

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
July 6-12, 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)

PICKENS COUNTY

On July 1st, Cpl. James Keener issued citations to two individuals for violations of commercial turtle trapping regulations and laws. One subject was cited for collecting turtles without a non-resident turtle collecting permit. The other subject was cited for failing to tag the commercial gear with the required commercial permit number, name, and address.

FANNIN COUNTY

On July 4th, RFC Joe Hill and RFC Cody Jones patrolled Lake Blue Ridge for boating safety violations. The Rangers issued warnings and citations for violation of rules of the road, operating an unregistered vessel, improper registration, overloaded vessel, skiing without an observer, failure to obey regulatory markers, and numerous light violations after dark.

On July 6th, Cpl. James Keener and RFC Joe Hill issued citations and warnings on Blue Ridge Lake for offenses including creating a wake in a “no wake” zone, insufficient PFD’s, operating vessel with improper registration, allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without PFD, violating the rules of the road for waterways, and equipment violations.

MURRAY COUNTY

On July 4th Sgt. John VanLandingham and Cpl. Casey Jones made twelve vessel stops on Carters Lake. The rangers addressed various violations including, fishing without license, skiing after sunset, insufficient PFD’s and improper registration.

On July 5th Cpl. Casey Jones and RFC Joe Hill made fifteen vessel stops and addressed several violations that included failure to obey regulatory marker, operating vessel without registration, fishing without a license, improper lights, violations of rules of the road, insufficient PFD’s and violation of the 100’ rule.

On July 6th Cpl. Casey Jones and Wildlife Tech. III Larry Etheridge stopped six vessels on Carters Lake and addressed several violations including, towing skier without observer, failure to obey regulatory marker and violation 100’ rule.

On July 6th Cpl. Casey Jones was patrolling along the Consasauga River and charged a Catoosa County woman for possession of marijuana less than one ounce.

HARALSON COUNTY

On July 12th, Sgt. Ricky Dempsey and RFC Daniel Gray patrolled the Tallapoosa River using kayaks. They issued citations for fishing without a license and operating a vessel without PFD's.



Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

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

On July 6th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and RFC Mark Stephens patrolled Lake Lanier. The rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers issued a citation for reckless operation of a vessel to a PWC operator that came between the rangers and swimmers within 15 feet of both at full speed.

On July 8th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and RFC Mitchell Crump patrolled Lake Lanier. The rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers checked 10 vessels and 13 fishing license. The rangers issued citation and warnings for failure to obey regulatory marker and towing a skier/tube with an observer or mirror. The rangers watched as 8 year old Zach Sweat caught a nice striper on of the license inspections.



8 year old Zach Sweat reeling in and posing a nice striper on Lake Lanier.

On July 9th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins, RFC Mitchell Crump, and Ranger Shane Brown patrolled Lake Lanier. The rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers checked 22 vessels and 25 fishing license. The rangers issued citation and warnings for failure to obey regulatory marker, towing a skier/tube with an observer or mirror, allowing a child under age 13 to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD, operating vessel with improper registration, and failure to maintain pump-out records for marine toilet.

On July 11th, Sgt. Lee Brown and RFC Barry Britt patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. The rangers issued a written warning for fishing without a license.

On July 12th, Sgt. Lee Brown and Cpl. Eric Sanders patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. The rangers gave verbal guidance, written warnings and citations for fishing without a license, operating a vessel without a PFD, allowing a child under age 13 to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD, operating a vessel without registration, allowing an underage person to operate a PWC and operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's. The rangers responded to a boating incident at Charleston Park. A pontoon had run aground and severely damaged it. No one was injured but the operator was arrested for BUI.

UNION COUNTY

On July 8th, RFC Kevin Dyer assisted Georgia Forestry Commission with the investigation of illegal burn in Union County. The subject had started a small illegal burn that consisted of plastic and a wooden table at his resident. RFC Dyer checked the subject's driver license for any outstanding warrants. The license checked showed that the subject had an active felony warrant from Henry County. RFC Dyer confirmed the active warrant and arrested the subject. The subject was transported the Union County Jail for booking.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

CLARKE COUNTY

On July 12, 2014, RFC Tim Butler checked several municipal fishing locations. Violations addressed were fishing without license, under age possession of alcohol and littering.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On July 12, 2014, RFC Bobby Timmerman and SGT Doyte Chaffin conducted a concentrated patrol of West Dam and Lake Springs area of Clarks Hill Lake. Officers have received several complaints of boats being in the no boat zones near the swim area. Officers found 4 boats in violation. Citations were issued.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On July 11, 2014, CPL Ryan Swain received a call in reference to a possible drowning near Chamberlain Ferry boat ramp. CPL Swain along with Jim Wallen of the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office and Casey Broom of the Lincoln County EMA responded to the scene. Upon arrival, officers recovered a body that was found floating near an island in the vicinity of the boat ramp. The incident is still under investigation pending an autopsy.

OCONEE COUNTY

On July 11, 2014, RFC Tim Butler arrested a man for possession of cocaine, Xanax and a substance believed to be crystal methamphetamine.

LAKE OCONEE

On July 11-13, 2014, CPL David Allen and RFC Niki Spencer cited individuals for failure to obey regulatory marker, towing skier without/mirror and operating a vessel without a sufficient number of PFD's.

On July 12, 2014, RFC Niki Spencer and CPL David Allen, observed a PWC operating above idle speed in a no wake zone. The PWC was stopped and upon further investigation it was determined the operator of the vessel was under the influence of alcohol. The individual was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence and failure to obey regulatory marker.

On July 12, 2014, CPL David Allen and RFC Niki Spencer, observed a PWC operating during hours of darkness. The PWC was stopped and upon further investigation the operator was arrested for operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol and operating a PWC during hours of darkness.

RICHMOND COUNTY

On July 12, 2014, CPL Micheal Crawley and SGT Max Boswell patrolled the Savannah River in Richmond County for boating and fishing activity. Around 20 boats were checked and no violations were cited.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On the evenings of July 11th and 12th, Ranger Matt Johnson, RFC Jeremy Reese and Sgt. Bo Kelly patrolled Lake Sinclair. Numerous boats were checked throughout both patrols. One citation, 2 written warnings and several verbal warnings were given for various boating violations.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

THOMAS COUNTY

On July 12, while conducting a patrol along the Ochlocknee River RFC David Brady encountered two individuals in possession of marijuana. These two were arrested, charged with possession of marijuana, and transported to the Thomas County Sheriffs Department.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

LAURENS COUNTY

On July 6th, Cpl. Dan Stiles, RFC Rodney Horne, and RFC Allen Mills conducted a concentrated ATV patrol at the Beaverdam WMA. Several WMA users were contacted. Citations were issued for consuming alcohol on a WMA for regulation violation of ATV use on WMA.

COOK COUNTY

On July 13th, during a patrol at Reed Bingham State Park, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey observed a boater towing a person behind the boat on a tube. The subject on the tube was not wearing a life jacket. The driver of the boat was cited for towing a skier w/o wearing a PFD. The driver was also warned for operating a vessel with insufficient PFD'S. The person being towed was also cited for not wearing a life jacket.

Later in the day a subject was cited for illegal consumption of alcohol on a state park.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

GLYNN COUNTY

On July 7th, CPL Chris Ridley, RFC John Evans and RGR Colte Shaske boarded shrimp trawlers off of Jekyll Beach to check Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) for proper measurements as part of the JEA agreement with NOAA. 3 vessels were boarded. One person was cited for commercial fishing with unlawful gear

On July 9, RFC David Brady and Ranger Jay Bright participated in a joint detail with the United States Coast Guard to conduct vessel boarding's offshore. Multiple vessels were boarded and violations ranging from commercial fishing infractions to PFD violations were found.

On July 12th, Corporal Chris Ridley worked with the United States Coast Guard in St Simons Sound checking vessels returning from offshore during the opening weekend of Red Snapper season. The Brunswick Coast Guard stations new 45 foot patrol boat was used for this detail. The Coast Guard conducted the safety checks while Cpl. Ridley checked licenses and fish. A total of six boats were checked. One boat was cited for failure to land saltwater fish with fins and heads intact.

On July 9th, RFC John Evans, SGT Chris Hodge, SGT Mark Carson, and Wildlife Technicians Ed Van Otteren and Robert Danley served a search warrant on a residence on St Simons Island. The owner had a raccoon that had tested positive for rabies the day before. She was in possession of another raccoon. After some investigation, Rangers were able to determine that there had been other raccoons at the residence that had been given to various individuals. There were at least 30 people and 6 pets that had been potentially exposed to the rabid animal. The incident also affected people in Florida, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Missouri. The investigation is still ongoing and there have been 11 more raccoons confiscated.

On July 11th, Corporal Craig Smith, Corporal Chris Ridley, and Wildlife Technician Ed Van Otteren checked two residences reference the investigation involving rabid Raccoons. One residence did not have any Raccoons and the other residence had two. The Raccoons were confiscated and turned over to the Glynn County Health Department.

CAMDEN

On July 8th, Corporal Craig Smith, Sergeant Chris Hodge, and RFC David Brady conducted an offshore JEA boarding detail. The rangers were checking gear compliance on commercial shrimp trawlers. One subject was cited for Commercial Fishing Without a Commercial Fishing License and another subject was cited for Commercial Fishing With Illegal Gear.

On July 12th, Corporal Craig Smith and Corporal Chris Ridley were patrolling north Camden for illegal hunting activity. Two subjects were checked hunting hogs with dogs. Both were cited for Hunting without a license.

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On July 5th, RFC John Evans was working a night hunting detail. Around 2200 hours a vehicle approached the clear cut he was watching and began shining. RFC Evans pulled out and followed the vehicle. The driver shined the next four clear cuts also. RFC Evans stopped the vehicle and cited the driver for Blinding Wildlife.

BRYAN COUNTY

On July 6th, Cpl. Jay Morgan, Cpl. Bill Bryson, and RFC Jack Thain conducted a dockside inspection of a 26-ft. stern-trawler shrimp boat at the Demeries Creek boat ramp. The licenses of the crew were inspected as well as the net's Turtle Excluder Device which releases live sea turtles from the net and the By-catch Reduction Device which reduces the by-catch of smaller saltwater fish. The boat operator was cited for operating a vessel above idle speed within 100 feet of a dock as he came up the river to the ramp.

CHATHAM COUNTY

On July 7th, Ranger Jason Miller, RFC Jack Thain, Cpl. Bill Bryson, and Cpl. Jay Morgan patrolled offshore of Ossabaw Island in state waters checking commercial shrimp boats. On the first boat they boarded, they inspected the boat's four Turtle Excluder Devices and the crew's licenses. It was found that an arrest warrant had been issued on one of the crew for failure to pay child support. The subject was arrested and transported to Sunbury ramp where a Liberty County deputy transported him to jail to be picked up by McIntosh County Sheriff's Dept.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On July 6th, Cpl. Bill Bryson, Cpl. Jay Morgan, and RFC Jack Thain patrolled from St. Catherin's Sound to Sapelo Sound. Several boats were checked but no violations were found.

OFFSHORE/FEDERAL WATERS

On July 9th, Cpl. Jay Morgan teamed up with the U. S. Coast Guard for a Joint Enforcement Agreement patrol aboard the Coast Guard cutter "Tarpon" 20- 40 miles offshore of Ossabaw/St. Catherine's/Sapelo Islands checking commercial and recreation fishermen. One sport fishing boat was checked with vermillion snapper and black sea bass. No violations were found