

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
June 22-28, 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.

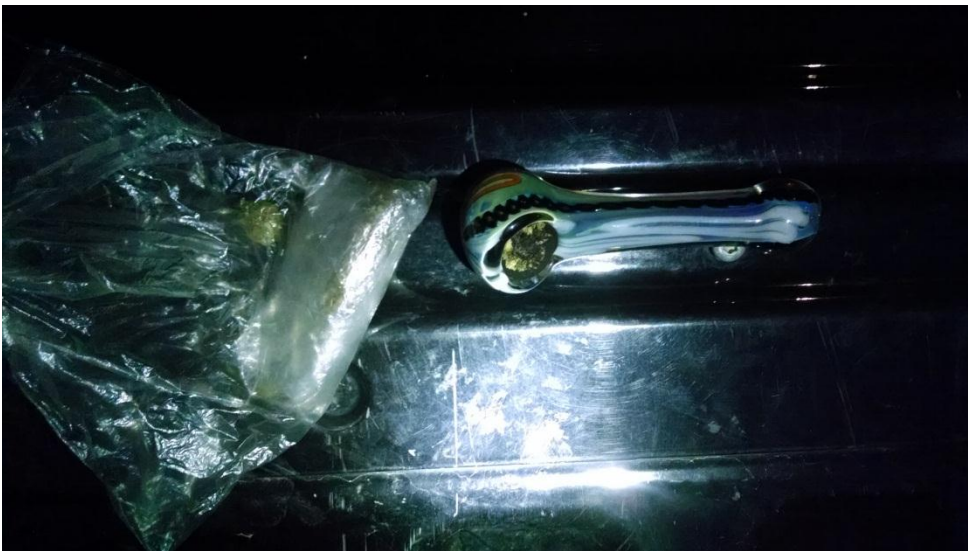


Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

FANNIN COUNTY

On June 26th, Cpl. James Keener and RFC Joe Hill patrolled Rock Creek on Blue Ridge WMA for trout fishermen. The Rangers issued two citations for fishing without a trout license.

On June 28th, RFC Cody Jones was patrolling campsites along Blue Ridge Lake. When Officer Jones encountered two men in a campsite, one of the men immediately put his hands into his pockets. Concerned with officer safety, Officer Jones asked the man to remove his hands from his pockets. Due to the person's nervous demeanor, he asked the man for consent to search him. The men consented to the search. Officer Jones found two knives, a glass smoking pipe containing marijuana, and a small bag containing marijuana. The knives were moved to a safe location and the marijuana and pipe were seized for evidence. The subject was cited for possession of marijuana and possession of drug related objects.



MURRAY COUNTY

On June 23rd, Cpl. Casey Jones and RFC Cody Jones were patrolling the Conasauga River along the Whitfield and Murray County line. The officers encountered two adult males and a juvenile fishing from a jon boat. The jon boat did not have a motor and was being propelled by paddling. While checking the vessel the officers observed a car battery attached to cables and chains. The men were using the device to shock fish and then catch them in large dip nets. The two adults were cited for fishing by illegal methods, and their equipment seized for evidence.



Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

LAKE LANIER

On June 22nd, Corporal Jason Roberson and RFC Mark Stephens arrested one subject for possession of methamphetamine in Sunset Cove on Lake Lanier.

On June 27th, Corporal Jason Roberson, Captain Thomas Barnard, and RFC Mark Stephens arrested one subject for operating a vessel under the influence near Shoal Creek on Lake Lanier.

On June 28th, Corporal Jason Roberson arrested one subject for operating a vessel under the influence in Sunset Cove on Lake Lanier.

On June 22st, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and RFC Mitchell Crump patrolled the South end of Lake Lanier. The Rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers checked 14 vessels and 1 fisherman. The rangers issued citations and warnings for fishing without a license, operating vessel without registration, operating vessel without PFD's, operating vessel with improper registration, allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without PFD, Failure to use cut off switch on PWC, Towing tube/skier with PWC without observer, and operating vessel with improper lights.

On June 27th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and Ranger Shane Brown patrolled the South end of Lake Lanier. The Rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers checked 13 vessels and 14 fishermen. The rangers issued citations and warnings for allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without PFD and fishing without license. The rangers also arrested one subject for Boating under the influence, operating a PWC during hours of darkness, and operating vessel with improper registration.

On June 28th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and Ranger Shane Brown patrolled the South end of Lake Lanier. The Rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers checked 13 vessels and 1 fisherman. The rangers issued citations and warnings for allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without PFD, Operating vessel without registration, Towing tube/skier with PWC without observer, and operating vessel with improper lights. The Rangers also arrested 1 subject for Boating under the influence and operating vessel with improper lights.

On June 28th, Sgt. Lee Brown and RFC Eric Isom patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing violations. During the day the rangers checked several boats. Verbal guidance, written warnings and citations were issued for operating a boat improper registration, operating a boat with insufficient PFD's, allowing a child under the age of 13 to ride in a moving boat without wearing a PFD, operating a boat with improper lights.

HART COUNTY

On June 22nd, RFC Brandon Pierce patrolled Lake Hartwell for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several boats were checked for proper safety equipment. A total of one warning was issued. The violation consisted of towing skier without observer/mirror.

On June 27th, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Tim Vickery patrolled Lake Hartwell for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several boats were checked for proper safety equipment. As a result, one warning was issued. The violation consisted of failure to obey regulatory marker.

On June 28th, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Tim Vickery patrolled Lake Hartwell for any boating safety/fishing activity due to it being a pre-fourth weekend. Numerous fishing licenses and boats were checked for proper safety equipment. A total of six citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of towing skier with PWC without observer on board, operating a vessel with improper registration, operating vessel without a throwable device, operating vessel with improper lights, and allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing PFD.

On June 28th, Cpl. Craig Fulghum and Sgt. Stan Elrod patrolled Lake Hartwell by patrol boat for boating violations. Two citations were issued for towing a skier with PWC without observer on board and allowing underage children to ride in moving vessel without wearing PFD's.

MADISON COUNTY

On June 27th, RFC Shane Sartor was working the Broad River when he observed a group of kayakers smoking what he believed to be marijuana. RFC Sartor waited until the group got back in their kayaks and he then stepped to the edge of the river and identified himself as a DNR Ranger. As the subjects came over to the bank RFC Sartor saw one of the subjects throw a can into the river. The subjects admitted to smoking marijuana and two subjects were in possession of small amounts of marijuana. Two subjects were issued citations for Violation of Georgia Controlled Substance Act (less than an ounce) and one subject was issued a citation for littering.

On June 28th, RFC Shane Sartor was working the Broad River when he observed a male subject packing a substance into a glass pipe and smoking from the pipe. Believing the subject was smoking marijuana; RFC Sartor identified himself as a DNR Ranger and called the subject over. The subject admitted to having the pipe and some marijuana in a pill bottle. The subject was issued a citation for Violation of Georgia Controlled Substance Act (less than an ounce).

On June 28th, RFC Shane Sartor was working the Broad River when he observed a male subject finish his beer and then sink the can in the river. The subject was stopped and issued a citation for littering.

HALL COUNTY

On June 22nd, Corporal Jason Roberson and RFC Mark Stephens arrested one subject for possession of methamphetamine in Sunset Cove on Lake Lanier.

On June 27th, Corporal Jason Roberson, Captain Thomas Barnard, and RFC Mark Stephens arrested one subject for operating a vessel under the influence near Shoal Creek on Lake Lanier.

On June 28th, Corporal Jason Roberson arrested one subject for operating a vessel under the influence in Sunset Cove on Lake Lanier.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On June 28th, Cpl. Brian Hobbins apprehended one subject for boating under the influence on Clarks Hill Lake in Keg Creek. The subject was arrested and transported to the Columbia County Jail.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On June 26th, Cpl. Ryan Swain finalized an investigation involving a false report of a boating incident, insurance fraud, and a false report of a crime. The investigation was conducted with Columbia County Sheriff's Office Investigators. The investigation started with a suspicious boating incident that occurred off of the Savannah River on Clarks Hill Lake. A vessel sunk due to several large holes in its gunwale. Arrest warrants were taken out on two subjects both in Columbia and Lincoln County.

LAKE OCONEE

During the weekend of June 27- 29, Rangers patrolled Lake Oconee for Operation Dry Water. Several infractions were cited including boating under the influence, underage consumption of alcohol, operating vessel with improper lights, towing skier without an observer, operating PWC within 100' of object in water above idle speed, towing skier without a PFD, failure to obey regulatory marker, operating vessel with no stern light, and allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing a PFD. Rangers patrolling the lake during the weekend were Sgt. John Harwell, Cpl. Derrell Worth, Cpl. Michael Crawley, Cpl. David Allen, RFC Ricky Boles, RFC Grant Matherly.

RICHMOND COUNTY

On June 28, Cpl. Ben Payne and RFC Jeff Billips were preparing to go on vessel patrol on the Savannah River when an emergency call came out from dispatch. Apparently, there was an individual about to jump off of the 5th Street Bridge into the Savannah River. The Rangers were about a mile away but had to launch their patrol vessel. They responded along with Richmond County Fire Department Water Rescue Unit. Once on scene no one could be spotted and witnesses said they had seen no one on the bridge. After making several calls it was identified that someone had drowned up river from the Riverside boat landing in North Augusta. After getting the location, the Rangers responded by land due to fact that the drowning occurred in the shoals of the Savannah River. The shoals are unable to be accessed by boat. Once on scene Cpl. Payne interviewed the witness and received information about exactly where the drowning occurred. The information was given to divers to look for the body. Once the body was recovered it was noted that the drowning was in South Carolina waters and was turned over to South Carolina DNR.

Later in the afternoon and into the evening the Rangers worked boating and fishing activity on the Savannah River. The Rangers checked several vessels and wrote citations for insufficient PFD's, no registration, wake zone violation, and fishing without licenses.

On June 26th, Sgt. Max Boswell responded to assist Richmond County Sheriff's Office with a traffic accident on Interstate 20. A tractor trailer truck had wrecked and plunged off an I-20 overpass bridge into the Augusta Canal. The driver of the truck was missing and believed to be in the canal. RFC Richard Tanner and RFC Grant Matherly responded to help search for the missing driver utilizing the side scan sonar and remote operated vehicle. Captain Mark Padgett and Sgt. Matt Garthright also responded to assist with the recovery efforts. Richmond County dive team recovered the victim.

OCONEE COUNTY

On June 24th RFC Tim Butler initiated a vehicle stop after a suspect continued to follow him too closely. After pulling to the side of the road, the suspect fled in his vehicle. RFC Butler apprehended the suspect after a short chase. The suspect was arrested and charged with following too closely, reckless driving, and fleeing and attempting to elude a law enforcement officer.

CLARKE COUNTY

During the early morning hours on June 28th RFC Tim Butler observed a Clarke/Athens police officer initiate a vehicle stop. The suspect fled at a high rate of speed, and RFC Butler and the police officer pursued the suspect. The suspect drove into a government housing community and fled on foot. After a 500 yard foot chase the suspect was apprehended and placed into custody. Illegal narcotics, a digital scale, and a hand gun were located inside the suspect's vehicle.

ELBERT COUNTY

On June 27th Capt. Mark Padgett, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, Cpl. Mark Patterson, RFC Phillip Nelson, and RFC Tim Butler patrolled Lake Russell by vessel during a fireworks display at Richard B. Russell State Park. Violations addressed during the patrol included operating a vessel without personal flotation device and operating a vessel without lights.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On the morning of June 24th, Ranger Matt Johnson and RFC Jeremy Reese presented a program at the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office's annual Junior Deputy Camp. Over 100 children received instruction on ATV and boating safety.

On the evening of June 27th, RFC Jeremy Reese and Cpl. Lynn Stanford patrolled Lake Sinclair. Numerous boats were stopped and one vessel operator was arrested for boating under the influence and transported to the Baldwin County Jail.

BUTTS COUNTY

On Saturday, June 28th, while on routine patrol of Jackson Lake, Cpl. Susan Morris and Sgt. Tim Kendrick observed a Personal Watercraft (PWC) operating approximately thirty minutes after sunset. When they got close enough to the PWC, they also noticed the operator was not wearing a Personal Flotation Device (PFD). After stopping the PWC and talking with the operator, Cpl. Morris noticed a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage. Morris screened the operator and found him to be under the influence of alcohol. He was arrested and charged with operating a vessel under the influence, operating a PWC after sunset and operating a PWC without wearing a PFD. He was transported to the Butts County Jail.

COWETA COUNTY

On Thursday June 26th, Cpl. Keith Waddell and RFC Kevin Godbee assisted at Chattahoochee Bend State Park with the “Paddle Georgia” event. They patrolled the area to offer any needed assistance to the participants.

MERIWETHER COUNTY

On Sunday June 22nd, at about 2230 hours Cpl. Keith Waddell and Sgt. Brent Railey received a call about stranded tubers on the Flint River in Meriwether County between Flat Shoals and the Hwy 18 Bridge. Both rangers responded to the scene. Cpl. Waddell and the Meriwether County Sheriff’s Office Shift Sgt. got into Cpl. Waddell’s boat at the Hwy 18 Bridge and went upstream looking for the tubers. Sgt. Railey and another Meriwether Deputy remained at the boat ramp and set up a command post. Cpl. Waddell located the tubers about a mile and a half upstream and began bringing them to the boat ramp. In total, eight people were transported along with their gear back to the ramp. Four of those were juveniles, ages 12 and under, and four were adults. The rescue ended at around 0230 AM.

On Saturday, June 28th, RFC Kevin Godbee, Deputy Ranger Joe Sebo and Sgt. Brent Railey patrolled Joe Kurz WMA. They checked several fishing licenses and issued a citation for consumption of alcohol on a WMA.

PIKE COUNTY

On Sunday, June 22nd, Cpl. Keith Waddell and Sgt. Brent Railey patrolled Still Branch Reservoir. They checked four boats and several fishing licenses. One citation was issued for operating a vessel without PFD’s. Two warnings were also issued.

On Saturday, June 28th, RFC Kevin Godbee, Deputy Ranger Joe Sebo and Sgt. Brent Railey patrolled Still Branch Reservoir. They checked three boats and several fishermen. No violations were found.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

DECATUR COUNTY

On June 28th, RFC Tony Cox was conducting a boating patrol on Lake Seminole when he encountered and arrested a boat operator for boating under the influence.

On June 28th, Sgt. Rick Sellars and Ranger Steve Thomas responded to a boat fire at a landing on Lake Seminole.

DOOLY COUNTY

On June 28, Cpl. Bob Holley and RFC Randy James were patrolling the Flint River when they observed two fishermen working a trotline. Neither of the two fishermen possessed a valid fishing license, and it was discovered that one of the subjects had an active warrant for his arrest for probation violation. The subject was placed under arrest and turned over to the Dooly County Sheriff's Office.

DOUGHERTY COUNTY

On June 18th, Ranger Eric White located three subjects who were trespassing on posted property along the Flint River. As Ranger White approached the subjects, he observed a smoking device (bong) and other drug paraphernalia near the subjects. Ranger White collected the evidence, identified the subjects and notified the Albany-Dougherty County Drug Unit. The three subjects were charged with criminal trespass and one subject was charged with felony drug possession.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

TELFAIR / WHEELER COUNTY

On June 22nd, RFC Rodney Horne and Cpl. Dan Stiles conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River. Nine vessels were stopped and inspected for fishing and boating safety violations. Violations documented were operating a vessel without registration, operating a vessel with insufficient PFD'S, and allowing underage child to ride in a moving vessel without PFD.

DODGE COUNTY

On June 28th, Cpl. John Stokes and RFC Allen Mills conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River south of Abbeville. The two officers checked 17 vessels for boating safety equipment and 24 anglers for license and creel compliance. Three violations were documented for fishing w/o a license and two violations for operating a vessel w/o registration. Verbal guidance was given for minor violations.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On June 28th CPL Eddie Akins and Ranger Jordan Crawford patrolled the Savannah River from Abercorn Landing to Tuskasee King Landing. A total of 22 vessels were checked and 8 violations were documented. Violations included operating a vessel with insufficient PFDs, fishing without a license, and operating a vessel above idle speed within 100 feet of an object.

BULLOCH COUNTY

On June 27th, Cpl. Eddie Akins and Ranger Jordan Crawford patrolled the Ogeechee River upstream of Steel Bridge Landing. Their efforts resulted in three boats and five fishing licenses being checked. One violation for operating a vessel without proof of registration was also documented.

COFFEE COUNTY

On June 28th, RFC Hilton and intern Jonathan Day worked boating safety on the Ocmulgee River. The patrol resulted in eight warnings and citations being issued for fishing without a license and operating a vessel without PFD's. Also on the 28th, RFC Hilton and intern Day worked an ongoing night hunting complaint. RFC Hilton and Day observed a vehicle pass their location and shine a hand held spotlight across the field. RFC Hilton performed a traffic stop on the vehicle and made contact with the driver, which was a juvenile. RFC Hilton discovered two rifles and two hand held spotlights in the vehicle, with multiple spent rounds from each rifle in the driver side floorboard. The suspect admitted to hunting deer at night and not to have permission or a crop damage permit to be hunting the property. RFC Hilton made contact with the suspect's parents and released him to their custody.



COFFEE/JEFF DAVIS

On June 29th, RFC Tim Hutto and RFC Joe Hilton patrolled the Ocmulgee River from Ben-Hill County to Jeff Davis County. One warning was issued in Coffee for towing a skier without a mirror or observer. Four citations were issued in Jeff Davis at the Rocky Hammock WMA boat ramp for littering and illegal consumption of alcohol on a WMA.

CLINCH COUNTY

On June 26th, Ranger Sam Williams and Ranger Daniel North checked boating and fishing activity on the Satilla River at Hwy. 84 Bridge. One individual was discovered fishing without a license. The violation was documented.

On June 27th, RFC Mark Pool and Ranger Daniel North documented a violation of operating a vessel within 100 ft. of object above idle speed for an individual on the Suwannee River as he passed beneath the bridge crossing the river.

On June 27th, RFC Mark Pool and Ranger Daniel North completed an investigation of illegal trapping that was started earlier in the week by Sgt. Patrick Dupree and RFC Mark Pool. One citation for failure to inspect traps within a 24 hour period was documented.

On June 28th, Ranger Daniel North conducted a vessel patrol of the Suwannee River near Fargo. Many boaters and anglers were checked throughout the day. Most of the boat operators and anglers were found to be in compliance with boating and fishing regulations but violations of operating vessels without any PFDs, operating vessels with insufficient PFDs, and fishing without license were documented.

PIERCE COUNTY

On June 28th, while patrolling boat landings along the Satilla River, RFC Mark Pool checked seven boats and twelve fishing licenses. Two written warnings were issued for violations.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

WAYNE COUNTY

On June 22nd while conducting a boating safety check at Paradise Park landing Cpl Bobby White issued one citation for allowing an underage child to ride in a moving vessel without a PFD and one warning for operating above idle speed within 100ft of landing.

GLYNN COUNTY

Ranger First Class David Brady has been selected as the 2013 South Atlantic Fishery Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. This title is selected from officers from Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and the United States Coast Guard. His accomplishment comes from his dedicated efforts to enforce Federal Fishing Regulations in the South Atlantic.