

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
May 29 – June 4, 2016

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 29th, Sgt. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, Cpl. Lee Burns and RFC Bart Hendrix responded to a call of a fight in progress in Illinois Creek. A male was located that had been assaulted by several other males that left the scene. The Bartow County Sheriff's Dept. is working the case. During this same time RFC Zack Hardy responded to a call of an intoxicated person in the campground at Red Top Mt. State Park. The subject was located passed out in a campsite.

On May 29th at 3:30 A.M., RFC Zack Hardy responded to a call of a subject on a boat stating that he was going to commit suicide on Allatoona Lake. RFC Hardy and 4 Bartow County Deputies responded to the area of Flamingo Cove. The male was intoxicated and passed out when the officers arrived. Later on at 7:30 A.M. a 911 call came in that the same male and a female were in a domestic dispute on another boat. Cpl. Byron Young and 2 Bartow Deputies responded and separated the two. The case was turned over to the Bartow County Sheriff's Dept.

On May 29th, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Zack Hardy responded to an emergency call of a female unconscious in Flamingo Cove. The female was taken to Allatoona Landing where she was transported to a local hospital by EMS. The female had an apparent medical condition effected by the heat and collapsed in the boat.

On May 29th, Sgt. Derek Dillard and RFC Bart Hendrix stopped a vessel operating without lights. The operator was found to be under the influence of alcohol. RFC Hendrix placed the male under arrest for BUI and operating a vessel without lights.

On May 30th, Sgt. Derek Dillard and RFC Zack Hardy stopped a PWC at Bethany Bridge on Allatoona Lake for a wake zone violation. The male operator was found to be under the influence and also under 21. RFC Hardy placed the operator under arrest and charged him with BUI and failure to obey regulatory marker.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

On May 29th, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Bart Hendrix received information on a subject that was injured when the fly wheel off his boat motor struck his arm while the boat operator was working on his engine near Little River. The boat operator suffered a deep laceration and was transported to a local hospital.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

WHITE COUNTY

On May 28, Cpl. Anne Britt and Intern Dalton Everett assisted the US Forest Service with a road check on the Chattahoochee WMA. During the check, the officers cited 20 adults for not wearing a seat belt, 5 adults for open container, 3 adults for driving while violating permit restrictions, 2 for possession of marijuana, and 1 for driving while privileges are suspended.

Later that night, at 11:00pm, Cpl. Anne Britt checked a group of fishermen fishing on the pier at Unicoi Lake. Three adults were cited for fishing on State Park after day use hours.

RABUN COUNTY

On May 29th, Ranger Beth Gilbert performed foot patrols of Tallulah Gorge State Park for gorge permit violations. The Ranger issued 2 written warnings (1 for accessing the gorge without a permit and 1 for having a dog on the gorge stairs) and 1 citation for alcohol consumption in the beach area parking lot.

TOWNS COUNTY

On May 30th, Ranger Beth Gilbert and RFC David Webb performed a vessel patrol of Lake Chatuge. Ranger Gilbert issued 2 citations no fire extinguisher on vessel and a PFD violation and 3 written warnings for PFD violations.

On June 1st, following an investigation, Ranger Gilbert issued a citation for littering to the person responsible for leaving trash on Swallow Creek WMA over Memorial Day weekend.

On June 4th, Sgt. Steve Seitz and Cpl. Anne Britt responded to a boating incident on Lake Chatuge. There were three people in a bass boat that became swamped by waves, overturned, and sank. Another passing vessel stopped and assisted the three people in the bass boat to the shore and no one was injured.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

ELBERT COUNTY

On Monday May 30th, SGT Brian Carter, CPL Julian Wilkins, and RFC Phillip Nelson patrolled Lake Russell during the Memorial Day Holiday. Officers checked several boaters throughout the day. No violations were documented.

GREENE COUNTY

On Thursday June 2nd, RFC Phillip Nelson assisted Capt. Doc Watson, SGT John Harwell, and RFC Ricky Boles along with Greene County S.O. and the U.S. Forestry Service. Officers searched for a man believed to be lost in the woods along Redlands Wildlife Management Area near Lake Oconee. The subject was not located and the search resumed the following day. Other Rangers that helped with the search were Capt. Mark Padgett, RFC Tim Butler, RNG Jason Harrison, RNG Dan Schay, Cpl. David Allen. The missing individual was found on June the 4th.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On the afternoon of June 2nd, Cpl. Bubba Stanford ended a six month poaching investigation that began with a single trail camera image. Cpl. Stanford was able to get the subjects on camera identified by sources in the area but had to wait until one of them returned to Georgia. Both suspects are currently incarcerated and facing charges of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, hunting without permission, hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, hunting without fluorescent orange and failure to record deer harvest.

On the afternoon of June 4th, Sgt. Bo Kelly and Cpl. Robert Stilwell patrolled Lake Sinclair and numerous boats were stopped. One boat was stopped for a registration violation and further investigation led to the subject being arrested for boating under the influence.

COWETA COUNTY

On Tuesday, June 1st, rangers were requested to assist with searching for a missing person in the area of a rock quarry. Rangers assisted for the next 3 days using side scan sonar and the ROV to search for the body in the quarry pond. They were unable to locate the missing person. RFC Russell Epps, RFC Keith Page, Cpl. Keith Waddell, Cpl. Mitch Oliver, Cpl. Josh Swain and Sgt. Brent Railey participated in the search.

On Saturday, June 5th, RFC Russell Epps and Sgt. Brent Railey responded to a call of a swamped canoe in the Chattahoochee River about 100 yards below the low head dam at Plant Yates. The owner of the canoe had put an anchor out to fish and in the swift current when his weight shifted the canoe swamped. Rangers responded and after several attempts were able to retrieve the canoe and return it to its owner.

HARRIS COUNTY

On May 31st, Cpl. Mitch Oliver was contacted by the Harris County Sheriff's Office about a drowning on the Chattahoochee River. Cpl. Oliver along with Cpl. Jeremy Bolen and Sgt. Jim Bradfield responded to the Riverview boat ramp to begin searching for the missing swimmer. On June 1st, Cpl. Oliver and RFC David Fisher recovered the deceased after DNR aviation located the victim on the river. GA DNR LED was assisted in the search and recovery by East Alabama Fire Department and Chambers County Fire Department.

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On June 1st, Cpl. Mitch Oliver gave a phone interview to Columbus Ledger Enquirer reporter Chuck Williams in regards to boating safety.

On June 3rd, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen and Cpl. Mitch Oliver presented the DNR Law Enforcement Division's power point to youth at a local detention center. The power point displays the various roles and tasks of a Conservation Ranger. K-9 Ruger was also utilized to portray the departments K-9 unit and their abilities.

PUTNAM COUNTY

On the afternoon of May 29th, Captain Chris Hodge and Cpl. Bubba Stanford patrolled Lake Sinclair near Crooked Creek Marina. The officers stopped a subject operating a personal watercraft without wearing a PFD. Further investigation led to the subject being arrested for misdemeanor possession of marijuana and operating a vessel under the influence.

On the afternoon of June 4th, RFC Jeremy Reese and RFC Michael Crawley patrolled Lake Sinclair near Wallace Dam. A pair of fishermen were checked and they were discovered to be over the limit of stripers and hybrids and the fish were confiscated. Both fishermen received citations and the fish were donated to a food bank.

TROUP COUNTY

On Sunday, May 29th, RFC Russell Epps and Sgt. Wanda Roberts responded to a report of a drowning in West Point Lake at Amity Park. Rangers arrived on the scene and found a white male who had been pulled out of the lake by family members. Sgt. Roberts performed CPR on the man as RFC Epps took him to the shore to an ambulance. They were unable to resuscitate the man and he was pronounced dead at a local hospital.

On Sunday, May 29th, Cpl. Keith Waddell and Sgt. Brent Railey patrolled West Point Lake. They checked several boats including one that's operator was charged with BUI.

On the morning of Monday, May 30th, RFC Kevin Godbee was patrolling the area around West Point Lake Dam. He noticed a vehicle driving recklessly and running off the road. He was able to stop the vehicle behind the dam in a parking lot. The driver was intoxicated and admitted to having been drinking all night. A Georgia State Trooper was called to the scene and the driver was arrested for driving under the influence.

On the morning of Monday, May 30th, US Army Corps of Engineers Rangers David Scott and Ben Williams located a gill net about 150 feet in length at the dam of West Point Lake. They called Sgt. Brent Railey who responded to the scene along with RFC Kevin Godbee. Rangers were able to develop a suspect but did not make charges at this time. The gill net was confiscated and it contained about 40 fish including catfish, Hybrid bass, Crappie, Bluegill and Shad. The fish were taken to a local shelter. The case remains under investigation.



Region V- Albany (Southwest)

CRISP COUNTY

On May 29th, Cpl. Bob Holley and Sgt. Al Greer were patrolling Lake Blackshear when they observed a vessel being operated during the hours of darkness without lights. A vessel stopped was conducted and during the stop the operator was found to be under the influence of alcohol. The vessel was also occupied by three juveniles ages 11, 6 and 3. Two of the juveniles were not wearing the required PFD's. The operator of the vessel was placed under arrest and transported to the Crisp County Jail where he was cited for operating a vessel under the influence, child endangerment, operating a vessel without lights and allowing an underage person on a moving vessel without wearing a PFD.

LEE COUNTY

During the Memorial Day Holiday period, RFC Jon Penuel and Ranger Eric White patrolled the Kinchafoonee Creek in response to ongoing complaints in the area. During the patrol, the Ranger's documented multiple violations of operating a vessel without PFD's, as well as operating vessels with insufficient PFD's and multiple violations of operating a vessel within 100ft of shore above idle speed.

CLAY COUNTY

On May 29th, Sgt. Jim Atchley's section was patrolling Lake Walter F. George in two vessels. During the patrol both vessels simultaneously stopped other vessels due to boating violations. Both operators were determined to be operating their vessels under the influence and were arrested for the offense. While these two individuals were being transported to the Clay County jail, Sgt. Atchley, whom had remained on the lake, made a vessel stop which produced another boating under the influence arrest.

DECATUR COUNTY

On May 30th, Sgt. Rick Sellars and RFC Steve Thomas responded to a boat incident that occurred on the Flint River at Reynold's sandbar. The incident occurred when a PWC struck a vessel that was anchored just off the sandbar. The PWC operator was cited for operating a vessel above idle speed within 100' of an object in the water.

GRADY COUNTY

On June 3rd, Sgt. Rick Sellars and RFC Steve Thomas responded to a report of a drowning in a farm pond north of Cairo. The victim, a 14 year old male, was recovered shortly before the Rangers arrived on scene.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On May 30th, Corporal Mike Wilcox, Ranger First Class Jason Miller and Ranger First Class Jordan Crawford conducted a vessel patrol of the Savannah River throughout Effingham County. Numerous boaters were checked and several violations were documented. Violations included operating a vessel with insufficient personal flotation devices, allowing an underage child to ride in a vessel without a personal flotation device and operating a vessel without a fire extinguisher. One suspect was also arrested for boating under the influence of alcohol. The suspect was transported to the Effingham County Jail for booking.

JENKINS COUNTY

On Friday June 3rd, Corporal Mike Wilcox received a call from the Jenkins County Sheriff's Office about a stolen G3 boat. The boat was reported stolen from the Lane Landing Road area. On Saturday June 4th, Cpl. Wilcox and Ranger Randell Meeks were patrolling the Ogeechee River in Jenkins County and they came across a boat at a private landing that matched the description of the stolen boat. Cpl. Wilcox contacted the Jenkins County Sheriff's Office and checked the registration number of the boat and verified that it was the stolen boat that was reported the day before. Cpl. Wilcox turned the boat over to Jenkins County Sheriff's Office.

TELFAIR COUNTY

On May 29th, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River. The officers checked twelve vessels for registration and boating safety equipment and also checked thirteen anglers for fishing license and creel limit compliance. Violations documented were operating a vessel without personal floatation devices (life jackets), allowing underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD, operating a vessel without registration, and fishing without a license.

On May 29th, Ranger First Class Rodney Horne and Corporal John Stokes conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River. Six vessels and 12 persons were checked for creel limits and boating safety violations. Nine violations were documented.

LAURENS COUNTY

On June 1st, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area in the late evening. One vessel was checked for registration and boating safety equipment and seven anglers were checked for fishing license and creel limit compliance. Two violations for fishing without a Wildlife Management Area license on a Public Fishing Area were documented.

On June 2nd, Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled boat landings and fishing locations in the late afternoon. One vessel was checked for registration and safety equipment and two anglers were checked for licenses and creel limit compliance. One violation for operating a vessel without personal floatation devices (life jackets) and one violation for fishing without a license were documented.

On June 4th, Corporal Dan Stiles assisted with a Kid's Fishing Event (KFE) at the Hugh M. Gillis Public Fishing Area. Approximately 50 children participated in the event.

IRWIN COUNTY

On June 30th, Corporal John A Stokes and Ranger Rodney Horne, patrolled creeks for fishing violations. Two violations were found and documented for fishing without license.

PIERCE COUNTY

On June 4th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree, Corporal Jason Shipes, Ranger First Class Sam Williams, and Ranger First Class Daniel North responded to a report of a drowning at the GA Hwy. 121 Bridge on the Satilla River. A 48-year old male reportedly swung off a rope swing into the river and did not resurface. Swimmers that were nearby located the victim after several minutes.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

GLYNN COUNTY

On May 29th, RFC John Evans and Captain Bob Lynn were patrolling the Altamaha River around Altamaha Park. They observed a boat coming down river with three men standing up on the bow and hanging off the front of the boat. The Rangers stopped the vessel and after a brief investigation determined the underage operator was under the influence of alcohol. Evans placed the man under arrest and he was transported to the Glynn County Detention Center. He was charged with Boating under the influence and Allowing passengers to ride on the bow.

On May 29, RFC David Brady and Sgt. Chris Ridley were patrolling Turtle River when they observed a PWC violate the 100' law under the I95 Bridge. The Rangers initiated a vessel stop and after further investigation Brady determined the man was under the influence of alcohol. The man was arrested and charged with Boating under the Influence and Operating PWC above idle speed within 100' of an object.

On May 30, RFC David Brady and RFC John Evans were patrolling South Brunswick River when they conducted a vessel stop on a boat. After further investigation, Brady determined the operator of the vessel was under the influence of alcohol. The man was arrested and charged with Boating under the influence (under 21).

On June 4th, RFC John Evans assisted Coastal Resources Division with the Annual Kids Fishing Rodeo at the old Sidney Lanier Bridge in Brunswick. There were 90 kids registered for the event and over 150 people in attendance. The fish were biting well and the anglers were all very successful.

On June 4, Sgt. Chris Ridley, RFC John Evans, RFC Colte Shaske and Corporal Kate Hargrove assisted Glynn County Police Department with recovery of a vehicle, vessel and trailer from South Brunswick River. The vehicle lost traction while launching the vessel at the boat ramp. After recovering the vehicle, Rangers responded to search and rescue of an overdue boater in Glynn County. Rangers conducted search efforts along the South Brunswick River. Rangers located and recovered the vessel. Rangers, along with United States Coast Guard and rescuers from Glynn County Emergency Management Agency, will continue search and rescue efforts.

CAMDEN COUNTY

On May 29, RFC Colte Shaske and Corporal Kate Hargrove patrolled the Satilla River for recreational boating and fishing activity over the holiday weekend. Rangers responded to a call of an overturned truck on private property near the Satilla River. Rangers assisted Georgia State Patrol and Camden County Sheriff's Office with apprehension of the driver who fled on foot following the accident.