many fish due to the varying water levels. Three violations were documented. In the afternoon he met with two hunting clubs and checked their dove fields.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

On August 24, Sergeant Max Boswell, Corporal Micheal Crawley, RFC Jeff Billips, and RFC Grant Matherly worked in Sandersville, Georgia at the Wildlife Expo. There were many children and adults that participated in the Laser Shot interactive hunting simulator. They also were available for questions and passed out the new hunting regulations.

WILKES COUNTY

On August 24th Cpl. Mark Patterson patrolled the Clarks Hill and Fishing Creek WMA's. Public boat ramps and access points were also checked. Several small game hunters and fisherman were encountered during the patrol. Violations detected included illegal use of an ATV on a WMA and driving on a closed road.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On August 24th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and Cpl. Ryan Swain responded to an out of season dove hunting complaint. No contact was made with any illegal hunters in the area.

On August 24th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and Cpl. Ryan Swain performed a concentrated patrol of McDuffie PFA. Many licenses were inspected with no violations being detected.

GREENE COUNTY

On August 24, Cpl. Derrell Worth initiated a traffic stop of a vehicle driven by an elderly female. While talking with the female, Cpl. Worth, found that she was looking for her husband that had been missing since the previous date. She had not notified the authorities. Cpl. Worth initiated a search through the appropriate authorities and her husband was later found in Alabama.

LAKE OCONEE

On August 24, Sgt. John Harwell, Cpl. Derrell Worth, RFC Richard Tanner, and RFC Ricky Boles patrolled Lake Oconee for boating safety violations. Individuals were cited for: towing skier without an observer, operating vessel with improper PFD, and towing skiers without PFD's.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On the evening of August 23rd, Ranger Derek Cobb, Ranger Matthew Johnson and Corporal Lynn Stanford responded to the Oconee River tail race and Greenway Project in reference to a missing tuber. The tuber had become separated from his party while floating the river and they became worried when darkness fell and they had not heard from him. Shortly after the officers arrived the subject was located, uninjured, near the landing.

JASPER COUNTY

On Saturday, August 24th, at approximately 1:15 p.m., while en-route to Lake Jackson for boat patrol, Corporal Tony Wynne received a phone call from Jasper County 911 in reference to boaters stranded on the Ocmulgee River near the Highway 16 bridge. Corporal Wynne, along with Sergeant Tim Kendrick stopped on the bridge and saw a small boat containing an adult male and an adult female anchored in a stretch of shoals. Following directions from Sergeant Kendrick and Corporal Wynne, the male subject was able to drag the boat to the shore and secure it. Corporal Wynne gave the couple a ride to their vehicle. They then drove their vehicle with the boat trailer to the bridge where Corporal Wynne and two other subjects, recruited by the boat owner, helped them drag the boat up the embankment and put it on the trailer.

NEWTON COUNTY

On Saturday, August 24th, Sergeant Brent Railey and Corporal Tony Wynne were on a concentrated boat patrol utilizing a DNR Law Enforcement helicopter on Lake Jackson. As they headed up the South River, RFC Keith Page, who was an observer in the helicopter flying overhead, directed them to the Yellow River in Newton County where a ski boat was pulling a skier through a “no wake” zone where they had received complaints in the past. At RFC Page’s direction, they stopped a ski boat downstream from the “no wake” zone. While checking the boat’s safety equipment, Corporal Wynne smelled alcohol and saw a cup on the floor at the operator’s station. The boat operator admitted to having had a drink. When Corporal Wynne had the operator perform the field sobriety exercises, the operator had difficulty performing them. Corporal Wynne determined the operator was under the influence of alcohol and placed him under arrest. The boat operator was charged with operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol, child endangerment, and failure to obey a regulatory marker.

PUTNAM COUNTY

On the afternoon of August 24th, Ranger Derek Cobb and Corporal Josh Copelan patrolled Lake Sinclair. Several vessels were stopped and warnings and citation were issued for PFD violations, as well as navigation light violations.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

TURNER COUNTY

On August 24th, RFC Chad Hulseley received information about illegal alligator hunting activity in Turner County. RFC Hulseley and Sergeant Al Greer were able to locate the cypress pond in which the poachers had set baited hooks, a common method of illegally taking alligators. The rangers set up surveillance on the area and after several hours they observed an adult and a juvenile checking and re-baiting a hanging hook. The adult was charged with hunting alligators out of season and hunting with unlawful substances or equipment.



RFC Chad Hulseley investigating illegal alligator hunting.

TIFT COUNTY

On the afternoon of August 20th, Cpl. Greg Wade was dispatched to assist the Tift County Sheriffs' Office in the search for an elderly man that had gone missing in a heavily wooded area. A GSP helicopter spotted the man standing, chest-deep, in the middle of the Little River. Ground crews were directed to the location and the subject was escorted out to an awaiting ambulance.

WORTH COUNTY

On August 22nd, Cpl. Robbie Griner and Ranger Eric White investigated a suspected night deer hunting incident after a complainant discovered a truck stuck in his cotton field and two fresh deer carcasses dumped in a nearby creek. The officers arrived on scene and began their investigation. After running the vehicle's tag information on their MDT computer, the officers proceeded to the truck owner's address. Upon arrival at the residence, Cpl. Griner noticed bloody shoes on the front porch and deer hair and blood in the grass beside the driveway. No one was home at the time so the officers waited until the truck's owner arrived. After speaking with the suspect, it was learned the truck in the field was from a previous night hunting excursion; the deer carcasses were the result of a separate offence that occurred the night before. Armed with this information, the officers proceeded to Tift County and interviewed a second suspect who corroborated the story. The two suspects led the officers to a field in Turner County where they had killed two deer the night before. While surveying the scene, the officers discovered a third deer shot by the suspects that was overlooked in their haste to leave the area. The two subjects were charged for hunting deer at night and hunting out of season in Turner County and littering in Worth County. The confiscated deer meat was donated to a needy family.



Two deer carcasses illegally dumped in Daniel's Creek, Worth County

DOUGHERTY COUNTY

On August 24, Sgt. David Ruddell, Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Greg Wade and Ranger Eric White assisted Dougherty County P.D. with search efforts for a missing elderly man suffering from advanced-staged Alzheimer's. Available resources that included GSP air support, EMS, Marine Corps Logistics Base personnel, and volunteers were mobilized to search a heavily wooded area near the man's home. Although missing for almost 8 hours when finally located, the 89-year-old Albany native was found dehydrated but otherwise safe.

LAKE WORTH

Later that evening, Cpl. Robbie Griner and Ranger Eric White received a call for assistance from the Lee County Sheriff's Department at the Ga. Hwy. 19 Bridge. Two swimmers reported discovering a severed human arm in the Kinchafoonee creek portion of Lake Worth. DNR officers provided water security of the scene while divers searched the reported area until darkness hampered their efforts. The following morning, search efforts resumed but were later cancelled when divers were unable to find any evidence to confirm the report.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

LAURENS COUNTY

On August 24th, Cpl. Dan Stiles and RFC Rodney Horne operated the fishing simulator and laser shot at Olivet Baptist Church in conjunction with an outdoor program and wild game supper. Thirty five children participated in the event.

Later that same day, Cpl. Dan Stiles and RFC Rodney Horne patrolled the Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area. Two vessels were checked for registration and safety equipment and ten anglers were checked for license compliance. Two license violations were documented.

DODGE COUNTY

On August 24th -25th; RFC Allen Mills conducted a Hunter Education class at the Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Eight students participated in the class and received their certification. Assisting with the class were Fisheries Technician Jim Hargrove and his wife; volunteer instructor Pat Hargrove.

BULLOCH COUNTY

On August 11th, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely and Cpl. Mike Wilcox responded to a reported drowning at Steel Bridge landing on the Ogeechee River. Witnesses at the scene stated that the victim, a 33 year old white male from Port Wentworth, had been swimming with friends in the river. The victim jumped from the Hwy. 119 Bridge, and was unable to swim to shore before becoming exhausted. Rangers located the victims' body, after a brief search in approximately ten feet of water.

EVANS COUNTY

On August 23rd, RFC Debbie Brannen checked a complaint from a landowner in reference to persons fishing without permission. Two individuals were found on the property and subjects were cited for fishing without permission.

On August 24th, RFC Debbie Brannen checked fishing and boating activity on the Evans County Public Fishing Area. Several boats and numerous licenses were checked resulting in two violations documented for fishing on a PFA without a WMA license.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On August 24th, Sgt. Jon Barnard, Cpl. Kevin Joyce, RFC Clint Jarriel, Ranger Patrick Gibbs, and K-9 Briar conducted a special detail at the Bullard Creek WMA shooting range. Violations were documented for littering, and entering a fee area without a GORP pass.

COFFEE COUNTY

On August 23rd and 24th, RFC Tim Hutto, RFC Mark Pool, Cpl. Morty Wood, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey and Sgt. James McLaughlin worked the DNR Shooting Simulator at the Sportsman Expo in Douglas. The officers also gave out information packets about hunting in Georgia and answered questions for the public about this upcoming hunting season. RFC Tim Hutto also presented two K-9 demonstrations with K-9 Gauge.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On August 25th, RFC Tim Hutto and K-9 Gauge patrolled Paradise PFA for boating and fishing activity. Numerous fishermen were checked resulting in three documented violations for fishing without a WMA license on a PFA.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

CHATHAM COUNTY

On Aug. 18th, RFC Jack Thain, Cpl. Jay Morgan, and Cpl. Phillip Scott responded to a call about a fatal boat incident on the Ogeechee River at King's Ferry Ramp where Savannah-Chatham Metro Police Dept. had already responded. The rangers were assisted by SCMPD, and Sgt. Cindy Miller and Cpl. Bill Bryson in the investigation. Preliminary investigation indicates that a 25 year-old female passenger was riding in a bass boat with three other persons when the driver drove the boat on a plane under the old drawbridge span which had very little clearance due to incoming tide and the river being higher than normal due to significant rain over the summer. The victim was sitting up in the front pedestal seat facing backwards when she hit her head on the metal bridge span. The incident is still under investigation to determine if alcohol was involved.

August 20th, Cpl. Chris Moore patrolled Chatham County waterways for commercial crab fishing violations. Two commercial crab boats were checked as well one person working recreational traps. No violations were documented.

August 24th, Cpl. Chris Moore checked boats returning from offshore during the limited red snapper season. Seven boats were checked. Several boats had limits of red snapper. Other fish landed were vermilion snapper, black sea bass, amberjack, gag grouper, red porgy, triggerfish, and other bottom species. One violation of undersize amberjack was documented.

On August 24th, Sgt. Cindy Miller and Cpl. Bryson checked a boat at Bell's Landing Boat Ramp that was found to have 3.5 bushels of blue crab, over the limit and undersized. Citations were issued and the crabs were returned to the salt water. The following morning a commercial crab fisherman in the area advised DNR that he had approximately 30 traps robbed near Bell's Landing and Forest River.



August 24th, Cpl. Chris Moore responded to a complaint of hunting without permission in Bloomingdale, GA. Three hunters were checked leaving the area, which had been training hounds.

August 25th, Cpl. Chris Moore and Ranger Jordan Crawford patrolled the Herb River for crab fishing violations. The officers confiscated six commercial traps that were being fished illegally.



BRYAN COUNTY

On Aug. 18th, RFC Jack Thain was patrolling the Richmond Hill WMA, when he received a call from Cpls. Phillip Scott and Jay Morgan, who were on boat patrol and were observing two persons on the old Bryan Fisherman's Co-op dock, which now privately owned and in a state of disrepair. RFC Thain responded and cited one person for fishing without permission.

On Aug. 22nd, Cpl. Jay Morgan presented a Hunter Education class at J. F. Gregory Park in Richmond Hill, certifying 21 students.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On Aug. 18th, Cpl. Jay Morgan and Cpl. Phillip Scott conducted a boating safety patrol on the Medway River and the St. Catherine's Sound area. One boater was cited for not having enough life jackets on board and for overloading his canoe. Two life jackets were loaned to the boater to help them get back to the dock. Another boater who was having motor problems in Sunbury Channel was towed over to the Sunbury ramp.