

# Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

**Weekly Report**  
**June 26 – July 2, 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**

On June 29<sup>th</sup>, RFC Bart Hendrix and RFC Zack Hardy responded with Bartow County Investigators to a body found floating in Allatoona Lake. The Investigators are working with East Point Police involving a missing child from the city. The case is under investigation at this time.

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, Sgt. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Zack Hardy stopped a vessel with improper lights near Allatoona Landing Marina. The officers immediately noticed marijuana on a wooden plate on the pontoon boat. The officers also observed several empty Coors Light cans scattered throughout the boat. The operator and all the passengers were under 21. RFC Hardy placed the operator under arrest for BUI, possession of marijuana less than 1 oz. and operating a vessel with improper lights. The passengers were charged with minors in possession of alcohol. Cpl. Young drove the vessel back to Glade Marina and secured.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sgt. Derek Dillard and RFC Zack Hardy stopped a vessel near Flamingo Cove with a passenger riding the bow of the boat. The officers immediately detected alcohol use. The operator was placed under arrest for BUI and allowing passenger to ride the bow.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sgt. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Byron Young, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, RFC Bart Hendrix, RFC Zack Hardy and Bartow County Fire / Rescue responded to a drowning near Gatewood Park on Allatoona Lake. A 37 year old male was located deceased at approximately 5:15 p.m.

### **CHEROKEE COUNTY**

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, RFC Bart Hendrix and Cherokee County Deputy Halstead responded to a boat incident at Victoria Marina. A ski boat was struck by a PWC in the "no wake zone". The operator and passenger of the PWC suffered minor injuries and both vessels were damaged.

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, RFC Bart Hendrix and Cherokee County Deputy Halstead were patrolling in the area of Little River. The officers stopped a vessel without a stern light displayed. The operator was found to be under the influence. The operator was placed under arrest and charged with BUI and operating without a stern light. The boat also did not have enough PFD's, the operator was issued a warning for the PFD violation.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Cpl. Byron Young and RFC Bart Hendrix stopped a vessel near Gault's Day Use Area towing a skier after sunset. The operator was found to be under the influence. The male was placed under arrest and charged with BUI.

## **Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)**

### **RABUN COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, RFC Joe Hill and Rabun County Sheriff's Office Deputy Tony Parrish conducted boating safety patrols on Lake Rabun, Seed Lake, and Lake Burton. The Ranger and Deputy issued on warning for operating a PWC above idle speed within 100' of object/person on Lake Rabun. Verbal warnings were given for several lifejacket violations to persons on paddle boards on seed Lake. Numerous light sticks were handed out along with verbal warnings for light violations during the fireworks on Lake Burton.

On Saturday July 2nd, RFC Chad Chambers and Rabun County Deputy Darrin Smith patrolled Lake Burton. The two officers addressed numerous violations before, during and after the annual fireworks show including Creating a Wake in a "No Wake" Zone, Violating Rules of the Road and Operating with Improper Lights.

On June 30th, Ranger Beth Gilbert and Cpl. Anne Britt responded to a fishing complaint on Wildcat Creek. The complainant reported that the subject, an adult male, was fishing for trout with a cast net. Ranger Gilbert and Cpl. Britt located the subject, who was then fishing with a rod and reel, and issued 1 citation for fishing with an expired license and 1 warning for fishing for trout with an expired trout license. A cast net was not located.

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, Sgt. Steve Seitz and Ranger Beth Gilbert patrolled Tallulah Gorge State Park. While the officers were conducting a foot patrol around the park, they issued 9 citations to people who accessed the gorge floor without a permit.

On July 2nd, Ranger Beth Gilbert patrolled Tallulah Gorge State Park. While Ranger Gilbert was conducting a foot patrol around the park, she issued 4 citations to people who accessed the gorge floor without a permit and 3 citations for consuming alcohol in a public-use area of the Park.

## **TOWNS COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sgt. Steve Seitz and RFC David Webb conducted a boating safety patrol on Lake Chatuge. During the patrol, the officers observed a vessel with someone riding on the gunwale and stopped the vessel. Upon conducting a safety check of the vessel, the officers determined the vessel was overloaded with 18 people on board and the operator had been drinking alcohol. The operator was arrested and charged with boating under the influence, allowing a person to ride on the gunwale, and operating an overloaded vessel.

## **HALL COUNTY**

On June 29 Corporal Jason Roberson responded to Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Braselton in reference to a boating incident. The operator had left the victim at the hospital. Corporal Roberson convinced the operator to get a ride back to the hospital. He was found to be under the influence of alcohol and arrested for BUI.

On July 2, Corporal Jason Roberson responded to a minor boating incident at Sunset cove on Lake Lanier. The operator, who had left the scene of the incident was determined to be under the influence of alcohol and was arrested for BUI.

On July 2, Corporal Jason Roberson made two additional arrests for Boating under the influence.

On July 2 rangers from the Georgia DNR responded to a sinking boat in the area of Shoal Creek on Lake Lanier. The vessel had apparently taken a large wave over the bow after the fireworks show. Five people were stranded in the water as the boat sunk.

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

### **RICHMOND COUNTY**

On July 2, Cpl. Ben Payne and Cpl. Brian Adams patrolled Richmond County checking fishing and boating activity. The officers checked for safety violations on the Augusta Canal. Fifty-two kayaks and rafts were checked with 4 citations and 4 warnings issued for no PFD's. Several fishing licenses were checked with no violations documented. They also checked Lake Olmstead, Savannah River boat landings and local creeks for activity. Two fishing without permission complaints were checked with no activity. Later in the evening the officers checked activity on Spirit Creek and Phinizy WMA.

### **COLUMBIA COUNTY**

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, RFC Robert Timmerman and Sgt. Doyte Chaffin apprehended one subject for operation of a vessel while under the influence of alcohol. The subject was arrested and transported to Columbia County Detention Center.

## **ELBERT COUNTY**

On Saturday July 2, CPL Julian Wilkins, RFC Tim Butler and RFC Phillip Nelson patrolled Lake Russell. Violations documented were Boating under the influence, operating without registration, operating without lights during hours of darkness, and failure to obey regulatory markers.

## **LAKE OCONEE**

During the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, Rangers John Harwell, David Allen, Derrell Worth, Ricky Boles, Richard Tanner, Daniel Schay, Jason Harrison, Mark Padgett, and Thomas Barnard patrolled Lake Oconee for boating violations. The rangers made two Bui arrests and wrote multiple citations for 100' violation on PWC, Operating vessels with insufficient PFDs, operating vessel during the hours of darkness without lights, operating PWCs after hours, failure to obey regulatory markers, and children under the age thirteen in a moving vessel without wearing a PFD. The rangers also worked three boating incidents during the holiday weekend.

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

No activity to report.

## **Region V- Albany (Southwest)**

No activity to report.

## **Region VI- Metter (Southeast)**

### **TATTNALL COUNTY**

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, Sergeant Jon Barnard and Ranger First Class Bobby Sanders conducted a vessel patrol on the Altamaha River. While on the patrol, violations were documented for insufficient number of life jackets as well operating a vessel without registration.

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, Sergeant Jon Barnard and RFC Bobby Sanders patrolled the area of the Hwy 147 Bridge on the Ochoopee River. Violations were documented for non-resident and resident fishing without a license.

### **APPLING COUNTY**

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, RFC Bobby Sanders was patrolling the area of Deens Landing where violations for fishing without a license were documented.

### **JEFF DAVIS COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Corporal Kevin Joyce and RFC Bobby Sanders were on a vessel patrol of the Altamaha River where violations for operating a vessel without registration and operating a vessel without lifejackets were documented.

### **MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sergeant Jon Barnard and RFC Bobby Sanders were on an area check of the landing at the Hwy 221 Bridge on the Altamaha River and made one arrest for boating under the influence.

### **DODGE COUNTY**

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, Ranger First Class Allen Mills patrolled boat landings for fishing and boating activity. A safety equipment check was conducted on three vessels, and five anglers were checked for license and regulation compliance. A violation for fishing without a license was documented.

### **TELFAIR COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sergeant James McLaughlin and Corporal Dan Stiles patrolled the Ocmulgee River near Lumber City. Several vessels were checked for boating safety equipment and registration. Five anglers were checked for license and creel compliance. Verbal guidance was given for minor violations with no citations issued.

## **BACON COUNTY**

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Judd Sears and Ranger First Class Daniel North responded to a dumping complaint near Alma. Multiple bags of household trash had been dumped on the side of the county dirt road along with wiring and satellite dish equipment. Ranger Sears and RFC North were able to locate multiple pieces of mail with a subject's information. The officers made contact with this individual by phone and met with them at their residence. A male subject at this residence admitted to dumping the trash on the roadside. One violation for dumping of egregious litter less than 500lbs was documented.

## **WARE COUNTY**

On June 27<sup>th</sup>, Ranger Judd Sears and Ranger First Class Daniel North conducted a boating safety presentation at Laura Walker State Park at the annual Camp Reveille. Approximately 100 campers were in attendance. Ranger Sears and RFC North talked about the importance of wearing life jackets and the requirements by Georgia law. Ranger Sears and RFC North displayed a patrol vessel for the campers and answered questions about boat operation.

## **CHARLTON COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sergeant Patrick Dupree and Ranger First Class Daniel North patrolled the St. Mary's River upstream from Trader's Hill. The officers encountered several recreational boaters and fishermen. Two vessels were encountered that the officers determined were short of personal flotation devices (PFDs) for the number of people on board. Violations of operating a vessel with insufficient PFDs were documented.

## **PIERCE COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ranger First Class Sam Williams was working night hunting in an area where recent complaints had been received from citizens. RFC Williams was watching a clear-cut, when he observed a truck drive past his location sweeping the area with a light. The officer stopped the vehicle and observed two doe deer that had recently been shot in the bed of the truck. During a brief investigation, it was determined that the deer had been killed in an adjoining county and the poachers did not possess a valid deer control permit for that area, nor for the location where the officer observed them shining a light. The three poachers were arrested and charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a motor vehicle, and hunting big game from a public road. The two deer were donated to a family in need.



*The firearm and other equipment in possession of the poachers and the two doe deer killed earlier in the evening.*

## **COFFEE COUNTY**

On July 1<sup>st</sup>, Corporal Tim Hutto and Corporal Tommy Daughtrey patrolled the Ocmulgee River in Coffee County. At around 5:30 p.m., the officers stopped a suspicious vessel just east of Barr's Bluff Landing. While talking with the two occupants of the vessel, the officers noticed there were no fishing rods on board, just dip nets, extra batteries, and suspicious looking wiring. The officers asked the operator if they were in possession of a device used to shock fish and the operator produced a homemade fish shocking device. Both occupants admitted to having the device in use in the water as the officers approached their vessel. Both occupants were charged with shocking fish. The device was seized as evidence.



## **JENKINS COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Corporal Mike Wilcox received a call from Georgia State Patrol requesting assistance searching for a fleeing suspect. It was reported that a car chase, with shots fired, ended when the fleeing vehicle crashed in a wooded area. The suspect then fled on foot. Cpl. Wilcox, Sergeant Chris Moore, and Ranger First Class Jason Miller assisted Jenkins County with the search until Sheriff Robert Oglesby called off the search. The suspect was later apprehended walking back into Millen.

## **EFFINGHAM COUNTY**

On July 2<sup>nd</sup> Captain Scott Klingel, Ranger First Class Jason Miller, and Ranger First Class Jordan Crawford conducted a vessel patrol of the Savannah River in Effingham County. During the patrol several boats were checked with four violations documented. Violations included operating a vessel without PFD's and violating Georgia's 100 foot law.

## **Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)**

### **BRANTLEY COUNTY**

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, RFC Colte Shaske received a call from Brantley County Sheriff's Office in reference to a drowning. Upon arrival, Deputies responded to a subject that had fallen into a pond while swimming with some friends but did not resurface. One of the friends was able to locate the subject, pull him out of the water and perform CPR but was unsuccessful. Brantley County Sheriff's Office is performing an investigation on the matter.

### **GLYNN COUNTY**

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, RFC John Evans was patrolling the area of Altamaha Park when he observed a vessel come from down river and attempt to pull up to the dock. After several unsuccessful attempts from the man and woman on board, Evans walked down to the dock and offered to catch a line and help them. The man then began trying to pull away from the dock and Evans was able to get him to come back. RFC Evans conducted a BUI screening and determined the man was under the influence. He was arrested, charged with Operating a vessel under the influence, and transported to the Glynn County Detention Center.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, RFC Evans was patrolling the Clayhole Swamp WMA when he encountered 4 subjects using the pond next to the campground. Two of the people had been warned twice before by RFC Evans for illegal use of the area. Further investigation this time yielded that one of the men had a warrant for his arrest and was in possession of marijuana and illegal prescription pills. The other man had a bag of marijuana while one of the females had two bags of marijuana and illegal prescription pills. Three of the four were arrested and charged with Violation of the GA Controlled Substance Act felony and misdemeanor charges.

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, RFC David Brady, Cpl. Kate Hargrove and Intern Clay Guess responded to a boating incident on Brunswick River. After making contact with all the parties, it was determined that the commercial bait boat had gotten hung on a submerged object while dragging for bait shrimp. The two men on board were unable to free the net and the boat was quickly capsized. Several good Samaritans were able to get the men throw cushions and get them to the dock nearby without incident.