

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
August 4-10, 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 9th, Cpl. Byron Young, RFC Brooks Varnell, and RFC Bart Hendrix responded to a medical emergency call at Holiday Marina on Allatoona Lake. A 7 year old female was unresponsive on a Mastercraft ski boat. The 7 year old was treated by Bartow County EMS and transported to Kennestone Hospital in Cobb County. The 7 year old was alert at the hospital and was admitted overnight for observation. RFC Varnell and RFC Hendrix responded to the hospital and determined that the 7 year old and another child were riding on the swim platform of the boat when the 7 year old became unresponsive. Officers determined that carbon monoxide poisoning was the possible cause of the incident. Boat owners with inboard type engines should note that passengers who are seated around or behind the engine compartment of their boats should watch for signs of carbon monoxide poisoning. These symptoms include dizziness, fatigue, headache, confusion and in high doses can cause loss of consciousness and death.

On August 10th, Cpl. Byron Young responded to Grady Hospital in Atlanta. A 51 year old male suffered a broken neck while swimming at the Old Hwy 41 day use area on Allatoona Lake. The male was pulled from the water after jumping in and going under. The male was flown by life flight helicopter to Atlanta. At present time the male has regained movement in his arms and legs, but will be in the hospital for several days, possibly weeks.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On August 9th, RFC Bart Hendrix responded to Allatoona Lake in reference to an attempted suicide at the boat ramp at Harbor Town Marina. A female had taken several prescription pills and drove her vehicle into the lake. Two dock workers saw the vehicle in the water and swam out to rescue the driver. The workers had to remove the driver from her seat belt and then pulled her through the sun-roof. She was transported to a nearby hospital for evaluation.



Passenger car pulled from Allatoona Lake

COBB COUNTY

On August 9th, Cpl. Byron Young, Cpl. Lee Burns, RFC Brooks Varnell and RFC Bart Hendrix conducted HIN inspections at Jim R. Miller Park. The officers inspected 41 vessels and assisted boat owners get their registration issues resolved.

PICKENS COUNTY

On August 7th, Cpl. James Keener assisted Pickens County emergency services staff with public safety response in reference to severe flash flooding across the eastern portion of the county. Cpl. Keener was staged with a DNR jet drive boat along with other first responders and assets at the main county fire station in Jasper. Several roads were washed away leaving citizens temporarily stranded. This is the second so-called "100 year" flash flooding event in the county within the last week.

FULTON COUNTY

On August 7th, several DNR Rangers responded to the Chattahoochee River near Sandy Springs to assist local agencies and the U.S. National Park Service in the search for a missing boater. Side Scan Sonar and underwater divers were utilized in an attempt to locate the missing man. Several environmental factors challenged search efforts such as flash flooding of tributary creeks, muddy waters and high water levels. Daily searches were conducted for the missing man utilizing all available search and recovery methods including cadaver dogs and aerial observation. The drowning victim was recovered on August 12th after being spotted by a DNR Law Enforcement Aviation helicopter unit.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HALL COUNTY

On August 9, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk and RFC Eric Isom patrolled Lake Lanier for boating violations. During the patrol they received a call about a boat being stolen. A short time later the Rangers saw a boat matching the description with three people on board. The Rangers stopped the boat and confirmed that it was the stolen boat. The three occupants were questioned and admitted to stealing the boat. All three were arrested and charged with felony theft, possession of tools of a crime, and criminal damage to property due to the boat being damaged. One suspect was also charged with giving a false name to the officers.

On August 10, Ranger Kevin Goss responded to a boat incident at Van Pugh North Park in Hall County on Lake Lanier. Ranger Goss assessed the damage to the boats and took statement from the parties involved. While finishing the boat incident Ranger Goss was dispatched to another incident involving a fire on a boat. After contacting the owner and determining that no one was hurt, and the vessel was back at the owners home Ranger Goss suspended the investigation until Monday.

On August 4th, RFC Kevin Goss and RFC Eric Isom responded to a personal water craft incident at Old Federal, where a fifteen year old sustained back injuries from falling of the PWC. The operator of the PWC was transported to Northeast Georgia Medical Center for treatment. The Rangers also assisted two people in water after their catamaran sailboat capsized. The Rangers also transported three juveniles and one adult back to their residence after finding them out after sunset.

On August 10th, RFC Mark Stephens and RFC Eric Isom responded to, two separate boat incidents in Shoal Creek. The first incident was a vessel fire. The second incident was a partially sunken vessel. All persons from both incidents were uninjured.

DAWSON COUNTY

On August 10th, Sgt. Lee Brown and Wildlife Technician III David Shattuck patrolled Dawson Forest WMA. During their patrol the rangers gave verbal guidance and written warnings for entering the area without a Georgia Outdoor Recreation Pass, written warnings and citations for possession of alcohol by an underage person and unlawful consumption of alcohol on a WMA. The rangers also arrested three subjects for possession of marijuana.

DEKALB COUNTY

On August 6th, RFC Barry Britt and Ranger Shane Brown conducted an On-line Hunter Education Class at the Tucker Park and Recreation Department. A total of 22 students were certified in Hunter Education.

GWINNETT COUNTY

On August 6th, RFC Barry Britt and Ranger Shane Brown held a HIN Inspection at the Bass Pro Shop in Lawrenceville. A total of 35 were inspected.

HALL COUNTY

On August 10th, Cpl. Eric Sanders and RFC Mitchell Crump patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. During their patrol the rangers arrested one subject for boating under the influence. They also assisted in the search for a missing person. After a short search the person was located.

LUMPKIN COUNTY

On August 6th, RFC Mitchell Crump responded to Chestatee WMA at Dicks Creek reference a subject that was injured while swimming at the falls. RFC Crump along with the Lumpkin and White County Fire Departments were able to get the subject out to a waiting Life Flight Helicopter. The subject was taken to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

OCONEE COUNTY

On August 6th Capt. Mike England and RFC Tim Butler taught a hunter education class. Nineteen students were certified.

WILKES COUNTY

On August 5th Cpl. Mark Patterson taught a hunter education class at the Mary Willis Library. Five students were certified.

BURKE COUNTY

RFC Jeff Billips patrolled Di-Lane Plantation, Yuchi and Alexander WMA's. RFC Billips checked fishing without permission complaint and cited two fishermen for fishing without a license and warned them for fishing without permission.

RFC Billips checked crop damage permits in Sardis and Girard. RFC Billips checked the Ogeechee River for boaters and fishermen. RFC Billips responded to a nuisance alligator complaint at Jones Lake in Waynesboro.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

August 5, RFC Grant Matherly visited Wrens Middle School. RFC Matherly spoke with faculty and walked the hallways to assist Wrens PD with a security detail. While at the school RFC Matherly heard a call for assistance with a mentally handicapped subject on the outskirts of Wrens. He responded to the call. Do to Crisis Intervention Training he was able to assist with the subject. After about an hour of speaking with the subject, RFC Matherly convinced him to be transported to a Hospital in Augusta, GA. The subject was a black male that was out of his medication. He was having hallucinations which made him feel like he and others were in danger. With the use of his training, RFC Matherly was able to calm the subject. The subject was transported to the hospital for treatment.

On Sunday, August 11, RFC Grant Matherly patrolled North Jefferson County on his ATV to check for fishing and hunting activities. The ATV was used to get into more remote locations that are not accessible by vehicle.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

RFC Brian Adams patrolled the little river from Hwy 17 to Hwy 80 on Friday.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and RFC Brian Adams patrolled the Savannah River on Saturday.

CLARKS HILL LAKE

Cpl. Ryan Swain and RFC Bobby Timmerman patrolled the lake on Saturday. No boating violations were documented.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BIBB COUNTY

On August 4th, Sergeant Tony Fox assisted the Air National Guard with air-water rescue training at Lake Tobesofkee; DNR provided site security and logistical support during the event.



Photo courtesy of Donn Rodenroth

HEARD COUNTY

On July 31st, August 1st and 2nd, Rangers conducted educational programs at Rockridge Baptist Assembly in Franklin. They gave instruction on basic archery and firearms safety and the students were able to shoot BB guns and archery, some for the first time ever. About 60 elementary school age campers participated including some from as far away as South Korea. Rangers involved in the programs were Sergeant Brent Railey, Corporal Keith Waddell, Corporal Jeremy Bolen, Corporal Travis Sweat, RFC Russell Epps, RFC Kevin Godbee and Deputy Ranger Joe Sebo.

HENRY COUNTY

On Monday, August 5th, Corporal Travis Sweat and RFC Kevin Godbee responded to a call about two men hunting doves out of season. They were hunting near three public schools on the first day of school. The school system put the schools on lockdown because of the shots fired and armed men in the area. With the assistance of Henry County Police Department, Rangers located the hunters and cited them for hunting doves out of season and hunting over bait.

MERIWETHER COUNTY

On Saturday, August 10th, Sergeant Brent Railey, Corporal Keith Waddell, Corporal Mitch Oliver, Corporal Jeremy Bolen and RFC Russell Epps responded to assist the Meriwether County Sheriff's Office with the search for a missing person. It was believed the missing person, a 65 year old local man, had possibly drowned in a small pond near Greenville. Rangers used two riverboats to drag the pond with body drags for about an hour until Corporal Waddell and Corporal Bolen located the man with the drag. The body was turned over to the Meriwether County Coroner.

PEACH COUNTY

On August 8th, Sergeant Tony Fox assisted the Peach County Sheriff's Office with the checking of a number of boats at a residence that was being searched, pursuant to a warrant, for stolen property. Sergeant Fox found one kayak that had been reported stolen out of Bibb County and identified several others that exhibited altered hull identification numbers. All vessels were subsequently seized by the sheriff's office pending further investigation.

TROUP COUNTY

On Saturday, August 10th, Sergeant Brent Railey, Corporal Keith Waddell, Corporal Mitch Oliver, Corporal Jeremy Bolen and RFC Russell Epps conducted a HIN inspection at GSP LaGrange. Forty-two boats were inspected and 4 HIN's were issued.

TWIGGS COUNTY

On the evening of August 7th, Corporal Robert Stillwell, RFC Ronnie Beard, and Ranger David Fisher assisted the Twiggs County Sheriff's Office in searching for a missing elderly person. The individual was found unharmed in an adjacent county.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

TURNER COUNTY

On August 6th, RFC Chad Hulsey received a call from the Turner County 911 center in reference to a night hunting incident. The dispatcher advised that an Ashburn P.D. officer and a Turner County Sheriff's Deputy had stopped a SUV that matched a 911 caller's description of a vehicle that had fired a shot from a roadway at a deer. After arriving on scene, Hulsey made contact with the Deputy and learned that the driver had already been taken into custody for DUI and was en-route to the Sheriff's Office. Hulsey took the second occupant of the vehicle into custody and seized a spotlight, and a Remington 30-06 rifle from the suspect vehicle. A juvenile passenger was released from

the scene to the custody of his parent. During the subsequent investigation by Hulsey and Sgt. Al Greer, both subjects were interviewed and confessed to shooting at a deer from the roadway. Both subjects were charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road, hunting from a motor vehicle, hunting without permission, and hunting deer out of season. The driver was also charged with D.U.I.

WEBSTER COUNTY

On the afternoon of August 7th, Sgt. Butch Potter responded to a boating incident involving a drowning on Bear Creek. Two elderly men were fishing when their 12 foot jon boat capsized sending them into the water. One of the men drowned, while the other clung to the swamped boat until rescued. The incident was turned over to Critical Incident Reconstruction Team investigators Cpl. Steve Robinson and RFC Chad Hulsey.

LAKE W.F. GEORGE

On August 9th-10th, Sgt. Butch Potter led a group of rangers on a concentrated patrol along the Georgia/Alabama State line on Chattahoochee River. The detail encompassed three counties and approximately 30 miles of waterway, with the focus being illegal hunting/pursuing of alligators during a closed season in Georgia waters, and within the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge.

The Alabama alligator season began on the night of August 9th and many hunters had taken to the Chattahoochee River in pursuit of the animal. LE Division Rangers documented 13 violations for hunting alligators out of season in Georgia waters and 8 boating safety violations.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

TELFAIR COUNTY

On August 5th, 2013 RFC Rodney Horne investigated a complaint of illegal digging of Indian artifacts in Telfair County near China Hill. RFC Rodney Horne issued 3 citations to 2 violators for littering and excavating artifacts without written permission on private property. One arrow head and one piece of pottery were seized as evidence.

WHEELER COUNTY

On August 5th, 2013 RFC Rodney Horne patrolled Little Ocmulgee State Park and Thaxton Beach looking for illegal activity. One citation was issued for fishing without a license.

EVANS COUNTY

On August 10th, RFC Debbie Brannen conducted boating safety patrol on the Canoochee River. Several vessels were checked along with 10 licenses resulting in one violation documented for operating a vessel without registration

CLINCH COUNTY

On August 4th, Cpl. Jason Shipes observed a vehicle driving erratically on Hwy 441. Cpl. Shipes notified the Homerville Police Department (HPD) and conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle. All occupants had consumed alcoholic beverages during the night. The

driver of the vehicle was given field sobriety and was determined not to be impaired. After given consent to search, Cpl. Shipes located a small bag of suspected marijuana in the driver's door of the vehicle. Two of the occupants claimed ownership of the substance. The suspected marijuana was turned over to HPD officers and arrests were made.

On August 10th, Cpl. Jason Shipes encountered several people fishing along the Suwannee River Sill in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. While checking creel limits and license requirements, Cpl. Shipes encountered two subjects fishing without a license. Both were residents of Florida and were issued citations for non-resident fishing without a license.

BULLOCH COUNTY

On August 10th, Cpl. Eddie Akins patrolled the Ogeechee River above and below Steel Bridge. His efforts resulted in seven boats and one fisherman being checked. No violations were detected. Verbal guidance was given to one group of boaters putting in at the landing. Cpl. Akins directed the boaters to go get the proper number and type of PFD's before launching their boat.

Later that day, Cpl. Eddie Akins responded to information about two boaters who had overturned their boat less than a mile downstream of Steel Bridge Landing on the Ogeechee River. Cpl. Akins was able to get both individuals from the boat back to the landing safely. With the assistance of several other people, Cpl. Akins was able to get the overturned vessel back to the landing and released to the owner.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On Aug. 6th, Cpl. Phillip Scott and RFC Jack Thain set up a wildlife display and information table at the Pembroke National Night Out event, which was attended by approximately 200 persons.

On Aug. 10th, Cpl. Phillip Scott assisted Cpls. Eddie Akins and Shaymus McNeely, from the Region 6 (Metter), with a call about two female kayakers who were missing on the Ogeechee River near the Stokes Landing area. While searching the river and local river landings, the two females were found safe by a passing boater who returned them to their landing.

GLYNN COUNTY

On August 5th, RFC David Brady, RFC John Evans and Wildlife Technician Ed VanOtteran served a search warrant on a residence in North Glynn County. The search warrant was obtained through an investigation concerning a raccoon being held illegally and subsequently had bitten a child. The Rangers served the warrant and seized the raccoon without incident. The raccoon was euthanized and sent off for rabies testing. On August 10th, Cpl. Craig Smith responded to a possible boat sinking off Jekyll Island. Before Cpl. Smith could arrive on scene, the boat had washed onto the beach and all occupants were accounted for. Sea Tow was able to remove the vessel and return it to the boat ramp.

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On August 8th, Cpl. Craig Smith and Sgt. Chris Hodge were working Night Deer Hunting detail when a truck came by and started shining a spot light into a clear cut that Cpl. Smith was watching. The vehicle was stopped and found to have 2 subjects inside that had already killed a deer and had it in the back of the truck. The passenger/shooter was intoxicated and the driver threw a small box out the window that had prescription pills in it that were not prescribed to him. The Rangers also found Marijuana in the truck. Upon arrival at the Brantley County jail, it was discovered by Corrections Officers that the driver had a small Marijuana pipe in his possession as well. Both subjects were cited for Hunting Deer at Night, Hunting from a Public Road, and Hunting from a Vehicle. The passenger was also cited for Hunting under the Influence. The driver was additionally cited for Littering, Possession of Marijuana, Possession of a Controlled Substance, and Bringing Illegal Contraband into a Correctional Facility.



LONG COUNTY

On August 11th while conducting a boating safety check at Johnston Station landing, Bobby White, noticed two occupants on a Jet Ski fall and try to get back on and fell off again. Finally after several unsuccessful tries of getting back on the jet ski the driver let the passenger drive the jet ski back to the landing allowing the original driver to hang on to the seat as he was drug back to the landing. Field sobriety was given to the original driver. He was arrested for Boating under the Influence.