

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
June 7 – June 13, 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.

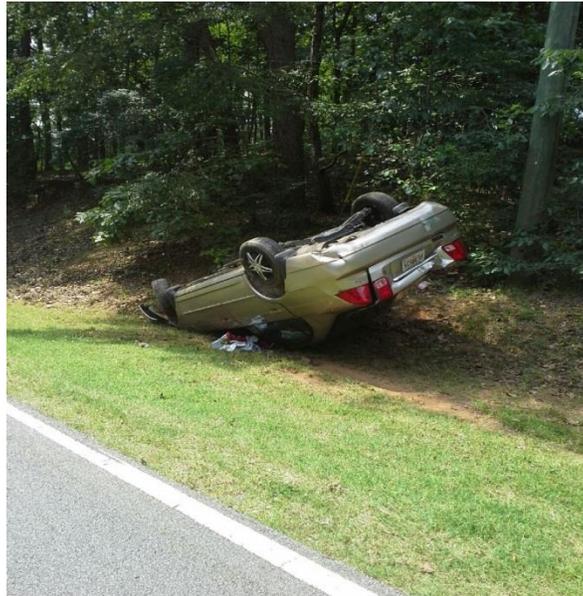


Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

BARTOW COUNTY

On June 8th at 12:44 a.m., Sgt. Mike Barr, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, and RFC Zack Hardy responded to a call of a vehicle in Allatoona Lake at the Blockhouse boat ramp. A fisherman near the ramp saw headlights under the water and called 911. The officers responded with Bartow County SO / Fire and Rescue and the Georgia State Patrol. After several hours the car was pulled from the water unoccupied and determined that it was stolen.

On June 10th, Cpl. Byron Young was patrolling Red Top Mt. State Park checking fishing licenses near Bethany Bridge. As he exited his truck a fisherman told him that he heard what sounded like a car crash. Cpl. Young located an overturned vehicle across the lake bridge and assisted the occupants. Luckily the two passengers were checked by EMS and only had minor injuries.



Vehicle crash on Red Top Mt. State Park

On June 13th, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Michael Crawley responded to a boat incident at Holiday Marina on Allatoona Lake. A female suffered broken ribs while tubing. The female was treated by Bartow County EMS and transported to Cartersville Medical Center.

On June 13th, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Michael Crawley stopped a vessel for violation of the rules of the road. The operator was found to be under the influence. When the officers transported the intoxicated operator to meet a Bartow County Deputy, the operator resisted arrest. While on the boat dock a struggle ensued between the suspect and the Bartow County Officer. He was charged with Boating Under the Influence, Operating a Vessel Without Registration, Violation Rules of the Road, Disorderly Conduct, and Obstruction of a Law Enforcement Officer.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On June 9th, Cpl. Byron Young responded to a boat incident call on Allatoona Lake near Victoria Marina. Two males running at an estimated 55 MPH in a 19 foot bass boat were ejected when the operator took his hands off the steering wheel. The bass boat turned hard left and capsized, ejecting the two men into the water. Neither man was wearing a PFD (lifejacket) but were able to swim to the boat and hold on until a boater in the area came to assist. The two men were stunned that they are still alive.



Capsized 19 foot Aries Bass Boat on Allatoona Lake

CARROLL COUNTY

During the week of June 8th through June 12th, Cpl. Eric Brown held the 10th Carroll County Outdoor Day Camp. During the event 42 youths were certified in Hunter Education and Boat Georgia. Activities included shooting .22 rifles, shotguns, archery, geocaching, a snake show, tree ID, mammal ID, and a fishing trip. Volunteers from the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, Carrollton Police Department, Carroll County Fire and Rescue, and volunteer Hunter Education Instructors made the camp a success.



Carroll County Outdoor Day Camp

FULTON COUNTY

On June 13th, Cpl. Lee Burns and RFC Chad Cox assisted National Park Service, Roswell Fire and John's Creek Rescue with the Race Back to the River. Over 430 canoes and kayaks participated in this year's event.



Race Back to the River

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HART COUNTY

On June 7th, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Shane Sartor patrolled Lake Hartwell for boating safety violations. Numerous boats were checked for proper safety equipment and several fishing licenses were checked. As a result, six citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of towing a skier with PWC without observer on board, operating PWC within 100 foot of object above idle speed, allow underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing PFD, and operating vessel without CGA PFD's.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

On June 8th, Cpl. Craig Fulghum and Sgt. Stan Elrod assisted with the Franklin County Sheriff's Office Junior Deputy Camp in Carnesville. The students were given a presentation on the duties of Conservation Rangers and were taught a wildlife program on native animals in Georgia. Sherriff Mike Cleveland from Hart County also attended and brought his alligator "Okie" to show the students. For most of the kids it was their first experience ever seeing a live alligator.



Franklin County Sheriff's Office Junior Deputy Camp

On June 10th, Cpl. Craig Fulghum assisted with the Junior Ranger Camp at Victoria Bryant State Park. Cpl. Fulghum taught wildlife education and did a fur program for all the students.



Cpl. Craig Fulghum with youth from the Junior Ranger Camp at Victoria Bryant State Park

HALL COUNTY

On June 12th, at approximately 1730 hours Ranger First Class Mark Stephens and Cpl. Eddie Tompkins were patrolling Lake Sidney Lanier in Hall County near River Forks Park. Both Officers responded to a Jet Ski incident near the park. After an investigation one of the jet ski operators was arrested for operating a jet ski under the influence of alcohol. The other individual broke his leg and was transported to Northeast Georgia Medical Center.

On June 7th, RFC Kevin Goss received a complaint from dispatch about a blue Four Winns motor boat with 3 females on board smoking marijuana in Sardis Creek on Lake Lanier. When he arrived, RFC Kevin Goss encountered three female suspects with obvious signs of impairment due to marijuana. After gaining permission to search RFC Kevin Goss discovered a small box containing marijuana. RFC Kevin Goss issued each woman a citation for VGCSA less than one ounce.

On June 7th, Cpl. Jason Roberson arrested one subject for Boating Under the Influence in Sunset Cove on Lake Lanier.

RABUN COUNTY

On June 13th, RFC Chad Chambers patrolled Lake Rabun with Rabun County Deputy Cody Sanders. The officers cited and warned boaters for violations on registration, the 100 foot rule, skiing after sunset and improper lights. The officers encountered ten violations in all.

On June 13th, Cpl. Derek Dillard and Rabun County Sheriff's Officer Mike Mazarky patrolled Lake Burton in the area of Wildcat Creek due to several complaints of boats coming within 100 feet of people's docks. After patrolling the area for about 5 hours and using a laser range finder to help identify the violations, they issued numerous citations and warnings.

WHITE COUNTY

On July 13th, Sgt. Steve Seitz, RFC Anne Britt and UNG Intern Holdan Kellar participated in a hunter education development program for Smithgall Woods State Park "Kids Day in the Park" event. They taught the kids important safety rules while hunting. The kids also were able to learn safety techniques while using a hunting scenario simulator. RFC Eric Isom presented his K-9, "Colt" to show all of the K-9's duties. Other activities included .22 rifle shoot, archery, snakes, honeybees, and stream ecology.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

RICHMOND COUNTY

On June 13, Cpl. Payne and RFC Billips patrolled Richmond County checking fishing and boating activity along the Savannah River. The officers checked without permission complaints in the late afternoon with no activity observed.

ELBERT COUNTY

On June 13th Cpl. Julian Wilkins and Cpl. Mark Patterson patrolled Lake Russell by vessel. During the patrol one subject was charged with violation of the Georgia Controlled Substance Act for misdemeanor marijuana possession.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On June 13th, Cpl. Ryan Swain taught a Boating Education Course at the Lincolnton Library. Twenty people participated and were certified. Several rescue and law enforcement personnel attended from local agencies in Lincoln County.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

JONES COUNTY

On the afternoon of June 9th, RFC Jeremy Reese conducted an HIN inspection on two vessels on Hungerford Road.

Later that evening, RFC Reese checked fisherman at the Cedar Creek Bridge on Hwy 129 and 1 warning was issued.

LAKE SINCLAIR

On the evenings of June 12th and 13th, Ranger Matt Johnson, Cpl. Lynn Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly patrolled Lake Sinclair. Ranger Johnson spoke about boating safety at the MADD day on the lake. While patrolling, the officers issued a number of citations for failure to wear PFD in a hazardous area, violations of the 100' law, as well as making one arrest for boating under the influence.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

DOUGHERTY COUNTY

On June 13th, Cpl. Robbie Griner and Cpl. Greg Wade were on a patrol when they encountered two vehicles parked on a dead-end road. As the officers approached the vehicles, they witnessed a male subject place a small container in the back of his car. It was determined that the male subject was attempting to sell an alligator for \$50.00 to a female subject, and had driven down the dead-end road to conduct the transaction. Charges for illegal possession of an alligator and the unlawful sale of wildlife were made by the officers and the confiscated alligator was released back into the wild.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

DODGE COUNTY

On June 7th, Corporal Dan Stiles received a call from Dodge County 911 stating that an individual called reporting that he was floating on the Ocmulgee River in a rubber raft and was in distress due to a large alligator following his vessel. Cpl. Stiles responded, but before Cpl. Stiles could get to the location in his vessel the complainant called back reporting that he had gotten off of the river and was safe. Cpl. Stiles continued his patrol in the section of river where the report originated. Shortly after beginning his patrol Cpl. Stiles encountered two adult males, an adult female and three young children "tubing" on the river. The female and a child approximately 2 years of age had gotten swept into some woody debris in the river current and were unable to free themselves. The other adults were unable to reach the female and the child. Cpl. Stiles was able to maneuver his vessel and use a throw line to free the woman and her child and get them safely into his vessel. The female was distressed and Cpl. Stiles loaded her other two children into his vessel and transported them back to a private boat landing on the river to safety.

LAURENS COUNTY

On June 13th, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area (HGPFPA). Three vessels were checked for registration and boating safety equipment compliance. Numerous anglers were checked for creel compliance. June 13th was a free fishing day in Georgia therefore no license checks were conducted. One violation for operating a vessel with insufficient personal floatation devices (PFD) was documented.

BERRIEN COUNTY

On June 10th, Sergeant Morty Wood, Corporal Tim Hutto, Corporal John Stokes, Corporal Robbie Griner, Corporal Scott Carroll, RFC Keith McDonald, and RFC Rodney Horne assisted with the Natural Resource Conservation Workshop at Paradise PFA. Approximately 160 kids enjoyed the day by learning safe gun handling, shooting skeet, fishing on the area, and practicing at the archery range that had been set up for the event.

On June 13th, Sergeant Morty Wood assisted fisheries personnel and the Tifton Kiwanis Club with a kids fishing event at Paradise PFA, Approximately 250 kids and adults attended the event.

COOK COUNTY / COLQUITT COUNTY

On June 13th, Sergeant Morty Wood was conducting a patrol at Reed Bingham State Park. During the patrol Sergeant Wood witnessed a man exit a vehicle with a beer in his hand. The man then saw Sergeant Wood and attempted to hide the beer by placing it back into the truck. After further investigation the man was charged with consuming alcohol on a state park.

LOWNDES COUNTY

On the night June 13th, Sergeant Morty Wood received a request for assistance from the Lowndes County Fire and EMS. They had received a call that a 22 year old female was approximately 1 ½ miles down the river from the Knights Ferry boat landing on the Withlacoochee River and in need of medical attention. Sergeant Wood responded to the area with his patrol vessel. The female was safely transported to the landing and received medical care from EMS personnel.

LANIER COUNTY

On the night of June 13th, Sergeant Morty Wood received a call from a landowner wanting to make a complaint about deer crop damage permit violations that had occurred on his property. The landowner stated that his land should not have been permitted by the farmer without the landowner's permission. He also stated that three men had just shot a deer on his property but that one of the men was not listed on the permit that they had with them. Sergeant Wood responded and located two of the men that had been shooting deer on the permit earlier that night. One of the men was not listed on the permit. Sergeant Wood took their information, instructed them to read all of the rules on the permit and instructed the unpermitted man that he was not allowed to go with the others that were listed. The landowner / complainant was instructed to call the farmer and insure that the farmer knew that the field was not to be permitted and to call the Game Management office that issued the permit to insure that the field was removed from the permit.

COFFEE COUNTY

On June 11th, Corporal Tim Hutto and Sergeant Morty Wood received a tip from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission that two subjects from Douglas had killed an alligator and posted pictures of it on Facebook. Cpl. Hutto initiated an investigation into the complaint and began building a case on the two subjects. On the evening of June 11th, Cpl. Hutto picked up one of the individuals for questioning. The subject admitted to killing the alligator in a pond in Mora and posting the pictures of it. On June 15th, Cpl. Hutto took warrants on the second individual for hunting alligators out of season. Charges are still pending on the subjects due to both being convicted felons.

WARE COUNTY

On June 13th, Corporal Jason Shipes and Ranger Judd Sears patrolled Hwy 84 bridge landing for boating safety requirements and creel limits. Multiple vessels were inspected with one vessel discovered that did not have enough lifejackets (PFDs) on board for the number of occupants. A citation for operating a vessel with insufficient PFDs was issued.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On June 7th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree, Ranger Judd Sears, and Ranger Sam Williams conducted a high-visibility patrol at the Camp Pinkney boat landing on the St. Mary's River for boating safety violations. During the afternoon, a total of eighteen vessels were encountered resulting in twelve violations being addressed. Documented violations included operating vessel above idle speed within 100' of public boat ramp, operating vessel with insufficient personal flotation devices (PFDs), and allowing underage child to ride in vessel without wearing a PFD.

On June 13th, Ranger Sam Williams conducted an area check at Trader's Hill boat landing on the St. Mary's River. A total of fourteen vessels were encountered. Violations documented were operating a vessel without PFDs and operating a vessel with insufficient PFDs.

SCREVEN COUNTY

On June 13th, Corporal Shaymus McNeely, Corporal Mike Wilcox, and Sergeant Don Dasher conducted a vessel patrol of the Savannah River from Millers Lake to Blue Springs. Several boats and fisherman were checked for safety equipment and creel limit compliance.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On June 7th, Ranger Jordan Crawford patrolled several landings throughout Effingham County. Several boaters were checked with no violations documented.

BULLOCH COUNTY

On June 13th, Corporal Eddie Akins and Ranger Jordan Crawford checked river landings along the Ogeechee River for boating and fishing activity. Their efforts resulted in six boats being checked. No violations were detected.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRYAN COUNTY

On 06/02/15 RFC Toney responded to a report of a stolen vessel after the owner of the stolen vessel called DNR to advise that someone was trying to register the vessel. Once on scene in the Ellabell area, it was determined that the vessel was indeed stolen out of Bulloch County. The case was turned over to the Bryan County Sheriff's office. The owner was notified and picked up his vessel from the Sheriff's Office soon afterward.

GLYNN COUNTY

On Friday, June 12th, RFC John Evans and RFC Patrick Gibbs were patrolling the lower end of the Altamaha River. They encountered a boat that had been fishing, while checking the vessel the rangers noticed the operator seemed to be under the influence of alcohol. RFC Gibbs conducted a BUI screening and the operator was arrested for boating under the influence. He was transported to Altamaha Park and then to the Glynn County Detention Center.

On Saturday, June 13th, RFC Evans was working a crabbing complaint on Terry Creek. With the help of the commercial crabber in the area, RFC Evans was able to watch two men working the traps and stealing the crabs that belonged to the commercial crabber. RFC Evans stopped the two men when they arrived back at the Sidney Lanier Ramp. They had a 48 quart cooler full of crabs, many of which were undersized, and an undersized shark. Both men were charged for working the traps of another without permission, possession of undersize crabs, and undersized fish. The entire catch was confiscated.

On Saturday, June 13th, RFC Evans and RFC Gibbs were working on the Altamaha River. They encountered a boat with a man and two small boys in it around Brown's Lake. While talking to the man RFC Evans noticed the smell of alcohol. When asked, the man denied drinking anything and became very defensive. The rangers tied up to his boat and conducted a BUI Screening and determined that he was under the influence of alcohol. They placed him under arrest and began towing the vessel to Altamaha Park. The man was charged with boating under the influence and child endangerment.

On Saturday, June 13th while waiting for a transport unit at Altamaha Park, RFC Evans witnessed a driver in the parking lot run over a boat trailer. He determined the female operator of the vehicle was also drunk and turned the DUI over to the GA State Patrol officer who came to do the transport for the BUI he had just arrested.

WAYNE COUNTY

On June 10th, Cpl. Randy Aspinwall was called to a possible drowning at a small pond in Wayne County. Cpl. Aspinwall arrived on scene along with Wayne County first responders. After a heroic effort two small children were recovered from the water. First responders worked feverishly to revive the young victims but tragically they were pronounced deceased at the Wayne County Hospital.

GLYNN COUNTY

On June 11th, Cpt. Ed Watkins, Sgt. Damon Winters, Cpl. Randy Aspinwall, RFC John Evans, Ranger Jay Bright, and Ranger Colt Shaske were working a commercial fishing detail with helicopter support that Ranger Bright had set up the previous day. A short time after liftoff Cpt. Watkins and Ranger Bright observed three shrimp trawlers dragging inside state waters off Sea Island. The coordinates of each vessel were plotted and it was confirmed that all three were inside closed waters. The officers that were on the water boarded the vessels and escorted them to port where they were charged and their catch was confiscated.