



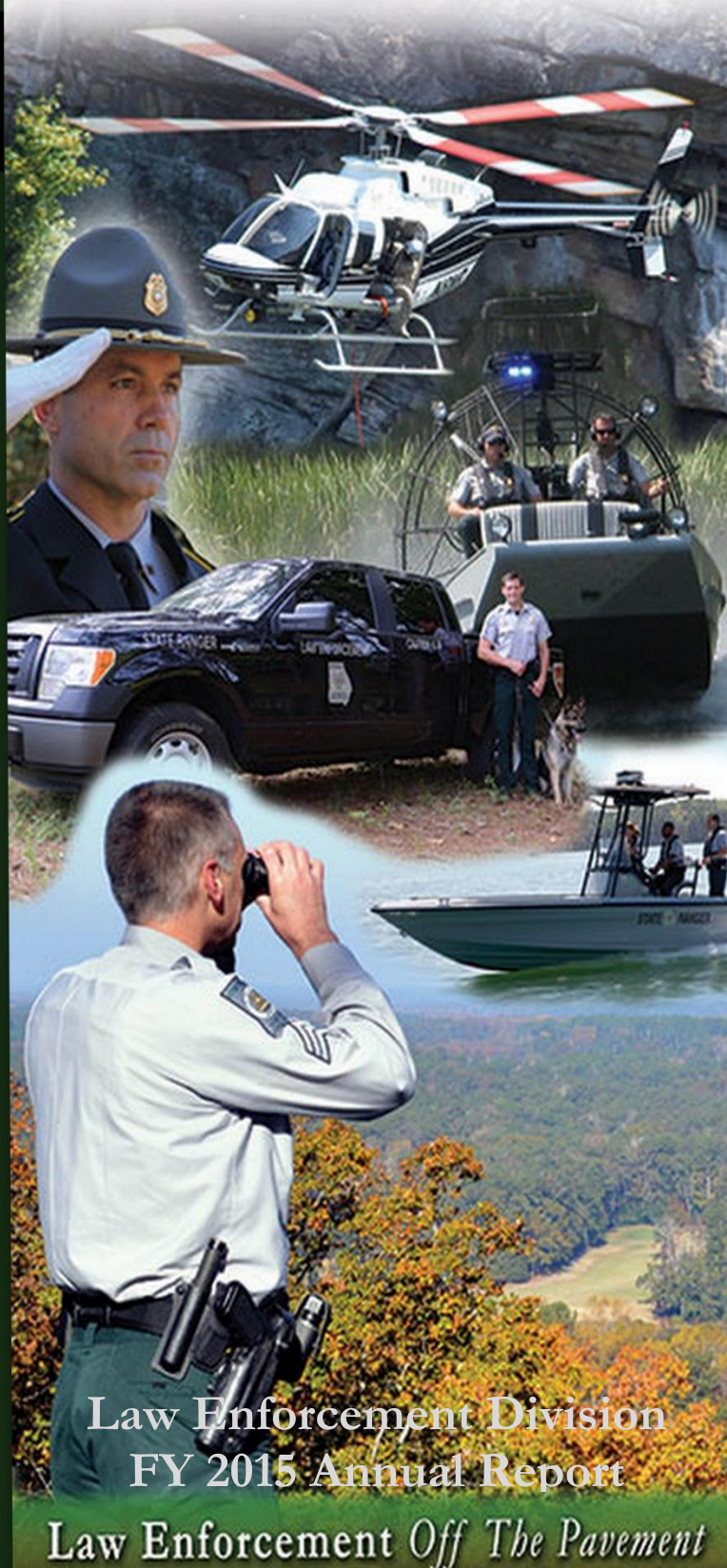
GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

Mark Williams
Commissioner

Colonel Eddie
Henderson
Director



Law Enforcement Division
FY 2015 Annual Report

Law Enforcement Off The Pavement

Headquarters



Colonel Eddie Henderson, Director



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



**L-R, Majors Thomas Barnard and
Stephen Adams**



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



**L-R, Linda Mayo, HQ Secretary
Sharon Whitaker, AOM
Jen Hammonds, HR Generalist
Shannon Witcher, AOC I
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 Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division currently has 185 peace officers with statewide authority and full arrest powers. The primary duties of these Conservation Rangers are enforcement of all laws and regulations pertaining to hunting, fishing, commercial fishing, environmental violations, and recreational boating.

The Law Enforcement Division operates with a straight-line chain of command. It consists of the Colonel, Lt. Colonel, three Majors (field operations, special operations and aviation), seven Region Supervisors (Captains), two “specialty” Captains (training, and administrative support), two pilot Captains, three Lieutenants (database management, investigations and special permits/captive wildlife and wild animals), and 166 field Conservation Rangers (Sergeants, Corporals, Ranger First Class, and Rangers).

DNR Re-Organization

The Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division celebrated its second anniversary after an internal reorganization of its operational Divisions with a vote by the Board of Natural Resources. The reorganization elevated the Law Enforcement Section to Division status, removing it as a sub-program of 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.

Pay Parity

After several years of incremental implementation, Officers in the Department finally achieved pay parity with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the Georgia State Patrol. A target salary plan was created and implemented to ensure that future promotions do not allow Rangers to fall short of the original plan.

Boat Accreditation and Boating Violator Compact

The Division is now one of only ten organizations in the nation to be accredited for meeting the standards set forth by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in their Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) program. The accreditation was awarded after the implementation and adoption of key elements in the training of Rangers that ensures they are prepared to perform maritime law enforcement and to respond to emergencies to a national standard of operations. The BOAT program is accepted by the U.S. Coast Guard as the national standard of training and certification and was created to ensure the readiness of state, local, and federal law enforcement and emergency response boat crews throughout the country to conduct missions on the nation's waterways. Accreditation of an agency ensures that its training curricula, policies, qualification processes and documentation for crew members, boat operators for search and rescue, and tactical operators meets the BOAT Program's National Standards, and allow an agency to train and qualify all of its officers internally, as well as its partners on the water.

Georgia was the first state to pass legislation creating The Boating Violator Compact, a voluntary interstate agreement providing participating states with a mechanism to participate in a reciprocal program to: (1) Promote compliance with the statutes, laws, administrative rules and regulations relating to boating safety in their respective states, and; (2) Provide for the fair and impartial treatment of boating violators within the participating states by allowing non-residents the option to pay fines or appear in court without posting a bond for minor violations. South Carolina recently passed legislation to join the boating compact and other states have expressed an interest.

New Class C Field Operations Shirts

This year the Division replaced the polo-style shirts worn during boating safety patrols with a button up Class "C" shirt. The shirt selected to replace the polo-style shirt was the 511 Tactical Taclite Shirt. This shirt is available in both long and short sleeve. A local vendor is embroidering the badge, name, collar brass with rank insignia for lieutenants and above on the epaulets. The standard shoulder patch and rank chevrons for corporal and sergeants are sewn onto each sleeve.

Dispatch Services/CAD

Over the past year the Division's Mobile Computer were all replaced with new Panasonic Toughbook computers. These computers, which operate on a statewide CAD system funded jointly by DNR and the Georgia State Patrol, were bought with bond funds to replace ageing computers that were put into service over the past five years. A new hunting and drowning report was also created on the system to replace paper reports, which will make tracking and submission of these reports easier.

Geographic Incident and Violator Tracking

Data from the Records Management System, including violator contacts and boating incidents locations, are being extracted and provided to the Region Supervisors to better allow them to see the need for increased or concentrated patrols. The same information is being used to construct maps in Google Earth showing this information geographically, and to create an automated report system that will generate in-depth reports for the LED leadership across the state.

Body Cameras

Although Georgia's LED Rangers have worn body cameras for a number of years, the decision was made to upgrade to the new VieVu camera. It has been evaluated and approved for use, and distribution to the field Rangers is underway. Features of the recommended unit include a slide-shutter activation, which is simply either on or off, HD resolution, enhanced sound quality, a 16 GB internal memory and up to 12 hours of recording time.

Equipment

As the Division is increasingly called upon for search and rescue missions more equipment vital to that role was purchased this past year including swift water PFD's and helmets for every Ranger. Forty new patrol trucks were ordered during the FY14 year.

GILEE

Major Walter Rabon, who was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Department after his selection, participated in the 22nd 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.

Professional Management Program

Five Rangers graduated from Columbus State’s PMP program this year. The 400-hour program is designed as an advanced school for public safety personnel to better prepare them for their roles as supervisors.

Command College

Captain Bob Lynn graduated from the Command College during the year. The Command College program that is held at Columbus State University is a key part of the division’s leadership and succession training.

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.

Public Affairs

Media Relations and Public Outreach

The Division conducted media news conferences and ride-alongs with Rangers for the start of the boating and hunting seasons, “Operation Dry Water,” and the July 4th Holiday weekend to promote safe boating and swimming safety and to educate citizens on boating laws and how they are applied. Prior to boating season, in late May, LED partnered with the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) and the Georgia State Patrol (GSP) to encourage safety on the waterways and highways throughout the summer. The 2015 campaign was called the “Summer of Safety.” News releases, I & E presentations and speeches to various civic groups, and regular news media interviews and interaction were utilized throughout the year to disseminate information to the public.



**Public Affairs Officer
Mark McKinnon**



Division Branding

The Public Affairs Officer, Mark McKinnon has continued to promote the Division’s “Law Enforcement, Off the Pavement!” branding campaign through social and traditional media, and to support LED Rangers at trade shows and other outdoor events. The development of a Division slideshow and the procurement of other promotional materials such as banners to make the Division much more visible at these events has been a great success.



Social Media

LED manages a Facebook page that currently has nearly 30,000 page “Likes” (people who regularly view the page). Many of LED’s Facebook posts have a “Reach” (number of people who may see the post through their friends who “Like” the page) that exceeds 40,000, and occasionally, some are above 100,000. The Division also has a Twitter account that is linked to Facebook, which currently has over 500 followers, a YouTube Channel with multiple safety-related videos, and a Boating Rental Video that has had over 10,000 views. In mid-July of 2015, LED added to the social media outreach and began posting photos to Instagram.

“Off the Pavement” Awards Banquet



2013 Ranger of the Year RFC David Webb pins the ROY badge on the 2014 winner, Cpl. Greg Wade.

In August 2014, the LED’s Command Staff was joined by the Georgia DNR Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Board Members at the First Annual “Off the Pavement” Awards Banquet in Savannah. The event highlighted the outstanding efforts of Rangers from across the state who had received a number of awards throughout the year. At the end of the evening, Corporal Greg Wade from the southwest Georgia Region was named as the Division’s 2014 Ranger of the Year.



Statewide Awards

Ranger of the Year

Corporal Casey Jones always demonstrates a strong commitment to the Division through his aggressive but fair conservation law enforcement efforts. He has developed a rapport with the community. Leading to numerous tips on violations that otherwise would be difficult to detect. This past year, Casey made several big cases that included illegal hunting, illegal ginseng harvesting, and violations of turtle trapping laws. Assigned to Murray County, he is very involved in his community and with the local school system. He presented 28 boating safety programs to middle school students, attended Woodlawn Elementary Archery in the Schools tournaments, and represented LED at the North Murray High School Law Enforcement Appreciation Day. He instructed 10 Hunter Education courses, certifying 217 students. As a conservation officer, he always sets a positive example for others to follow. He participated in 12 Search and Rescues, seven on land and five on the water. Casey is also a well-rounded officer. He is a P.O.S.T. instructor, a firearms instructor, and a Side Scan Sonar Operator. Cpl. Jones is always willing to do anything that is asked of him and, in addition to his assigned county, he willingly works vacant Whitfield County, a very populated county with lots of complaints and request for programs.



James R. Darnell Award

Corporal Bob Holley has proven himself to be an integral part of the Region V team in southwest Georgia. Cpl. Holley began his career with DNR Law Enforcement in December of 2004 and is currently assigned to Crisp County and Lake Blackshear. Bob is one of the eight K-9 officers statewide. He and his K-9 partner, Creek, are always willing and ready to assist other Rangers and local and state agencies when necessary. This past year, he and Creek had a number of agency assists, including man-tracking and locating criminal evidence. In one case, they were able to recover items used in a bank robbery. Cpl. Holley is a P.O.S.T. instructor, teaching EVOC and Firearms. He is also a member of the Division's CTTF, Honor Guard, and is a Field Training Officer. He routinely leads his section in violator contacts, this year logging 52 hours investigating 14 landowner complaints and 143 hours on boating safety patrols. His professionalism and fairness has helped him to gain the trust of the community, enhancing his ability to gather valuable information regarding wildlife violations. Bob's dedication to educational programs within the Crisp County School System and various civic organizations demonstrate his value to the community and his extraordinary work ethic is evidence of his commitment to the Division's core mission.



Ranger of the Year Nominees

Region I- Cpl. Casey Jones
Region II- Cpl. Adam Loudermilk
Region III- Cpl. Brian Adams
Region IV- Cpl. Travis Sweat
Region V- Cpl. Bob Holley
Region VI- Cpl. Dan Stiles
Region VII- Ranger Patrick Gibbs

Supervisor of the Year

Sergeant Ricky Dempsey is LED's 2014 Supervisor of the Year. Sgt. Dempsey is a 29-year veteran of DNR Law Enforcement, serving as Conservation Sergeant since 2012. One



of the most notable qualities that make Sgt. Dempsey a deserving winner of this prestigious award is that, as noted by the Rangers in his work section, he leads by example. He is available both day and night, on or off duty, to answer questions and provide guidance, drawing on his many years of experience in conservation law enforcement. Ricky fosters an atmosphere of teamwork that promotes unity and cohesion among the section members. He values the efforts of his staff and always takes time to recognize his Rangers for their outstanding accomplishments. He is dedicated to the LED mission and works

tirelessly to mentor and guide new Rangers. One of his newest team members summed it up by saying, "Sergeant Dempsey's steadfast dedication and devotion to duty has shaped my first year out of the Ranger academy and my outlook on my future role as a Conservation Law Enforcement Ranger." Ricky has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills during this past year and is a credit to the Law Enforcement Division. Congratulations to Sergeant Ricky Dempsey, the 2014 Supervisor of the Year.

Investigative Ranger of the Year

RFC Fred Hays of Region IV is LED's 2014 Investigative Ranger of the Year. In October, RFC Hays received information from a confidential informant concerning three adult male



subjects who had killed a buck deer at night on September 28th in Jasper County, GA. One of the suspects in the case was an individual whom RFC Hays had been receiving night hunting complaints on for the last two years, but had avoided apprehension. With only the verbal complaint and two pictures obtained from a social media site, Fred started an investigation. With determination and keen investigative skills, he was able to confiscate the deer and charge all three subjects with hunting deer at night, hunting from a vehicle and hunting from a public road. He was also able to get one of the violators to confess to

killing another deer at night in March. Fred's perseverance, skill and commitment to conservation law enforcement led to the convictions of these violators who stole a record book deer from the sportsmen of the State of Georgia. Congratulations to RFC Fred Hays, the 2014 Investigative Ranger of the Year.

Boating Officer of the Year

Corporal Jason Roberson of Region II is the 2014 Georgia Boating Officer of the Year. Working on Lake Sidney Lanier, arguably one of the busiest lakes in the nation, Cpl.



Roberson is known for his success in enforcing Boating Under the Influence (BUI) laws, pursuing those who participate in illegal drug activity, and removing dangerous boaters from the water. In 2014, he conducted 15 Search and Rescue (SAR) missions, several of which included victims needing immediate medical attention. In one critical SAR, with very little information, he was able to successfully locate a distressed man at a marina on Lanier, quickly getting him the help he needed. During the cold 2014 winter, he assisted in the double body recovery of two missing boys in an ice-covered cove. The ice had to be broken up before search efforts could begin. Jason is known for

always taking the time to mentor younger Rangers and teach them the investigative and SAR techniques he has learned from many years on the lake. In the community, he works with the Gainesville/Hall County Safe Kids Coalition, and gave fourteen water safety programs to target-aged children. He also worked the Atlanta Boat Show, providing patrons with valuable information and education. Congratulations Corporal Jason Roberson, the 2014 Boating Safety Officer of the Year.

The Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award

For the second consecutive year, Cpl. Brian Adams of Region III is receiving the 2015 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award. In 2014, RFC Adams logged over 200 hours of



waterfowl enforcement, resulting in over 50 enforcement contacts. Documented violations include hunting after legal hours, over the limit, possession of lead shot, unplugged shotguns and various license violations. Cpl. Adams helped to organize “Operation Frozen Quacker,” an effort to enforce laws pertaining to waterfowl and boating violations on Clarks Hill Lake. Ten officers participated on a 14-degree morning and checked over 90 hunters, inspected 35 vessels, and documented over 20 violations. Brain’s involvement in the Glascock County School System led to a Wildlife Program being

added as part of the curriculum. This was the second year that waterfowl habitat, regulations, and hunter ethics were added to his block of instruction. Congratulations to Cpl. Brian Adams, the 2015 Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award recipient.

The Torch Award

The Command Staff is proud to announce that RFC Daniel Gray from Region I is the recipient of the 2015 Torch Award. RFC Gray has been with the LED since 2013 and is currently assigned to Haralson County. His commitment to Conservation Law Enforcement has truly shown this past year as he checked 53 fishing licenses, 75 hunting licenses, 410 vessels, and six Commercial Boating Licenses. He also conducted 51 foot patrols during deer season and 18 during turkey season, logging well over 100 contacts. Daniel organized and conducted a night flight hunting detail in Polk and Haralson Counties with assistance from LED Aviation, utilizing 18 officers from DNR LED and others from the local sheriff's offices, which netted 16 DNR violations. He is also an excellent investigator and conducted an investigation on the first ever illegal bear kill in Polk County. Committed to hunter education, he certified over 200 students in Haralson County and also taught hunter education in three other counties. Daniel coordinates the hunter education program at Haralson County Middle School where he and a volunteer instructor certified a total of 137 students from the 7th grade this year. Clearly embedded in his community, RFC Gray assisted with the Haralson County Kids Fishing Rodeo where over 3,600 people attended. He also assisted with the Polk County Kids Fishing Rodeo. Congratulations to Ranger First Class Daniel Gray, the 2015 Torch Award recipient.



Hunter Education Instructor of the Year Award

Corporal Daniel Stiles of Region VI is the Hunter Education Instructor of the Year for 2014. In the last year, he conducted 14 Hunter Education courses, certifying 85 students, including a course scheduled and taught to accommodate the needs of a 4-H shooting team to meet 4-H requirements. Showing his commitment to educating hunters in Georgia in the most effective and efficient manner, he scheduled seven courses in a vacant county in his work section and recruited a volunteer to teach the courses, saving his work section man-hours and vehicle mileage. Even while on leave, Cpl. Stiles taught a scheduled Hunter Education Course to ensure the customers in his assigned county were well-served. While leading Cub Scout and Boy Scout groups in the community, he teaches them wildlife and wildlife management, cleaning and cooking of game and fish, firearms safety, and various outdoor safety and survival topics. Dan also teaches the Hunting and Firearms Safety portion of the Choosing Healthy Activities and Methods Promoting Safety (CHAMPS) program through the Laurens County Sheriff's Office in three elementary schools, giving fifth grade students an overview of basic firearms safety and safe hunting practices. Congratulations to Corporal Dan Stiles, the 2014 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
		Greg Wade	2014



Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)



**Front Row Kneeling: Capt. Jeff Galloway, Cpl. Shawn Elmore, Ranger Mark Moyer, RFC Barton Hendrix, RFC Zack Hardy, Cpl. James Keener, Cpl. Tommy Gentry, Sgt. Brian Keener, Cpl. Eric Brown, Ranger Mark Puig
Back Row: RFC Micheal Crawley and K9 Storm, Secretary Cortney Gullede, Cpl. Lee Burns, RFC Ben Cunningham, Cpl. Casey Jones, Sgt. Mike Barr, Cpl. Byron Young, Sgt. John Vanlandingham, RFC Roger McConkey, Sgt. Ricky Dempsey, RFC Daniel Gray, RFC Chad Cox, BOG Joyce Holland, Cpl. Brooks Varnell and K9 Rock**

Currently Region I is comprised of 20 Northwest Georgia Counties and the Metro Atlanta area. Within these counties there are three major impoundments, six major rivers, 18 Wildlife Management Areas (249,000 acres), 173,000 acres of US Forest Service lands, 2,440 miles of trout streams and calls for service from citizen complaints on private lands in 20 counties, covered by 23 LED Rangers.

FY-2015 has been a busy year administratively in the Calhoun Region; they gained two assignments in the LE transition process where LED Rangers are living in State housing on Fort Mtn. and Red Top Mtn. State Parks. RFC Micheal Crawley and Rgr. Mark Moyer transferred into these positions in April 2015. Other personnel changes during this period include Cpl. Will Smith's lateral transfer from Paulding Co. in Region 1 to Region 4. Cpl. Lee Burns, who was assigned to Allatoona Lake, made the lateral transfer to Paulding County, Capt. Johnny Johnson lateralled to Region II Gainesville as Region Supervisor, Sgt. Jeff Galloway was promoted to Region Supervisor and Sgt. Mike Barr lateral-transferred from Allatoona Lake Work Section to the Northwest Work Section that covers Walker, Catoosa, Chattooga, Floyd and Gordon Counties.

Sergeant Rick Dempsey was selected as State Supervisor of the Year. Sgt. Dempsey also completed the 400-hour Georgia Law Enforcement Professional Management/Supervision Program at Columbus State College this period. Cpl. Eric Brown was the Rocky Wainwright Award nominee, Cpl. Casey Jones was the Investigative ROY for Region 1. RFC Daniel Gray was Region 1 Torch Award nominee, and RFC Barton Hendrix was the Boating Safety Officer of the Year for Region 1.

Fall hunting season was no different; Operationally, Region 1 Ranger's worked some Outstanding Investigations and cases in this period.

RFCs Cox and Gray organized and conducted a night flight detail in an effort to detect hunting deer at night violations. The detail was setup in Polk and Haralson counties due to number of complaints. Eighteen DNR LED officers were utilized from Region 1 along with numerous Polk and Haralson SO officers. During the detail two groups of night hunters were apprehended and five individuals were charged.

In January 2015, Cpl. Casey Jones investigated a complaint involving the harvesting of ginseng out of season in Murray County. After an extensive investigation, two covert officers were brought into to purchase ginseng harvested out of season and from U.S. Forest Service property from the main suspect. In the end four suspects were arrested on 12 charges, including seven counts of harvesting ginseng out of season, three counts of harvesting ginseng on private property without written permission, one count of violation of U.S. Forest Service rules on a WMA, and one count of contributing to the delinquency of a minor. More than 500 illegally harvested ginseng roots were confiscated, only a small portion of what was actually harvested.



In January 2015, Cpl. Casey Jones completed a very in-depth illegal hunting investigation in Whitfield County. A total of 43 hunting violations were documented in Georgia, with additional violations being discovered in Tennessee. Two suspects were charged with 15 counts including hunting deer and turkey out of season, hunting deer and turkey over bait, and hunting on lands of another without permission. Parts of nine buck deer and one turkey were confiscated.

On May 30th, Sgt. Ricky Dempsey, Cpl. Lee Burns, RFC Chad Cox and RFC Daniel Gray held the annual Polk County Kid's Fishing Event. The event is free and 430 kids under 16 registered and fished this year. Each child received a t-shirt listing the sponsors and a free skating pass to the local rink. Everyone got free hotdogs, chips, cookies, drinks and ice cream. The event also included a big fish contest and a kayak raffle. Over 70 prizes were awarded.

During the week of June 8th through June 12th, Cpl. Eric Brown conducted his 10th annual Carroll County Outdoor Day Camp. The camp hosted 42 boys and girls between the ages of 13 and 16. During the week students were certified in Hunter Education and Boat Georgia. Activities included learning to shoot .22 rifles, skeet, and trap. Other activities included shooting archery and crossbows, learning to use a GPS, wildlife identification, plant identification, a live snake show, boat operation and a fishing trip.

In May 2015, Cpl. James Keener was recognized by the Jasper Optimist Club for his outstanding law enforcement efforts over the past year. In addition to his every day duties as a Conservation Ranger, Cpl. Keener is the chief firearms instructor for Region I. He instructs at the police academy at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. He spent two months last year instructing law enforcement officers all over the state on how to respond to an active shooter, providing response consistency for all Georgia law enforcement officers. He also taught Advanced ATV training to rangers statewide. He is a trained aerial observer with the Aviation Unit for search and rescue efforts. He assisted with the 27th Annual Pickens County Sportsman's Club fishing rodeo. This three-day event for children, elderly and handicapped persons attracted nearly 1,000 fishermen.

Members of the Counter Terrorism Task Force from Regions I and IV assisted the Bartow County Sheriff's Office with an arrest warrant in May 2015. The suspect was wanted for aggravated assault on his wife, and had evaded capture for several weeks. After another



violent incident involving the suspect, the CTF Woodland Operations Team was called to assist. The team entered the woods at 4:00 a.m. and by 5:30 a.m. had surrounded a residence where the suspect was thought to be hiding. Upon entry of the residence, the suspect was arrested without incident.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)



Back Row L-R: Capt. Johnny Johnson, RFC Mitchell Crump, Sgt. Steve Seitz, RFC Tim Vickery, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins, RFC Anne Britt, RFC Barry Britt, Ranger Kevin Goss, Sgt. Stan Elrod, RFC Brandon Pierce, RFC Shane Sartor, RFC Mark Stephens, Ranger Shane Brown, Sgt. Greg Colson
Front Row L-R: BOG Brenda Tanner, Ranger Beth Gilbert, Cpl. Adam Loudermilk, Cpl. Kevin Dyer, Cpl. Derek Dillard, RFC Chad Chambers, Cpl. Eric Sanders, RFC David Webb, Cpl. Jason Roberson, Sgt. Mike Burgamy, Cpl. Josh Chambers, RFC Joe Hill, Ranger Chris Kernahan, Sgt. Lee Brown
RFC Eric Isom and K9 Colt, Inset: Secretary Taylor Cassell

This year brought about many changes and noteworthy occurrences in the Gainesville Region, which is comprised of 19 northeast Georgia counties. Within these counties there are eight major impoundments, three major rivers, 13 Wildlife Management Areas, 220 miles of trout streams, 21 State Park properties and 288,000 acres of National Forest lands. The impoundments in Region II receive over 20 million visitors annually while the state parks and wildlife management areas receive another 2.5 million each year. The Law Enforcement Division has assumed all law enforcement responsibilities on state owned and operated property including any LE calls for service on private or public property from the 19 counties. The tremendous amount of visitation and use of these properties generates a great deal of diverse law enforcement issues that Region II's 26 officers continually address.

Over the past couple of years, Georgia has experienced significant winter weather events impacting the northern half of the state. This year was no exception with the arrival of winter storm Octavia in February. Rangers from Region II were involved in a comprehensive plan that was developed to address the needs of Georgia's citizens during an event such as this. Rangers were assigned to a multi-agency patrol and response strike teams primarily assigned to the metro Atlanta area. While these Rangers were detached to the storm, unassigned Rangers assisted local officials with emergency requests. They transported troopers, deputies and other emergency personnel to calls and also assisted in debris removal, opening roads and highways in surrounding counties.

Deer season was very active in northeast Georgia this year and most of the violations were typical of what Rangers normally see every year. In September RFC Tim Vickery received information that a large antlered buck had been shot with a rifle during archery season. After investigating, Ranger Vickery and RFC Brandon Pierce confiscated a 140 class deer on the charge of failure to record deer harvest. The two Rangers also gathered evidence of an illegal weapon charge. After an extensive interview, the poacher confessed to shooting the deer with a rifle.



In another incident, RFC Vickery discovered an individual walking out of a wooded area with a beer in one hand and his rifle in the other. After administering field sobriety tests the subject was arrested for hunting under the influence and later registered twice the legal limit. Throughout the Region, numerous cases involving hunting deer at night, from a vehicle, from a public road, hunting over bait and hunting without permission were made.

A case that displayed the brazen nerve of some was a hunting deer at night case that was made by Cpl. Adam Loudermilk and Cpl. Jason Roberson. This incident involved five individuals that were arrested for spotlighting deer inside the city of Gainesville. When the subjects were stopped, they had two dead deer in the back of their truck and were attempting to kill more.

In late September of 2014 Cpl. Kevin Dyer was patrolling United States Forest Service land and was observing a camp. While investigating the camp, he observed a person dressed in camouflage walking down the mountain toward the camp. Cpl. Dyer met the

person who stated that she had been camping for two days and was leaving the area that day. He asked where her vehicle was and she stated that "Billy Joe" was going to pick her up that day. Cpl. Dyer asked what Billy Joe's last name was and she stated that



she did not know. He also asked what was she doing and she stated that she had walked to the top of the ridge that morning. He then questioned her about illegally harvesting ginseng and she showed him where she had hidden her fanny pack and digging tool. She did not have a permit from the USFS to dig ginseng and the season had already ended. Cpl. Dyer located 16 Ginseng roots and a pack of Buglers rolling papers. Dyer asked her where the rest of the ginseng was and she stated that Billy Joe had picked it up the night before. With assistance from the USFS and a Union County K-9 and handler, Dyer arrested her for digging ginseng without permission and she was transported to the Union County Jail. During an inventory of the camp, they located a bag containing 178 ginseng roots hidden in a hollow log. Dyer contacted North Carolina Game & Fish in reference to others involved in this case. A total of 194 ginseng roots were confiscated and she was charged with digging ginseng without permission.

An investigative case was adjudicated in Union County for the illegal purchase of bear gall bladders by an individual. The subject paid a \$1,000 fine, was placed on probation for 12 months and also paid \$3,000 in restitution.



Enforcement of the waterways in Region II was busy again this year. Seventy-one BUI arrests were made this year, slightly up from the 67 BUIs logged in last year. The number of serious injury and fatality boating incidents were down this year, possibly due to Rangers concentrating on BUI and light violations, as well as keeping a level of high visibility. Region II Rangers also assisted in campaigns to educate the public through programs such as the First Lady Deal's SPLASH initiative and the Summer of Safety media blitz.



There were four serious boating incidents investigated by CIRT in Region II this year that resulted in two fatalities and two serious injuries. There was one on Lake Hartwell, two on Lake Lanier and one on Lake Burton. Rangers with assistance from the Hall County Sheriff's Office conducted two undercover and covert operations on Lake Lanier this year. The purpose of the details were to seek out and arrest individuals

who were involved in drug activity. Twenty-five individuals were arrested for illicit drug activity and another subject was arrested for possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine. Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and Ranger Shane Brown approached a subject, who after getting nervous, threw a duffel bag overboard. Divers recovered the bag containing drugs and a stolen gun. \$4,000.00 was seized along with the drugs and firearm.



Calls for service continue to be on the rise for Rangers. This year Region II Rangers responded to multiple SAR's in northeast Georgia. The Counter Terrorism Task Force (CTTF) was also requested in several incidents including one in Habersham County where the Sheriff had been shot. Members of the unit responded when a domestic dispute between a former deputy and his estranged wife turned violent. During the dispute the deputy murdered his wife and her boyfriend and, upon responding to the scene, the sheriff and another deputy were shot. Both survived their wounds while the shooter fled into a wooded area where he took his own life. Units later discovered the body.

In another field investigation Cpl. Eric Sanders located a large illegal dump site in DeKalb County. The dump site was estimated to contain 20,000 discarded tires. He set up surveillance on the area and was able to pattern the day and time that the dumping was taking place. Early one morning, he and an accompanying Ranger caught the culprit in the act of illegally dumping the tires. The subject was arrested and with assistance from local agencies, Cpl. Sanders linked the subject to



other locations where he had also illegally dumped tires. The second location contained an additional 10,000 tires. The subject is currently awaiting trial.

There were several personnel changes in Region II this year. Captain Thomas Barnard was promoted to Major of Field Operations and after his departure, Captain Johnny Johnson transferred from Region I to Region II. Ranger Kevin Dyer assigned to Union County was promoted to the rank of Corporal. RFC Joe Hill transferred from Gilmer County to the position on Lake Burton and Chris Kernahan lateralled from the Parks Division to the Fort Yargo LED Ranger position. Other personnel changes included the retirement of Cpl. Jesse Cook and Cpl. Bill Bunch. Julia Braswell, a secretary in the region office, also left the Department.

Region Personnel Awards

Cpl. Jason Roberson received the State Boating Safety Officer of the Year Award

Cpl. Adam Loudermilk received the Region II Ranger of the Year Award

Cpl. Eric Sanders received the Region II Investigative Ranger of the Year Award.

Ranger Shane Brown received the Region II Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl Award.

RFC Anne Britt received the John Jacobs Award from the Hall County Kiwanis Club.

Ranger Shane Brown received the Region II Torch Award.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)



Front L-R: Cpl. Brian Hobbins, RFC Phillip Nelson, RNG Daniel Schay, Cpl. Ben Payne, Cpl. Derrell Worth, Sgt. Max Boswell, Cpl. Brian Adams, RFC Ricky Boles, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin, and Sgt. Matt Garthright.
Back L-R: RFC Richard Tanner, Cpl. Mark Patterson, RFC Tim Butler, Cpl. David Allen, Capt. Mark Padgett, RNG Jason Harrison, Sgt. Brian Carter, RFC Bobby Timmerman, and Cpl. Ryan Swain.
Not pictured: Sgt. John Harwell, Cpl. Julian Wilkins, RFC Grant Matherly, RFC Jeff Billips, RNG Michael Madden and AOC Elizabeth Bentley.

Personnel Changes

Region III underwent several personnel changes this past fiscal year. RFC Niki Spencer transferred from Newton County to Region IV Butts County. Rgr. Michael Madden transferred from Parks Division into Lincoln County, Elijah Clark State Park. Rgr. Jason Harrison transferred from Parks Division into Walton County and Rgr. Daniel Schay transferred into Newton County. RFC Micheal Crawley transferred to Region 1, Red Top Mountain State Park. RFC Brian Adams promoted to Corporal in Washington/Johnson Counties. Kelly Hadden joined Region III as the new part-time secretary after Stephanie Taylor resigned to pursue full time employment at another agency. College students Jessica Walker and Kacie Babb completed their internships with Sgt. Brain Carter's work unit and students Nolan Callaway and Jordan Janousek completed their internships with Sgt. John Harwell's work unit.

Region Personnel Awards

Cpl. Brian Adams received the Region Ranger of the Year Award
Cpl. Brian Adams received the Rocky Wainwright Waterfowl State Award.
RFC Bobby Timmerman received the Region Boating Officer of the Year Award.
Cpl. Mark Patterson received the Region NWTf Officer of the Year Award.
RFC Tim Butler received the Region Hunter Education Instructor nomination.

Training

Rangers in Region III took part in many different training opportunities this year. They all completed Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT), Advanced ATV Training, Below 100 Training, CPR Refresher, Chainsaw Training, Health and Wellness Training, BUI/SFST Refresher, Driver Training, Fall Firearms Training, Spring Firearms Qualification, Search and Seizure, Policy Review, and Legislative Updates.

In addition, RFC Jeff Billips and RFC Tim Butler attended Health and Wellness Instructor Training and then taught it to the remainder of the Region. Tim and Jeff also serve as the Region C.I.R.T. Investigators and have attended several additional classes in that field. Cpl. Mark Patterson completed Below 100 Instructor Training and taught it to the Region, as well as the Wilkes County S.O, the Watkinsville P.D., and the Winterville P.D. Sgt. Brian Carter instructed EVOC training to the DNR Board Members and to a basic mandate class at GPSTC. RFC Phillip Nelson attended the Tactical Boat Operators Course in Savannah. Cpl. Julian Wilkins started PMP School and has completed four classes. Sgt. Matt Garthright graduated from Command College at Columbus State University.

Conservation Law Enforcement

Region III had an outstanding year in the area of Conservation Law Enforcement. Rangers put forth great effort and celebrated many accomplishments that warrant special recognition. The enforcements efforts mentioned in the following cases show a willingness to go above and beyond, dedication beyond measure and commitment to catch the violators responsible.



The region continued to see a spike in night hunting activity, apprehending 18 groups for a total of 37 people charged with hunting deer at night. Contact with those 37 people resulted in 141 citations for various offenses from hunting deer at night to trafficking methamphetamine. One particular case resulted in a nine month investigation. RFC Tim Butler and RFC Phillip Nelson received a night hunting complaint in Oconee County in July 2014. Someone had shot a buck known throughout the Watkinsville Community as “Bucky.” The Rangers gathered what evidence they could, worked several different leads, and in March 2015, they charged the two individuals responsible, whom have since been successfully prosecuted.

Cpl. Brian Adams conducted an investigation that started with a fishing without permission complaint. Brian visited four residences and conducted 11 interviews in order to obtain the evidence necessary to secure a search warrant. After 100 hours, 700 miles, and a search warrant in hand, Cpl. Adams located the wanted subject hiding in a closet. Brian's investigation resulted in multiple arrests for hunting deer at night, trapping without license, fishing without permission, various license violations, and the apprehension of a fugitive with multiple outstanding warrants. Although one subject is still incarcerated and awaiting trial, other subjects involved have paid fines totaling over \$3000 and loss of hunting privileges for five years.

Cpl. Derrell Worth and RFC Ricky Boles continue to encounter individuals fishing by illegal methods on Lake Oconee. In April, they encountered five individuals fishing with gill nets and cast netting game fish. The individuals were charged with the violation and 50 pounds of game fish were confiscated by the Rangers. The fish were large-mouth bass, crappie, bream, and catfish.

Sgt. Doyte Chaffin responded to a turkey hunting without permission complaint that resulted in multiple violations. The hunter was hunting with an unplugged shotgun, hunting with electronic calls, hunting without permission, and hunting over bait. The hunter was charged and released. The next morning, Sgt. Chaffin located the same hunter on a different piece of property hunting over bait, hunting with electronic calls and hunting with an unplugged shotgun. The hunter was arrested this time and transported by Cpl. Ryan Swain to the Columbia County Sheriff's Office.



RFC Bobby Timmerman coordinated a waterfowl enforcement detail on Clarks Hill Lake on January 10th, known as "Operation Frozen Quacker." At 19 degrees, 10 Rangers from various sections patrolled the lake to concentrate on boating safety violations including light violations and violations of waterfowl hunting laws. The detail began at 0500 hours and ran until 1200 hours. Those that participated in the detail were, Sgt. Doyte Chaffin, Sgt. Brian Carter, Sgt. Matt Garthright, Cpl. Brian Hobbins, Cpl. Mark Patterson, RFC Bobby Timmerman, RFC Jeff Billips, Cpl. Brian Adams, RFC Grant Matherly, and Rgr. Michael Madden. During the detail, officers checked 91 hunters and 35 vessels, resulting in 20 violations. Teamwork within the region made this detail a success.



Community Involvement

Cpl. Brian Hobbins assisted with Wounded Warrior Hunts at Come-A-Way Plantation in Warren County. This is the 5th straight year that Cpl. Hobbins has taken part in these special opportunity hunts. He had the privilege this year to help with four deer hunts and two turkey hunts.

Cpl. Brian Adams worked with the Glascock County School Superintendent to get Hunter Ed and Boater Ed approved as part of the curriculum. This is the first year that both were taught in the Glascock County Public School. Hunter Ed is offered to all 9th grade students and Boater Ed is offered to all 8th grade students in a progressive effort to allow certification for all students. He also facilitated the 19th Annual Glascock County Kid's Fishing Event - a seven day event that allows all children through 5th grade to participate in a day of fishing and fun.



Passing of Retired Captain Philip Moss

On May 2, the Region received a call that one of their retired Rangers was missing, Retired Captain Philip "Pete" Moss. Pete had gone turkey hunting and failed to return home as scheduled. Several Rangers responded to his hunting club in McDuffie County where they later found Pete deceased, due to natural causes. Retired Captain Moss was laid to rest on May 6th, 2015 at Green Lawn Cemetery in Roswell Georgia.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)



Front Row L-R: K-9 Drake, RFC Keith Page, Sgt. Brent Railey, Sgt. Tim Kendrick, Sgt. Tony Fox, Sgt. Wanda Roberts, Captain Bob Lynn, Sgt. Jim Bradfield, Sgt. Bo Kelly, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, K-9 Ruger
Middle Row L-R: RFC Niki Spencer, Cpl. Keith Waddell, Cpl. Tony Wynne, RFC Kevin Godbee, RFC Russell Epps, RFC Ronnie Beard, Cpl. Mitch Oliver, RFC Jeremy Reese, Chaplain Brandon Brooks
Back Row L-R: Cpl. Travis Sweat, Cpl. Josh Swain, Ranger Matt Johnson, RFC David Fisher, Cpl. Robert Stillwell, RFC Freddie Hays, Cpl. Lynn Stanford
Not pictured: Cpl. Wil Smith, Chaplain Rick Lanford, Chaplain Chaplain Marc Crandlemire, Chaplain Joel Vinson
Inset: BOG Stephannie Stinson, Part-time Secretary Jami Tripp

Sgt. Bradfield's work section had a busy and interesting year. A boating safety enforcement aircraft patrol was scheduled for West Point Lake in July 2014, resulting in several violations being detected that otherwise would have gone unnoticed. Several Rangers from this and other work sections participated in the enforcement detail.



In August, Sgt. Bradfield's section received a call about two boaters who had been missing on West Point Lake for over a day. West Point Lake is a 26,000 acre Corps of Engineers lake covering two Georgia counties. An aircraft search detail was coordinated with DNR aviation and the subjects, along with their boat, were located on the north end of West Point Lake where they had run their boat aground. No one was injured in this incident.

Also, in August, all officers in this work section assisted with a spear fishing complaint in Harris County on the upper regions of Lake Harding. Four suspects were apprehended using spears to take game fish and other fish. A total of 68 game fish were confiscated as well as four spears and four snorkeling masks. This had been an ongoing complaint that the Rangers had been checking for about a month.



In May 2015, Sgt. Bradfield's work section hosted one of the statewide "Summer of Safety" media events. This event took place at Pyne Road Park on West Point Lake and was attended by DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED), the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, Georgia State Patrol, the Troup County Sheriff James Woodruff and personnel, and others including several local media outlets.

Earlier this year, Sgt. Bradfield was able to make arrangements with Realtree Outdoors in Columbus to fund the new Ranger Hotline decals and other promotional materials, which have aided in promoting this new program.

Sergeants Jim Bradfield, Brent Railey and Wanda Roberts began Command College at Columbus State University. Sgt. Bradfield completed an instructor training class for Below 100, an officer safety awareness training class. As a Below 100 instructor, Sgt. Bradfield made this valuable program available to several local agencies within the work section including, Heard County, Franklin PD, West Point PD and Hogansville PD. In addition to these local agencies, Sgt. Bradfield presented Below 100 materials at LED Region meetings and other gatherings in Region 4.

Sgt. Bradfield's work section used West Georgia Christian School in LaGrange as the western Region 4 boat registration HIN inspection site for most of the year. All officers participated in these inspections at various times. The procedures for boat registration inspections were changed in the spring and these inspection sites were discontinued. The officers in Sgt. Bradfield's work section completed 70 educational programs throughout the work section this past year which included programs in Heard, Troup, Harris, Muscogee, and Talbot Counties.

This past year RFC Russell Epps completed three 40-hour blocks of training for his involvement with the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT). These classes included NASBLA, photography, and blood pattern analysis.

RFC Epps, along with Sgt. Bradfield, represented the LE Division at the signing ceremony for House Bill 70 at Reece Road Elementary School in Columbus in April. House Bill 70 was an initiative from 4th grade students to name the White-tailed Deer as the Georgia State Mammal. This event was attended by Governor Deal, DNR Commissioner Mark Williams and Deputy Commissioner Walter Rabon and local media outlets covered the event.

RFC Epps, with assistance from other Rangers, completed a night deer hunting investigation this fall initiated from a citizen complaint. This incident involved six suspects driving two vehicles who had shot at three deer, killing one buck. The six ultimately confessed during the investigation, pled guilty in Troup County this spring, and received various fines and a two-year suspension of hunting privileges. Also, one of the suspects was apprehended by LED personnel for a second violation, shooting a road sign, within one month of the hunting deer at night charges.

Cpl. Jeremy Bolen served on the Ranger Advisory Council this year as part of his duties as the immediate past James Darnell Award winner. Additionally, he attended the 55th annual NASBLA conference in Bar Harbor, Maine as the past year's Georgia Statewide Boating Officer of the Year. Cpl. Bolen utilized his K-9, Ruger, in several incidents throughout the year, including locating hunters who had taken bucks illegally in Talbot and Harris counties and locating three turkey hunters on Standing Boy WMA without quota hunt permits. He and Ruger also assisted Harris County S.O. with the search for a wanted person. When the S.O. advised Cpl. Bolen that the suspect would be hunting raccoon on a specific night in another county, he and Sgt. Bradfield located the raccoon hunters and took the suspect into custody without incident. The officers also discovered that several of these hunters did not have hunting licenses and told the Rangers that they did not know they had to have a hunting license to raccoon hunt.



Cpl. Jeremy Bolen and Ruger

Cpl. Mitch Oliver volunteered to be one of the Health and Awareness instructors for Region IV and completed Health and Awareness instructor training. Cpl. Oliver also attended a death investigation class in Atlanta taught by the FBI. Earlier in the summer, he was patrolling for fishing activity around Bartlett's Ferry Dam and noticed two subjects in a secure area on Georgia Power property and seemed out of place. After investigating, it was determined that the two were burglarizing a Georgia Power warehouse below the dam and had taken a large volume of items from the area. Cpl. Oliver is a member of the CIRT team and was involved in the investigation of two CIRT incidents this past year and conducted numerous PEER reviews of CIRT incidents. Cpl. Oliver represented the work section this year on the Region 4 Ranger of the Year board. Cpl. Oliver was additionally selected by LED Command Staff as one of the LED officers to represent the Division on the License Restructure Committee and attended several public meetings in this capacity.

In October, acting on a complaint from park personnel, Cpl. Oliver located a deer stand and bait on FDR State Park property. Cpl. Oliver checked the area, located the hunter in the stand and resolved the complaint.

In December, Cpl. Oliver worked a lengthy nighttime boating search and rescue on Lake Harding. After a search using the patrol boat and many phone calls to numerous agencies and several 911 centers, the two missing subjects were located on an island in Alabama and were transported to a safe location.

In June, Cpl. Oliver resolved an alligator shooting investigation. After interviewing several persons, including the suspect, it was determined that the suspect's version of the events didn't match the evidence. The suspect was charged with illegally taking the alligator.

During the week of July 22, 2014, Cpl. Wil Smith represented the Department at the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association in Reno, NV. Cpl. Smith gave a presentation on GA DNR LED Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) and the U.S. Forest Service hunting incident case. The presentation was attended by wildlife officers from over 25 states and Canada.

In October 2014, RFC Freddie Hays received information from a confidential informant concerning three adult male subjects who had killed a buck deer at night on September 28th in Jasper County. One of the suspects in the case was an individual whom RFC Hays had been receiving night hunting complaints on for the last two years, but had been unsuccessful in apprehending. With nothing more than the verbal complaint and two pictures he obtained from a social media site, RFC Hays started an investigation. With determination and keen investigative skills, RFC Hays was able to confiscate the deer as well as locate and charge all three subjects with hunting deer at night, hunting from a vehicle and hunting from a public road. Additionally, RFC Hays was able to get one of the culprits to confess to killing an additional deer at night in Jasper County during the month of March 2014. Due to RFC Hays' high standing with the community and through the network of informants he has established, he was able to apprehend and convict these violators who stole a record book deer from the sportsmen of the State of Georgia. RFC Fred Hays of Region IV was selected to receive the Investigative Ranger of the Year Award for 2014. RFC Hays also worked hard on the water, conducting five river rescues on the Ocmulgee and Tussahaw Rivers, including saving the life of a young boy who was trapped against a bridge abutment.



Opening day of dove season resulted in Cpl. Stillwell and Cpl. Swain both making hunting under the influence (HUI) arrests in Bibb and Taylor counties respectively. Multiple baited dove fields were also cited including one where a Pileated Woodpecker was shot directly in front of Cpl. Stillwell. That individual, in addition to hunting doves over bait, was also cited for taking a protected species.



Cpl. Swain and RFC Beard both attended a three-day Sonar Training in Augusta to become certified operators. RFC Fisher attended Post Instructor Training and has since become an ATV instructor as well as a Ranger in the Public Instructor. Cpl. Stillwell, as a member of Counter Terrorism Task Force (CTTF), assisted Bartow County with the serving of warrants on multiple subjects in the early morning hours of May 1, 2015.

RFC Beard received an award from the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) for Volunteer of the Year in Region 9 for his work and partnership with them.

On July 2014, Cpl. Stillwell observed three males fishing out of jon boat on the Echeconnee Creek in Houston County. He also witnessed them smoking marijuana and littering. One of the individuals was a juvenile. All three were arrested and charged with possession of marijuana and littering. One was also charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor. A homemade pipe made of deer antlers was also seized. Citations were also issued for boating safety violations.

Cpl. Swain and RFC Fisher made cases against two men in Taylor County that were hunting turkeys over bait, as well as using an electronic call. Cpl. Swain responded to a hunting turkey without permission call in Crawford County and caught an individual who had harvested two Jakes that morning. Both turkeys were seized. RFC Fisher and RFC Reese, while working the one-day Middle Georgia Bear Season, caught a hunter who had just shot a doe out of season. That deer was seized and the individual was charged with killing a doe outside of doe days.

Cpl. Swain responded to a search and rescue in Taylor County to help a man and his grandson out of the Flint River. Cpl. Stillwell caught two loads of night hunters in Twiggs County and seized a doe that was shot less than 100 yards from where he was sitting. RFC Beard responded to a complaint of night deer hunting in Bleckley County. His investigation led to the seizure of an 8-point buck as well as night hunting charges. The fine was \$1200.00. Cpl. Stillwell and RFC Fisher issued multiple citations on the Echeconnee and Oaky Woods WMAs for illegal operation of ATVs.

Sgt. Brent Railey and Cpl. Travis Sweat worked a complaint of hunting waterfowl after hours in Spalding County. On the last day of the season they located four persons shooting well after legal shooting hours and issued citations for the violations.

Sgt. Railey's section worked two fatal boating incidents during the year. One involved a kayaker that apparently flipped over and the operator fell out of the vessel and drowned in Lake Meriwether. The second involved a father and a three year old child that fell off the boat in Still Branch Reservoir in Pike County. Cpl. Keith Waddell located and recovered the three year-old's body immediately after responding to the scene with RFC Kevin Godbee assisting. Using side scan sonar and sector scan sonar the body of the adult was located the following day.

On December 22, 2014, Cpl. Keith Waddell was patrolling Joe Kurz WMA in Meriwether County for waterfowl activity around 9:00 a.m. He encountered two subjects at the boat ramp that had been duck hunting. He found several violations on the hunters and cited the boat operator for operating a vessel without PFD's and the other subject for hunting with an unplugged shotgun. Cpl. Waddell also warned the two for hunting license violations. The hunters then left the area. At about 1200 noon on the same day, RFC Kevin Godbee received a complaint of road hunting in western Spalding County. RFC Godbee met with the complainant and they provided details of the event as well as a vehicle description and a tag number. Later that afternoon, RFC Godbee located the truck in question at a residence in Pike County. RFC Godbee interviewed the suspect and determined that he had shot at a fox squirrel on the property, but was adamant he had not shot it from the road. He was issued a citation for hunting without permission. During the interview, RFC Godbee determined he was one of the same individuals that Cpl. Waddell had cited on Joe Kurz WMA earlier in the morning.

Sgt. Railey's section conducted 92 I&E programs, as well as 23 hunter education classes and one boater education course. Cpl. Keith Waddell and Cpl. Travis Sweat worked with a class from Spalding County School System (Cowan Road Elementary) to build several wood duck boxes. The materials were donated from Home Depot. Cpl. Sweat and Cpl. Waddell then took the class to Joe Kurz WMA and put the boxes out in areas attractive to wood ducks. They then took the class back to the area in late spring to inspect the boxes for nesting activity. This helped the school meet their STEM (Science/technology/engineering/mathematics) requirements for the year.



Cpl. Waddell and Cpl. Sweat with students putting up wood duck boxes.

During this past year, Rangers from the Milledgeville area work section worked three hunting incidents involving tree stands on private property and one boating incident on Lake Sinclair. Rangers recovered two drowning victims in Lake Sinclair and assisted with a SONAR search in one other incident. There were 12 boating under the influence arrests made on Lake Sinclair during this period. A new 21.5 foot Chaparral patrol boat was acquired to replace a boat that had been on the lake for twelve years and was no longer in service.

Rangers in Sgt. Kelly's section assisted with the annual Wilkinson County Quail Hunt for Kid's event that introduced 19 novice hunters to quail hunting and shooting clay pigeons.



Rangers from Sgt. Kelly's work unit instructed annual field sobriety in-service training for all Regions in the Law Enforcement Division. The work unit sent volunteers to work bear hunting enforcement in Region VI and boating enforcement on Lake Lanier. Sgt. Kelly's



section investigated a night hunting case that developed into a several burglary arrests in Baldwin County. Another investigation was recently completed that involved the illegal taking of a large buck by a Texas resident, who did not possess a Georgia hunting license. There were four different groups of night hunters that were apprehended. The work unit worked all managed hunts for deer/dove/turkey on BF Grant and Cedar Creek WMAs

with DNR Game Management technicians, as well as at Balls Ferry State Park. Area hunts on the Oconee National Forest and Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge were also patrolled by area Rangers and the section assisted one of the local sheriff's offices with surveillance on two stolen ATV's.

Region IV was able to fill the office staff vacancies with the hiring of Jami Tripp as the Region's part-time secretary and Stephannie Stinson as our Business Operations Generalist. This year brought about the retirements of Cpl. Susan Morris and Sgt. Tim Kendrick after their many years of service to the State of Georgia. Cpl. Wil Smith transferred to Upson County from Region I and RFC Niki Spencer transferred to Butts County from Region III.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)



Front: Cpl. Bob Holley and Creek, Sgt. David Ruddell, Sgt. Al Greer, Sgt. Ellis Wynn, Capt. Jeff Swift, Sgt. Rick Sellars, Sgt. Jim Atchley
2nd Row: Cpl. Randy Davis, Cpl. Scott Carroll, Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Clint Martin, Cpl. Steve Robinson, Cpl. Greg Wade, Ranger Jay Lewis
Back Row: Ranger Quinn Fogle, RFC Randy James, Ranger Eric White, RFC Jon Penuel, RFC Tony Cox, Ranger Steve Thomas, Ranger Jesse Harrison
Inset: Shannon Boyd-Secretary, Cindy Hynote –AOC

Region V is comprised of twenty-nine counties in the southwest portion of the state with the headquarters located in Albany. Within the Region there are four large reservoirs, two major rivers, three smaller rivers, thirteen wildlife management areas, and seven state parks.

Currently, the Region has twenty-one POST certified Rangers assigned to its ranks with nineteen primarily assigned field responsibilities, and two, Capt. Jeff Swift and Sgt. Ellis Wynn, assigned administrative responsibilities. The Region also has two non-sworn administrative/support staff, Cindy Hynote the AOC, and Shannon Boyd the hourly secretary.

The twenty nine counties are divided into four work units, each supervised by a sergeant:
Sgt. Al Greer and his staff: Cpl. Clint Martin, Cpl. Bob Holley, RFC Randy James, Rgr. Jesse Harrison and Rgr. Jay Lewis
Sgt. David Ruddell and his staff: Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Greg Wade, RFC Jon Penuel and Rgr. Eric White
Sgt. Rick Sellars and his staff: Cpl. Jim Atchley, Cpl. Randy Davis, RFC Tony Cox and Rgr. Steve Thomas
Sgt. Butch Potter and his staff: Cpl. Scott Carroll, Cpl. Steve Robinson and Rgr. Quinn Fogel



Region V staff received numerous awards and honors for their work throughout the year. Cpl. Greg Wade was selected as the 2014 State Ranger of the Year for his outstanding enforcement efforts. He was also recognized at the State Capital with a resolution in his honor. RFC Chad Hulsey was the first recipient of the TORCH Award, which recognizes a Ranger with less than five years of service who displays great leadership potential for the future. RFC Hulsey was also selected as the 2014 Wild Turkey Federation Ranger of the Year.

Region V experienced several personnel changes this year. Three of our staff resigned, Cpl. Mike Binion accepted a position with Grady County as the Tired Creek Lake Executive Director, RFC Chad Hulsey left to manage private land and RFC Chris Carlisle accepted a position in the Motor Carrier Compliance Division of the Department of Public Safety. We had one Parks Division employee, Ranger Jay Lewis, transfer into the Sumter County position.



Torch Award Recipient RFC Chad Hulsey (Left)



Sgt. Butch Potter and his work unit

Sgt. Butch Potter also retired after nearly 33 years of service to the state. His presence in the region will be missed by many.

There was also one promotion and several assignment changes this year. RFC Jim Atchley was promoted to fill the vacant corporal position in the Lake Seminole work unit. Ranger Eric White transferred to Colquitt County, Cpl. Robbie Griner transferred into Dougherty County, Cpl. Greg Wade transferred into the Worth County position and Ranger Steve Thomas transferred to Grady County.

Corporal Randy Davis was out on sick leave as a result of leg and shoulder injuries he sustained during a SAR event involving a rescue of boaters on the Flint River last year.

Corporal Steve Robinson was also out on leave for a period of time with a broken foot.

Ranger Jay Lewis completed his Field Orientation program in July and will assume his duties in Sumter County.

Cpl. Robbie Griner completed an internship program with a student pursuing a career in conservation law enforcement. Cpl. Griner invested 164 hours over the course of four months exposing the student to the many aspects of his job.

Region V personnel responded to several SAR incidents this year. One of the most significant was the search for, and recovery of the victims on board a plane which crashed into the Chattahoochee River.



On September 17th, Cpl. Jim Atchley and RFC Tony Cox responded to a request from Alabama to assist in the search for a small plane with two occupants onboard that was suspected of crashing into Lake Walter F. George. Cpl. Atchley organized DNR's response as he and RFC Cox searched the lake with sonar equipment. Eight DNR Rangers along with DNR's aviation unit were involved in a lengthy search lasting nine days. The plane and victims were eventually located south of the lake in the Chattahoochee River. Rangers Butch Potter, Scott Carroll, Steve Robinson, Quinn Fogle, Jim Atchley, Tony Cox and Steve Thomas, along with personnel from other local, state and federal agencies retrieved the plane and victims utilizing the Corps of Engineer's barge and crane.

In another unusual incident, four family members, a husband, wife and two juvenile children were boating on Lake Worth near Albany, when the father ignored warning signs on the dam and approached too close. Unable to escape the tremendous pull of water flowing under the open gates of the dam, the boat and the four occupants were sucked under water and through the dam gates, then discharged downstream of the dam. The occupants were wearing life jackets and miraculously survived the incident and were able to swim to shore where bystanders assisted them. Cpl. Robbie Griner and Ranger Chris Carlisle were conducting a boat patrol on Lake Worth and were able to be on scene within minutes of the event. Following the investigation, the operator was charged with three counts of reckless operation of a vessel.

Region V experienced a significant increase in the numbers of kayakers and wake boarders utilizing the local creeks, rivers and reservoirs, as these two watersports become even more popular. The popularity of wakeboarding also spawned numerous wakeboard events throughout the Region.

Aggressive BUI patrols and media coverage, along with the Governor's Office of Highway Safety campaign designed to educate the public on the dangers of impaired driving, appear to have had a favorable impact on boaters. Rangers have noticed an increase in the number of designated operators on boats they encounter, a very welcomed sign. The Region had 35 BUI arrests and no boat incidents involving serious injuries or fatalities.

Cpl. Bob Holley and Cpl. Clint Martin responded to a report of an overturned boat on Lake Blackshear and quickly located four boaters in the water. Two were on top of the overturned boat and two were treading water, none had lifejackets on. The boaters were taken onboard the patrol boat and transported to a nearby boat ramp and treated by EMS for hypothermia.

RFC Tony Cox's boating enforcement efforts produced 11 BUI and child endangerment arrests while patrolling Lake Seminole this past year.

Rangers continued to conduct investigations into illegal activities, working diligently to address landowner concerns and violations on state operated properties.

Cpl. Robbie Griner completed a lengthy investigation in Worth County that resulted in nine warrants being taken for a landowner who was holding deer illegally in enclosures.

Cpl. Bob Holley and Rgr. Jay Lewis responded to an in progress night deer hunting call after a landowner, using night vision himself, observed someone hunting on foot on his property. Cpl. Holley used his patrol dog Creek to locate the subject, who was wearing a ghillie suit and hiding in a ditch. Creek also located a deer the violator had shot earlier. An accomplice whom had dropped the subject off in the area was also charged in the case.

RFC Jon Penuel investigated and obtained convictions on two separate complaints involving the illegal taking of trophy sized deer, taking over the limit and hunting without permission. Several large deer heads were confiscated during the investigation.

Rgr. Quinn Fogle, acting on information from a complainant and assisting a sheriff's office, organized a night detail to apprehend the persons involved in the theft of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel from a logging operation. He and Cpl. Steve Robinson set up surveillance on a site that was being targeted by the thieves and observed an individual in a tank truck arrive and begin to transfer fuel to the tanker. At their approach the subject fled but was later apprehended.

There was an increase in night hunting complaints this year in comparison to the last several years. Sgt. Greer's work unit received numerous complaints of night hunters, arresting fifteen individuals for hunting hogs from public roads and motor vehicles and nineteen for hunting deer at night. Sergeant Ruddell's unit had fourteen arrests for hunting deer at night.

While working an area from which numerous night deer hunting complaints had been received, Rgr. Eric White and Sgt. David Ruddell arrested a father and his adult son on a Saturday for hunting deer at night, then arrested the father and an adult nephew the following Monday for the same offense.

The increased popularity of waterfowl hunting was evident in Region V as Rangers encountered the most hunters ever. Canvasbacks, redheads, scaup and ringneck ducks were found in substantial numbers and in areas that have traditionally not held the species. Rangers also saw an increase in boating safety violations related to waterfowl hunting as more hunters took to the lakes and rivers. Lake Seminole continues to be a popular destination for waterfowlers from all over the nation in pursuit of canvasback ducks.

Cpl. Greg Wade had several significant cases, apprehending twenty hunters hunting over bait and ten others for roost shooting violations.

Cpl. Robbie Griner located and cited a group of six hunters hunting geese over bait. In addition to the numerous violations, Cpl. Griner seized twenty-one geese along with ducks from the group.



Ranger Quinn Fogle with an overlimit case of Scaup (Bluebills)

Cpl. Jim Atchley and Ranger Quinn Fogle experienced an increase in the number of violations they encountered during waterfowl patrols on Lake Walter F. George, as hunters flocked to the lake on the Georgia-Alabama line in pursuit of the increased numbers of ducks present.

RFC Tony Cox and Rgr. Steve Thomas also experienced an increase in waterfowl hunting activity on Lake Seminole as hunters sought to harvest the highly prized Canvasback ducks that frequent this lake. The officers made numerous cases for rallying ducks and taking over the limit.



RFC Tony Cox with illegally taken ducks



Ranger Jesse Harrison with over the limit of doves

Sumter, Dooly, Macon, Schley and Crisp counties continue to produce excellent dove hunting opportunities and the Rangers were busy checking the numerous dove shoots in this area.

The regions Sonar-ROV team was kept busy responding to requests throughout the state. Cpl. Jim Atchley and RFC Tony Cox responded to ten requests for



Rangers Tony Cox and Jim Atchley conducting evidence search with the ROV.

deployment with three of these being in Alabama. The Rangers conducted searches for articles related to several crimes including an ongoing ten year search for a missing person and items involved in a recent murder. The sonar was also used to locate a drowning victim in an extremely deep rock quarry in Alabama. The Rangers also conducted joint training with several dive/rescue teams in the state.



Cpl. Bob Holley and Creek

Cpl. Bob Holley and his patrol dog Creek responded to fifteen requests for assistance from Rangers and local agencies.

Rangers were kept busy attending training throughout the year, all participated in an advanced ATV Operations course held at the public safety training center in Forsyth. Many returned bruised and battered, but the training was appreciated by all. Each Ranger also attended ALERRT training to prepare them for a rapid response to shooting scenarios.



Advanced ATV Operations Training

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)



Front Row Kneeling L-R: Cpl. Jason Shipes, Rgr. Sam Williams, Sgt. Morty Wood, RFC Keith McDonald, Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey, Cpl. Tim Hutto, K-9 Titan, Sgt. James McLaughlin
2nd Row L-R: RFC Allen Mills, Cpl. Shaymus McNeely, Cpl. Chase Altman, Sgt. Jon Barnard, BOG Sharon Sims, RFC Debbie Brannen, Sec. Melinda Monroe, Cpl. Dan Stiles, Cpl. Mike Wilcox, Sgt. Don Dasher, Capt. Scott Klingel
3rd Row L-R: Cpl. John Stokes, Rgr. Jordan Crawford, Sgt. Chris Moore, RFC Clint Jarriel, Cpl. Eddie Akins, Cpl. Kevin Joyce, Rgr. Judd Sears, Rgr. Daniel North, RFC Rodney Horne, Sgt. Patrick Dupree
Not pictured: Cpl. Mark Pool

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. The office is staffed by Region Supervisor Captain Scott Klingel, Administrative Sergeant Chris Moore, Business Operations Generalist Sharon Sims, and Secretary 1 Melinda Monroe. There are 33 POST certified positions in the region.

Personnel

Sgt. James McLaughlin transferred from the Administrative Sergeant's position to a Field Sergeant's position and supervises Laurens, Dodge, Wheeler, Ben Hill, Wilcox and Irwin counties.

Sgt. Chris Moore promoted into the Administrative Sergeant's position, coming from nearby Chatham County in Region VII.

Sgt. Don Dasher supervises Screven, Effingham, Bulloch, Jenkins, Emanuel and Candler Counties.

Sgt. Jon Barnard supervises Evans, Tattnall, Toombs, Treutlen, Montgomery, Jeff Davis and Appling Counties.

Sgt. Patrick Dupree supervises Echols, Clinch, Ware, Bacon, Pierce, and Charlton Counties.

Cpl. Chase Altman and Rgr. Daniel North completed the required training and became certified as Aerial Observers for the Aviation Unit. The officers displayed their skillset when the region participated in long-line rescue training with the Aviation Unit.



Cpl. Altman and Ranger North

This year marked the third effort of the Southern Bear Detail where five visiting officers assisted the work unit with checking the vast territory during bear season. The aviation unit was also utilized and officers were able to check over 150 bear hunters to ensure their compliance.



K-9 Gauge

Tragedy struck the Region VI family in October when K-9 Gauge suddenly fell ill while searching for a firearm in a nearby region. He was rushed to a clinic in Florida, but unfortunately the illness was fatal. Gauge served the Department for four years and was assigned to Cpl. Tim Hutto.

After obtaining outside funding, K-9 Titan was purchased in January 2015 to replace K-9 Gauge. Cpl. Tim Hutto and K-9 Titan completed 11 weeks of K-9 training at GPSTC and graduated from the K-9 Academy in April 2015.



K-9 Titan

RFC Rodney Horned joined Cpl. Mike Wilcox as the Region's second investigator with CIRT. RFC Horne has begun the two-year process to complete all of the specialized training required to professionally manage the Department's investigations.

Sgt. Morty Wood supervises Coffee, Atkinson, Berrien, Cook, Lanier and Lowndes Counties. Mark Pool (Bacon/Pierce Counties) and Tim Hutto (Atkinson/Lanier Counties) were both promoted to Corporal this year.

Two officers left Region VI this year; RFC Joe Hilton (Coffee County) went to the GBI and Cpl. Josh Chambers (Ware County) transferred back to his home county in Region II. Rgr. Judd Sears (Clinch County) transferred into Region VI this year.

Awards

Cpl. Dan Stiles was selected as the Ranger of the Year for Region VI. Cpl. Stiles is a 21-year veteran assigned to Laurens County. Dan graduated from the Performance Management Program at Columbus State University and is a CAT Team Leader. He also helped revise and write the DNR All Hazards Response Manual. Cpl. Stiles was also selected as the Hunter Education Instructor of the Year for the Law Enforcement Division.

Cpl. Tim Hutto was selected as the Region VI Boating Safety Officer of the Year. Cpl. Hutto logged over 220 boating safety hours during the year. He had over 100 boating safety contacts including two arrests for boating under the influence, child endangerment, and seven arrests for VGCSA.

Cpl. Tommy Daughtrey was named as the Region VI Waterfowl Award winner. His enforcement efforts included apprehending poachers hunting on five baited shoots and two "Roost Shoots". He also confiscated 34 illegally taken ducks and issued 46 waterfowl related cases and warnings.

Corporal Eddie Akins received the Outstanding Public Safety Award from the Candler County American Legion Post 108 and Ranger Jordan Crawford was selected as this year's Torch Award winner for Region VI.

Corporal Chase Altman was selected as the Region VI Investigative Ranger of the Year for cracking the case where 11 subjects vandalized DNR owned properties. The vandals did \$32,000 in damage and Cpl. Altman was able to gain convictions on all counts. Restitution was ordered of all the defendants.

Cpl. Chase Altman was selected as the Region VI National Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year. Cpl. Altman dedicated 202 patrol hours to protecting the wild turkey and answered eight complaints during the season. On one hunting without permission complaint, Cpl. Altman conducted the same foot patrol eight separate times until he was able to catch the poacher.

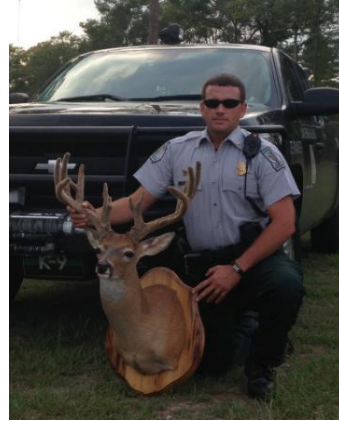


Sgt. Dupree and Ranger North with illegally killed wading birds

Investigations

On November 30, 2014, Sgt. Patrick Dupree was on patrol when he heard what sounded like duck hunting activity. Sgt. Dupree and Rgr. Daniel North located the shoot and found four hunters. The hunters had killed 11 Ibis, 6 white herons, 1 blue heron, and 9 hooded mergansers. The Rangers issued 10 citations for the senseless killing of these birds.

On August 11, 2014 RFC Hutto received a picture of a velvet buck that appeared to be at a taxidermist or a deer processing facility. RFC Hutto initiated an investigation into the picture. During the investigation RFC Hutto interviewed the taxidermist that had reportedly mounted the illegally killed velvet buck. After talking to more witnesses and gathering information related to the case, the fifteen point velvet buck was seized from the shooter in Dodge County. Charges were made for violation of a crop damage permit in the illegal killing of the deer.



Cpl. Hutto with an illegal buck killed by crop damage permit holder.

On April 25th, Cpl. Jason Shipes and Rgr. Daniel North were patrolling popular fishing and boating areas along the Satilla River. As Cpl. Shipes and Rgr. North entered the Jamestown Landing boat ramp area, they observed a vehicle parked at the waterline. As the officers approached the vehicle they observed a male and female begin to quickly move about the vehicle. It was determined that the two were engaged in a sexual act while parked at the public landing. While speaking with the two subjects, their behavior ranged from calm one second to very nervous the next. A K-9 unit from the Ware County Sheriff's Department arrived at the landing and assisted with the situation. A search of the vehicle was conducted due to positive response indicated by the K-9 on scene. While conducting the search, officers found a working meth lab in the bed of the pickup truck concealed in a duffel bag. At that point, due to the dangers of a working meth lab, the search was suspended and part of the landing was blocked off to public access. Agents from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation responded to the landing to process and properly dispose of the hazardous materials used to manufacture methamphetamine. After the lab was secure, officers found finished product, loaded syringes, and other evidence related to methamphetamine. The two subjects were arrested.



On July 16, 2014 RFC Tim Hutto investigated a complaint in Lanier County that a largemouth bass had been caught at Banks Lake and sold to two men that were fishing in a tournament. The two tournament fishermen weighed the bass in as part of their catch and won the tournament, including the prize for Big Fish. The bass was to be sold for \$250.00, but the sellers of the fish were only paid \$95.00. The fish was confiscated and charges were made for fishing without a license against the man that actually caught the fish and all four people involved were charged with the illegal sale of gamefish.



Night Hunters



Night hunting for deer is still an issue in the Region and efforts are ongoing to catch these poachers. During this past deer season, 45 groups of night hunters were caught and 91 persons charged for hunting deer at night. These efforts resulted in 320 charges being made including hunting deer at night with the aid of a light, obstruction, fleeing and eluding, DUI, felony possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute, hunting from a motor vehicle, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, hunting from a road, and drug possession.

On October 11th, RFC Allen Mills received a complaint through the Ranger Hotline in reference to hunting deer at night. The anonymous complainant stated that an individual had taken a large deer at night with a rifle and was passing it off as a legal bow kill. The complainant gave RFC Mills a name, the county the deer was taken in and a social media site that had a picture of the subject with the deer. After conducting several interviews on four subjects over several days, RFC Mills was able to gain confessions from both subjects involved, one of which was a convicted felon. The deer antlers and cape were confiscated and donated to a local wildlife club, and the meat was taken to a nearby deer processor and donated to a needy family. The convicted felon's probation officer was notified about the case.



RFC Mills with a poached buck

Special Events

Rangers assisted the Georgia Bureau of Investigation with a case involving a missing couple from the Atlanta area. The couple had traveled to Telfair County in response to a Craig's List advertisement about a vintage car for sale. Rangers assisted in the search for the couple over several days, and then helped with locating and securing evidence once the deceased couple was located.



Ranger Sam Williams probing the Satilla River.

In January, a local man went fishing on the rain swollen Satilla River in Ware County and was reported missing that night. His vessel was located early the next morning and Region VI Rangers began an exhaustive search for the man. The search lasted throughout the winter and involved some brutally cold temperatures and consistent rain. The missing boater's body was located 67 days later.

For the fourth straight year, Rangers assisted the Evans County SO with ATV and UTV patrols at the Luke Bryan concert. They also attended the Claxton Rattlesnake and Wildlife Festival, Coast Fest, the Georgia Hunting and Fishing Federation Outdoor Show, Paradise PFA and NWTF Jakes Day, GA-FL-USFWS meeting, GA Sheriff's Youth Hunt, and the NWTF Turkey Hunting School in Valdosta.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)



Front (L/R) – RFC David Brady, Rgr. Jay Bright, Sgt. Damon Winters, RFC Jack Thain, Boat Mechanic Gary Denis
Middle (L/R)- Sgt. Mark Carson, Rgr. Patrick Gibbs, Sgt. Phillip Scott, Rhonda Knight, Capt. Doug Lewis, Kay Readdick,
Cpl. Buster Cooper, Sgt. Cindy Miller
Back (L/R) – Cpl. Jay Morgan, Cpl. Bill Bryson, Cpl. Craig Smith, Rgr. Colte Shaske, Sgt. Chris Hodge, Cpl. Bobby White,
Cpl. Randy Aspinwall, RFC John Evans, RFC Jason Miller, Cpl. Kate Hargrove, and RFC Kiel Toney

Region VII is comprised of the nine coastal counties and three inland counties. Region VII Rangers focus heavily on the commercial fishing industry and offshore federal fisheries. This year was typical year for the Region, working normal hunting and fishing violations, assisting other agencies with crowd control, and logging numerous illegal commercial fishing violations.

On July 9th, RFC John Evans, Sgt. Chris Hodge, Sgt. Mark Carson, and Wildlife Technicians Ed Van Otteren and Robert Danley served a search warrant at a residence on St. Simons Island. The owner had a raccoon that had tested positive for rabies the day before and was in possession of another raccoon. After some investigation, Rangers determined that other raccoons had been at the home and were given to various individuals. At least 30 people and six pets had been potentially exposed to the rabid animal. The incident affected people in Florida, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Missouri.

On October 4th, Region VII officers assisted with traffic control for the 20th anniversary of Coast Fest. Coast Fest is an annual event at the Brunswick office where all Divisions of DNR have free exhibits for the public. The event, sponsored by the Coastal Resources Division, included four man-made ponds – two for kids kayaking and two for a kids fishing rodeo, a butterfly tent, Colonial games, cannon and musket firing, touch tanks for sharks and stingrays, and other educational exhibits. A total of 9,500 people attended this year's Coast Fest.

On November 1, Rangers from Region VII assisted the Glynn County Police Department with the Georgia-Florida “Frat Beach” party. These Rangers focused their efforts on environmental laws such as littering and crowd control. The county estimated 5,000 college students were in attendance.

On December 5th, Sgt. Chris Hodge responded to assist the Camden County Sheriff’s Office, Glynn County Police Department, and the Georgia State Patrol with a pursuit which started in Glynn County around 6:40 p.m. Officers in Glynn County attempted to stop a suspect involved in a murder from North Carolina and the suspect fled south on I-95. After



pursuing the suspect through two counties, officers in the chase, along with the suspect, crashed in the south end of Camden County. The suspect was apprehended at the scene after the pursuit ended. Unfortunately, a Camden County Deputy Sheriff was seriously injured after his vehicle overturned several times. Sgt. Hodge, along with several other officers, rendered aid to the injured deputy who had to be removed from the wrecked patrol car after it caught fire. The deputy was transported to a hospital in Jacksonville. Sgt. Hodge received the Peace Officers Association of Georgia Valor nomination for this event.



The National Wild Turkey Federation presented RFC Jason Miller with a turkey decoy to aid in the apprehension of violators.

RFC Jason Miller was selected as the Region VII representative for Ranger of the Year. Region VII had a few promotions this past year. Damon Winters was promoted to Sergeant for the McIntosh, Wayne, Long work section. Cpl. Chris Moore from Chatham County was promoted to Sergeant. He took over the Administrative Sergeant position in Region VI. Kate Hargrove was promoted to Corporal in Chatham County.

Region VII completed Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) 13 with the 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). New to this JEA was the introduction of aircraft hours. These hours aided in spotting the fishing activity along Georgia's Coast.

Hours provided during this agreement period, July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015 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: 325 man hours

ALWTRP: 37 vessel hours

Aircraft Support hours- 61.5 flight hours

Public Outreach: 83 man hours



Investigative Unit

The Investigative Unit (IU) is comprised of two full-time investigators. The IU is responsible for undercover investigations, Special Permit Unit (SPU) inspections and violations, the administration of the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT) and the Marine Theft Unit (MTU). The IU depends heavily on assistance from uniformed Rangers. Statewide, 15 Rangers perform a collateral duty called "Regional Investigator". Regional Investigators assist the IU with various duties.

Undercover Investigations

The Region Investigators referenced above are full-time Conservation Rangers who have received training in undercover operations and equipment. They perform this collateral duty in addition to their everyday Conservation Ranger duties. The primary function of the Investigative Unit is to provide uniform Rangers with investigative support and the unit is also responsible for plain-clothes and long-term investigations. CIRT and MTU are also managed by the Investigative Unit.

Last year, the Investigative Unit conducted and managed over 100 investigations and calls for assistance from the field. These investigations were comprised of intelligence gathering, buy/bust, and both short and long-term investigations. The focus of many of these investigations included the sale or possession of wildlife and wild animals. These violations are difficult to address without the aid of undercover officers.

Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT)

Georgia has 16 CIRT investigators assigned throughout the state. CIRT investigates all fatality and serious injury boating and hunting incidents. Each investigator receives specialized training on investigating and presenting these cases. Last year, CIRT investigated 23 boating and 2 hunting incidents.

Marine Theft Unit (MTU)

The primary function of the MTU is to assist law enforcement officers in the field. The MTU conducts computer database and offline searches, locates hidden hull identification numbers, and assists with locating and recovering stolen vessels. The MTU also serves as the point of contact for customers as well as court systems related to the abandoned vessel process. Last year, the MTU received 31 abandoned vessel requests from the public and fielded numerous phone calls related to the abandoned vessel process.

Special Permits Unit

The Law Enforcement Division of the agency administers 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 was involved in the drafting of new legislation this past year involving changes to the feral hog laws and regulations related to the transportation and the control of hogs on private agricultural property. The unit also coordinated inspections on all permitted falconers and fox hunting preserves throughout the state.

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. Training this year included a refresher on Tactical Tracking for Felons/Dangerous Suspects. Currently the Division has eight K-9/Handler teams deployed statewide.



L-R: Cpl. Books Varnell and K-9 Rock, RFC Micheal Crawley and K-9 Storm, Cpl. Tim Hutto and K-9 Titan, Cpl. Bob Holley and K-9 Creek, RFC Keith Page and K-9 Drake, RFC Eric Isom and K-9 Colt, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen and K-9 Ruger, Cpl. Kevin Joyce and K-9 Briar



Training Unit

Advanced ATV

The 2015 In-Service Training consisted of a 20-hour block entitled Advanced ATV Operator's Course. This course was designed to provide officers with the knowledge and skills necessary to build a strong and secure foundation in the operation of an ATV for patrol purposes and to build confidence in their individual and unit operational capabilities using ATVs. All LED Rangers and selected officers from other DNR Divisions participated in this course over a 7-week, 14-session period.



PT Sec. Nancy Patten, Capt. Wade Law, AOC Mandy James



Firearms Instructors at Spring Training



Firearms

In the spring, Rangers completed Firearms Requalification with handgun, shotgun, and rifle within each Region. Use of Deadly Force training, malfunction drills and time-reduction drills were also covered during the session.

Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid response Training (ALERRT)

This year, five Rangers were certified as ALERRT instructors. ALERRT is the national standard for active shooter response and prepares the first responder to isolate, distract, and neutralize an active shooter. The training includes weapon manipulation, threshold evaluation, concepts and principles of team movement, setting up for room entry and room entry techniques, approach and breaching the crisis site, follow-on responder tactics, improvised explosive devices, and post-engagement priorities of work.

PT Readiness/Health and Wellness

The Division currently has 14 Health and Wellness Instructors to implement the new voluntary Physical Readiness policy, ensuring that each officer is physically capable of performing his/her duties. This instructor-focused course covers planning and implementing health and wellness programs within the agency. Subjects include physiology, skeletal and muscle anatomy, kinesiology, exercise physiology, conditioning analysis, blood pressure, body composition, heart rate, flexibility, strength, cardiovascular endurance, injury treatment, relaxation, stress and nutrition.



BUI/SFST Training

The annual BUI/SFST (Boating Under the Influence/Standardized Field Sobriety Testing) refresher course was also part of this year's training. 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.

Crisis Intervention or Critical Incident Training

Two Rangers continue to participate in the Crisis Intervention or Critical Incident training and are part of the Peer Support Team. The Peer Support Team (PST) consists of personnel who are specially trained as skilled listeners. The objective of the PST is to provide support for law enforcement personnel, and their immediate family, who have experienced a critical incident or traumatic event. A Critical Incident is defined as any incident, action, or event, which has the potential for producing significant emotional trauma that may adversely affect the psychological well-being of law enforcement personnel.



Post Critical Incident seminar attendees

Aviation Unit



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

This year the Aviation Unit flew a total of 1,032 mishap-free flight hours qualifying Major Watson, Captain Turner and Captain Watkins to receive the Bell Helicopter safety award. This benchmark also attributed to the unit's recognition and acceptance of the Helicopter Association International (HAI) 2014 Aviation Safety Award.



The Aviation Unit flew 347 hours supporting the Division's Rangers across the state. The year began during the July 4th weekend with Maj. Watson and Capt. Turner flying day and night boating patrols on Lake Lanier and Lake Sinclair with Aerial Observer (AO) James Keener. Later in the month, Maj. Watson and AO Roger McConkey conducted a search and located a missing person in north Georgia. The same day Capt. Turner dropped 29 buckets of water for a total of 6,090 gallons to suppress a wildfire in Bacon County.



The Aerial Observer program has proven to be very successful. The additional trained aerial crewmembers in northern Georgia have expedited the response time for search and rescue (SAR) requests in some cases. RFC Mitchell Crump's geographical location has attributed to his ability to quickly respond to missing person requests and long line rescues at Rabon Cliff Falls and Yonah Mountain. Due to the accomplishments of the program, four additional Rangers were trained in the southeastern Regions. Capt. Turner, Capt. Watkins and Crew Chief's Rogers and Peberdy trained Cpl. Chase Altman and Rgr. Daniel North from Region VI, and Cpl. Bobby White and RFC Jack Thain from Region VII in Aerial Observer duties and responsibilities, and practiced numerous long line rescues.

The Aviation Unit supported the Division Rangers throughout the hunting season from early fall through early spring. Rangers were flown on county surveys looking for baited food plots, duck ponds and illegal shrimping along the Georgia coast. Flight support was also provided for Operation Dry Water, night deer poaching/spotlighting patrols, and searches for missing person and drowning victims. The Wildlife Resource Division (WRD) was provided aviation support during surveys of bald eagles, kestrel, sandhill cranes and waterfowl. Capt. Watkins flew these same flights along the Georgia coast in addition to surveys for sea turtles, dolphins and the tagging of manatee. In addition to the WRD surveys, the Aviation Unit flew 35 hours during nine prescribed burns on the State WMA's during the months of February through April.



Honor Guard



Front L-R: Cpl. Josh Chamber, Cpl. Travis Sweat, RFC David Brady, Cpl. Ben Payne, Cpl. Derek Dillard, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, Cpl. Scott Carroll
Back L-R: RFC Clint Jarriel, Cpl. Bob Holley, RFC Cody Jones, RFC Micheal Crawley, Cpl. Brooks Varnell, Cpl. Robbie Griner, Cpl. Chase Altman

Honor Guard Details:

8/17/2014 – Funeral Honor Guard Detail for Retired Ranger Pat Nugent in Pearson, Georgia.

10/4/2014 – Presentation of Colors for opening ceremony at Coast Fest in Brunswick, Georgia.

10/28/2014 – Funeral Honor Guard Detail for Retired Ranger Henry Hart in Vidalia, Georgia.

5/4/2015 – Funeral visitation Honor Guard Detail for Retired Captain Phillip Moss in Thomson, Georgia.

5/5/2015 – Funeral service Honor Guard Detail for Retired Captain Phillip Moss in Thomson, Georgia.

5/6/2015 – Funeral graveside Honor Guard Detail for Retired Captain Phillip Moss in Roswell, Georgia.

5/20/2015 – Honor Guard Detail at the Georgia Public Safety Memorial Ceremony at the GPSTC in Forsyth, Georgia.

6/2/2015 – Funeral visitation Honor Guard Detail for Retired Sgt. Donnie Peebles in Swainsboro, Georgia.

6/3/2015 – Funeral Honor Guard Detail for Retired Sgt. Donnie Peebles in Swainsboro, Georgia.

7/19/2015 – Funeral visitation Honor Guard Detail for Retired Sgt. David Henderson in Cleveland, Georgia.

7/20/2015 – Funeral Honor Guard Detail for Retired Sgt. David Henderson in Blairsville, Georgia.



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:

Maj. Thomas Barnard
 Capt. Jeff Galloway
 Sgt. Chris Moore
 Cpl. Tim Hutto
 Cpl. Mark Pool
 Cpl. Kevin Dyer
 Cpl. James Atchley
 Cpl. Kate Hargrove
 Cpl. Brooks Varnell
 Cpl. Brian Adams

Transfers:

RFC Micheal Crawley
 Ranger Chris Kernahan
 Ranger Michael Madden
 Ranger Judd Sears
 Ranger Tim Morris
 Ranger Jason Harrison

Retirements:

Sgt. Butch Potter
 Cpl. Bill Bunch
 Cpl. Susan Morris
 Cpl. Jesse Cook

Activity Summary		FY2015
Hunter Ed Programs		712
I&E Programs		1679
Boating Safety Programs		457
Hunter Development		324
Total Programs		3172
Water SAR Cases		275
Water SAR Hours		4160
Vessels Assisted		344
Water Persons Asst.		703
Land SAR Cases		183
Land SAR Hours		1562
Land Persons Asst.		368
Hunting Incidents		38
Boating Incidents		115
Hunting License Checks		20,527
Fishing License Checks		28,252
Comm. License Checks		988
Total License Checks		49,767
Boat Checks		31,103
Boating Contacts		4764
Hunting Contacts		5473
Fishing Contacts		2673
Trapping Contacts		49
Environmental Contacts		426
Other Contacts		2391
Total Contacts		15,776