

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
May 24 – 30, 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 May 24th, Sgt. Mike Barr, Cpl. Byron Young, RFC Ben Cunningham, RFC Micheal Crawley, and RFC Zack Hardy responded to a call of a boat incident at Allatoona Landing Campground on Allatoona Lake. A male operating a 19 foot ski boat was struck in the head by a 20 lb anchor and knocked unconscious while traveling down the lake. EMS on scene called in a helicopter to fly the injured male to Grady Hospital in Atlanta. Cpl. Shawn Elmore with DNR C.I.R.T responded to the hospital to assist. The officers on-scene secured the vessel and interviewed witnesses. Cpl. Elmore is investigating the exact cause of the incident.

On May 25th, RFC Micheal Crawley was patrolling Red Top Mt. State Park. RFC Crawley was contacted by a concerned parent. The parent reported that her two juvenile daughters were on Allatoona Lake and overdue. The two female juveniles were paddling in an inflatable kayak. With an approaching thunderstorm the parents were concerned. RFC Crawley relayed this information to Sgt. Mike Barr, Cpl. Byron Young, RFC Brooks Varnell and RFC Bart Hendrix who were on water patrol. The officers on the water quickly located the two juveniles and transported them back to Red Top Mt State Park.

On May 27th, RFC Zack Hardy was patrolling the Etowah River near the low head dam off Paga Mine Rd. RFC Hardy located 5 males fishing on the bank of the river on private property. The men launched a jon boat at Hwy 41 and paddled downstream. The Etowah River was running high due to generation. RFC Hardy located only 3 lifejackets in the boat. The men planned to paddle upstream against the current. Feeling the men would not make it with the strong current and not having enough PFD's, RFC Hardy decided to assist the men back to Paga Mine Rd and retrieve their vehicle. RFC Hardy issued the men warnings for fishing without permission and stressed the importance of PFD use and water safety to the men.

On May 27th, Cpl. Byron Young, RFC Zack Hardy and US Army of Corps of Engineers Ranger Amy Cobb were live on WBHF radio in Cartersville on the Joe Tilley Show. The officers spoke about boating safety on Allatoona Lake and the Etowah River. Topics stressed were sober operators, PFD use, lights, education and rules of the road on the water.



The Joe Tilley Show on WJBF

On May 30th, Cpl. Byron Young, RFC Bart Hendrix and Intern Ray Kennedy were patrolling Allatoona Lake in the area of the Dam. The officers overserved a PWC violating the 100 foot law. The operator was also found to be under the influence of alcohol. The male was placed under arrest and charged with operating under the influence and violation of 100 foot law on PWC.

On May 30th, at 9:35 p.m. Cpl. Byron Young was contacted by Bartow County 911 in reference to a person heard yelling for help on the Etowah River near the Bartow / Floyd County line. Cpl. Young, RFC Ben Cunningham, Bartow County Deputies Nathan Gibbs, Josh Nelson and several Bartow County Firemen searched the banks of the Etowah River and located 2 females that became stranded on the river in a small jon boat. The 1st female was located just after 11:00 p.m. and the 2nd female was located at 2:20 a.m. The females were assisted back to their residences by the Bartow County SO. The two females planned to float from Hwy 411 to Rome, but ran into several problems. The two overturned their boat and broke their paddles before stopping along the river and trying to get help.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On May 24th, RFC Bart Hendrix, RFC Brooks Varnell, RFC Ben Cunningham, and RFC Zack Hardy responded to Payne Campground on Allatoona Lake. A 62 year old male with dementia disappeared from a campsite. The officers searched the water and wooded area with Cherokee County Fire / Rescue and Sheriff's Office for over 7 hours. The officers located the male near the Boys Scout Camp in Kellogg Creek. The male was checked by EMS and returned to the care of his family.

GILMER COUNTY

On May 13th, Sgt. John VanLandingham and RFC Joe Hill investigated a complaint in reference to fishing without permission in Gilmer County on Tickanetley Creek. After speaking with the landowner, collecting evidence, and interviewing two subjects, the Rangers issued two subjects citations for fishing without permission.

On May 29th, Sgt. John VanLandingham and RFC Joe Hill patrolled Carters Lake. The Rangers issued citations and warnings for operating PWC during hours of darkness, fishing without a license, and possession of marijuana, less than one ounce.

On May 25th, Cpl. James Keener and RFC Joe Hill responded to a call of a boating incident. A wakeboarder had fallen and broken his femur. The wakeboarder was transported by ambulance to Hamilton Medical Center in Dalton.

FANNIN COUNTY

On May 10th, RFC Joe Hill and Ranger Mark Moyer patrolled the Toccoa River delayed harvest for trout fishing violations. The Rangers checked several subject's trout fishing and issued warnings and citations for unlawful bait in artificial stream/zone, fishing without a license, and fishing without a trout license.

On May 23rd, RFC Cody Jones and Ranger Mark Moyer patrolled Lake Blue Ridge. The Rangers issued citations and warnings for operating a vessel without proper PFD's, without registration, without fire extinguisher, for violation of rules of the road, allowing a person to ride on the bow, skiing after sunset, and operating a PWC during hours of darkness.

MURRAY COUNTY

On May 22nd, Cpl. Casey Jones and RFC Mark Moyer patrolled Carters Lake. The Rangers issued citations for fishing without a license and possession of marijuana, less than one ounce.

On May 24th, Cpl. James Keener and Cpl. Casey Jones patrolled Carters Lake. The Rangers issued citations and warnings for operating a vessel without proper PFD's, without registration, and for operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

No significant activity to report.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

ELBERT COUNTY

On May 24th while on boating patrol on Lake Russell RFC Phillip Nelson and Cpl. Julian Wilkins documented several violations such as fishing without a license, allowing underage child to ride in moving without wearing life jacket, violating rules of the road, and operating vessel at night without lights.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On May 25th while on boating patrol on Clarks Hill Lake RFC Phillip Nelson and RFC Bobby Timmerman documented several violations such as violation of 100' law, and failure to obey regulatory marker. The Rangers also conducted a surface search for a drowning victim.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On May 30th Cpl. Ryan Swain and Cpl. Mark Patterson patrolled Clarks Hill Lake by vessel. Violations documented during the patrol included operating a vessel with insufficient PFD's, failure to obey a regulatory marker, skiing without a PFD, and towing a skier without a PFD.

LAKE OCONEE

Rangers Jason Harrison, Ricky Boles, Daniel Schay, David Allen, and Derrell Worth patrolled Lake Oconee May 29-31st. Cpl. Derrell Worth and RNG Jason Harrison made a boating under the influence arrest along with a light violation. Other violations cited were towing skiers w/out observer on PWC, 100' violations PWC, operating vessels w/improper lights, and failure to obey regulatory markers.

BURKE COUNTY

On May 27, Ranger First Class Jeff Billips located 3 fishermen fishing without permission. RFC Billips secured a rifle lying on the ground. RFC Billips escorted the men off the property and back to their vehicles. A criminal history check of the rifle's owner revealed he was a convicted felon. RFC Billips issued citations for fishing without permission. RFC Billips arrested the felon for possession of firearm by convicted felon and fishing without permission.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On May 29th, Ranger Matt Johnson responded to a complaint in Eastern Baldwin County of a deer that had been shot out of someone's yard. Ranger Johnson met with the complainant and the case is currently under investigation.

On the evening of Saturday, May 30th, RFC Jeremy Reese and Sgt. Bo Kelly were travelling in Milledgeville, when a vehicle came up behind them at a high rate of speed and began following them very closely. After a short amount of time, that vehicle then unlawfully passed their patrol truck and another vehicle in the center turning lane. A traffic stop was initiated and after the driver pulled over, it was clear to the rangers that the driver was intoxicated. The driver failed the field sobriety exercises and was arrested for driving under the influence. He was charged with DUI, driving with an expired license, and failure to show proof of insurance for a motor vehicle. Baldwin County Sheriff's Office transported the suspect to jail.

COWETA COUNTY

On May 26th, RFC Kevin Godbee patrolled the Chattahoochee River. He checked several boats and issued one written warning for operating a vessel without registration.

HENRY COUNTY

On Sunday, May 24th, RFC Kevin Godbee patrolled the Tussahaw Reservoir where he checked 10 boats and 20 fishermen. He issued written warnings for fishing license and PFD violations.

LAKE SINCLAIR

On May 24th, Major Thomas Barnard, Sgt. Bo Kelly, Cpl. Lynn Stanford, RFC Jeremy Reese and Ranger Matt Johnson patrolled Lake Sinclair for boating activity. Several warnings and citations were issued for various offenses, such as operating an over loaded vessel, towing without an observer and violation of the 100 foot rule.

On the evening of May 29th, Ranger Matt Johnson, RFC Jeremy Reese and Sgt. Bo Kelly encountered some fishermen who were fishing well after sunset and did not have an anchor light displayed on their boat. A written warning was issued for the violation.

MERIWETHER COUNTY

On Monday, May 25th, Cpl. Keith Waddell patrolled the Flint River at the Hwy 18 Bridge. He checked several boats and issued a citation for operating a vessel without personal floatation devices.

PUTNAM COUNTY

On the afternoon of May 27th, Cpl. Lynn Stanford responded to an in progress unlawful burning complaint. Once on scene and after a brief investigation one subject was issued a citation for unlawful burning.

SPALDING COUNTY

On Sunday, May 24th, RFC Kevin Godbee and Sgt. Brent Railey patrolled the Upper Towaliga Reservoir and the Griffin Reservoir. Several boats and fishermen were checked but no violations were found.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

No activity to report.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On May 25th, Corporal Eddie Akins and Sergeant Don Dasher patrolled the Ogeechee River from Dasher's Landing to Steel Bridge Landing checking boaters and fishermen. Their efforts resulted in 35 boats and 48 fishing licenses being checked. A total of 7 violations were documented for the day. The violations were a combination of fishing without a license, operating a vessel without a registration and operating a vessel with insufficient number of life jackets (PFD'S).

SCREVEN COUNTY

On May 30th, Corporal Shaymus McNeely, Corporal Eddie Akins, and Corporal Mike Wilcox responded to the scene of a boat incident on the Savannah River above Blue Springs landing. Officers began interviewing witnesses and searching the crash site for the missing operator.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On May 24th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree, Corporal Jason Shipes, Rangers Sam Williams, Daniel North and Judd Sears were conducting afternoon and night vessel patrols of the Satilla River in the Burnt Fort area. Throughout the afternoon and into the night several recreational boaters and anglers were encountered. Most vessels and anglers were found to be in compliance with boating and fishing laws. One vessel was observed operating well above idle speed as it passed under the Highway 252 Bridge. The operator was cited for the violation. Later that night, another vessel was observed being operated without any navigation lights. Upon stopping the vessel and conducting a safety inspection, it was found that there were no life jackets aboard. Two violations were documented and the boat and occupants were escorted safely back to where they had launched their vessel.

COOK COUNTY

On May 24th, while patrolling the Little River on the Cook/Colquitt line, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey checked several boaters and fishermen. One violation of operating a vessel w/o PFD'S was documented.

On May 25th, while patrolling Reed Bingham State park, Cpl. Daughtrey documented two violations of towing a skier without a mirror or observer.

On May 30th, while patrolling the beach area at Reed Bingham State Park, Cpl. Daughtrey caught one subject consuming alcohol on the State Park.

TATTNALL COUNTY

On May 24, RFC Clint Jarriel and CPL. Chase Altman patrolled Tippons Lake for fishing and boating activity. One violation observed and a citation written for operating vessel without registration.

APPLING COUNTY

On May 24th, Cpl. Altman and RFC Jarriel patrolled sections of the Altamaha River. Several vessels were checked, resulting in 3 violations documented for Operating a Vessel without Registration, Fishing without a License, and Operating a Vessel without life jackets.

On May 29th, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen worked a crop damage complaint in the area of Lennox road. A vehicle was observed shining from a public road. Three subjects were cited for violation of a crop damage permit.

EVANS COUNTY

On May 25th, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen checked the Canoochee River landing at Moore's bridge for fishing activity. Violations for fishing without a license and fishing without permission were documented.

On May 27th, Ranger Brannen checked the Canoochee River at Hwy 169 Bridge for fishing activity. One violation was documented for fishing without a license.

On May 29th, Ranger Brannen patrolled the Evans County Public Fishing area. One violation for illegal use of a boat motor was addressed.

On May 30th, Ranger First Class Debbie Brannen and Ranger First Class Clint Jarriel patrolled the Evans County Public Fishing area. Numerous licenses and vessels were checked resulting in violations for fishing without licenses and fishing on a PFA without WMA licenses.

WHEELER COUNTY

On May 24th, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River from Town's Bluff to Lumber city assisted by Sergeant James McLaughlin. Seventeen vessels were inspected for safety equipment compliance and twenty five anglers were checked for license and creel compliance. Violations for fishing without a license and operating a vessel with insufficient Personal Floatation Device (PFD) were documented.

On May 28th, Sergeant James McLaughlin along with Ranger First Class Allen Mills, responded to Little Ocmulgee State Park about an incident that occurred on one of the nature trails. A lady was running on the trail when a male attacked and raped her. The victim left and called for help and the suspect fled the scene. Corporal Tim Hutto, with K-9 Titan and Corporal Kevin Joyce with K-9 Briar also responded to the park to search for evidence. The suspect was arrested a short time later at his residence.

On May 30th, Sergeant James McLaughlin assisted Corporal Kevin Joyce and Corporal Chase Altman conducted a detail on the Oconee River at Hwy 280 Bridge near Mt. Vernon. Several vessels were inspected and two operators were charged with operating a vessel under the influence. One of the operators was also charged with child endangerment as well. Both subjects were arrested and turned over to Wheeler County Sheriff's Office.

DODGE COUNTY

On May 24th, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted an after-hours patrol at the Dodge County Public Fishing Area (PFA). After securing the area, the officers assisted fisheries personnel by locking the entrance gate to the PFA.

On May 25th, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted patrols at Half moon, Statham Shoals, McCranie's, and Dodge's landings as well as several creek crossings and bridges in Dodge County. Six anglers were checked for license and creel compliance. Four violations for fishing without a license were documented.

On May 29th, Ranger First Class Allen Mills gave the Law Enforcement Division's power point presentation to the Eastman Rotary Club. The thirty-two people in attendance gave lots of positive feedback and support towards the Law Enforcement Division.

TELFAIR COUNTY

On May 24th, Ranger First Class Rodney Horne was on a river patrol looking for fishing and boating safety violations on the Ocmulgee River in Telfair County with Corporal John Stokes and Sergeant James McLaughlin. The officers documented 4 violations for operating a vessel without registration and 3 violations for fishing without a license.

On May 24th, Ranger First Class Rodney Horne was on a boat landing patrol looking for fishing and boating safety violations on the Ocmulgee River in Telfair County. RFC Horne documented 3 violations of residents fishing without a license and 1 non-resident fishing without a license.

LAURENS COUNTY

On May 29th, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted a night time vessel patrol on the Oconee River. Seven vessels were inspected for safety equipment compliance and twelve anglers were checked for license and creel compliance. Two violations for fishing without a license and one violation for operating a vessel with insufficient personal floatation device were documented.

WILCOX COUNTY

On May 23rd and 25th, Rangers worked several details at Statham Shoals Boat Landing. Rangers received complaints about illegal activity occurring around the landing. Rangers checked boats, fishing licenses, and individuals in hopes of curbing the illegal activities.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

GLYNN COUNTY

On May 27, RFC David Brady was working a commercial shrimping complaint off Jekyll Island when he observed a vessel actively trawling for shrimp in state waters. Brady apprehended the trawler and escorted them into the sound where he was met by Captain Doug Lewis, Sgt. Mark Carson and Ranger Patrick Gibbs. The captain and two strikers were cited for using power drawn nets in closed waters and forty pounds of shrimp were seized.

On May 24th, RFC John Evans patrolled the coastal area of the county and made several cases on various boating violations. After vessel patrol RFC Evans went inland to check the Altamaha Park Boat ramp on the Altamaha River. While there he observed a boat coming into the ramp without any running lights. When the boat arrived at the ramp and RFC Evans made contact with the operator he noticed a strong odor of alcohol. RFC Evans conducted a BUI Screening and determined the operator was in fact under the influence. The operator was arrested and transported to the Glynn County Detention Center. He was charged with boating under the influence.

MCINTOSH COUNTY

On May 26th Corporal Craig Smith received a call reference shrimp trawlers inside fishing in closed state waters. Cpl. Smith called Captain Ed Watkins with the Law Enforcements aviation unit. Captain Watkins was able to fly the southern part of the coast and did not find any violations. He then flew the next sound north and found 2 shrimp trawlers inside state waters. Cpl. Smith and RFC David Brady responded to the area and escorted the two trawlers into the sound where they were boarded and inspected by Ranger Patrick Gibbs, Ranger Jay Bright, and Corporal Randy Aspinwall.

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On May 24th, Ranger Colte Shaske and RFC David Brady were on patrol on the Satilla River in Brantley County. Upon arriving at Atkinson Boat Ramp the rangers saw a PWC fail to come down to an idle under the bridge. Ranger Shaske waved the PWC down to speak with the individual about the violation and found that the suspect had been drinking alcohol on the sandbar. Ranger Shaske performed a series of Field Sobriety Tests and found that the suspect was under the influence of alcohol. Brantley County Sheriff's Office was called and the individual was taken to the Brantley County Jail and cited for boating under the influence and operating a vessel above idle within 100 feet of a bridge.

WAYNE COUNTY

On May 24th, Cpl. Randy Aspinwall and Ranger Jay Bright patrolled the Altamaha River out from Jesup Georgia. They checked over 20 vessels documenting several boating violations. At approx. 1600hrs they checked a vessel and noticed the operator displaying evidence of impairment due to alcoholic beverage consumption. After administering field sobriety test, they placed the operator under arrest for Operating a Vessel under the Influence. The suspect was taken to the Wayne County Jail for evidentiary testing. The suspect was charged and placed in the Wayne County Jail to await a bond.

CHATHAM COUNTY

On May 24, Cpl. Buster Cooper and Sgt. Cindy Miller patrolled the Skidaway River working the idle zones of South Harbor and Isle of Hope. The Rangers issued several citations to include not enough life jackets and not idling in the idle zone.

On May 24, Cpl. Kate Hargrove and Ranger Tim Morris patrolled Chatham County waters and noticed several violation. Individuals were cited for not enough life jackets and not idling in the idle zone.