Law Enforcement Section
FY 2011-2012 Annual Report
Headquarters

Colonel Eddie Henderson

Lt. Colonel Jeff Weaver

L to R. Capt. Mike England, Majors Walter Rabon and Stephen Adams, Lt. Judd Smith

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The Vision of the Law Enforcement Section is to ensure that Georgia’s natural resources will be conserved for our present and future generations.

The Mission of the Law Enforcement Section is to conserve our natural resources and to protect the people we serve. We maintain public support through fair and vigorous law enforcement, quality education, and community involvement. We commit ourselves to our Vision and Mission by practicing our core beliefs, which are trust, fairness and professionalism.

March 2012 marked a milestone in the joint effort with the Department of Natural Resources and the Georgia State Patrol in the deployment of the Mobile Computer/Computer Aided Dispatch System. By December 2011, all Law Enforcement Section Officers were added to the system, and the remaining Game and Fish Management Officers were added by March, 2012. The focus has now been shifted from initial deployment and training to maintenance and improvement of the system. The LE Section is now testing different mounting options for vessels in an attempt to find the best solutions to allow the same access to E-citations, GCIC and other software while on boating safety patrol. To date 10 Mobile Computer Terminals have been installed in patrol boats.

Georgia signed up for the DLA Disposition Services Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) in early March, 2012. Currently 50 states and 3 US territories participate in the program which supports a law enforcement customer base of more than 1.7 million officers. Since inception of the program, more than $2.6 billion worth of property has been transferred and in FY 11 a record $498 million worth of property was transferred saving the American taxpayer. There are more than 16,000 State Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) that have participated in the 1033 Program. In 2012 Georgia DNR has received 7,788 items valued at more than $2.5 million. Items used by Rangers include Assault Packs, Field Packs, Sleeping bags, shovels, forklifts, M16’s, Aim Point scopes, parachutes, storage containers and much more.


The Law Enforcement Section assumed responsibility of the Special Permits Unit (SPU) in 2010. Since then the section has worked to ensure consistency in the permitting process and to implement inspections of permitted facilities and persons. This year the unit has focused on inspecting wildlife exhibition and rehabilitation permit holders. The Special Permits Unit is also responsible for transitioning the Falconry Permitting process from Federal to State Regulations. SPU assembled a stakeholder group for input on
regulations and is currently drafting state regulations to assume this responsibility by the January 2014 deadline.

In May 2012, Lt. Judd Smith and Cpl. Michael Crawley both participated in the Police Unity Tour, a 250 mile bicycle ride to promote awareness of fallen officers and provide financial support to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC. Ranger Asa Thornton, KIA 1962, and Ranger Charles Mercer, KIA 1968 were both added to the Memorial in 2012. Lt. Smith and Cpl. Crawley were at the Candlelight Service at the Memorial to meet with the family of Ranger Mercer. This brings the following total of Georgia DNR Officers killed in the line of duty to eight dating back to 1927.

The 2012 Georgia General Assembly also passed House Resolution 1134 honoring Ranger Robert Clayton Sizemore for his service and ultimate sacrifice to the State of Georgia.

**Rangers Killed in Action:**

- Ranger James Hiram Waller  
  KIA by gunfire 08-20-1927  
- Ranger Robert Clayton Sizemore  
  KIA by gunfire 11-9-1928  
- Ranger Lonnie F. Boggus  
  KIA by gunfire 08-21-1930  
- Ranger Asa Edwin Thornton  
  KIA in auto accident 05-19-1962  
- Ranger William Earl Hobbs  
  KIA by gunfire 07-21-1967  
- Ranger Charles Callaway Mercer  
  KIA in auto accident 11-28-1968  
- Ranger William Lee Bryant  
  KIA by accidental gunfire 12-23-1970  
- Cpl. Rocky Daren Wainwright  
  KIA in an ATV accident 08-19-1999

Cpl. Crawley and Lt. Smith at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial with the widow of Ranger Charles Mercer, Shelby and daughter Sherry.
On March 16th, President Obama visited the Atlanta area where he held three fundraisers: an event at the residence of actor and director Tyler Perry, a separate event at Tyler Perry Studios and then another fundraiser at a private residence. DNR Law Enforcement was contacted by the US Secret Service and requested to secure an area on the Chattahoochee River behind the Perry residence. Rangers from Region I Law Enforcement launched a boat in the Chattahoochee River at 4:00 p.m. and remained until 11:00 p.m. Navigating conditions of the river were less than ideal due to low water and darkness. Four Rangers were assigned to the detail, one in the command center, two in the riverboat and two assigned to a back-up boat located on the shore. The detail went off without a hitch except for the loss of a lower housing on one of the jet drive motors, which was damaged on a rock.


Officers from Region I Law Enforcement completed their training in the use of the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT). The issuance and placement of these systems was also completed with each officer. This system coupled with the up-dated radio equipment throughout the state was the most significant equipment deployment in recent history and gives officers in the field unprecedented ability to access information otherwise unavailable.
On March 4th Rangers from Region I Law enforcement responded to a three County area where the National Weather Service said an EF-3 tornado touched down in Paulding and Haralson counties, and an EF-1 touched down in Cobb. In Haralson County, the twister touched down along Bethlehem Church Road, where a repair shop was destroyed and trees knocked down. Also on Bethlehem Church Road, a mobile home was pushed off of its foundation. A church steeple was blown off on Mount Zion Church, numerous trees and telephone poles were knocked down. A man was trapped by debris after his Haralson County house imploded. Strong winds slammed Poole Elementary in Dallas, overturning portable classrooms and ripping off portions of the school's roof. At the Paulding County Airport off U.S. 278, Georgia Emergency Management Agency officials reported 22 planes were damaged and a hangar was destroyed. Estimation of the damaged planes was near $5 million and the damage to the airport itself is between $1 million and $2 million. According to GEMA, 30 homes were destroyed statewide. The storm system that swept over metro Atlanta was related to a swarm of tornadoes that crossed the Midwest and Southern states.

Rangers from Region I Law Enforcement were deployed to Lake Lanier to assist in a double fatality boating incident. Over the course of a week, thirteen officers assisted in the investigation and recovery of a 13 year old victim. The use of the side scan sonar and additional equipment was requested and provided to Region II.

The Region I Law Enforcement CAT team was activated in a CART deployment to the Canton area as part of a multi-jurisdictional effort to recover a missing 7 year old girl who would later be determined to have been abducted and brutally murdered. Jorely Rivera of Canton was abducted from a local playground and was later located in a trash compactor. The assailant was later arrested and committed suicide before trial.

Rangers from the Region I Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) investigated three hunting incidents this season. The first was an incident involving a white female in Haralson County that had been shot by a neighbor during deer season. The victim had been mistaken for game and was fatally injured. The second incident occurred in Chattooga County where a turkey hunter had shot another hunter in another case of mistaken for game. The victim was treated and released at a local hospital. The last incident was also a turkey hunting related case but took a strange turn when the two individuals involved decided to relocate the incident scene in an attempt to mislead investigators. The officer were able to determine that the scene had been staged which lead to other violations in the case. The victim knew the shooter and his injuries were not life threatening.

In February of 2012, Captain Carroll Chastain retired after serving 34 years with DNR. He started his career in the Albany District later transferring to the Calhoun District to Polk County. Ranger Chastain was promoted to Corporal and moved to Gilmer County where he remained and again promoted to Sergeant. He was promoted to Captain in 2004 and became the Region I supervisor until his retirement. Sergeant Johnny Johnson was promoted to Captain of the Calhoun Region after Captain Chastain’s retirement.
In May of 2012, Sergeant Danny Crook retired after 34 years of service with DNR. He started his career in the Manchester District and later transferred to the Calhoun District assigned to Haralson County. He was promoted to Corporal in 1988 and then promoted to Sergeant in 1995. Danny received many accolades but on the year of his retirement the Georgia State Legislature honored him with a proclamation read on the floor of the state capital.

RFC Brooks Varnell attended a comprehensive three-month K-9 Instructors Training Course at the Tarheel Canine facility in Sanford North Carolina. Ranger Varnell became the head trainer for the Departments K-9 program after Captain Johnson’s promotion. Captain Johnson had been a member of the K-9 program since its inception in 1999.

Rangers throughout the State continued to attend innovative training in 2012. During the course of the year every Ranger was required to attend a 40-hour course in Officer Survival where firearms tactics and mechanics of arrest were instructed. This course was part of the required yearly in – service training.

Corporal James Keener received the Region I Ranger of the Year award and also was recognized as the State James R Darnell recipient for 2012. Corporal Shawn Elmore was recognized as the Region I Law Enforcement Boating Safety Officer of the Year. Mr. Brad Bates was nominated from Region I and was also recognized as the State Hunter Education Instructor of the Year.
Region II - Gainesville (Northeast)

This year the region has been involved in numerous boating and hunting investigations. The region investigated over 60 boating incidents and numerous hunting complaints. The majority of boating incidents occurred on Lake Lanier, which was visited by over 8 million people last year.

Rangers in the region have been trained this year on methods to assist in the investigation of both hunting and boating incidents. Cpl. Adam Loudermilk and Cpl. Eddie Tompkins were trained in the use of the new side scan sonar equipment which is used to investigate boating incidents and drownings. Sgt. Steve Seitz and RFC Anne Wiley are the region’s Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) members. They work all major boating and hunting incidents in the region that involve serious injury or fatalities.

Rangers investigated a double fatality boat incident involving two juveniles in Hall County in June of 2012. It took the resources from many different agencies to conduct the search and recovery for one of the bodies. Due to increase in incidents that have occurred on Lake Lanier the Gwinnett County Police Department has partnered with the Rangers on Lake Lanier to assist with their patrols. Several Rangers involved in the incident were asked to be present when Governor Nathan Deal made a televised press release announcing his support for lowering the BAC level for boating under the influence from .10 to .08, bringing it in line with driving under the influence levels. Rangers in the region have also been promoting the “Wear It” campaign. This campaign promotes the wearing of life jackets while boating. Numerous news agencies in the surrounding areas have promoted the campaign through interviews with rangers and
advertisements. Boat ramps on Lake Lanier were painted with the logo’s “Wear It” and “Life Jacket Zone.”

Rangers have been busy working both hunting and landowner complaints. During the 2012 turkey season, Sgt. Steve Seitz and RFC Kevin Dyer investigated two separate illegal hunting complaints around Union County where residents of Georgia killed turkeys out of season in North Carolina and brought the turkeys back to Georgia. The officers turned this information over to North Carolina DNR officers and they charged three individuals from Georgia for killing three gobblers out of season in North Carolina. The region utilized the help of the aviation unit and made several night flights to work key night deer hunting complaints. Cpl. Jason Roberson and RFC Mark Stephens investigated and charged a subject with killing 12 deer at night. Cpl. Roberson and Cpl. Adam Loudermilk investigated another hunting deer at night complaint and charged 5 subjects in North Hall County. RFC Josh Chambers had a high profile deer case in Hart County where several charges were made and a deer was confiscated. RFC Chamber’s was honored for his hard work on the case and was chosen as Investigator of the Year for Region 2. The deer and RFC Chambers are featured on the cover of this report.

Rangers in the region received several region and state wide awards. Cpl. Jason Roberson was the Boating Safety Officer of the Year for Region II and was also selected as the State Ranger of the Year. RFC Josh Chambers was awarded the Investigator of the Year for the region. Cpl. Craig Fulghum and Cpl. Derek Dillard also attended PMP School at Columbus State University.
Region III- Thomson (East Central)

Region III Law Enforcement had another successful year with several personnel additions, promotions, a retirement and significant resource enforcement cases. Three of our officers received state awards this year. They were for Boating Officer of the Year, Investigative Ranger of the Year and State Hunter Education Ranger Instructor of the Year.

Recently RFC Larry Mills retired with 34 years of service to the state. Larry was assigned to Newton County where he grew up and spent the vast amount of his working career. His institutional knowledge of Newton County and its residents was invaluable. He was known by virtually everyone in Newton County and had a great working relationship with his local government officials. Prior to retirement, Larry received the State Hunter Education Ranger Instructor of the Year. Larry will be missed by the Region III personnel, however we wish him well in his new endeavors of retirement.

Region III gained a transfer from Region II this year. RFC Freddie Hays transferred from Dawson County to Walton County. RFC Mark Patterson was promoted to Corporal in June of this year. He is assigned to Wilkes County. Miss Stephanie Taylor joined the Region III Law Enforcement team in January of this year as our new part-time Secretary. The Lake Oconee work unit received funding this year for the construction of a new boathouse. The new boathouse replaces some of the state’s oldest boathouses dating back to the early 1980’s. It has been a welcomed addition to the officers that work Lake
Oconee. The boathouse is a floating type boathouse with a 35 foot walkway, 3 boat lifts, office space and plenty of storage space as well.

This year RFC Richard Tanner received the States Boating Officer of the Year Award. Richard was selected for his enforcement and educational efforts to keep the boaters on Lake Oconee safe. He was also recognized for his extensive work with our Side Scan Sonar. To date, Richard has recovered 13 drowning victims with this new equipment and has trained 14 other Sonar Operators across the state with the addition of 5 new sonars. During the year, Richard had an article published in the Small Craft Advisory Magazine regarding the implementation of our Side Scan Sonar Unit. RFC Richard Tanner has also been nominated as Region III’s Ranger of the Year.

Cpl. Micheal Crawley received the States Investigative Officer of the Year Award. Cpl. Crawley was selected for this award as a result of an intensive investigation in Washington County. Since 2008 Cpl. Crawley had received complaints from 15 different landowners on the violator. With the assistance of his K-9 Storm they were able to take a small amount of evidence left at one scene and link the violator to several of the other complaints. At the end of the investigation, Cpl. Crawley charged the violator with possession of illegally taken wildlife, hunting after obtaining the bag limit, taking over the bag limit for deer, and 11 counts of failure to record deer harvest. The violator plead guilty and was fined $2,500.00 and his hunting privileges were suspended for 2 years.

2011 saw an increase in night deer hunting complaints in Burke County. Two Region details were set up with support from our aviation group. Both details brought success with a total of 7 individuals arrested for night deer hunting.

Within the last two years the region has seen an increase in alligator poaching. This past year Rangers investigated a case in Johnson County where an individual killed a 10 foot alligator. The photo of the dead alligator was placed in the local newspaper. An investigation was started and a tip from a concerned citizen led Rangers to the two people that were involved. Rangers interviewed one subject who stated he did not shoot the alligator but assisted the shooter. The subject had the meat and the hide from the alligator and gave the Rangers the name of the shooter. He was charged with possession of illegally taken wildlife. The shooter was interviewed and charged with hunting out of season. The meat, hide and head were confiscated.
As in the past, many rangers in Region IV excelled during the past year beginning with Cpl. Susan Morris and Cpl. John Harkins completed PMP training at Command College in Columbus. Sgt. Tim Kendrick was named the 2011 Supervisor of the Year and RFC Travis Sweat was the 2011 Region IV NWTF nominee. Cpl. Lynn Stanford was the 2011 Boating Safety Officer nominee and Sgt. Bo Kelly was the 2011 Investigative Ranger nominee. RFC Tim Butler was the 2012 State Waterfowl Officer of the Year for the second year in a row. Cpl. Mitch Oliver was appointed as Chief CIRT Investigator this past year and has spent a significant amount of time focusing on CIRT duties.

There were also several personnel changes in Region IV during the past year. Captain Barry Fincher retired in mid-2011, which led to the promotion of Captain Bob Lynn. Two new rangers from the last two basic academies joined Region IV with Ranger Russell Epps assigned to Troup County and Ranger David Fisher assigned to Heard County. RFC Allen Mills transferred from Game Management to fill the Wilkinson County position. Aggie Clanton filled the part-time secretary position in our Region Office.

In September 2011, Region IV was trained on the MDT/CAD system. This computerized system has put a laptop computer in every truck which allows rangers real time access to GCIC information, license and boat registration information, internet access, and has all necessary forms rangers utilize every day. This system has greatly improved customer
service and increased law enforcement efforts in the field. During the past hunting season, rangers prosecuted eight convicted felons with firearms.

At the beginning of deer season rangers worked five tree stand incidents within a short period of time. Two night flights were conducted in the region that resulted in one DUI arrest. Rangers held five road checks with GSP and local officers which resulted in the confiscations of two deer and various violations of Title 27 and traffic laws. During firearms deer season, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen and his K-9, Ruger conducted an extensive manhunt for a hunter, which was a convicted felon that eluded Cpl. Bolen. The offender was captured the next day. Nearing the end of hunting season Sgt. Bradfield’s section worked a hunting incident that involved a female subject rabbit hunting. The hunter shot a rabbit then went over to finish killing it by clubbing it with the butt of her shotgun. The shotgun fired while the hunter was clubbing the rabbit, striking the hunter in the abdomen.

During the 2011/2012 deer season Cpl. Keith Waddell received several complaints of deer parts being dumped around Meriwether county. He was able to obtain a suspect vehicle’s description and found information in one dump pile that indicated the parts were coming from area deer processors. During the investigation another dump site was discovered in Heard County. After a five month investigation he charged two men with Felony Unlawful Commercial Dumping. The men were picking up deer parts from several deer processors and instead of taking the parts to the landfill as they were contracted to do, they were dumping them at random in the county. The deer processors were unaware this was going on.

Sgt. Bradfield and Cpl. Bolen were able to acquire a donation of six Plotwatcher trail cameras from Day 6 Outdoors, a hunting products company located in their work section. Each Ranger in that work section has a camera now to use for surveillance purposes. These cameras have been used successfully to apprehend a person trapping rabbits on property without permission, were instrumental in Cpl. Waddell's felony deer dumping case by getting photographs of the suspect’s truck and trailer at one of the dump sites, and used successfully to catch a convicted felon hunting turkey over bait.

Conservation Rangers from Regions 4 and 6 assisted local volunteers with the 16th annual Quail Hunt for Kids. This hunt was open to past and current Hunter Education graduates under age 17 in the Wilkinson County area. Twenty four hunters enjoyed a full day of sporting clays and quail hunting. Conservation Rangers in attendance were RFC Josh Swain, RFC Allen Mills, RFC Josh Copelan, Cpl. John Harkins, Cpl. Dan Stiles, Cpl. Lynn Stanford, Cpl. Bill Goodson and Sgt. Bo Kelly.

November 12th, 2011 marked middle Georgia’s first open season for the hunting of bears in Twiggs, Houston, and Bibb Counties. A total of 34 bears were harvested. During the one-day hunt, Cpl. Robert Stillwell apprehended one hunter who had taken a bear over bait. The following day he initiated a separate investigation which led to the apprehension of several subjects involved in the illegal taking of a bear elsewhere in Twiggs County. Through this investigation Cpl. Stillwell was able to determine a hunter
had killed a large bear (426 pounds) over bait and, assisted by several individuals, had “staged” a non-baited kill site in order to conceal the offense.

Inspired by the popular television show “Swamp People”, several individuals recently found themselves on the wrong side of the law when they were apprehended for setting baited hooks on the Ocmulgee River in hopes of catching alligators. On March 24th, 2012 in Bibb County, RFC Joyce charged two subjects for the offenses of hunting out of season and using an unlawful device in order to take game. In April, RFC Joyce and RFC Josh Swain apprehended three individuals for the same offenses in Bleckley County. All parties stated they had been influenced by what they had witnessed on television.

On May 8th-10th, 2012 Rangers from Region IV assisted the Warner Robins Police Department in the search for a missing juvenile who walked away from school on the afternoon of the 8th. The missing 10 year old, who had been attempting to elude authorities for fear of being in trouble, was located on the morning of the 10th and reunited with his father.

RFC Keith Page responded to a call about a deer being shot out of season in Lamar County. The investigation led RFC Page to a house on Lamar County Line Road. While looking for signs of a deer kill, RFC Page noticed a pipe bomb at the edge of the woods that had been detonated. RFC Page notified members of the GBI bomb squad and Lamar County investigators of his findings. RFC Page and members of the GBI bomb squad obtained a search warrant for the residence in question. After executing the search warrant, 8 pipe bombs, 31 firearms and 2 pounds of marijuana were seized. In addition, a large amount of survival gear and a large amount of ammunition were seized. Two arrests were made in the case. The suspects were charged with possessing destructive devices, possession with intent to distribute marijuana, possession of drug related objects and possession of a firearm during the commission of a crime.
*Region V - Albany (Southwest)*

During fiscal year 2012 Region V underwent several personnel changes and a total re-organization of work units. Three officers retired and three transferred to other regions and two left the agency altogether. The region also had six promotions and four new staff members join it.

Sgt. Wade Law was promoted to Captain and now serves as the Training Director at GPSTC in Forsyth. RFC Al Greer, Cpl. Bob Holley and RFC Randy Davis were promoted to Corporal during this year. Region V also had Fisheries Technician Greg Wade promoted to Corporal in the Law Enforcement Section and Game Management Technician Ronnie Beard made a lateral transfer into Region V as a Corporal.

Also five associates left the agency. Cpl. Terri Jones, Cpl. B.J. Foster and RFC Harold Hill retired this fiscal year. Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey lateral transferred from Tift County in Region V to Cook County in Region VI and RFC David Brady transferred from Thomas County in Region V to the Brunswick area in Region VII. RFC Jeff Phillips resigned and is overseas serving as a missionary, and RFC Ben Roberts resigned to become a code enforcement officer in Lee County.

Due to the promotion of Captain Law and staffing reductions, Region V underwent a re-organization. Last fiscal year the region had five work units and due to these factors it was felt a four-work unit model would better serve the current needs. Sgt. Danny Bishop
absorbed most of the counties Captain Law had been supervising including Lake
Blackshear. Sgt. Ruddell absorbed some of the counties Sgt. Bishop had supervised and
Lake Worth. Sgt. Potter absorbed a couple of these counties, as did Sgt. Sellars, but their
assigned lakes remained the same.

Region V was also involved in an illegal drug growing operation investigation. In
August of 2011, RFC Tommy Daughtrey located a field of marijuana with over 150
plants in Colquitt County. He notified the GBI of the marijuana and both agencies joined
forces to set-up surveillance of the area. One suspect was arrested for his role in
manufacturing marijuana and all the assets involving the case were seized.

Region V awarded Cpl. Greg Wade the Region V Waterfowl Award and RFC Tony Cox
was the Region V selection as Ranger of the Year. Both of these officers had outstanding
years and were very deserving of the honors they received.
Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

While working on July 4th, 2011, Sgt. Don Dasher and RFC Clint Jarriel were at the Ohoopee River in Tattnall County when a young man fell into the water and began struggling. The young man’s father and then his younger brother entered the water in efforts to save him. None of the three could swim and all of them slipped below the surface of the 12-foot deep water. Sgt. Dasher and RFC Jarriel heard the commotion and ran to the area, seeing the three family members struggle underwater. Don and Clint jumped into the water and pulled the two brothers out. With the help of a citizen, they went back into the water and pulled the father out. All three of the men were saved from drowning by our officers. Don and Clint were later recognized on the floor of the House and Senate and a house resolution was read in their honor. Both officers were later recognized by the FOP and the POAG, as well as with the Department’s life-saving award.

In August, RFC Joe Hilton responded to an Irwin County accident involving seven vehicles. RFC Hilton began checking the occupants of the vehicles and assisting them to safety. As Joe arrived, one car was engulfed in flames and the female driver was unconscious. Joe managed to get her out of the car and drag her to a safer area, injuring his back in the process. The woman later died from her wounds, as did two others involved in the massive wreck. Joe was recognized for his heroic efforts with the Department’s life-saving award, which is given for saving or prolonging the life of another.
This year was a very busy one for personnel changes. Sgt. William Vickers’ earned his retirement after 34 years of faithful service, effective on October 1st, 2011. Cpl. Jimmy Williams ended his career after serving faithfully for 34 years as well, and his retirement was effective on November 1st, 2011. After struggling for years with knee injuries, Sgt. David Nugent applied for and was granted a disability retirement that became effective on October 1st, 2011.

Corporal Damon Winters was promoted to Sergeant on January 1st and RFC Jason Shipes was promoted to Corporal on March 1st. Game Management Technician II Mark Pool transferred into the region and became a Ranger First Class, effective March 1st. Mark is assigned to Bacon and Pierce Counties.

RFC Danielle O’Connor accepted a job offer with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and left the Department in June. Her K-9 partner Briar was later reassigned to another handler.

Due to dwindling staff numbers, the LE section has had to reorganize manpower needs throughout the state. Redistribution for Region VI became effective December 1st, 2011 where we went from six work units to five work units by losing one sergeant's position and ultimately two corporal positions.

Cpl. Jason Shipes was selected as the Region VI Ranger of the Year and RFC Brandon Pierce was selected as the Region VI Boating Safety Officer of the Year. RFC Tim Hutto was selected as the Region VI Investigative Officer of the Year and Cpl. Barry Britt was the Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award winner.

RFC Chase Altman completed MPOC training in Charleston, SC and during the month of September, Cpl. Jason Shipes attended the Hunting Incident Academy that was held in Iowa. The annual in-service training was a week of Officer Survival where all officers shot our weapons, refreshed our defensive tactics skills and went through various scenarios.

In May, officers Clint Jarriel, Mark Poole, Debbie Brannen, Mike Wilcox, Brandon Pierce, Rodney Home and Dan Stiles all participated in HURREX 2012. HURREX is a hurricane preparedness exercise designed to test and evaluate Georgia’s readiness in dealing with a hurricane making landfall on our shores.
Region VII documented several interesting and high profile cases during the 2011-2012 year. These cases ranged from Savannah to St Mary’s. In September, RFC Buster Cooper, Cpl. Cindy Miller, and intern Jordan Crawford, patrolled offshore Little Tybee checking shrimp trawlers. The rangers came in contact with an out of state shrimp trawler trawling in Georgia waters without any commercial fishing licenses for Georgia. The captain of the vessel was cited for a nonresident commercial fishing without a commercial fishing license, nonresident commercial fishing without a commercial fishing boat license, and commercial fishing without a bond or affidavit. In addition, the rangers confiscated the shrimp trawler and 7465 pounds of shrimp.

In November, Captain Doug Lewis, Sgt. Mark Carson, Sgt. Chris Hodge, Cpl. Chris Ridley, and RFC Craig Smith investigated a snake bite incident in Kingsland involving a Black Mamba snake. It was determined that the subject did not have a Black Mamba, but was bitten by an Egyptian Cobra. He was later indicted on Federal charges involving this case.

In December 9th, RFC Smith received a call about a shrimp trawler illegally trawling in closed waters. RFC Smith contacted Captain Ed Watkins with DNR Aviation for air support. Captain Watkins responded to the area by helicopter and located the vessel
trawling illegally in closed waters. Captain Watkins remained in the area until RFC Smith arrived in a patrol vessel. RFC Smith then verified that the vessel was 4.5 miles inside closed waters and escorted the vessel to the Brunswick dock where the shrimp and fish on board were confiscated. The subjects on board were cited, and the captain of the vessel was taken to the Camden County Jail.

On the morning of May 26th, 2012, information was received that some of the sea turtle nests on Sapelo Island had been robbed of their eggs. Based on all the information available it was decided to contact a K-9 handler and attempt to catch someone bringing the eggs off of the island on the Sapelo Ferry. K-9 Officer RFC Tim Hutto was contacted and immediately agreed to assist. The next morning Ranger Jeremy Reese, RFC Tim Hutto and K-9 Gauge, Cpl. Chris Ridley, Cpl. Jimmy Finn and Sgt. Wayne Hubbard met in Meridian and conducted an inspection of baggage coming off of the ferry utilizing the K-9. The dog alerted on a duffle bag and the owner was asked for consent to search. Consent was granted and 156 sea turtle eggs were discovered inside. After further investigation, a small amount of marijuana was found in the bag and a handgun was located in the subject's vehicle. The individual also admitted to being a convicted felon. The firearms charges were sent to the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The turtle egg charges were turned over to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officers for Federal prosecution.

During the months of May and June, Rangers from the Glynn, Camden, and Brantley work section assisted Camden and Glynn County with flooding resulting from 2 Tropical Storms that came through the area.

There were multiple personnel changes in Region VII due to retirement, vacancies, and transfers. In October, Sgt. Tim Vincent retired after 34 years of service. Sgt. Bob Lynn was promoted to Captain/Region Supervisor in Region IV. Cpl. Cindy Miller and Cpl. Wayne Hubbard were promoted into these sergeant vacancies. RFC Chris Moore and RFC Wil Smith were promoted into these corporal vacancies. In January, 4 new rangers attended the Basic Conservation Ranger School and joined Region VII. RFC David Brady and Tech III John Evans transferred to Region VII to fill some vacant Ranger positions.

Region VII assisted in numerous charity and specialized events. Rangers assisted in a Wounded Warrior Hunt, Wayne County Catfish Tournament, Wayne County Hog Jam, and on Saturday April 28th, 2012, The Georgia Department of Public Safety Motor Carrier Compliance Division, and the Long County Sheriff’s Office hosted the 1st Annual Fishing for a Cure. This is a non-profit pan fish tournament on the Altamaha River and its tributaries to benefit children in the community who are battling cancer or other disease. The Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Section was asked to conduct the official weigh in. DNR officers RFC Randy Aspinwall, Corp. Bobby White, Sgt. Wayne Hubbard and Capt. Doug Lewis participated. Two local children, Taylor McCartney and Victoria Hall, were presented with $5,000 each to assist with medical expenses.
Region VII had several officers recognized for their efforts throughout the year. Cpl. Chris Moore represented Region VII for Waterfowl Officer of the Year and Ranger of the Year. RFC Buster Cooper was selected for Federal Officer of the Year for NOAA. RFC Craig Smith represented the region as the Boating Safety officer of the Year. Cpl. Jimmy Finn was selected as the Glynn County Exchange Officer of the Year.

Region VII completed Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) 10 with the National Marine Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement with NOAA. Priority areas of enforcement included Turtle Excluder Device compliance, Snapper/Grouper, Marine Mammal Protection, Highly Migratory and Pelagic fisheries. A commitment was also made to enforce the Atlantic Right Whale Take Reduction Plan and to provide enforcement for Gray’s Reef national Marine Sanctuary. Hours provided during this agreement period, July 1st, 2011-June 30th, 2012 include the following:

Large Vessel: 188 vessel hours (2 officers per vessel)
Mid-Range Vessel: 188 vessel hours (2 officers per vessel)
GRNMS: 145 vessel hours (2 officers per vessel)
Dockside Inspection: 230 man hours
ALWTRP: 118 vessel hours (combined large and mid-range vessels)
Public Outreach: 87 man hours
Training Unit

The 2012 In-Service Training consisted of a 40-hour block of Officer Survival training. The block of instruction was designed to update officers on a variety of topics including Armed Confrontations, Off Duty Survival, Domestic Violence, Unknown Risk Stops, Violent Encounters, Rules for a Gunfight, Vehicle Positions, and DNR Escalation of Force. Instruction also consisted of Building Searches, Shooting While Moving, Officer Down Exercises, Car Drills, Defensive Tactics, and Night Firing. Rangers were also provided with a 3 hour block of Firearms Requalification and Use of Deadly Force training. This course was taught by Sgt. Mark Carson and Sgt. Damon Winters. This course was part of the required yearly in-service training and was very helpful in updating officer’s knowledge on topics they are involved with daily.

A Basic Conservation Ranger Academy began January 16, 2012 with 14 cadets in attendance. This was the second academy to be held within a 12 month period. Cadets are required to successfully complete the first 11 weeks of training in order to receive POST certification. The remainder of the 18 week training includes specialized training required to become a Conservation Ranger or a Deputy Conservation Ranger.

The Training Academy hosted DNR’s Volunteer Chaplain Training. This marked the first formal gathering of our Volunteer Chaplains. This training was beneficial in providing the chaplain’s with organizational policies and procedures, as well as instructions on emergency preparedness and response protocols. Previous deployments, such as the Flood of ’94 and Hurricane Katrina, were also discussed. Plans for a second Chaplain Training are already being discussed.

The DNR Training Academy continues to work closely with the Georgia Public Safety Training Center to establish a new All-Terrain Vehicle Training Course. DNR is also donating several of their older ATVs to the program. Some of these ATVs will be used as part of the instruction, while others will be used for parts. This Fall DNR will send five officers to become certified as ATV Instructors. Once completed, all DNR officers will receive hands on ATV instruction.
Investigative Unit
The Investigative Unit (IU) is comprised of two full-time investigators, a Lieutenant and a Sergeant. The IU is responsible for undercover investigations, Special Permit Unit (SPU) inspections and violations, and the administration of the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) and the Marine Theft Unit (MTU).

The IU depends heavily on assistance from uniformed Rangers. Statewide, 15 Rangers perform collateral duties as “Regional Investigators”. Regional Investigators assist the IU with various duties.

Undercover Investigations
In March 2012, three Rangers attended the Wildlife Investigations Covert Academy (WICA) in Nashville, Tennessee. Georgia now has 9 Rangers who have attended this course since 2008. The IU averages 40 undercover investigations per year. They range from intelligence gathering contacts, to buy/busts to complex long term investigations.

Critical Incident Reconstruction Team
On January 1st, 2012, the administration of the CIRT was assigned to the IU. Previously, a uniformed field sergeant with many years of experience in accident reconstruction oversaw the team. With the sergeant’s retirement, the oversight of the team was transferred to the IU. Georgia has 14 CIRT members assigned throughout the state. The CIRT investigates all fatality and serious injury boating and hunting incidents as well as all shooter/victim hunting incidents. Each CIRT member is required to attend 10 training courses related to investigation and prosecution of these incidents. These courses include hunting incident investigation, boating incident investigation (intermediate and advanced), criminal investigations, evidence presentation, photography, crime scene technician, blood pattern analysis, interviews and interrogations, and advanced report writing.

Marine Theft Unit
In November of 2011, the Marine Theft Unit (MTU) responsibilities were transferred to the Investigative Unit. The MTU provides assistance to law enforcement officers in the field with computer database searches, location of hidden hull identification numbers, and offline searches for stolen vessels. The MTU also serves as the point of contact for customers and courts in dealing with the abandoned vessel process. Since the transition, over 60 requests for assistance have been answered.
Georgia continues to successfully utilize K-9 units and currently has 8 canine/handler teams in use throughout the state. These dogs are full service / multi-purpose German Shepherds. They are trained in tracking, article searches, wildlife detection, obedience, officer protection, apprehension and agility. Recently RFC Brooks Varnell assumed the role of chief K-9 Instructor with the promotion of long time canine handler Johnny Johnson to the rank of Captain. RFC Varnell attended a 10 week handler/instructor course in North Carolina to prepare him for his new role. This program is in its twelfth year and continues to be very beneficial in detecting and deterring wildlife crimes.
Honor Guard

Honor Guard Members include:
Region 1: RFC Cody Jones and RFC Brooks Varnell
Region II: Cpl. Derek Dillard, OIC, RFC Josh Chambers
Region III: Cpl. Micheal Crawley, Cpl. Ben Payne
Region IV: Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, RFC Travis Sweat
Region VI: RFC Chase Altman, RFC Clint Jarriel
Region VII: RFC David Brady

The Honor Guard attended several details over the year, some of which are listed below.
 Honor Guard Details
09/15/2011 – Funeral detail in Sylvester Georgia for retired Corporal Dennis Harrelson.
10/17-18/2011 – Visitation and funeral detail for retired Captain Ashley Darley in Dawson and Pelham Georgia.
01/03/2012 – Funeral detail for retired Sergeant Knight in Jesup.
01/10/2012 – Funeral detail for retired Captain Green in Bainbridge.
06/26/2012 – Funeral detail for retired Ranger L.W. Jones in Ocilla.

Color Guard Details:
7/19/2011 – Presentation of colors at the Gang Conference in Savannah Georgia.
11/4/2011 – Presentation of colors at Ranger School Graduation at GPSTC.
5/18/2012 – Presentation of colors at Ranger School Graduation at GPSTC.
Chaplains

Front L-R: Rev. John Haney, Dr. Joe Bufford, Rev. Marc E. Crandlemire
Back Row L-R: Dr. Rick Lanford, Dr. Greg Loskoski, Rev Darryl Dale, Dr. Charles Houston, Jr.
**Promotions:**
Major Walter Rabon, Headquarters
Captain Bob Lynn, Macon
Captain Wade Law, Training Academy
Captain Johnny Johnson, Calhoun
Sgt. Greg Colson, Gainesville
Sgt. Damon Winters, Metter
Sgt. Wayne Hubbard, Brunswick
Sgt. Cindy Miller, Brunswick
Cpl. Byron Young, Calhoun
Cpl. Eddie Tompkins, Gainesville
Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, Macon
Cpl. Mitch Oliver, Macon
Cpl. James McLaughlin, Metter
Cpl. Barry Britt, Metter
Cpl. Greg Wade, Albany
Cpl. Bob Holley, Albany
Cpl. Wil Smith, Brunswick
Cpl. Chris Moore, Brunswick
Cpl. Jason Shipes, Brunswick

**Retired**
Captain Dan Parrish, Headquarters
Captain Carroll Chastain, Calhoun
Sgt. Tim Vincent, Brunswick
Sgt. Danny Crook, Calhoun
Cpl. Billy Joe Foster, Albany
RFC Harold Hill, Albany
RFC Larry Mills, Thomson
## FY 2012 ACTIVITY SUMMARY

### HUNTER EDUCATION
- Hunter Education Presentations: 695 Man Hours: 3573

### Hunter Development / Shooting Sports
- Hunter Development Programs: 352 Development Hours: 1742

### I & E PRESENTATIONS (Other than Boating Safety Programs)
- Number of Presentations: 1329 Man Hours: 2654

### BOATING SAFETY PROGRAMS
- Number of Presentations: 331 Man Hours: 979

### COMPLAINTS / INCIDENTS
- Number of Reports Investigated: 7489 Man Hours: 24898

### HUNTING INCIDENTS
- Total Number of Incidents: 37 Number of Fatalities: 4
- Number of Injuries: 33

### BOATING INCIDENTS
- Total Number of Incidents: 117 Est. Property Damage: $443,242
- Number of Injuries: 81 Number of Fatalities: 10

### DROWNINGS
- Number of Drownings: 26 Victims Recovered: 26

### TOTAL LICENSES CHECKED
- 32,037

### TOTAL BOATS CHECKED
- 30,237

### COMMERCIAL LIC. CHECKED
- 1,005
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<th>OTHER ITEMS CONFIscATED</th>
<th>CONFISCATED WILDLIFE / SEAFOOD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana 23</td>
<td>Alligator 1</td>
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<td>Shotguns 8</td>
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<td>ammunition 11</td>
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<td>Blue Fish 8</td>
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SUPPORT TO OTHER SECTIONS,

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