

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
July 5 – July 11, 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 July 5th, RFC Micheal Crawley and a college intern were patrolling Lake Allatoona when they observed a large ski boat driving recklessly near the hazard markers near the dam. A white male was driving with an adult female and 2 small children as passengers. RFC Crawley stopped the boat and observed that the operator had been drinking. The operator was screened and was found to be under the influence of alcohol. The operator was charged with Boating under the Influence and Child Endangerment. The operator was transported to Bartow County Jail.

GILMER COUNTY

On July 11th, Cpl. Casey Jones and Ranger Mark Moyer patrolled Carter's Lake and issued 6 citations and 4 warnings for offenses including fishing without license, operating vessel without lights during hours of darkness, riding bow of vessel, insufficient PFD's, and registration violations.

On July 11th, Sgt. John VanLandingham and Cpl. James Keener patrolled areas in Gilmer and Murray Counties around Carter's Lake and Holly Creek on Cohutta WMA. Officers issued 2 citations and 3 warnings for violations including fishing without license, operating vessel with improper lights, and operating vessel with insufficient PFD's.

On July 12th, Cpl. Casey Jones and Cpl. James Keener patrolled Carter's Lake and issued 2 warnings for allowing underage child to ride in vessel without PFD and creating wake in no-wake zone.

FANNIN COUNTY

On July 3rd and 4th, Col. Eddie Henderson, Sgt. John Vanlandingham, RFC Mark Moyer, and RFC Cody Jones patrolled Blue Ridge Lake. The Officers issued 22 citations and warnings over the holiday weekend for towing a skier on PWC without an observer, operating without registration, operating without PFD's, operating PWC's after sunset, towing skiers after sunset, operating with improper lights, and various other boating safety infractions.

On July 10th, Cpl. James Keener patrolled areas around the Toccoa River, Rock Creek, and Blue Ridge WMA. Two citations were issued for fishing without a license and fishing without a trout license. A warning was also issued to another subject for an unrelated violation.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HART COUNTY

On July 5th, RFC Brandon Pierce and Sgt. Greg Colson patrolled the lake for the holiday weekend traffic. Numerous boats were checked for proper safety equipment, as well as, several fishing licenses were also inspected. As a result, three citations were issued. The violations consisted of towing a skier without mirror or observer and fishing without a license.

On July 6th, RFC Brandon Pierce was on patrol and noticed smoke coming from a residence. Upon investigating, it was determined by the officer that some illegal material was being burned. RFC Pierce made the individual who started the fire put it out and to make arrangements to take it to the local landfill. A warning of unlawful burning of egregious litter was issued for the infraction.

On July 10th, RFC Brandon Pierce patrolled the lake for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several boats were checked for proper safety equipment and several fishing licenses were inspected as well. A total of two citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing a PFD and towing a skier with PWC without observer on board.

HALL COUNTY

On July 11th, Cpl. Jason Roberson and RFC Kevin Goss observed a large cruiser travel approximately one hundred yards into the no-wake zone at Sunset Cove without slowing down. The man showed obvious signs of alcohol impairment and was arrested for BUI.

On July 11th, RFC Kevin Goss, and Cpl. Jason Roberson stopped a vessel in the “No Wake Zone” at Sunset Cove for operating above idle speed. During the stop the operator showed obvious signs of impairment due to alcohol. RFC Goss asked the operator to come aboard his vessel and began to screen the operator for BUI. After completing field sobriety RFC Goss determined that the operator was under the influence and placed the man under arrest. The man refused to submit to a state chemical test and was subsequently taken to Hall County Jail.

FORSYTH COUNTY

On July 10th, Cpl. Jason Roberson received a call about a very boisterous boater. He made contact with the suspect who was driving a houseboat. The man showed obvious signs of alcohol impairment and was arrested for BUI.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

JEFFERSON COUNTY

On July 06, RFC Matherly received a complaint of Night hunting in West Jefferson County. After speaking with the complainant, RFC Matherly went to the area to look for signs of the illegal activity. RFC Matherly noticed in one area where a vehicle had pulled onto the shoulder of the road way to possibly shine a light into a field. Further investigation is ongoing at this time.

On July 11th and 12th Sgt. Boswell patrolled the creeks and boat landing in Jefferson Co for fishing activity. No violations were detected.

RICHMOND COUNTY

On July 5th Cpl. Payne and Cpl. Adams checked numerous fishermen in Richmond Co. Three subjects were cited for fishing without a license. Several minor violations were handled with verbal guidance.

Cpl. Payne and Cpl. Adams investigated a vandalism complaint on Spirit Creek WMA. The investigation is still ongoing.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

On July the 6th Cpl. Adams checked several fishermen and boaters at Bald's Ferry boat ramp on the Oconee River. No violations were found.

LAKE OCONEE

Rangers Derrell Worth, David Allen, Ricky Boles, Richard Tanner, Jason Harrison, John Harwell, and Dan Schay patrolled Lake Oconee during the fourth of July weekend. Several violations were cited including towing skier w/out observer on PWC, operating a vessel w/insufficient PFD's, and light violations after sunset. One subject was screened and charged for BUI by Cpl. Derrell Worth.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On July 11th, Cpl. Ryan Swain and Cpl. Julian Wilkins apprehended one subject for Operation of a Vessel while Under the Influence of Alcohol. The subject was arrested and transported to Lincoln County Jail.

OGLETHORPE COUNTY

On July 10th Corporal Julian Wilkins and RFC Phillip Nelson responded to an in progress well drilling without a license complaint. While investigating the complaint a subject was found drilling a well on a job site without a current license. A citation was issued for the violation. Later in the day RFC Nelson stopped a vehicle for a child restraint violation. The driver had a two year old in the back seat of the vehicle that was not restrained in a car seat.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On Sunday, July 5th, Ranger Matt Johnson and Sgt. Bo Kelly patrolled Lake Sinclair for boating activity. Numerous citations and warnings were issued for violations that were encountered that included towing a skier without an observer, and 100' rule violations.

On Monday, July 6th, Ranger Matt Johnson checked several boat ramps on the Oconee River in Baldwin and Wilkinson Counties. Two boats and 5 fishermen were checked and no violations were encountered.

On Saturday, July 11th, RFC Jeremy Reese arrested one subject on Lake Sinclair for operating a vessel under the influence.

HARRIS COUNTY

On July 11th, Cpl. Mitch Oliver was patrolling Lake Harding when he stopped a vessel for operating without navigational lights after sunset. While talking with the boat operator about the violation and performing a safety inspection, it became apparent that the operator may be impaired. Cpl. Oliver administered a series of field sobriety exercises on the operator and at the conclusion of those exercises, placed the boat operator under arrest for boating under the influence. Cpl. Oliver transported the subject to the Harris County Jail where he was charged with operating a vessel under the influence and operating a vessel at night without lights.

PUTNAM COUNTY

On Friday July 10th, RFC Jeremy Reese responded to a boating incident on Lake Sinclair at the Putnam Beach area. Two PWC's collided resulting in property damage to the vessels. No one was seriously injured.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

No significant activity to report.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

TOOMBS COUNTY

On July 9th, Corporal Chase Altman, Corporal Kevin Joyce, and K-9 Briar assisted the Toombs County Sheriff's Office and the US Marshall Service in searching for and apprehending a suspect on the run from Ohio for over ten years. He was on the Top Ten Most Wanted List for the US Marshall Service.

ECHOLS COUNTY

On July 6th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree, Corporal Jason Shipes, Ranger Sam Williams, Ranger Judd Sears, Ranger Daniel North and Echols Sheriff Randy Courson served a search warrant at a poacher's residence. Three frozen alligator tails were recovered from the poacher's freezer and were seized as evidence. Ranger Daniel North had received information from Sheriff's Investigator in June about possible illegal alligator hunting activity. The investigator, who was conducting a narcotics investigation, discovered communication by the suspect concerning illegal alligator hunting activities. Ranger Daniel North then began his investigation which resulted in a search warrant for the poacher's residence. Violations of illegal possession of alligator parts and hunting alligators out of season were documented.



Alligator tails discovered at a poacher's residence in Echols County.

WARE COUNTY

On July 6th, Ranger Sam Williams completed an investigation into a report of a woman and a juvenile that were injured at Dixon WMA shooting range. An individual was firing a handgun and the bullet struck a metal target frame resulting in bullet fragments bouncing back and striking the woman and the child. The woman had an injury to her arm from an embedded fragment and the child received a small laceration on his neck from a grazing fragment. Both were treated at a hospital for the injuries.

LAURENS COUNTY

On July 5th, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills patrolled the Beaverdam Wildlife Management Area (BDWMA). The officers checked four individuals at the shooting range for license requirements. Verbal guidance was given to one subject for a minor violation. The officers also patrolled the boat landing on the BDWMA and conducted boating safety checks on four vessels. No violations were detected.

On July 8th, Ranger First Class Rodney Horne assisted a vessel owner with requesting a Hull Identification Number for his vessel.

WILCOX COUNTY

On July 11th, Corporal John A. Stokes and Corporal Dan Stiles conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River. The officers checked fifteen vessels for registration and boating safety compliance. Six anglers were also checked for license and creel compliance. No violations were documented.

TELFAIR COUNTY

On July 11th, Corporal Dan Stiles conducted a night patrol on the Horse Creek Wildlife Management Area. No violations were detected.

WHEELER COUNTY

On July 8th, Ranger First Class Rodney Horne assisted Wheeler County Sheriff's Office and the Oconee Drug Task Force with locating and arresting a person for the illegal growing of Marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On July 11th, Ranger Jordan Crawford, Corporal Shaymus McNeely, and Sergeant Don Dasher patrolled the Savannah River around the area of Tuskasee King Landing. A total of 10 boats were checked with six violations documented. Violations included Georgia's 100 ft. law and operating a vessel without registration. One subject was arrested for boating under the influence and boating under the influence child endangerment.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

LONG COUNTY

On July 11th, while on a boating safety patrol on the Altamaha River, Cpl. Bobby White checked a boater and smelled the odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from the operator. Field sobriety was given and the operator was arrested and charged with boating under the influence.

CHATHAM COUNTY

On Sunday, July 5th, RFC Jason Miller, RFC Jack Thain, Cpl. Bill Bryson and Sgt. Phillip Scott were notified of a missing vessel in the area of St. Catherine Sound. The vessel ran out of gas in the area of St. Catherine Sound with a Richmond Hill couple on board. There had been no phone contact since 2:15 pm. The Rangers notified other Rangers and a search was begun. Sgt. Cindy Miller and Cpl. Buster Cooper began searching the Ossabaw Sound area while the other Rangers started in St. Catherine Sound. The Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department and the United States Coast Guard (USCG) were also out searching in vessels and by helicopter. The vessel was located at about midnight approximately one mile off of the north end of Ossabaw Island. The two boaters were hoisted onto the USCG helicopter with the assistance of the USCG rescue swimmer. RFC Thain and Sgt. Scott recovered the vessel at the request of the boaters and returned it to the DNR office.

On July 5, Corporal Kate Hargrove and Ranger Tim Morris patrolled near shore and inshore waters of Chatham County. They confiscated 4 crab traps that were not labeled. Ranger Morris documented violations for failure to obey regulatory markers and allowing underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD.

On July 8, Corporal Buster Cooper and Ranger Tim Morris patrolled near shore and inshore waters of Chatham County. Ranger Morris documented violations for failure to obey regulatory markers and taking shrimp over the limit with a cast net.

GLYNN COUNTY

On July 3rd CPL. Chris Ridley and RGR Colte Shaske received a call in reference to a Search and Rescue of a shark fisherman who lost his paddle on his kayak. The Rangers arrived on scene and were able to make contact with another fisherman on the beach who was able to point out where he had last seen the kayak. When the Rangers found the kayaker the individual had his paddle but had fallen out of his kayak and was extremely exhausted from trying to get back into it while still hanging onto his paddle. The individual and his kayak were placed into the Rangers boat and returned to the beach, tired, but unharmed.

On July 11, Captain Doug Lewis, Sgt. Mark Carson, RFC John Evans and RFC David Brady presented Information and Education Programs to members of the Republican Caucus. The programs consisted of Boater Education, Port Security, Commercial Fishing regulations and the intense involvement of the Law Enforcement Division pertaining to the Coastal Region.