

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
June 12 – June 18, 2016

This report is a broad sampling of events that have taken place in the past week, but does not include all actions taken by the Law Enforcement Division.



Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

BARTOW COUNTY

On June 12th, Cpl. Tommy Gentry, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Zack Hardy assisted with the recovery of a drowning victim from the previous day on Allatoona Lake at Glade Marina. A 40 year old male disappeared on June 11th and was recovered mid-day on June 12th.

On June 15th, Cpl. Byron Young and Cpl. Brooks Varnell presented a program covering boating safety to the employees at the Anheuser Busch plant in Cartersville.

On June 18th, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Zack Hardy were patrolling Red Top Mt. State Park in the area of Webster's boat ramp on Allatoona Lake. The officers exited their patrol unit to check three male fishermen standing next to their SUV. Immediately the officers smelled the distinct smell of Marijuana. When asked about the illegal drugs, the three males became very uncooperative. The three men were placed in handcuffs and the Bartow / Cartersville Drug Task Force arrived to assist the officers. A search of the vehicle uncovered a small amount of marijuana and a stolen firearm. The drugs and a 9mm pistol with altered serial numbers were seized as evidence. The three males were placed under arrest and transported to the Bartow County Jail. The Bartow DTF agent took over the case and will have several felony charges against the three males.

On June 18th, Sgt. Derek Dillard and Cpl. Byron Young located five young males fishing on Allatoona Lake without lights displayed. The young men were having electrical and engine problems. The officers towed the males back to their campsite.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

HABERSHAM COUNTY

On June 13, RFC Joe Hill received a complaint from RFC Chad Chambers in reference to an illegal fire in Habersham County. RFC Hill responded to the complaint and found that a subject had set the remains of a prior house fire on fire again. The Ranger issued the subject a citation for unlawful burning of egregious litter (less than 500lbs) while the Habersham County Fire Department put the fire out.

On June 15, RFC Joe Hill patrolled Buck Shoals State Park for boating safety violations and fishing activity. The Ranger issued one warning for failure to display valid park pass.

RABUN COUNTY

On June 12, RFC Joe Hill and Rabun County Sheriff's Office Deputy Tracy Payne conducted two boating safety patrols on Lake Burton. The Ranger and Deputy issued citations one citation for towing skier with PWC without observer on board, one citation for operating vessel with insufficient PFD's, and two citation for failure to obey regulatory marker. Warnings were issued for operating vessel with expired registration, failure to obey regulatory marker, operating vessel with unserviceable fire extinguisher, operating vessel without fire extinguisher, and operating vessel without registration.

On June 12, Cpl. Anne Britt cited five adults for not having a gorge permit to access the gorge floor and warned them for swimming in a prohibited area at Tallulah Gorge State Park.

On June 16, RFC Chad Chambers worked a complaint regarding a personal water craft (PWC) operating during hours of darkness on Lake Rabun. At approximately 10:00 pm, RFC Chambers located a PWC on the water and made a vessel stop. The operator was not wearing a personal floatation device (PFD). RFC Chambers smelled a presence of an alcoholic beverage coming from the operator. The operator was under the age of 21. The operator was charged for boating under the influence, operating a PWC without wearing a PFD, and operating PWC during hours of darkness.

TOWNS COUNTY

On June 18, Sgt. Steve Seitz and Cpl. Anne Britt patrolled Lake Chatuge by vessel and cited two adults for not having a PFD on board their kayaks. One adult was cited for operating a personal watercraft without wearing a pfd. Another adult was issued a citation for towing skiers on a PWC without having an observer on board.

On June 12, RFC David Webb patrolled Lake Chatuge for boating violations. RFC Webb was contacted by Towns County 911 in reference to two PWCs that had left the beach area possibly intoxicated. RFC Webb first observed the PWC's traveling towards the Ridges Marina on the wrong side of the lake. RFC Webb was able to make a vessel stop on the PWC's just outside of the no wake zone of the marina. One of the operator's then began operating his PWC over idle speed within 100 feet of the other PWC and the occupants were in the water as well as the DNR patrol vessel. RFC Webb began a boating safety check of both PWC's and noticed the odor of alcohol coming from the operator who was violating the 100 foot law. A nineteen year old male was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence (under 21 YOA), violation rules of the road, operating a PWC over idle speed within 100 foot of an object and operating a vessel without a fire extinguisher.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On June 17th and 18th, Rangers responded to Mistletoe State Park in reference to a strong storm and possible tornado touchdown. The park suffered severe infrastructure damage and two people were injured. Several campers and vehicles were destroyed by wind and falling trees. Rangers stayed on site for a continuous 36 hour patrol to help assist the park staff and guests with any of their needs.

LINCOLN COUNTY

On June 17th and 18th, Rangers responded to Elijah Clark State Park in reference to a strong storm and possible tornado touchdown. The park suffered severe infrastructure damage. Powerlines and Transformers were ripped down from power poles. Several Campers and Vehicles were totaled by downed trees and debris. Rangers stayed on site for a continuous 36 hour patrol to provide law enforcement and assistance to the park staff and its visitors.

LAKE OCONEE

On Saturday, June 11, Sgt. John Harwell and RFC Richard Tanner were patrolling Lake Oconee when they encountered a vessel with two individuals riding on the bow of a pontoon. Upon further investigation, it was determined the operator was operating the vessel under the influence of alcohol. The operator was arrested and charged with boating under the influence.

On Saturday, June 11, Sgt. John Harwell, RFC Richard Tanner, and RGR Jason Harrison were patrolling Lake Oconee when they encountered an operator towing two tubers from a personal watercraft without an observer. Upon further investigation, it was determined the operator was operating the vessel under the influence of alcohol. The operator was arrested and charged with boating under the influence and towing tuber on PWC without observer.

On Sunday, June 19, RFC Richard Tanner, RGR Dan Schay, and RGR Jason Harrison were patrolling Lake Oconee when they encountered a vessel towing two tubers without life jackets. Upon further investigation, it was determined the operator was operating the vessel under the influence of alcohol. The operator was arrested and charged with boating under the influence and towing tuber without PFD.

On Sunday, June 19 Cpl. Derrell Worth and RFC Ricky Boles cited several boaters while patrolling Lake Oconee. Among the violations were allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without a PFD and failure to obey regulatory marker.

GREENE COUNTY

On June 13, Cpl. David Allen taught a boater program at Del Webb. Cpl. Allen talked to 25 local residents about the importance of boating safety.

On June 15 and 16, seven students were certified at Singleton Marine during a boating safety class. Cpl. Derrell Worth, Cpl. David Allen and Ranger Dan Schay were among the instructors during the two day course.

ELBERT COUNTY

On Friday June 17, RFC Phillip Nelson patrolled Vaughter WMA in Elbert Co. Violations documented were driving on a closed WMA Road and fishing without a license.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

No activity to report.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

No activity to report.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

PIERCE COUNTY

On June 13th, Ranger First Class Sam Williams was patrolling Little Satilla WMA when he encountered an individual riding an all-terrain vehicle. ATV use on the area is illegal this time of year and the violation was documented.

WARE COUNTY

On June 18th, Sergeant Patrick Dupree and Ranger First Class Sam Williams patrolled Laura S. Walker State Park Lake for boating activity. While there, the officers observed two vessel operators towing skiers without an observer or mirrors. The violations were documented.

LAURENS COUNTY

On June 18th, Corporal Dan Stiles and Ranger First Class Allen Mills patrolled boat landings on the Oconee River. Six vessels were checked for registration and boating safety equipment. Three anglers were also checked for fishing licenses and creel compliance. One subject was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence (alcohol).

BEN HILL COUNTY

On June 12th, Corporal John A. Stokes patrolled creeks for fishing violations. Three violations were found on House Creek and documented for fishing without license.

APPLING COUNTY

On June 12th, Sergeant Jon Barnard and Corporal Kevin Joyce patrolled the Altamaha River near Dean's Landing for boating activity. Multiple vessels and individuals were checked and a violation was documented for allowing an underage child to ride in a moving vessel without wearing a life jacket.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On June 17th, Ranger Bobby Sanders patrolled the Altamaha River near U.S. Highway 1 and Towns Bluff Landings for boating activity. Multiple vessels were checked and violations were documented for insufficient life jackets and operating personal watercraft without wearing a life jacket.

On June 18th, Corporal Kevin Joyce and Ranger Bobby Sanders patrolled Bullard Creek WMA. Multiple subjects were checked and violations were documented for fishing without a license and driving on non-improved roads.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

On June 12th, Ranger First Class Jason Miller, Ranger First Class Jordan Crawford and Ranger Randell Meeks conducted an investigation involving a boating incident that took place in the late hours of the 11th of June on the Savannah River in Effingham County. One boater was seriously injured in the incident and had to be airlifted to an area hospital. The incident is still under investigation.

SCREVEN COUNTY

On June 17th, Ranger First Class Jason Miller responded to a call from Screven County 911 in reference to boaters stranded on the Savannah River. RFC Miller located the stranded boaters a few miles below Burtons Ferry landing, and transported them off the river. The family of three had been traveling up the river from Tybee Island when their engine quit.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On June 18th, Corporal Tim Hutto patrolled an area of Flat Tub Wildlife Management Area along the Ocmulgee River. During the patrol Cpl. Hutto came in contact with a subject in the woods in his underwear who said he was hunting for snakes. Cpl. Hutto began to investigate the incident as well as performing a search of the suspect's vehicle. During a search of the suspect's vehicle and a search of the suspect's friend, Cpl. Hutto located Xanax, cocaine, crystal methamphetamine, a meth pipe, digital scales, methamphetamine baggies, and other tools used to distribute illegal drugs. The suspects were arrested and taken to Jeff Davis County Jail. On June 20th, Cpl. Hutto took six misdemeanor warrants in Jeff Davis State Court for possession of drug related objects, misdemeanor possession of marijuana, and having prescription drugs not in original container. Cpl. Hutto also took four felony warrants on the suspects in Jeff Davis State Court for possession of a controlled substance and possession of methamphetamine.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

BRANTLEY COUNTY

On June 13th-17th RFC Colte Shaske assisted Brantley County Sheriff's Office along with other agencies including Georgia State Patrol, Hoboken Police Department, Waycross SWAT Team, CSX Railroad, and many others, teaching the 2016 Jr. Police Academy. 56 students were enrolled in a week long training that would allow the students to see and train like real police officers. RFC John Evans and RFC Jay Bright talked to the Cadets about being a Conservation Ranger using the Laser Shot Simulator and teaching the kids about Boating Safety.

