

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
August 16 – August 22, 2015

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)

BARTOW COUNTY

On August 16th just after midnight, Cpl. Brooks Varnell and Cpl. Eric Brown stopped a ski boat on Allatoona Lake for having improper running lights. The operator was found to be operating under the influence of alcohol. The operator was placed under arrest and charged with BUI and operating a vessel with improper lights.

On August 17th, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Zack Hardy responded to two separate stolen vessel calls on Allatoona Lake at Allatoona Landing. A ski boat and a bass boat were stolen from McKinney Campground and located across the lake. Several items were taken from both vessels. Investigators with the Bartow County Sheriff's office are working the cases.

On August 22nd, Cpl. Brooks Varnell and RFC Micheal Crawley responded to a domestic dispute on Allatoona Lake in the area of Flamingo Cove. A male and female were involved in a physical altercation while on the water. The female was arrested by the Bartow County Sheriff's office and charged with simple battery under the Family Violence Act.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HART COUNTY

On August 16th, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Tim Vickery patrolled the lake for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several boats were checked for proper safety equipment, as well as, several fishing licenses were inspected. As a result, four citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of operating a vessel without a fire extinguisher, allowing person to ride bow/gunwale, towing skier with PWC without an observer on board, and operating vessel with insufficient PFD's.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

JEFFERSON COUNTY

On August 17, RFC Matherly and RFC Tanner assisted Bullock County SO with searching for an object of interest in a murder trial in South Bullock County. The Rangers searched a small water way for several hours using the ROV Sonar and by foot. While RFC Matherly operated the ROV with sonar, RFC Tanner waded in the water and searched with his feet and two metal rods. Nothing was located eliminating the area for the Sheriff's office.

On August 22, Sgt. Boswell, Cpl. Adams, and RFC Matherly participated in the first annual Back to School Safety Fair in Louisville, GA. The Rangers set up a booth and passed out fishing and hunting regulations to people attending the event. They also answered several questions, ranging from looking at the department as a career to hunting, fishing and boating.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

On August 17th CPL. Adams patrolled the Oconee River for fishing and boating violations. Numerous people an boats were check with no violations found.

NEWTON COUNTY

On August 21, Cpl. David Allen and Ranger Dan Schay investigated a buck that was shot on August 20th. The Rangers interviewed the witness who stated an older gentleman was shooting deer on a crop damage permit and killed a buck. The witness stated he had to put the buck down because it was wounded. The Rangers went to the suspect's home and after a short interview, the suspect admitted to killing a small buck. The suspect was charged with violation of a crop damage permit for shooting the buck.

LAKE OCONEE

During the weekend of August 22-23, Rangers David Allen, Derrell Worth, Jason Harrison, and Dan Schay patrolled Lake Oconee for fishing and boating violations. Rangers documented 100' violations on a PWC, failure to obey regulatory markers, operating PWC w/out a PFD, towing skiers w/out observers or mirrors on vessel and PWC's, and several light violations.

CLARKE COUNTY

On August 18th RFC Tim Butler observed a vehicle with beagles entering a block of woods. RFC Butler returned an hour later and found a man with a shotgun hunting rabbits with the beagles. It was also determined the man did not have permission to be hunting on the land. The hunter was issued a citation for hunting out of season, and a warning at the request of the landowner for hunting without permission.

OCONEE COUNTY

On August 22nd SGT Brian Carter, CPL Mark Patterson, and RFC Tim Butler ran the fishing simulator at the Oconee County Pet Festival.

On Sunday, August 16, RFC Phillip Nelson and CPL Julian Wilkins responded to a call about a deer being shot at night in Oconee Co. Incident is currently under investigation.

ELBERT COUNTY

On Tuesday August 18, Cpl. Julian Wilkins taught a hunter education class. There were a total of 8 students certified from this class.

On Thursday August 20, Cpl. Julian Wilkins caught a subject that had driven a truck onto a closed road on the Vaughter WMA. The subject was issued a Citation for this violation.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

CLAYTON COUNTY

On Monday, August 17th, DNR Rangers laid to rest Deputy Ranger Joe Sebo. Ranger Sebo passed away at age 70 on August 15th from complications of a recurring cancer. Deputy Ranger Sebo had been an unpaid, volunteer Deputy Ranger with the Department for over 25 years and had taught hunter education for the department for over 40 years. Deputy Ranger Sebo was also a professional photographer and owned Sebo Photography. In his lifetime, Sebo hunted big game on several continents, taking the world slam of wild turkeys and the grand slam of North American wild sheep. He was a board member of the Georgia Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors. He served his country in Vietnam as a Captain in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, where he was awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He is survived by his wife Rita and his son Jason. He will be deeply missed by those who knew him.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

DECATUR COUNTY

On August 19th, several Region V Rangers responded to assist Decatur County S.O. and Bainbridge Public Safety after a million gallon fertilizer tank exploded near the Flint River. The incident occurred when a worker was trying to weld on the tank lid. One person was killed in the explosion, and several were injured from the toxic fumes released by the fire.



Rangers assisted local law enforcement during this fertilizer tank explosion incident in near the Flint River

LAKE SEMINOLE

On August 22nd, Ranger Steve Thomas and Ranger Jay Lewis conducted a patrol to address alligator hunting and boating safety issues. The Rangers issued citations for hunting without an alligator hunting license, operating vessels without PFD's, operating at night without lights, and a PWC violation.

QUITMAN COUNTY

On August 21st, while conducting a patrol in River Bluff Park, Ranger Quinn Fogle encountered a boat operator whom appeared to be impaired. Upon conducting field sobriety exercises, Ranger Fogle determined the subject was operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol. The subject was then arrested and charged with BUI.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On August 16th, Ranger Jordan Crawford and Sergeant Don Dasher received a call from Effingham County Sheriff office's Dispatch regarding an emergency call for help from a group of boaters on the Savannah River. The caller stated that their boat had struck a sandbar ejecting one of the boat's passengers. That passenger was then struck by the boat's prop. RGR. Crawford and Sgt. Dasher quickly made their way to Abercorn Landing where the passenger was airlifted to a local hospital. The investigation of the incident was turned over to Corporal Kate Hargrove with the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team.

APPLING COUNTY

On August 21st, Corporal Chase Altman certified 6 students for Hunter Education, by having a CD-ROM Class.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On August 22nd, Corporal Chase Altman and Corporal Kevin Joyce offered two Hunter Education courses at the Town Bluff Heritage Center, certifying 10 students.

TATTNALL COUNTY

On August 22nd, Corporal Chase Altman and Ranger First Class Clint Jarriel patrolled the county for alligator hunting along the river, and local ponds. Two vessels were checked with no violations found.

COFFEE COUNTY

On August 21st and 22nd, Sergeant Morty Wood, Corporal Tim Hutto, Corporal Tommy Daughtrey, and Ranger First Class Keith McDonald worked the annual South Georgia Outdoor Expo in Douglas. The officers handed out information pamphlets, answered questions for the public, and worked the Laser Shot Hunting Simulator. Cpl. Hutto, K-9 Titan, and RFC McDonald also presented K-9 demonstrations on officer protection and wildlife detection.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On August 21st, Sergeant Patrick Dupree met with members of Lowndes Longspurs chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation to receive a check to cover costs for a turkey decoy to be used to apprehend poachers that may hunt turkeys illegally. The mount was completed at cost by taxidermist Joe Boatright of Bacon County.



NWTF's Lowndes Longspurs presenting check to Sgt. Dupree for turkey decoy

CHARLTON COUNTY

On August 22nd, Ranger First Class Sam Williams assisted Charlton County Sheriff's deputies and Folkston police officers with the stop of a vehicle occupied by four individuals that had just shoplifted numerous items from a convenience store in Waycross. All of the items were recovered in the vehicle in addition to illegal drugs. All four suspects were arrested and taken into custody.



Shoplifters stopped near Folkston

WHEELER COUNTY

On August 22nd, Ranger First Class Allen Mills was on routine patrol at Little Ocmulgee State Park when an elderly man stopped RFC Mills and stated that someone had ‘fallen out’ at one of the group shelters. RFC Mills arrived on scene and discovered a 63 year old black female lying on her back awake, but incoherent. RFC Mills contacted Wheeler County 911 to dispatch Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to respond to shelter 1. After arriving on scene, EMS determined that the individual had suffered mild heat exhaustion and treated her with a cold drink and cooling rags. The subject recovered quickly and needed no further treatment. The group was thankful for RFC Mills’ rapid response and providing the subject with immediate care.



EMS arriving on scene and treating patient.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

CAMDEN COUNTY

On August 21st, Ranger Colte Shaske was checking local boat ramps for alligator hunters. Upon arriving at White Oak Creek Boat Ramp, Ranger Shaske found a group of hunter getting ready to start their hunt for the night. Ranger Shaske checked the hunter's equipment and licenses. All equipment was in compliance but one of the individuals did not have a current Alligator Hunting License. The hunter was cited for Hunting Alligators without an Alligator Hunting License.

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On August 18th and 20th Corporal Craig Smith taught a boating safety at Brantley County Middle School in conjunction with the Brantley County Schools Police Department. 23 middle school students attended the training and received their certification.



Brantley County Middle School students learn boating safety

CHATHAM COUNTY

On August 16, Ranger Tim Morris and Corporal Kate Hargrove responded to a boating incident on the Savannah River. Rangers met with Sergeant Don Dasher and Ranger Jordan Crawford at Abercorn Landing in Effingham County. Rangers secured the scene, assisted vessel occupants and began investigating the incident.

On August 18-19, Corporal Kate Hargrove patrolled Chatham County waters with United States Coast Guard officers. Officers performed safety boardings of vessels in transit, two people were cited for safety violations.

On August 19, Corporal Kate Hargrove responded to calls reporting injured birds of prey and assisted callers with capture and immediate care for the birds.

On August 20, an osprey and a barred owl were transferred to the Georgia Sea Turtle Center to care for their injuries and rehabilitation.

On August 20, Corporal Kate Hargrove assisted marinas in Chatham County by inspecting bait dealership's facilities, vessels and equipment.