



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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## LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Field Operations

**Weekly Report**  
**July 24<sup>th</sup> – July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**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- Acworth (Northwest)**

### **FLOYD COUNTY**

On the evening of July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Game Wardens Cpl. Ben Cunningham and Ranger Kalem Burns were patrolling at the Rocky Mountain Public Fishing Area (PFA). They checked a person fishing who did not have fishing license. The man told the officers that his identification was at a picnic table by the beach. The officers followed the man to the picnic table and found several other adults. Cpl. Cunningham noticed the odor of alcohol and questioned the visitors about possessing alcohol. It is a violation of law and regulation to possess alcohol on Rocky Mountain PFA. Another man admitted to consuming some beers. Cpl. Cunningham obtained consent to search their coolers and found 5 Bud Lite beers and 1 Corona beer. The officers had the man pour out the beer. The first man was issued a citation for fishing without license and the second man was issued a citation for possession of alcohol on a PFA.

On July 29<sup>th</sup>, Game Warden Sgt. Mike Barr was on late patrol at the Rocky Mountain Public Fishing Area (PFA). He was checking the camping area specifically for alcohol. The area is off limits to possession of alcohol by law and regulation. He stopped and spoke with a man next to a campsite and asked if they had alcohol. The man avoided the question and turned to his wife and asked if they alcohol. She stated “no”. Sgt. Barr asked for consent to enter the campsite and check their cooler. They agreed to the check. Inside the cooler, there were 20 Bud Lite beers on ice. The couple then stated it must have been left from the last camping trip. The group stated it was their first visit to Rocky Mountain PFA and they did not see the “no alcohol” signs. Sgt. Barr issued a warning. The group packed up their campsite and left the PFA.

On July 29<sup>th</sup>, Game Warden Sgt. Mike Barr was checking on a truck with boat trailer still in the Oostanaula River Highway 140 boat ramp and parking lot at 10:30 PM. He saw a vessel coming down river and checked two men in a boat at the boat ramp. He noticed the vessel was not displaying proper navigational lights. Sgt. Barr completed a boating safety check and the found the men did not have any life jackets. The operator was issued a citation for operating a vessel without life jackets and issued a warning for navigational lights. The operator was also given a boating handbook to get caught up with current boating laws.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, Game Wardens Sgt. Mike Barr and Cpl. Ben Cunningham patrolled the Coosa and Etowah River by vessel. They encountered over 100 vessels floating on the river while on patrol. Several citations will issued for underage children in a moving vessel without a life jacket and operating a vessel without life jackets. The Game Wardens did notice most people floating and boating on the river did comply with the law and had their life jackets readily available.



**A lot of people are floating the Etowah River and taking out at Heritage Park in Rome, Ga. Even the dog in this group had on a life jacket.**

## **Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)**

### **BARROW COUNTY**

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Game Warden Chris Kernahan patrolled Fort Yargo State Park for illegal trespassing related activity. While he patrolled, Game Warden Kernahan made contact with two subjects who had been illegally off-roading in their vehicles in a remote area of the Park. The subjects got their respective vehicles stuck in the mud. Game Warden Kernahan found that one of the operators drove while under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Game Warden Kernahan arrested the operator, and charged him with Driving while Under the Influence, and Criminal Trespass on a State Park. Game Warden Kernahan then transported the operator to jail. Game Warden Kernahan also charged the other operator with Criminal Trespass on a State Park. Each vehicle was towed off the Park at the operator's expense.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, Game Warden Chris Kernahan patrolled Fort Yargo State Park for boating and fishing related activity. While he patrolled, Game Warden Kernahan observed a vehicle being operated in a reckless manner, in an intensively used area of the Park. Game Warden Kernahan conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle, and found that the operator possessed a significant quantity of methamphetamine. Game Warden Kernahan also found that the operator drove while under the influence of drugs. Game Warden Kernahan arrested the operator, charged him with Possession of Methamphetamine, Reckless Driving, and Driving While Under the Influence. Game Warden Kernahan transported the subject to jail.

### **HALL COUNTY**

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, RFC Kevin Goss while on vessel patrol encountered a PWC in operation above idle speed in the no wake zone in Sunset Cove. RFC Goss stopped the PWC and discovered that the operator had been drinking heavily. RFC Goss screened the man and placed him under arrest for BUI.

On July 29<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk and Game Warden Chris Kernahan patrolled Lake Lanier for boating and fishing activity. During the patrol, two subjects were arrested for Operating a Vessel while Under the Influence, and Failure to Obey a Regulatory Marker. The subjects were transported to jail.

### **RABUN COUNTY**

On July 29<sup>th</sup>, RFC Joe Hill and Rabun County Deputy David Dooley conducted two boating safety patrols on Lake Burton. The Game Warden and Deputy issued citations for allowing an underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD, towing skier with PWC without an observer on board, allowing another to operate vessel without complying with registration laws, violating rules of the road, and operating vessel with improper lights. Warnings were issued for operating vessel without a fire extinguisher, operating vessel with expired registration, operating vessel with insufficient PFD, operating vessel without a throwable device, operating vessel within 100' of object/shore above idle speed, and operating a vessel with improper PFD.

### **WHITE COUNTY**

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, while off duty, Cpl. Anne Wiley was driving her personal vehicle on Buck Shoals Drive, exiting the WMA property when she came across two adult parents, walking, who were looking for their two children who had been tubing the Chattahoochee River, but had decided to exit the river on foot. The father explained he had had cell phone contact with the two 17 year olds, but had lost service. They had sent him their GPS location, which showed them on the WMA property. Cpl. Wiley asked the adults if they wanted to ride with her in her personal vehicle to locate them. The adults agreed. While patrolling the area, Cpl. Wiley was able to gain more information on where the two 17 year olds were located. She exited the WMA and drove to another area on the WMA off Duncan Bridge Rd. and located the two 17 year olds. The 17 year olds were not injured. This was the first time they had tubed the river. Due to the time, they became concerned that they had gone past the take out. They decided to exit and walk out after they had seen the State Wildlife Management Area signage.

## **Region III- Thomson (East Central)**

### **COLUMBIA COUNTY / CLARKS HILL LAKE**

On July 19<sup>th</sup>, RFC Bobby Timmerman conducted a concentrated vessel patrol of the Little River and Cliatt Creek on Clarks Hill Lake from the HWY. 47 Bridge to Mistletoe State Park. Game Warden Timmerman stopped one vessel during the patrol. Game Warden Timmerman documented the following violations in Columbia County; operating a vessel under the influence and failure to obey regulatory maker.

### **COLUMBIA COUNTY / CLARKS HILL LAKE**

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Mark Patterson and Sgt. Brian Carter conducted a concentrated vessel patrol of the Little River and Cliatt Creek on Clarks Hill Lake from the HWY. 47 Bridge to Mistletoe State Park. Game Wardens stopped one vessel during the patrol. Game Wardens documented the following violation in Columbia County; operating a vessel under the influence.

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Cpl. Mark Patterson, Cpl. Julian Wilkins and Game Warden Michael Madden conducted a concentrated vessel patrol of Clarks Hill Lake. Game Wardens stopped approximately fifteen vessels during the patrol. Game Wardens documented the following violations in Columbia, Lincoln and McDuffie Counties; operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's on board, towing skier without mirror / observer, allowing person to ride bow / gunwale, allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing a PFD, operating a vessel without lights during hours of darkness and operating a vessel under the influence.

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Cpl. Mark Patterson and Game Warden Michael Madden conducted a concentrated vessel patrol of Clarks Hill Lake. Game Wardens stopped approximately six vessels during the patrol. Game Wardens documented the following violations in Columbia County; towing skier without mirror / observer and allowing person to ride / gunwale. Game Wardens also confiscated and seized an illegal hoop net at Wildwood Park boat ramp on Clarks Hill Lake.

### **MCDUFFIE COUNTY / CLARKS HILL WMA**

On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Cpl. Mark Patterson and Game Warden Michael Madden conducted a concentrated vessel patrol of Clarks Hill WMA in McDuffie County. Game Wardens documented the following violation during the patrol; illegal use of ATV on WMA.

### **ELBERT COUNTY**

On July 29<sup>th</sup> Cpl Julian Wilkins and Rfc Phillip Nelson patrolled Lake Russell for boating and fishing activity. Violations documented during the patrol were violation of the 100 foot law, allowing underage children to ride in moving vessel without wearing a lifejacket, operating at night without lights, and fishing without a license. Additionally, three subjects were caught cast netting at Dry Fork Creek Boat Ramp. The subjects had 26 bream which are a game fish and are illegal to keep when caught with a cast net. The officers confiscated the net.

## **Region IV- Macon (West Central)**

No activity to report.

## **Region V- Albany (Southwest)**

No activity to report.

## **Region VI- Metter (Southeast)**

### **EFFINGHAM COUNTY**

On July 17<sup>th</sup> RFC Jordan Crawford and RFC Jason Miller assisted Effingham County Sheriff's office and the Burke County Dive Team with a search for evidence in an active case along the Ogeechee River at Morgan's Bridge. During the search the Rangers provided security for the dive team. While providing the security the Rangers observed a boat nearly hit the dive marker even after the operator was instructed to divert around the area. The boat was stopped and the operator was charged with boating under the influence, BUI child endangerment, Georgia's 100 foot law and allowing underage persons to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD. The operator of the boat was placed under arrest and transported to the Effingham County jail.

## **Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)**

No activity to report.