

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
May 4-10, 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)

POLK COUNTY

On May 6th, RFC Chad Cox attended a career day at VanWert Elementary school in Rockmart. Pre K through 5th grade got to visit RFC Cox outside to talk about being a Conservation Ranger.



On May 8th, RFC Chad Cox assisted Polk County Sheriff Office, US Marshals, and State Probation Officers with a warrant roundup. There were 18 subjects arrested during the roundup.

HARALSON COUNTY

On May 7th, RFC Daniel Gray conducted a Career Day program for Haralson County Middle School titled “Career as a Conservation Ranger”. There were 92 students who attended the program.

On May 10th, RFC Daniel Gray assisted with the 32nd annual Haralson County Kids Fishing Rodeo. There were 1100 kids who attended the event.

DOUGLAS COUNTY

On May 4th, Cpl. Eric Brown was patrolling Douglas County for fishing activity. While on patrol at Sweetwater Creek State Park one subject was cited and transported to jail due to fishing violations.

On May 10th, Cpl. Eric Brown and RFC Chad Cox participated in the annual fishing rodeo at Sweetwater Creek State Park. The Laser Shot shooting simulator and the fishing simulator were set up to educate the youths.

CARROLL COUNTY

On May 7th, Cpl. Eric Brown along with the Carroll County Fire Department completed placing mile markers on 22 miles of the Chattahoochee River. Plans are ongoing to place mile markers in Douglas, Coweta, and Heard Counties at a later date. The mile markers will help boater's better estimate their float times and determine approximate locations on the river.



Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

DAWSON COUNTY

On May 8th, Sgt. Lee Brown, RFC Barry Britt, Ranger Shane Brown and Ranger Kevin Goss assisted the US Army 5th Ranger Battalion from Camp Merrill with their “Parachute Drop” on Lake Lanier. The DNR Rangers provide on water security and manning the Command Post. Assistance was also provided by the Corp of Engineers, Dawson County Sheriff’s Office, Dawson County Fire Department, Forsyth County Sheriff’s Office, Forsyth County Fire Department, Hall County Sheriff’s Office, Hall County Fire Department and the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On May 10th, Sgt. Lee Brown patrolled the Chattahoochee River for boating and fishing violations. Sgt. Brown gave verbal guidance, issued written warnings and citations for fishing without a license, fishing without a trout license and fishing with unlawful bait.

LAKE LANIER

On May 4th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins patrolled the South end of Lake Lanier. Cpl. Tompkins checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. Cpl. Tompkins checked 8 vessels and 8 fishermen. Cpl. Tompkins issued citations and warnings for fishing without a license, operating vessel without registration, operating vessel with insufficient PFD’s, and operating vessel with improper lights.

On May 10th, Ranger Kevin Goss responded to a boating incident on Lake Lanier. Ranger Goss went to Northeast Georgia Medical Center where he made contact with a skier who had broken his femur bone while being pulled behind a boat.

HALL COUNTY

On May 5th and 9th, Ranger Kevin Goss and Sgt. Mike Burgamy Conducted Safe Kids Week at Fair Street and McEver Elementary Schools in Gainesville. The programs consisted of educating 2nd and 3rd graders in boat and water safety such as wearing properly sized life jackets and the difference between life jackets and swim-aids. In total almost 1,000 students were reach by the safe kids programs.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

BURKE COUNTY

On May 10, RFC Grant Matherly received a call from Burke County Sheriff’s Office in reference to a nuisance alligator at the Waynesboro Air Port in Burke County. After calling and talking with the complainant RFC Matherly learned that the alligator had tried to catch a man’s dog earlier that morning. RFC Matherly contacted Wildlife Tech Steve Kyles for assistance with the alligator. After arriving at the airport RFC Matherly and WL Tech Kyles found the 6 foot alligator lying on the side of a wet area off the side of

the road. The Officers captured the alligator and relocated it to a secluded location, in hopes that it would no longer be a threat to anyone or any pets.



RICHMOND COUNTY

On May 04, Cpl. Ben Payne, Cpl. Michael Crawley, RFC Grant Matherly, and RFC Jeff Billips worked the Day in the Country Concert in Augusta GA on the Savannah River. The Rangers checked approximately 100 boats while on patrol. Several warnings and citations were issued, including one boating under the Influence charge. The subject was taken off the water after being found to be under the influence of both alcohol and drugs. The Concert is held yearly at the River Front Arena in Augusta, and the Rangers are tasked to work along with the Richmond County Sherriff's Office, South Carolina DNR, and North Augusta Police Department to insure the safety of the attendees both on land and water during the event.

OCONEE COUNTY

On April 6th RFC Tim Butler issued a citation for drilling water well without a license.

CLARKE COUNTY

On April 9th RFC Tim Butler patrolled several municipal fishing and boating areas. Violations documented were fishing without a license, operating a vessel without personal flotation devices, and operating a vessel without registration.

JASPER COUNTY

On April 10th Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Mark Patterson, and RFC Tim Butler attended a Jakes Day event hosted at the Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center. The Rangers used electric mini boats to help youth learn about boating safety. Participants were given the opportunity to operate the mini boats while accompanied by the Rangers.

GLASCOCK COUNTY

On May 5th- May 9th, RFC Brian Adams conducted a kids fishing event for Glascock County Schools.

WARREN COUNTY

On May 9th, Cpl. Ryan Swain conducted a boating education program at Warren Co Elementary School. Four hundred children attended the event and learned about boating safety.

LAKE OCONEE

On May 7-12th, Cpl. Derrell Worth, Cpl. David Allen, RFC Niki Spencer, and RFC Richard Tanner assisted Putnam County Sheriff's Office with the search of missing person, Shirley Dermond. Sonar was used to scan the sections of the lake surrounding the house where Mrs. Dermond resided. Vessel patrols were used to scan the shorelines and the rest of lake. Searches are still on going.

On May 11th, RFC Niki Spencer and Cpl. David Allen cited individuals for allowing child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD and failure to obey regulatory marker.

GREENE COUNTY

On May 09, Cpl. Derrell Worth cited two subjects for violation of Georgia Waste Control Laws.

On May 09, Cpl. Derrell Worth cited two subjects for fishing without permission. While investigating the third subject for fishing without permission complaint, the subject became very belligerent and refused to comply with his requests. The subject attempted to leave the area and flee into his home. Cpl. Worth was forced to take the subject down to the ground and hand-cuff him. The subject was cited for fishing without permission, driving under the influence of alcohol and felony obstruction.

MORGAN COUNTY

On May 10th, RFC Ricky Boles and RFC Niki Spencer participated in Career Day at Morgan County Middle School. Rangers answered numerous questions related to their everyday job duties. The Rangers also showed animal skins allowing the students to see, feel, and possibly identify some of these creatures in their outdoors. Among those attending were 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and a few 9th graders.



On May 6th, RFC Ricky Boles and RFC Niki Spencer participated in Safety Day at Hard Labor Creek State Park. Students attended nine different stations where safety practices were discussed. Rangers taught the fundamentals on Boat and ATV safety. Two hundred and forty students attended.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On May 9th, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and Cpl. Mark Patterson participated in a Career Day Program at Thomson-McDuffie middle school.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

WORTH COUNTY

On May 9th, Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Greg Wade, RFC Jon Penuel and Ranger Eric White, conducted the 17th Annual Nature Trek Information and Educational Program. The program was presented to 81 individual classes comprising of over 900 Worth County Primary students, ranging from Pre-K through Second Grade. The program provided students an opportunity to learn about native wildlife along with outdoor and boating safety.



Cpl. Robbie Griner with Worth County class

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

DODGE COUNTY

On May 10th, RFC Rodney Horne and Cpl. Dan Stiles conducted a Hull Identification Number inspection site at the Dodge Co. Public Fishing Area. Seventeen vessels were inspected and registration issues resolved.

On May 10th, Cpl. Dan Stiles and RFC Rodney Horne conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River. Eight vessels were checked for registration and boating safety equipment and six fishing licenses were checked. A violation for operating a vessel without CGA PFD's and operating a vessel without registration were documented. While on patrol the officers discovered litter on a sandbar and collected the evidence. The officers were able to locate the individuals responsible for the litter at a residence and issued the three violators citations for littering.

LAURENS COUNTY

On May 9th, Cpl. Dan Stiles conducted a vessel patrol on the Oconee River. Thirteen vessels were checked for registration and boating safety equipment and eighteen fishing licenses were checked. Two violations for fishing without a license and two violations for operating a vessel with insufficient CGA PFD's were documented.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On May 10th, RFC Tim Hutto checked areas along the Alapaha River for fishing and boating activity. The patrol resulted in several documented violations for operating a vessel without life jackets, operating a vessel with no registration, and fishing without a license.

IRWIN COUNTY

On May 13th, RFC Tim Hutto was on routine patrol when he passed a home in the Wray community that appeared to have a marijuana plant growing in the front yard. RFC Hutto went back to the home and identified the plant growing approximately twenty yards from the highway as marijuana. As RFC Hutto approached the front door of the residence to speak with the homeowner he began to smell a strong odor of marijuana coming from inside the home. RFC Hutto called for a deputy to assist in monitoring the home until a search warrant could be obtained. While waiting on the search warrant the homeowner and another subject passed by the residence, attempted to stop, and then proceeded to leave the area. The subjects were stopped and detained for questioning by RFC Hutto and Deputy Owens. Later in the afternoon RFC Hutto along with Irwin County Sheriff's Department officials searched the home with a search warrant. Inside the home the officers found elaborate indoor marijuana grow operation.

SCREVEN COUNTY

On May 7th, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely and Sgt. Don Dasher conducted a vessel patrol of the Savannah River from Miller Lake to Johnsons Landing. Officers checked several boats and fisherman including one group fishing in a lake on private property just off the river. A total of eight citations were issued during the patrol for; fishing without permission, fishing without a license, and operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's.

On May 9th, at approximately 10:00 p.m. Cpl. Shaymus McNeely and Cpl. Mike Wilcox encountered what appeared to be a vehicle broken down on the side of Millhaven Rd. Upon approaching the vehicle Officers learned that it had not broken down but had stopped so the passenger could urinate on the side of the road. Both the passenger and the driver had open containers of alcohol in their possession. Cpl. McNeely conducted field sobriety on the driver and contacted TFC Chris Calhoun with the GA State Patrol. The driver and the passenger were charged with open container and the driver was arrested for DUI.

CLINCH/PIERCE COUNTY

On May 12th, Cpl. Jason Shipes, RFC Mark Pool, Sgt. Patrick Dupree, & Ranger Daniel North assisted Florida FWC with completing a three-week long investigation related to the illegal taking of bears in Hamilton County, Florida. A bear den was discovered by a logging crew and two small cubs were unnecessarily removed and brought into Georgia to residences near Argyle and Blackshear. Cpl. Shipes led the Georgia investigation and three counts of holding a game animal without a permit were documented. Florida FWC documented violations of taking bears during a closed season and molesting wildlife or their dens. The healthy cubs were reunited and delivered to a veteran bear rehabilitator in central Florida.



Cpl. Jason Shipes (left) & RFC Mark Pool with bear cubs that were illegally taken from their den in a north Florida swamp.

On May 5th, Cpl. Jason Shipes presented an annual report to the citizens and commissioners at the Clinch County Commission meeting. Cpl. Shipes updated the commissioners and attendees on DNR Law Enforcement Division activities that had been conducted during 2013.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On May 10th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and Ranger Daniel North conducted a vessel patrol of portions of the Okefenokee Swamp from Stephen C. Foster State Park. Several boaters and fishermen were encountered and one non-resident fishing without a license was documented.

On May 5th, Ranger Sam Williams received a call from the Charlton County Sheriff's Office around 9:45 p.m. in reference to two individuals who were stranded in the Okefenokee Swamp due to mechanical problems with their vessel. Ranger Williams made contact with Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Officer Pam Garrison. Officer Garrison stated that she had been out looking for the boat, but could not locate it. RGR Williams advised her of the information he had received from the Sheriff's Office. Based off the information, both officers agreed that the boat was most likely near Canal Run Platform, an overnight camping location for canoers approximately 12 miles from Suwannee Canal Boat Landing. Ranger Williams responded to Officer Garrison's location at Suwannee Canal to assist her in locating the vessel. At approximately 2:15 a.m. on May 6th, the officers returned to Suwannee Canal Boat Landing with the two stranded boaters and their vessel in tow. The vessel had been located near the Canal Run camping platform. Both subjects were very excited to get back to solid ground and away from the swarming mosquitos in the swamp.

On May 8th, Ranger Sam Williams presented an annual report to the citizens and commissioners at the Charlton County Commission meeting. Ranger Williams updated the commissioners and attendees on DNR Law Enforcement Division activities that had been conducted in the county during 2013.

On May 8th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and RGR Sam Williams checked Trader's Hill Boat Landing on the St. Mary's River for boating activity. Several boats were checked, along with numerous fishing licenses. Violations for fishing without a license, operating vessel with improper registration, and operating vessel during hours of darkness without lights were documented.

On May 9th, Ranger Sam Williams patrolled several boat landings along the St. Mary's River near Folkston for boating activity. Several vessels and bank fishermen were checked at the locations. Violations for fishing without a license, operating vessel without registration, and operating vessel during hours of darkness without lights were documented.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On May 1st, Ranger Daniel North presented an annual report to the citizens and commissioners at the Echols County Commission meeting. Ranger North updated the commissioners and attendees on DNR Law Enforcement Division activities that had been conducted in the county during 2013.

On May 6th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree & Ranger Daniel North captured and relocated a small alligator from an elderly woman's yard. The gator had recently startled her by crawling near the back door of her residence from a nearby pond. The gator was released in a secure swampy area of the county.



Ranger North about to release a nuisance alligator into its new home.

WARE COUNTY

On May 10th, Cpl. Jason Shipes & Ranger Sam Williams conducted a vessel patrol on the Satilla River near Jamestown Boat Landing. While conducting the patrol, the officers received information from several boaters about a yellow and white ski boat occupied by four male subjects that was operating recklessly. One boater stated he had observed the occupants of the boat consuming alcohol and throwing the beer cans into the river and another boater advised that she had seen the occupants drinking heavily. The officers were able to determine from this information that the ski boat had more than likely stopped at a sandbar near US Hwy. 1 Bridge. The officers waited downstream from the sandbar for the vessel to return. After approximately 30 minutes, a vessel matching the description passed the officer's location. A vessel stop was conducted. While checking for the required safety equipment on the vessel, the operator appeared to be acting in a manner consistent with someone who was intoxicated. Ranger Williams conducted a series of exercises on the operator and determined he was too intoxicated to be operating a vessel. The operator was arrested and charged with boating while intoxicated and also received a citation for operating a vessel with insufficient PFDs and transported to Ware County Jail.

TATTNALL COUNTY

On May 10th, RFC Clint Jarriel and Cpl. Kevin Joyce conducted boat safety patrol on the Oohoopee River. The officers checked approximately 12 boats and two violations were documented for safety equipment and invalid registration.

APPLING COUNTY

On May 5th, Ranger Gibbs assisted Officer Dyal of the Baxley Police Department in reference to discharging a firearm inside the city limits. After a brief investigation, Dyal and Gibbs concluded that a Red Shoulder Hawk had been shot by a convicted felon. The subject was transported to the Appling county jail and charged for discharging a firearm inside city limits, taking of protected species and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Both the firearm and the hawk were seized for evidence.



Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On Thursday May 8th at approximately 1230 hours Ranger Miller, Cpl. Morgan, and Sgt. Miller responded to a boating fatality near the Medway River. The victims' body was recovered and the DNR CIRT team is investigating the incident.

On Friday May the 9th Ranger Miller and RFC Thain responded to an overdue vessel in the Ogeechee River.

On May 10th, Ranger Miller, RFC Thain, Cpl. Bryson and Sgt. Scott conducted HIN inspections at the Richmond Hill Fish Hatchery in Richmond Hill. Eighteen vessels were examined and the owners of the vessels were assisted with obtaining registration for their vessel.

On Saturday May the 10th, Cpl. Bryson along with Rangers Thain and Miller responded to a complaint of fishing without permission near I-95 in Bryan County. They found that the three people involved had parked alongside the interstate and climbed the fence to access the private lake. The three were cited for fishing without permission.

LIBERTY COUNTY

On Thursday, May 8th, Ranger Miller, and Cpl. Morgan were called out to a possible drowning on Wells Cemetery Road in Liberty County. The rangers arrived on scene and did not leave until the victim was recovered by the search and rescue dive team.

CAMDEN COUNTY

On May 9th, Cpl. Craig Smith responded to a boating incident off Cumberland Island. Two subjects were on the way to the Jetty's to go fishing. The subjects turned soon and ran the boat on top of the rocks about 2 miles off shore. They were pulled from the water by Nassau County Florida Sheriff's Department and the boat rolled over and was afloat in the ocean. Subjects were then transported to St. Mary's, Georgia by Cpl. Smith.