



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Commissioner  
Mark Williams

Director  
Colonel Eddie  
Henderson

Law  
Enforcement  
*Off the  
Pavement*



Serving  
Since  
1911

**Law Enforcement Division  
FY 2018 Annual Report**

# **Headquarters**



**Colonel Eddie Henderson, Director**



**Lt. Colonel Jeff Weaver,  
Assistant Director**



**Major Stephen Adams**



**Major Thomas Barnard**



# Headquarters Support Staff



**Lt. Wayne Hubbard**



**Lt. Wanda Roberts**



**Lt. Judd Smith**



**Jen Hammonds**



**Jamie Hawkins**



**Linda Mayo**



**Mark McKinnon**



**Taye Pierce**



**Kathy Plumley**



**Sharon Sims**



**Shannon Witcher**

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

**The Mission of the Law Enforcement Division 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.**



## **Headquarters**

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division, currently has 213 POST-certified Game Wardens with statewide authority and full arrest powers and 30 non-sworn staff members. The primary duties of these Game Wardens are enforcement of all laws and regulations pertaining to hunting, fishing, commercial fishing, environmental violations, and recreational boating, as well as to provide public safety on all our DNR-controlled properties.

The Law Enforcement Division operates with a straight-line chain of command. It consists of the Colonel, Lt. Colonel, three Majors (field operations, special operations and aviation), seven Region Supervisors (Captains), a "specialty" Captain (investigations), two pilot Captains, four Lieutenants (database management, training, special permits/captive wildlife and wild animals, and administrative support), and 185 field Game Wardens (Sergeants, Corporals, Game Wardens First Class, and Game Wardens).



## **Vehicles & Equipment**

Throughout the year, the Law Enforcement Division acquired some new vehicles and equipment, utilizing funding from various sources. Vehicles obtained included a new Bell 407 GX helicopter, a 38-foot coastal patrol boat, a mobile command vehicle, 20 4x4 patrol vehicles, 19 patrol boats, 22 kayaks, 27 ATVs, three swift water rescue boats with motors and trailers and a new enclosed trailer for statewide disaster response. New equipment included 74 sets of night vision goggles and smart phones for all field personnel. The smart phones have already proved to be a valuable asset for Game Wardens in the field, allowing increased communication with customers and partners as well as the ability to check license status of hunters and anglers while away from the patrol vehicle.



## **GILEE**

Captain Mike England participated in the 25<sup>th</sup> Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange (GILEE) program to Israel. This two-week training session, coordinated through Georgia State University, focuses on sharing homeland security techniques as well as the benefits and limitations of a national police system. During the program, 19 Law Enforcement Executives from Georgia, one from Alabama, and one from Tennessee were briefed at multiple venues in the state of Israel.

## **Ranger Hotline**

The Ranger Hotline program, which provides a way for citizens to report anonymously potentially illegal wildlife and other conservation law violations, continues to be successful. If the information leads to an arrest, the tipster receives a cash reward funded by the Georgia Natural Resource Foundation, whose mission is to protect wildlife by increasing public support for wildlife law enforcement. Last year, 25 tips were received by email for various violations.

## **LED License Plate**

During the year, the Division reached the required 1,000 presales of the GA DNR Law Enforcement license plate that was designed by one of the Game Wardens in the Coastal Region. The license plate is sold to citizens for an additional fee and part of the revenue generated from the sale of the plates will go to DNR Law Enforcement for operational costs.



### **Guy Bradley Award**

In March of 2018, at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) presented Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Colonel Eddie Henderson with the prestigious Guy Bradley Award for his lifetime contributions to wildlife law enforcement. The award is only presented to one state and one federal recipient each year.

### **OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES**

#### **Hurricane Irma**

In September of 2017, Game Wardens responded to Hurricane Irma on the Georgia Coast and provided first responder operations, debris clearing with chain saws, damage assessment, search and rescue and security roles. Due to the path of the storm, Game Wardens in all areas of the state were called into action and the Division logged 10,188 man hours during the week-long event.

#### **JEA Patrols**

The 16<sup>th</sup> Joint Enforcement Agreement between Georgia DNR and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement called for GA DNR Game Wardens to provide a total of 2,309 hours of marine law enforcement or related work during the year. There were 985 at-sea personnel hours and 405 vessel hours, 173 man hours for dockside inspections, 41 aircraft hours and 41 aircraft personnel hours. Additionally, Georgia had three Execution Priorities. Execution Priority 1 was Turtle Excluder Device (TED) Enforcement. There were 192 man hours and 64 at-sea offshore large vessel patrol hours dedicated to this priority. Execution Priority 2 was dedicated to Red Snapper Patrols. There were 168 man hours and 56 at-sea large vessel patrols dedicated to Priority 2. Priority 3 was IUU enforcement in which 64 man hours were dedicated. These patrols consisted of assisting NOAA Enforcement Officers with inspection of containers at the Georgia Ports. Throughout the year, Game Wardens detected a number of Federal Fisheries violations including over the limit of fish, possession of illegal species, illegal nets, and Turtle Excluder Device (TED) violations. These documented violations were turned over to NOAA for prosecution or handled in the local courts.

#### **TASER**

The Division received approval to move forward with a pilot project to deploy TASERs to 40 officers statewide. A policy has been developed and instructors are being identified to roll this program out. One Game Warden per work section at the rank of Field Sgt. or below, and some instructors will be issued a TASER once the equipment is secured and training is completed.

#### **DNR Re-Organization Period Completed**

The Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division completed the five-year transition that consolidated all Law Enforcement functions under the umbrella of the Law Enforcement Division, to include State Parks enforcement. In 2013, the Board of Natural Resources approved the internal reorganization of its operational Divisions that elevated the Law Enforcement Section to Division status, removing it as a sub-program in the Wildlife



Resources Division. The changes to the DNR structure were made to more accurately reflect the working structure of the department, streamline operations, clarify chain of command, standardize training, equipment and operational guidance for law enforcement services and to reduce liability.

## **Public Affairs**

### Media Relations and Public Outreach

The Division conducted media news conferences and ride-alongs with Game Wardens for the start of the boating and hunting seasons, “Operation Dry Water,” and the July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday weekend to promote safe boating and swimming safety and to educate citizens on boating laws and how they are applied. Prior to boating season, in late May, LED partnered with the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) and the Georgia State Patrol (GSP) to encourage safety on the waterways and highways throughout the summer. The 2018 campaign theme was “Make Your Summer Click,” making reference to the clicking sound made by life jacket buckles and seat belts. News releases, I & E presentations and speeches to various civic groups, and regular news media interviews and interaction were utilized throughout the year to disseminate information to the public.

### SPLASH

The Division continued moving forward with the multi-agency water safety initiative, SPLASH. Along with Georgia’s First Lady Sandra Deal and a number of federal, state, and private partners, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Georgia Department of Public Health and Georgia Power, the aggressive anti-drowning campaign encourages citizens to follow these tips when enjoying beaches, pools, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water. The partners meet every 4-6 weeks to share promotional ideas and discuss implementation. Ten meetings have been held so far. SPLASH is an acronym used to encourage safety around the water.

- **Supervision** – Designate an adult to watch children at all times. Do not assume someone else is watching.
- **Prevention** – Wear personal flotation devices (PFD or life jacket), install fencing around pools, and use drain covers in hot tubs and pools.
- **Life Jackets/Look before you leap**– Always wear a life jacket and never jump into water without knowing how deep it is and what is below the surface.
- **Arm’s Length** – Adults should be arm’s length to children in water, and life jackets and throwable flotation devices should be nearby at all times.
- **Swim Lessons** – Knowing how to swim greatly reduces the chance of drowning.
- **Have a Water Safety Plan** – Know what to do during an emergency.

During the year, the campaign distributed nearly 20,000 bilingual brochures, provided public service announcements to local radio stations, increased social media messaging, stenciled painted safety messages on boat ramps and places “Wear It Georgia” signs at numerous facilities on the state’s waterways. Currently, the Department is in the process of adding 250 life jacket loaner boards at public boat ramps and state parks statewide, with these locations now included on the Georgia Outdoors app.

### Social Media

LED manages a Facebook page that currently has over 50,000 page “Likes” (people who regularly view the page). Many of LED’s Facebook posts have a “Reach” (number of people who may see the post through their friends who “Like” the page) that exceeds 40,000, and occasionally, some are above 100,000. The Division also has a Twitter account that is linked to Facebook, which currently has nearly 1,250 followers, a YouTube Channel with multiple safety-related videos, and an Instagram account approaching 5,000 followers.

### “Off the Pavement” Awards Banquet

In August 2017, the LED’s Command Staff was joined by the Georgia DNR Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Board Members at the Fourth Annual “Off the Pavement” Awards Banquet in Savannah. The event highlighted the outstanding efforts of Game Wardens from across the state who had received a number of awards throughout the year. At the end of the evening, Cpl. Brian Adams from the east central Georgia Region was named as the Division’s 2017 Game Warden of the Year.



*2016 Game Warden of the Year Cpl. Eddie Tompkins pins the one-of-a-kind badge on the 2017 winner, Cpl. Brian Adams.*

*2017 Game Warden of the Year, Cpl. Brian Adams receives his award.*





## **Statewide Awards**

### **Game Warden of the Year**



Cpl. Brian Adams is a Game Warden who is dedicated to public outreach and education, and solid enforcement efforts. Assigned to Glascock County, Cpl. Adams also covers Warren, Taliaferro and McDuffie counties. Education for young people is high on his priority list. One of his very impressive educational efforts is with Glascock County Public Schools, where he convinced school officials to adjust the curriculum to include Hunter Ed for all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and Boater Ed for all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, ensuring that every student can be certified in both before graduation. He also gained approval to launch a Shooting Sports program at Glascock

County High School and volunteered his property for team practices. This year Brian organized his 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Glascock County Kids Fishing Event, which allows every student in Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade an opportunity to spend a day fishing. His enforcement numbers are strong with 209 hunting license checks, 162 fishing license checks, 210 vessel inspections, 25 WMA patrols, 22 State Park patrols and 12 PFA patrols. He issued 111 citations, 43 warnings and tallied 84 assists. Brian is also a proven investigator and initiated four lengthy investigations this year that resulted in 89 violator contacts and the seizure of 14 vehicles, over \$30,000 in cash, 22 firearms, and illicit drugs with a street value of over \$310,000.

### **James R. Darnell Award**



Cpl. Jason Shiples has proven himself as a dedicated Game Warden with his exceptional efforts during the past year. Cpl. Shiples is well-versed in computer and electronics investigations and has been active in training and discussing new ways of conducting investigations, emerging intelligence gathering trends such as social media investigations, and information sharing within the Division and with other LE agencies. Jason has collateral duties as an original member of the Counter Terrorism Task Force and is currently Delta Team leader. His knowledge and skills in radio programming have been a valuable asset and were tested as Hurricane Matthew hit the

Georgia coast in 2016. During the storm, he met officers in the field and programmed their radios with frequencies needed to communicate with local agencies. Jason places great value in training young people in hunting safety. Last October, he assisted with the annual Georgia Sheriff's Youth Home deer hunt near Fargo, purchasing hunting licenses for participating youth hunters out of his pocket as he has done for a number of years. Jason has also been instrumental in planning and ensuring the success of his work unit's annual bear hunting enforcement details. His knowledge of southern bear hunting enforcement has led him to instruct bear hunting enforcement at Advanced Game Warden School a few years ago. During the past year, Cpl. Shiples recorded 19 violations for hunting deer at night and recorded 27 violator contacts for deer dogging and hunting without permission. According to his supervisor and those who work with him on a regular basis, Jason exemplifies exactly what a Game Warden is and should be.

## **Game Warden of the Year Nominees**

Region I- Cpl. Bart Hendrix  
Region II- GWFC Joe Hill  
Region III- Cpl. Brian Adams  
Region IV- Cpl. Lynn "Bubba" Stanford

Region V- GWFC Quinn Fogle  
Region VI- Cpl. Jason Shipes  
Region VII- GWFC David Brady

## **Supervisor of the Year**

### **Sgt. Lee Brown – Region II**



Sgt. Lee Brown is the recipient of the 2016 Supervisor of the Year Award. Sgt. Brown is a 22-year veteran of the Law Enforcement Division and has served as Sgt. since 2006. Sgt. Brown currently supervises one of the most diverse and busiest areas in the state. His work section, which includes Gwinnett, DeKalb, Forsyth, Rockdale, Dawson, and Lumpkin counties, serves approximately two million Georgia residents. Lee is also a supervisor on Lake Sidney Lanier, one of the busiest lakes in the nation. His work unit also covers three state parks - Panola Mountain, Stone Mountain and Amicalola Falls - and two WMAs - Dawson Forest and Chestatee. As well as nearly 67,000 acres of US Forest Service land. Sgt. Brown exemplifies the qualities of a true leader, always leading from the front. He is a team player, tirelessly promoting the division and building relationships with other agencies. The evidence of his leadership ability lies in the successes of the members of his work unit who, collectively, have taken nine statewide and region awards just within the last three years, including the 2016 State Ranger of the Year and the 2016 State Boating Safety Officer of the Year. Congratulations to Sgt. Lee Brown, the 2016 Supervisor of the Year.

## **NWTF Officer of the Year**

### **Cpl. Ben Payne – Region III**



Cpl. Ben Payne is the 2016 National Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year. Cpl. Payne's dedication to the protection of Georgia's Wild Turkeys is evident in his drive and persistence in protecting the species and promoting the sport of turkey hunting. He spent 113 hours on foot and on ATV patrols in a four county area throughout the season, focusing his attention on private property, but also conducting 33 turkey patrols on state WMA's checking hunters and locating violations. He assisted 17 landowners with hunting and habitat questions and worked 12 complaints, logging 47 hours with many resulting in poachers being apprehended. Ben made contact with 37 hunters which produced 10 cases, 6 warnings and 22 assists to other officers. He made eight cases for hunting turkey over bait and seven for license violations. Always striving to practice fairness and professionalism, he also gave verbal guidance to eight hunters who had some license issues and was able to resolve the problems without making cases against them. Congratulations to Cpl. Ben Payne, the 2016 National Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year.



## **Investigative Game Warden of the Year**

### **Cpl. Jason Shipes - Region VI**



Cpl. Jason Shipes is the 2016 Investigative Ranger of the Year. Cpl. Shipes began an investigation in 2016 after receiving a tip from a citizen about members of a Clinch County hunting club who had killed more than the legal limit of deer. He quickly learned that they were posting pictures and comments of their poaching activities on their personal Facebook pages. He obtained search warrants for the Facebook accounts, ultimately leading him to large amounts of evidence. Since the poachers were all Florida residents, Jason worked closely with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission in order to obtain further evidence in building his case. After thoroughly examining thousands of Facebook posts and other evidence, all four primary subjects were cited for a total of 17 separate violations. After seeing the volume of indisputable evidence against them, most of it from their own Facebook posts, all four defendants chose plea agreements and paid nearly \$4,000 in fines. Jason's investigative skills have achieved nationwide recognition through at least two recent publications: International Game Warden magazine and International Wildlife Crime-Stoppers newsletter. Congratulations to Cpl. Jason Shipes, the 2016 Investigative Officer of the Year.

## **Georgia Boating Officer of the Year**

### **Cpl. Barton Hendrix – Region I**



Cpl. Bart Hendrix is the 2016 Boating Officer of the Year. Cpl. Hendrix is assigned to Cherokee County and routinely works Allatoona Lake in Region I. Bart has the special skill set, knowledge of boating safety laws, and the commitment to serving the public required to work on such a busy lake. He routinely works boat incidents and drownings and has been involved in 11 such cases this year. One attribute that sets Bart apart is his compassion. In one case, he was called to a scene in which a victim had drowned in front of his wife and three children. Bart took the family away from the scene, bought their lunch, and spent the entire day with them, providing comfort and assurance to them in their time of despair. Later in the year, he arranged for the work section to buy the children their school supplies and he delivered them. Cpl. Hendrix dedicated 616 hours to boating enforcement around the areas of Allatoona Lake and the Etowah River, conducting 43 water patrols and 226 hours on the water. He checked 288 boats and assisted in 150 others. His patrol efforts resulted in five arrests for BUI, three VGCSA, and numerous other boating violations. Additionally, he worked five reportable boat incidents and was involved in six drowning investigations. Last year, Bart presented 27 boating safety I&E programs and two boat education classes. Congratulations to Cpl. Bart Hendrix, the 2016 Georgia Boating Officer of the Year.

## **The Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award**

### **Game Warden First Class Quinn Fogle – Region V**



Game Warden First Class Quinn Fogle is the 2017 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award recipient. GWFC Fogle is a four-year veteran and is a validated leader in his work unit and Region. He places a strong emphasis on waterfowl enforcement and recognizes the importance and significance of educating youth and developing community trust and involvement. Quinn's patrol area includes eight rural counties and covers roughly 2,600 square miles of habitat along the Chattahoochee River Basin, including the 46,000-acre Lake Walter F. George, a major travel corridor for migrating waterfowl. His knowledge of waterfowl species, their habitat, and the changing regulations and limits, has led to his waterfowl enforcement success. He documented the most waterfowl related violations and confiscations in Region V this season - 21 cases, 36 warnings, and 13 violation assists. These violations included hunting over bait, hunting with illegal ammunition, over the limit, resident and non-resident license issues, and boating violations he encountered while checking waterfowl hunters. GWFC Fogle conducted 49 patrols for waterfowl violations, logging 115 hours and 168 total contacts. Congratulations to Game Warden First Class Quinn Fogle, the 2017 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award recipient.

## **Hunter Education Instructor of the Year**

### **Game Warden First Class Allen Mills – Region VI**



Game Warden First Class Allen Mills is the 2016 Hunter Education Instructor of the Year. GWFC Mills has been a certified Hunter Education instructor for seventeen years. His enthusiasm and ability to speak in front of a group motivates and keeps the students interested in the classroom. Throughout the year, Allen adjusted his schedule to accommodate the public with more convenient opportunities to obtain a Hunter Education certification on Sunday afternoons and provided unscheduled testing opportunities for unique situations. He even assisted a student that could not read with the test. GWFC Mills completed the IHEA Hunting Incident Training to increase his knowledge and experience to pass along to his students. Hunter development is also one of Allen's strengths and he made it a priority last year to teach young hunters firearm safety, how to shoot skeet safely - emphasizing safe shooting zones, and taking the young hunters quail hunting with dogs in order to emphasize shoot/don't shoot situations. He took his hunter safety and hunter ethics messages to the community as well, speaking on radio stations in his area and to locally based clubs. Additionally, he taught the hunting and firearms safety to 10 classes for the Choosing Healthy Activities and Methods Promoting Safety (C.H.A.M.P.S.) program in Laurens County. Congratulations to Game Warden First Class Allen Mills, the 2016 Hunter Education Instructor of the Year.



## The Torch Award

### Game Warden 2 Chris Kernahan – Region II



Game Warden 2 Chris Kernahan is the 2017 Torch Award recipient. Chris is focused on conservation law enforcement and the proof is in his work ethic. This past year, he logged 224 citations and 301 written warnings in hunting, fishing, boating, environmental, and WMA/State Park enforcement. He has developed a keen sense of investigatory and verbal skills and while working both on and off Fort Yargo State Park, where he is assigned, he made 44 VGCSA cases with five being felony grade violations. Game Warden Kernahan's attention to detail earned him a spot on the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) where he has investigated three boating fatalities, two serious injury boating incidents, one hunting fatality and two hunting incidents with serious injuries. His education and public outreach efforts were commendable. He performed eight water safety I&E's to over 900 middle school students and wildlife identification to over 200 elementary students. He also taught six boater education courses, six hunter education courses, and three hunter development programs. Chris has proven to be a valuable asset to the region as well as the Law Enforcement Division. Congratulations to Game Warden 2 Chris Kernahan, the 2017 Torch award winner.

### Previous Game Wardens of the Year

William Powell	1980	Stanley Elrod	1999
W.D. Hill, Jr.	1981	Rick Sellars	2000
Michael Bone	1982	David Ruddell	2001
William Vickers	1983	Derek Dillard	2002
Dan Parrish	1984	Mike Barr	2003
Ronald Bailey	1985	Harry E. Akins	2004
Ralph Sheppard	1986	Eric Brown	2005
Roger D. Garrison	1987	John Murphy	2006
James McDaniel	1988	Shane Sartor	2007
Doug Lewis	1989	Mike Binion	2008
Terry West	1990	Brian Hobbins	2009
W. Howard Hensley, Jr.	1991	Cindy Miller	2010
Dennis Aderholt	1992	Timothy Butler	2011
Bill Bunch	1993	Jason Roberson	2012
Arvid Edwards	1994	David Webb	2013
Mitchell H. Yeargin	1995	Greg Wade	2014
Jeff Weaver	1996	Casey Jones	2015
Mike Commander	1997	Eddie Tompkins	2016
Phillip Scott	1998		

## Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)



Front row - *L-R*: Capt. Jeff Galloway, GW Frank Pucci, Sgt. James Keener, GW Travis Shrader, Cadet Jeffery Turner, GWFC Roger McConkey, Cpl. Bart Hendrix, GWFC Mark Puig, Sgt. Brian Keener, GWFC Mark Moyer, GWFC. Zack Hardy

Back Row - *L-R*: Cpl. Shawn Elmore, Sgt. Mike Barr, GW Kalem Burns, Cpl. Cody Jones, Cpl. Casey Jones, GWFC Daniel Gray, Cpl. Byron Young, Cadet William Smith, Cadet James Lewis, and Sgt. Jason Roberson.

Inset: AOC Joyce Holland, Secretary Sherry Rollins

Not Pictured: Sgt. Eric Brown, Cpl. Brooks Varnell and K9 Taz, Cpl. Chad Cox, Cpl. Ben Cunningham, and Cadet Garrett Pownall. Cadet Carla Gann, Cadet Ryan Shorter, Cadet Kevin Hurley, and Cadet Caleb Thomas.

### Administration

Currently Region I is comprised of 20 Northwest Georgia Counties and the Metro Atlanta area. Within these counties, we have 3 major impoundments, 6 major rivers, 7 State Parks, 18 Wildlife Management Areas (249,000 acres) 173,000 acres of US Forest Service lands, 2,440 miles of trout streams, and calls for service from citizen complaints on private lands in 20 counties, covered by 30 LED Game Wardens.

FY-2018 has been a busy year administratively in the Acworth Region with several personnel changes. The addition of three new Game Wardens for Rocky Mtn. PFA along with other Regional vacancies led to the hiring six new Game Wardens. Five finished the academy and began their FTO process. Cadets Kalem Burns and Nolan Callaway were assigned to Rocky PFA. Frank Pucci was assigned to Redtop Mountain State Park. Cadet Ryan Locke was assigned to Fulton County and Cadet Travis Shrader was assigned to Fort Mountain State Park. Once the FTO was complete, Game Warden Frank Pucci transferred to the Bartow County vacancy. Game Warden Travis Shrader transferred to the Walker County vacancy. Game Warden Kalem Burns transferred to the Gilmer County vacancy. Game Wardens Ryan Locke and Nolan Calloway transferred out of the region. In January, a round of Cadets started P.O.S.T. training with more to follow in April of 2018. There assignments were as follows: Cadet Kevin Hurley, Cadet Jeffery Turner, and Cadet Carla Gann will be going to Rocky Mountain PFA, Cadet William Smith will be going to Fort Mountain State Park, Cadet James Lewis will be going to Redtop Mountain State Park,

Cadet Garrett Pownall will be going to Fulton County, Cadet Ryan Shorter will be going to Douglas County, and Cadet Caleb Thomas will be going to Pickens County. GWFC Mark Puig was selected as the State Boating Officer of the Year. Cpl. Bart Hendrix was selected as the State Investigative Game Warden of the Year. Cpl. Cody Jones represented Region 1 as the Game Warden of the Year. GWFC Daniel Gray represented Region 1 as the National Wild Turkey Game Warden of the Year. Sgt. Eric Brown represented Region 1 as the Supervisor of the Year.

### **Operational**

In February 2018, Sgt. Mike Barr was detached to headquarters to assist with the Law Enforcement Division specialty license plate project. Legislators approved a new specialty license plate during the 2016-2017 session. Funds from the sale of the “Support Georgia Game Wardens” specialty license plate are designated to the Law Enforcement Division to be used as needed for operations, equipment. Sales had been slow during 2017 and early 2018. Sgt. Barr worked with game wardens across the State, local media, and attended special events including many of the National Wild Turkey Federation events. Sales increased from 263 to 1168 within 60 days which met the minimum of 1000 pre-sells required by law. Georgia is the only State in the U.S. to currently have a specialty license plate program directly benefitting game wardens. The specialty license plate is pending the final process of availability by the Georgia Department of Revenue.

Sgt. Mike Barr was also assigned to assist in recruiting efforts for the Law Enforcement Division starting in April 2018. This is the first time the department has had a designated recruiter. Working with local game wardens, a media blitz, and direct recruiting efforts, applicant numbers increased from 298 in 2017 to 605 applicants in 2018. Successful applicants will attend the DNR Law Enforcement Division game warden academy in January 2019 held at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, Georgia.



*Sgt. Mike Barr (right) working with National Wild Turkey Federation personnel at the Augusta, Georgia event where game wardens pre-sold 102 specialty license plates.*

On September 9<sup>th</sup>, most of Region 1 Game Wardens responded to Hurricane Irma in the southern section of the State while others concentrated on state owned properties within the Region to ensure evacuees were safe and had necessities.



June 2, 2018 Game Wardens Cpl. Ben Cunningham and Cadet Carla Gann were assisting Rome-Floyd County Fire Department on the Etowah River as safety boats for Coosa River Basin Initiative Totally Tubular event. This event was being held to attempt to break a world record for the longest line of inner tubes and inflatables. The river levels on the Etowah River and the Oostanaula River were at dangerous levels and event coordinators were advised to cancel the event. The coordinators did not heed the warning and Cpl. Cunningham, Cadet Gann and firefighters from the Rome-Floyd Fire Department had to rescue nearly 100 participants from the river after they were swept past the take-out point at Heritage Park just below the confluence of the Etowah and Oostanaula Rivers



*Coosa River Basin Initiative prepares to break a world record on the Etowah River.*

*An aerial view of the attempt to break a world record that almost ended in tragedy. (photo*



*courtesy of Keith Beauchamp with KB Aerial Imaging)*

August 29<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Eric Brown, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, Cpl. Chad Cox, GWFC Daniel Gray and Game Warden Ryan Locke conducted a dove field flight detail in Paulding County with the help of DNR Aviation. During the flight two baited fields were located and flagged.

In October, multiple DNR cameras were placed at the DNR HWY 166 boat ramp in Fulton County to assist with illegal dumping investigations. Since the cameras have been deployed close to a dozen illegal dumping cases have been made.

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sgt. Eric Brown, GWFC Daniel Gray and Game Warden Ryan Locke responded to Sweetwater Creek State Park to look for a missing person who had been making suicidal threats. The individual's body was found the next day in the lake by utilizing the DNR Sonar equipment.

November 25<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Chad Cox and GWFC Daniel Gray organized a night deer hunting detail in Haralson and Polk Counties where DNR aviation was utilized. During the detail four different groups of violators were apprehended which netted in 13 citations issued.

In January and February, Sgt. Eric Brown attended Communications Technician Train-the-Trainer and Communications Leader Train-the-Trainer provided by Homeland Security and the Office of Emergency Communication. This training is the first step in a cooperative plan with GEMA to train others in Georgia as certified Technicians and Leaders during large scale events.



In February, Cpl. Brooks Varnell travelled to North Carolina where he chose 4 new K-9's for the state. The following week he began the twelve-week K-9 school at the GPSTC for handlers and the new K-9 Game Wardens.

March 24<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Eric Brown and GWFC Daniel Gray were patrolling on opening day of turkey season when they located a truck. Game Wardens then heard two shots and quickly located the hunter. The hunter was charged with possession of firearm by convicted felon, hunting w/o nonresident hunting license and big game license, hunting with electronic calls and hunting out of season. The individual had killed 2 wood ducks. Cpl. Brooks Varnell was able to utilize K-9 Taz to retrieve the dead ducks from the lake.





April 30<sup>th</sup> through May 4<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Eric Brown participated in the Departments first Mobile Command Vehicle Communications exercise hosted by GEMA at Lake Lanier Islands.



*The MCV was used for team communications with other MCV teams and scenarios.*



May 12<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Eric Brown, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, GWFC Daniel Gray, and K-9 Taz assisted with the Haralson County Trout Rodeo. This annual event drew over 1,100 kids and a total of 3,200 individuals participated in the event which includes fishing, archery and shooting sports.



June 9<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Chad Cox organized the Polk County Kid's Fishing Rodeo. 392 kids under the age of 16 attended this year's event. Drinks, t-shirts, ice cream, hotdogs, chips, cookies and fishing bait were provided at no cost to everyone at the event.



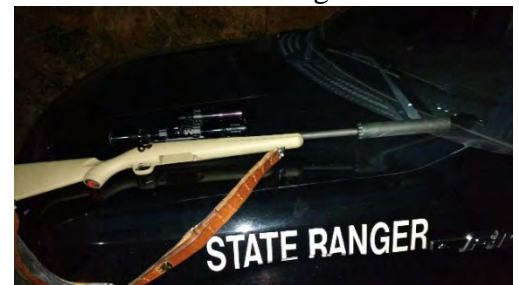


The week of June 11<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Eric Brown, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, GWFC Daniel Gray, and GW Garrett Pownall conducted the 14<sup>th</sup> Carroll County Outdoor Camp. Thirty-Seven youths were certified in Hunter Education and Boat Georgia. Activities included live fire with .22 and shotguns, archery, crossbows, GPS hunts, tree identification, and a day of fishing.



Cpl. Cody Jones received an award for “Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer” from the Jasper Optimist Club. He was also chosen as the Region I Warden of the Year. Cpl. Jones attended training in Florida in August of 2017 to provide future training on Water Survival. Cpl. Jones also had a new addition to his family with the recent birth of his 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter.

Cpl. Cody Jones confiscated an illegally suppressed rifle taken from a subject who was located hunted deer over bait in Fannin County. A subsequent investigation and collaborative work with the ATF revealed that the subject was also a convicted felon. The subject was charged with multiple violations and is awaiting trial.



In November of 2017 Cpl. Casey Jones and Cadet Travis Shrader responded to a complaint of an illegally killed deer in Pickens County. Cpl. Jones also received a photo of the suspect in possession of the buck deer in question. After an in-depth investigation and several interviews, 4 bucks were confiscated and multiple charges were made against two suspects.



In May of 2018, Warden Kalem Burns made contact with two subjects illegally digging “ramps” on USFS property near Cohutta WMA. The subjects had in their possession approximately 5 pounds of the plants. Information was turned over to USFS officers and federal charges were made.

In June of 2018, Cpl. Casey Jones and Cadet William Smith arrested and charged a Murray County man with multiple charges including digging ginseng out of season, digging undersized ginseng plants, and driving on a suspended license. Cpl. Jones seized 70 ginseng roots of which 54 were undersized.



*The new Cobia patrol boat assigned to Carter’s Lake. Cpl. Casey Jones, Game Warden Kalem Burns, and Cadet William Smith are pictured.*

On November 17, Sgt. Jason Roberson and Game Warden First Class Mark Puig received a complaint of night deer hunting in Cherokee County. Upon investigating, the subject was located and charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a vehicle, hunting from a public road, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, as well as numerous felony drug charges.

Game Wardens in the Allatoona Lake work section began to foster a cooperative agreement with the Bartow and Cherokee County Sherriff’s offices that would provide officers to assist on vessel patrols during the summer months. The two Sherriff’s offices have provided officers to act as a force multiplier in assisting Game Wardens to operate more patrol boats. This initiative has assisted the work section in increasing the number of impaired boat operators that it is able to detect. In 2017 the section was able to detect forty-one such operators and is on pace to detect more than that this year.



## Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)



Front Row L-R: AAIMI Brenda Tanner, Secretary Tasha Lamb, PT Secretary McKayla Justus, Cpl. Craig Fulghum, GWFC Joe Hill, GW Chris Hall, GWFC David Webb, Sgt. Lee Brown, GWFC Matt Johnson, GW Ryan Locke, GWFC Mitchell Crump, Cpl. Tim Vickery, GWFC Brandon Pierce, GWFC Shane Sartor, GWFC Chris Kernahan,  
Back row, L-R: Cpl. Eric Sanders, Sgt. Mike Burgamy, GWFC Kevin Goss, Cpl. Eric Isom, Sgt. Derek Dillard, GW Beth Gilbert, GW Jonathan Segars, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins, GWFC Shane Brown, Sgt. Steve Seitz, Cpl. Kevin Dyer, Sgt. Greg Colson, Capt. Johnny Johnson  
Inset, L-R: Cpl. Anne Wiley, GWFC Chad Chambers, GW Tommy Crabb, GWFC Mark Stephens

The Gainesville Region is comprised of the 19 Northeast Georgia Counties which include several metro areas around Atlanta. Within these counties, we have 8 major impoundments, 3 major rivers, 13 Wildlife Management Areas, 220 miles of trout streams, 21 State Park Properties and 288,000 acres of National Forest lands. The impoundments within Region II receive over 25 million visitors annually while the state parks and wildlife management areas receive another 2.5 million annually. The Law Enforcement Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources is responsible for the law enforcement needs on all of the state owned and operated properties in addition to any DNR law enforcement calls for service on private or public property from the 19-county area within the region. This tremendous amount of visitation and use on these properties create a great deal of diverse law enforcement issues and needs that the 30 officers of this region continually address.

### **Boating Activity**

This year has been another active year with water related fatalities. Drowning and boating related incidents accounted for 16 deaths from July of 2017 through June of 2018. Game Wardens assigned to Region II LED continue to be very busy with these types of incidents investigating 48 boating incidents this year. Lake Lanier's visitation reportedly increased from 9.8 to 11.8 million visitors annually. All of the lake water levels within the region remained at full pool throughout the summer months.



The image below was the results of attempting to locate a drowning victim where over 280 drops of the sector scan were performed by Game Wardens. All of the other areas in the image were covered by other sonar devices. The victim was never recovered although an extraordinary effort was made by those involved. Game Wardens from Region II LED arrested over 60 BUI's this year where enforcement of alcohol and drug related offences remain a priority.



### **Hunting and Fishing Activity**



This summer Game Warden Ryan Locke was patrolling known fishing areas on Lake Lanier. Locke observed a center console with two occupants fishing with gill nets. Locke engaged the two individuals and determined that they had one gill net on their vessel. The subjects later informed Locke that there were two-gill nets remaining in the water. Citations were issued for fishing by illegal methods and warnings issued for commercially fishing without a license. The three-gill nets were confiscated.

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, Game Wardens Mike Burgamy, Adam Loudermilk, and Ryan Locke worked a concentrated fishing enforcement detail at Commerce watershed for fishing violations. During the detail the Game Wardens identified 8 individuals who had caught 456 Crappie over their limit. The individuals were issued citations for the violations and the fish were donated to needy families. After this initial incident, some of the same individuals were apprehended again for the same violations and incarcerated.







9 points he had taken in July and August prior to the season starting. In total 6 deer racks were confiscated and the subject was charged in two counties with violations of hunting deer without permission, hunting out of season, hunting over bait, hunting at night, and other violations.

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Game Warden Ryan Locke, gained information that a subject had shot two turkeys. Upon further investigation, it was determined that the subject did not have a hunting license and the turkeys were shot in Hancock County. In a separate incident 3 other turkeys were found to have been taken illegally by hunters without license. The violations were addressed and the fans, spurs, and beards of both birds were confiscated.



### **Other Activity**



This summer LED partnered with the State Parks Division, NGMA and the Fisheries Division to address the canoe launch issue on the Chattahoochee River located on Hwy 115. The launch had deteriorated and was in desperate need of replacement. As a team effort associates from these sections and divisions worked to install new timbers and gravel to make the necessary repairs for a safer and better facility.





On August 21<sup>st</sup> 2017 a solar eclipse occurred where its path took it over the northern part of Georgia. Blackrock Mountain was indicated as ground zero but all of the Region II area was in the preferred viewing area of the state. The event was forecasted to become a major event that would draw an estimated 200,000 visitors to the area. LED initiated ICP throughout the north Georgia area to address the public safety concerns on DNR owned and controlled properties and lakes as well as to provide assistance to local and other state agencies with law enforcement and search and rescue operations. Game wardens from Regions I, II and III were assigned to this detail, associates from WRD and Parks were involved.

Game Wardens from Regions II and V were assigned to an extended detail in the north Georgia area this summer. The Rainbow Family of Living Light selected a site on the Chattahoochee National Forest for its 2018 national gathering. The event coincided with the Fourth of July holiday. The area experienced the highest concentration of visitors during the first week of July near Dahlonega just outside the community of Nimblewill. The Rainbow Family is a loose-knit group of people from throughout the USA and other countries. Each summer they hold a national gathering to pursue social and spiritual activities and pray for world peace. Since 1972, the event has taken place on a different national forest each year. Crowds range from 2,000 to 10,000 forest visitors. The Game Wardens assisted Local, State and Federal Law Enforcements agencies to maintain public safety at the event.





Game Wardens continued to keep their SAR skills perfected. The annual training held at Tallulah Gorge State Park provides an opportunity for Game Wardens to practice in anticipation of real life situations that unfortunately are occurring more and more in the North Georgia area of Region II.



### **Region II Personnel Awards**

GWFC Chris Kernahan received the NAWEOA National Torch Award  
GWFC Shane Brown received the Region II Game Warden of the Year Award  
GWFC Kevin Goss received the Region II Boating Safety Officer of the Year Award  
GWFC Shane Sartor received the Region II NWTF Award  
GWFC Joe Hill received the Region II Investigative Officer of the Year Award  
GWFC Beth Gilbert received the Region II Torch Award  
Captain Johnny Johnson received the John Jacobs Award presented by the Hall county Kiwanis Club

### **Promotions and Personnel Changes**

Game Warden Tim Vickery was promoted to Cpl.  
Game Warden Brandon Pierce GWFC 2  
Game Warden Matt Johnson was promoted to GWFC 1  
Game Warden Kevin Goss was promoted GWFC 1  
Game Warden Chris Kernahan GWFC 1  
Game Warden Tommy Crabb was promoted to GW 2  
Game Warden Chris Hall was promoted to GW 2  
Game Warden Ryan Locke was promoted to GW 2  
Cpl. Josh Chambers retired from DNR LED

## **Region III- Thomson (East Central)**



Front Row - L-R: Cpl. Derrell Worth, Cpl. Jeff Billips, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin, Cpl. Ben Payne, Sgt. Max Boswell, Sgt. Matt Garthright, Sgt. Brian Carter

Second Row - L-R: Sgt. John Harwell, GW Dan Schay, Cpl. David Allen, Captain Stan Elrod, GW Phillip Nelson, Cpl. Ryan Swain

Third Row - L-R: Cpl. Brian Adams, GW Jason Harrison, GW Bobby Timmerman, GW Tim Butler, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, Cpl. Mark Patterson

Inset: AACIII Elizabeth Bentley, Part time Secretary Shelby Patterson

### **Personnel Changes**

Region III welcomed four new Game Wardens. Chris Adkins is assigned to Columbia County, John Rhodes is assigned to Lake Oconee Boating Safety, Noah Osborne is assigned to Elijah Clarke State Park, and Jerry Paulk is assigned to Washington/Jonson Counties. Nolan Calloway transferred from Region 1 to McDuffie/ Taliaferro Counties.

### **Region Personnel Awards**

Cpl. Brian Adams received the State Game Warden of the Year award

Cpl. Brian Adams received the NAWEOA Officer of the Year

Cpl. David Allen received the Region III Boating Officer of the Year Award

Sgt. Doyte Chaffin received the State Supervisor of the Year award

Cpl. Ben Payne received the Region III Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award

Cpl. Jeff Billips received the State NWTF Officer of the Year Award



### **Conservation Law Enforcement**

Over the past year, Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, Cpl. Mark Patterson, GWFC Phillip Nelson, and GWFC Tim Butler were involved in five separate illegal trapping incidents. Two incidents occurred in Oglethorpe County, two in Wilkes County, and one in Elbert County. One incident was called in on a complaint when a dog was caught in a leg-hold trap and the other four were self-generated and located while searching for deer and turkey bait. A total of seven subjects were charged. Their charges included Trapping Without a License, Trapping Out of Season, Unlawful Methods (Blind Pig), Failure to Check Within 24 Hours, Failure to Tag Traps, and Trapping Without Permission. Cpl. Patterson placing a camera on a trap site. There are three traps underneath the hanging deer carcass. The two subjects responsible for this setup also used a live chicken in a cage at another spot. They had nine traps placed around the chicken.



In February, Region III LED Game Wardens started an Investigation on illegal artifact digging in Columbia Co. Arrests of two suspects were made in March. One suspect was arrested again in Burke Co. in June. Game Wardens obtained information that also implicated the diggers in South Carolina. Assistance was lent to SCDNR and several arrests were made in McCormick Co. S.C. (One arrest was the same suspect that was arrested in Columbia and Burke). Currently, both states continue to investigate and anticipate several more arrests soon. State Archeologists helped identify the items seized.





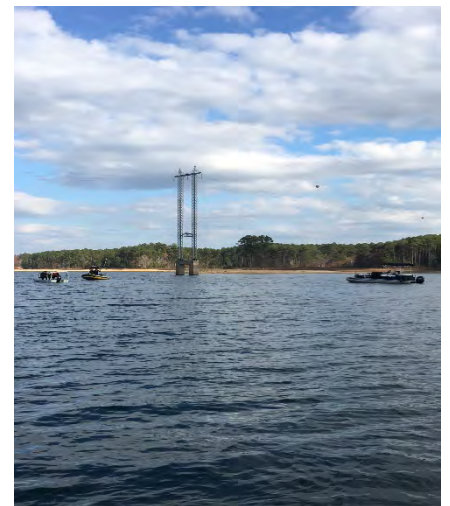
### “Tom Brady” Case

In September 2017, Cpl. Jeff Billips responded to a complaint of a trophy buck killed by a non-resident poacher with a firearm during archery season. Cpl. Billips examined the buck’s carcass at the deer processor. There was an obvious bullet wound that traveled through the buck’s midsection, shattering the spine and leaving a large exit wound. Cpl. Billips noted the poacher had attempted to conceal the bullet wounds by shooting an arrow



through the exit wound. The buck carcass, rack and cape were seized. Cpl. Billips interviewed the poacher, who denied shooting the buck with a firearm. The poacher had not recorded the buck’s harvest. Cpl. Billips found that the poacher had killed a ten point buck the previous weekend and it too had not been recorded or reported. In December State Court, the judge accepted pleas to one count of hunting deer with a centerfire rifle during archery season and two counts recording and reporting requirements for game animals. The poacher was fined for the three counts, his hunting privileges were suspended through January 2019, ordered to pay \$2,000.00 restitution, ordered to pay to have the trophy buck mounted and to surrender the ten-point rack.

On December 1, Region 3 Game Wardens responded to a boating incident on Clarks Hill Lake. The incident involved two bass boats that collided. Both operators were killed. One subject was located the next day and the other subject was located three days later with sector scan. CIRT completed the investigation. Game Wardens involved with the search were Sgt. Doyte Chaffin, Sgt. John Harwell, Sgt. Brian Carter, Cpl. Ryan Swain, GW Jason Harrison, GW Bobby Timmerman, GW Grant Matherly, and Captain Stan Elrod.



Game Wardens responded to a double drowning in Oconee County in June. Game Wardens spent five days on McNutt Creek assisting the county EMA in its search for two teenagers that drowned below a low-head dam after heavy rains.

Cpl. Derrell Worth hosted a youth squirrel hunt and skeet shoot at the Oconee WMA. Twelve kids and their parents took part in the hunt. All children were successful at harvesting a squirrel. These children had completed their hunter safety certification earlier in the year and were given the opportunity to participate in the hunt. Volunteer dog handlers with dogs made this event possible. Nine Game Wardens participated in the hunt and guided the hunt groups to ensure the safety of everyone involved.



GWFC Ricky Boles combated night deer hunting activity in Morgan County after receiving numerous complaints from local citizens. GWFC Boles apprehended three groups of night deer hunters. During one of his stops he located a convicted felon in possession of a firearm. While attempting to make another stop, Captain Stan Elrod and GWFC Boles were led on a high-speed chase, where the driver crashed and fled on foot.

Sgt. Matt Garthright partnered with the Georgia Power Company to construct five additional life jacket loaner boards around Lake Oconee in support of the Wear It Campaign. Sgt. Garthright reached out to friends with the Sea Tow Foundation and got them to donate 300 loaner life jackets. Some of these life jackets were used on Lake Oconee to fill the new loaner boards. Most of the donated life jackets were sent to other parts of the state to fill newly constructed DNR life jacket loaner boards. These new loaner boards on Lake Oconee have been highly used by the public.





The Lake Oconee work unit saw a spike in illegal fishing practices around the lake. The work unit encountered fishermen using cast nets and gill nets to catch game fish. Game Wardens worked this illegal activity during all times of the day and night resulting in 20 individuals charged with illegally netting game fish. Game Wardens confiscated hundreds of game fish that were illegally caught and kept. The illegal activity was detrimental to the fish resource. As a result of the enforcement effort put forth against these illegal practices, the illegal activities were curtailed.



Environmental crimes such as this tire dump became more prevalent this past year. Several tire-dumping cases were investigated by Game Wardens in Newton, Walton, Morgan, and Greene Counties. Game Wardens pursued criminal charges against several individuals and partnered with EPD to pursue the civil process of having these tires cleaned up.





## **Region IV- Macon (West Central)**



Front Row – L-R: Keith Page w/K-9 Rio, AA III Kim Cato, Nikki Spencer, Cpl. Lynn Stanford, Jonathan Segars, Stephen Payne, Secretary Debbie Stephens, Sgt. Jeremy Bolen w/K-9 Ruger

Second Row – L-R: Sgt. Brent Railey, Freddie Hays, Ethan Franklin, Josh Cockrell, Charlie Follin, Ronnie Beard

Third Row – L-R: Cpl. Mitch Oliver, Cpl. Keith Waddell, Cpl. Robert Stillwell, Cpl. Tony Wynne, Cpl. Wil Smith, Captain Chris Hodge

Fourth Row – L-R: Sgt. Bo Kelly, Sgt. Tony Fox, Lamar Burns, Ken Lalumiere, Kevin Godbee, Russell Epps

### **Sgt. Bo Kelly's Work Unit**

Sgt. Kelly's work section covers eight counties and Lake Sinclair. Counties in the area include: Pulaski, Bleckley, Houston, Twiggs, Baldwin, Jones, Wilkinson and Putnam. Working in the work section are Cpl. Lynn Stanford, Cpl. Robert Stillwell, GWFC Ronnie Beard, GW2 Stephen Payne, GW2 Josh Cockrell and GW2 Jonathan Segars.



During this past year, this work section had three new Game Wardens added to its work force. GW2 Stephen Payne, Josh Cockrell and Jonathan Segars graduated from Advanced Game Warden Academy this past fall and filled vacancies in Jones, Wilkinson and Baldwin counties. This has added a much-needed boost to the work section and they are diligently working all complaints received while also providing law enforcement presence on state owned/controlled lands. There are 10 Wildlife Management Areas, 2 Public Fishing Areas, 1 Historic Preservation Area and 2 federal hunting areas (Piedmont NWR, Oconee National Forest) in this work section.

During this past year, Game Wardens worked events at the Perry Buckarama as well as the spring Turkeyrama. During these events, Game Wardens answered questions from the public and distributed recruitment paperwork.



During this period, there were several significant investigations that were conducted by Game Wardens. One such investigation involved hunting deer from motor vehicle and from a public road. After receiving a tip about this incident, Game Wardens located the site where the deer was killed. After collecting evidence, the suspect was interviewed and a confession was obtained. The person was charged with hunting from a public road, hunting from a motor vehicle and hunting without permission.



This work section is also responsible for patrolling Lake Sinclair. Lake Sinclair, a 15,500-acre impoundment operated by Georgia Power is normally a high traffic lake. During this past year, Rangers worked eight boating accidents/incidents on the Lake as well as one drowning. Rangers assisted numerous boaters who were either lost or were having engine problems. There are two patrol boats assigned to Lake Sinclair, both outfitted with side scan sonar, and are housed at the DNR boathouse located on the water. The work section also worked a drowning in the Oconee River, below Milledgeville and another drowning in Wilkinson County, during the year.



Three of the Game Wardens in our work section serve the department as SONAR operators, who have been trained to operate the towed side scan sonar, the sector scan sonar and the ROV (remotely operated vessel). These tools allow us to search the bottom of lakes and rivers for drowning victims as well as evidence of a crime. Below is Cpl. Stanford operating the ROV in a small pond in south Georgia, at the request of the GBI, who were searching for a firearm used in a homicide.



Some of the significant cases that Rangers encountered during this period included 2 groups of persons hunting deer at night, 3 cases of hunting under the influence of alcohol/drugs (HUI) and 13 boating under the influence (BUI) arrests. There were numerous wildlife cases made this past year, including hunting waterfowl over bait and the unlawful selling game fish.





This past fall, Game Wardens assisted local agencies with opening roadways as Hurricane Irma came through the work section. Game Wardens worked on clearing trees from roads, allowing other public safety agencies to be able to respond to calls for service. Game Wardens also opened up roads on WMA areas for the public.



During the year, the Region hosted two student internships through ABAC. The first intern is currently attending Game Warden Academy, while the other is currently going through the hiring process. Our internship programs allow students, working towards their college degree, to work daily with a Game Warden to observe the job and decide if they want to pursue a career as a Game Warden.

GWFC Ronnie Beard was assigned to the Governor's Drug Task Force for seven months of this past year. The GTF is a partnership with DNR, the Georgia State Patrol, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, the Georgia Department of Corrections and the Georgia Department of Community Supervision. The GTF works statewide to detect and eradicate Marijuana grow operations.

#### **Sgt. Jeremy Bolen's Work Unit**



Sgt. Bolen's section consists of Harris, Muscogee, Talbot, Taylor, Crawford, Bibb, and Peach Counties. The Game Wardens in this work unit patrol Lake Harding, Lake Oliver, Goat Rock, and Lake Tobesofkee, along with several miles of the Chattahoochee, Ocmulgee, and Flint Rivers. Several state-owned properties are also located within the work section including 7 Wildlife Management Areas, 1 Public Fishing Area, and 1 State Park. Game Wardens assigned to this work unit are Cpl. Mitch Oliver, Cpl. Josh Swain, GWFC David Fisher, Game Warden Lamar Burns, Game Warden Ethan Franklin, and K-9 Ruger.

Sgt. Jim Bradfield retired this year after 25 years of outstanding service to the citizens of the State of Georgia. Jim enjoyed a wonderful career and we wish the best for him, Carol, and their two boys.



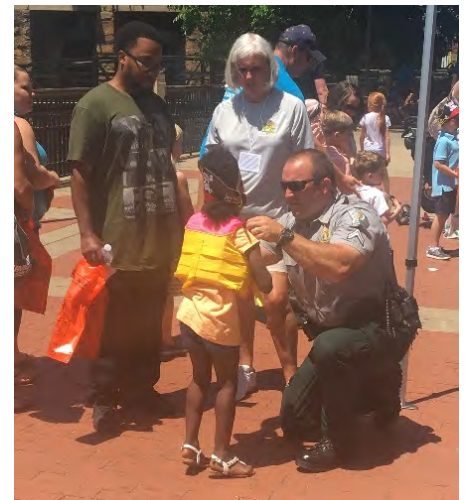
Cpl. Mitch Oliver is a defensive tactics instructor as well as a senior member of the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team. Cpl. Oliver traveled to Missouri and Arkansas this past year where he served as an Instructor at the National Hunting Incident Investigation Academy. Cpl. Mitch Oliver was named the Region 4 Investigative Game Warden of the Year as well as the Region 4 Game Warden of the Year.

In December of 2017, Cpl. Oliver received a complaint of a large buck being killed at a local chicken processing plant in Harris County. The information was initially reported that the deer was put down from the result of some kind of injury. Cpl. Oliver began an investigation which quickly unveiled that criminal acts had occurred. Throughout the investigation, Cpl. Oliver utilized search warrants to obtain surveillance video footage which showed an individual striking the deer with a shovel. After the course of the investigation, Cpl. Oliver took arrest warrants out on the individual for hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license, and hunting with an illegal weapon.



In April of 2018, Cpl. Oliver and Sgt. Bolen were patrolling for turkey hunting violations. They noticed pieces of chicken hanging from a tree limb in front of a trail camera. After an interview with the property owner, it was determined that there was poison capsules (temik) inside of the chicken which was being used to target coyotes. No deceased animal carcasses were located in the area. The case was turned over to the Department of Agriculture for prosecution.

In May of 2018, Cpl. Oliver was instrumental in setting up a life jacket giveaway in Columbus. The event was in partnership with Safe Kids of Columbus. Over 400 life jackets were given away to children during the event. Cpl. Oliver was on hand at the event to ensure that the life jackets were properly fitted for the children.







Cpl. Josh Swain is one of the region sonar operators and he attended a week-long sonar training session this past year. With his vast knowledge of computers, Cpl. Swain was tasked with developing a statewide v-card contact list for the new state issued cell phones. Cpl. Swain travelled out of the section several times to assist other sections with searching for drowning victims. Cpl. Swain was the recipient of the Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award for Region 4. Cpl. Swain took our new Game Warden (Ethan Franklin) under his wing and showed him how to seek out waterfowl violations.

*In October of 2017, Cpl. Swain assisted this successful hunter with checking in his deer on the Big Lazer WMA firearms deer hunt.*



In January of 2018, on the last weekend of the waterfowl season, Cpl. Josh Swain was able to locate a baited duck shoot. The hunters all received citations from Cpl. Swain for their violations. The group still managed to smile and requested a picture with their local Game Warden.





Game Warden First Class David Fisher works a large metro county in the work section. His ability to communicate with the public led him to being selected to teach the required Cultural Awareness training to Game Wardens all over this state. GWFC Fisher attended NASBLA Boating Incident Investigation Level 1 in Tennessee this past year.

In August of 2017, GWFC Fisher was patrolling Bibb County when he discovered something very unusual in the midst of his path. GWFC Fisher identified the object as an African Sulcata Tortoise. GWFC Fisher picked the tortoise up and later discovered that someone was missing the animal. The local museum of arts held the tortoise until the rightful owners were able to retrieve it. This incident was submitted to DNR LED Facebook where it received over 700 likes.



*In May of 2018, GWFC David Fisher presented a live television interview on boating safety to a local news station out of Columbus.*



Game Warden Lamar Burns just recently transferred into the work section. Game Warden Burns is now assigned Bibb County. It was just a short matter of time before the local news stations were calling and wanting to do a boating safety interview with the local Game Warden.



Game Warden Ethan Franklin completed his required FTO training back on January 1st. Game Warden Franklin didn't waste any time getting out and working on his own.

In January of 2018, Game Warden Franklin and Cpl. Bolen located a baited duck shoot. A total of 9 ducks were confiscated for various violations such as hunting over bait, hunting without license, and hunting with lead shot.

*In May of 2018, Game Warden Franklin presented a television interview about boating safety as well as the alligator population on the Chattahoochee River.*



K-9 Ruger was utilized throughout the year. Ruger assisted GWFC Russell Epps with backtracking an individual back to their residence where an illegally taken deer was located, as well as a marijuana grow.

In October of 2017, K-9 Ruger was utilized to perform a demonstration at a local school. The children learned about the functions of a Game Warden and their K-9 companions. Sgt. Bolen's Work section Game Wardens responded to a total of one hunting incident, five boating incidents and six drownings during this past year.





### **Sgt. Brent Railey's Work Unit**



Sgt. Railey's work unit covers Henry, Spalding, Pike, Clayton, Fayette, Meriwether, Coweta, Heard, and Troup Counties. His work unit also consists of West Point Lake and several miles of the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers.

Cpl. Keith Waddell, GW Russell Epps, GW Kevin Godbee, GW Charles Follin, and GW Ken Lalumiere are currently assigned under Sgt. Railey's command. Cpl. Travis Sweat is currently assigned on a detachment to the Training Unit at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center to assist with hiring and training of new Game Warden cadets. Currently, Game Warden Cadet Steven Martinez, assigned to Troup County, is attending the Advanced Game Warden academy and will enter the field in late October.

In July 2017 Cpl. Keith Waddell, Cpl. Travis Sweat and Game Warden Charlie Follin caught two subjects illegally digging artifacts in Pike County. The two subjects were arrested and charged with digging artifacts without permission.

On Thursday August 24 GWFC Kevin Godbee, GWFC Russell Epps, Cpl. Keith Waddell and Sgt. Brent Railey assisted the US Army Corps of Engineers, The Troup County Fire Department, Troup County Sheriff's Office and the 1-507<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regiment of the US Army, Ft. Benning with a training exercise on West Point Lake. Members of the 1-507<sup>th</sup> jumped from helicopters using parachutes from about 1500 feet into the lake. DNR Game Wardens kept boat traffic off of the soldiers while they completed their training. About 70 soldiers jumped that afternoon. They did a similar training exercise in May 2018.



On September 3, 2017 Sgt. Brent Railey, Game Warden Russell Epps and Captain Chris Hodge responded to the Earl Cook Beach area of West Point Lake. Two 12-year-old children were swimming in the water when one went into distress and the second tried to save him. They both drowned and were recovered a short time later by the Troup County Sheriff's Office dive team and DNR Game Wardens.

On September 6, 2017 at about 5:00 AM Sgt. Brent Railey received a call from Henry County 911. There was a report of a Bengal tiger running loose near I-75 in Henry County. Sgt. Railey along with Lt. Wayne Hubbard, Sgt. Roberts, Cpl. Travis Sweat, Game Warden Charlie Follin and members of DNR Wildlife Resources Division Game Management Staff responded to the scene. Before they could arrive, several Henry County Officers shot and killed the tiger. It was later determined that the tiger was being transported from Florida to another state and had gotten out of its enclosure.

On February 15, 2018 Cpl. Keith Waddell and GW Charlie Follin responded to a missing person on West Point Lake at Clark Access. They, along with Troup County Sheriff's Office and Fire units along with volunteers searched the area. The boat the missing elderly fisherman was in was located and shortly thereafter his body was located in the water near the boat. It was later determined that the cause of death was accidental drowning.

*Cpl. Keith Waddell and cousin Michael Waddell of Bone Collector, along with their sons, filmed a video promoting the new DNR LED tag. Bone Collector's endorsement of the new LED tag was very beneficial in the success of pre-selling the 1000 tag minimum.*





Sgt. Brent Railey completed Command College and was awarded a MPSA (Master of Public Safety Administration) degree from Columbus State University in May 2018.

Cpl. Travis Sweat was detached to the DNR LED Training Unit at GPSTC to assist with the hiring and in service training in DNR LED in March 2018.

Cpl. Keith Waddell completed the 40 hour IHEA Hunting Incident Investigation Academy in Missouri.

Game Warden Charlie Follin completed field training on January 1, 2018 and is currently assigned to Coweta County.

Game Warden Steven Martinez was hired on April 1, 2018 and is assigned to Troup County/West Point Lake. He is scheduled to attend the Game Warden academy in July 2018.

Game Warden Ken Lalumiere took a lateral transfer to Pike County from the High Falls/Indian Springs State Park position.

#### **Sgt. Tony Fox's Work Unit**



This year began with Sgt. Fox as the supervisor for the work unit that covers Butts, Jasper, Lamar, Monroe, and Upson Counties. Included in this work unit are Lake Jackson, Lake Juliette, High Falls Lake, the Ocmulgee River, the Towaliga River, the Flint River, High Falls State Park, Indian Springs State Park, Rum Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Clybel WMA, Sprewell Bluff WMA, Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, Marben Farm PFA, and Camp Thunder hunting area.

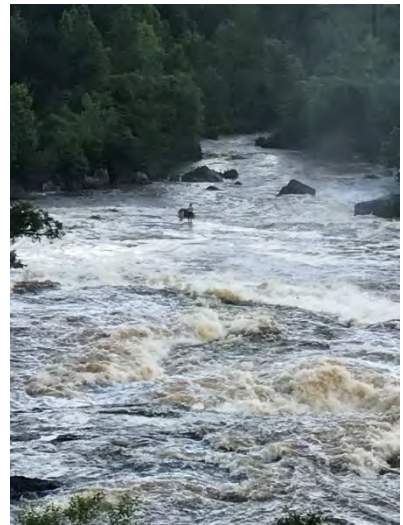
The work unit had a total of eight officers assigned: Sgt. Tony Fox as the supervisor, Cpl. Wil Smith, Cpl. Tony Wynne, Game Warden First Class Fred Hays, Game Warden First Class Jessica (Niki) Spencer, Game Warden First Class Keith Page (with K-9 Rio), Game Warden First Class Jeremy Reese, and Game Warden Ken Lalumiere. This past spring Jeremy Reese transferred to the investigative unit and Ken Lalumiere took the open position in Pike County. Game Warden Cadet Zachary Griffis is currently attending the Advanced Game Warden Academy and will graduate in late October. He will be assigned to High Falls/Indian Springs State Parks.



Early in FY 2018, Sgt. Fox was pulled out of the work unit to take over the Admin Sergeant position at the Region IV Office. With Sgt. Fox's departure from the work unit, Cpl. Tony Wynne assumed interim duties as the supervisor for the work unit while also handling his duties as the Game Warden for Monroe County.

In the early spring of this year, a young boy fell from the falls on High Falls State Park and drowned. His older brother also fell but was trapped at the base of the upper falls. Due to the high water, the only way to save the boy and recover the deceased child was to use a helicopter.

In late spring two kids, a male and a female, seventeen years of age required rescue. Due to the danger of the falls and the danger that First Responders face in trying to effect rescues, the work unit has begun strictly enforcing the park regulations to keep visitors off of the falls. During the month of June, the work unit made 25 trips down the falls, wrote 37 cases/warnings, and escorted 131 people off the park site. The concentrated patrols have noticeably decreased the number of people getting on the falls.



Over this past fiscal year, Cpl. Wil Smith worked two hunting accidents and one drowning. He was also recognized by the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. While traveling north on I-75, Cpl. Smith came upon a traffic accident. When he stopped to render assistance, he saw a Georgia State Patrol Trooper administering CPR to a person lying on the ground. Cpl. Smith assisted the trooper by administering breaths to the victim. Due to their efforts, the injured subject was revived. Smith is currently enrolled in the Professional Management Program at Columbus State University and should complete his final segment this year.



This past spring, Game Warden First Class Fred Hays was called to a boat repair facility that had questions about hull identification number on a boat they were repairing. Upon investigation, Hays, with assistance from the Investigative Unit, determined that the number on the boat was not valid and did not match the hidden number on the boat. The boat had travelled a circuitous route through several states before it wound up in Georgia to be sold. Arrests have been made and are pending adjudication.



Game Warden First Class Niki Spencer worked two boating incidents on Lake Jackson. On one, which occurred in late June, a 24' inboard/outboard exploded killing the owner of the boat. In addition to working boat incidents, Spencer assisted with the shotgun range during the Georgia Wild Day, giving the young shooters a safety briefing prior to them shooting. In addition to working boat incidents, Spencer assisted with the shotgun range during the Georgia Wild Day, giving the young shooters a safety briefing prior to them shooting.



Game Warden First Class Keith Page and his K-9 partner, Rio, are in high demand by local law enforcement agencies in the Middle Georgia area. Page and Rio have been requested to search for people, guns, and other objects as requested by the local agencies. Page and Rio are in high demand because they have a reputation for being responsive as well as having a high success rate in their searches.



*GWFC Keith Page with K-9 partner Rio*

During the early summer, the middle Georgia area received several inches of rain over a few days. On May 23<sup>rd</sup>, DNR Law Enforcement received a call from the Crawford County Sheriff's office in reference to assistance needed on the Flint River. Cpl. Wil Smith and Game Warden Keith Page were dispatched to the area to try and locate an overturned boat in the river. Taylor County EMA launched a boat at the same time as Cpl. Smith and GW Page to start searching. A short time later, a mechanical failure on the Game Warden boat



caused Page and Smith to drift uncontrollably down the swift running river. Their boat then became lodged against tree which caused their patrol boat to swamp and overturn. At that point the Game Wardens quickly found themselves in a very dangerous situation. Luckily, a Georgia State Patrol helicopter was on scene and observed the entire incident from the air. The pilot was able to keep a close watch on the Game Wardens as they made their way out of the water and to an area where they could be picked up by the helicopter.

In the fall of 2017, the Region IV Law Enforcement office received a grant from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency to purchase and equip three swift water rescue boats. With this grant, Region IV was able to purchase three inflatable rescue boats along with motors and trailers. This equipment will allow for quicker and safer responses to the swift water rivers in the middle Georgia area. This equipment will also allow for responses to flooding around the state as well. Earlier in the year, Region IV Game Wardens all received hands on training in the basic operation of these new boats. Training is also being planned for the upcoming year to send Game Wardens to South Bend, Indiana, to attend the Indiana River Rescue school's swift water boat operator's course.





## Region V- Albany (Southwest)



L-R: Capt. Rick Sellars, Sgt. Ellis Wynn, Cpl. Jesse Harrison, AOC Cindy Hynote, Cpl. Clint Martin, Sgt. Al Greer, Cpl. Tony Cox, Ranger David Jones, GWFC Jon Penuel, GWFC Quinn Fogle, GWFC Steve Thomas, Cpl. Scott Carroll, Sgt. Bob Holley, Cpl. Steve Robinson, GWFC Eric White, Sgt. Jim Atchley  
Kneeling: Cpl. Greg Wade, K-9 Trigg  
Not pictured: Sgt. David Ruddell, Secretary Shannon Boyd

The Region V Law Enforcement Division is comprised of twenty-nine counties in the southwest portion of the state with the headquarters located in Albany. Within the region, there are five large reservoirs, two major rivers, three smaller rivers, thirteen wildlife management areas, seven state parks, Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge, and Ft. Benning Military Base.

Currently, the region has twenty-six POST certified game wardens assigned to its' ranks with twenty-four assigned field responsibilities and Captain Rick Sellars and Sgt. Ellis Wynn assigned administrative responsibilities. The region also has two non-sworn administrative staff, Cindy Hynote the Administrative Assistant III, and Shannon Boyd the hourly secretary.

*Sgt. Ellis Wynn, AOC Cindy Hynote, Captain Rick Sellars*



**The region's twenty-nine counties are divided into four work units; each supervised by a Sergeant.**

**Sgt. Al Greer's Work Unit**



Sgt. Greer and his staff, Cpl. Clint Martin and Cpl. Jesse Harrison. Sgt. Greer's work unit covers Marion, Macon, Schley, Dooly, Sumter, Crisp, Lee and Turner counties. Key points of interest are Georgia Veterans State Park, Lake Blackshear, Flint River WMA, Montezuma Bluffs Natural Area, Cordele Fish Hatchery and Fall Line WMA.

**Sgt. David Ruddell's Work Unit**



Sgt. Ruddell's work unit covers Dougherty, Worth, Tift, Colquitt, Thomas and Brooks counties. Key points of interest are Lake Worth, Doerun Picture Plant Bog Natural Area, River Creek WMA, Chickasawhatchee WMA, DOT Mitigation sites and Albany Nursery WMA.



### **Sgt. Bob Holley's Work Unit**



Sgt. Holley and his staff, Cpl. Tony Cox, Game Warden First Class Steve Thomas and Ranger David Jones. Sgt. Holley's work unit covers Grady, Decatur, Seminole, Miller, Early, Mitchell, and Baker Counties. Key points of interest include Lake Seminole, Seminole State Park, Kolomoki Mounds State Park, Chickasawhatchee WMA, Silver Lake WMA, Lake Seminole WMA and Elmodel WMA.

### **Sgt. Jim Atchley's Work Unit**



Sgt. Jim Atchley and his staff, Cpl. Scott Carroll, Cpl. Steve Robinson and GWFC Quinn Fogle. Sgt. Atchley's work unit covers Chattahoochee, Stewart, Webster, Quitman, Randolph, Terrell, Clay and Calhoun counties. Key points of interest include Chickasawhatchee WMA, Lake Walter F. George, Providence Canyon State Park, Florence Marina State Park, George Bagby State Park, Hannahatchee Creek WMA, Lake George WMA and Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge and Fort Benning Military Base.

**Region V staff received numerous awards and honors for their work throughout the year.**



*GWFC Quinn Fogle being recognized at the annual Albany Exchange Club banquet as the region's game warden of the year by club president Gary Knight.*

*GWFC Fogle was also recognized as the regions investigative game warden of the year following an investigation into the illegal killing of a trophy whitetail buck in Webster County.*



*Cpl. Jesse Harrison received the NWTF award.*

Cpl. Tony Cox was selected as the Region V Waterfowl Enforcement Officer of the Year and he was subsequently selected as the 2018 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award winner for the state. He dedicated 171 hours patrolling waterfowl habitat in Decatur, Seminole and Early Counties. Cpl. Cox's waterfowl patrols resulted in interactions with 198 hunters and the documentation of fifty-one quality cases and warnings. Highlights of Tony's activity include locating two out of season duck shoots that occurred in Seminole and Decatur Counties, one after-hours roost shoot, two shoots with persons over bag limits, and three baited ponds which resulted in nine adults being cited and verbal guidance being given to five persons under the age of seventeen. Cpl. Cox also issued citations for the taking of protected species, hunting from a moving vessel (rallying ducks), utilizing lead shot and other lesser offences. Tony confiscated nearly 60 ducks of various species during his patrols.





Cpl. Tony Cox was also selected as the Region V Boating Safety Game Warden of the Year for his outstanding work in boating safety. Cpl. Cox dedicated 690 hours of effort towards providing the public with a safe environment on the waters in and around Lake Seminole. As a result, he checked 233 vessels for boating and other conservation related violations and documented over 75 violator contacts to include seven B.U.I.'s and two child endangerments.

### **Region V experienced several personnel changes this year**

- Jon Penuel promoted to Cpl. in Mitchell County then transferred to the Cpl. position in Cook County in Region 6.
- Cpl. Tommy Daugherty transferred from Cook County in Region 6 to Brooks County in Region 5.
- Cpl. Greg Wade transferred from Colquitt County to Worth County.
- Warden David Jones completed field training and laterally transferred to Colquitt County.
- Jesse Harrison was promoted to Cpl. and transferred from Macon County to Crisp County.
- Cpl. Robbie Griner retired on a medical disability after suffering a back injury.

The Law Enforcement Division was fortunately able to hire additional game wardens throughout the state this year, with Region V receiving nine new game wardens. These nine cadets completed POST basic training and entered the Game Warden Academy in July of 2018.

- Philip Stout is assigned to Calhoun County.
- Ryan Cleveland is assigned to Early County.
- Logan South is assigned to Lee County.
- Dean Gibson is assigned to Marion County.
- Kristie Carpenter is assigned to Tift County.
- Clayvin Pickard is assigned to Clay County.
- Brock Hoyt is assigned to Stewart County.
- Taylor Brown is assigned to Baker County.
- Bryan Price is assigned to Schley County.

*Cadets Brock Hoyt and Clayvin Pickard during POST Basic Training at GPSTC.*



## Region V New Equipment



*GWFC Steve Thomas displays his new 2017 F-150. This year, the Law Enforcement Division transitioned from marking their vehicles and vessels with state ranger to game warden.*

*GWFC Eric White with a new Xtreme stick steer river boat.*



*Cadet Philip Stout and Cpl. Scott Carroll with their new Pathfinder 2300HPS patrol boat which is assigned to Lake Walter F. George.*

*Sgt. Bob Holley, AOC Cindy Hynote and GWFC Steve Thomas with the new Gator Trax boat which is assigned to Lake Seminole. Cindy was instrumental in the purchase of the boat which will be a tremendous asset on the lake.*







*Contractors rework the Radium Springs tower at the region office. In an ongoing project, repeaters and towers throughout the region are being updated and replaced.*

### **Game Wardens in their communities**

Game Wardens continue to be involved in community activities, attending dinners with local groups and participating with various civic functions.



*Cpl. Jesse Harrison with Crisp County Elementary School students.*

*Cpl. Clint Martin providing an environmental program at a local elementary school.*



Cpl. Tony Cox facilitated the installation of SPLASH Campaign signs at several locations in his work area. The SPLASH campaign is an anti-drowning program initiated by first lady Sandra Deal and involves several public and private partners including the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.



Game Wardens from Georgia and Alabama attend the annual Corps of Engineer Law Enforcement Meeting at Fort Gaines Corps office. This annual meeting allows the law enforcement agencies which have jurisdiction over the corps property a chance to meet and discuss items of importance.

Wardens participated in many programs at local schools this year, many requests were received for safety programs related to boating and water safety prior to children being released for the summer.



*Cadet Logan South conducting a water safety program at Crisp County Elementary School.*

*Wardens David Jones and Eric White participate at an event sponsored by Big Jim's Bow Company.*







*Game Warden David Jones (far right) guiding a successful turkey hunt on the Youth Mentored hunt sponsored by NWTF.*

*Sgt. Jim Atchley provides boat operations training to City of Albany Animal Control officers.*



*Cpl. Greg Wade with his K-9 Trigg conducting a program at a local school.*

## **Work Unit Activities**

Sgt. Greer, Cpl. Clint Martin, and Cpl. Jesse Harrison documented one hundred and six landowner complaints during hunting season. The section charged seven people with hunting deer at night. Cpl. Clint Martin charged one subject for hunting deer out of season, and apprehended an out of season dove shoot. Cpl. Jesse Harrison caught a subject who killed three turkeys prior to turkey season. Cpl. Martin and Cpl. Harrison worked two hunting incidents, one was a tree stand fall and the other was a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the foot. Cpl. Martin and Cpl. Harrison worked a turtle trapping complaint in conjunction with the investigative unit, seizing twenty-seven illegal traps on Lake Blackshear and issuing a total of fifty eight citations to two subjects. During the boating season the section arrested seven subjects for boating under the influence on Lake Blackshear, and worked two boating incidences which had no injuries.

Sgt. Bob Holley, Cpl. Tony Cox, Cpl. Jon Penuel and GWFC Steve Thomas spent three hundred and fourteen hours working a total of sixty-one complaints. Investigations into these complaints lead to the arrest of 29 persons for offences that included fishing and hunting without permission, night deer hunting, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, possession of meth-amphetamine, possession of marijuana, collecting artifacts without permission and the possession of wildlife without a permit. During the hunting season these Game Wardens arrested five groups of night hunters that consisted of thirteen individuals, flagged six dove fields, shut down and cited hunters on three baited dove fields and confiscated three illegally taken bucks. During waterfowl season sixty-nine violator contacts were made for waterfowl hunting violations as game wardens apprehended hunters on five baited duck ponds, two out of season shoots and one after-hours roost shoot. Eighty-nine illegally taken ducks were confiscated throughout the season. During the alligator season eight non-permitted Florida hunters were cited for hunting alligators in Georgia waters. The Game Wardens worked eight reportable boating incidents that resulted in three injuries. Seven BUI arrests were made on the combined waters of Lake Seminole, Spring Creek and the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers.

Sgt. Jim Atchley, Cpl. Scott Carroll, Cpl. Steve Robinson, GWFC Quinn Fogle and Cadet Philip Stout documented 370 assists, 520 violations (including 5 BUI's and 3 convicted felons with firearms), confiscated 15 deer, 6 ducks, and 250 dove. The officers worked over 3700 hours of wildlife patrols, 492 hours of fishing patrols, 838 hours of boating enforcement and 712 hours in training. They conducted 428 patrols on state owned lands, 78 vessel patrols and worked 376 hours investigating 92 complaints. Cpl. Scott Carroll is serving as a POST instructor for Firearms, Environmental Law and Basic/Advanced ATV. He is also a CTTF and Honor Guard member and a FTO. Cpl. Steve Robinson is serving as a POST instructor for Wildlife ID and Basic/Advanced ATV and is also a CIRT Investigator. GWFC Quinn Fogle has been recognized as the Region V Game Warden of the year for the second year in a row and has completed an extensive investigation into a night hunting case charging ten individuals with eighty-nine charges for violating wildlife laws.

**Game Wardens continue to conduct investigations into illegal activities, working diligently to address landowner concerns and violations throughout the region.**

*A site in Lee County on private property where illegal artifact digging has been taking place.*





Game Wardens received many complaints related to illegal dumping and burning of various materials as people attempt to avoid disposal fees at landfills. They worked closely with county code enforcement officers to curtail the activity.

*Household garbage and building materials illegally dumped in Worth County.*



*Warden Eric White investigating an environmental complaint in Dougherty County.*

*Oil and filters illegally dumped and burned near Lake Worth in Dougherty County.*





Several boating access points were developed in the region, the one pictured below is Suttons Landing in Lee County. The ramp was named in honor of Marine Lance Cpl. Steven Sutton, a Lee County native, who was killed in Afghanistan.

Ramps such as this are constructed through the Sport Fish Restoration Program and cooperative efforts with the DNR Fisheries Section using funds derived from the Dingell-Johnson Act.



*Suttons Landing in Lee County*





Sgt. Ellis Wynn and GWFC Quinn Fogle responded to a wildfire in the campground on Hannahatchee Creek WMA. Three hunters staying at the campsite failed to extinguish their fire when they left to go hunting and the fire escaped, destroying their tent and gear and also threatening several other campers in the area.

**Waterfowl season was very productive across the region and wardens continued to address violations of hunting over bait, over the limit and boating safety.**



The region had several snow events this season and hunters welcomed the winter weather.

*The view from the Cromartie boat ramp on Lake Worth, as Game Wardens wait on duck hunters to come in following morning hunts.*

*Wardens David Jones and Cpl. Tony Cox with illegally taken wildlife they seized during an investigation in Decatur and Seminole Counties.*



*Cpl. Jon Penuel with wood ducks  
he confiscated during a mid-  
December over bait case.*



*Sgt. Ellis Wynn listens for an early morning duck shoot in Baker County.*





*Cpl. Greg Wade with ducks seized following charges of shooting over bait.*

*On January 28<sup>th</sup>, Game Warden David Jones located a roost shoot where the violators had shot and left 39 hooded mergansers in the pond.*



*Sgt. Jim Atchley patrolling the swamps of Chickasawhatchee WMA for illegal activity.*

*Mallard ducks have been harvested in increasing numbers throughout the region during the past several years.*



*Sgt. Bob Holley in the process of flagging a baited dove field in Early County.*



*GWFC Steve Thomas enjoying a patrol on the backwaters of Lake Seminole.*

Cpl. Daughtrey logged over 50 miles of foot patrols in Brooks County while searching for out of season turkey hunters and baited areas. Tommy caught eight subjects, hunting areas scattered throughout the county. With so many baited areas located, Tommy made use of the newly purchased Spartan trail cameras to assist with his surveillance efforts. One area he was watching was baited repeatedly throughout the season but no one was encountered during his follow up visits. Tommy decided to let the camera do the work and was rewarded when the hunter finally triggered the camera, late in the season. Without the camera, it would have been difficult to catch this particular subject. Tommy's efforts resulted in 15 turkey contacts and three confiscated turkeys for the season.



*Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey with a confiscated three bearded turkey which was killed over bait.*





*Cadet Dean Gibson and Cpl. Clint Martin patrolling Lake Blackshear.*

*Dove hunting continues to be productive in the early season on manipulated sunflower and grain sorghum fields.*



*GWFC Quinn Fogle completing some of the eighty-nine warrants associated with a night hunting investigation.*



*Feral Hog hunting remains one of the more popular hunting sports and occurs 24/7 year-round. Hog hunting with dogs has generated many complaints related to hunting without permission.*





*Cadet Ryan Cleveland meeting with park staff on Seminole State Park to discuss a complaint.*

Wardens were busy during alligator season as hunters were encountered hunting both day and night. Wardens in Region V have to contend with three alligator seasons involving Alabama, Florida and Georgia. The Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge is also located on the Chattahoochee River in both Alabama and Georgia and requires constant attention, as it is not open to alligator hunting. Georgia wardens also attended the Alabama Game and Fish annual alligator meeting to provide insight into both state's seasons.



*Warden David Jones with an illegally taken alligator he seized following an investigation.*

May was a busy month for Game Wardens investigating poached alligators. Game Warden David Jones, with the assistance of Cpl. Greg Wade and GWFC Eric White, conducted investigations of two trophy-sized alligators that were killed illegally. The first case involved three subjects who shot a large alligator in the Ochlocknee River. The suspects were charged for hunting alligators out of season, possession of alligator parts, and selling alligator parts

The second alligator investigation involved five subjects who participated in the killing of a large alligator after it was caught on a baited hook. The subjects were charged for hunting alligators out of season, use of unlawful devices, possession of alligator parts, and littering.



## Search and Rescue Operations

On the afternoon of April 5<sup>th</sup> members of Sgt. Jim Atchley's work unit were contacted by the Henry County Alabama Sheriff's Department to assist with the search for a boat and three passengers that went missing on Lake Walter F. George. The following day a debris field and one deceased victim was located. The game wardens utilized the towed sonar in a search that lasted five days and covered a search area of over a square mile due to the unknown location of the sinking. The boat and other two victims were eventually located and recovered in Alabama waters.



*Sgt. Bob Holley, Cpl. Tony Cox and Cadet Ryan Cleveland responded to an incident involving an airboat which flooded and sank on Lake Seminole in early April.*

In September, a small johnboat sank on the Flint River resulting in one fatality. Game Wardens spent the next several days in inclement weather searching the river with sonar in an attempt to locate the victim.



*Game Wardens prepare to deploy the towed sonar at the scene of a drowning on the Flint River.*

*One of two bass boats involved in a collision during the FLW bass tournament on Lake Seminole and investigated by Cpl.s Tony Cox and Steve Robinson.*



On June 9<sup>th</sup> a kayaker who wasn't wearing a PFD and was unable to swim, drowned after he fell out of his kayak during a storm on Lake Blackshear.



**Game Wardens were busy attending training throughout the year**



*Region V AOC II Hynote and hourly secretary Shannon Boyd are fingerprinted as part of her GCIC requirements.*



*Region V staff at fall firearms training.*



*Retired Sergeants (L-R) Danny Bishop, John Pettis and Leonard Stuart attended firearms qualification this year.*



*Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey assists Cadet Kristie Carpenter with her online training.*



Long Line rescue training was conducted at Providence Canyon State Park in April and involved parks staff, local first responders and game wardens.



*PT Instructor Cpl. Jesse Harrison (left) demonstrates the proper technique for performing push-ups during PT assessment as other officers follow his lead.*



## Region VI- Metter (Southeast)



**Kneeling – L-R:** Cpl. Dan Stiles, GWFC Sam Williams, GW Joseph Cowart, GWFC Clint Jarriel, GWFC Bobby Sanders, GW Christopher Thompson, Cpl. Jason Shipes, GWFC Daniel North  
**Sitting – L-R:** Sgt. Patrick Dupree, Cpl. Mark Pool, Sgt. James McLaughlin, Capt. Scott Klingel, Sgt. Jon Barnard, GWFC Patrick Gibbs, Cpl. Chase Altman, GWFC Jason Miller, Cpl. John Stokes  
**Standing – L-R:** Sgt. Morty Wood, GWFC Randell Meeks, GWFC Allen Mills, GWFC Rodney Horne, GWFC Judd Sears, Cpl. Jon Penuel, Sgt. Brian Hobbins, Cpl. Mike Wilcox, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely, Cpl. Kevin Joyce.  
**Inset:** Sgt. Chris Moore, Cpl. Tim Hutto and GWFC Jordan Crawford.

The Region VI office in Metter services 32 of Georgia's coastal plains counties and covers over 14,000 square miles. This includes 11 river systems that range from the mighty Savannah River down to the black waters of the St. Mary River. Region VI Wardens patrol over 142,000 acres of public lands that includes: six state parks, eighteen WMA properties, four PFA properties, various public dove fields and many VPA properties.

### Personnel

The office is staffed by Region Supervisor Captain Scott Klingel, Administrative Sgt. Chris Moore, Administrative Assistant 2 April Thrift, and Secretary Christina Colquitt.



*AA3 April Thrift and Secretary Christina Colquitt*

### **Personnel Changes**

- GW Judd Sears transferred from Region VII to Pierce/Bacon Counties. In October 2017.
- Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey transferred from Cook County to Region V in January 2018.
- GWFC Patrick Gibbs transferred from Region VII to Evans County in March 2018.
- GW Randell Meeks transferred from Emanuel/Candler Counties to Treutlen County in March 2018.
- GW Chris Thompson transferred from Atkinson/Lanier Counties to Irwin County in March 2018.
- GW Lamar Burns transferred from Region VI Telfair County to Region IV in March 2018.
- Cpl. Jon Penuel transferred from Region V to Cook County in April 2018.

### **New Hires (L to R)**



*Sgt. Chris Moore with  
the Region VI Cadets*

- Jason Bennett assigned to Lowndes County in January 2018.
- Cameron Dyal assigned to Jeff Davis County in January 2018.
- Johnny Robinette assigned to Lanier County in April 2018.
- Ben Reese assigned to Emanuel County in April 2018.
- Thomas Sibley assigned to Berrien County in January 2018.
- John Kennedy assigned to Wilcox County in April 2018.

### **Promotions**

GW Judd Sears promoted to Game Warden First Class on March 1, 2018.





Sadly, there was a loss in the region with K-9 Briar DNR528K passing away in January.



*Briar in action.*

#### **Region Personnel Awards**

- Cpl. Kevin Joyce Region VI Ranger of the Year.
- Cpl. Kevin Joyce Region VI Waterfowl Officer of Year.
- Cpl. Kevin Joyce Region VI Most LED Tags Sold
- GWFC Jason Miller Region VI Investigative Ranger of the Year.
- GWFC Daniel North Region VI NWTF Officer of the Year.
- GWFC Bobby Sanders Statewide Torch Award winner.
- GWFC Bobby Sanders Region VI Hunter Ed Instructor of the Year.
- Cpl. Jason Shipes 2017 James Darnell Award Winner.

## Continuing Education and Specialized Training

In the interest of growing our personnel, DNR LED participates in several leadership development programs. The following Region VI Wardens participating in the programs are:

Sgt. James McLaughlin attended classes at Columbus State University Command College and was selected to be in the 3<sup>rd</sup> DNR Leadership Academy.

Corporals Mike Wilcox, Tim Hutto, Jason Shipes, Kevin Joyce and Mark Pool attended classes at Columbus State University Professional Management Program (PMP).

As technology advances so does the means for investigating the hunting and boating incidents across the state. GWFC Clint Jarriel and GWFC Jordan Crawford completed the IHEA Hunting Incident Investigation Academy in Missouri.

To maintain the quality of training that our officers receive, it is pertinent to develop in-house instructors. Region VI is proud to present Cpl. Shaymus McNeely and Cpl. Dan Stiles as the newest POST certified instructors.

## Night Hunting

Timber tracts, river corridors and agricultural crop land make up a large portion of the private lands inside the region. These rural environments create a prime setting for illegal night hunting and other forms of poaching.

Region VI had another successful year in apprehending night hunters, 81 persons were apprehended and a total of 196 violations were documented. Air support was used for a Bacon County detail that resulted in eight persons cited for a total of 18 violations. In many cases the stop leads to more than hunting violations. These totals do not include crop damage permit violations that were also documented by the Region VI Wardens.



*Multiple weapons removed from a vehicle during a Toombs County night hunt stop by GWFC Bobby Sanders and GWFC Clint Jarriel.*

*Cpl. Dan Stiles discovered more than a weapon during a poaching stop. Along with the deer and weapon, a bag of marijuana was also taken as evidence.*





## Investigations

Along with patrols of their assigned area, Game Wardens also respond to tips and complaints received via the Ranger Hotline, social media and sometimes straight from the public. Region VI had multiple investigations into illegal harvesting of deer along with other game and fish violations.



GWFC Jason Miller received information of someone taking over the limit. A two-month long investigation by Miller, with assistance from Cpl. Shaymus McNeely, led to multiple charges in two counties against a father and his two sons. A total of 31 racks were confiscated as evidence in the case.

GWFC Jordan Crawford received several tips from citizens about a large buck being taken illegally in Effingham County. After a month-long investigation, Crawford charged the violator with hunting without a license, hunting without a big game license and hunting without a harvest record. The deer was also confiscated.



GWFC Allen Mills confiscated an illegally taken buck. The violator had already taken two bucks earlier in the season.

In November 2017, GWFC Jordan Crawford, assisted by GWFC Jack Thain and K-9 Case, conducted an investigation that led to the arrest of an individual for nine counts of hunting related charges and two felony counts of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Two guns and two deer were confiscated.



GWFC Jason Miller received information about someone who was in possession of a dead bald eagle. Miller, Sgt. Brian Hobbins, and an investigator from the Bulloch County SO went to the residence and interviewed two suspects. During the investigation, it was determined the suspects



were also in possession of an illegally taken duck and two illegally taken deer. Multiple charges were filed against the suspects. The eagle and duck were both seized as evidence and were donated to an educational institution. One subject paid \$2000 in fines and was sentenced to 60 days in jail. The second subject paid \$1000 and was sentenced to 30 days in jail.

In September 2017, Game Wardens Daniel North and Joseph Cowart, and Cpl. Jason Shipes observed vehicles parked near a small pond in Ware County. Upon stopping to investigate it was discovered that the juveniles were attempting to catch an alligator. The violations were addressed, and their poaching equipment seized.





## Dove Season

Region VI Game Wardens conducted many pre-season dove field inspections. Some inspections were from tips others were from normal patrols. Several fields were posted and dove shoots were not allowed until all regulations were met. Even with the posting of many baited fields, several violations were still documented during the season.

*GWFC Clint Jarriel with 45 doves confiscated from an illegal dove shoot in Montgomery County. GWFC Bobby Sanders assisted in the case.*



## Waterfowl

While Region VI does not have large impoundments, it has 11 river systems flowing through it. Those river systems, along with numerous farm ponds and remote swamps, makes locating waterfowl hunting infractions a challenge.



Region VI's Waterfowl Ranger of the Year, Cpl. Kevin Joyce, had a successful year in catching multiple violators during waterfowl season. Evidence photos from several illegal duck shoots from Montgomery and Treutlen counties.

Ducks confiscated by Sgt. Brian Hobbins and Cpl. Mike Wilcox. Seven hunters were charged with hunting waterfowl after hours and one was charged with taking over the limit. The 22 ducks were donated to a local charity that provides meals for homeless shelters.



On Thanksgiving Day 2017, Sgt. Patrick Dupree and GW Daniel North located an illegal duck shoot in Echols County where two of the five hunters fled the scene. Cpl. Tim Hutto and his K-9 Titan responded, along with Cpl. Jason Shipes and GW Joseph Cowart. The additional hunters were identified and returned to the location. Violations of hunting without federal waterfowl stamp, hunting ducks over bait, hunting without Georgia migratory bird stamp, possession over the daily bag limit, hunting without a license, hunting with unplugged shotgun and interference with the performance of a Ranger's duties were documented. Forty-three illegally-killed ducks were confiscated.

### **Turkey Season**

After a short break following deer season, turkey season brings warmer weather and the renewed challenge of finding turkey bait.

*Cpl. Tim Hutto found this blind in front of turkey bait in Berrien County in March 2018.*





*Game Wardens Allen Mills and Chris Thompson apprehended an individual for killing these three gobblers over bait in Telfair County.*



### **Protecting the resources on state lands**

During the last few years, WRD has added new lands to those that are managed by DNR. Several WMA's grew in size, while several new properties added to the number of acres patrolled by the region's Wardens. Game Wardens patrol public lands for hunting, fishing and boating, as well as for other activities that range from illegal use of ATV's to drug possession.

Several of these properties have palmetto plants on them and the palmetto berries are popular in the homeopathic medicine market. Region VI Wardens work with other state agencies, such as Georgia Forestry Commission, to protect the public lands. Multiple groups have been arrested on various properties for illegally picking the berries.



*A group of palmetto berry thieves caught by Region VI Game Wardens on state property off US Highway 1 in Ware County.*

*Cadet Cameron Dyal checking a successful turkey hunter on Big Hammock WMA with GWFC Patrick Gibbs.*



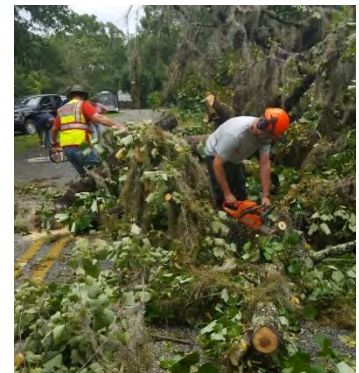


*GWFC Patrick Gibbs on ATV and GW Randell Meeks patrol Moody Forest WMA for illegal use of ATVs.*

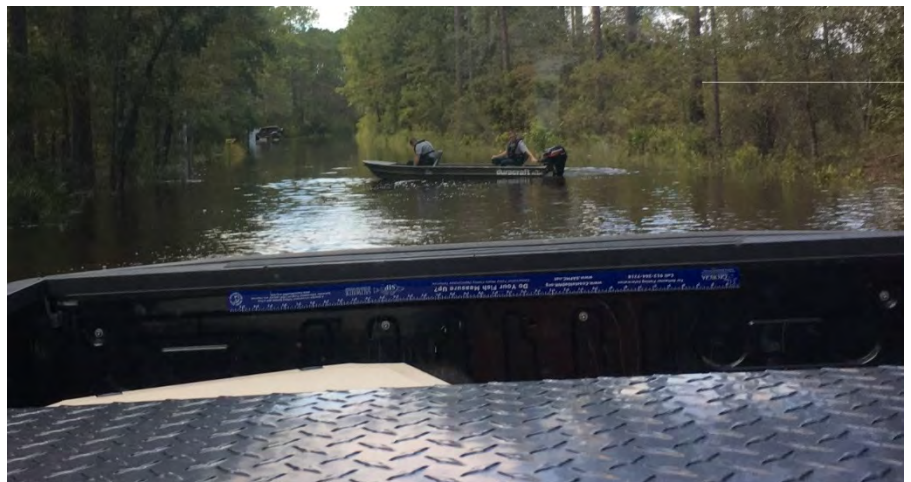
### **Response to Natural Disasters**

As in the past, DNR LED offers their unique skillset and equipment to assist during and after natural disasters. The Region VI office was transformed into the Incident Command Post for emergency response operations during Hurricane Irma. Irma's path shifted west at the last minute but still did significant damage to the coast of Georgia. Region VI Wardens, along with other DNR employees, responded with Strike Teams and delivered supplies to the stricken areas. A winter ice storm hit South Georgia in early January and DNR LED was the only law enforcement agency able to respond to calls in the area by using our 4WD vehicles and ATV's.

*GWFC Daniel North removing a fallen tree from the roadway in Statenville.*



Game Wardens Sam Williams, Joseph Cowart and Daniel North responded to southern Charlton County and utilized their patrol boat to check on residents. Several people had been trapped in their homes when the St. Mary's River flooded a nearby neighborhood due to the rainfall from Hurricane Irma.





## Community Involvement

Along with the above activity, Region VI Wardens have responded to search and rescue requests, hunting incidents, boating incidents and drownings throughout the area. Wardens realize the value of being involved with their assigned areas. Most Wardens do several Informational and Educational programs during the year for their local school systems, local civic clubs and local governments. Many participate in programs that encourage hunting, fishing and other outdoor activity.



During March 2018, Sgt. Patrick Dupree, Sgt. Morty Wood, Cpl. Tim Hutto, and GW Daniel North assisted the NWTF Chapter Lowndes Long Spurs with their annual youth turkey school and hunt. Attending game wardens provided classroom education to the kids about hunting and firearm safety, then served as hunting guides to the youth the following day. Several of the kids were successful in harvesting a turkey.

In December 2017, Cpl. Mark Pool and GW Joseph Cowart assisted with a Becoming an Outdoors Woman event near Fargo. The women chose between Okefenokee Swamp fishing and handgun hunting for deer and feral hogs. The officers served as fishing and hunting guides for the women that attended the event.



With the passage of HB208, more Game Warden positions were approved and funded. Region VI officers have been to high schools, colleges and job fairs in efforts to recruit the next generation of Game Wardens.



In January 2018, Cpl. Tim Hutto and GWFC Daniel North set up a booth at the Georgia Department of Labor office in Valdosta where several local high schools attended a career fair. GWs North and Hutto were able to provide information and answer questions concerning a career with Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division to about 400 attendees.

Each year, the LED detaches Game Wardens to assist the Governor's Drug Task Force.

*Region VI Cpl. Stokes is shown with marijuana plants that were seized during a Task Force operation.*





## Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)



Front Row -L-R: GWFC Jack Thain, K-9 Case, Cpl. Randy Aspinwall, Sgt. Mark Carson, Sgt. Chris Ridley, Sgt. Cindy Miller, Sgt. Damon Winters, Sgt. Phillip Scott, Captain Bob Lynn.

Second Row - L-R: GWFC David Brady, Chaplin Randy Lamb, Cpl. Kate Hargrove, Cpl. Jay Morgan, Chaplin Greg Loskoski, GWFC Tim Morris

Third Row - L-R: Cpl. Kiel Toney, GWFC Colte Shaske, Cpl. Buster Cooper, Cpl. Bobby White, Cpl. John Evans, GWFC Doug Chambers

Fourth Row - L-R: GWFC Patrick Gibbs, GWFC Jay Bright, GW Josh Cockrell, Cpl. Barry Britt, GWFC Mark Day

Fifth Row - L-R: AOC Janette Senior, Mechanic 3 Gary Denis, Part-time Secretary Rhonda Knight, License Clerk Kay Readdick

Region VII is comprised of three inland counties and six coastal counties (Chatham, Bryan, Liberty, Long, Wayne, McIntosh, Brantley, Glynn, and Camden). We focus heavily on the commercial fishing industry and offshore Federal fisheries. This year wasn't another typical year for the Game Wardens in Region VII. Our efforts ranged from our "normal" hunting and fishing violations to assisting other agencies with crowd control to numerous illegal commercial fishing violations to Hurricanes.

Recruiting was a big priority for the Division throughout the year and Region VII Game Wardens certainly did their part.

*Cpl. Kate Hargrove at a Region VII recruiting event.*



On the morning of August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Game Wardens Cpl. Bill Bryson and Cpl. Buster Cooper responded to a plane crash that occurred in North Bryan County near the Bulloch and Effingham County lines and close to the Ogeechee River. Cpl.'s Bryson and Cooper responded with an ATV and a Jon boat to assist the other responding agencies, not knowing where the plane crashed. When they arrived near the area, the crash site had been located. The two Game Wardens remained on scene, assisting, until the three deceased persons were removed from the plane.

All Game Wardens in Region VII prepared for Hurricane Irma. She entered Georgia on September 11<sup>th</sup> and caused damage throughout Georgia. Game Wardens throughout Georgia assisted local counties with debris removal/ road clearing and security patrols. During these patrols over 65 cases of water and multiple cases MRE's (Meals Ready to Eat) were given out to residents that needed assistance.



On September 17<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. John Evans and Ranger Judd Sears patrolled the St Mary's river in the Flea Hill community to check on residents that were flooded. During this patrol, they received a call from a subject that wanted to be taken out to high ground. Cpl. Evans and Ranger Sears picked the subject up from his residence by vessel and transported him out of the flooded area.



On October 7<sup>th</sup>, Game Warden Patrick Gibbs checked two fishermen taking their boat out at Beards Bluff landing. The fishermen had 31 largemouth bass in their cooler. After talking with the fishermen, Gibbs discovered that they were aware of the 10/person creel limit on bass. Gibbs also discovered 4 bass that were undersized. Violations were addressed for keeping over the creel limit and possession of undersized fish. The fish were confiscated and donated to a needy family

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. John Evans was patrolling for night hunting activity when he noticed someone walking the edge of the clear cut he was watching. Cpl. Evans snuck around to the other side of the cut and used a slash pile to close the distance between him and the suspect. Once he was within about 40 yards, Cpl. Evans turned on his flashlight and confronted the suspect. The man immediately threw down the rifle he was carrying and started trying to distance himself from the gun. Cpl. Evans searched him for weapons and asked about the gun. He denied having a gun at first and then kept saying it wasn't his and he was just getting it for a friend. Cpl. Evans ran a criminal history on the suspect and found him to be a convicted felon. He was arrested and charged with hunting deer at night and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

On November 18<sup>th</sup>, Game Warden David Brady completed an investigation regarding a suspect from Florida that had killed a deer at night in Georgia. Brady and Game Warden Colte Shaske met with Florida Fish and Wildlife and conducted interviews of the suspects. The investigation yielded multiple charges for hunting deer at night, hunting big game from a public road and hunting from a vehicle. FWC also had multiple charges on the suspects and felony Lacey Act charges are being considered.

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. John Evans was working a night deer hunting detail with several other game wardens. Cpl. Evans observed a truck shine the corn field he was watching. Cpl. Evans followed the truck and stopped it as it was pulling into a drive way. There were two people in the truck and a third standing in the yard that they were coming to pick up. Cpl. Evans identified the driver and passenger and sent the third man back in the house. The driver was the same suspect Cpl. Evans had caught just 10 days earlier hunting from the road, without orange, without licenses, without permission, and running dogs on unpermitted property. The suspects had a 12-gauge shotgun and a .22 rifle on this night. Both were charged with Hunting deer at night, Hunting from a vehicle, and Hunting from a public road.

On Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, Game Wardens GWFC Toney and Morris, and Sgt. Scott patrolled the salt water areas of Bryan and Liberty Counties. Boats were checked inshore and offshore for boating and fishing violations. While offshore of Ossabaw Island a vessel with several people on board was found to have 11 undersized black sea bass. The federal size limit for black sea bass is 13 inches.

A second vessel was boarded and found to have several legal fish caught offshore and a red drum also caught offshore. Red drum are illegal to possess in federal waters. Another vessel the Game Wardens boarded had primarily caught black sea bass. Most of the fish were of legal size except for two that were well under the 13-inch size limit. These cases were turned over to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Officer for prosecution.



On April 30<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Kate Hargrove, GWFC Jay Bright, GWFC Tim Morris, and NOAA Enforcement Officer Ben Hughes conducted an offshore Red Snapper patrol. This patrol focuses on commercial fishing boats in Federal waters. Captain Steven Turner and GWFC Jack Thain also assisted with this patrol by flying the area to help locate boats fishing off the coast of Georgia.

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Game Wardens David Brady and John Evans were conducting a late evening patrol on Turtle River when they observed a small fishing vessel heading toward a local ramp. The Game Wardens stopped the vessel and upon inspection discovered the two men to be in possession of 11 undersize sharks. Both subjects were cited for possession of undersize fish and the sharks were seized as evidence. Later that night, Game Warden David Brady was checking St. Andrews Beach off Jekyll Island for subjects illegally seining for food shrimp. After observing a group of men that were pulling a beach sein and watching them sort the shrimp they were catching, Brady made contact with the group to investigate further. After interviewing the men and inspecting the catch, the 5 men were cited for Seining during closed season (food shrimp).

During the 2017 hunting season, Game Wardens in Region VII conducted numerous night hunting patrols. These patrols included catching 20 groups of night hunters, 50 people were cited with 133 citations and 19 warnings.



During this year, Region VII had excellent officers performing above and beyond expectations. GWFC David Brady was the Region Ranger of the Year, Cpl. John Evans was the Region Boating Officer of the Year, GWFC Tim Morris was the Torch Award winner, and GWFC Patrick Gibbs was the Region Investigator of the Year and NWTf officer of the year.

Region VII had personnel changes throughout the year. RNG Josh Cockrell transferred from Chatham County to Region IV, RNG Judd Sears transferred from Brantley County to Region VI, and GWFC Patrick Gibbs transferred to Region VI. Cpl. Buster Cooper retired from the Chatham County work section opening a promotion for Kiel Toney to be promoted to Cpl. in Chatham.

Region VII is the only Region capable of providing a unique opportunity to assist the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) by participating in a Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA). Officers enforce Federal Fishing laws and regulations for NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement from 3 miles to 200 miles offshore of Georgia's Coast. The Joint Agreement #16 between Georgia DNR and NOAA office of Law Enforcement called for GADNR enforcement personnel to provide a total of 2,309 hours of marine law enforcement or related work under the agreement. The at-sea personnel hours were 985 hours with 405 vessel hours, 173 man hours for dockside inspections, 41 hours of aircraft hours and 41 hours of aircraft personnel hours. Additionally, Georgia had 3 Execution Priorities. Execution Priority 1 was TED Enforcement. There were 192 man hours and 64 hours of at-sea offshore large vessel patrol hours dedicated to this priority. Execution Priority 2 was dedicated to Red Snapper Patrols. There were 168 man hours and 56 hours of at-sea large vessel patrols dedicated to priority 2. Priority 3 was IUU (Illegal, Unregulated, Unreported) enforcement. There were 64 man hours dedicated to IUU enforcement. These patrols were assisting NOAA Enforcement Officers with inspection of containers at the Georgia Ports.



Game Wardens detected a number of Federal Fisheries violations including over the limit of fish, possession of illegal species, illegal nets, and Turtle Excluder Device (TED) violations. These documented violations were turned over to NOAA for prosecution or handled in local courts.

## **Investigative Unit**

The Investigative Unit (IU) is comprised of two full-time investigators. The IU is responsible for undercover investigations, Special Permit Unit (SPU) inspections and violations, the administration of the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) and the Marine Theft Unit (MTU). The IU depends heavily on assistance from uniformed Game Wardens. Statewide, 13 Game Wardens perform a collateral duty called "Regional Investigator". Regional Investigators assist the IU with various duties.

### **Undercover Investigations**

The Region Investigators are full-time Game Wardens who have received training in undercover operations and equipment. They perform this collateral duty in addition to their everyday Game Warden duties. The primary function of the Investigative Unit is to provide uniform Game Wardens with investigative support. The Investigative Unit is responsible for plain-clothes and long-term investigations.

Last year, the Investigative Unit conducted and managed over 281 investigations and calls for assistance from the field. These investigations were comprised of intelligence gathering, buy/bust, and both short and long-term investigations. The focus of many of these investigations included the sale or possession of wildlife and wild animals. These violations are difficult to address without the aid of undercover officers.

### **Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT)**

Georgia has 16 CIRT investigators assigned throughout the state. CIRT investigates all fatality and serious injury boating and hunting incidents. Each investigator receives specialized training on investigating and presenting these cases. Last year, CIRT investigated 10 boating, six hunting, and two State Park incidents. These incidents resulted in 12 fatalities.

### **Marine Theft Unit (MTU)**

The primary function of the MTU is to assist law enforcement officers in the field. The MTU conducts computer database and offline searches, locates hidden hull identification numbers, and assists with locating and recovering stolen vessels. The MTU also serves as the point of contact for customers as well as court systems related to the abandoned vessel process. Last year, the MTU received 81 abandoned vessel/stolen boat requests from the public and fielded numerous phone calls related to the abandoned vessel process.

## **Special Permits Unit**

The Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division Special Permits Unit is responsible for permitting captive wildlife and wild animals in addition to some specialty-take permits such as Scientific Collection Permits. The Unit also coordinates inspections on all permitted wild animal facilities throughout the state. This past year, the Special Permits unit issued 2,087 permits.



## K-9 Unit

The Division continues to use K-9s to enhance patrol efforts by Conservation Rangers and provide assistance to other agencies for man tracking and article searches. The four new K-9s put in service in 2017 are doing a good job in their respective regions with each playing a part in numerous cases over the past year. Georgia currently has seven K-9/Handler teams across the state.

### 2018 K-9/Handler Teams

**Sgt. Jeremy Bolen and K-9 Ruger**

**Cpl. Brooks Varnell and K-9 Taz**

**Cpl. Tim Hutto and K-9 Titan**

**GWFC Eric Isom and K-9 Colt**

**Cpl. Greg Wade and K-9 Trigg**

**GWFC Keith Page and K-9 Rio**

**GWFC Jack Thain and K-9 Case**





## Training Unit

In early 2018, the Division hired 32 new Game Warden cadets and one Game Warden pilot. Revenue generated as a result of the passing of HB 208 in 2017, which increased hunting, fishing, and recreational license fees, provided salary and benefit funding, as well as a full complement of equipment for 17 of the new hires. This funding will also provide money for additional personnel, equipment and operational costs in the future.

All 32 of the cadets are scheduled to graduate on October 19, 2018 at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center from the 32<sup>nd</sup> Game Warden Academy. During the 25-week academy, cadets become P.O.S.T. certified and receive a wide variety of Conservation Law Enforcement specific training. They will then complete six months of field training in their assigned counties throughout the state. The Academy includes 80 hours of NASBLA BOAT course training for BCM (Boat Crew Member) and BOSAR (Boat Operator Search and Rescue). The Division's in-house NASBLA certified instructors will deliver these comprehensive courses at Lake Walter F. George. Water survival training will also be taught during the 32<sup>nd</sup> Academy. Cadets will swim approximately three miles during the training, and through most of the swimming exercises, they will wear clothes, gun belt, shoes, and a ballistic vest to provide the most realistic situations possible.

During the year, in-service training for all Game Wardens statewide included NASBLA Seated Battery Standardized Field Sobriety refresher, Alzheimer's Response, De-escalation, Use-of-Force, Firearms, Dynamics of Citizen/Police Encounters, Domestic Violence Awareness, and Cultural Awareness Training.

All Game Wardens statewide and front line responders from other Georgia DNR Divisions completed a 3-day, 24-hour Critical Incident Management class. The class, coordinated by the Law Enforcement Division with instruction delivered by instructors from each division, encouraged teamwork and interdivisional collaboration. The class used curriculum developed by the IACP and incorporated tabletop exercises with scenarios that are typical for a Natural Resource Agency response.



L-R: Training & Dev. Spec. I Mandy James, Lt. Sam O'Neal, PT Secretary Debra Hollar



## Aviation Unit



L-R: Larry Rogers, Capt. Steven Turner, Maj. Doc Watson, Capt. Ed Watkins, John Peberdy

The LED Aviation Support Unit supports all state agencies and all DNR Divisions, utilizing two Bell 407 helicopters, one Bell L4 and a fixed wing Quest Kodiak 100 aircraft.

The year started out with a busy July. The first support was for Operation Dry Water over the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend, conducting aerial patrols over Lakes Allatoona and Lanier.

The Aviation Unit flew 278 hours supporting the Division's Game Wardens and the Division's core mission of protecting the states waterways and woodland areas. This consisted of flying support throughout the hunting season, from early fall through early spring. Game Wardens were flown on county surveys looking for baited food plots, duck ponds and illegal shrimping along the Georgia coast. Flight support was also provided for Operation Dry Water, night deer poaching/spotlighting patrols, and searches for missing person and drowning victims across the state. Also, support was provided for Hurricane Irma and numerous tornado damaged areas across the state.



Throughout the year, the Unit provided aviation support for the Wildlife Resource Division (WRD) for surveys of bald eagles, kestrel, sandhill cranes and waterfowl. Captain Ed Watkins flew these same flights along the Georgia coast in addition to surveys for sea turtles, dolphins and the tagging of manatee. In addition to the WRD surveys, the Aviation Unit flew 46 hours for prescribed burns on the State WMA's during the late winter months of January through March 2018.



The Aerial Observer program has proven to be very successful. The additional trained aerial crew members in northern Georgia have expedited the response time for search and rescue (SAR) requests in some cases. This success has advanced the scheduled training of four additional aerial observers in central Georgia. The Aviation Unit conducted six long line rescues and flew 97 hours for search and rescue (SAR), drownings and missing person missions with aerial observers.

The TASE 500 camera system equipped Kodiak Quest fixed-wing aircraft, with trained camera operators has greatly enhanced the Aviation Unit's capability to support Game Wardens in conducting their primary mission of protecting the states waterways and woodland areas. This capability was evident in the increased apprehension of illegal night poachers throughout the state this past year.



The Unit was very fortunate at year's end receiving funding for a new Bell 407. This 407 will replace the 23 year old Bell L-4, enhancing safety and increasing the Unit's capabilities, while lowering training and maintenance costs for the Division.



## Honor Guard



Front L-R: Cpl. Josh Chamber, Cpl. Travis Sweat, GWFC David Brady, Cpl. Ben Payne, Cpl. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, Cpl. Scott Carroll

Back L-R: GWFC Clint Jarriel, Cpl. Bob Holley, GWFC Cody Jones, GWFC Micheal Crawley, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Chase Altman

### Honor Guard Details

- August 21, 2017: Honor Guard members Cpl. Ben Payne, Cpl. Scott Carroll, GWFC David Brady and GWFC Clint Jarriel presented the colors at the annual POAG Conference in Savannah.
- October 25, 2017: Honor Guard member Sgt. Derek Dillard and Lt. Col. Jeff Weaver conducted a presentation to the DNR Board on the Law Enforcement Division's Honor Guard in Atlanta.
- December 18, 2017: Honor Guard members Sgt. Derek Dillard and Cpl. Cody Jones participated in the visitation, funeral and graveside service for retired Parks Manager Ralph Turner in Hiawassee.
- May 22, 2018: Honor Guard members Sgt. Jeremy Bolen and Cpl. Travis Sweat participated in the 2018 Public Safety Memorial Ceremony at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth.
- June 11, 2018: Honor Guard members Sgt. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, Cpl. Travis Sweat and Cpl. Cody Jones presented the colors at the FOP State Convention at Unicoi State Park in Helen.



## Chaplains



**L-R: Charles Houston, Jr., Joel Vinson, Chip Strickland, Daryl Brown, Tac Coley, Marc Crandlemire, Rudy Ross, Brandon Brooks**

**Not Pictured: Gregory Loskoski, John Haney, Randy Lamb**

The 11 members of the DNR Law Enforcement Division Chaplain Corps currently serve four of the state's seven Regions.

The DNR Chaplains are non-sworn volunteers who support the mission of DNR in providing a source of strength to sworn and non-sworn members of the Agency, their families, and the community. The program supports employees in the handling of crisis situations, comforts victims and their families when incidents occur, and provides counseling and other ministerial functions that may be needed.



### **Promotions:**

Lt. Wanda Roberts  
Sgt. Jeremy Bolen  
Cpl. Jesse Harrison  
Cpl. Kiel Toney  
Cpl. Tim Vickery  
Cpl. Jon Penuel  
GWFC 1 Bethany Gilbert  
GWFC 1 Randell Meeks  
GWFC 1 Mark Moyer  
GWFC 1 Dan Schay  
GWFC 1 Jason Harrison  
GWFC 1 Timothy Morris  
Game Warden 2 Tommy Crabb  
Game Warden 2 Lamar Burns  
Game Warden 2 Ken Lalumiere  
Game Warden 2 Kalem Burns  
Game Warden 2 Frank Pucci  
Game Warden 2 Travis Shrader  
Game Warden 2 Ryan Locke  
Game Warden 2 Christopher J. Hall  
Game Warden 2 Chris Kernahan  
Game Warden 2 Nolan Callaway  
Game Warden 2 Charles G. Follin  
Game Warden 2 Ethan J. Franklin  
Game Warden 2 Stephen T. Payne  
Game Warden 2 Joseph L. Cowart  
Game Warden 2 Christopher M. Thompson  
Game Warden 2 Jonathan Segars

### **Retirements:**

Capt. Wade Law  
Sgt. Jim Bradfield  
Cpl. Robbie Griner  
Cpl. Josh Chambers  
Cpl. Hugh "Buster" Cooper

<b>Activity</b>	
<b>Summary</b>	<b>FY2018</b>
Hunter Ed Programs	130
I&E Programs	1,541
Boating Safety Programs	254
Hunter Development	177
<b>Total Programs 2,102</b>	
Water SAR Cases	212
Water SAR Hours	3,110
Vessels Assisted	375
Water Persons Asst.	738
Land SAR Cases	163
Land SAR Hours	1,405
Land Persons Asst.	325
Hunting Incidents	36
Boating Incidents	143
Drownings	71
Hunting License Checks	20,817
Fishing License Checks	29,031
Comm. License Checks	409
Total License Checks	50,257
Boat Checks	26,279
Boating Contacts	5,085
Hunting Contacts	5,914
Fishing Contacts	3,080
Trapping Contacts	141
Environmental Contacts	288
Other Contacts	2,629
<b>Total Contacts</b>	<b>17,137</b>



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION



**JAMES HIRAM WALLER**

**LONNIE F. BOGGUS**

**WILLIAM EARL HOBBS**

**WILLIAM LEE BRYANT**

**ROBERT CLAYTON SIZEMORE**

**ASA EDWIN THORNTON**

**CHARLES CALLOWAY MERCER**

**ROCKY DAREN WAINWRIGHT**



IN MEMORY OF THE OFFICERS  
WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE  
PROTECTING THE PEOPLE AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES OF GEORGIA

