

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
July 7-13, 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 July 7th, Sgt. Mike Barr, Cpl. Byron Young, Cpl. Lee Burns, Ranger Zack Hardy, and the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) members Cpl. Wil Smith, and RFC Bart Hendrix responded to a fatality boating incident on Allatoona Lake. A call came into the Bartow County 911 center of a person hit by a boat and in the water near Allatoona Landing and the CSX Railroad trestle. On arrival by boat, Cpl. Byron Young found an unmanned bass boat under full power traveling in circles in the water. A 52 year old man was recovered without a lifejacket and floating in the water by Bartow Fire and Rescue and citizens in personal boats. The circling bass boat belonged to the man found in the water. He was later pronounced deceased by the Bartow County coroner. Cpl. Young worked with fire and rescue personnel to keep all other boaters from the area to avoid greater injury or damage to structures. Due to the extreme dangers of boarding the boat under full power, Cpl. Young decided to let the boat run for over 45 minutes until it finally ran out of gas. A full investigation of the cause of the fatality incident will be carefully completed by members of the DNR CIRT team. The Atlanta media covered the story in detail throughout the July 4th holiday period and over the next several days.



Shown are Bartow County Fire and Rescue personnel and DNR Law Enforcement Cpl. Byron Young towing in the unmanned bass boat after it had ran out of gas from circling under full power for over 45 minutes.

On July 13th, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Bart Hendrix stopped a pontoon on Allatoona Lake with several violations. The officers observed a male riding the bow of the vessel holding a cooler. The officers stopped the pontoon and found it to be overloaded with 13 people onboard. While talking with the operator, the officers noticed signs of intoxication. Cpl. Young checked the operator and placed him under arrest for BUI (boating under the influence). The officers issued 4 additional citations for violation of the 100 foot law and operating a vessel without navigation lights. For more information on boating laws, go to www.goboatgeorgia.com

On July 13th, Cpl. Lee Burns and Intern Walker Jardine responded to a boating incident on Allatoona Lake near Victoria Landing. Three males were being towed on a tube and were met by a very large wave. The tube went into the air causing all three young men to hit heads. The youngest of the three was admitted to Scottish Rite Hospital in Atlanta.

PICKENS COUNTY

On July 9th, Cpl. James Keener presented two presentations to youth at the Pickens Recreation Department summer camp. The programs presented were on wildlife information and identification. Cpl. Keener made use of mounted animals, an extensive animal fur collection, and wildlife calls.

On July 13th, Sgt. Brian Keener, Cpl. James Keener and W/L Tech IV Mitch Yeargin competed as a team in the “Challenge at High Noon” fundraiser to benefit the Pickens County 4-H S.A.F.E. shotgun shooting team. This event challenged local law enforcement agencies against the 4-H shooters in skeet/trap shooting competitions. Four law enforcement agencies including Pickens Co. Sheriff’s Deputies, Jasper Policemen, State Patrol Troopers and DNR Rangers competed against the 4-H shooters. The DNR team placed 2nd overall behind the impressive first place 4-H shooting team. The fundraiser was a huge success with many citizens and local officials on hand to watch the friendly competition.



Shown (L-R) is Wildlife Technician Mitch Yeargin, Pickens County 4-H Shotgun Team, Sgt. Brian Keener and Cpl. James Keener.

FULTON COUNTY

On July 5th, RFC Chad Cox and RFC Daniel Gray patrolled northern Fulton County on the Chattahoochee River for trout fishing and boating activity. One citation was issued for fishing without a license and several verbal warnings were given for operating vessel w/o personal flotation devices (life jackets).

MURRAY COUNTY

During the week of July 1st through the 6th, Cpl. James Keener issued 12 citations on the Coosawattee River below Carter's Lake while working illegal fishing complaints. The violations included two citations for taking game fish by illegal methods, one citation for possession of over the daily creel limit for striped bass, five citations for fishing without license, and four citations for littering. Cpl. Keener also issued five warnings for violations including fishing by illegal methods, fishing without a license, and possession of illegally taken wildlife.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

LAKE HARTWELL

On July 7th, RFC Tim Vickery, Cpl. Craig Fulghum and Sgt. Stan Elrod patrolled Lake Hartwell by vessel. Several boats were checked during the patrol and citations were issued for fishing without a license and littering.

On July 7th, Cpl. Bill Bunch and RFC Shane Sartor patrolled on Lake Hartwell. Numerous vessels were checked with three warnings and five citations being issued. The violations were operating with expired registration, operating with unserviceable fire extinguisher, two failure to obey regulatory marker, two operating personal watercraft without personal flotation device and two operating without registration displayed.

MADISON COUNTY

On July 8th, RFC Shane Sartor checked a private pond that had a land owner affidavit filed on it for fishing without permission. While checking the area one subject was caught fishing in the pond and was issued a citation for fishing without permission.

UNION COUNTY

On July 7th, RFC Dyer and RFC Alexander were patrolling Nottely Lake boat ramps for illegal fishing / boating. The Rangers was checking Canal Lake Boat Ramp and observed a subject place something in his pocket when he noticed the Rangers truck. The Rangers investigated the suspicious activity and RFC Dyer arrested the subject for possession of Marijuana less than an ounce. The subject was transported to the Union County Jail.

On July 9th, RFC Dyer patrolled Nottely Lake boat ramps and shoreline for illegal fishing / boating. RFC Dyer observed two subjects fishing in Nottely Lake at Kiutuestia Creek. RFC Dyer checked the fishermen's license and issued one person a citation for fishing without a license.

On July 9th, RFC Dyer patrolled Nottely River for illegal trout fishing. RFC Dyer checked several fishermen and issued citations for fishing without a license and fishing without a trout license.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On July 7th, RFC Barry Britt and Ranger Shane Brown responded to a drowning at a private dock on Lake Lanier. The Forsyth County Fire Department and Sheriff's Office assist with this case.

On July 7th, Cpl. Eric Sanders patrolled the Chattahoochee River. Cpl. Sanders issued written warnings and citations for fishing without a license and fishing with unlawful bait.

On July 8th, Sgt. Lee Brown and Ranger Shane Brown were patrolling when they observed an illegal burn. The rangers talked with the owner of the property but the case is still under investigation.

On July 8th, Cpl. Eric Sanders and Cpl. Bill Bunch patrolled Lake Lanier. The rangers issued verbal guidance, written warnings and citations for operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's, operating without registration displayed, operating with registration displayed improperly and operating a vessel without a marine toilet certificate.

On July 9th, Cpl. Eric Sanders and Ranger Shane Brown conducted a HIN inspection at the GSP Post in Cumming. A total of 27 vessels were inspected.

On July 11th, RFC Barry Britt and Ranger Shane Brown patrolled Lake Lanier and issued a written warning for fishing without a license.

On July 13th, Sgt. Lee Brown and RFC Mitchell Crump patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. The rangers issued verbal guidance and written warnings for operating a vessel without the registration displayed, operating a vessel without PFD's onboard and for fishing without a license.

GWINNETT COUNTY

On July 7th, Cpl. Eric Sanders patrolled the Chattahoochee River at Jones Bridge Park. Written warnings and citations were issued for fishing without a license and fishing without a trout license.

On July 9th, RFC Barry Britt and Ranger Shane Brown responded to a complaint of subjects illegally killing geese. On July 11th, the rangers made contact with the subjects involved and verbal guidance was issued due to the age of the subjects.

HALL COUNTY

On July 7th, Sgt. Lee Brown and RFC Mitchell Crump patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. A written warning was issued for fishing without a license.

LUMPKIN COUNTY

On July 12th, RFC Mitchell Crump was patrolling Dockery Lake on Chestatee WMA. RFC Crump issued a written warning for fishing for trout with unlawful equipment.

ROCKDALE COUNTY

On July 9th, Cpl. Eric Sanders received a call of a stranded boater on Randy Poynter Lake. With a storm moving in Cpl. Sanders launched his patrol boat and towed the boat back to the dock.

On July 11th, Cpl. Sanders assisted the Rockdale County Sheriff's Office with two burglary suspects that had fled. Cpl. Sanders was able to assist with the arrest of the two suspects after a short search in a wooded area.

HALL COUNTY

On July 7th, 2013 Corporal Jason Roberson and Sgt. Mike Burgamy arrested a subject for operating a vessel under the influence after the suspect drove through the no-wake zone at Russell Bridge on Lake Lanier at a high rate of speed coming within thirty feet of a child on a tube.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

RICHMOND COUNTY

On July 7, Cpl. Payne and Sgt. Boswell patrolled Richmond County checking local waterways for flooding. While patrolling, several fishing licenses were checked at local creeks around the county. While checking fishing licenses and without permission complaints on Spirit Creek the officers walked up to a fisherman on the bank and noticed the odor of marijuana coming from the area. Cpl. Payne asked the subject for his fishing license and asked what he was smoking. The subject stated that he had been smoking a joint. Cpl. Payne then asked if he had any identification and the subject said it was in the car. At the car Cpl. Payne asked if the subject had any more marijuana on his person and the subject responded yes and handed a small bag of marijuana and some pills to him. The subject was arrested for fishing without license, felony possession VGCSA, and misdemeanor possession VGCSA. The subject's son was issued a warning for fishing without permission and released to his mother.

BURKE COUNTY

RFC Jeff Billips and Wildlife Technician Steve Kyles patrolled Burke County for boaters and fishermen. Citations and warnings were issued for fishing without license and possession of illegally taken fish. Billips and Kyles patrolled Di-Lane Plantation, Yuchi and Mead Farm WMA's. Billips and Kyles also checked fishing without permission complaint and a nuisance alligator complaint.

GREENE COUNTY

On July 10 and 11, Cpl. David Allen and RFC Richard Tanner taught a boater safety class at Crowe Marine. Nine boaters were certified.

On July 10, Sgt. John Harwell and Cpl. David Allen assisted GTF with their search for illegal grows of marijuana. No arrest made at this time.

MORGAN COUNTY

On July 10, RFC Niki Spencer assisted GTF with their search for illegal grows of marijuana. No arrests made at this time.

HANCOCK COUNTY

On July 9, Sgt. John Harwell and Cpl. Davis Allen assisted GTF with their search for illegal grows of marijuana. Several locations were discovered and multiple plants seized. One arrest made and others pending.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BIBB COUNTY

On July 12th, Rangers conducted a HIN inspection at the Bass Pro Shop in Macon. Eighty vessels were inspected to complete their vessel registration process.

HARRIS COUNTY

On July 9th, Corporal Mitch Oliver attended a meeting at the Chattahoochee Sailboat Club on Lake Harding. Corporal Oliver was there to discuss and answer questions about the new boating laws that were passed by the Georgia General Assembly.

On July 13th, Corporal Mitch Oliver was patrolling Lake Harding assisted by Desmond Timmons, Park Manager at FDR State Park. They, along with another DNR vessel were working the concert that was taking place on the lake. Corporal Oliver observed a PWC pass by several anchored vessels and persons in the water at a close distance and operating on plane. Corporal Oliver stopped the PWC operator for the violation and during the conversation, observed clues that the operator may be impaired. Corporal Oliver administered a series of field sobriety exercises to the operator and placed him under arrest for boating under the influence. The subject consented to take the state breath test and Corporal Oliver transported him to the state boathouse. During the boat trip back to the state's boathouse, the subject jumped from the moving patrol vessel. Corporal Oliver went back and picked the subject up and made sure he was ok. When

asked why he did it, the subject said that the officer threw him from the vessel. Going back and looking at video from the boats 2 cameras clearly shows the subject jumping from the boat.

JASPER COUNTY

On July 13th, Corporal Susan Morris and RFC Fred Hayes were patrolling Lake Jackson and checking areas of citizen complaints, specifically boats and PWC's that were violating the 100 foot law. While going into Rocky Creek Cove, they observed a PWC coming out of the cove, traveling approximately 35 mph, that went between the DNR boat and a dock. The DNR boat was at idle speed and was approximately 80 feet from the end of the dock. When stopped, the PWC operator stated he had never been on a PWC before and therefore was not aware of the 100 foot law. Corporal Morris explained the law to the PWC operator and told him they were there because it was a high complaint area and he was issued a citation for operating a PWC above idle speed within 100 foot of a dock.

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On July 8th, Corporal Mitch Oliver was contacted by a Channel 3 reporter in regards to doing an interview on dangerous wildlife in the Chattahoochee River. The report was in response to the new whitewater rafting course and some concerned participants fearing alligators. Apparently, some of the citizens around Columbus just learned that there were alligators in the Chattahoochee River and feared that they may be eaten if they fall out of their raft. Corporal Oliver assured the reporter that alligators didn't routinely prefer the swift water and that they should not be an issue to fear while rafting on the Chattahoochee.

TROUP COUNTY

On July 13th, Sergeant Brent Railey, Corporal Jeremy Bolen, Corporal Mitch Oliver and Ranger Russell Epps conducted a HIN inspection at the Georgia State Patrol Post in LaGrange. 47 vessels were inspected and 4 HIN's were issued.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

BERRIEN COUNTY

On July 13th, RFC Tim Hutto patrolled Paradise PFA for boating and fishing related violations. Numerous citations were issued for illegal consumption of alcohol on a PFA and fishing without a WMA license on a PFA.

COFFEE COUNTY

On July 12th, RFC Hilton received a complaint of someone trapping on General Coffee State Park. RFC Hilton responded to the complaint and began an investigation. RFC Hilton found a raccoon in a trap and made contact with a suspect. RFC Hilton interviewed the suspect and he admitted to trapping the raccoon. RFC Hilton issued the suspect a citation for trapping out of season and trapping with an illegal device on a state park.

WHEELER COUNTY

On July 7th, 2013 RFC Rodney Horne was conducting a vessel patrol in a complaint location on the Little Ocmulgee River. RFC Horne initiated a vessel stop for operating a vessel within 100' of an object in the water. The subject was cited for the violation and also received citations for failure to stop a vessel, operating a vessel without PFD's, and operating a vessel without registration.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On July 7th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and Ranger Daniel North patrolled the central portion of the county where five individuals were encountered training their hounds. It was discovered that three of the individuals did not have proper hunting licenses on their persons. Written warnings were issued to the three individuals and they were given guidance to keep proper licenses on their person in the future.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

A little after midnight on the morning of July 13th, Cpl. Altman, RFC Brannen, and Ranger Gibbs responded to a call about a man falling into the river at Rocky Hammock Landing. A Search and Rescue operation was performed trying to locate the missing person. Sgt. Barnard responded later that morning to take part and lead the operation. The search and rescue was later changed to a drowning that day. Sgt. Winters and RFC McDonald took the next shift to help aid.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On July 11th, Sgt. Chris Hodge, Sgt. Wayne Hubbard, Cpl. Craig Smith, Cpl. Bobby White, RFC David Brady, and Ranger Jay Bright responded to a call for assistance from Georgia State Patrol. State Patrol Troopers had attempted to stop a vehicle when the driver drove into the Satilla River and fled into the water. Officers searched the area with boats for several hours. The search was resumed the next morning until the confirmation was made that the driver had actually survived the incident and was not in the river.

CAMDEN COUNTY

On July 12th, Sgt. Chris Hodge, Cpl. Chris Ridley, Ranger Colt Shaske, and Camden County Sheriff's Office personnel responded to Crooked River to assist a boater in distress. A small john boat was caught in a storm with a small child on board and the motor on the boat was losing power. Officers arrived at the boat ramp as the small boat safely returned to the dock.

BRYAN COUNTY

On evening of July 6th and early morning of July 7th, Cpl. Phillip Scott, RFC Jack Thain, and Ranger Jason Miller were patrolling the local boat ramps and Richmond Hill WMA at night when they checked the private dock at the old Bryan Fishermen's Co-op. They found three males and one female stealing metal off of a tugboat and barge used for building docks. Bryan County deputies responded and two of the males were arrested and charged with theft. A juvenile male and pregnant female were released with possible charges pending. The suspects' vehicle was towed.

On July 7th, Cpl. Phillip Scott and RFC Thain cited one person for fishing without permission at the old Bryan Fishermen's Co-op dock.

On July 9th, Ranger Jason Miller cited one person for fishing without permission at the old Bryan Fishermen's Co-op dock which now privately owned.

On July 9th, Ranger Miller and RFC Thain met with a boat owner regarding a boat accident that occurred during the holiday weekend but was not reported. The incident is currently under investigation.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On July 13th, RFC Jack Thain and Ranger Jason Miller patrolled the Liberty County Industrial Authority property off of Cay Creek Rd, checking for persons hunting hogs without permission and for trespassing. They found three men and one woman who were found parked on the property, and under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Liberty County deputies were called for assistance and custody was turned over to them. All four were charged with criminal trespass and arrested by LCSO. One subject was also charged with underage drinking and another was also charged with felony possession of cocaine. Their vehicle was towed.