



# GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

MARK WILLIAMS  
COMMISSIONER

COLONEL EDDIE HENDERSON  
DIRECTOR

A large orange circular graphic with a white border. The top arc contains the text 'RANGER HOTLINE' in white, bold, sans-serif font. The bottom arc contains the text '800-241-4113' in white, bold, sans-serif font. The center of the circle is divided into two sections. The top section shows a photograph of a tree trunk with a 'REALTREE' logo. The bottom section shows a photograph of a tree trunk with a 'REALTREE' logo and a smaller version of the Georgia DNR Ranger badge overlaid on it. The text 'CASH REWARD' is written across the middle in white, bold, sans-serif font. The text 'THE GEORGIA NATURAL RESOURCES FOUNDATION' is written around the bottom inner edge of the circle in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Law Enforcement Division  
FY 2014 Annual Report

## Headquarters



**Colonel Eddie Henderson, Director**



**L-R, Major Walter Rabon,  
Lt. Colonel Jeff Weaver, Major Stephen Adams**



**L-R, Captain Mike England,  
Lt. Wayne Hubbard, Lt. Judd Smith**



**L-R, Jen Hammonds, HR Generalist  
Shannon Witcher, AOC I  
Linda Mayo, HQ Secretary  
Sharon Whitaker, AOM  
Tammy Peters, SPU Sec.  
Jamie Hawkins, Special Permits AOC I**



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 DNR Law Enforcement Division celebrated its first anniversary after an internal reorganization of its operational Divisions with a vote by the Board of Natural Resources last year. The reorganization elevated the Law Enforcement Section to Division Status, removing it as a sub-program in the Wildlife Resources Division. The reorganization plan is a five-year transition that will consolidate all Law Enforcement functions under the umbrella of the Law Enforcement Division, to include State Parks enforcement. 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.

In its efforts to keep the public, the General Assembly, board members, local public officials and other divisions within DNR informed of the Law Enforcement Division's vision, mission, responsibilities, unique capabilities and operational needs, a Public Affairs Officer was added to the HQ staff. Mark McKinnon, who transferred to DNR after 14 years with the Georgia Department of Transportation, was selected to fill the position. His responsibilities include enhancing communication to the Division's stakeholders through media relations,



**PAO Mark McKinnon**

social media and various presentations. He will also be developing and promoting the Division's "LAW ENFORCEMENT– *Off the Pavement!*" branding campaign.

### **Dispatch Services/CAD**

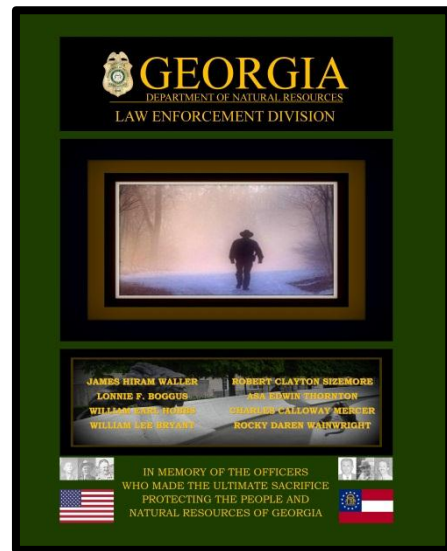
As a continuation of the partnership with the Georgia State Patrol and DNR on the Computer Aided Dispatch program started several ago, all in-progress calls taken by GEMA are now being transferred directly to GSP Communications Centers around the state. This allows the centers to see which Rangers are actually on-duty and dispatch calls for service directly, which can greatly reduce response time. This transition eliminates the need for the GEMA call center to page Rangers and wait for a reply. This year the LE Division performed a refresh on the field computers and transitioned from the Dell XFR 6400 to the Panasonic CF-31. This included switching out docking stations in patrol vehicles and vessels. These computers were purchased with bond funds allocated for this purpose several years ago. Upgrades and improvements to the Georgia State Patrol's CAD infrastructure should allow almost all reporting to be done electronically, all but eliminating the need for data entry after the fact.

### **Equipment**



The Law Enforcement Division once again received grants from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency this year. These grants provided funds for the purchase of several pieces of key equipment items that enhanced operations in the field. Included in the grants were funds to purchase a pontoon boat that was rigged for use in evidence/body recovery operations with our side scan sonars, sector scan sonar and Remotely Operated Vessel (ROV). This platform provides a more stable and larger working space for Rangers engaged in recovery operations.

Lt.'s Judd Smith and Wayne Hubbard, Sgt. Chris Hodge, Cpl's Chris Moore and Micheal Crawley and RFC Davis Brady represented the LE Division at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial during Police Week in May. All but Sgt. Hodge rode in the Police Unity Tour and Sgt. Hodge provided support for the riders. This was Lt. Smith's fifth, Cpl. Crawley's third and Lt. Hubbard and RFC Brady's second time riding in the Tour, a 250 mile bicycle ride to raise awareness of officers killed in the line of duty. All of the riders rode in memory of Arkansas Game Warden Joel Campora who, along with Sheriff Cody Carpenter, drowned while conducting a river rescue. Cpl. Chris Moore, who was a first time rider, was sponsored by the Arkansas Wildlife Officer's Association.



**Memorial Poster developed to raise awareness of Georgia's Fallen Rangers**

## **GILEE**

Major Stephen Adams participated in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange (GILEE) program to Israel. This two-week training session that is 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, 17 Law Enforcement Executives from Georgia were briefed at multiple venues in the state of Israel.

## **FBI Training**



Captain Wade Law attended the FBI National Academy, which began in 1935. The FBINA is a 10 week course to enhance the personal and professional development of law enforcement leaders which includes officers from all 50 states, US territories and over 150 other countries. The Law Enforcement Division currently has seven National Academy graduates employed with the agency. The Division now has eight FBINA graduates currently working.

## **Ranger Hotline**

Effective July 1, 2014 the “Turn In Poachers” program transitioned to the “Ranger Hotline” program. This transition had been in the making for several months prior. The principles and purpose of the program will remain the same by continuing to encourage sportsmen to report poachers and violators of our state’s game laws, but it will be expanded to include a broader range of rewards to support all of DNR. The Ranger Hotline program will be operated by the Georgia Natural Resource Foundation with DNR Commissioner Mark Williams serving as Chairman of an advisory committee comprised of GNRF Board Members and other organizations committed to this cause. Captain Mike England will be the DNR Law Enforcement Division liaison to the program.



## **Counter-Terrorism Task Force**

Twenty-nine Rangers, who represent DNR Law Enforcement on Georgia’s Counter-Terrorism Task Force (CTTF), participated in a five-day field training exercise (FTX) at the Guardian Center in Perry. CTTF is Georgia’s rapid deployment protective-security force. Its mission is to detect, prevent, protect against and respond to terrorist threats and attacks targeting the State’s critical infrastructure. CTTF is comprised of personnel from




numerous public safety agencies across the state. The FTX simulated a variety of terrorist attacks and participants followed intelligence and investigative “leads” to test command, control, coordination and communications. This valuable training allowed the Rangers to exercise protective-security, detection, deterrence and counter-surveillance tactics in very realistic scenarios.




## Statewide Awards

### Ranger of the Year



Since his transfer from WRD Fisheries Management Section to LED in 2011, Corporal Greg Wade has exhibited exceptional performance as a Conservation Ranger and has distinguished himself among his peers. He is ambitious, resourceful, and a very astute enforcement officer who is particularly adept in the areas of waterfowl protection, boating safety, and investigations. His hard work and dedication earned him the 2013 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Officer of the Year award. Greg is always willing to teach less-experienced colleagues the skills and knowledge to make them successful and he understands that success is the product of hard work and effectiveness is best achieved by a well-trained team. He is a member of the Counter-Terrorism Task Force and trains frequently on tactical maneuvering and the use of specialized equipment. He is also a certified LED instructor. As a strong promoter of the Division and its goals, he presented 35 information and education programs to local schools, civic clubs, Georgia Power, and media outlets, covering a wide range of topics. Cpl. Wade's performance as a Conservation Ranger is a testament to his abilities and the personal pride that he takes in his profession.

### James R. Darnell Award



Corporal Jeremy Bolen started his career with DNR LED in 2001 and was promoted to the rank of Corporal in 2011. He is currently assigned to Muscogee and Talbot Counties. Jeremy is a dedicated, hardworking, and a well-liked officer who sets a great example for newer Rangers. He has won numerous Region awards in his 12 years with LED and is currently the Georgia Boating Officer of the Year. Jeremy is an ambassador for the Law Enforcement Division, promoting the agency in a positive manner through boating safety and education programs, speaking engagements, and media outreach. In addition to his regular duties, Jeremy is a member of the Honor Guard, an LED firearms instructor, and has been a K-9 handler since 2007. His K-9, Ruger, is utilized frequently for DNR Law Enforcement and assisting other agencies. He and Ruger were involved in numerous enforcement actions and investigations and are a team you can count on to perform at the highest level. Cpl. Bolen has established himself as an excellent Ranger who is knowledgeable, dependable, well respected, and is consistently a top producer in his work section.

### **Ranger of the Year Nominees**

Region I- RFC Brooks Varnell  
Region II- Cpl. Craig Fulghum  
Region III- Cpl. Mark Patterson  
Region IV- Cpl. Jeremy Bolen  
Region V- Cpl. Greg Wade  
Region VI- RFC Joe Hilton  
Region VII- Ranger Jason Miller

### **Supervisor of the Year**

Colonel Eddie Henderson is the recipient of the 2013 Supervisor of the Year Award. Colonel Henderson has served the Law Enforcement Division at every rank from Ranger to Colonel, giving him a unique perspective on what is needed to effectively manage such a complex organization. Throughout his tenure, Colonel Henderson has demonstrated his ongoing commitment to providing the citizens of Georgia a professional law enforcement agency. Colonel Henderson has directed the focus of the division toward conservation law enforcement and continuously strives to strengthen and refine our professional effectiveness. He has promoted quality values throughout the division and empowered the staff with the knowledge and training necessary to confidently enforce Georgia's laws. Colonel Henderson's greatest attribute is his compassion for every member of the Law Enforcement Division. His dedication to his staff and the mission of the agency has earned him the respect and loyalty of all rangers. Colonel Henderson's contributions to the Law Enforcement Division are immeasurable. He has addressed current issues, but most importantly, he has the foresight to recognize those issues which loom in the future and plan accordingly. Congratulations to Colonel Eddie Henderson, the 2013 Supervisor of the Year.



### **Investigative Ranger of the Year**

Region II's RFC David Webb is the 2013 Investigative Ranger of the Year, sponsored by the Safari Club – Georgia Chapter. He was a principle investigator in a three-year multi-agency covert investigation called Operation Something Bruin, a federal and state investigation that targeted illegal bear hunting and guiding activities on U.S. Forest Service properties in the Appalachian Mountains along the Georgia and North Carolina state line. The operation began in the fall of 2009 and closed January 1, 2013. David was detached solely to the Investigative Unit for 18 months throughout the investigation. He was one of five officers in the investigation who assumed undercover identities to infiltrate groups who were hunting illegally. He documented violations he observed while undercover and generated 189 reports and over 500 covert audiotaped conversations. The violations included: hunting bears out of season, hunting bears over bait, failure to tag bears, taking protected wildlife (heron) and taking alligator out of season. He spent 264 hours organizing reports, evidence and obtaining search/arrest warrants on the North Carolina



and Georgia targets. In the end, this operation documented over 900 state and federal charges, including 139 state charges against eight defendants in Georgia and 110 state charges against 26 defendants in North Carolina. David recently won the Wildlife Officer of the Year Award from the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association (NAWEOA). Congratulations to RFC David Webb, the 2013 Investigative Officer of the Year.

### **NWTF Officer of the Year**

Corporal Lynn Stanford of Region IV has been selected to receive the Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year Award for 2013, sponsored by the Georgia Chapter of the



National Wild Turkey Federation. This past year, Cpl. Stanford has shown his continued dedication to the protection of the Wild Turkey as he logged over 119 hours of foot patrol to detect turkey hunting violations. His tireless efforts resulted in the documentation of 22 violations, of which 13 were for hunting turkey over bait and two were for hunting without permission on Georgia Power property. Corporal Stanford is a seasoned veteran of DNR Law Enforcement Division. His endless devotion to maintaining Georgia's wild turkey population is exhibited in his everyday work ethic. He is not only devoted to

maintaining our wild turkey population, but educating our youth as well. Cpl. Stanford is to be commended for working to better the sport of turkey hunting through his continuous vigilance in the arena of protecting Georgia's wild turkey population. Congratulations Corporal Lynn Stanford, the NWTF Officer of the Year for 2013.

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

Corporal Jeremy Bolen of Region IV is the 2013 Georgia Boating Officer of the Year. His commitment to boating safety issues are evident by his involvement in a variety of



boating law enforcement and educational activities, setting an example for others to follow. In 2013, Jeremy devoted 475 hours to boating safety patrols, checking 157 boats. He patrols four major reservoirs in his work section and the Chattahoochee River. These reservoirs are all shared with the State of Alabama and he works to maintain a positive working relationship with Alabama's Marine Police. This past year Jeremy completed the 32-hour NASBLA Level 1 boat incident class and participated in six vessel HIN inspection events. His public relations efforts were excellent, speaking to various civic and

community groups and the news media about boating safety, BUI's, and National Safe Boating Week and he also participated in the Columbus Safe Kid's life jacket give-away. Congratulations Corporal Jeremy Bolen, the 2013 Boating Safety Officer of the Year.



## **The Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award**

RFC Brian Adams of Region III Law Enforcement was selected to receive the 2014 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award. In 2013, he logged 260 hours of waterfowl



enforcement. His efforts, enthusiasm and expertise in knowing where to be and when to be there resulted in over 40 enforcement contacts. Documented violations include hunting over bait, hunting after legal hours, over the limit, possession of lead shot, unplugged shotguns and various license violations. Notably, Brian spent 30 days checking more than 30 ponds for bait, using a drag that he constructed from materials donated by GDOT. His determination yielded eight baited ponds. RFC Adams' understands the importance of public outreach and education, speaking to various civic and church groups. His involvement in the

Glascock County School System led to a wildlife and hunter education program being added to the curriculum, insuring that by graduation every student will be certified. RFC Adams is also involved with the Glascock FFA. This year he provided construction plans for Wood Duck boxes and identified areas within the county that the students could place them for observation. For his contributions to the protection of Georgia's waterfowl resources, congratulations go to RFC Brian Adams, the 2014 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award recipient.

## **The Torch Award**

*The Torch Award is a new award that, each year, will be presented by the Law Enforcement Division to encourage the professional development of recently appointed Rangers. Nominees must not have worked as a wildlife enforcement officer for more than five years, have demonstrated a genuine desire to protect the resources and develop professionally, and demonstrate exceptional ability and initiative in the performance of his or her duties, including public education.*

The Command Staff is proud to announce that RFC Chad Hulsey from Region V is the first recipient of the 2014 Torch Award. RFC Hulsey has been employed with the LED since November of 2011. He graduated from the 28<sup>th</sup> Basic Ranger Academy where he received the Top Gun Award for excellent proficiency with a firearm and was the co-recipient of the Wildlife Award for excellence in wildlife knowledge and identification. Chad's work section consists of eight southwest Georgia counties and, as the newest member of his unit, he has proven his dedication to the Division's mission through his superior work ethic. Due to his attention to detail and investigative skills, he was selected as a member of LED's



Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT). As part of his training for CIRT, Chad attended the Hunting Investigation Academy in Wisconsin, GPS Forensics in Tennessee, and Criminal Investigation Fundamentals in Forsyth, Georgia. RFC Hulsey is one of only two Rangers within LED certified to conduct forensics on GPS devices. He actively pursues opportunities to inform and educate the public and this past year he conducted 38 of these programs. Chad also participates annually in the Special Youth Challenge, a program which is geared toward introducing children with

handicaps to hunting, fishing, and the outdoors. As part of this program, Chad volunteers his personal time to take two handicap children turkey hunting on his hunting club each year. Congratulations to RFC Chad Hulsey, the 2014 Torch Award winner.

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

Corporal Travis Sweat of Region IV was selected as the Hunter Education Instructor of the Year for 2013. In the last year, he instructed 15 Hunter Education classes as the head



instructor in three counties and assisted with classes in another. Additionally, he taught two Live Fire classes. Cpl. Sweat logged 243.5 hunter safety hours in 2013 and, on more than one occasion, changed his off days to ensure he would be there to teach. Travis is constantly searching for new volunteer instructors and he currently has two new instructors waiting to be certified. When he is unable to attend a class, he sets up the class for the instructors so they will only need to show up and teach. Cpl. Sweat frequently promotes hunter education at Information and Education programs, such as Fayette County's

National Night Out, and often speaks to senior citizens groups and at elementary schools. Cpl. Sweat's desire to ensure Georgia's hunters know safe practices is continually demonstrated by his commitment to hunter education while still performing his other job duties at an exceptional level. Congratulations Corporal Travis Sweat, 2013 Hunter Education Instructor of the Year.

### **Previous Rangers of the Year**

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

A one of a kind Ranger of the Year Badge was designed this past year to be presented to and worn by the current ROY. The badge will be passed from Ranger to Ranger each year as a way to highlight that officer's dedication, hard work, and commitment to the Division's mission.



*Law Enforcement Off the Pavement!*



## Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)



**Front Kneeling:** RFC Brooks Varnell, K-9 Rock

**Front Row L-R:** BOG Joyce Holland, Capt. Johnny Johnson, Sgt. Jeff Galloway, Sgt. Rick Dempsey, RFC Joe Hill, Cpl. Tommy Gentry, Sgt. Brian Keener, Cpl. James Keener, Cpl. Eric Brown, RFC Chad Cox, Rfc. Barton Hendrix, Ranger Mark Puig, Cpl. Shawn Elmore, Secretary Rachel Cox.

**Back Row L-R:** Sgt. John Vanlandingham, Cpl. Lee Burns, RFC Ben Cunningham, RFC Roger McConkey, RFC Cody Jones, Cpl. Casey Jones, RFC Zack Hardy, Cpl. Byron Young, Cpl. Wil Smith, RFC Daniel Gray, Sgt. Mike Barr

FY 2014 brought about a momentous event in the organizational history of DNR. The creation of the Law Enforcement Division within the Department of Natural Resources was a long overdue change that has improved many functions and the delivery of services to the citizens of Georgia. The new Division will continue to absorb the law enforcement duties of the Game Management section and a transitional period was begun to also absorb the LE duties of the State Parks system. This will bring all law enforcement duties and personnel of DNR, outside of EPD, under the command of one Director/ Colonel, and thus create a higher level of consistency and accountability in delivering LE services to the public.

This year also brought several significant events in the Region I LED (Calhoun) area. On September 19<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> an estimated 30 to 40 thousand people attended the re-enactment of the battle of Chickamauga that was fought during the Civil War. This re-enactment was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle and Rangers were task in providing a Law Enforcement presence during the week-long event. The re-enactment was held on Crockford-Pigeon Mountain WMA in the area known as the “Cove”. On February 11<sup>th</sup> and again on the 14<sup>th</sup> of 2014 two winter storms impacted the upper half of the state. The first storm caught the North West section of the state by surprise and hit the metro Atlanta area especially hard leaving thousands of people stranded at their places of work and in their vehicles along highways and interstates. Rangers were dispatched to assist these citizens by checking the stranded vehicles and providing blankets and food and water. Rangers also provided the transportation of vital medical supplies to area hospitals and nursing homes. Local schools were assisted with transportation needs of students and the evacuations of stranded school busses were also provided. The second storm was less of a surprise and although it affected a larger portion of the state, officials were better prepared for the response.

During this year some of the Rangers of Region I was recognized for their efforts and others attended specialized training. Sergeant Ricky Dempsey started the PMP course given at Columbus State University during this year. Corporal James Keener and Ranger Rodger McConkey were chosen and trained as aerial observers to assist the pilots in the aviation unit during rescue and law enforcement missions. Members of the Counter Terrorism Task Force (CTTF) attended several specialized training courses. Rangers Ben Cunningham, Rodger McConkey and Mark Puig attended the Woodland Ops course given in North West Georgia. Captain Johnny Johnson attended and completed the FBI LEEDS course held in Atlanta. Ranger Chad Cox was nominated as the Region I LED Ranger of the year. Corporal Byron Young was awarded the Region I LED Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award and Ranger Barton Hendrix was the Region I LED Boating Safety Officer of the Year.

Operationally the year has been active including a case made in Murray County by Corporal Casey Jones involving individuals shocking fish with an old telephone. Ranger Jones also cited a case of illegal ginseng harvesting where he confiscated over 100 plants. A case was also made in Murray County by Rangers Casey Jones and Joe Hill where individual was snaring bears. Cases involving social media seem to be increasing including several incidents of illegally killed black bear and several cases made relating to the taking of turkey and deer. Cases involving the selling of wildlife were also discovered and investigated. Allatoona Lake continues to be very active and this year was no different. Several serious boating incidents were investigated and with the exception of one case where an individual fell from his boat while fishing and was subsequently ran over as his boat circled no other fatalities were recorded. The Chattahoochee River was active with six drowning reported and investigated this year. Rangers from Region I were involved in several search and rescue missions this year including two separate cave rescues, five missing persons searches and three body recovery missions. Rangers assigned to the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) investigated numerous boating and hunting incidents this year with one occurrence involving the shooting of a female by her boyfriend who mistook her for a deer. Ranger Brooks Varnell continues to head the Divisions K-9 program and he and canine Rock made several good cases this year. Ranger Varnell was called to assist the Cobb County Police Department with the pursuit of an unknown subject who had burglarized a home and had assaulted the owner. Canine Rock tracked the subject who attempted to flee but was soon arrested. The arrest resulted in clearing 30 unsolved burglaries in Cobb County. Ranger Varnell and Rock also tracked an individual onto private property who was hunting without permission. The track was very long being several hours old and traversed over very rough ground including several creeks and ridges.

The year brought many challenges administratively also. The Division made many changes in the way Rangers report everything they do or produce. One of the many initiatives was the development of a work force deployment matrix. This was a very complicated and in depth process where data was collected from every region throughout the state. The matrix will identify the future needs to provide law enforcement services to the public and will give a scientific process for validation. Google Drive was also an internet tool adopted for use in the many reporting duties of rangers within the Division.

Another project that was concluded was a display for the State Training Center. A display of a mannequin wearing the first law enforcement uniform from the early forties is located on one side while the current uniform is worn by another mannequin on the right side. This mannequin is also holding a deer fawn. The centennial print is located between these uniforms at the front on an easel. The background is a wooded scene.

After completing eleven weeks in the basic police academy and another twelve weeks in Ranger School, Ranger Mark Puig assumed his new duties assigned to Fulton County. Ranger Puig was elected class president and a lot of good “Game Wardening” is expected from him as he assumes his new duties.

Rangers from the Region I Law Enforcement Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) investigated six hunting incidents during the 2012-2013 season. No fatalities were reported and half of the incidents were tree stand related falls. One incident involved a hunter mistaken for game and the other two were self-inflicted wounds. Rangers also investigated 4 drowning and responded to numerous search and rescue calls.



## Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)



**Front L-R: Cpl. Craig Fulghum, Sgt. Mike Burgamy, Cpl. Jesse Cook, AOC II Brenda Tanner, Secretary Julia Braswell, Capt. Thomas Barnard, Sgt. Lee Brown, RFC Chad Chambers, RFC David Webb  
Middle L-R: RFC Brandon Pierce, Cpl. Jason Roberson, RFC Shane Sartor, Sgt. Steve Seitz, Cpl. Derek Dillard, RFC Kevin Goss, Cpl. Eric Sanders, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins, RFC Kevin Dyer, RFC Eric Isom, RFC Mitchel Crump, Sgt. Greg Colson, RFC Mark Stephens  
Back Row L-R: RFC Anne Britt, RFC Barry Britt, RFC Shane Brown, Sgt. Stan Elrod  
Inset: PT Secretary Taylor Cassell**

Currently Region II is comprised of 19 Northeast Georgia Counties. Within these counties we have 8 major impoundments, 3 major rivers, 13 Wildlife Management Areas (185,000 acres), 21 State Park properties, 288,000 acres of National Forest lands, 220 miles of trout streams and calls for service from citizen complaints on private lands in 19 counties, all handled by 25 Rangers.

This past fall proved to be very busy for Region II. Citizen complaints on night deer hunting increased in comparison to the last couple of years. Rangers worked numerous complaints and used our aviation unit on 2 separate details in efforts to apprehend night deer hunters. From July 2013 to February 2014 Region II Rangers apprehended 12 groups of night deer hunters and arrested 34 people.

RFC David Webb received a complaint about a store owner in Union County who was asking hunters about purchasing bear parts from them. Our Investigative Unit along with Sgt. Seitz, Cpl. Crawley, Cpl. Cook, and RFC Dyer worked the complaint for several months and completed the investigation with the arrest of the store owner when he purchased bear parts from undercover DNR Rangers.

On December 26, 2014 RFC Brandon Pierce and Sgt. Stan Elrod responded to a hunting incident in Hart County. Upon arrival Rangers found a subject that had been shot in the left arm and abdomen from a rifle. The victim saw the shooter flee the scene on foot toward a nearby highway. The GBI along with the Hart County Sheriff's Office and DNR

Rangers worked together to process the scene, canvass nearby residences and secure evidence from the scene. The following day Cpl. Fulghum, RFC Anne Britt, RFC Tim Butler and K-9 handler Cpl. Micheal Crawley responded to assist with a search of the area with hopes of locating more evidence. Sgt. Elrod notice a boot track in soft soil in the same area the shooter had ran the night before. Cpl. Crawley and his K-9 Storm were able to track the subject back to a house. Five adults in the house were later questioned at the Sheriff's Office. One adult from the group identified the shooter; warrants were then secured for his arrest. When officers arrived at the suspected shooters location he ran from the residence. A brief foot chase ensued and he was taken into custody. Rangers found where he had used a torch to destroy the rifle used during the hunting incident. It was also determined that the other 4 adults that were originally interviewed lied about the identity and location of the shooter. Warrants were also taken on those and they were arrested as well. A total of 17 warrants were taken and 5 people were arrested.

Enforcement on the waterways in the region has been very busy. We have had great weather on the weekends with most lakes reporting at full pool. Our BUI arrests have increased this year in comparison to last year. From July 2012 to June 2013 there were 50 BUI arrests. From July 2013 to June 2014 there were 71 BUI arrests. Our serious injury and fatality boating incidents have declined this past year. We attribute this decline to aggressive enforcement by our officers, boating education requirements and public awareness of the new boating laws and general boating safety tips through our local media.

In February of 2014 CIRT Investigators and Rangers spent 7 days testifying in a fatal boating incident that occurred in 2012. This case involved a PWC operator that ran over 2 kids in a tube being towed behind a pontoon boat. At the end of the week the jury was given the case. Within a matter of a few hours the jury came back with Guilty verdicts on all charges. The PWC operator was charged with Homicide by Vessel, serious injury, reckless operation of a vessel, rules of the road violation and a 100 foot rule violation. The operator was sentenced to 15 years, 4 to serve, 11 years' probation, \$3,000.00 in fines and 80 hours of community service.

We just completed construction on a 2 bay boathouse at Laurel Park on Lake Lanier. This boathouse replaced the old boathouse previously located at the Rowing Venue at Clarks Bridge. The new boathouse has an office space; boat lifts for 2 patrol boats, and has the ability to chase water during drought conditions.

### **Search and Rescue/ Recovery**

All of the Region II Rangers were impacted by both Winter Storms Pax and Leon. Region II Rangers were personally impacted by both storms, but as Rangers always due, rose to the occasion and provided 24 hour assistance. Rangers used their 4-wheel drive vehicles to rescue stranded students on school buses, transported emergency medical personnel and supplies, used chain saws to open roadways and assisted stranded motorists.

In January of 2014, Cpl. Loudermilk, Cpl. Roberson, RFC Barry Britt, Cpl. Tompkins and RFC Goss responded to Lake Lanier in Dawson County to assist the GBI with a search for 2 missing Dawsonville men. Both had been missing for almost a week. Due to the extremely cold temperatures Rangers had to break through 1” thick ice in order to operate the side scan sonar. On day 2 of the search, Rangers located an image on the screen about thirty feet from a dock. Rangers deployed the R.O.V. (Remote Operated Vessel) and were able to identify that this was in fact one of the missing persons. Once the dive team recovered the body, Rangers began scanning again. Within a few minutes Rangers had located another image about thirty yards from the last location. Rangers deployed the R.O.V. and were able to identify that this was in fact the second missing person. The side scan sonar and R.O.V. proved to be invaluable to the recovery operation and enabled the Rangers to give both families closure.

On April 17<sup>th</sup> 2014, both Region II CAT (Critical Action Teams) participated in a SAR Training exercise at Cochran Falls adjacent to Amicalola State Park. The DNR LED Aviation Unit, DNR LED CAT, Dawson County S.O., Dawson County Fire, and DNR Parks SART all worked together to simulate a hiker in need of medical treatment at Cochran Falls. Part way through the scenario another hiker was injured and the Aviation Unit was grounded due to weather. All of the different agencies worked extremely well together, handled the challenge and completed the mission, carrying out both victims to an awaiting ambulance.

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, The LED Aviation Unit was called to lift a hiker who had broken his leg on the floor of Tallulah Gorge. Just recently the Aviation Unit had certified several Rangers as Aerial Observers. RFC Mitchell Crump was off that day but responded and assisted Aviation. The many days of training paid off, the extraction went extremely well, the patient was lifted to the LZ on the Rabun County side of the Gorge and was transported by EMS to a nearby hospital.

#### **Region Personnel Awards**

RFC David Webb received the Statewide Ranger of the Year Award

RFC David Webb received the Statewide Investigative Ranger of the Year Award

Cpl. Jesse Cook received the Region Boating Safety Officer of the Year

RFC Mitchell Crump received the Region Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award

Cpl. Craig Fulghum received the Region Ranger of the Year Nomination



## Region III- Thomson (East Central)



**1<sup>st</sup> Row L-R: Sgt. John Harwell, BOG Elizabeth Bentley, Admin. Sgt. Matt Garthright, Secretary Stephanie Taylor, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Row RFC Niki Spencer, Captain Mark Padgett, RFC Brian Adams.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Row Cpl. Derrell Worth, RFC Phillip Nelson, RFC Ricky Boles, RFC Jeff Billips, RFC Grant Matherly.**

**4<sup>th</sup> Row Cpl. Ryan Swain, Cpl. David Allen, RFC Richard Tanner, Cpl. Ben Payne.**

**5<sup>th</sup> Row RFC Tim Butler, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, Cpl. Mark Patterson, RFC Bobby Timmerman, Cpl. Brian Hobbins. Not pictured: Sgt. Brian Carter, Sgt. Max Boswell, Cpl. Micheal Crawley, K-9 Storm**

Region III Law Enforcement had another successful year with significant conservation law enforcement efforts. RFC Brian Adams received the Region III Waterfowl Officer of the Year Award and was also recognized as the State's Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award recipient for 2014. Cpl. Mark Patterson represented Region III as its Ranger of the Year. Cpl. Derrell Worth represented Region III as its Boating Safety Officer of the Year. Cpl. Brian Hobbins represented Region III as its Investigative Officer of the Year. RFC Tim Butler received the Region III NWTF Officer of the Year Award. Sgt. Brian Carter was a nominee for Supervisor of the Year from Region III. Volunteer Hunter Education Instructor, Mr. Fred Perry received the State's Hunter Safety Instructor of the Year Award.

After 23 years with the Department, RFC Leroy Ficklin retired. RFC Ficklin was assigned to Hancock County upon starting his career with the department in 1991. He later transferred and became the Game Warden for McDuffie/Taliaferro County. Sgt. Brian Carter completed Command College at Columbus State University. Cpl. Mark Patterson completed P.O.S.T. Instructor Training and F.T.O School. RFC Tim Butler joined the DNR C.I.R.T. Team.

RFC Jeff Billips gave a presentation for the Society for Georgia Archaeologists at Red Top Mountain State Park. RFC Billips' presentation covered two recent cases that he worked in Burke County. One case involved the arrest of four looters at a Native American Indian site. The other case involved the arrest of two looters that desecrated Confederate soldier graves and infant graves.

Region III completed the construction of a two bay boathouse on Clarks Hill Lake within the boundaries of Elijah Clark State Park. This boathouse will serve Cpl. Ryan Swain and his work section on the north end of the lake.

Region III was impacted by Winter Storm Pax, a record ice storm. This ice storm impacted the area with major power outages and downed trees for over a week. A number of Rangers in the region suffered property damage from this storm. Rangers from across the state were deployed to Region III to assist with this winter storm.

Region III Rangers had another very active year in introducing our youth to the outdoors. Cpl. Derrell Worth hosted the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Skeet Shoot/Squirrel Hunt on Oconee WMA. Out of sixteen youth, approximately one thousand shot shells were fired and fifteen squirrels were harvested.

RFC Brian Adams hosted the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Glascock County Kid's Fishing Event. Over the week-long event 240 children from the local school system got the opportunity to take part in the event along with many of their parents. All the children were successful in catching fish with 1400 fish being caught.

Cpl. Ben Payne coordinated efforts for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Augusta Outdoor Expo. This event yielded 5000 participants. Cpl. Payne and other rangers from the Region provided a booth at this event utilizing the laser shot and fishing simulator. They also did break-out sessions during the event to talk about Ranger's duties and new law changes. Ranger's handed out lifetime hunting and fishing license to door prize winners throughout the event. Cpl. Payne also coordinated and helped electro shock and collect fish to be used in an aquarium at the event, for public viewing of game fish.

Region III Rangers made some very impressive cases against violators of the state's wildlife and fish laws.

The region saw a spike in night hunting activity apprehending 11 groups for a total of 30 people charged with hunting deer at night. RFC Grant Matherly led the region in night hunting contacts while devoting 268 hours to night deer hunting enforcement. He caught 6 groups of night hunters, 18 people total in three different counties resulting in 55 night hunting related contacts including one convicted felon.

Over the last year, Rangers have encountered people shocking fish, cast netting game fish, and seining for game fish. Sgt. Doyte Chaffin and RFC Robert Timmerman apprehended two subjects who were shocking fish on the Savannah River. The two subjects were cited for shocking fish and sixty bream were confiscated.

RFC Richard Tanner was patrolling the Oconee National Forest when he apprehended a group of people gill netting near the water's edge. RFC Tanner noticed a 5 gallon bucket with various species of game and non-game fish inside, a stringer with several larger game and non-game fish, and a gill net placed in the water. The individuals were charged with taking game fish by illegal methods. RFC Tanner seized the gill net and 50 game fish from the group.

RFC Richard Tanner also encountered several individuals using cast nets to catch game fish. Several individuals were cited for taking game fish by illegal methods and a total of 128 game fish were seized.

RFC Ricky Boles and RFC Richard Tanner encountered a group of fisherman that was collecting snails in Lake Oconee. After further investigation, it was determined they had several fish and a cast net hidden in their car. One of the individuals admitted to catching the fish with the cast net. He had 40 bream, 1 large mouth and one catfish.



## Region IV- Macon (West Central)



**Front Row:** K-9 Drake, RFC Keith Page, Sgt. Brent Railey, Sgt. Tim Kendrick, AOC Audrey Taylor, Captain Bob Lynn, Sgt. Wanda Roberts, Secretary Lindsey Morris, Sgt. Tony Fox, Sgt. Bo Kelly, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, K-9 Ruger

**Second Row:** RFC Kevin Godbee, Cpl. Lynn Stanford, Chaplain Rick Lanford, RFC David Fisher, RFC Russell Epps, Cpl. Susan Morris, Cpl. Travis Sweat, Cpl. Josh Copelan

**Third Row:** RFC Ronnie Beard, Rgr. Matt Johnson, RFC Freddie Hays, Cpl. Tony Wynne, Cpl. Mitch Oliver, Cpl. Keith Waddell, RFC Jeremy Reese, Cpl. Robert Stillwell

**Not Pictured:** Sgt. Jim Bradfield, Chaplain Eric Crandlemire, Chaplain Brandon Brooks  
Cpl. Josh Swain

Region IV had another outstanding year. The region produced three state award winners along with superb Conservation Law Enforcement efforts. Corporal Travis Sweat received the honor of being the State Hunter Education Instructor. Corporal Jeremy Bolen was honored by receiving the State Boating Officer of the Year, and Corporal Lynn Stanford received the State National Wild Turkey Officer Award.

Not to sell our other award winners short, RFC Kevin Godbee was the region's Waterfowl Officer. Corporal Mitch Oliver was the region's Investigative Ranger of the Year and Corporal Jeremy Bolen was the region's Ranger of the Year nominee. The Ranger of the Year process changed this year, which will result in the State Award winner, will be announced in August at the POAG Conference Banquet in Savannah.

Due to copious amounts of rain fall during the past year, flooding along the Ocmulgee River was a frequent occurrence. In many instances where there is flooding, there is the need for water related rescues. One such incident involved Corporal Josh Swain, RFC Ronnie Beard, and Sergeant Tony Fox. Cpl. Swain and RFC Beard risked their life to rescue four individuals stranded on a small island being consumed by flood waters. Cpl. Swain and RFC Beard were recognized by the DNR Board as well as their names being submitted for the POAG Officer of the Year Award and Governor's Public Safety Award. The above officer's dedication to our profession does not go unnoticed. Many thanks to each of the above Rangers for countless hours of hard work and time spent away from their families to protect Georgia's Natural and Cultural Resources.

Region IV also underwent personnel changes as well. This year brought about the retirement of the region's AOC, Audrey Taylor. The region's part-time secretary, Lindsey Morris, resigned to complete her college degree. Corporal Josh Copelan resigned as the Lake Sinclair Boating Safety Officer to continue a law enforcement career with the Motor Carrier Compliance Division of the Georgia Department of Public Safety.

Sergeant Tim Kendrick's work section had a busy year with water related activity. His section conducted six search and rescue operations along with responding to two boating incidents, one incident resulted in a fatality. His section was not only busy with search and rescue operations, but educating the public as well. Sgt. Kendrick's section presented 79 educational programs to various groups during the past year.

Sgt. Kendrick's section contains one of the region's two K-9 officers. RFC Keith Page and K-9 Drake had a great year. Drake was utilized numerous times for his wildlife detection and man tracking abilities. RFC Page and Drake finished the year confiscating 1-turkey, 1-10 Pt buck, 1-3pt buck, 1-handgun, 1-rifle, 1-cell phone, and 2 lbs. of marijuana.

One of the section's most interesting cases came from a county familiarization flight with DNR's Aviation. During the flight, a baited deer stand was located with a vehicle parked in the vicinity. Major Doc Watson landed the helicopter in a nearby location relative to the baited stand's location. Corporal Susan Morris and RFC Keith Page located a hunter in the area. RFC Page confronted the hunter and discovered he was hunting under the influence of alcohol. The hunter was arrested for HUI. One never knows what to expect while out protecting our natural resources.



Sergeant Jim Bradfield's section had an active year as well. His section assisted with the 2014 Powerboat Super League hydroplane boat races on West Point Lake. This was a two day event that involved numerous categories of racing vessels. Sgt. Bradfield's section was tasked with water security around the race course and responding to critical incidents related to the event.

Corporal Jeremy Bolen and RFC Russell Epps concluded a felony dumping case involving a 35 ft. vessel that was sunk on purpose in West Point Lake. Officers are currently perusing prosecution of the offender.

Sgt. Bradfield assisted the Troup County Sheriff's Office with a theft of property case by utilizing trail cameras set up on the property in question. By utilizing the cameras, officers were able to obtain undisputed evidence of the suspects and their vehicle taking items off of the property.

Sgt. Bradfield's section possesses the second K-9 Officer, Corporal Jeremy Bolen and K-9 Ruger. Cpl. Bolen and Ruger had a successful year as well. They were responsible for tracking numerous hunters down which led to the confiscation of an illegally killed hen turkey and illegal size buck deer in one case. Other K-9 activity includes locating two convicted felons hunting with firearms, another illegally killed hen turkey, locating a 7 pt. buck and two does killed at night and locating four suspects who fled from a dog fight in Meriwether County.

Due to the great relationship Sgt. Bradfield has with the Georgia State Patrol Post in LaGrange, he was offered office space in the new Post. The office was furnished at no cost to DNR. In front of the new Post is a DNR LE Division sign which was also provided to DNR at no cost. The new office provides officers a place to get out of inclement weather so they can complete paperwork as well as a place to conduct interviews for investigations.

During the past year, Sergeant Brent Railey's section made numerous cases worthy of mentioning. One such case involved Cpl. Travis Sweat checking an area in Pike County where hunting violations had been found in previous years. While on the property he found several people hunting over bait (rice bran) and hunting deer without fluorescent orange. One of the hunters, who had several empty beer cans underneath his deer stand, was believed to be hunting under the influence. He was asked to perform several field sobriety exercises which he failed to successfully complete. He was arrested at the scene and charged with hunting under the influence of alcohol.

In the early hours of Monday December 30, 2014, RFC Kevin Godbee received a night hunting complaint in northern Coweta County. RFC Godbee went to the scene and spoke to a witness who had chased after and made contact with two men after they had shot and killed a doe in the front yard of a neighbor. The witness gave RFC Godbee an Alabama tag number from the suspect vehicle and a description of the suspects. Later that afternoon RFC Godbee and Sergeant Brent Railey went to the location where the deer was shot and were able to find a 9mm shell casing on the shoulder of the road. RFC Godbee was also able to locate a local address where the suspects were possibly living. Two men were found at the residence. RFC Godbee interviewed the individuals. During the interview the individuals confessed to shooting the deer. A 9mm pistol was seized as evidence and they were charged with hunting deer at night, hunting from a motor vehicle and hunting from a public roadway. Both men ultimately reached plea agreements that included fines and loss of hunting privileges.

On the evening of January 9, 2014, Cpl. Keith Waddell responded to a complaint of a deer being killed out of season in Coweta County. An off duty State Trooper had heard a high powered rifle shot and had detained a suspect that had a freshly killed nine point



From L to R: K9 Drake, RFC Keith Page, CPL. Keith Waddell

buck in his truck bed. The suspect told Cpl. Waddell he had killed the buck earlier in the day in Fulton County where the season was still open for archery. With the assistance of RFC Keith Page, K9 Drake and Sgt. Brent Railey; Cpl. Waddell was able to find the place of the kill and the firearm the subject had hidden in the woods. He also found the spent rifle cartridge and a large amount of hair in the immediate area. The suspect was a person whom Cpl. Waddell had received numerous complaints in reference to poaching in the last several years. He was arrested and charged with hunting out of season, hunting big game over bait, failure to record deer harvest and interference with a ranger in the performance of his duties. On June 30, 2014 in Coweta County State Court a plea agreement was reached and in addition to fines and probation his hunting privileges were suspended for twenty four months.

This past year Conservation Rangers in Sergeant Tony Fox's work section conducted several search and rescue operations along the Ocmulgee River.

On the evening of December 23, 2013, Cpl. Josh Swain, RFC Ronnie Beard, and Sgt. Tony Fox responded to the river below the City of Macon in reference to four boaters – three of whom were juveniles - who had become stranded by rising flood waters after their boat experienced a swamping. Swain and Beard successfully maneuvered their boat through hazardous waters and were able to bring all four persons safely to land. For their valor, they were recognized by the Board of Natural Resources and have been nominated for the POAG (Peace Officers Association of Georgia) Officer of the Year Award.

On December 26, 2013, RFC Beard responded to the river once again, this time in Bleckley County; a father and son became trapped by rising flood waters while hunting on Ocmulgee Wildlife Management Area. Beard was able to launch a patrol boat into the flooded woodlands and bring both people to the safety of dry land. The hunters' vehicle, however, could not be recovered before it was overtaken by floodwaters.

Finally, on the evening of January 19, 2014, RFC David Fisher and Cpl. Josh Swain responded to the Ocmulgee River in Twiggs County regarding three people who had been reported missing. This rescue operation happened to evolve into a criminal investigation when it was discovered the individuals had become lost after committing theft and burglary at a nearby cabin. Rangers arrested the individuals, transported them to the nearest boat ramp, and turned the subjects over to local law enforcement.

Sergeant Bo Kelly's work section had an active year as well. During this past year, Rangers from his work section investigated one fatality hunting incident on Cedar Creek WMA and one fatality boating incident on Lake Sinclair. Four other boating incidents were worked on Lake Sinclair by his work section as well. Rangers in Sgt. Kelly's section were involved with the recovery of three drowning victims from Lake Sinclair and assisted in SONAR searches in two other incidents. Sgt. Kelly's section assisted Region III and the Putnam County Sheriff's Office with a double homicide investigation on Lake Oconee in Putnam County. They provided patrol boats and SONAR looking for one of the victim's that was thought to have been placed in the lake to dispose of the body.



Ranger Matt Johnson completed the FTO program and is productive member of Sgt. Kelly's work section. RFC Jeremy Reese was promoted to RFC in January 2014. During a routine wildlife checkpoint in Putnam County, Rangers seized over \$11,000 dollars of suspected drug money from a convicted drug dealer currently on federal probation. Rangers assisted with the annual Wilkinson County quail hunt for kid's event that introduces novice hunters to quail hunting and shooting clay pigeons.

Rangers utilized the DNR aviation unit for boating safety patrols on Lake Sinclair, and made several arrests for various violations and boating under the influence. Volunteers from Sgt. Kelly's work section assisted with working bear hunting enforcement in Region VI and boating enforcement on Lake Lanier.

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



**Front Row L-R; Captain Jeff Swift, Cpl. Scott Carroll, Sgt. David Ruddell, Sgt. Al Greer, Cpl. Bob Holley, K-9 Creek, Cpl. Greg Wade, Ranger Quinn Fogle, Cpl. Steve Robinson  
Middle Row; Sgt. Ellis Wynn, Ranger Jesse Harrison, RFC Tony Cox, Sgt. Butch Potter, Cpl. Randy Davis, Ranger Eric White  
Back Row; Sgt. Rick Sellars, RFC Randy James, RFC Jon Penuel, Ranger Steve Thomas, RFC Jim Atchley, Cpl. Clint Martin, RFC Chad Hulsey and Cpl. Robbie Griner. Not Shown: Cpl. Mike Binion  
Inset: Sec. Shannon Boyd, BOG Cindy Hynote**

The Region V Law Enforcement Division is headquartered in Albany, Georgia and consists of the 29 counties in the southwestern corner of the state. The region has four reservoirs and two major rivers within the boundaries. Currently, the region has 23 Rangers assigned to patrol the region with 21 of those being assigned primary field duties and two assigned administrative duties. The region also has two non-sworn staff members performing administrative support functions at the regional office.

Region V personnel responded to five hunting incidents, three boating incidents and six drownings throughout fiscal year 2013. Two of the boating incidents resulted in fatalities. The first incident occurred on Bear Creek in Webster County. Sgt. Butch Potter responded to the incident when two men were fishing and their vessel capsized. One of the men was able to swim to shore while the other drowned. The second fatal incident occurred on Lake Seminole. On January 7, 2014, Sgt. Sellars' unit responded to an incident involving three teenage waterfowl hunters on Lake Seminole in Seminole County. The boat they were hunting in swamped and sank leaving the three hunters to swim for shore. Two of them were able to swim to a nearby island and the third was unable to make it and drowned. RFC Jim Atchley, one of Region V's Side Scan Sonar operators, and Ranger Quinn Fogle also responded with the side scan to assist Sgt. Sellars

and his unit and was able to locate the sunken vessel and the body in a short period of time. The recovery was made that afternoon. The weather during the search was very cold with high winds making the recovery difficult. Cpl. Mike Binion initiated the investigation and Cpl. Steve Robinson completed the CIRT investigation into this incident as well as the other fatality.

During the year Region V continued to see the popularity of alligator hunting grow. In an effort to ensure this resource was protected Cpl. Scott Carroll coordinated a concentrated pre-season alligator patrol on Lake Walter F. George Reservoir and Chattahoochee River along the Alabama/Georgia line in August. The patrol included Georgia DNR aviation support, Rangers from several work units throughout Region V, Alabama Game Wardens and USFW Service personnel. The detail was in conjunction with Alabama's opening of alligator season. The focus of the patrol was the protection of the alligator population on the Georgia side of Lake Walter F. George, the Chattahoochee River and the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge. The detail was successful with the detection and apprehension of 20 violations. In September, opening day of Georgia season, Region V staff again conducted an alligator hunting detail along the Flint River from Lake Blackshear to Lake Worth. The detail consisted of several units from the Region V staff and DNR aviation support. Several violations were detected for hunting prior to the season opening and minor license issues.



**Cpl. Greg Wade with 58 Redhead Ducks confiscated in the over the limit cases**

Waterfowl season was also quite eventful throughout the region. On September 29, 2013, Sgt. Rick Sellars and RFC Tony Cox located a duck hunt that was being held in a partially flooded corn field in Seminole County. After detecting several over limit violations, the Rangers called Cpl. Bob Holley and requested that he utilize his K-9 "Creek" to thoroughly search the area. A total of 17 citations were issued to the hunters and 82 Teal and two Wood Ducks were confiscated. Cpl. Greg Wade led the region effort in waterfowl activity with his accomplishments resulting in his

selection as the Region V Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award nominee and the Region V nominee for Ranger of the Year. His activities included coordinating and conducting an investigation and apprehension of six hunters who killed 58 redhead ducks. The arrests resulted in high fines and hunting privilege suspensions as the cornerstone of the convictions.

The Region V K-9 Program, with Cpl. Bob Holley and K-9 Creek, continued to enjoy success in the field. They responded to a wide variety of calls-for-service ranging from traditional game and fish assistance from other Rangers to assisting other agencies tracking fleeing convicted felons. The highlight game and fish case was an investigation



into a complaint involving a hunter poaching on Georgia Veterans State Park. Cpl. Holley and K-9 Creek searched the area for evidence and thanks to the keen eye of Cpl. Holley and the sharp nose of Creek they were able to find evidence of the area the hunter was using to enter the park and hunt. Cpl. Holley conducted surveillance of the area and apprehended the suspect who was charged with criminal trespass and hunting under the influence. Creek also recovered countless other items in other cases including handguns, spent cartridges, deer parts and three fleeing suspects.



**Ranger Jesse Harrison, Cpl. Bob Holley and K-9 Creek with six firearms seized in an illegal hog**



**Antlers confiscated during over the limit investigation by Cpl. Davis and RFC Cox**

This was the first year of the DNR Law Enforcement Division and due to modifications in DNR's law enforcement delivery of services model, LED increased patrols on state owned and controlled properties. As a result of this increased presence, Cpl. Randy Davis and RFC Tony Cox identified an individual who claimed, on the wma sign out sheets, to have killed over the limit of bucks. RFC Cox launched an investigation into his activities and gathered enough evidence to charge this individual with taking six bucks on Silver Lake, Mayhaw and Lake Seminole Wildlife Management areas. They also determined he killed a bobcat out of season on a WMA. In all 19 violations were detected during this investigation.

Rangers throughout Region V conducted concentrated opening day Turkey hunting patrols with special emphasis placed on baited sites and the illegal killing of hens. Sgt. David Ruddell's work unit patrolled the Brooks County area in a detail based on observations and possible violations located by RFC Jon Penuel prior to opening day. Ruddell's unit apprehended several hunters for hunting over bait and was able to piece together an investigation into one of the violators having shot a turkey the day before the season opened. Another individual was charged for hunting over bait early in the morning and caught again three hours later hunting over bait on another site several miles away. In all, Region V staff documented 37 turkey



**L-R- Sgt. David Ruddell, Ranger Eric White, RFC Jon Penuel and RFC Chris Carlisle with three of the gobblers confiscated on opening weekend of Turkey Season 2014**



violations, including 16 over bait and confiscated seven turkeys, including two hens.

In February of 2014 North Georgia was blasted with extreme winter weather causing gridlock, power outages and chaos over much of the area. During this time Region V dispatched seven units for three days to aid in the safety and security of Georgia residents. The Rangers were assigned clearing roadways, patrolling snow covered icy roads, assisting power companies and any other task the varied calls-for-service dictated.



**RFC Chris Carlisle and Ranger Quinn Fogle during Winter Storm Pax**

This year saw several of the Region V staff receive honors and promotions for their dedicated service. Cpl. Greg Wade was the 2013 Ranger of the Year nominee from Region V and received local awards from the Colquitt County Rotary Club, Albany Exchange Club and the Southwest Georgia Sportsman's Club for his outstanding achievements. Cpl. Wade was also selected as the 2014 Region V Rocky Wainwright Award nominee for his outstanding efforts and emphasis on waterfowl protection. Ranger Chad Hulsey was promoted to RFC during the year. He was also Region V's first ever Torch Award nominee and Georgia DNR's first winner. This award is for a Ranger with less than five years law enforcement service who has shown exceptional leadership and dedication in law enforcement. Rangers Fogle, Harrison, Thomas and White all successfully completed the FTO program and are now patrolling alone and doing an outstanding job. RFC Clint Martin was promoted to corporal in the Lake Blackshear work unit. Region V also had two Rangers resign from the ranks, One left DNR to pursue a career with another agency and the other left law enforcement altogether.

The end of fiscal year 2014 brings to a close a very productive year for the Region V Law Enforcement Division Staff. The events of this year included the first year as a stand-alone division in DNR and an overall positive year for the staff. We look forward to the future and the challenges ahead.

## Region VI- Metter (Southeast)



**Front Row L-R: Sgt. Morty Wood, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey, RFC Joe Hilton, Cpl. Dan Stiles, Cpl. Chase Altman**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Row: RFC Mark Pool, RFC Tim Hutto, RFC Sam Williams, RFC Debbie Brannen, Sgt. Don Dasher, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely, Sgt. Jon Barnard, Sgt. Patrick Dupree**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Row: Cpl. Jason Shipes, Ranger Daniel North, Ranger Jordan Crawford, RFC Clint Jarriel, Cpl. Kevin Joyce, Cpl. Eddie Akins, Cpl. John Stokes, RFC Allen Mills, Cpl. Mike Wilcox, RFC Rodney Horne. Not Pictured: Cpl. Josh Chambers and RFC Keith McDonald**

**Inset: Sgt. James McLaughlin, Scott Klingel, BOG Sharon Sims, Sec. Melinda Monroe**

The Region VI Law Enforcement office is located in Metter and services 32 of Georgia's south-central counties, covering 24% of the state's land mass. There are 33 POST certified positions in the region and two administrative staff.

We had one retirement this year, Sergeant David Reckley left in May after a distinguished 30 year career. Sgt. Damon Winters voluntarily transferred to McIntosh County and Cpl. Morty Wood was promoted to the vacant Sergeant's position.

RFC Jamey O'Brien left the Department to pursue a private business venture and Ranger Jordan Crawford transferred into the vacant Effingham County position. Ranger Patrick Gibbs transferred from Jeff Davis County to his home area of Long County.

Great effort should always be recognized and celebrated, and Region VI has several officers that warrant special mention. The Ranger of the Year for Region VI is RFC Joe Hilton and our Boating Safety Officer of the Year is Corporal Chase Altman. The Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award winner for Region VI is Sergeant Morty Wood. The National Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year for our Region is RFC Joe Hilton. This year also marks the introduction of a new recognition – The TORCH Award. This award is presented to Rangers with less than five years of service and marks those who

are making an impact in the early stages of their careers. Our inaugural winner for the TORCH award is Ranger Sam Williams, assigned to Charlton County.

Sergeant Dupree recognized that additional manpower would be needed in his work unit to adequately protect black bear populations during the South Georgia bear season. Twelve additional officers were brought in during the three weekends of open season. These officers located and checked hundreds of bear hunters in an area measuring more than 3,000 square miles. This group of officers was able to catch 17 hunters hunting over bait and they solved cases involving two illegally killed bears.

The conference room/training room at the Metter office was constructed sometime in the late 1960's, and had not received much in the way of upgrades until this year. The Hunter Development Program was able to fund a renovation project on the conference room this year. Construction lasted for four months and the results are well worth the wait. The classroom was enlarged, bathrooms were added, new tables and chairs were purchased, and a complete audio/visual system was installed.

RFC Rodney Horne joins Cpl. Mike Wilcox as a member of the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT). Both officers are charged with investigating hunting and boating incidents involving death or serious injury.

Two severe winter storms struck Georgia this year. The first storm, Leon, crippled Atlanta and shut down the interstate system for days. Local officers responded and helped everywhere they could. The second winter storm, Pax, hit two weeks later and was a massive ice storm that shut off power for weeks in some areas. There were 19 Region VI officers that responded and they provided 574 hours of assistance. The effects of winter storm Pax are still visible today.

RFC Joe Hilton was involved in a large-scale investigation in Irwin County that originated with a night hunting complaint in 2012. Evidence was collected, but the case was unsolved until the poacher returned to the same property in 2013. After documenting over 180 hours of effort, Joe closed the case by charging the suspect with five felonies and charging him with both night hunting offenses. RFC Hilton discovered the suspect was involved in thefts spanning across Florida and Louisiana. The suspect was later charged with theft and grand theft auto in those two states. The investigation resulted in the recovery of a motor home, ATV's, golf carts, two vehicles, a Yamaha Rhino, and several utility trailers.



## Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)



**Pictured: Bottom Row (L/R) - SGT Mark Carson, RNG Jordan Crawford, CPL Bobby White, RNG Jason Miller, SGT Phillip Scott, Captain Doug Lewis, SGT Damon Winters, CPL Chris Ridley**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> row standing (L/R)- Gary Denis, CPL Randy Aspinwall, CPL Bill Bryson, RNG Jay Bright, CPL Jay Morgan, RFC John Evans, SGT Chris Hodge, SGT Cindy Miller, Kay Readdick, CPL Craig Smith, Janette Senior**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> row on boat (L/R) - RFC Kate Hargrove, RFC Jack Thain, RNG Colte Shaske**  
**Not Pictured: RFC Kiel Toney, RFC David Brady, CPL Chris Moore, and Rhonda Knight**

This year was an exciting and exhausting year for the rangers in Region VII. Our efforts ranged from our “normal” hunting and fishing violations to assisting other agencies with crowd control to plane crashes.

On September 6<sup>th</sup> during a vessel patrol Cpl. Chris Ridley observed a commercial shrimp trawler up the Satilla River from St. Andrews sound. The trawler appeared to be not moving and the nets were in the rigging. A short time later, the trawler began moving downriver and by looking through binoculars Cpl. Ridley could see that the trawler had dropped its nets and was dragging down river towards the sound. Approximately 20 minutes later the trawler was stopped by Cpl. Ridley and after talking to the Captain the trawler was escorted to the Jekyll Creek boat ramp. Cpl. Ridley was met at the ramp by Sgt. Chris Hodge and Ranger Colte Shaske. The trawler was boarded and the gear was inspected. The trawler was bonded and licensed as were all crew members. No seafood was on board except the small amount of sea life that was in the nets which was pushed overboard. The Captain and crew were cited for using power-drawn nets in closed waters. The trawler was 2 miles inside closed waters.

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, Sgt. Wayne Hubbard received a complaint through the McIntosh County Sheriff’s Office that someone was tearing down a mobile home in McIntosh County and the complainant was unsure of how the debris was being disposed of. Sgt. Hubbard responded to the area and noticed heavy ATV use leaving a residential area



travelling onto a neighboring landowner's timber land. While following the ATV tracks, Sgt. Hubbard noticed several pieces of building materials in the road including insulation and sheetrock. The trail eventually led to two large piles of what turned out to be the complete interior of a mobile home. Sgt. Hubbard was able to determine through the zoning office that an older mobile home had recently been moved to the area. When Hubbard arrived at the address there were two ATV's in the yard along with a trailer containing more debris. The owner of the residence admitted to the dumping the material and was charged with unlawful dumping of egregious litter.

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, DNR officers from Region VII and Region VI assisted the Coastal Resources Division with the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Coastfest event held at the Brunswick DNR office. Officers parked vehicles, directed traffic, and assisted with emergency calls throughout the day. It was estimated that over 9500 people attended the event.

On November 1, Sgt. Mark Carson, Cpl. Chris Ridley, RFC Randy Aspinwall, RFC John Evans, RFC Jason Miller, RNG's Jay Bright and Colte Shaske assisted Glynn County Police Department with working the Georgia Florida Beach Bash on St Simons Islands. These Rangers focused their efforts on environmental laws such as littering and crowd control. The county



estimated 5000 college students were in attendance.

On Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Jay Morgan received a call about someone cutting firewood on the Sweet Hill tract of the Richmond Hill WMA. Ranger Jason Miller responded and found two young males with a truck full of freshly cut live trees. The subjects were made to unload the wood at the scene. Both subjects were arrested for destruction of department property and transported to Bryan County Jail. On the next day, Ranger Miller returned to the scene to retrieve wood and found that it had been taken. With assistance from RFC Jack Thain, the rangers found the wood at the residence of one of the subjects who went back to get the wood after bonding out of jail. The subject was arrested again for theft and taken back to jail.

On February 10<sup>th</sup>, Cpl. Chris Ridley, RFC John Evans, RGR Colte Shaske, and Wildlife Technician Hal Wiggins performed a JEA patrol of SFC Reef, G Reef, A Reef, and F Reef. While at G Reef, a boat with 2 people on board was checked for illegal fish. Upon inspection, multiple violations were found including possession of prohibited fish and exceeding the daily bag limit. 13 Black Sea Bass and 2 Redfish were confiscated and the case was turned over to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

On March 24<sup>th</sup>, Rangers from Region 7 responded to a call reference a plane that possibly crashed between Brunswick and St. Simons Island. The Rangers along with FLETC Instructor/Student Boats, U.S. Coast Guard, and Glynn County EMA boats were on scene within an hour. The rangers were able to find several pieces of the plane that was found

to be the outside of the two wings and a piece of the tail section. U.S. Coast Guard found paperwork and log books in the river that was over .5 mile north of the location that the tail section was in. Other Rangers were assisting Glynn County EMA in setting up a command post and even more were searching other rivers in the area.

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, the Rangers, Coast Guard, and Glynn County EMA resumed the search in the same area that the log book and paperwork were found. After 2 hours of side scanning, Glynn County EMA hit a target that was believed to be the plane. Camden County Sheriff's Office divers investigated the wreckage and were able to determine that it was indeed a plane but could not see into the cockpit. Two rangers were stationed at the scene until the next morning when arrangements could be made to remove the plane.

On March 26th the wreckage was removed from the water using a barge and track hoe. The two pilots were recovered by the Rangers and turned over to the Glynn County Coroner. The wreckage of the plane was turned over to the NTSB and FAA investigators that were on scene.

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, Cpl. Jay Morgan and Sgt. Phillip Scott conducted a night patrol offshore of Ossabaw and St. Catherine's Islands to check for illegal shrimping in the state waters out to the three-mile limit which at that time was closed to commercial fishing. The rangers found a 44-foot shrimp boat operating without any lights on and dragging its nets approximately 1.1 miles inside closed waters off Ossabaw Island. The boat was boarded and then escorted to its Sunbury dock. Cpl. Chris Moore and RFC Kiel Toney assisted with the escort and measurement of the shrimp boat's Turtle Excluder Devices that allow sea turtles to escape from the nets. The captain and two crew members were cited for using power-drawn nets in closed waters. The captain was also cited for operating a vessel without lights during hours of darkness and for possession of undersized flounder. 708 pounds of shrimp were confiscated and sold for \$3577.65 which will go into the State general fund if the captain is found guilty at trial. This gained a lot of media attention from Savannah and Atlanta Media outlets.

At about midnight on June 18<sup>th</sup>, RFC John Evans was working a night hunting complaint. A man on an ATV came into the fields RFC Evans was watching and shined three of them. RFC Evans stopped the vehicle and noticed several empty beer cans in the bed. The suspect was over twice the legal limit. He had a loaded shotgun and a rifle. He was charged with hunting under the influence and driving under the influence in addition to hunting deer at night, hunting from a public road, and hunting from a vehicle. This was the 19<sup>th</sup> group of night hunters that were caught in Region VII and a total of 38 people were charged for hunting deer at night.

Several Rangers were honored this past year for heroic actions. Sgt. Mark Carson, Sgt. Chris Hodge, and RFC David Brady received the Governor's Public Safety Award and these Rangers were presented with Resolutions that were read in the House and Senate during the Legislative session for their heroic actions.

RFC David Brady was selected as the Region VII representative for Ranger of the Year, Boating Safety Officer of the Year, and the South Atlantic Fishery Law Enforcement Officer of the Year for NOAA. Ranger First Class David Brady was selected as the 2013 South Atlantic Fishery Law Enforcement Officer of the Year. This title is selected from officers from Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and the United States Coast Guard. His accomplishment comes from his dedicated efforts to enforce Federal Fishing Regulations in the South Atlantic.

Region VII saw its share of promotions and transfers. Sgt. Wayne Hubbard was promoted to Lieutenant over Special Permits at Headquarters. His vacancy was filled by Sgt. Damon Winter who transferred from Coffee County in Region VI. Ranger Patrick Gibbs transferred to the McIntosh/Long position from Jeff Davis County in Region VI. Ranger Jordan Crawford transferred to Effingham County in Region VI from Chatham County. RFC Kiel Toney transferred from Chatham County work section to the Bryan/Liberty work section.

Region VII completed (JEA) Joint Enforcement Agreement 12 with (NOAA), National Marine Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement. The priority areas of enforcement included Snapper/Grouper, Turtle Excluder Device (TED) compliance, Marine Mammal Protection Act (Dolphins), Highly Migratory (HMS) and Pelagic Fisheries. A commitment was also made to enforce the Atlantic Right Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) from November through March and to provide enforcement for Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary (GRNMS).

Hours provided during this agreement period, July 1, 2013–June 30, 2014 include the following:

- Large Vessel: 312 vessel hours (3 officers per vessel)
- Mid-Range Vessel: 277 vessel hours (2 officers per vessel)
- GRNMS: 67 vessel hours (3 officers per vessel)
- Dockside Inspection: 222 man hours
- ALWTRP: 83 vessel hours (combined large and mid-range vessels)
- Public Outreach: 71 man hours

## **Investigative Unit**

The IU is comprised of two full-time investigators. The IU is responsible for undercover investigations and long term investigations. The IU also administers the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team and the Marine Theft Unit. The IU depends heavily on assistance from uniformed Conservation Rangers. Statewide, 15 Rangers perform a collateral duty called "Regional Investigator". Regional Investigators assist the IU with overt and covert investigations. This unit is supervised by Lieutenant Sam O'Neal with Sergeant Chad Welch.

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

The primary function of the MTU is to provide assistance to law enforcement officers in the field. Over the past year, the MTU answered 52 requests from the field. These requests consist of computer database searches, offline searches for stolen vessels, location of hidden hull identification numbers, and assistance 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 35 abandoned vessel requests from the public and fielded numerous phone calls related to the abandoned vessel process.

## **Undercover Investigations**

The IU conducted over 40 undercover investigations last year. These investigations are comprised of intelligence gathering, buy/bust, and multifaceted, short and long-term investigations. This year, the IU participated in Operation Wild Web, a multi-state internet investigation initiative that focused on the illegal sale of wildlife or parts, wild animals, game fish and threatened or endangered species.

## **Special Permits Unit**

The Law Enforcement Division welcomed Lt. Wayne Hubbard to head up the Special Permits Unit. This unit is responsible for permitting captive wildlife and wild animals in addition to some specialty take permits such as Scientific Collection Permits. The Unit is responsible for the oversight of inspections. Additionally Georgia completed the transition to the new Falconry Regulations on January 1, 2014.



## Training Unit



L-R Capt. Wade Law, Mandy James AOC I, PT Sec. Nancy Patten

The 2014 In-Service Training consisted of a 16 hour block of Advanced Report Writing presented by Cpl. Shawn Elmore. The goal of this training program is to better equip our LED officers to accurately and articulately report the incidents they investigate. The course was designed to teach officers how to write clear, accurate and complete incident reports, supplemental reports and special reports which becomes the basis for every decision relating to the prosecution of a criminal act. Rangers were also provided with a 3 hour block of Firearms Requalification and Use of Deadly Force training within each Region. This course was part of the required yearly in-service training and was very helpful in updating officer's knowledge on topics they are involved with daily.

The BUI/SFST (Boating under the Influence/Standardized Field Sobriety Testing) refresher course was presented by Sgt. Bo Kelly and Cpl. Shawn Elmore. This course was established to reinforce proper administering of BUI field sobriety exercises, identify impairment indicators observed during contact with the operator and proper protocol for note taking, report writing and courtroom testimony.

Law Enforcement Division officers that currently hold INTOX 5000 certification, which is required to administer breath testing for DUI and BUI testing, underwent training for INTOX 9000. This certification is required as the machine has been updated and will become the new Intoxilyzer test method for checking sobriety. By December 31, 2015, INTOX 5000 will no longer be an approved evidential breath testing device.

Firearms Instructors had the opportunity to participate in a GLOCK Armorer course presented by a Alex Cobb, a GLOCK Representative, as well as a M & P Rifle Armorer Course hosted by the Smith & Wesson Academy. Both courses provided an excellent opportunity to advance existing knowledge of firearm maintenance, in addition to use and safety issues encountered in the field. This training helped to stress the importance of firearm safety in the daily activities of our officers.

A.L.E.R.R.T. (Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training) instruction was also implemented into our training program. The purpose of this training program is to keep our officers on the cutting edge of preparedness to protect the citizens from an active shooter. This 16 hour course is designed to prepare the first responder to isolate, distract and neutralize an active shooter. In the wake of tragedies such as the Columbine High School incident and other mass shootings, training needed to respond to these types of scenarios has become of the utmost importance. For this reason, all LED officers are required to participate in this specialized training. In addition, Capt. Wade Law, Cpl. James Keener, Sgt. Mark Carson, and Cpl. Derek Dillard have each completed the necessary requirements to be certified as A.L.E.R.R.T. Instructors.

## Aviation Unit



L-R, Cpt. Steven Turner, Cpt. Ed Watkins, Major Doc Watson, Mechanics Larry Rogers and John Peberdy

The Aviation Unit has had another successful mishap free year flying over 958 hours supporting state and federal agencies with 293 of these hours in direct support of the DNR Law Enforcement Division. The year began with an Ocmulgee River rescue. Captain Steven Turner and Crew Chief John Peberdy conducted a long line short haul of two boaters that were stranded after a flash flood.

The Aviation Unit initiated an Aerial Observer Program; training two Rangers from Regions I and II. The initial training began on site at Fulton County Airport and culminated with a joint exercise at Amicalola Falls State Park. The training consisted of helicopter safety, landing zone site selection and helicopter long-line techniques. There were 13 first responders from the DNR Critical Response Team, Dawson County Fire and Rescue Unit, and the DNR Parks Division.

From early fall through early spring the Aviation Unit assisted the Law Enforcement Division in the execution of their primary mission of protecting the state waterways and woodland areas. Flight support was provided for night alligator hunts, night deer hunts, and illegal shrimping along the coast. County surveys were also conducted looking for baited fields, baited duck ponds and a variety of other violations. The Aviation Unit supported the Wildlife Resource Division, flying survey flights for Bald Eagles, kestrel, and water fowl. Captain Ed Watkins flew these same surveys along the Georgia coast in addition to manatee and diseased dolphin surveys. Captain Watkins also assisted State and Federal agencies while serving warrants, assisted in investigations for the



Department of Justice and EPA, and the FAA in the location and mapping of downed aircraft debris fields. Major Watson assisted the FBI in a dog fighting raid in Merriweather County.

Major Watson and Captain Turner supported the Georgia Forestry Commission for fire suppression on two separate fires in Dade County, dropping over 35 thousand gallons of water on designated hot spots.

The Aviation Unit flew 34 hour during 11 prescribed burns on State WMA's during the months of February through April. The Unit participates in the 2014 Hurricane exercise in Savannah and coordinated with Captain Wade Law to provide initial long line rescue training for the new Training Academy Recruits. The Aviation Unit also teamed up with Rangers to fly night patrols over many of the state's lakes and waterways in search of boating violations.

The year culminated with a long line short haul rescue in Tallulah Gorge flown by Captain Turner and one of the newly designated aerial observers, RFC Mitchel Crump. This rescue demonstrated and proved the success of the aerial observer program. The quick response from a DNR ranger from the same region as an incident could affect the outcome.

**Long Line Training at Tallulah Gorge State Park**



**Aerial Observers RFC Mitchel Crump, RFC Brandon Pierce, Cpl. James Keener, RFC Roger McConkey**

## Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT)



Front L-R, Cpl. Phillip Scott, RFC Bart Hendrix, Sgt. David Ruddell, RFC Niki Spencer, Cpl. Steve Robinson, Cpl. Mitch Oliver  
Back L-R, Sgt. Steve Seitz, Sgt. James McLaughlin, Cpl. Shawn Elmore, RFC Anne Alexander, Cpl. Wil Smith, RFC Russell Epps, RFC Jeff Billips

Georgia has 16 CIRT members assigned throughout the state. CIRT investigates all fatal and serious injury boating and hunting incidents. Each member receives specialized training on investigating and presenting these cases. Last year, CIRT investigated 18 boating and 8 hunting incidents.

### **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. Our training this year included a refresher on Tactical Tracking for Felons/Dangerous Suspects. Currently the department has eight K9/Handler teams deployed statewide.



## Honor Guard



L-R: Cpl. Josh Chambers, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, RFC David Brady, RFC Clint Jarriel, RFC Brooks Varnell, Cpl. Micheal Crawley, Cpl. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Ben Payne, Cpl. Bob Holley, Cpl. Scott Carroll  
Not pictured: RFC Cody Jones, Cpl. Travis Sweat, Cpl. Chase Altman.

### Honor Guard Details:

May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014- Cpl. Micheal Crawley and RFC David Brady attended the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington DC.

May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014- Cpl. Jeremy Bolen and Cpl. Travis Sweat attended the Georgia Public Safety Memorial Ceremony at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center.

## Chaplains



**L-R, Rev. John Haney, Rev. Duncan “Duke” Forster, Dr. Laudis “Rick” Lanford, Rev. Gregory Loskoski  
Rev. Charles Houston, Jr., Rev. Darryl Dale, Rev. Mark Crandlemire, Rev. Danny Cochran  
Inset, Rev. Tac Coley**

The DNR Law Enforcement Division Chaplain Corp rose to 11 members this year with the addition of Reverend Tac Coley. The 11 Chaplains currently serve four of the state’s seven Regions.

**Promotions:**

RFC Zackary N. Hardy  
 RFC Russell P. Epps  
 RFC Chad M. Hulsey  
 RFC Christopher R. Carlisle  
 RFC David Fisher  
 RFC Jeremy Reese  
 RFC Mary Kathryn Hargrove  
 RFC Kiel Toney  
 Cpl. Hugh "Buster" Cooper  
 Cpl. James R. Aspinwall  
 Cpl. Joseph C. Martin  
 Sgt. Phillip Scott  
 Sgt. Morty Wood  
 Lt. Wayne Hubbard

**Retirements:**

RFC Leroy Ficklin, Jr.  
 Cpl. Jimmy Finn  
 Sgt. David A. Reckley

| <b>Activity Summary</b> |  | <b>FY2014</b> |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|
| Hunter Ed Programs      |  | 824           |
| I&E Programs            |  | 1369          |
| Boating Safety Programs |  | 315           |
| Hunter Development      |  | 251           |
| <b>Total Programs</b>   |  | <b>2759</b>   |
| Water SAR Cases         |  | 344           |
| Water SAR Hours         |  | 3048          |
| Vessels Assisted        |  | 344           |
| Water Persons Asst.     |  | 315           |
| Land SAR Cases          |  | 203           |
| Land SAR Hours          |  | 1225          |
| Land Persons Asst.      |  | 281           |
| Hunting Incidents       |  | 54            |
| Boating Incidents       |  | 102           |
| Hunting License Checks  |  | 24,868        |
| Fishing License Checks  |  | 29,960        |
| Comm. License Checks    |  | 671           |
| Total License Checks    |  | 55,499        |
| Boat Checks             |  | 27,160        |
| Boating Contacts        |  | 4191          |
| Hunting Contacts        |  | 6012          |
| Fishing Contacts        |  | 2650          |
| Trapping Contacts       |  | 45            |
| Environmental Contacts  |  | 458           |
| Other Contacts          |  | 2923          |
| <b>Total Contacts</b>   |  | <b>16279</b>  |