

# Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

**Weekly Report**  
**August 10-16, 2014**

**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 16<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Mike Barr and Cpl. Byron Young were patrolling Allatoona Lake in the area of Bartow Carver. The officers stopped a pontoon for a rules of the road violation. While the officers were talking with the operator of the pontoon, a Rinker runabout came within 100 feet of the pontoon and the officer's patrol boat (with blue lights flashing). The officers quickly stopped the Rinker boat. The male operator of the vessel was found to be under the influence of alcohol. The male was charged with BUI and violation of the 100 foot law and transported to the Bartow County Jail.

On August 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, RFC Bart Hendrix and Bartow County Deputy Stewart Duncan patrolled Allatoona Lake working past midnight both days. The officers assisted two different vessels with engine problems. The vessels were towed to Blockhouse and Upper Stamp Creek boat ramps.

### **DOUGLAS COUNTY**

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Eric Brown was patrolling Sweetwater Creek State Park when he came upon an individual in the lake. The subject was floating around the bank and was actively searching holes and under rocks with his hands. The subject was asked what he was doing and he responded that he was noodling (fishing by hand) for catfish. The subject was cited for noodling out of season.

## **Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)**

### **LAKE LANIER (DAWSON, FORSYTH, GWINNETT, HALL, & LUMPKIN COUNTIES)**

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, RFC Mitchell Crump and Cpl. Eddie Tompkins stopped a vessel on Lake Lanier for violating a no wake zone. While speaking with the operator Cpl. Tompkins determined the subject was under the influence of alcohol. The subject was arrested for boating under the influence and failure to obey a regulatory marker. The subject's BAC was .177 grams, over two times more than the legal limit.

### **HART COUNTY**

On August 10<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Craig Fulghum concluded a boating incident investigation on Lake Hartwell that occurred on May 10<sup>th</sup> of this year. The DNR LE CIRT team was called in to assist in the investigation. The incident involved a thirteen year old boy that was riding on the bow of a pontoon boat, when he fell off and was struck by the prop. The Driver was cited for allowing a person to ride on the bow of a vessel while under power.

On August 10<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brandon Pierce and Cpl. Craig Fulghum patrolled Lake Hartwell for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several boats were checked for proper safety equipment. A total of two citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of operating a vessel without CGA PFD's and operating vessel without registration.

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brandon Pierce and Sgt. Stan Elrod patrolled Lake Hartwell for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several fishing licenses and boats were checked for proper safety equipment. A total of one citation was issued. The violation consisted of operating a vessel without lights during hours of darkness.

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brandon Pierce conducted a boating safety program to the boy and girl scouts from the boat. Boating safety was discussed, as well as, numerous other water activities relating to water safety. Boys and girls of all ages, as well as, the scout masters were in attendance for the event.

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, RFC Brandon Pierce and Cpl. Craig Fulghum, along with several volunteer hunter safety instructors, taught a ten hour hunter education class at the Oak Bower Baptist Church. A total of forty-two students participated in the class. All students were certified.

### **HALL COUNTY**

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, Corporal Jason Roberson taught a boating safety class to the Boy Scouts in Barrow County. Fifteen students were certified.

## **Region III- Thomson (East Central)**

### **RICHMOND COUNTY**

On August 16, Sgt. Boswell, RFC Billips and Tech 3 Steve Kyles received a call of an alligator that was caught on a bush hook. The officers responded, but the alligator had already freed itself from the line. After a brief investigation the officers cut the line and removed it from the water.

Later in the afternoon RFC Billips responded to MCG to interview individuals involved in a boating incident. RFC is a Critical Incident Response Team member who responds to all major hunting and boating incidents in the state.

### **GREENE COUNTY/ LAKE OCONEE**

On August 15, Cpl. Derrell Worth and RFC Ricky Boles encountered three subjects setting up a gill net on Lake Oconee. The violators were cutting sticks and sticking them in the shallow flats of the lake. They were then attaching the gill net to the sticks. Rangers watched the subjects for over an hour while hidden in a wooded area. The violators were then approached and asked to retrieve the net. Several catfish, shad and carp were entangled in the net. The subjects were charged for use of a gill net and transported to Greene County Detention Center for processing.

During the weekend of August 16- 17, several violations were documented on the lake. Among the violations were allowing person to ride bow of vessel, allowing underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD, reckless operation, operating a PWC with no PFD and operating vessel within 100' of object in water. Sgt. John Harwell, Cpl. Derrell Worth, RFC Niki Spencer, RFC Tim Butler and RFC Phillip Nelson were the officers working on the lake during the weekend.

On August 16, Cpl. Derrell Worth responded to a boating incident in the area of Richland Creek on Lake Oconee. The vessel drove through timber located in the lake causing significant damage to the hull of the vessel. The vessel was able to make it back to the dock even though it took on a great amount of water. No injuries were reported.

### **MORGAN COUNTY**

On August 13 and 14, RFC Ricky Boles taught a Hunter Safety Course at Morgan County Safety Complex. During the two night course fifteen students were certified.

### **COLUMBIA COUNTY**

On August 16<sup>th</sup>, Captain Mark Padgett, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin, Cpl. Brian Hobbins, and Cpl. Ryan Swain responded to a boating incident in Keg Creek on Clarks Hill Lake. Upon arrival at the scene, it was discovered that a male juvenile was struck in the head by a PWC after being ejected off of another PWC. Due to the juvenile's injuries, he was flown to the hospital by helicopter. CIRT investigators were activated and arrived on scene. The matter is still under investigation.

## **Region IV- Macon (West Central)**

### **BALDWIN COUNTY**

On the evening of August 13<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Matt Johnson and Cpl. Bubba Stanford responded to south Baldwin County in reference to an illegal alligator kill. Throughout the following days, the officers interviewed numerous people and the incident is still under investigation.

On the afternoon of August 16<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly patrolled Lake Sinclair. Numerous vessels were stopped and 2 warnings and 2 citations were issued.

## **HENRY COUNTY**

On Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Travis Sweat conducted an Information & Education program at the Shriner's banquet where he used the laser shot. About 400 people were in attendance.

## **MERIWETHER COUNTY**

On Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Keith Waddell conducted a Hunter Education class at Big Red Oak Plantation. Later in the day, he also patrolled the county issuing 4 warnings for fishing without a license at Lake Meriwether.

## **WILKINSON COUNTY**

Shortly before midnight on August 16<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Matt Johnson and Cpl. Lynn Stanford responded to Ball's Ferry boat ramp on the Oconee River in reference to missing tubers. The officers traveled approximately 6 miles upstream and located the tubes and a jon boat. After contacting the owner of the boat, the officers learned that boat owner was camping on the river and had located the tubers at approximately 1:00 a.m. The tubers, 2 males and a female were returned to the boat ramp and turned over to family.

## **Region V- Albany (Southwest)**

### **DECATUR COUNTY**

On the night of August 11<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Rick Sellars and Ranger Steve Thomas responded to a call of missing persons on Mosquito Creek. Three male subjects had launched a canoe earlier in the day, with plans to take out before dark several miles downstream. The Rangers met with Decatur County deputies at the scene, but the creek was too small to launch a patrol boat. A helicopter was requested but was unable to fly due to heavy fog. The subjects were eventually located by the officers early the next morning.

### **GRADY COUNTY**

On August 12<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Rick Sellars met with Grady County Investigators to show them a wooded area that appeared to have been used recently for unlawful activities. While in the area, the officers located a Kawasaki UTV Mule that was hidden in the woods. The UTV was found to have been stolen from the City of Cairo the previous night. The stolen equipment was recovered and turned over to investigators with Cairo Police Department.

## **Region VI- Metter (Southeast)**

### **WHEELER COUNTY**

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, RFC Rodney Horne and Cpl. Kevin Joyce responded to a reported drowning in the Oconee River. Sgt. James McLaughlin, Sgt. Jon Barnard, Cpl. Dan Stiles, and RFC Allen Mills also responded to assist. Officers McLaughlin, Horne, and Joyce searched for the victim by vessel and recovered the victim from the river after dark. The victim was a college student swimming with friends and reportedly jumped from a railroad trestle into the river.

### **DODGE COUNTY**

On August 14<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Dan Stiles and RFC Allen Mills responded to a call from Dodge County 911 in reference to a lost 84 year old male on an ATV with possible Alzheimer's. The victim was able to make a cell phone call and stated that he was stuck and didn't know his location. The officers arrived on scene and began organizing a search with volunteers, fire fighters, deputies, as well as DNR and GSP aviation units. After three hours of intense searching, the victim was found riding his ATV on a dirt road. The victim was transported to the hospital for evaluation.

## **DODGE COUNTY**

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, RFC Hutto received a picture message of a velvet buck that appeared to be at a taxidermist or a deer processing facility. RFC Hutto initiated an investigation into the picture on August 12<sup>th</sup>, which involved interviewing a reliable witness. On August 13<sup>th</sup>, RFC Hutto traveled to Telfair County to interview another witness and to perform a taxidermy inspection on the taxidermy shop where the buck was supposed to have been taken. The taxidermist admitted to mounting the velvet buck which came to him on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. The taxidermist stated that “the deer came to him on August 1<sup>st</sup> and the deer was picked up mounted on August 7<sup>th</sup>”. After talking with more witnesses and gathering information related to the case, the fifteen point velvet buck was seized from the shooter in Dodge County and violations were documented for violation of crop damage permit.



## **APPLING COUNTY**

On the night of July 27<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Altman and RFC Brannen answered a call on the Altamaha River that a group of people were on inner tubes and could not be seen. Several boaters reported that they had almost struck the tubers because they did not have any lights. Cpl. Altman's boat was put in just down river from where officers thought they may be, and along with Appling Sheriff's Office assistance, the four tubers were found at around 11:30 that night. They had been drinking alcohol and had no life jackets or lights to warn other boaters of their presence.

On July 28<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Altman presented a laser shot for the youth of the Camp Whatever at the Baxley Church of God.

Later that day, Cpl. Altman had finished up a month long investigation of Felony Burglary and Criminal Damage to State Property at the Baxley Wilderness Institute. Seven juveniles and four adults did an estimated \$37,000 in damages. Court trials have been set and some have already taken place.

On August 15, 2014 RFC Clint Jarriel answered a call of a stranded vessel on the Altamaha River between Deans Landing and the #1 Bridge. Officer Jarriel assisted the Appling County Deputies with escorting the vessel off the water safely.

#### **JEFF DAVIS COUNTY**

On the evening of the 9<sup>th</sup>, RFC Clint Jarriel and Cpl. Chase Altman patrolled Flat Tub WMA, focusing on alcohol consumption around Rocky Hammock Landing. Two subjects were found to be illegally consuming alcohol on the WMA, and charged for the violation.

#### **TATTNALL COUNTY**

On August 16, 2014 RFC Clint Jarriel, CPL Kevin Joyce, and K-9 Briar worked an area for night hunting activity. The two officers observed an individual shining a light from a highway. The subject was stopped and charged for hunting deer at night, hunting from a vehicle, and hunting from a public road.

### **Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)**

#### **BRANTLEY COUNTY**

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, RFC John Evans, Ranger Colte Shaske, RFC Sam Williams, RFC Mark Pool, Sgt. Chris Hodge, and Cpl. Craig Smith assisted Brantley County drug team with Marijuana eradication. The plots were found by walking areas and looking for sign of subjects being in the woods. A total of 4 Plots were found in 2 different locations with a count of 31 plants seized.