

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
June 8-14, 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)

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

DAWSON COUNTY

On June 9th, RFC Barry Britt responded with Lumpkin County EMS to a call of an injured person on the approach trail between Amicalola Falls State Park and Springer Mountain. By the time they arrived on scene, the injured person had already been taken off the trail by a Good Samaritan.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On June 20th, Ranger Shane Brown located three subjects fishing at McGinnis Ferry Boat Ramp on the Chattahoochee River without a license, trout stamp and in possession of illegal bait. Citations and warnings were issued.

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

On June 8th, Sgt. Lee Brown, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins, and RFC Barry Britt patrolled Lake Lanier. The rangers responded to three drowning during the day. The rangers issued citation/warnings for operating PWC during hours of darkness, and Operating PWC without PFD.

On June 14th, RFC Barry Britt and Sgt. Lee Brown patrolled the northern part Lake Lanier. While on patrol they checked numerous vessels for boating safety violations and issued verbal guidance, written warnings, and citations for boating safety violations.

On June 21st, Ranger Shane Brown and Cpl. Jason Robertson patrolled Lake Lanier. The Rangers issued citations and warnings for allowing underage age child to ride a moving vessel not wearing a life jacket, operating vessel with improper lights, and operating PWC within 100' of object above idle speed. The rangers also arrested one subject for Boating under the influence.

LUMPKIN COUNTY

On June 9th and 10th, RFC Barry Britt, RFC Mitchell Crump, Ranger Shane Brown, Wildlife Tech Frank Manning, David Shadtuck, Sarah Smith, and Jeffery Turner participated in the Lumpkin County Junior Law Enforcement Academy. The rangers taught boating safety and firearms safety to 20 teenagers. The rangers utilized the shooting simulator as well as live fire with .22 caliber rifles during firearm safety.

HALL COUNTY

On June 8th, Ranger Kevin Goss stopped a vessel whose operator was dancing and being inattentive to the crowded conditions on Lake Lanier. After a safety inspection, Ranger Goss screened the operator and determined he was under the influence of alcohol. The operator was arrested and taken to Hall County Jail after refusing implied consent.

HART COUNTY

On June 10th, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Tim Vickery patrolled Hartwell Lake for boating safety/fishing violations. Several fishing licenses and boats were checked for proper safety equipment. A total of one warning was issued. The violation consisted of fishing without a license.

On June 11th, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Tim Vickery patrolled Hartwell Lake for boating safety/fishing violations. Several fishing licenses and boats were checked for proper safety equipment. A total of four citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of fishing without a license, failure to obey regulatory marker, allowing person to ride bow/gunwale, and operating vessel with insufficient PFD's.

On June 14th, RFC Brandon Pierce and Cpl. Bill Bunch patrolled Hartwell Lake for boating safety violations. A total of seven boats were checked for proper safety equipment. As a result, ten citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of operating vessel with improper registration, operating vessel within a 100 foot of object above idle speed, failure to obey regulatory marker, operating vessel without CGA PFD's, operating vessel under the influence (under 21 years of age), reckless operation of a vessel, and possession of alcohol by underage person.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

On June 14th, RFC Brandon Pierce, RFC Shane Sartor, and Cpl. Craig Fulghum conducted a HIN inspection at Tugaloo State Park for boats with issues on registration. A total of thirty-one boats were inspected and all registration issues were resolved.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

CLARKE COUNTY

On June 8 SGT Brian Carter and RFC Tim Butler checked several municipal fishing areas. Several people were found fishing without a license.

ELBERT COUNTY

On June 10th Cpl. Mark Patterson taught boating safety to the Elbert County Junior Deputies. Area youth were instructed on the proper use of personal flotation devices, general water safety, and navigational rules.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On June 14, Cpl. Ryan Swain, RFC Robert Timmerman, and RFC Jeff Billips conducted Regional HIN inspections at the Region Office in Thomson. Forty-three vessels were inspected and sent through the process.

WALTON COUNTY

On June 14, Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, and RFC Niki Spencer conducted Regional HIN inspections at the WRCC Office in Social Circle. The Rangers inspected 30 boats.

GREENE COUNTY

On June 11th and 12th, Cpl. Derrell Worth certified numerous students in boating safety during an education course.

MORGAN COUNTY

During the week of June 9th-13th, RFC Ricky Boles, RFC Niki Spencer, Cpl. David Allen, and Cpl. Derrell Worth assisted the Morgan County Sheriff's Office with their annual Junior Deputy Camp. During the week Rangers familiarized the students with Hunter Safety and Firearm Safety.

LAKE OCONEE

On June 8th, Cpl. Derrell Worth investigated a boating incident where a pontoon boat collided with timber in the lake.

On June 14th, Captain Mark Padgett and Sgt. Matt Garthright encountered a subject operating a PWC without wearing a CGA PFD. The subject was also observed operating the PWC above idle speed in a No Wake Zone and operating the PWC within 100 feet of people in the water above idle speed. Upon further inspection it was determined that the PWC registration had not been transferred into the owner's name and that the PWC did not have a serviceable fire extinguisher on board the vessel. The subject was cited for the violations.

On June 14th, Captain Mark Padgett and Sgt. Matt Garthright arrested one individual for Boating under the Influence of alcohol after stopping the vessel for operating with improper lights.

On June 14th, Captain Mark Padgett, Sgt. Matt Garthright, Cpl. Michael Crawley, and RFC Niki Spencer, detected numerous violations including: Failure to obey regulatory marker, Allowing an underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD, Operating a vessel with improper lights, Towing a skier between sunset and sunrise, and operating a vessel with insufficient number of PFD's, Violation of 100' law, and Operating Vessel without registration.

On June 15th, RFC Jeff Billips and RFC Niki Spencer investigated a boating incident where a vessel was swamped due to being overloaded.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On the evening of June 9th, Ranger Matt Johnson responded to the area of Little River Park on Lake Sinclair in reference to a boating incident. Once on scene, it was discovered that the persons had been tubing and as the victim was attempting to enter the boat he was struck on the foot by the propeller. The victim was transported to ORMC and was treated for a laceration and released.

On the evening of June 14th, Sgt. Bo Kelly, RFC Jeremy Reese and Ranger Matt Johnson patrolled the Nancy's Branch area of Lake Sinclair. A pontoon boat was observed and stopped for navigational light violations. After further investigation, the operator was arrested for boating under the influence and refused the breath test. The operator was transported to the Baldwin County Jail.

BUTTS COUNTY

On June 14th, RFC Keith Page and Cpl. Susan Morris were patrolling Jackson Lake. The Rangers stopped several vessels and issued citations for failure to obey regulatory markers. They stopped a vessel for a person riding on the gunwale of the boat and the operator had been consuming alcohol. The operator was asked to complete some field sobriety exercises to make sure he was safe to operate the boat. The operator performed poorly on the field sobriety exercises and was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol. The man also received citations for child endangerment and allowing a person to ride on the gunwale of his boat.

JASPER COUNTY

On June 12th, RFC Keith Page and K9 Drake responded to a call pertaining to a man holding a baby deer captive inside his home on August Lane. RFC Page talked to a lady that lived at the residence that admitted the deer was inside the home. The man who was holding the deer in captivity was not home. RFC Page then seized the deer and transported it to Dauset Trails so that it could be rehabilitated back into the wild. The lady at the residence stated that the home owners had not been home in three days and she wasn't sure where they were, or when they would be back. This investigation is still on-going.

PUTNAM COUNTY

On the afternoon of June 14th, Ranger Matt Johnson conducted a boating safety program for the MAC (Mothers Against Crime) at Oconee Springs Park on Lake Sinclair. Ranger Johnson discussed boating safety and the duties of conservation rangers on the water.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

MITCHELL COUNTY

On June 14th, Cpl. Jason Shipes and RFC David Brady observed several scuba divers in the Flint River diving for artifacts. Through discussions with the divers, it was established that artifacts in their possession had been illegally obtained. The divers were issued warnings for the illegal activity.

DOUGHERTY COUNTY

On June 10th, Cpl. Robbie Griner and Cpl. Scott Carroll taught a class on firearms safety and introduced over 200 youngsters to the sport of skeet shooting. This event was part of the annual Natural Resource Conservation Workshop, which enlightens students to career opportunities in the various fields of conservation.

STEWART COUNTY

On the afternoon of Saturday, June 14, Ranger Jack Stripling and Sgt. Butch Potter were patrolling Lake W. F. George when they observed a vessel displaying what appeared to be an improper registration. The Rangers stopped the boat to investigate and noticed the driver showed signs of impairment. After failing field sobriety exercises the boat's operator was arrested for boating under the influence and transported to the Stewart County Sheriff's Department.

GRADY COUNTY

On June 14, Cpl. Mike Binion responded to two complaints in Grady County about individuals fishing in private ponds without permission. A total of 9 subjects were apprehended and written citations for fishing without permission. Also occurring on the same date, Cpl. Binion assisted the Georgia State Patrol with a roadblock in Grady County. A total of 11 arrests were made, with violations ranging from DUI, possession of marijuana and cocaine with intent to distribute, and driving with suspended license.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

DODGE COUNTY

On June 8th, RFC Allen Mills Patrolled the Dodge County PFA and four landings along the Ocmulgee River. Nine vessels were inspected for boating safety compliance and 21 anglers were checked for license requirements and creel limit compliance. Violations for fishing w/o a license, take/possession of illegal size fish, and operating a vessel w/o a C.G.A. personal flotation device were documented.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On June 11th, RFC Allen Mills, and RFC Rodney Horne assisted with the Natural Resource Conservation Workshop at Paradise PFA. The two officers assisted 120 participants with learning archery shooting skills and safety.

WILCOX COUNTY

On June 14th, Cpl. John A. Stokes and Cpl. Dan Stiles patrolled the Ocmulgee River by vessel. Fifteen vessels were checked for boating safety compliance and vessel

registration. Three violations for operating a vessel without registration were documented.

LAURENS COUNTY

On June 8th, Cpl. Dan Stiles and RFC Rodney Horne conducted vessel patrols on the Oconee River. Combined the officers checked eleven vessels for boating safety equipment and registration. Nine fishing licenses were also checked. No violations were detected. Later the same night Cpl. Stiles and RFC Horne were dispatched to a distressed swimmer on the Oconee River. RFC Horne arrived on scene and discovered the subject had been picked up by a passing vessel and returned to the boat landing. Officer Stiles and Horne interviewed the subject; who stated that he had swam across the river at Buckeye landing, but was too tired to return to the landing. The subject waited on the river bank, but as darkness approached a friend called 911 to rescue the individual.

On June 9th, Cpl. Stiles concluded an investigation from a complaint of an individual shooting songbirds and posting a photograph of the birds (bluebirds and cardinals) on a social media site. After locating the suspect(s), multiple interviews, and locating evidence Cpl. Stiles determined the violation had occurred in Wilkinson County. One subject was charged with taking protected species.

WARE COUNTY

On June 8th, Cpl. Jason Shipes, Ranger Daniel North, & Ranger Sam Williams conducted boating safety checks and checked for fishing licenses and creel limits at Laura Walker State Park, Hwy. 158 boat landing, Jamestown boat landing, and Hwy. 84 boat landing. Thirteen violations were documented including operating vessel without PFDs, operating vessel without navigation lights during hours of darkness, fishing without a license, allowing person to ride on bow/gunwale, and allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing PFD. One person getting his equipment ready to fish was found to be in possession of a cast net. Since he had not used the net, verbal guidance was given to the person in the use of legal fishing devices.

CLINCH & ECHOLS COUNTY

On June 14th, RFC Mark Pool and Ranger Daniel North patrolled the Suwannee River at Fargo, Suwannee River Sill, Stephen Foster State Park, and the Alapaha River at Statenville landing for fishing and boating activity. Several boater were encountered and one violation of allowing an underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD was documented.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On June 14th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and Ranger Sam Williams patrolled the Satilla River from Burnt Fort landing. Several vessels were encountered with occupants either fishing

or skiing. One warning was issued for improper registration and one citation was issued for operating vessel without PFDs. To ensure the safety of the occupants, the vessel without PFDs was escorted several miles back to the landing it had embarked from.

COOK COUNTY

On the 14th, RFC Hilton and Sgt. Wood were patrolling Reed Bingham State Park for boating safety violations, when they encountered a subject allowing an underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD. RFC Hilton issued warnings for the violation and a warning for operating a vessel without a registration.

EVANS COUNTY

On June 14th, RFC Debbie Brannen, Fisheries Tech Steve Mincey, Fisheries personnel from Richmond Hill and the Evans County Wildlife Club hosted a Kids Fishing Event at the Evans County Public Fishing Area. There were over 200 participants attending not only for the fishing event but for Evans County Centennial Celebration Day. Events included Archery, BB range, Kayaking and fishing. The Evans County Wildlife Club provided lunch.

Later on the 14th, RFC Debbie Brannen checked boaters on the Canoochee River. Several boats were checked resulting in one citation for operating a vessel without life jackets.

TATTNALL COUNTY

On June 8th, RFC Debbie Brannen patrolled the Big Hammock WMA. Several boaters and anglers were checked. Violations were documented for operating a vessel without registration and operating a vessel without life jackets.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On June 14th, Ranger Jason Miller, RFC Jack Thain, and Cpl. Bill Bryson checked the Ogeechee River boat ramps at Kings Ferry, Morgans Bridge, and Hwy. 80. Two persons were cited at Morgans for possession of open containers of alcoholic beverages at a DNR-owned ramp/pier.

CHATHAM COUNTY

On the late evening of June 13th and early morning of June 14th, Cpl. Jay Morgan and Sgt. Cindy Miller conducted a boat patrol in the Wilmington River and Herb River area to check for any illegal fishing activity. At approximately 0245 hours, the rangers checked a boat with six persons on board near the Savannah Yacht Club and found that the operator was under the influence. The boat operator refused to submit to a breath test, was arrested for boating under the influence, and transported to Thunderbolt Police Dept. where he was later transported to jail. The rangers returned to their patrol and checked two men gigging flounder at the mouth of Herb River. Upon closer inspection, the men were found to have three spot-tail bass that had illegally been gigged – only flounder are allowed to be gigged. Two of the spot-tail bass were 29” and 28”, which were too large

and outside the size slot limit of 14 – 23”. Both men were cited for illegally gigging fish and for possession of illegal size fish. All three bass were confiscated. Later that morning at 0900 hours, the rangers conducted a HIN/registration inspection at Skidaway boat ramp assisting 14 boat owners with registering their boats.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On June 14th, Cpl. Bill Bryson, RFC Jack Thain, and Ranger Jason Miller conducted a HIN/registration inspection at Lewis Fraser Middle School in Hinesville assisting 14 boat owners with registering their boats.