

Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division

Field Operations

Weekly Report
June 29-July 5, 2014

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



Region I- Calhoun (Northwest)

MURRAY COUNTY

On July 4th, Sgt. John Vanlandingham, Cpl Casey Jones and Cpl. James Keener made twelve vessel stops. The rangers addressed various violations including, fishing without license, skiing after sunset, insufficient PFD's and improper registration.

On July 5th, Cpl. Casey Jones and RFC Joe Hill made fifteen vessel stops and addressed several violations that included failure to obey regulatory marker, operating vessel without registration, fishing without a license, improper lights, violations of rules of the road, insufficient PFD's and violation of the 100' rule.

On July 6th, Cpl. Casey Jones and Wildlife Tech. III Larry Etheridge stopped six vessels on Carters Lake and addressed several violations including, towing skier without observer, failure to obey regulatory marker and violation 100' rule.

On July 6th, Cpl. Casey Jones charged a Catoosa County woman for possession of marijuana less than one ounce.

Region II- Gainesville (Northeast)

DAWSON COUNTY

On July 5th, Ranger Shane Brown patrolled Amicalola Falls State Park. Ranger Brown observed subjects fishing at the reflection pool. One subject didn't have a fishing license or a trout stamp. The subject was issued one citation and one warning.

LAKE LANIER (DAWSON, FORSYTH, GWINNETT, HALL, & LUMPKIN COUNTIES)

On June 29th, Sgt. Lee Brown and Ranger Shane Brown patrolled the North end of Lake Lanier. The Rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers issued citations and warnings for operating a vessel without PFD's, towing tube/skier with PWC without observer, and violation rules of the road.

On July 4th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and Ranger Shane Brown patrolled the north end of Lake Lanier. The Rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers stopped 28 vessels and checked 4 fishing license. The rangers issued citations, and warnings for fishing without license, allowing underage person to ride in a moving vessel without PFD, towing tube/skier with PWC without observer, violation rules of the road, operating vessel without lights, and operating vessel with improper lights. The rangers arrested one subject for BUI. Also after the fireworks show at Laurel Park the rangers assisted six persons out of the water when their pontoon boat sank. All six persons were assisted to shore with no injuries.

On July 4th, RFC Mitchell Crump and Ranger Kevin Goss patrolled the north end of Lake Lanier. The Rangers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The rangers issued citations, and warnings for fishing without license, allowing underage person to ride in a moving vessel without PFD, towing tube/skier with PWC without observer, operating vessel without registration, operating vessel without lights, and operating vessel with improper lights.

On July 5th, Cpl. Eddie Tompkins and Gwinnett County PD Sgt. Danny Appleby patrolled the south end of Lake Lanier. The Officers checked fisherman and pleasure boaters for compliance with license requirements and safety equipment. The officers stopped 22 vessels and checked 3 fishing license. Cpl. Tompkins issued citations and warning for operating vessel without PFD's, operating vessel with insufficient PFD's, allowing an underage child to ride in a moving vessel without a PFD, riding the bow/gunwale, operating a PWC during hours of darkness, and operating vessel with improper lights.

HART COUNTY

On June 29th, RFC Brandon Pierce and Sgt. Stan Elrod patrolled the lake for any boating safety/fishing activity. Several fishing licenses and boats were checked for proper safety equipment. A total of three citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of operating a vessel without a throwable device and allowing underage child to ride in moving vessel without wearing a PFD.

On July 4th, RFC Brandon Pierce and Cpl. Craig Fulghum patrolled Lake Hartwell for boating safety violations. Numerous boats were checked throughout the day. The Rangers issued a total of five citations. The violations consisted of insufficient PFD's, Children not wearing PFD's in a moving vessel and Non-Resident fishing without a license.

On July 5th, RFC Brandon Pierce, RFC Tim Vickery, RFC Shane Sartor, Cpl. Craig Fulghum, Sgt. Stan Elrod, and Sgt. Greg Colson completed a HIN inspection at Gum Branch Mega Ramp for boats with registration issues. Approximately twenty boats were inspected and all were cleared of registration issues.

On July 5th, RFC Brandon Pierce, RFC Tim Vickery, RFC Shane Sartor, Cpl. Craig Fulghum, Sgt. Stan Elrod, and Sgt. Greg Colson completed a HIN inspection at Gum Branch Mega Ramp for boats with registration issues. Approximately twenty boats were inspected and all were cleared of registration issues.

On July 5th, RFC Brandon Pierce and RFC Tim Vickery patrolled Hartwell Lake for any boating safety/fishing activity. Due to being a holiday weekend, numerous boats were checked for proper safety equipment, as well as, several fishing licenses were checked. A total of six citations and warnings were issued. The violations consisted of fishing without a license, failure to obey regulatory marker, towing a skier with PWC without an observer on board, operating a vessel without registration, and operating vessel with improper lights.

MADISON COUNTY

On July 4th RFC Shane Sartor, RFC Tim Vickery, Sgt. Stan Elrod, and Sgt. Greg Colson Patrolled the Broad River. While working one particular area of the River the Rangers observed a group smoking what they believed to be marijuana. The group was stopped and admitted to smoking a “joint” and turned over the marijuana they had left to the Rangers. The subjects were issued appearance citations for Violation of Georgia Controlled Substance Act.

HALL COUNTY

On June 30th, Corporal Jason Roberson arrested four subjects for numerous drug charges on Lake Lanier. Over 40 grams of methamphetamine, marijuana, and numerous illegal prescription pills were seized. Two people were charged with trafficking methamphetamine and two more were charged with boating under the influence. A boat and a ford expedition were seized by Hall County as well. In all, 13 drug related charges were made to the four individuals.

On July 4, Corporal Jason Roberson arrested one subject for operating a vessel under the influence.

On July 5, Corporal Jason Roberson arrested two subjects for operating a vessel under the influence.

On July 6, Corporal Jason Roberson arrested two subjects for operating a vessel under the influence.

On July 4th, RFC Kevin Goss, RFC Mitchel Crump, Cpl. Eddie Thompson, and Ranger Shane Brown, responded to a boating incident in the Chattahoochee River on Lake Lanier. When they arrived they found a Pontoon Boat submerged in the water and 8 individuals in the water with PFDs on. After getting the people out of the water; the people involved were taken to Holly Park, where they were evaluated by Hall County EMS. There were no serious injuries.

Region III- Thomson (East Central)

RICHMOND COUNTY

On July 4, 2014, Corporal Micheal Crawley, Sargent Max Boswell, and Corporal Ben Payne patrolled the Savannah River for boating and fishing violations. Several boats were checked and violations including operating vessel without lights, allowing underage child to ride in vessel without pfd, and violation of no wake zone. Corporal Crawley also assisted the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety with road checks around Richmond County.

ELBERT COUNTY

On July 5th Sgt. Brian Carter and Cpl. Julian Wilkins patrolled Lake Russell by vessel. During the patrol the following violations were detected, personal watercraft towing skier w/o observer on board, personal watercraft operating within 100 feet of object, two subjects with expired registration, and two subjects that had driven on a closed WMA road.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

On July 4th, Cpl. Brian Hobbins and RFC Brian Adams apprehended a female subject who was operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol and drugs. The subject was operating a vessel near Wildwood Park on Clarks Hill Lake. The female was arrested and transported to Columbia County Jail.

MCDUFFIE COUNTY

On July 6th, Sgt. Matt Garthright and RFC Brian Adams apprehended a male subject near Big Hart on Clarks Hill Lake who was operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol. The subject was arrested and taken to the McDuffie County Jail.

LAKE OCONEE

The 4th of July weekend was a busy one for DNR Rangers on Lake Oconee. Starting on July 3 with a fireworks display at the Ritz Carlton and another fireworks display at Great Waters on the fourth. Complaints rolled in of illegal activity such as operating PWCs within 100' of docks above idle speed was just one. In all, five BUI's were recorded, three possession of alcohol by minors, 1 boating incident, a near drowning, and almost every violation concerning a vessel was written. Rangers started patrolling hard on Thursday and didn't slow down until Sunday night. Among the Rangers were Captain Mark Padgett, Sgt. Matt Garthright, Sgt. John Harwell, Cpl. Derrell Worth, Cpl. David Allen, RFC Ricky Boles, RFC Niki Spencer, and RFC Tim Butler. Special thanks to RFC Butler for coming over and giving the Lake Oconee work section a needed hand.

Region IV- Macon (West Central)

BALDWIN COUNTY

On the evening of July 4th, Ranger Matt Johnson, RFC Jeremy Reese, Cpl. Bubba Stanford and Sgt. Bo Kelly patrolled Lake Sinclair. Numerous complaints were answered to include a boating incident near Little River Park. Two boats collided head on but none of the occupants were injured. One of the operators was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence and was transported to the Baldwin County Jail. During the evening patrol, two other vessel operators were arrested for operating a vessel under the influence and one for giving false name to an officer.

HARRIS COUNTY

On July 1st, Cpl. Mitch Oliver was checking a landowner complaint in reference to trespassing. The property in question has a large creek that flows through it and is a popular spot for underage drinking and drug use. Cpl. Oliver located 2 unoccupied vehicles parked outside the gate and got out to investigate. While standing at the driver's door of the SUV, Cpl. Oliver detected the odor of marijuana. Before Cpl. Oliver could go and search for the trespassers, they came out of the property in question and returned to their cars. Cpl. Oliver discussed the violation with them and asked the 4 subjects for their driver's license. All said they had to get their driver's license from the vehicles. Cpl. Oliver followed the driver of the SUV and watched as he cracked his door slightly and retrieved his wallet. At this time, Cpl. Oliver could smell marijuana even stronger. Cpl. Oliver pulled the driver aside and questioned him about the contents of the vehicle. The driver admitted to smoking marijuana in the SUV the night before, but swore that there were no drugs inside the vehicle now. Cpl. Oliver searched the SUV and located a plastic bag containing a wooden box. Inside the box was suspected marijuana along with a pipe used for smoking marijuana. Cpl. Oliver also located two other plastic bags in a console that contained suspected marijuana. The driver was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana and criminal trespass.

On July 4th, Cpl. Keith Waddell and Cpl. Jeremy Bolen checked boating activity on Lake Harding. Four citations were issued for various navigational light and personal flotation device violations. Two warnings were also issued for other boating violations.

HENRY COUNTY

On Sunday, June 29th, RFC Kevin Godbee and Sgt. Brent Railey patrolled the Tussahaw Reservoir. No violations were found.

JASPER COUNTY

On Friday, July 4th, RFC Keith Page and Sgt. Tim Kendrick patrolled Jackson Lake. Page and Kendrick stopped a vessel at 10:30 pm that was operating without a stern light. After stopping the vessel, the operator was found to be under the influence of alcohol. After he performed poorly on field sobriety test, he was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol and transported to the Jasper County Jail. He was also charged for operating a vessel at night with improper lights.

On Saturday, July 5th, RFC Keith Page and Cpl. Tony Wynne stopped a pontoon boat on Jackson Lake because they could smell the odor of marijuana coming from the boat. After stopping the boat and talking to the operator, RFC Keith Page found 2 marijuana cigars on the boat. One of the passengers claimed the marijuana and was charged with possession of less than an ounce of marijuana.

MUSCOGEE COUNTY

On July 5th, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen checked boating activity on Lake Oliver. Two citations were issued for various personal flotation device violations.

PUTNAM COUNTY

On the evening of July 5th, RFC Ronnie Beard and Cpl. Bubba Stanford assisted Putnam County S.O. Lt. Harry Luke with a vessel stop. The occupants of the pontoon had swapped operators as they were stopped. One of the operators was arrested for operating a vessel under the influence by Lt. Luke and the other occupant was arrested by Cpl. Stanford. The male subject, arrested by DNR, jumped out of the DNR patrol boat in an attempt to escape. After approximately 20 minutes, the officers were able to extract the subject from the water and place him in handcuffs. The male subject was charged with four counts of felony obstruction of an officer, one count of giving false name to a law enforcement officer, interference with government property and operating a vessel under the influence and he was transported to the Putnam County Jail, where it was learned that he had an outstanding warrant for arrest out of Chatham County.

TROUP COUNTY

On July 2nd, an investigation was completed in LaGrange involving a boat that was intentionally sunk in West Point Lake. Divers were able to positively identify the boat taking photographs of several identifying characteristics on the boat. DNR LED Officers participating in this investigation were Sgt. Jim Bradfield, Cpl. Jeremy Bolen, and RFC Russell Epps. Warrants for illegal dumping will be issued in the coming days for the boat's owner.

On the afternoon of July 4th, Sgt. Jim Bradfield, Sgt. Brent Railey, Cpl. Travis Sweat, and Ranger First Class Russell Epps patrolled West Point Lake. Fourteen cases and five warnings were issued for various violation such as boating under the influence, allowing underage person on vessel without wearing a PFD while in operation, operating a vessel without PFD's, failure to obey regulatory markers, towing a skier on a PWC without an observer, and operating an overloaded vessel.

On the afternoon of July 5th, Sgt. Jim Bradfield, Sgt. Brent Railey, Cpl. Mitch Oliver, and Ranger First Class Russell Epps with the assistance of the Department of Natural Resources Aviation Unit, and Cpl. Keith Waddell, conducted an aerial observation detail on West Point Lake. Six citations and three warnings were issued for various violations such as operating a PWC above idle speed within 100 feet of an object, operating a vessel without PFD's, towing a skier on a PWC without and observer, and allowing underage person on vessel without wearing a PFD while in operation.

WILKINSON COUNTY

On the afternoon of June 30th, Cpl. Bubba Stanford investigated a complaint in reference to an illegal alligator kill. Cpl. Stanford met with all parties involved and discovered that an approximately 4 to 5 foot alligator had been shot with a .22 caliber rifle at a pond in north Wilkinson County recently. Cpl. Stanford was able to receive a confession and the subject was charged with hunting out of season.

Region V- Albany (Southwest)

BOATING ACTIVITY

Rangers conducted concentrated boating safety patrols and worked four fireworks shows on lakes shows throughout the region. Safety violations were a priority and seven boat operators were arrested for boating under the influence.

LAKE GEORGE

Rangers worked fireworks shows at the dam and Lake Point Marina and during patrols arrested two boaters for boating under the influence.

LAKE SEMINOLE

Rangers worked fireworks shows at Bainbridge and Seminole State Park and during patrols arrested four boaters for boating under the influence.

LAKE WORTH

Rangers conducted patrols resulting in one arrest for boating under the influence.

LAKE BLACKSHEAR

On July 5th, Cpl. Bob Holley and RFC Randy James responded to the report of a vessel that had capsized and sank. Upon arrival they found an 18 ft. bass boat capsized and floating in a debris field of trash, life jackets and other items. The occupants of the vessel had been rescued by a passing boater and had been taken to a nearby marina. When interviewed, the occupants stated they were fishing when the vessel began taking on water and then capsized before sinking below the surface of the water. There were no injuries and the vessel was recovered from the lake.

GEORGIA VETERANS STATE PARK

On July 4th, Cpl. Bob Holley encountered a vehicle parked on the shoulder of the roadway on the Park. The occupants were standing on the shoulder of the roadway involved in a domestic disturbance. One of the individuals was subsequently arrested for criminal trespass / being under the influence of alcohol on a State Park.

Region VI- Metter (Southeast)

WILCOX COUNTY

On June 29th Cpl. John A. Stokes and RFC Rodney Horne patrolled the Ocmulgee River below Half Moon landing for boating safety violations. Nine violations were found; seven for fishing without license and two for operating vessel without PFD's.

On July 5th Cpl. John Stokes, Cpl. Dan Stiles, RFC Allen Mills, and RFC Rodney Horne conducted a HIN inspection site at the Bowens Mill Fish Hatchery. Seventeen vessels were inspected and registration issues addressed for vessel owners.

DODGE COUNTY

On July 5th Cpl. John Stokes and RFC Allen Mills conducted a vessel patrol on the Ocmulgee River south of Abbeville. The two officers checked 23 vessels for boating safety equipment and 19 anglers for license and creel compliance. Four violations were documented for fishing w/o a license, operating a vessel with insufficient PFD. Verbal guidance was given for several minor violations.

LAURENS COUNTY

On July 4th, Cpl. Dan Stiles, RFC Rodney Horne, and RFC Allen Mills responded to a possible hunting incident. Officers Stiles and Mills responded to Fairview Park Hospital to interview the victim who had sustained a gunshot wound and Officer Horne responded to the reported location of the incident with personnel from the Laurens County Sheriff's office. It was later determined that the incident did not involve hunting activity and the investigation was turned over to the Laurens County Sheriff's office. Arrests were made in the incident and the investigation is still ongoing.

On July 5th, Cpl. Dan Stiles and Captain Scott Klingel conducted a vessel patrol on the Oconee River. Thirteen vessels were checked for registration and boating safety equipment. Twelve anglers were also checked for fishing license and creel compliance. Citations were issued for fishing without a license and operating a vessel without CGA PFD's (life jackets). The officers also encountered one disabled vessel and towed the subject's vessel back to the boat landing.

TELFAIR COUNTY

On July 5th, RFC Rodney Horne conducted a night patrol at the Horse Creek WMA. Four fishing licenses were checked and one citation was issued for fishing without a license.

JEFF DAVIS COUNTY

On July 4th, RFC Tim Hutto and Sgt. Morty Wood patrolled the Ocmulgee River from Ben-Hill County to the Rocky Hammock landing in Jeff Davis County. The patrol resulted in one warning for operating a vessel with insufficient life jackets, one citation for littering, three citations for illegal consumption of alcohol on a WMA, two citations for fishing without licenses, and two citations for misdemeanor possession of marijuana.

COFFEE COUNTY

On June 30th, RFC Hilton was patrolling the Willacoochee River for boating safety and fishing violations. This patrol resulted in two violations for operating a vessel without personal flotation device and two violations for fishing without a license.

On July 5th, RFC Hilton and Intern Johnathan Day were patrolling the Ocmulgee River for boating safety violations and fishing violations. During this patrol, RFC Hilton, RFC Hutto and Intern Day patrolled Rocky Hammock WMA boat landing for violations. This patrol resulted in three warnings for illegal use of an ATV on a WMA and one citation for illegal consumption of alcohol on a WMA.

Also on the 5th, RFC Hilton and Intern Day patrolled the Satilla River for boating safety and fishing violations. This patrol led to two individuals being cited for Violation of Georgia Controlled Substance Act (marijuana less than an ounce) and four individuals cited for fishing without a license,

LOWNDES COUNTY

On July 5th, RFC Keith McDonald patrolled several areas in Lowndes County for boating safety and fishing activity. RFC McDonald observed an individual sink a can in the Little River. The individual was issued a citation for littering. The individual also had a warrant out of Lee County. A trooper was called to transport the individual to the Lowndes County jail.

BERRIEN/COOK COUNTY

On Saturday July 5th, Sgt. Morty Wood patrolled bridges and checked the fishing areas along the Withlacoochee and New Rivers. Sgt. Wood issued several citations for fishing without a license and for non-resident fishing without a license during the patrol.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On June 29th, RFC Mark Pool and Ranger Daniel North checked boats on the St. Mary's River at Camp Pinckney. A violation of operating a vessel after hours of darkness without any navigation lights was documented with one vessel operator.

CLINCH COUNTY

On July 4th, Cpl. Jason Shiples and Ranger Daniel North conducted a vessel patrol of the Suwannee River between the Suwannee River Sill and Fargo Welcome Center boat landing. During the patrol, Rangers Shiples and North encountered an individual who was operating a vessel while drinking an alcoholic beverage. The vessel was stopped and field sobriety tests were conducted on the operator who was found to be intoxicated. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence and booked at the county jail.

On July 6th, Ranger Daniel North checked vessels at the Suwannee River boat landing at Fargo for required safety equipment, fishing license, and creel limits. Several boats were checked through the day and a violation of fishing without license was documented.

CHARLTON COUNTY

On July 4th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree, RFC Mark Pool, and Ranger Sam Williams conducted a vessel patrol on the St. Mary's River. While on patrol, numerous boaters were encountered. One violation of operating a vessel within 100' of a dock was observed. The subject was issued a citation for the violation.



RFC Mark Pool & Ranger Sam Williams conducting boating safety inspection on St. Mary's River.

Only July 5th, Sgt. Patrick Dupree, Sgt. James McLaughlin, RFC Mark Pool, and Ranger Sam Williams conducted vessel patrol on the St. Mary's River. Numerous boaters were encountered throughout the day. Violations documented were riding on bow/gunwale, operating above idle speed within 100' of an object, operating vessel with insufficient PFD's, and operating vessel without navigation lights.

APPLING COUNTY

On July 4th, Cpl. Kevin Joyce and Cpl. Chase Altman patrolled the lower Altamaha River for boating safety violations. Several vessels were stopped and one warning for allowing an underage person to ride in a moving vessel without a CGA PFD.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

On the night of July 5th, Cpl. Chase Altman, Cpl. Kevin Joyce, RFC Debbie Brannen, RFC Clint Jarriel, and Tech Bobby Sanders were patrolling boat landings along the Altamaha River for safety violations. Around 9:30 pm, one vessel was checked coming to the Hwy 221 Bridge boat ramp towing another vessel. The operator was screened for BUI and later arrested and charged with boating under the influence.

Region VII- Brunswick (Coastal)

MCINTOSH COUNTY

On July 1st, Cpl. Bobby White, Ranger Jay Bright and Ranger Patrick Gibbs conducted a JEA patrol checking TED's (Turtle Excluder Devices) on board vessels trawling for shrimp in state waters near Doboy Sound. One citation was issued for a non-resident commercially fishing without a license and a warning for having a TED at the wrong angle which was fixed on the spot.



LONG COUNTY

On July 3rd Ranger Gibbs set up surveillance at The Long County Landing to observe fishing/boating activity. Violations were documented for operating a vessel during hours of darkness without lights and operating a vessel without CGA PFD's.

On July 5th Corporal White and Ranger Gibbs conducted a boating safety patrol on the Altamaha River in the area of Adamson's Fish Camp. Multiple boats were checked and violations were documented for Operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol and Operating a vessel without CGA PFD's.

CHATHAM COUNTY

On July 4th, DNR Rangers Sgt. Cindy Miller, Sgt. Mark Carson, Corporal Chris Moore, Ranger Jay Bright, and Ranger Colt Shaske patrolled the Savannah area for boating safety infractions, documenting several violations. The DNR officers along with the Savannah Chatham Marine Patrol and US Coast Guard patrolled the fireworks show from the Savannah River. At 9:45 p.m. the officers responded to Isle of Hope in the Skidaway River to investigate a boating incident. A vessel collided with a navigational marker sending one occupant to the hospital.