

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
January 26 – February 1, 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 January 26th, RFC Zack Hardy and Intern Taylor Lawrence, patrolled Allatoona Lake for boating and fishing activity. Ranger First Class (RFC) Hardy checked 10 boats and 18 fishing licenses. One person was cited for having no fishing license. While on patrol RFC Hardy and Intern Lawrence noticed a person stranded in the 40 degree water in the middle of the lake near Bethany Bridge. While approaching the person, RFC Hardy realized that the person was in a kayak that had overturned and filled with water and was in distress. The subject was holding on to the kayak and did not have on a personal floatation device (PFD). RFC Hardy and Intern Lawrence were able to pull the subject and his kayak into the patrol vessel. The kayaker stated that he and another person in the kayak were paddling across the lake when a large wave overtook them and they overturned. The other boater was towed to shore by another kayak. RFC Hardy explained the importance of lifejackets especially in extremely cold water where hypothermia can occur within minutes.



RFC Hardy assisting boater from the water.

On January 28th, Sgt. Mike Barr assisted eight tractor trailers who were stuck on the exit ramp of I-75 at the Adairsville exit during the the winter snow and ice storm 2014. He was able to find a local wrecker to free the large vehicles which had caused the exit ramp to be entirely closed. Sgt. Barr also discovered a vehicle that had lost control and rolled on Highway 140 due to the slick weather conditions on Highway 140 near Pine Log, Georgia.

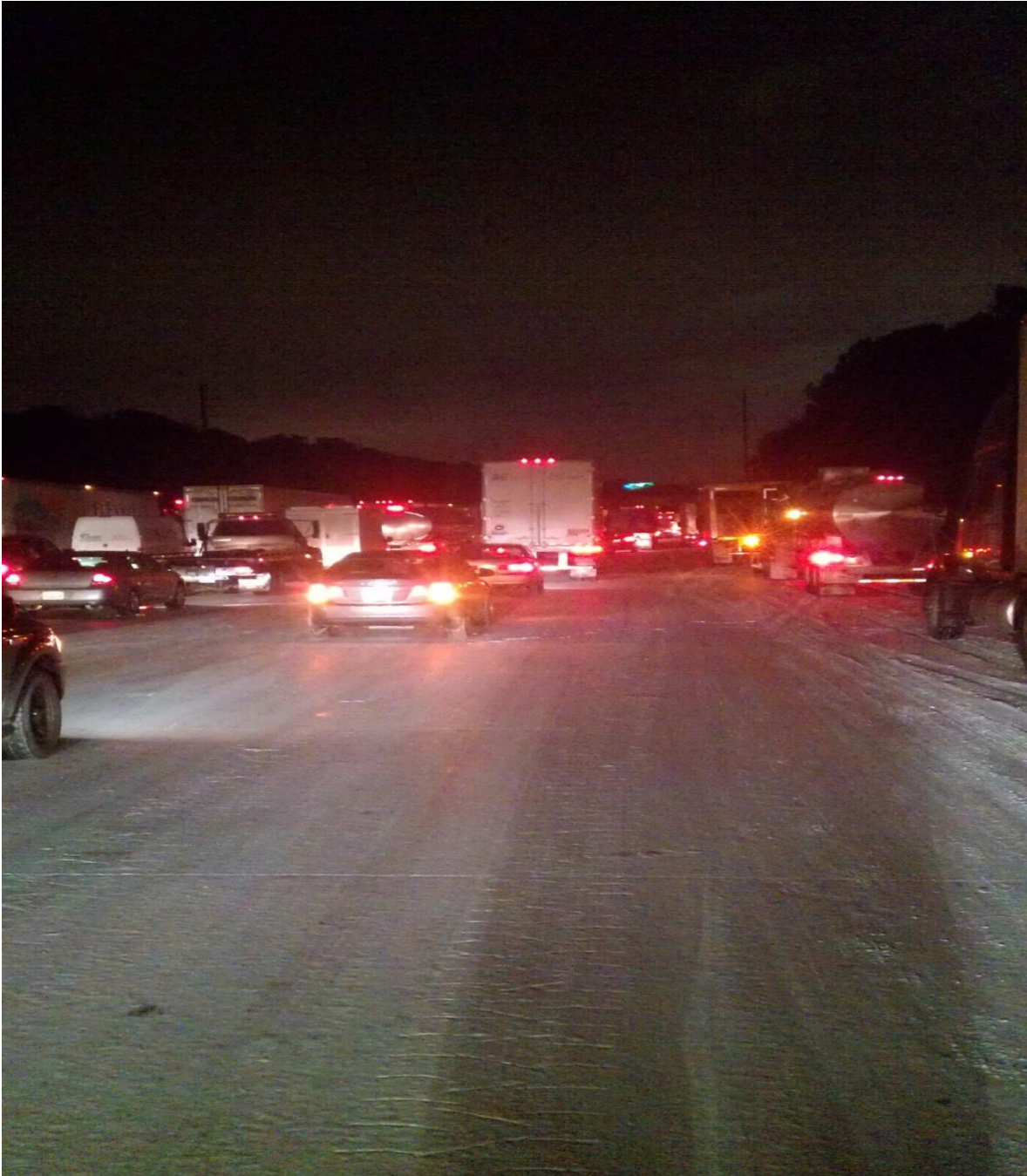


Vehicle that had lost control and hit a drainage ditch on Highway 140 causing it to roll during winter storm 2014.

On January 28th, Cpl. Byron Young patrolled I-75 in Bartow and Cobb Counties to assist motorists stranded by the winter storm. Cpl. Young located 12 vehicles off the roadway in Bartow County. Cpl. Young checked with the driver's for injuries and provided assistance. Cpl. Young found I-75 to completely be shut down at Wade Green Road in Cobb County. While on patrol Cpl. Young was asked to provide an ambulance escort through the traffic. It took over 1 hour for Cpl. Young and the ambulance to travel 2 miles on I-75. Eventually the ambulance was able to exit and get the patient to Kennestone Hospital.



A Small truck located just after midnight by Cpl. Young on I-75 in Bartow County



I-75 traffic in Cobb County at 2:00 A.M.

On February 1st, Cpl. Byron Young patrolled Allatoona Lake checking fishermen. None of the fishermen reported catching any bass or stripers. The main problem right now is water temps in the low 40's and a major shad kill. With mild winters, Allatoona Lake has not seen a major shad kill in several years. Cpl. Young saw thousands of threadfin shad floating in the lake. The shad kill creates a buffet for all species of fish. Anglers on Allatoona will find tough conditions for the next few weeks.



Winter Shad kill on Allatoona Lake



Threadfin Shad

COBB COUNTY

On January 29th, Sgt. Mike Barr was assisting the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) with the winter storm response at night along I-75 in Cobb County. DNR Rangers were checking stranded vehicles to ensure all people were able to get to safe locations. While checking a vehicle near the North 120 loop entrance ramp, Sgt. Barr was flagged down by a vehicle in distress. The driver stated that he had a medical emergency and needed to get a child to a hospital immediately. Sgt. Barr could see a woman and child in the back of the vehicle. Sgt. Barr was able to contact Cpl. Byron Young and together they utilized their emergency lights and sirens to escort the vehicle to the Kennestone Hospital Emergency Room. The Georgia State Patrol dispatch center had contacted the hospital and had medical personnel ready when the child arrived for immediate medical treatment.

On January 29th, Cpl. Lee Burns assisted Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) with assisting stranded motorists along I 75. Cpl. Burns found a lady walking down Highway 92 crying. The lady was traveling on foot to her doctor for medical attention after her car slide off of the roadway. Cpl. Burns transported the lady to her Doctor's Office in Woodstock where she received the appropriate medication needed. Cpl. Burns also assisted approximately twenty other stranded motorists in around I 75.



DNR Rangers assisting where needed.

On January 31st, Ranger First Class (RFC) Brooks Varnell and DNR Intern Taylor Lawrence attended the Safari Club International (SCI) banquet at the Cobb Galleria. They provided an introduction to safe shooting sports utilizing a laser shot simulated shooting system.



RFC Brooks Varnell helps a young person with proper firearms techniques using a simulated laser shot shooting system at the SCI Banquet.

GORDON COUNTY

On January 26th, Cpl. Shawn Elmore heard radio traffic from Gordon E911 about a fire that had gotten out of control on Sugar Valley Rd. Cpl. Elmore responded to the area and was able to direct the Gordon County Fire Department into the remote location near John's Mountain WMA. The fire department was able to extinguish the fire before it reached the WMA boundary.

On January 27th and 28th, Cpl. Shawn Elmore taught rangers from Region 1 Advanced Report Writing. This course is part of the yearly in-service training that will be attended by all law enforcement officers within DNR.

On January 28th and 29th, Cpl. Shawn Elmore assisted the Gordon County Sheriff's Office and the Georgia State Patrol during the winter storm. Cpl. Elmore assisted stranded motorists, responded to wrecks, and assisted with in-progress calls for the sheriff's office due to icy road conditions.

On January 30th, RFC Ben Cunningham responded to a drowning in a private pond off Boone Ford Road. Four juveniles walked out on the ice covered pond and fell through. Unfortunately only three of the juveniles were able to get out of the pond. About 45 minutes after first responders arrived they located the body of a 13 year old male from Calhoun.

FLOYD COUNTY

On January 28th, RFC Ben Cunningham assisted Floyd County Police Department with a wreck on Hwy 156 and Turkey Mtn. Road. The wreck was caused by snow and ice on the road way.

CHATTOOGA COUNTY

On January 28th, RFC Roger McConkey and RFC Ben Cunningham used their four wheel drive patrol trucks and assisted the Chattooga County Sheriff's Office and the Georgia State Patrol. The Rangers assisted stranded motorists, provided transportation to the GSP troopers to wrecks, and assisted with in-progress calls for the sheriff's office due to very bad road conditions. GSP and local officers were having difficulty getting around the county due to snow and ice conditions.

PAULDING COUNTY

On January 29th, Cpl. Lee Burns assisted the Paulding County Sheriff's Office with transporting children home from North Paulding High School during winter storm 2014. Cpl. Burns also assisted in towing stranded vehicles to and from the roadways. Cpl. Burns also transported several people home that were stranded overnight.



DNR Cpl. Burns assist stranded students. Harmony Grove Church Road, Paulding Co.

FULTON COUNTY

On January 30th, Cpl. Lee Burns patrolled I-285 assisting stranded motorists. Cpl. Burns assisted ten stranded motorists with getting their vehicles back onto the interstate. One vehicle broke down in the middle of the interstate. Cpl. Burns and a Doraville Police Officer were able to push the vehicle across three lanes of traffic without incident.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

DAWSON COUNTY

On February 1st Ranger Shane Brown issued a written warning for fishing without a trout stamp.

DEKALB COUNTY

On February 1st Cpl. Eric Sanders and Cpl. Eddie Tompkins interviewed a subject involved in a hunting complaint the previous evening. The subject admitted to hunting hogs without permission. The subject was issued a citation for hunting without permission.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On January 27th Ranger Shane Brown and SGT Lee Brown issued written warnings for hunting without a license and hunting without a Georgia Waterfowl license.

METRO ATLANTA (CLAYTON, COBB, DEKALB, FULTON, GWINNETT)

Rangers responded to the aftermath of Winter Storm Leon in the Metro area. Rangers searched for students stranded on busses, assisted stranded motorist, transported citizens a place of safety or to hospitals if needed, and relayed needed medical supplies to hospitals. SGT Lee Brown, Cpl. Eric Sanders, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins, RFC Barry Britt, and RFC Mitchell Crump responded at different times.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

OGLETHORPE COUNTY

On January 26th RFC Phillip Nelson responded to a call from a landowner in reference to complaint of hunting without permission that had occurred the previous evening. After a brief investigation, RFC Nelson was able to determine that three juveniles had been hunting rabbits on the complainant's property. Contact was made with the juveniles who were given verbal guidance on the violations of hunting without permission, hunting at night, and hunting from a motor vehicle.

ELBERT COUNTY

On January 26th Cpl. Julian Wilkins made contact with two waterfowl hunters. During a license inspection it was determined that one of the individuals did not possess a hunting license, a Georgia waterfowl license, or a Federal waterfowl stamp. Citations and warnings were issued for the violations.

On February 1st Cpl. Wilkins patrolled the Vaughter WMA where he checked a subject hunting hogs with a center fire rifle. The hunter was given a written warning and encouraged to familiarize himself with the WMA regulations on firearm restrictions for hunting feral hogs.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On February 2nd, RFC Leroy Ficklin performed a concentrated patrol of Clarks Hill WMA. During the patrol several subjects were checked and no violations were detected.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On February 1st, Cpl. Ryan Swain performed a concentrated patrol for Southern Lincoln County Boat Landings for boating and fishing activity. No subjects were detected violating the law.

JEFFERSON COUNTY

On January 29 RFC Matherly assisted in Atlanta in response to Winter Storm Leon. RFC Matherly assisted in patrolling GA 400 from I-85 to the North side of Alpharetta, and I-85 from the I-75 I-85 split to just north of I-285. The Officers were tasked with check for stranded motorist, checking road conditions, and checking for looters of the parked vehicles left on the sides of the highways.

BURKE COUNTY

On February 01, RFC Billips and RFC Matherly conducted the first half of a two day Hunter Education Class at Corinth Christian Church outside of Sardis, GA in Burke County. The Officers will conclude the Hunter Education Training on February 08. There were approximately 25 youth attending the class. This is the third year RFC Billips has provided the class at Corinth Christian Church which draws attendees from Burke, Jefferson, Emanuel, Jenkins, and Screven County.

GREENE COUNTY

On February 1, Rangers with the Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division hosted the 12th annual skeet shoot/squirrel hunt located at the Oconee Wildlife Management Area in Greene County. The idea is to expose youth aged children to safe gun handling while shooting skeet and squirrel hunting. The students received hands-on instruction by Rangers and most will complete their hunter safety certification at a later date. Out of sixteen youth, approximately one thousand shot shells were fired and fifteen squirrels were killed. Rangers who assisted were Sgt. John Harwell, Sgt. Matt Garthright, Cpl. Josh Copeland, Cpl. David Allen, Cpl. Mark Patterson, Cpl. Derrell Worth, RFC Ricky Boles, and Capt. Mark Padgett.

A special thanks goes out to Mark Gordy (Georgia Power Company) for providing snacks and drinks; the squirrel dog owners Jamie Dowdy, Randy Dillard, and Bill Norris. Other thanks to Walter Lane and Rusty Garrison for the use of shotguns, shot shells, skeet throwers and supplies.



Region IV- Macon (West Central)

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

STEWART COUNTY

On January 29th, Ranger Quinn Fogle, RFC Jim Atchley, Cpl. Steve Robinson and Sgt. Butch Potter assisted GSP Troopers and local authorities with road closures and traffic control due to ice and snow.

TERRELL COUNTY

On January 31st, Rangers participated in a multi-agency warrant served in Dawson Georgia. Ranger Quinn Fogle, Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Steve Robinson and Sgt. Butch Potter assisted Dept. of Revenue Agents in the arrests of several subjects related to illegal alcohol establishments and a variety of other charges.

MILLER COUNTY

On January 26th, Ranger Steve Thomas was on patrol when he made contact with two waterfowl hunters, citing both for hunting waterfowl after legal hours. One of the hunters was also cited for hunting without a Ga. Waterfowl License and hunting without a Federal Duck Stamp.

DECATUR COUNTY

On February 1st, Cpl. Randy Davis, RFC Tony Cox, and Sgt. Rick Sellars conducted a concentrated patrol on an area of Silver Lake WMA where several traps had been located. The trapper was apprehended and issued five citations and warnings for trapping without a license, trapping on a WMA, failure to tag traps, failure to carry a choke stick while trapping, and driving around a closed gate on a WMA.

THOMAS COUNTY

On January 30th, RFC Jon Penuel inspected an area where two illegal traps had been previously located by other Rangers. While checking the property, the suspect was located as he was checking the traps. After further investigations, it was determined that the subject did not possess a valid resident trapping license nor did he have landowner written permission. The subject was issued citations for the violations.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

IRWIN COUNTY

On January 26, Sgt. David Reckley heard shots coming from a property along the Alapaha River. He found a vehicle parked at a cabin and waited for the hunters to return. Reckley saw four males walking toward him down a woods road dressed in camouflage and wearing waders, and then another stepped out of the woods. Reckley looked at licenses and was told by the fifth hunter that he was only watching the others hunt. When asked he said he had not left anything in the woods. A brief search revealed a shotgun and shells lying on the ground. Violations of hunting without a license, hunting without a federal duck stamp, hunting without a Georgia waterfowl license, hunting with illegal ammunition (lead shot) and failure to allow inspection were addressed.

DODGE COUNTY

On February 1st, Cpl. Dan Stiles, Sgt. David Reckley, and Cpl. John Stokes attended a Wild Game Supper at the Gresston Baptist Church. The officers operated the laser shot simulator during the event and answered questions from the public regarding hunting, fishing, and boating.

WILCOX COUNTY

On January 25th, Cpl. John A. Stokes, Sgt. David Reckley, and Cpl. Dan Stiles held a HIN inspection site at the Bowen's Mill Fish Hatchery. Eight vessels were inspected and registration / HIN issues resolved.

LAURENS COUNTY

On January 26th while on patrol Cpl. Stiles received a BOLO for a stolen vehicle from the Laurens County Sheriff's office. Cpl. Stiles located the vehicle abandoned near the Riverbend WMA and remained on scene until the Laurens and Treutlen Co. Sheriff's deputies arrived. The vehicle had been stolen in Treutlen County and was returned to the owner.

ATKINSON COUNTY

On January 25th, RFC Tim Hutto checked areas along the Alapaha River for boating and fishing activity. Several fishermen were checked and two citations were issued for fishing without a license.

LANIER COUNTY

On January 26th, RFC Tim Hutto worked a detail involving illegal trapping. One subject was observed working steel traps and checked for compliance. The subject was issued a citation for trapping without a commercial trapping license. The subject was in possession of one bobcat and was working approximately thirty traps.

COFFEE COUNTY

On Jan. 30th, RFC Hilton and Sgt. Damon Winters participated in the Annual National Wild Turkey Federation Banquet for the Douglas Spurs Chapter. Over 100 citizens attended

CHARLTON COUNTY

On January 26th, Ranger Sam Williams received a complaint from a landowner in the St. George area that had found a raccoon caught in a trap on his property. The landowner stated that he had not given anyone permission to trap. After meeting with the landowner, RGR Williams familiarized himself with the property and located numerous traps on the complainant's property and the adjacent property. None of the traps that were located were tagged with the trapper's name or his trapping license number as required. He then returned to the location of the trap that contained the raccoon and set up surveillance on the trap. A little over an hour later, a subject drove up. RGR Williams observed the subject exit his vehicle and dispatch the raccoon and remove him from the trap. At that time, Ranger Williams revealed & identified himself and began to obtain information from the trapper. The subject was in possession of a valid trapping license, a .22 caliber weapon, and a choke stick, but only had verbal permission to trap on the adjacent hunting club for predator control. He did not possess written permission from the land owner as required and admitted that none of his traps were tagged as required. He also admitted to trapping for another hunting club nearby. Citations were issued for trapping without written permission and failure to mark traps with his name or license number. The trapper also had to remove all traps from the properties so they could be tagged and was provided guidance to where the property lines were located.



Ranger Sam Williams inspects a commercial trapper's license in south Charlton County.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)