



2017 BULLETIN

Law Enforcement Section

**2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**

ALABAMA

Matt Weathers, Chief

TRAINING

The Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division became the first agency in the United States to reach 100% certification of all law enforcement personnel in the A.L.E.R.R.T Exterior Response to Active Shooter Events (E.R.A.S.E.). This training focused on stopping active shooters in rural environments and preventing further casualties. With heavy emphasis on emergency first aid and evacuation, this training will prove invaluable in the event of active shooters, natural disasters or serious accidents.

Spring of 2016 witnessed the first of the transition courses to the Vanguard system of defensive tactics. Organized training teams began teaching courses in all districts. This system has seen adoption by the Alabama Peace Officers and Standards Commission as standard curriculum in all academies and promises to be a simple and effective system of defensive tactics for our agency.

For the first time since inception, our Field Training Officer program has become internet based with all forms and reports available online. This step forward gives our agency a level of uniformity in documentation that was not available previously. All evaluations are completed and filed electronically and offer the supervisor the option of tracking the progress of the trainee in real time.

FUNDING AND STAFFING

This past season saw a thirty year low in officer numbers. We are currently engaged in a hiring cycle to fill approximately 18 positions. The process has been delayed due to reclassification of the position to allow a Trainee and Senior class of officers. Funding for our law enforcement program continues to slowly decline with license sales. Numerous legislative changes to allow for specialized sporting licenses tailored to unique user needs have significantly increased the variety of licenses and associated privileges however they have not resulted in overall increases of program income.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

The Law Enforcement Section formalized our canine program through establishment of procedure and training policy. The fledgling program has operated for several years in a low key but very successful manner. The initial pilot program utilized a silent trailing beagle that had been rejected by the state corrections dog team who preferred beagles that sounded while they tracked. This type dog fit our program needs well and to date has been credited with numerous wildlife crime related arrests as well as recoveries of lost Alzheimers patients and burglary suspects. We are in the process of expanding the program to other regions in the state.

After a successful one year trial we are moving all officers over to electronic citations (e-cite). Training is conducted by our personnel who participated in the trial period. This will simplify the process by which officers file and

report cases with the court system. This move should keep officers in the field more by reducing the need to travel to various court jurisdictions to file citations.

Conflicts between organized hunting clubs utilizing deer dogs and adjoining landowners / clubs continue to arise. The main complaint tends to be against deer dog owners who fail to prevent their dogs from encroaching onto adjacent lands. Dog deer hunting is still very popular in some regions of the state and localized support for this traditional method is strong. Alabama developed a special discretionary permit program for dog deer hunting in the early 1980s that restricted deer dog hunting in problem areas. The permit allows for local officers to restrict or cancel permit privileges based upon cooperation of dog clubs in addressing conflicts. The program has been very successful but is time consuming in some regions. A graduated expansion of this program over the past few decades has successfully mitigated conflicts as they arose. Trends toward intensive management of properties for QDMA have heightened landowner resentment against dog encroachment and it appears that further expansion of the permit program or additional regulation of dog deer hunting is imminent.

After several years of utilizing surplus M16s through the Federal 1033 program to equip field officers we are returning these weapons and phasing in the purchase of new rifles. Although the M16s serve our purpose well, the Federal auditing process for 1033 program material

**2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**

has become cumbersome and time consuming.

**STATE ISSUES / LEGISLATION
AFFECTING LAW
ENFORCEMENT**

We continue to focus investigations into the illegal possession, release and transport of feral swine. Despite having opened all feasible opportunities for persons to take feral swine by virtually any method, pigs continue to cause significant agricultural and environmental damage in most parts of the state. We have long identified some hog dog hunters as one source of these problems. Legislation was passed this past year to elevate penalties for violation of any regulation prohibiting the possession or transport of live feral swine to a class B misdemeanor with a minimum fine of \$2500.

Concerns over possible disease risks associated with transport of commercially raised captive deer continue. Despite favorable reviews from volunteer participation, efforts to require breeder participation in a DCNR maintained inventory / transport database have been thwarted by opposition from the deer breeders association and their political allies.

Legislation to allow baiting of deer was again introduced this year although it contained specific language limiting the practice to high fence enclosures. Although the measure failed again it seems likely that it will be reintroduced as bills regarding this topic have been introduced with nearly every legislative session for the past decade .

Alabama as a whole is faced with the challenge of trying to consolidate first responder communications with agencies using different systems. Although we maintain a communications center for officer support through a commercial digital touch to talk system, the reality is that many areas have poor coverage. All officers have traditionally relied heavily upon local jurisdictions for communication support. The advent of varied digital systems that are largely incompatible with other agencies has left many officers without any reliable emergency communications.

We have enacted regulations requiring mandatory check in of all deer and turkey harvests via phone, computer or smart phone app for the 2016 -17 hunting season. Earlier attempts for required harvest documentation in 2013 failed due to legislative resistance. This new requirement represents a significant change for Alabama hunters and the officers charged with enforcing the measure as there has never been any tagging, check in or reporting requirement for deer or turkey harvests.

ARKANSAS

Greg Rae, Colonel

It has been a very busy year in Arkansas as far as job positions. The last bulletin, I had just been promoted to Major in February of 2016 replacing then Major Fitts, who became our new Colonel. Since then Pat has moved upstairs to Assistant Deputy Director, I promoted to Colonel in May of this year and then brought in Glenn

Tucker for Major. Major Tucker came from the Hot Springs area where he was Captain of the largest boating district in the state. Major Tucker assumes the West Region of Arkansas. Major Brad Young promoted from Captain in the area of Stuttgart where he handled the largest waterfowl areas and the issues that accompany them. He came to Little Rock last year in July to replace retiring Major Andy Tackett. Major Young took control of what is now the East Region of Arkansas. Major Parker who had been over our Training Center in Mayflower, moved to the Little Rock Headquarters and assumed the duties of Major over Training, Special Operations and the Liaison to the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management. It's pretty much new faces in this Little Rock administration but each are fully capable and are moving us in to the future. Also, across the state since the last Bulletin was published we have upwards of 15 promotions to Sergeant, Lieutenant, or Captain so there is an incredibly new amount of faces statewide

TRAINING

In our last Bulletin, we had just finished contracts with Fit Force to set up a fitness standard for our officers. This fall will be the first of the Fit Force Standards evaluations. They will be conducted within each district with every district having a Fit Force trained officer. It is a process which needed to be done and with it we have noticed statewide fitness training by the districts. Some districts began holding what they called Fit Force Friday's where they would meet as

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

district and train when time allowed. The process is to be a five year phase in. The first year will be Mandatory Participation / Voluntary Compliance with each year having a performance evaluation within the districts and the practical scored evaluation at the Training Center. Beginning in 2022 the evaluations will be Mandatory Compliance with the standards set forth.

A very high emphasis continues to be placed on continuing training for all Arkansas Wildlife Officers. Officers are selected by their Captains for various advanced training given in and out of state. Listed below is a list of some of the training received by selected officers:

- School of Law Enforcement Supervisors – 4 Officers
- Arkansas Leader Program – 2 Officers
- Basic K-9 In Service Training – 2 Officers
- Racial Profiling – 161 Officers
- Firearms Evaluations – 161 Officers / 28 Instructors
- Taser Instructor Training – 161 Officers / 8 Instructors
- National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs – 1 Officer
- Fit Force Coordinators – 15 Instructors
- Fit Force Training – 176 Officers
- FBI LEEDA Supervisor Leadership – 2 Sergeants

- FBI LEEDA Command Leadership – 2 Lieutenants
- FBI LEEDA Executive Leadership – 2 Captains

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

The Enforcement Division of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission continues to maintain specialized teams to assist Wildlife Officers in the performance of their duties. The teams also provide a unique beneficial service to other law enforcement agencies and the citizens of the State of Arkansas. The enforcement teams are the Dive Team, Disaster Response Team, K-9 Program, Chaplain Program, Special Investigation Unit and Honor Guard.

The main change from how we have done business in the past is the newly created position of Lieutenant over the Special Operations Unit which now coordinates and supervises all of the special teams listed above. Lieutenant Brian Aston promoted to this position from his Sergeant position in Northeast Arkansas. Since then he has moved all of these units into modern day investigative and responsive teams working with other states, other agencies and focusing on the importance of information and intelligence sharing.

The AGFC Dive Team currently consists of 7 members from across the state. They responded to 20 calls this past year. The dive team not only works on conservation law enforcement issues; it is also

available for call outs from other law enforcement agencies. All divers must be Master Diver Certified through PAD prior to making dives on the team. Each diver then completes the Underwater Criminal Investigators Course (UCI). This has been very beneficial across the state in locating and recovering critical evidence for law enforcement agencies, resulting in the arrest and conviction of suspects and all other valuable training the team deems necessary.

The AGFC Disaster Response Team consists of members from all over the state. This team was originally started in response to out of state disasters when Arkansas was called upon for assistance. Since the inception the team has only been activated out of state once but within the boundaries for Arkansas they have very active responding to flooding events, tornado damage, and many other calls where local jurisdictions need help

The AGFC Honor Guard consists of 24 members statewide with duties that are twofold. One being, they always look professional and make the Enforcement Division extremely proud but in almost all cases they are not called into action until something dire has happened. This past year they were called upon for 25 Public Events. The past we once again sent of these members to Washington D.C. to take part in the Law Enforcement Honor Guard activities honoring those who have fallen.

The AGFC K-9 program consists of 6 handlers with dogs located across

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

the state. This program is not only used frequently by Wildlife Officers in course of their duties, they also meet a very important educational function for the agency. They are often requested by other law enforcement agencies to assist with the location of lost citizens or recovery of evidence. One team, Corporal Jeremy Whiley his K9 Happy and Officer Bradley Huggins won the 2016 Southeastern Manhunt Field Trials. This past year our K9 Unit responded to over 400 calls for service to include searches, tracking, rescue and criminal calls.

The AGFC Special Investigation Unit consists of 12 officers. In addition to their normal enforcement duties, these officers focus on large cases that often extend into multiple jurisdictions. They routinely partner with other states and federal agencies. This past year our SIU investigated over 550 TIPS, worked with Colorado, Tennessee, Missouri and Texas on some major cases. Two cases produced 100 violations that stemmed from a Colorado case. These two cases netted just under \$30,000 in fines. There is another case in the charging phase as this time which has the potential to be in excess of 20 violations involving Missouri. Once again if falls back to communication and cooperation.

We moved to a new 3.5 million dollar AWIN Radio system with GPS Mapping and locations systems and brand new state of the art dispatch consoles. This new system gives us interoperation communications with all state and local entities. The dispatch system

now gives our operators the ability to see where officers are on a map enabling them to dispatch the closest officers instead of just calling the county officer. With this ability they can also track where an officer is by locating his mobile or handheld radio should the need arise to send back up. The officers will also have the capability of hitting an emergency button on either of their radios should an emergency arise. Our Dispatch Center averages around 17,000 calls per month during the fall months.

Our Chaplain Program consists of 17 current Chaplains. Prior to assignment of duties as Law Enforcement Chaplains, they must complete CISM, (Critical Incident Stress Management Class) and Basic Police Chaplain and 387 continuing education this year. In the past year our current chaplains rode 843.5 hours with officers, made 1399 calls to support or visit with officers, sent 466 emails, 1354 text messages, made 60 Home/Hospital visits, assisted officers 570 times, and assisted the general public 782 times, attended 14 District Enforcement meetings and traveled over 15,000 miles in their personal vehicles. This program has exceeded what he had in mind for it. It has become a tool that not just the officers are utilizing but the entire agency and now so many other local sheriff offices and police departments are calling to ask for help from them.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

The same issues as last year continue to be the issues facing us. We are holding a cadet school every year now and by the time we get that class graduated we are beginning the advertisements for another. We graduated a class in

October of 2016, we are in week 9 of the 16 week academy with 10 right now. When those 10 graduate and take their assignments, we already have 15 openings to fill as soon as possible. It's not that we are running that many off but with retirements or better offers from other state agencies or other states it's hard to keep a full staff. I can't remember a time since 1995 that we have ever been at full staff. I know this is a topic of the SEAFWA Chiefs as well as a concern from the National Chiefs. It has been given such a high priority that a recently formed committee will address those very concerns. Recruitment and Retention!

MAJOR LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

We continue to pursue new and innovative ways to protect our wildlife, fish and natural resources. Some of the steps we have taken over the past year have been directed at targeting the high profile, more serious violations. During this time we have built new relationships with our federal partners. USFSW Agent Brandon Bland came back to Arkansas and hit the ground running on working with the local officers on a variety of potential issues. Our refuge partners are working hand in hand with us on all the issues and with such large amount of National Forest in the state the USFS Officers are working in tandem with ours on all of their federal lands. Building those partnerships has helped with the issues listed above when we have counties not fully staffed or when we need additional manpower for big events or disasters.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

I would also guess that one of the biggest projects we are working on here in Arkansas though is the Professional Development of our up and coming leaders. We have implemented a plan and have been working on requirements for all of our specific ranks from Corporals interested in promoting to Sergeants up through the ranks. We are looking at the best out there for our officers to insure we are offering the officers what they need to succeed. We also a firm supporters of the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Academy and will continue to send a representative to each class.

We are attending conferences across the county to insure we are up to date on the latest in Wildlife Trends and enforcement methods and tactics, attending AFWA, SEAFWA, NASBLA and the Intel Summit's to make sure we are concentrating our efforts what appears to be rearing its ugly head at the time.

FLORIDA

Curtis Brown, Colonel

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Division of Law Enforcement's 853 sworn personnel operate in six regions throughout the state. FWC officers are responsible for uniformed patrol and investigative law enforcement services on more than 8,400 miles of coastline, 13,200 square miles of offshore waters, and over 34 million acres of land encompassing a variety of habitats including wildlife

management areas, state parks and forests. FWC officers stand as sentinels for the protection of Florida's precious resources and the public who utilize these resources. FWC officers are highly trained, versatile law enforcement officers with full police powers and statewide jurisdiction. Cooperative agreements with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cross-deputize FWC officers to enforce federal marine fisheries and wildlife laws, thus ensuring state and federal consistency in resource protection. FWC officers are an effective model of modern law enforcement multi-tasking – providing law enforcement services for: the protection and enforcement of laws relating to all wild animal and aquatic resources; public safety in Florida's state parks; boating safety enforcement; the protection of the public in rural, semi-wilderness, wilderness and offshore areas where no other law enforcement agencies routinely patrol; regulating commercial wildlife activities and inspecting personal and commercial native/exotic wildlife facilities; natural disaster and civil disturbance response; search and rescue missions; the prevention of illegal shipping of protected and regulated wildlife into Florida's ports; environmental crimes/protection; dignitary protection; mutual aid requests; and domestic security initiatives.

FWC Training Center



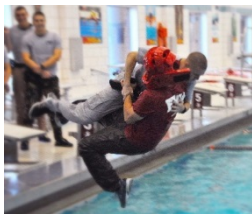
The FWC Training Center finalized multiple high priority training initiatives to include recruiting, use of force and mission critical mentoring. FWC restructured their recruiting team by providing a dedicated, full time recruiter to each of the six law enforcement regions to more effectively hire a diverse workforce which reflects Florida's population. Additionally, each recruiter was certified in diversity and inclusion recruiting and received Professional Selling Skills Training. To better equip Florida's conservation officers, FWC outfitted and trained all officers to carry the TASER X2. In an effort to retain institutional knowledge and mentor officers, FWC created the Advanced Conservation Academy (ACA). The ACA involves selected officers traveling to each region within Florida for a week, to train with subject matter experts and participate in targeted enforcement details. FWC's Advanced and In-service Training Section continues to directly support operations through biannual firearms, non-lethal weapons and scenario based training. A renewed focus on safe training included personnel certifying or recertifying as scenario based training instructors.



The FWC Law Enforcement Academy graduated three academy classes within the past year. Each Academy class includes an eight week breakout training session focusing on the unique aspects of conservation law enforcement and mission critical training. All law

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

enforcement recruits coordinated conservation community outreach events to promote conservation and better their communities. Additionally, recruits competed in a state law enforcement fitness challenge to promote fitness within the law enforcement profession and help build the state law enforcement team.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Boating and Waterways

The Boating and Waterways Section consists of three operational units: Boating Safety, Boat Access, and Waterway Management.

The Boating Safety Unit (BSU) coordinates and administers Florida's Boating Safety Grant. The BSU manages Florida's boating accident report process which includes reviewing and approving all reportable boating accident reports before they are submitted to the USCG. These reports are compiled annually to create Florida's Boating Accident Statistical Report. The unit uses statistical data to create radio, television and print media outreach promoting boating safety and education. This data is also used to improve educational materials. The unit reviews and approves boating safety education courses, issues Boating Safety

Education ID cards to students that have passed the approved courses, and manages Florida's boater safety education temporary certificate program. This program allows boaters to more quickly comply with Florida's boater education requirement.

This last year, the BSU created new outreach messaging related to canoes, kayaks, personal watercraft and sitting in manufacturer designed seating areas while the boat is moving. The unit also displayed Boating Under the Influence (BUI) graphics on billboards and gas pump toppers around the state to deter impaired operation. The BSU participated in the Florida State Fair, the Miami Boat Show, the World Wakeboard Association Championship, the Outdoor Expo Boat Show, the Florida Sportsman Outdoor and Boat Show, the International Boating & Water Safety Summit (IBWSS), as well as the 2016 International Convention of Allied Sport Fishing Trades (ICAST). In addition, the BSU coordinated eight National Safe Boating Week press conferences across the state. Collectively, these events allowed FWC to reach millions of boaters with safety messages.

The FWC's annual Operation Dry Water efforts in 2017 were a tremendous success. Statewide, FWC officers made 55 BUI cases, removing dangerous operators from the water, and logged 6,200 boating safety hours.

The BSU was directly involved in training new and current officers through boating accident investigation and reporting courses. More than 47,000 boating safety identification cards were issued to individuals and over 200,000 temporary certificate

exams were sent to program vendors during 2016.



The Boat Access Unit (BAU) coordinates and administers Florida's Boat Access Program, which maintains 248 boat ramps statewide. The unit created the Florida Public Boat Ramp Finder, which is available to the public to improve their awareness of nearby boat ramps. The BAU coordinates and administers the Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) and Florida's Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIGP). The FBIP provides grants to local governments for building facilities for boat access. Last year, 16 projects totaling \$2,235,069 were awarded through FBIP. The BIGP funds are used for projects with public and private entities for the construction of facilities for transient (15-day stay or less) vessels 26' or longer.



2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN



The Waterway Management Unit (WMU) oversees and coordinates statewide regulatory waterway markers to ensure compliance with the uniform marker system and to improve compliance of state boating and resource protection zones. The unit also manages the promulgation of Boating Safety Restricted Areas on the waters of the state for any purpose deemed necessary to ensure the safety of the public. The WMU is responsible for properly marking the boating restricted areas and manatee protection zones implemented under its authority. Statewide, the WMU is responsible for more than 10,000 regulatory markers and buoys. This can be a challenging task especially in the aftermath of natural disasters, such as hurricanes. Most recently, Hurricane Matthew skirted the Atlantic coast of Florida affecting 6 counties and more than 1,300 waterway markers from Cape Canaveral to Jacksonville. The resulting assessment and repair of affected markers challenged the unit's response plan and required extensive coordination with state and local government entities.



The Derelict Vessel Removal Program is also managed by the WMU. Derelict and abandoned vessels littering the state pose an environmental hazard, as well as a hazard to navigation. These vessels cause the destruction of valuable seagrass resources and the marine life which exist within that habitat. Derelict vessels also threaten human life, safety and property as they drift beneath the surface of the water or block navigable waterways, posing a navigation hazard to the boating public. Last year, the WMU implemented a \$1.4 million Derelict Vessel Removal Grant program offered to all 67 Florida Counties. This program was successful in awarding 27 contracts for the removal of 134 vessels from public waters.

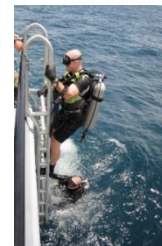


CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

Offshore Patrol

The Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) fleet of thirteen specialized boats is strategically located throughout the

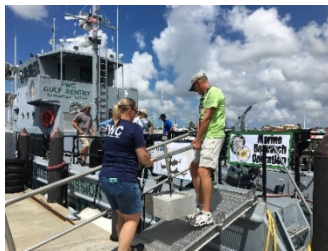
state's expansive coastline. Of the agency's two Heavy Endurance vessels, the Gulf Sentry is located in St. Petersburg and the OPV CT Randall is located in Marco Island. They conduct one- to four-day patrols offshore in the Gulf of Mexico, covering hundreds of miles. The crews perform resource and boating safety inspections on commercial fishing vessels as well as recreational vessels. One of their newest missions is to provide a reliable operations platform for FWC's expanding dive team program. Many of the OPV vessels provide the space, range and stability for dive related search, recovery and training missions that occur in open waters. The OPV crews' primary enforcement efforts consist of patrolling Federal EEZ waters and safely conducting commercial shrimp boat inspections to ensure compliance with Turtle Excluder Device (TED) regulations.



FWC's law enforcement offshore platforms serve multiple missions for the State of Florida. FWC OPV has conducted joint law enforcement patrols coupled with research missions over the past two

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

years. OPV members have utilized interdisciplinary collaborative communication between law enforcement officers and research personnel of the Fish & Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI). Over the past two summers, OPV crews of multiple offshore vessels have conducted law enforcement patrols to the Madison-Swanson Reserve in the Gulf of Mexico. During these missions, marine biologists from FWRI have been onboard to conduct Acoustic Telemetry research within the Madison-Swanson boundaries. Division of Law Enforcement and FWRI teams have successfully retrieved and redeployed the twenty-six data collecting devices that spend approximately a year on the floor of the Gulf of Mexico. When the research mission is complete, law enforcement patrol resumes as the OPV vessels return to port. Through the teamwork of these two FWC divisions and the efficient utilization of agency resources, they were able to accomplish the objectives and mission of the FWC: "Managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people." Both groups gain a better understanding of each other's knowledge and daily objectives through these events.



Statewide Investigations

The Statewide Investigations Section coordinates captive wildlife, environmental crimes and long-term undercover resource investigations focusing on the illegal commercialization of Florida's

natural and historical resources. The section provides training, administrative, and technical support for regional investigations as well as uniform patrol. The section works closely with other state and federal partners through the sharing of information and multi-jurisdictional investigations. The investigations section also provides additional services such as:

- Port Investigations Unit Coordination
- Digital Forensics and Electronic Surveillance Support
- Internet Crimes Unit Coordination
- Fish and Wildlife Forensic Analysis



Statewide Resource Investigations

A long-term investigation was brought to a close in 2017. This multiyear undercover investigation, known as "Operation Alligator Thief," began in 2014 and focused on the alligator farming and wild egg/hatchling harvest industry.

Alligator farming is a significant economic industry in Florida, representing millions, if not billions, of dollars in revenue both nationally and internationally. Eggs are harvested from public and private lands, incubated on alligator farms, hatched and then raised to a certain size. The process provides meat and hides which are shipped to processing and tanning operations. The use of wild alligator farms to produce food and commercial

products is a unique business and strict inventory reporting requirements are mandated by state law to ensure the continued health and abundance of Florida's wild alligator population.



Through an overt inspection process, the FWC determined that there were many fraudulent violations within this insular industry. As a result, the FWC Investigations Section began "Operation Alligator Thief" in 2014. Familiar with the industry and aware of how close-knit and wary of outsiders they are, our investigators knew that in order to be successful in this investigation, they would have to start a farm themselves.

In 2015, FWC undercover officers entered into the alligator farming industry by creating and maintaining an alligator farm in southern Florida named "Sunshine Farms." Shortly after business started, undercover officers met a man who would become a key player in exposing the black market that undermines and exploits this vital resource through laundering eggs. Under the guise of "assisting" the undercover officer with establishing an alligator farm, this individual, along with a number of others, were observed violating numerous state statutes.

Through the course of the 2016 alligator season, investigators documented more than 13,000 harvested eggs by this group of individuals. More than 10,000 of them were illegally harvested or stolen from private and public lands. The illegal eggs were essentially

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

laundered through Sunshine Farms, hatched and then transported to an out of state farming facility. Alligator eggs vary in price, but average over \$50 each with hatchlings averaging \$75 each, depending on demand. The estimated economic impact for just the illegally harvested eggs documented by FWC was conservatively estimated at more than \$600,000.

During the course of the investigation, FWC investigators documented over 10,000 criminal violations. On May 24, 2017, all 11 suspects were arrested for 44 felony charges ranging from illegal possession of American alligator, alligator egg harvesting, interstate transport of alligator eggs and hatchlings, falsifying official records, dealing in stolen property, conspiracy to commit racketeering, Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) and other wildlife violations. These charges include first-, second- and third-degree felonies. As a result of these arrests and additional evidence, this ongoing investigation has expanded and more arrests are expected.

Internet Crime Unit

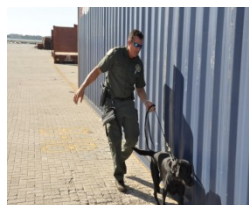
FWC's Internet Crime Unit (ICU) is staffed by twelve Regional Investigators and coordinated by one Statewide Resource Investigations Lieutenant. For the Regional Investigators, ICU is a collateral responsibility conducted in addition to their normal investigative duties. Investigators are trained to utilize intelligence generated from internet-based social media and advertising sites such as Facebook, Craigslist and eBay. Over the past year, ICU Investigators received 176 tips generated from online activity. Of the 176 tips generated, 40 investigations were initiated. Some notable cases for the year involved the illegal sale of blue crabs, snook and freshwater game

fish; and the unlawful harvest and possession of alligators as well as the unlawful possession and attempted sale of captive wildlife.



Port Investigations

FWC has developed a dedicated Port Investigations Unit comprised of one Statewide Coordinator, six full time Investigators and five full time K-9 Officers. Their mission is to detect the unlawful commercial trade and trafficking of fish and wildlife species. This unit was developed to enhance the FWC's capabilities and effectiveness for preventing the illegal importation, exportation and potential release of invasive species within the State of Florida.



The FWC Port Investigators, K-9 Officers and their K-9s are on the front lines of enforcement of these laws. The Port Investigations Unit's primary responsibilities include monitoring and interrupting the illegal import and export of invasive species, marine life, illegal saltwater products and the commercialization of Florida's fish and wildlife. The

unit conducts inspections of imports, exports and domestic shipping at U.S. international airports, seaports as well as international and domestic mail facilities. The Port Investigations Unit also monitors the pet trade for legal, ethical and health standards associated with the shipment of live animals. The Unit assists the US Fish and Wildlife Service with inspecting packages for Federal Lacey Act compliance, CITES and Migratory Bird Treaty Act violations. Other federal partners include US Customs and Border Patrol, NOAA Office of Law Enforcement and United States Postal Inspectors.



During the 2016/2017 fiscal year the Port Investigations Unit has been very busy:

- Conducting 6,781 combined hours of Port Investigations
- Coordinating ten special details around the state focused on the import and export of fish and wildlife
- Performing 477 airport cargo inspections
- K-9 Activity
 - 212 Deployments

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

- 259 Parcel Sniffs
- Using K-9 resources to find:
 - 1,689 Reptiles
 - 346 Tropical Fish
 - 81 Lobster
 - 24 Conch
 - 17 Reef Fish

Intelligence

Over the past few years, the FWC Intelligence Section has expanded in accordance with established Intelligence Standard Operating Procedures. Specifically, Regional Intelligence Officers (RIOs) have been established within operations and are utilized as a bridge to federal, state and local partners. FWC has also embedded one lieutenant in a key point of the Intelligence process in the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) in Tampa. There are two Intelligence Analysts and one Analyst Supervisor at General Headquarters in Tallahassee that provide analytical support to the RIOs and field personnel. The Analysts also serve as Interagency Fusion Liaisons (IFLs) with the Florida Fusion Center in Tallahassee. This has ensured the connectivity to key components of the intelligence community and timely sharing of information.

The FWC Intelligence Officers and Analysts team provides analysis and necessary data to identify organized crime groups or individuals, and effectively protect Florida's resources. Many of the RIOs have secret clearances in order to access databases and information from the FBI JTTF, the United States Coast Guard Center for Interagency Maritime

Intelligence (CIMI), and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) databases. With this access, analysts are better able to disseminate valuable information and intelligence obtained to FWC sworn personnel, greatly enhancing conservation law enforcement capabilities.

The FWC Intelligence Section assists Federal, State and Local partners with requests for information, statistical data and investigative assistance. These partnerships provide a shared responsibility between all levels of government to ensure that FWC remains broadly connected at all times in order to be prepared/proactive, rather than reactive, once a threat arises. To promote the exchange of maritime criminal intelligence among other law enforcement agencies in Florida, FWC coordinates the Florida Marine Intelligence Unit (FMIU). FMIU is comprised of multiple Federal and State partners that focus on the needs of the marine law enforcement community by providing resource, boating safety and domestic security enforcement training.

During fiscal year 2015-2016, FWC analysts responded to 1,016 requests for information and prepared 78 FWC bulletins. They also assisted with 501 tips received from stakeholders and other government partners. During this fiscal year in Florida, 1,596 vessels and motors were reported as stolen. The Intelligence Section prepared weekly hot sheets and quarterly reports that were disseminated to law enforcement agencies around

the state to facilitate awareness of these thefts and assist in recovery.

Captive Wildlife Update

The FWC promotes responsible ownership of captive wildlife, and it is the goal of the FWC to develop the best regulations possible that provide for public safety, animal welfare, and the legitimate use of wildlife for educational, exhibition, or personal purposes. Florida's captive wildlife regulations are among the most stringent in the nation. Individuals who possess wildlife in Florida must be licensed and meet all safe housing and humane treatment standards.



FWC investigators routinely conduct inspections of captive wildlife facilities to ensure humane treatment and sanitary conditions are in place for the animals. FWC investigators also inspect to ensure that cage and security requirements are followed to ensure public safety. Florida Statutes and our captive wildlife regulations provide the tools our investigators need to address issues when violations occur. During Fiscal Year 2015-16, FWC's Captive Wildlife Program conducted 5,160 captive wildlife inspections, responded to 466 complaints and seized 417 animals. There were 6,565 captive wildlife applications possessed during 2016.

Captive Wildlife Law Enforcement

A captive wildlife investigator received information about a subject who was keeping venomous reptiles without a permit. The investigator was able to gather enough intelligence to qualify for a search warrant of the residence

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

in question. Upon executing the search warrant, over thirty venomous reptiles were located being illegally kept. The subject was arrested and charged with more than 100 misdemeanor violations. Additional intelligence was also gathered from the search warrant.



UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Aviation

The FWC Aviation Unit participated in a multi-agency training exercise for National Technical Nuclear Forensics, Ground Collections Task Force, PROMINENT HUNT 16-2 in Tampa. This exercise involved many Federal, DOD, State of Florida, county and local personnel and equipment.

Aviation Unit personnel provided classroom and aircraft familiarization training with Hillsborough County Sheriff's (HCSO) SWAT team members in preparation for the 2017 National College Football Championship Game in Tampa. During the Championship Game FWC worked with HCSO Aviation and SWAT team members in the event of an emergency response was necessary.



Aviation Unit personnel participated in several multi-agency training initiatives which included: the Airborne Law Enforcement Association, Southeast Regional aviation safety training conference in St. Augustine, along with other airborne law enforcement partners from around the world. This training provides opportunities to learn about the latest in technology and aviation safety; training for law enforcement patrols; aerial cannabis detection with Florida Domestic Marijuana Eradication Program; Air Deployable Search and Rescue (ADSAR) teams

attached to Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams. Pilots were involved in providing aviation boating safety support for holiday boating weekend activities and specialized events such as Billy Bowlegs in Ft. Walton, Blue Angels Airshow in Pensacola and the Gasparilla event in Tampa.



Aviation Unit personnel worked with the FWC Special Operation Group (SOG) to provide classroom and aircraft familiarization training for new team members and to exercise team movement during a Statewide SOG training at KARS Park Port Canaveral.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

Aviation unit personnel and assets provided support for the State Emergency Operation Center responses to Hurricanes Hermine and Matthew. The FWC Aviation unit provided Air Coordination as Air Operation Branch Director working with other federal, state, county and local partners.

In preparation for the upcoming 2017 hurricane season, aviation unit participated in a planning meetings with Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM), State of Florida Emergency Operation Center (SEOC). Aviation personnel provided aviation support for a Monroe County Emergency Management development of Florida Keys Disaster Plan.

INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

K-9s



Officer Richard Dearborn with K-9 Marvel (left) and Officer Robert Hoover with K-9 Stryker (right) are the newest addition to the FWC K-9 program. They are currently attending a seven-week K-9 academy at the USDA's National Detector Dog Training Center in Newnan, Georgia. They are training in the detection of wildlife in palletized boxes and on moving conveyer belts. Upon completing their training, Officer Dearborn and Marvel will return to the Tampa area and Officer Hoover and Stryker will return to the Jacksonville area where they will work to detect illegal shipments of wildlife. Their mission will be to frequent sea ports, local airports and shipping/receiving companies to discover illegal

activity which may include Lacey Act violations, improper packaging, unsanitary conditions and unlawful transfer of ownership.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

Officer of the Year: Jason
Hutchinson, Northwest Region



Originally from Santa Rosa County, where he now patrols, Hutchinson uses his local knowledge to protect the resources and people in his community. He's rescued a first-time hunter lost in the treacherous Escambia River Swamp at night, caught people illegally night hunting, trespassing, discovered a hidden alligator snapping turtle and even apprehended one of his area's most wanted meth distributors. He's also developed an officer mentoring program, a youth violator community service program and performed countless outreach hours to area youth and civic organizations. Hutchinson and his wife Heather, along with their son Jake and daughter Haylee live in northern Santa Rosa County. Community members know that if they call his phone number with information or a violation to report, they have the ear of a dedicated, hardworking and engaged FWC officer who cares about them and their community.

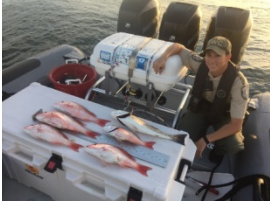
Investigator of the Year: J.W.
Armstrong, Northwest Region



Investigator J.W. Armstrong is a former Marine and began his career in Florida in 1999 with the GFC. He demonstrates professionalism and hard work with everything that comes his way. He takes initiative to reach out to the State Attorney's Office, Florida Department of Law Enforcement Crime Lab, and Crime Scene Investigators with other Law Enforcement Agencies to assist with processing crime scenes and evidence. In 2016, Investigator Armstrong served as the lead investigator in four serious boating accidents, two fatal and two involving serious bodily injury. One of these accidents was a double fatality involving a stolen vessel that struck the Destin East Jetty in the early morning hours following St. Patrick's Day. After six months of dedication to the case, the operator was arrested on 14 charges, including eight felonies. Armstrong was awarded the FWC's Lifesaving Award, initiated and organized a title fraud and stolen vessel operation, works well with covert investigators and speaks to FSU students enrolled in the Underwater Crime Scene Investigation program. Inv. Armstrong always maintains a positive attitude, is highly motivated and strives to continue learning and expand his knowledge. He is a true team player and is always willing to go out of his way to ensure the job gets done.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

Boating Officer of the Year: Megan Malicoat, Northeast Region



Officer Malicoat exemplifies the word "teamwork." She assists the crew of OPV Osprey with offshore patrols, regional K9 officers with training and deployment operations, USFWS and the National Park Service in enhanced boating safety and hunting enforcement details, FWRI and HUBBS with over two dozen mammal rescues, strandings and mortality events, neighboring squads with alligator and waterfowl hunting details, local municipalities in documenting and posting At-Risk and Derelict Vessels and volunteered to travel to Franklin County in order assist with the oyster harvest enforcement detail. She also had enough time to be a leader in water patrol and make or assist with numerous BUI cases as a BTO. Her "can do" attitude means that she is frequently asked to assist other officers on their calls and she never hesitates.

Reserve Officer of the Year: David Stermen, South Region A



David Stermen was originally a teacher before making a career change to law enforcement. Born in Bridgeton, New Jersey, he grew up in Pinellas County and has been a life-long resident of South Florida. RO Stermen began his career with the GFC in 1972 and retired as a major. "Major" Stermen has served as a reserve officer throughout the South Region for the past several years, and has been an invaluable addition to the FWC family in his role. Stermen is a counselor for Academy Class #31, has attended numerous meetings and responded to calls from one end of the spectrum to the other. Some are simple calls for service while others are more complex, such as when he responded to a call that required man tracking through swamp to assist FHP in apprehending a suspect in possession of large amounts of heroin who assaulted a trooper before crashing his car and fleeing on foot. He has been first on scene to car fires and worked targeted patrols in our management areas. He has worked bass tournaments and major holiday weekends. He has a will to protect the public as well as Florida's resources and has documented well over 900 hours of work so far this year. His passion for FWC and what we stand for is an inspiration to us all.

Team of the Year: OPV Squad, Osprey and Sea Hawk, Northeast Region



Lieutenant Bryan Lee, Lieutenant James Yetter, Officer Clay McDonough, Officer Jeff Luce, Officer Nick Bohne, NOAA OLE Special Agent Rich Chesler

Since its creation in the summer of 2014, the Northeast Region Offshore Patrol Vessel Squad has become a shining example of how a group of officers working together towards a common goal are far more productive than the sum of their individual efforts. When the Sea Hawk and Osprey crews were consolidated onto one team, both vessels increased their productivity and efficiency exponentially. Over the past year the Northeast OPV team filed 27 federal cases, consisting of 55 separate charges. When not working offshore on their assigned OPV's the Northeast OPV crew members assist local officers in the field, travel to support other regions with OPV patrols, conduct outreach events and have participated in a number SARs. It is rare that a specific program has chemistry that results in a team with such motivation, drive and initiative to continually conduct offshore boardings day in and day out with such positive attitudes.

Duty Officer of the Year: Keyshar Morris, South Region B



An FWC employee since 2014, Morris is very family oriented and joined the Miami dispatch team after her sister, Keyana. She is very involved in her community and an

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

active member of Antioch Mission Baptist Church. Keyshar is so welcoming to all the new duty officers that have recently been hired on at the Miami office, and is quick to lend a hand and help when traffic gets heavy or an incident requires more hands on deck. She is always professional, compassionate and most of all, competent. She has handled numerous high-stress, high-liability calls over the past year, and has performed admirably in each of them. Officers always feel reassured when Keyshar is working because they know officers will be safe with her behind the console.

Employee of the Year: Lisa Solms, Northeast Region



Lisa has been a member of the FWC family for many years, and is the new Staff Assistant at the Titusville Field Office in the Northeast Region. She has three children, Trey, Miranda and Marissa, and a granddaughter, Reagan. Many around the office believe that Lisa's experience as a kindergarten teacher is what gives her the fortitude and dedication to succeed in her position now. She stepped into her role as with a positive attitude and immediately put her skills to work to benefit the Northeast Region, and was the only administrative staff member in the Titusville Field Office for four

months. She took on many extra tasks with confidence, knowing her hard work would benefit the team as a whole. Lisa's work has helped her entire region function more smoothly, more efficiently and to the betterment of the natural resources and people of Florida

Prosecutor of the Year: Gary Ellis, Southwest Region

Gary Ellis is an Assistant State Attorney from the 10th Judicial Circuit in Highlands County. Ellis is a distinguished professional who is always eager to assist and provide case preparation guidance with complex and protracted investigations. During a recent case involving non-native hoof stock at an unlicensed commercial game farm in Highlands County, he assisted local officers with drafting two search warrants for the unlawful commercial game farm. During the execution of the search warrants, Ellis traveled to the site of the crime scene and provided invaluable expert guidance throughout the entire process. He acted as the liaison with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) veterinary staff and FWC legal counsel concerning the quarantine of the hoof stock and worked tirelessly through the complexity of this case to coordinate the administrative functions of both agencies for consistency. This case, which spanned almost a calendar year to the day, concluded with the defendant being adjudicated guilty on all charges. Without Assistant State Attorney Ellis' tremendous legal support, expert coordination, and committed dedication, a case of

this magnitude would not have ended so successfully. This case will serve as an industry-wide example for prosecuting similar wildlife cases.

Biologist of the Year: Angeline Scotten, Southwest Region



Although Angeline is spread thin across three regions, it seems that most of her time is spent assisting the FWC DLE in the Southwest Region, and they couldn't be more thankful for her. Angeline has travelled extensively throughout the SWR talking to and educating stakeholders and homeowners about how to coexist with coyotes, black bears, gopher tortoise and wildlife in general. She also travelled and met with DLE officers to make site visits after normal business hours. Last fiscal year, Angeline conducted 21 site visits related to black bears, coyotes, owls, eagles and otters just to name a few. When DLE received numerous complaints of bears roaming the neighborhoods in Davenport, Angeline made multiple site visits and determined that the cause for the bear activity was trash being left outside of rental houses and curbside by seasonal guests creating a perfect opportunity for the bears to interact with the public. This information was what DLE needed to step up enforcement in

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

the area. Her positive attitude and her commitment to never give up really sets her apart, and the DLE is lucky to have such support from her.

GEORGIA

Eddie Henderson, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division, currently has 190 POST-certified Game Wardens with statewide authority and full arrest powers. The primary duties of these Game Wardens are enforcement of all laws and regulations pertaining to hunting, fishing, commercial fishing, environmental violations, and recreational boating, as well as to provide public safety on all our DNR-controlled properties.

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 (investigations, and administrative support), two pilot Captains, three Lieutenants (database management, training and special permits/captive wildlife and wild animals), and 171 field Game Wardens (Sergeants, Corporals, Ranger First Class, and Rangers).

TRAINING

On June 23, 2017, graduation for the 31st Game Warden Academy class was held at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. During the 15-week academy, cadets received a wide variety of Conservation Law Enforcement specific training. The 16 new Game Wardens were assigned to vacancies throughout the state. The

academy included 80 hours of NASBLA BOAT course training for BCM (Boat Crew Member) and BOSAR (Boat Operator Search and Rescue). Pete Louzao from NASBLA and our in-house NASBLA certified instructors delivered these comprehensive courses at Lake Walter F. George. Water survival training was also taught during the 31st academy. The 10-hour course was provided weekly in 1-hour modules. Cadets swam approximately three miles during the training, and through most of the swimming exercises, wore pants, gun belt, shoes, and a ballistic vest to provide the most realistic situations possible.

During 2017 In-Service training, all Game Wardens received the NASBLA Seated Battery transition training course as part of their annual Standardized Field Sobriety training. The officers will now use the seated battery when evaluating suspected BUI offenders.

In May, the entire agency began training in Critical Incident Management by sending front line responders to a 24-hour Critical Incident Management Class. The class, coordinated by the Law Enforcement Division with instruction delivered by instructors from each division, was provided to a cross-section of employees from across the agency to continue fostering teamwork and interdivisional collaboration. The class uses curriculum developed by the IACP and incorporates tabletop exercises with scenarios that are typical for a Natural Resource Agency response.

Officer Involved Shooting Training was conducted for all DNR POST-certified officers. This training was conducted in all seven regions by Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) ASAC John Durden. The training was designed to inform officers of what to do if involved in, or responding to, an officer involved shooting. It also provided information of what to expect from the GBI when they investigate these incidents.



EXECUTIVE TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

GILEE

Captain Johnny Johnson participated in the 24th Georgia International Law Enforcement Exchange (GILEE) program to Israel. This two-week training session, 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, 19 Law Enforcement Executives from Georgia were briefed at multiple venues in the state of Israel.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

K-9

The Division acquired four new K-9s that were trained in house by the Unit's chief handler. The K-9 School is 10 weeks in duration and is held at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth. The

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

agency uses the German Sheppard breed imported from the Czech Republic. K-9/Handler Teams are trained in wildlife detection, man tracking, article searches, officer protection, apprehension, agility and obedience. Georgia currently has eight K-9/Handler teams across the state.

Equipment

The Division continued to purchase additional Glock Model 43s for issuance to new Game Wardens who will graduate Game Warden Academy in 2018. These back-up weapons were issued to all Game Wardens in 2016. The Model 43, along with all other issued firearms, is now introduced to new cadets during the Game Warden Academy as part of firearms training.

With funds provided by the Georgia Natural Resources Foundation, 60 pieces of body armor were replaced this past year. The Division is currently using Alpha Elite by Point Blank body armor.

The Division completed a patrol rifle upgrade with \$47,000 in funds received during the annual Weekend for Wildlife event. In 2007, Game Wardens were issued military surplus M-16s. In 2015, the process began to upgrade the rifles by replacing the upper assemblies with 14.5" Daniel Defense uppers. This year, the Daniel Defense lower assemblies were purchased, completing the upgrade and totally replacing the surplus rifle. Transition training to the upgraded rifles is scheduled for the fall.

The Division received a generous mid budget year funding amendment that resulted in the

purchase of 53 patrol vehicles. This will greatly improve the status of the division's fleet and will replace vehicles that have been in service since as far back as 2008. Ford has the state contract and Field Game Wardens are issued an F-150 extended cab and supervisors the F-150 Crew Cab. In addition, the Division utilized Recreational Boating Safety Grant Funds to replace six patrol boats in the fleet. The majority of the inland impoundments utilize a 20'-24' Center Console platform equipped with side scan sonar equipment. The division's coastal region utilized JEA funding to replace a 16-year-old, 35-foot Contender that was at the end of its service life, with a 38' Impact from Boston Whaler, configured with an enclosed cabin. This new offshore boat is equipped with triple Mercury 350 Verado Outboard motors, A/C, and a Garmin Chart plotter with radar and side scan sonar capabilities. It will be used for offshore and near shore patrols. The vessel will also allow Game Wardens to patrol Marine Protected Areas (MPA's) located 80-115 miles off the coast.

Over the past year, Region III (east central) has used 11 Spartan Cameras to apprehend fish and wildlife law violators in excess of 120 violations

The violations include fishing without permission, hunting without permission, illegal trapping, hunting big game over bait, and fishing with illegal baskets. A photo of a violator illegally hunting alligator out of season resulted in an arrest involving methamphetamine, marijuana, 15 stolen firearms, a

dozen vehicles and the seizure of \$26,000 in cash.



The Law Enforcement Division recently acquired, at no cost to the Department, a Mobile Command Vehicle from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency. The Command Vehicle will be used for a wide variety of incidents including natural disasters, wildfires, prolonged search and rescue missions, and planned events. It will provide interoperability with other agencies and a place to coordinate efforts and set up Incident Command. The vehicle is equipped with a wide variety of radio systems including VHF, 800 MHz, and Southern Linc that can be tied together via the ACU1000 Audio Gateway. It also has a satellite phone, allowing multiple agencies to

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

communicate more easily at an incident scene. The vehicle will be a valuable asset, not only to the Law Enforcement Division, but also to the entire Department.

The Law Enforcement Division is completing a radio system transition from analog to digital VHF. In 2011 when it was mandated that all VHF systems be narrow-banded, there was a significant loss in coverage from the 46 statewide repeater sites and the mobile units. To offset that, the transition to digital began and the coverage has significantly increased. Bond funds were used to purchase 32 new digital-capable repeaters. The Division will have a 100% digital statewide repeater system, with all infrastructure less than seven years old.

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 Game Wardens. Statewide, 14 Game Wardens perform a collateral duty called "Regional Investigator". Regional Investigators assist the IU with various duties.

Undercover Investigations

The Region Investigators are full-time Game Wardens who have received training in undercover operations and equipment. They perform this collateral duty in addition to their everyday Game Warden duties. The primary function of the Investigative Unit is

to provide uniform Game Wardens with investigative support. The Investigative Unit is responsible for plain-clothes and long-term investigations.

Last year, the Investigative Unit conducted and managed over 329 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 14 boating and seven hunting incidents. These incidents resulted in 19 fatalities.

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 86 abandoned vessel requests from the public and fielded numerous phone calls related to the abandoned vessel process.

Aviation

The LED Aviation Support Unit supports all state agencies and all DNR Divisions, utilizing three Bell 407 GX helicopters and a fixed wing Quest Kodiak 100 aircraft.

The Aviation Unit moved to a new hangar location on Fulton County Charlie Brown Airport. They moved three aircraft, support equipment, maintenance shop, and the offices of four personnel.

The Unit flew 386 hours in support of the Division's Game Wardens as they conducted their core mission of protecting the states waterways and woodland areas. They started out the year with a busy July. The first support was for Operation Dry Water over the July 4th weekend, conducting aerial patrols over Lake Hartwell and Clarks Hill Lake. Support was also provided to the Georgia Forestry Commission in July flying 24 hours and dropping 170 buckets of water on wild fires. During the course of the year the Aviation Unit conducted five long line rescues and flew 78 hours on search and rescue (SAR) missions.

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. The aerial observers have also proven their value during searches for missing persons and drowning victims.

The Unit purchased a TASE 5000 camera system, which was installed on the Kodiak Quest fixed-wing aircraft. This camera system has greatly enhanced the Aviation Unit's capability to support Game Wardens in conducting their primary mission of protecting the states waterways and woodland areas.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

A total of 33.7 support hours were flown for the Georgia Forestry Commission on the Tatum Gulf Wild Fire in November of 2016. The Unit dropped 347 buckets of water totaling 72,870 gallons.

The Aviation Unit supported the Law Enforcement Division Game Wardens throughout the hunting season from early fall through early spring. Game Wardens 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 across the state. The Wildlife Resource Division (WRD) was provided aviation support during surveys of bald eagles, kestrel, sandhill cranes and waterfowl. Captain Ed 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 prescribed burns on the State WMA's during the late winter months of January through March 2017.

Special Permits

The Law Enforcement Division of our 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 also coordinates inspections on all permitted wild animal facilities throughout the state.

UNIQUE LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Institutionalizing Game Warden Title

In Georgia Law, a DNR law enforcement officer has the title of Conservation Ranger. After careful consideration, the Command Staff decided to pursue obtaining the working title of Game Warden, to clear the public's confusion with park rangers, army rangers and forest rangers, and since it more clearly defines the core mission of the officers. The DNR Board changed a Board Regulation, and although the state laws have not, and will not be changed, the regulation allows the Game Warden title to be used. Moving forward, vehicles will be marked to reflect the change, as well as other new equipment, clothing, and branding items.

Ranger Hotline

The Ranger Hotline program, which provides a way for citizens to report anonymously potentially illegal wildlife and other conservation law violations, continues to be successful. If the information leads to an arrest, the tipster receives a cash reward funded by the Georgia Natural Resource Foundation, whose mission is to protect wildlife by increasing public support for wildlife law enforcement. In 2016, 401 tips were received by email for various violations.

LED License Plate

The 2016 Georgia Legislature approved a new automobile license plate, to be designed by the Division, and sold to citizens for an additional fee. Part of the revenue generated from the sale of the plates will go to DNR Law Enforcement for operational costs. One of the Game Wardens in the Coastal Region designed the plate

and pre-sales are currently underway.

New Headquarters Facility and Fallen Game Warden Monument

In December, Law Enforcement Headquarters moved into a newly renovated building on the Social Circle campus. The facility also includes a 1,600-square foot warehouse and a helipad. Adjacent to the entrance, a beautiful eight-foot high black granite monument, in the shape of Georgia, was erected. The Georgia DNR Fallen Game Warden Memorial, complete with Georgia and American flags on either side, honors the eight Game Wardens who have lost their lives in the line of duty.



**2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**

Recruitment Video

As part of an aggressive recruiting effort, LED Public Affairs produced a short video highlighting the duties of Georgia Game Wardens and encouraging qualified individuals to submit an application. The video features video clips and still photos shot during the last year, informational text, and high-energy, royalty-free background music. The video can be viewed at this URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j eYiTeVHOxY>

SPLASH

The Division, along with Georgia's First Lady Sandra Deal and a number of federal, state, and private partners, began an aggressive anti-drowning campaign called SPLASH. The acronym SPLASH encourages citizens to follow these tips when enjoying beaches, pools, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water:

- **Supervision** – Designate an adult to watch children at all times. Do not assume someone else is watching.
- **Prevention** – Wear personal flotation devices (PFD or life jacket), install fencing around pools, and use drain covers in hot tubs and pools.
- **Look before you leap** – Never jump into water without knowing how deep it is and what is below the surface.
- **Arm's Length** – Adults should be arm's length to children in water, and life jackets and throwable flotation devices should be nearby at all times.

- **Swim Lessons** – Knowing how to swim greatly reduces the chance of drowning.
- **Have a Water Safety Plan** – Know what to do during an emergency.

The campaign includes bilingual brochures, public service announcements and videos, social media messaging, and safety messages painted on boat ramps using stencils. The Department is also in the process of adding life jacket loaner boards at public boat ramps and state parks, with these locations now included on the Georgia Outdoors app.

**OTHER SPECIAL LAW
ENFORCEMENT ISSUES**

HB 208 - License Fee Increase to
Add New Game Wardens

This bill, which passed during the 2017 legislative session, increases hunting, fishing, and recreational license fees, bringing them in line with neighboring states' fees. The Law Enforcement Division will utilize a percentage of the new revenue for additional personnel and other enforcement and operational costs.

The Division experienced an unprecedented year in the area of receiving pay increases. At the beginning of FY-17, all certified personnel within the division received a 6% pay raise. Then, at the mid-year of the state budget cycle, Governor Nathan Deal called for major law enforcement reform, which included a 20% pay increase for any state law enforcement officers who were on the front lines and completed new, mandatory annual in service training in the

areas of de-escalation and community policing. This raise affected the Division by providing a 20% raise for the rank of Captain and below.

Matthew/West Mims/Tatum
Gulf/Albany Tornado X 2/ Ice Storm

Game Wardens responded to several natural disasters in the state this past year from wildfires in the North West Georgia Mountains and the Okefenokee Swamp, Hurricane Matthew on the Georgia Coast, multiple tornadoes in Southwest Georgia and two ice storms in the North Georgia area. Game Wardens provided first responder operations, debris clearing with chain saws, damage assessment, search and rescue and security roles during these events.

JEA Patrols

Coastal Game Wardens just completed the 15th Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) with NOAA. They patrolled saltwater areas inshore and offshore for 989 hours, using twin-engine boats for 245 hours, single-engine boats for 217 hours, and patrolling dockside for 196 hours. They spent 50 hours patrolling Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, 76 hours on Atlantic Right Whales violations, 78 hours for outreach (I&Es), 50 hours by aircraft, and 77 administrative hours. They detected a number of Federal Fisheries violations including over the limit of fish, possession of illegal species, illegal nets, and Turtle Excluder Device (TED) violations. These documented violations were turned over to NOAA for prosecution or handled in local courts.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

DNR Re-Organization Period Continues

The Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division completed the fourth year of a five-year transition that will consolidate all Law Enforcement functions under the umbrella of the Law Enforcement Division, to include State Parks enforcement. In 2013, the Board of Natural Resources approved the internal reorganization of its operational Divisions that elevated the Law Enforcement Section to Division Status, removing it as a sub-program in the Wildlife Resources Division. 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.

LOUISIANA

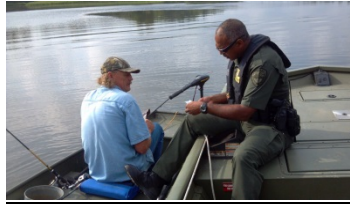
Joey Broussard, Colonel

2017 LDWF-LED SEAFWA Report

The LDWF Law Enforcement Division's (LDWF-LED) operating budget for fiscal year 2016-2017 was approximately \$35.4 million. Enforcement Division funding is derived from the Conservation Fund (LDWF self-generated revenue), Federal Boating Safety Funds, United States Coast Guard Grant funding, Homeland Security Grant funding, and the LDWF Enforcement Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) with NOAA for Federal Fisheries and various local grants.

LDWF-LED conducted 316,093 patrol hours in FY 2016-2017: 239,948 on land and 76,145 on water. Agents made

792,125 contacts with the public, the majority of whom were in compliance with state and federal wildlife and fisheries regulations. LDWF-LED agents issued 10,624 criminal citations and 5,760 warnings during this period.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & PERSONNEL

LDWF-LED is organized in a paramilitary structure to assure the efficient use of resources, consistent statewide enforcement policy, and an effective, coordinated response to urgent needs. LDWF-LED is commanded by one colonel, the Chief of Enforcement, who reports directly to LDWF's Secretary and oversees administration of the division. Reporting to the colonel are two Lieutenant Colonels. One Lieutenant Colonel who serves as assistant chief of administration which includes state boating law administrator, statewide strikeforce, training, budget, fleet, public information and aviation sections supervisor. The other Lieutenant Colonel serves as the assistant chief of patrol and supervises all state regional field operations. There are four majors: one over the even-numbered enforcement regions of the state and serves as policy and procedure administrator; one over the odd-numbered regions and safety coordinator; one over the emergency services, training, support and budget sections; and one over the statewide strike force, statewide program manager for JEA, LDWF representative for the shrimp, oyster and crab task forces.

The LDWF Enforcement Division headquarters staff works out of Baton Rouge headed by Col. Joey Broussard who was promoted to the head position in July of 2014. Col. Broussard, a native of Pointe Coupee Parish, graduated from the LDWF cadet academy in 1991, receiving his POST certification from LSU, and has been an agent for over 25 years.

The Enforcement Division is divided into eight enforcement regions (*Figure 2*) and the statewide strikeforce. Each numbered enforcement region is composed of two or three multi-parish districts. Each region is managed by a captain who supervises two or three district supervisors of the lieutenant rank. Regions have between 16-25 agents, depending on regional size, resident population and participant population. Current funding provides a field enforcement staff of two to four agents per parish, according to the nature of wildlife-based activities in the area, the number of people participating, the frequency of their participation and other factors.

Total division head count is 257 positions including 234 enforcement agents, 15 administrative staff, six communications officers and two pilots. The actual number of filled positions (as of July of 2017) is 251.

Regional Enforcement Programs

Most of the law enforcement activity performed by LDWF-LED is conducted by regional agents. Regional agents work a schedule assigned by their supervisors to address seasonal needs, reported violations, weather conditions and predominant activities. Agents are on-call 24 hours per day and must be willing to change their work hours and locations as circumstances require. Schedules are often changed due to weather

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

and reported violations, and agents are often called out to respond to violations in progress, boating and hunting accidents, and calls for search and rescue.

Agents use a variety of vehicles during land patrols, primarily four-wheel drive trucks and all-terrain vehicles. The primary patrol vessels used during water patrols are outboard bay boats and 19-to-40-foot marine patrol vessels. LDWF-LED also deploys go-devils, airboats, surface drive, mudboats, bass boats and flatboats.



Specialized Units

LDWF-LED contains three specialized units with selected missions or purposes: the Statewide Strike Force; the Maritime Special Response Team; and the Aviation Section. Agents in specialized units have developed specific skills, expertise and knowledge appropriate for their particular operational fields. Agents in specialized units operate in relatively broad geographic areas and may work alongside regional enforcement agents when appropriate.

Statewide Strike Force

The Statewide Strike Force is assigned to work problem areas statewide. They devote attention to commercial fisheries operations, license fraud and white collar crimes. Violations include smuggling, interstate commerce violations and false reporting, and under-reporting of commercial fish

harvests. These agents provide regional patrol with additional manpower on wildlife management area (WMAs) and places of high seasonal utilization, such as Grand Isle and other locations throughout the state. Strike Force agents also assist regional agents with oyster harvest enforcement, which primarily addresses harvesting oysters in closed waters, stealing from oyster leases and state grounds, and oyster size regulations.

Maritime Special Response Team

The Maritime Special Response Team cooperative endeavor by LDWF-LED and the Louisiana State Police SWAT team addresses maritime security threats within the state of Louisiana. The team provides a maritime tactical response capability at the state level in order to effectively provide public safety, officer safety, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-yield Explosives (CBRNE) prevention, and response and tactical support for LDWF's federal, state and local partners.



Aviation Section

The Aviation Section contains two pilots and four total planes which include one Kodiak, one Cessna 210, and two Cessna 206 amphibians. The Aviation Section's aircraft provide a valuable platform for detecting illegal hunting and fishing activities and frequently play a vital life-saving role in search and rescue operations. The Aviation Section also contributes its services

to other divisions for biological missions, such as waterfowl counts and the monitoring of commercial fisheries.

Agent Shot During Patrol

LDWF-LED Senior Agent Tyler Wheeler was shot multiple times on Jan. 7, 2017 while questioning a motorist on Jan. 7 on Hwy. 165 between Sterlington and Bastrop in Morehouse Parish. After numerous surgeries and countless hours of physical therapy, Wheeler was cleared to return to full time duty. His first day back on duty was Aug. 4, 2017.

Louisiana State Police Detectives arrested 31-year-old Amethyst Baird of Monroe on one count of attempted first-degree murder of a police officer. They also arrested 34-year-old Jeremy Gullette, of Monroe, on one count of accessory after the fact to attempted first-degree murder. Both are still awaiting trial at this time.



Boating Safety Program

With 15,000 miles of tidal coastline, 5,000 miles of navigable waterways, three of the busiest ports in the country, a thriving shipping industry, a large commercial fishing fleet, and over 327,000 registered boats, Louisiana contains many geographic, demographic and economic features that pose special

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

challenges for boating safety enforcement. LDWF-LED agents made 212,974 public contacts during the course of 58,999 patrol hours dedicated to boating enforcement, education and accident investigation in FY 2016-2017. Of those hours, 45,231 patrol hours were performed in vessels on the water.

The adoption of "Rules of the Road" regulations for boaters has enhanced the enforcement of boating safety regulations and boating under the influence laws. These regulations provide the boating public with clear rules for the manner in which boats are operated and are an important tool in determining fault in boating accidents. The "Rules of the Road" also enhance the ability of agents to address reckless and careless operation of motorboats. In FY 2016-2017, LDWF-LED agents issued 62 citations for careless and reckless operation of a vessel and 42 citations for operating a vessel while intoxicated.



The statewide LDWF-LED boater education course teaches safe, legal and responsible boat operation and is approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators. This program provides a vital outreach to the community and has greatly improved the awareness of and compliance with boating safety practices and regulations in

Louisiana. Agents hold monthly classes in each region for anyone who wishes or is required by Louisiana law to take them. In FY 2016-2017, 8,270 citizens were certified in classroom and online classes. LDWF-LED continues to recruit and train additional volunteer instructors to complement and enhance the efforts of its own agents. Since the inception of the boating safety education course in 2003, LDWF has certified 104,311 students.

LDWF-LED remained committed in marketing and promotion of boating education courses by creating special events and activities for students attending courses.

LDWF sponsored a summer day camp for children 11 to 13 years old at the Waddill Outdoor Education Center in Baton Rouge. The camp was held from July 18-22, 2016. The camp was completely free of charge and allowed participants to receive their official boater and hunter education certifications. A total of 14 children received their boating and hunting education certificates during the camps.



LDWF certified 112 students during the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) "Spring Aboard" national marketing campaign from March 19-25 to promote opportunities for boaters to enroll in a boating education course.

LDWF also certified 202 boaters statewide after their seventh

"Boating Education Lagniappe Day" on April 22. Lagniappe Day ran from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at nine locations across the state and consisted of the National Association of Safe Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) boating education course, food and drinks, giveaways and door prizes all free of charge to the public.

LDWF participated in several national campaigns including "Wear your PFD to work Day" on May 19, "Ready Set Wear It" on May 20 and the "Safe Boating Week" in Louisiana from May 20-26. LDWF Enforcement Division agents were out in full force as always during the safe boating week to perform boating safety checks and driving or operating a vessel while intoxicated (DWI) patrols.

LDWF once again participated in NASBLA's Operation Dry Water from June 30 to July 2, 2017. During Operation Dry Water, agents stepped up patrols looking for operators of vessels who were impaired or under the influence of alcohol or drugs. During the weekend, agents made five boating under the influence case and issued 157 safe boating citations with 155 safe boating warnings.

Media interviews, news release articles, public relation events and social media comments occurred throughout the state during all listed campaigns.

Search & Rescue Operations

LDWF-LED is responsible for providing and coordinating search and rescue response and maritime security activities for the state. This activity supports the state's goal of hurricane recovery and emergency preparedness by planning, training and coordinating local, state and federal response for search and rescue associated with natural or

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

manmade disasters. Preparedness and efficient execution of search and rescue response events is essential to saving lives and swift recovery efforts. Providing maritime security on our state's waterways is essential to protection of critical infrastructure located in maritime environments throughout Louisiana.

LDWF-LED agents rescued 3,152 people and 612 pets from Aug. 13 to 17 after the Baton Rouge area received over 20 inches of rain from Aug. 11 to 14.

The following are the rescues by parish for the August floods:

Tangipahoa - 305 people and 108 animals
Washington - 3 people
Livingston - 214 people and 82 animals
St. Helena - 25 people
East Baton Rouge - 1,442 people and 230 animals
Iberia - 41 people and 3 animals
Lafayette - 837 people and 114 animals
East Feliciana - 49 people and 5 animals
West Feliciana - 2 people
Vermilion - 98 people and 28 animals
Acadia - 24 people and 4 animals
St. Landry - 22 people and 14 animals
Ascension - 90 people and 19 pets



LDWF TRAINING Academy

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Law Enforcement Academy on April 26, 2017 graduated its 31st class of cadets into the ranks of LDWF Law Enforcement Division (LED) Agents. A ceremony for the graduating class was held in Baton Rouge.

After completing over 7 months of intensive physical and academic training at the academy, the 23 newly commissioned agents are ready to begin enforcing hunting, fishing and boating regulations that govern the use of the state's natural resources. Agents are also trained to provide emergency services as the state's lead agency for SAR and maritime security.



At the academy, cadets train to enforce the state's recreational boating laws, the state and federal wildlife and fisheries laws and general law enforcement work on the state's many wildlife management areas. The academy also covers general law enforcement training equal to that of other state law enforcement officers.

In-Service

At the end of 2016, agents completed their annual and fall/spring firearms in-service training requirements, which consisted of the following:

Spring/Fall: In-Service

-Firearms

Annual: In-Service

-First Aid/Blood Borne Pathogens/CPR for the Professional Rescuer
-Defensive Tactics/Officer Survival/Use of Force
-Firearms
-DWI (Intox. 5000, Intox. 9000, Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST), Boating Under the

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

Influence (BUI) Seated Test Battery, LA Drive)

- Taser
- Vehicle Stops (scenario based force on force training)
- Maps and Navigation
- ARIDE Retrainer (Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement)

Firearms

LDWF added one agent to its cadre of firearms instructors. This agent completed the selection, qualification and training process to become a certified LDWF and Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) firearms instructor. They will be able to provide the other instructors with assistance in providing the required firearms training to all agents and cadets throughout the enforcement division.

DWI

Two agents were certified as Drug Recognition Experts (DRE), bringing the LDWF-LED total to 13 DREs.

Marine Law Enforcement Training Program

At the end of 2016, all agents had completed their annual recertification as Boat Operators for Search and Rescue (BOSAR) in the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), Boat Operations and Training Program (BOAT).

Crisis Intervention or Critical Incident Training

LDWF has four agents trained in Crisis Intervention and Critical Incident as part of the Agents Crisis Team (ACT). The ACT team consists of agents who are specially trained as skilled listeners. The objective of ACT 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.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Maritime Special Response Team:

The LDWF/LED Maritime Special Response Team (MSRT) partners with the Louisiana State Police SWAT team to address maritime security threats within the state of Louisiana. The team provides a maritime tactical response capability at the state level in order to effectively provide public safety, officer safety, and tactical support for LDWF/LEDs federal, state and local partners.

During this period the LDWF/LED MSRT team completed their annual training which consisted of:

- Close Quarter Battle Techniques (CQB)
- Firearms Training
- Security Zone Enforcement Procedures
- Underway Training
- Hostage scenarios
- Large Vessel Training
- Rural Operations and Tactical Tracking
- Water Survival

At the end of 2016, MSRT members had completed their annual recertification as Tactical Operators Course (TOC) in the NASBLA BOAT Program.



Preventative Radiological and Nuclear Detection (PRND)

LDWF continues to work with key local, state and federal partners to implement a PRND program in the state of Louisiana. Through our partnership with the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO), the state has developed a statewide concept of operations plan (CONOPS), as well as standard operating procedures (SOPs) for individual agency partners. LDWF and PRND partners are currently planning a three day training exercise as well as a full scale exercise.

ACQUISITIONS FOR 2016-17

Equipment

- 6 search and rescue vessels
- 9 replacement outboard motors
- 41 (4x4) patrol trucks
- 3 administration SUVs
- 9 ATVs
- 40 replacement iPads
- 7 chart plotters
- 52 replacement/new personal ballistic vests
- 235 personal armor plate carriers (Level 4)
- 2 amphibious track vehicles with 2 personnel carrying trailers



Operation Game Thief

Louisiana Operation Game Thief (OGT), Inc. is a program which provides cash rewards to those providing information leading to the apprehension of wildlife violators. Violations can be reported anonymously by calling a 24-hour toll-free telephone number (1-800-442-2511) or by using LDWF's tip411 program. To use the tip411 program, citizens can text LADWF

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

and their tip to 847411 or download the "LADWF Tips" iPhone or Android apps from the Apple App Store and Google Play free of charge. The hotline and the tip411 program are monitored 24 hours a day by the LDWF Communications Center. Reports are immediately referred to agents for action.

During the 2016 year, OGT paid out \$15,600 in rewards. In 2016 the LOGT board reviewed 38 cases that led to 58 subjects getting cited or arrested and a total of 456 citations issued. From 1984 till the end of 2016 the LOGT board has paid out a total of \$391,300 in reward money to informants.

Joint Enforcement Agreement

LDWF-LED again entered into a Joint Enforcement Agreement with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office for Enforcement. LDWF-LED received approximately \$910,867 in FY 2016-2017 to patrol for compliance with federal commercial and recreational fisheries regulations, primarily in the Gulf of Mexico.



PUBLIC INFORMATION

The LDWF-LED Public Information section does various media and public information related tasks. The public information section handles

public emails, Facebook questions, media requests including setting up interviews, and gathering enforcement related information. The public information section also provides footage and photos to media outlets both in-state and nationally.

LDWF-LED issued 118 enforcement related press releases during FY 2016-2017. These press releases were issued to a media contact list via email both state and nationwide. They were also posted on the LDWF website. The press releases ranged from rewards for information on current cases, conviction results, announcements of event and upcoming cadet academies, highlighting important and unusual cases, enforcement division and agent achievements and awards won, and boating safety Information.

LDWF-LED public information also produces videos for both external and internal use. The videos range from public service announcements, cadet recruitment, hunting and boating safety and cadet training.

MISSISSIPPI

Steve Adcock, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Are officers 100% Wildlife Law Enforcement or Mixed?

Officers are mixed between Wildlife, Fisheries & Law Enforcement Bureau's

Straight Line Reporting Structure:
Yes

Number of Officers: 195. Officers are full time Law Enforcement

TRAINING

We will be issuing Tasers and Glock 42 handguns to officers within our

agency. The Glock 42 weapons will be utilized as a backup weapon. We have also secured funding allowing us to purchase Point Blank ballistic vests for all officers.

We will focus our attention during annual In Service training on ambush situations, brief our officers on trends that have developed within the past year, and utilize high stress situational firearms instruction. We feel it necessary to adapt and evolve our training to meet the ever changing world in which we live and work.

Our officers once again competed in the National LawFit challenge. Due to hard work and determination, our officers were able to win entire competition defeating the Mississippi Highway Patrol, who finished in second place. MDWFP officers also finished in first, second, and third place individually at the event. In the past four years, Team MDWFP has placed first or second overall.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

The total appropriated budget for the Law Enforcement Bureau is \$15,500,000.00; this includes federal funds and salary dollars. Funding allowed us to have one cadet class. The cadet class produced 11 Conservation Officers. The addition of the 11 Conservation Officers has put us at the 200 mark. Maintaining adequate numbers in the workforce continues to be a challenge due to retirements. However, the future is bright for FY 18. The passing of HB 1151 provide MDWFP with funding to help us hire and retain more

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

Conservation Officers. MDWFP is on schedule to produce two cadet classes for FY 18.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Officers are focusing on the importation and exportation of whitetail deer. The concern for CWD reaching Mississippi has increased with the disease being found in Arkansas. With the presence of High Fenced properties in Mississippi, the importation and exportation of whitetail deer has been a major concern for wildlife officers. Officers are making every effort to deter this illegal activity and prevent any disease being introduced to our State.

STATE, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL ISSUES, LEGISLATION, LEGAL CHALLENGES AND COURT DECISIONS IMPACTING NATURAL RESOURCES LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks has adopted a number of regulatory changes over the past year.

- HB 455 Nuisance animals and wild hogs; extend repealer on statute regulating the hunting of.
- SB 2271 Hunting & fishing; waive for veterans with certain disabilities when participating in certain events.

INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

MDWFP Special Response Team (SRT) was deployed and oversaw the search and recovery effort in locating plane remains, highly

valued military ordnates, and unfortunately victims in regards to a Marine KC 130 aircraft crashing in Leflore County, MS in July 2017.

Our SRT team utilized MSWIN radio systems, GIS staff, and MDWFP drones to canvas the crash site. This technology was vital in efficient recovery of debris, victims, and military items which stretched over a 9 sq mile area. Our teams helped lead at one point, approx 200 U.S. Marines who were brought in to assist in the recovery mission.

MDWFP utilized multiple drones in the recovery efforts to enhance decisions and identify areas to focus search efforts. The drones provided a real-time video feed to MDWFPs command center. The drones were instrumental in documenting before and after photos of the impact site for re-construction purposes. Additionally drone operators identified multiple large and small objects and collected spatial data to display and classify relevant information within our Common Operation Picture which was provided to multiple agencies that assisted in the recovery.

This technology will also be utilized in natural disaster response as well as high risk manhunts. These two areas are but a small sample of the range of capability this technology offers our SRT team.

MISSOURI

Larry Yamnitz, Chief

TRAINING ISSUES

For the fifth consecutive year, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is conducting a

training academy. The academy is Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certified and consists of conservation law, boating operations, waterfowl school, firearms training, land management practices, trapping, fish kills, defensive tactics, etc. Pending successful completion of the academy, fourteen conservation agent trainees will graduate at the end of September.

Protection Division held a statewide conference for all Division personnel in 2017. Training and discussion took place on a variety of topics including; *The Wildlife Code of Missouri*, 2017 Charge Code changes, and two special field investigations.

Protection Division also graduated two supervisors from the National Conservation Law Enforcement Leadership Academy (NCLELA) in September. Both graduates rated the program as excellent. Two additional supervisors are attending the 2017 NCLELA. Chief Larry Yamnitz also served as a coach for the 2016 International Conservation Law Enforcement Chief's Leadership Academy and is scheduled to travel to Thailand to assist with an ILEA Academy.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

The Department's budget has remained stable over the last few years. Protection Division currently has 210 FTEs and while we haven't been able to add new positions, we have reallocated existing positions to better accomplish our mission. Our Confined Wildlife Enforcement Unit is in their third year and has been

**2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**

effective in providing firm, fair, and consistent enforcement of confined wildlife and commercial permit regulations. We've also extended our Special Investigations Technical position for another year to assist Protection with technical support and on-line special investigations.

Salary continues to be an issue for all Department staff. Department Administration is working with the Conservation Commission to address this important issue. The Department has engaged CBIZ consulting firm to analyze our current compensation system and job classifications. This Department-wide job study will provide Administration with recommendations for the Department's Total Rewards system. To support the process, all salaried and hourly employees completed an online Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ) to provide the consultants the necessary job-specific details.

Protection Division is also completing a Job Task Analysis for our conservation agent position. Data from this project will be used to update our Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) to more accurately reflect the law enforcement duties and responsibilities of the agent position.

Diversity in employment continues to be a priority for the Department and our Discover Nature Girls Camp (DNGC) programs are helping us connect with a more diverse audience. Due to their popularity, Protection

conducted nine girls camps in 2016, including an urban Discover Nature Girls Camp held in St. Louis Region.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

In 2016, Missouri's Operation Game Thief (OGT) program received 938 violation reports which resulted in 93 arrests and \$6,050 in rewards paid. The OGT trailer was utilized at nine special events throughout the state.

During the 2016 deer season, 4,280 hunters donated 198,277 pounds of venison to Missouri's Share the Harvest program. Conservation staff, in addition to our program partner, the Conservation Federation of Missouri, is continually working on securing funding for this valuable program. The Governor of Missouri continues his active interest in Share the Harvest and has assisted in bringing more public awareness to the program.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE, ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

What started as a single poaching incident in Kansas in December, 2015 turned into a considerable, multi-state poaching investigation that spanned almost nine months. "Operation Geronimo" started with a single deer spotlighted in Kansas. The deer was transported back to Missouri, and when conservation agents learned of the violation, they served a search warrant on the subject; including his residence and cell phone. Based on the cell phone search, agents recovered 2,700 pages of text messages, 850 photos, and numerous videos which documented approximately 250 wildlife violations involving deer, turkey, catfish, and crappie. The

investigation revealed fourteen total poaching suspects with violations in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Saskatchewan. In August, conservation agents simultaneously served search warrants at various locations throughout Southwest Missouri to collect evidence and interview associates. When the smoke cleared the following wildlife charges were filed:

237 Missouri charges filed in 11 counties on 14 subjects

26 Canada charges

13 Nebraska charges

9 Kansas charges

7 Federal charges

292 total charges for violations occurring between Aug-Dec 2015

The primary subject was charged with 86 violations in Missouri, 6 in Kansas, 4 Lacey Act violations, and 10 violations in Canada.

At the request of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, fifteen Missouri conservation agents assisted in providing security for Governor Eric Greitens' Inauguration Ceremony on January 9, 2017. This was the first time Missouri conservation agents have been asked to assist other agencies in providing security at an inauguration ceremony.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN



NEW INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

Protection Division continues to embrace technology to better protect Missouri's fish, forest and wildlife resources. The "Agent Mobile" application combines our S3 permits system, arrest record, written warning, and Telecheck databases into one format that conservation agents can access via their iPhones. Protection has been working with our IT staff to create an electronic incident reporting system to be added to the Agent Mobile and Agent Online programs.

The Department continues to promote electronic hunting and fishing licenses, with electronic deer and turkey permits available again this year. Our MO Hunting app allows for electronic invalidation (notching) of deer and turkey permits and the ability to telecheck deer and turkey directly from your mobile device. Paper permits are still available and can be printed from a home computer. The Department also implemented a "Conservation Permit Card" in 2017 which is a refillable licensing card valid for most hunting/fishing licenses with the exception of deer and turkey permits. Initial reaction from the public has been positive; however enforcement challenges exist when trying to scan QR codes

from an agent's iPhone when signal strength is weak.

Protection Division is now outfitting agents with Ford F-150 SuperCrew Cab trucks. These vehicles better accommodate today's law enforcement equipment needs including digital and analog radios, and dual long-gun mounts. We have also transitioned to a new field uniform that is more practical for every-day field wear yet still presents a sharp, professional image for Missouri conservation agents.

STATE, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ISSUES, LEGISLATION, LEGAL CHALLENGES and Court Decisions Impacting Natural Resources Law Enforcement – Missouri's 2016 Outstanding Conservation Agent, Donnie Tiller, was recognized on the floor of the Capital in April. Agent Tiller, along with his wife Gail, Chief Larry Yamnitz, and Deputy Director Tom Draper, were present while Representative Patricia Pike presented Agent Tiller a House Resolution honoring his service to the citizens of Bates County and his selection as Missouri's Outstanding Conservation Agent. This is the first time a conservation agent has been recognized on the floor of the Capital.



COST SAVINGS INITIATIVES

Protection Division currently has approximately 120 Protection Volunteers who assist conservation

agents and other Department staff with projects including; enforcement patrols, outreach and education programs, training scenarios and wildlife surveys. The volunteer program continues to be a valuable recruitment tool.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

Protection Division continues to work diligently with Wildlife Division and other partners on feral hog eradication efforts in Missouri. Cage trapping and aerial gunning continue to be effective control measures. Department staff and partners killed 5,358 feral hogs in 2016. The Conservation Commission also passed regulations prohibiting the taking of feral hogs on all lands owned, leased or managed by the Department in an effort to further reduce the incentive to transport and release feral hogs on Department areas.

During the opening weekend of the 2016 November firearms deer season, MDC initiated mandatory sampling of deer harvested in 29 counties throughout the CWD Management Zone. This resulted in the collection of over 19,200 tissue samples from hunter harvested deer. CWD has now been found in northeast, central, west-central and east-central Missouri. The first cases of CWD in Missouri were detected in 2010 and 2011 in captive deer at private big-game hunting preserves in Linn and Macon counties. A total of 11 cases were confirmed in captive deer at the facilities. The total number of Missouri free-ranging deer that have tested positive for CWD is now at 40. Protection Division continues to be very active in CWD containment efforts serving as Incident Commanders and on landowner contact and shooting teams.

**2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**

NORTH CAROLINA

Jon Evans, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Law Enforcement Division's mission is to conserve wildlife resources; promote safe, responsible boating; and provide public safety, through proactive law enforcement and the instruction of quality education.

The division consists of 220 sworn law enforcement officers. Central office staff includes the Colonel, Major of Field Operations, Administrative Major, Training Director, Telecommunications Lieutenant, Professional Standards Lieutenant, Business Operations Manager, Telecommunications Supervisor, seven telecommunicators and three administrative assistants.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

Equity Raises for N.C. Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers

The N.C.W.R.C. completed a pay equity study in 2016 and was able to give equity raises to eligible employees throughout the agency. All officers within the law enforcement division were brought to a minimum of 90% of their banded class. These salary increases were much needed and appreciated by the officers and other staff in the Law Enforcement Division.

Basic Law Enforcement Academy

In 2016 the N.C.W.R.C. Law Enforcement Division advertised 24 Law Enforcement positions. The 54th Basic Law Enforcement Academy began in January 9th,

2017 and ended July 7th, 2017. The 16 new trainees began their 6 month Field Training program with their Field Training Officers in July 2017 and the Field Training will go through February 2018. The field training performance appraisal will show the trainees skills, abilities and responsibilities in vehicle operation, vessel operation, patrol techniques (night and day), hunter and boating education programs, etc.

Due to retirements and turnover, the N.C.W.R.C. is planning to hire at least twenty new officers for the 55th Basic Law Enforcement Academy which begins in January 2018. Approximately 1,200 individuals applied for these twenty "Wildlife Law Enforcement Officer" positions when they were advertised in June, 2017.

NEW INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Law Enforcement Division has again entered into the "Migratory Game Bird Hunting Awareness Campaign." This campaign is an attempt to educate landowners, hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts on migratory game bird hunting laws in North Carolina. Our officers are encouraged to personally contact landowners and hunters and discuss issues surrounding hunting migratory game birds such as baiting, lawful weapons, agricultural processes, bag limits, possession, etc. and gives the public and opportunity to ask the officer's questions. This campaign is truly an attempt at community policing and to prevent

wildlife crime through education and deterrence.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

None to Report

TRAINING ISSUES

Leadership Training

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission has implemented an agency wide leadership program designed around the adaptive leadership principles of the Kansas Leadership Institute and instructing model of the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI). The purpose of this 8 month program is to develop the strategies and skills necessary to adapt and lead through the complex challenges facing conservation organizations in the 21st Century; and foster communication and collaboration across organizational and non-traditional boundaries. Each class is made up of employees from all divisions and sections throughout the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

The N.C.W.R.C. Law Enforcement Division also sends officers to leadership training that is sponsored by the North Carolina Justice Academy. Newly promoted sergeants attend First Line Supervision and Law Enforcement Management Development Classes. In addition to these basic leadership courses, the N.C.W.R.C. also has seven alumni and two supervisors currently attending the Management Development Program, or "MDP." Each year, twenty law enforcement leaders are selected from all N.C. law enforcement agencies to attend this training. The training consists of 1 week per month, from January to November. The MDP experience includes an innovative curriculum which involves comprehensive and in-depth examination of the complex

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

issues of law enforcement management, as well as the actual application of learned management and leadership skills.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT

North Carolina Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers continue assisting the State Bureau of Investigation with marijuana eradication efforts across North Carolina. During the summer of 2017, Wildlife Officers have participated in two marijuana eradication details. One in western North Carolina and one in Eastern North Carolina. Wildlife Officers bring experience in rural land navigation, state waterways and boating operations, as well as specialized equipment including ATVs, UTVs, and four-wheel drive vehicles that are uniquely suited for this type of work. We continue partnering with all state and local law enforcement agencies within North Carolina throughout the year to achieve our mission and assist other agencies in achieving theirs.

Hurricane Matthew

Law Enforcement Division officers worked 6,536 hours providing services to the public during Hurricane Matthew from October 6th-29th. Officers provided a variety of services such as search and rescue, security, traffic direction, and supply transport. 156 rescue missions were conducted in a four-day period.



Officers utilized 358 pieces of equipment such as trucks, cars, boats, trailers, atvs, and aircraft to accomplish their missions. In addition, N.C Wildlife Officers worked 2,699 hours of overtime in support to Emergency Operations associated with Hurricane Matthew.

Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact
North Carolina will officially become a member of the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact on October 1, 2017. The N.C.W.C.R. has passed rules to administer the Compact and is ready to become a contributing member of this Compact to promote wildlife conservation.

International Law Enforcement Academy

Sergeant Chad Arnold accepted an invitation from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to be the first state officer to teach Wildlife Trafficking Investigators Course in the International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok Thailand. Sergeant Arnold was an instructor for international wildlife law enforcement officers from Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam. This training was conducted from February 26, 2017 through March 12, 2017. Curriculum In this training included classwork and progressive field scenarios. Students spend half their time in the classroom, and the other half in the field applying what was taught that day. Classes were Monday through Friday, allowing the students to have the weekend off. Through these new partnerships, Arnold was able to

return and share his new found knowledge with new recruits as he taught Covert investigations at the NCWRC recruit academy. Partnerships with China Resource Enforcement Officers as well as Hong Kong Resource enforcement officers were formed and communication was initiated, as resources from NC were recently located in their countries. Accomplishments made during the International Law Enforcement Academy include:



- Networking Building Between Countries and Stakeholders
- Open lines of communications Internationally
- Identifying resources exported from NC
- Information sharing of Trafficking Information
- Identifying Conservation Resources Sought by Southeast Asia

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission was honored to participate in this training experience and will benefit from the partnerships formed during this academy.

"On the Road, On the Water, Don't Drink and Drive Campaign"

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and its partners will continue with the "On the Road, On the Water, Don't Drink and Drive" campaign for 2017.



2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

The annual multi-agency initiative works to ensure that North Carolinians can travel safely on the road and on the water during summer holidays. During the campaign, drivers and boaters can expect to encounter sobriety checkpoints and increased enforcement patrols. This campaign is coordinated by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, State Highway Patrol and Forensic Tests for Alcohol, and is supported by local police and sheriff's offices, along with participating non-governmental organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

State, Regional and National Issues, Legislation, Legal Challenges and Court Decisions Impacting Natural Resources Law Enforcement

Sheyenne's Law

In 2016, the N.C. General Assembly passed Sheyenne's Law. This Law is named after Sheyenne Marshal, who was tragically killed in a boating incident involving an impaired boat operator.

Sheyenne's Law created felony offenses for unintentionally causing death or serious injury by impaired boating. North Carolina Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers have undergone two training periods on felony investigations to be prepared to investigate these tragic cases.

Cost Savings Initiatives

The N.C.W.R.C. is currently evaluating a "mandatory wear" policy for body armor. This type of policy is required to qualify for certain grants to purchase body armor for law enforcement officers. This policy has been discussed for years within our agency, but currently seems to be favorable among almost all of our law

enforcement officers. The policy will contain "reasonable exceptions" for instances where submersion in water is likely or due to extreme environmental conditions, the use of body armor could increase the risk to an officer.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

Operation Dry Water 2017

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators named the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission the 2017 Operation Dry Water "Top Agency" Award in the category of Large Agency. This selection was made based on the agency's involvement and participation in the 2017 Operation Dry Water heightened awareness and enforcement weekend which took place nationwide, June 30 – July 2. Based on the number of officers the agency deployed for Operation Dry Water, the N.C.W.R.C. qualified in the Large Agency category (101+ officers). The winner of each agency category is determined by the number of boating under the influence arrests made, divided by the number of officers who were deployed. Based on North Carolina's official report submitted to the Operation Dry Water campaign, the agency had the highest percentage in this category. The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators thanked the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission for all the time and effort that was put in by the officers within our agency. Those efforts and dedication of the law enforcement officers and personnel involved made a positive impact on boating under the influence and resulted in a successful and commendable Operation Dry Water campaign. A representative of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission will accept the award on the Agency's behalf at

the 2017 NASBLA Conference in Rapid City, South Dakota on Monday, September 11, 2017.

The Law Enforcement Division purchased 220 Point Blank "active shooter" body armor carriers this year. Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers are guaranteed to deal with thousands of individuals armed with rifles every year, yet they have never been issued body armor to protect against these types of weapons. The body armor purchased by our agency is Paraclete Model SPLT555 steel plates. These plates comply with NIJ Standard 0101.06 Protection Level III. This body armor also carries a ten year warranty. After looking at many types of plates and plate carriers, we are very satisfied with this piece of equipment. This is not body armor for everyday wear, but is issued to the officers when they recognize that an increased threat exists or is likely to exist in any situation. Our officers are constantly asked to assist other agencies with situations that demand this type of protection, yet we were often the only law enforcement officers without this type of armor.

Guy H. Bradley Award

For his years of service and dedication to wildlife enforcement, Maj. Todd Kennedy of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission became the state's first recipient of the Guy Bradley Award at the Commission's business meeting on Thursday, April 20. The award recognizes extraordinary individuals who have made an outstanding lifetime contribution to wildlife law enforcement, wildlife forensics or investigative techniques.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN



The Guy Bradley Award is named after a Florida game warden who became the first wildlife law enforcement agent killed in the line of duty in 1905. The national award, which was established by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in 1988, is presented to one state and one federal recipient each year.

“Major Kennedy’s multi-level career in law enforcement has had a tremendous impact on the health and security of wildlife in North Carolina,” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of the NFWF. “The dedication that he has demonstrated in protecting wildlife and natural resources is inspiring, and NFWF is pleased to recognize and honor his efforts with the 2017 Guy Bradley Award.”

Kennedy began his career by attending the wildlife basic training academy in 1990. In the years since, he progressively moved up through the ranks, including stints as a field training officer and supervisor of the Commission’s canine program. After being promoted to area sergeant in 2005 and lieutenant in 2008, it became clear that he was destined for leadership.

In 2010, he was promoted to district captain and, following the retirement of Maj. Jack Staley in 2011, Kennedy was promoted to his current role as major of field operations. In this role, he supervises nine district captains and the special investigations lieutenant,

and oversees all law enforcement operations for the Commission’s Law Enforcement Division.

“I was always that officer that wanted to challenge the process,” Kennedy said. “As I was promoted up through the chain, I gained a real love for leadership. I studied different philosophies and attended many leadership programs, then finally developed my own style.”

Previously, Kennedy was honored with the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife (SEAFWA) Officer of the Year award in 1997 and 2006, and with the National Wild Turkey Federation Officer of the Year award in 2005.

Gordon Myers, the Commission’s executive director, presented the award. Kennedy received a ceremonial plaque and a \$1,000 check from the NFWF.

“It’s his focus on leadership development that may stand out among his greatest accomplishments,” said Gordon Myers, the Commission’s executive director. “Major Kennedy has been instrumental in leadership initiatives throughout our agency and the community. It’s truly a pleasure to present to him this well-deserved award.”

Col. Jon Evans of the Commission nominated Kennedy for the award in January. Kennedy accepted his award in front of an audience consisting of co-workers, commissioners and family members.

“Conservation law enforcement is unique,” said Kennedy, who plans to retire from the Commission in 2018. “I do it because I enjoy it. And I believe in the mission. That’s what Guy Bradley believed in, and that’s

what our officers believe in. I’m honored by this award and appreciate the nomination and support.”

OKLAHOMA

Colonel Bill Hale, Chief

The following report covers the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 (FY2017) for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Law Enforcement Division.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Law Enforcement Division game warden’s primary responsibility is to enforce the State’s wildlife laws. Game wardens also participate and assist in all phases of the Wildlife Department’s operations and programs.

The division consists of 118 employees, with a field force of 90 game wardens, 16 game warden supervisors and 8 district chiefs. Central office staff includes the chief, assistant chief, operations manager and one secretary.

In addition, the agency has a reserve force consisting of 31 reserve officers who are agency employees assigned to various divisions whose primary duties are other than law enforcement.

The division operates with a straight-line chain of command.

TRAINING ISSUES

All new game wardens undergo a five to six week division academy and ten weeks in the Field Training and Evaluation Program with a Field

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

Training Officer. In addition, they also attend the 600-hour Oklahoma Basic Law Enforcement Academy, all totaling nearly 30 weeks of training prior to solo assignment.

All game wardens are now required by state mandate to complete twenty-five hours of law enforcement training and two hours of mental health training each year. In addition, all supervisors are also required to attend twelve hours of supervisory training each year. New supervisors are required to attend 24 hours within one year after promotion.

Game Wardens are also required to train and qualify annually with their pistols, shotguns and carbines. In addition, game wardens must also attend an annual 8 hour defensive tactics refresher course. Reserve officers beginning in 2017 are required to attend and train the same continuing education classes as full time wardens and are assigned two days per year to ride with a full time warden during high activity seasons.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

Funding remains basically unchanged from the previous year. We are fortunate that we are a revenue based agency and not experiencing any funding shortfalls.

Ten new game wardens were hired during this period; the open positions are a result of retirements. We currently have one warden vacancy.

We were able to purchase 20 Chevrolet Silverado four-wheel drive extended cab pickups and 3

crew cab pickups. Seventeen of the trucks have been converted to use CNG. The state now has a mandatory Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) requirement for most state vehicles. The CNG requirement cost the Division \$10,200 per vehicle for each aftermarket conversion for a total \$173,400 additional cost for vehicles. The fuel savings fluctuates as the price of CNG to gasoline changes. Compressed natural gas continues to be a more economical option to gasoline. The equipment installed on this years trucks include LED light bars, tool boxes, locking double gun racks, and grill guards. We purchased nine radios three high-band, three low-band and three 800 megahertz radios to replace aging equipment.

We replaced one hundred and twenty 517 EOTECH rifle sights, with the Aim-Point PRO rifle sight at no cost to the agency due to an equipment recall by EOTECH.

We are currently researching body worn cameras to document contacts with the public and critical incidents. We are continuing to replace self-inflating PFD's with new hydrostatic inflatable models 25 new PFD's were purchased.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Wardens are increasingly using social media to detect wildlife violations, with the proliferation social web sites and services in combination with a younger generation of wardens; we expect this trend to continue. The cases tend to fall in to two distinct types, the first being a posting to sell

wildlife or wildlife parts and the second a posting which shares an illegal activity with friends or other online contacts.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

The division continues to cooperate with every state in efforts to combat fraudulent license applications and interstate wildlife violations.

We continue to work with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in enforcing the federal laws occurring in our state.

NEW INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

We implemented a law enforcement Facebook page edited by selected game wardens. The page continues to be instrumental in developing leads in wildlife cases from the public, and serves as a method to provide feedback from the public on our law enforcement efforts. The benefit of social media is the low cost to the agency and the ability to disseminate focused information to interested constituents.

The Department continues to conduct the hunter education course on-line this has decreased the demand for traditional classroom courses taught by game wardens.

STATE, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL ISSUES, LEGISLATION, LEGAL CHALLENGES AND COURT DECISIONS IMPACTING NATURAL RESOURCES LAW ENFORCEMENT

**2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**

New legislation and administrative rules:

The legislature passed a law that modifies the meeting requirements from 12 times a year to nine times a year by the wildlife commission. We are working against proposed legislation that limits enforcement powers on private lands and relaxing rules to night taking of feral hogs.

COST SAVING INITIATIVES

Fuel costs continue to be a concern in Oklahoma. Game wardens are encouraged to use time management and to work wisely while conducting their patrols. Fuels saving initiatives have been implemented to help offset costs, including the installation of CNG conversions, which will greatly impact our fuel bill.

**OTHER SPECIAL LAW
ENFORCEMENT ISSUES**

We have formed a committee to update the Law Enforcement Division's Procedure Manual. The committee assigns sections of the procedure to members who then meet once per month to evaluate the procedure. We plan to complete this work sometime in 2017.

Enforcement of the illegal harvest and sale of paddlefish eggs for caviar continues to be a major enforcement issue. Game wardens maintain an increased enforcement emphasis during the annual spring spawn to help curtail the illegal activities associated with the illegal caviar trade.

Game wardens are involved in several Department programs that

involve the recruitment and retention of anglers and hunters. The programs include an annual Wildlife Expo held each September in Guthrie, Oklahoma, and regional and annual Archery in the Schools statewide tournaments. Both programs require an enormous amount of manpower and associated costs in these popular and worthwhile projects. Other programs include the annual Wildlife Youth Camp, STEP programs and Aquatic Education. The recruitment and retention of fishermen and hunters and the sale of licenses to them is vital to our agency.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Chisolm Frampton, Colonel

**INNOVATIONS IN
CONSERVATION LAW
ENFORCEMENT**

The Division purchased Didson dual frequency acoustic imaging unit with accessories. The Didson unit is state of the art technology used for the location of evidence and recovery of victims of drowning and boating related deaths. This unit required minimum training to allow operators to become efficient and effective with its use in recoveries. The unit has been used in over 30 recovery operations with 11 victims being recovered. This equipment has been invaluable due it maximizes diver safety and minimizes the wait for families to begin the closure process in the loss of a family member. The Division handled 14,661 calls for service this year. SC is 7th in the country in registered vessels and field staff worked patrolling 55,845 boating hours and inspected over 96,000 boats.

**LEGISLATIVE
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Department was successful in getting historic Deer Legislation passed which took effect on January 1, 2017. This legislation established a limit on antlered bucks and requires the tagging of all harvested deer. It also began an establishment of antler restrictions on bucks being harvested with optional harvest tags.

PUBLIC OUTREACH IMPACT

The Division overall has impacted over 180,000 youth through our Hunter Education, Boater Education, Take One Make One Program, and Shooting Sports outreach initiatives. Over 3360 public presentations with 112 media events where conducted by field operations in conjunction with 26 fishing rodeos which impacted over 4,000 youth and adults being introduced to the sport of fishing.

The Take One Make One (TOMO) Program coordinated 71 youth hunts with 337 youth participating. The Law Enforcement and Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries Divisions continued their partnership to increase youth hunting through the TOMO Program. Law Enforcement Regions across the state coordinated over 96 separate events using outreach trailers to impact over 44,000 youth across the state.

SC Scholastic Clay Target Sports continued to grow in success and popularity. This program promotes all three regiments of clay target shooting: Sporting Clays, Trap, and Skeet. The Department partnered with Clemson 4H Shooting Sports to sponsor a youth skeet and trap event. 157 youth participated in this event, making it the largest youth

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

skeet and trap competition held to date in South Carolina. The Division held the first annual Youth Sporting Clay Open with 430 youth shooters from 28 school teams and 17 club teams participating. A total of \$23,500 in college scholarships and 10 Chromebooks were presented to graduating seniors who participated, in addition to other prizes.

The SC Archery in Schools Program continued to see growth as well. South Carolina currently has 323 active schools that participate in the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). Over 1020 teachers have been trained in the NASP curriculum. 46,800 students participated in the National Archery in the Schools Program. 1,935 students participated in 5 regional archery events held across the state. 1,078 finalists from the Regionals attended the three-day State Event. \$7,000 in college scholarships were given to graduating seniors at the state archery event.

COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES

The Division continued cooperative efforts with the SC Department of Public Safety on BUI and DUI enforcement by initiating a new campaign, the "100 Deadliest Days of Summer". In cooperation with SCDPS the use of mobile breath-testing trucks enhanced the agency's ability to minimize time off the water due to an arrest.

The Division continues to play an important role in homeland security and emergency management by working cooperatively with State, Local, and Federal agencies on security missions, natural disaster response, port security, and patrolling sensitive sites. 96 officers were deployed to assist with the

Memorial Day Bike Festival in Myrtle Beach, SC. 71 SCDNR officers participated in several events at the State House during 2016 to include: Martin Luther King Parade, Black Lives Matter rallies, Honor Rally, Tunnel to Towers Event.

SCDNR deployed 205 officers and 32 Department Deputy Officers were deployed for Hurricane Matthew and lane reversal operations. 173 DNR officers were deployed to search and rescue, security, river sweeps and flooding operations post storm which lasted almost seven weeks. SCDNR Law Enforcement Officers continued to provide post storm security to the Town of Nichols in an effort to aid the Nichols PD. Officers worked 24 hours a day for several weeks after release of the initial deployment post storm. Officers rescued over 150 residents from the rising flood waters

In an effort to enhance the working relationships with the US Coast Guard (USCG) and to provide a stronger partnership in Operation Seahawk, SCDNR Officers spent over 6,508 hours on homeland security missions during the year. We are continuing our long standing partnership with NOAA Office of Law Enforcement through the Joint Enforcement Agreement for offshore fisheries enforcement. South Carolina has the longest standing agreement in the nation.

The Division and Wendy's Corporation continued joint promotions aimed at boating safety awareness. The Division continued issuing free frosty coupons in the form of citations for having been "caught wearing a life jacket".

4,000 archers from across North America attended the 4-day National Archery in the Schools Program World event in Myrtle Beach, SC at the Myrtle Beach Sports Complex as well as the World IBO 3D Challenge hosted by SCNDR. There are currently 40,000 students actively shooting archery in 358 schools across SC.

SCDNR sponsored the second annual SCDNR Sporting Clay Open at the NWTF Palmetto Shooting Complex in Edgefield, SC. 525 students and 1600 people total were in attendance at our second year event. In partnership with sponsors like Harry Hampton Wildlife Fund, Bass Pro Shop, Cabela's, and Rio Ammunition, a total of \$49,000 in college scholarships were presented to graduating seniors who attended youth shooting sports events.

The SCDNR Tips program has opened additional avenues for the public to report anonymously violations through the DNR website, DNR Facebook page, SMS texting, and through downloadable apps for smart phones on the iPhone and Android applications. Worked with administrators of the Pocket Ranger App to include a link from their App to the SCDNR Tips web based tip reporting through the SCDNR Website.

FUNDING AND STAFFING INITIATIVES

The Investigations Section was expanded with the addition of an Investigator for Region 3. This addition expanded the investigations section to 6 full-time fatality investigators. The Education Section was expanded due to exceptional growth in the area of shooting sports to include the addition of a Youth Shooting Sports Coordinator.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

The Law Enforcement Division was awarded \$352,000.00 through the Department of Justice JAG Grant Program for communications equipment upgrades in the state-wide communications center.

Palmetto Pride grants for Edgefield, Spartanburg, and Greenville Counties totaling \$7,890.00 were received to combat littering. This grant allowed for the purchased of Leopold Binoculars and Plot Watcher Cameras to investigate and prosecute Litter violations.

TRAINING

The Division also provided the following advanced training to staff:

- Seven supervisors completed the FBI Carolina Command College;
- Major Carey and Lt. Riley completed the three week NACLEC Leadership Training in Shepardstown, WV
- Three supervisors have completed the 18 month Certified Public Managers Training conducted through the state Office of Human Resources; Currently 2 field supervisors are enrolled in this program.
- Hosted a three day Radiological Nuclear Detection Concepts, Tactics and Integration (RCTIC) course in Moncks Corner. Ten (10) Federal instructors conducted the training with twenty-four (24) officers from local, state and federal agencies.

Training initiatives are a critical focus of the Division because we believe a well-trained force leads to

increased moral, and more professionalism within the Division. These are attributes the public expects of today's law enforcement professionals.

TENNESSEE

Darren Rider, Colonel

TRAINING

Six new officers were hired and trained in firearms, ATV operation, defensive tactics, EVOC (truck and boat operation), boating accident investigation, BUI investigations that included a wet lab, hunting accident investigation, black bear enforcement, commercial fishing enforcement, trapping enforcement, nuisance animal training, water survival, waterfowl enforcement and wildlife immobilization. In addition, these newly hired officers were certified as hunter safety instructors.

Annual in-service training was conducted for the Agency's 270 commissioned personnel – this year's annual training included: ERASE (Exterior Response to Active Shooter Events) using airsoft weapons; defensive tactics; domestic violence training; EVOC pickup truck operation; dealing with emotionally disturbed people; child sexual abuse and modern drug trends.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

Agency employees in a wildlife class position in which wildlife officers are included were given a 3.2 % pay raise, in addition if that employee was not topped out in their pay grade they were awarded an additional 4.5% for a cost of living adjustment.

Legislation was passed this year that will provide the Agency with an annual additional recurring funding of 2.3 million dollars. This funding

was appropriated through the marine fuel tax revenue and will be allocated for construction, maintenance and repair of boating access, boating safety educational programs and for boating safety law enforcement efforts.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

In June 2017, TWRA partnered with state and local law enforcement agencies across the state in Operation Dry Water (ODW) from June 30 – July 2. These joint operations identified and removed impaired operators from Tennessee waters. ODW resulted in 145 officers participating; 2,225 total officer hours; 5,971 total vessels checked; 200 citations written; 181 warnings written; 13 BUI arrests and 300 boaters were assisted.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Officers with TWRA's Special Investigations Unit have been working jointly with the USFWS on investigations dealing with illegal hunting, commercialization of wildlife and Lacey Act violations.

A new program for law enforcement was created by Legislation to identify and to respond to Dementia and Alzheimer's patients – named "Silver Alert". The Agency partnered with Tennessee Bureau of Investigations (TBI) and Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP) to provide assistance and aid for any reports of any missing senior citizens or any reports of any missing patients that have Dementia and or Alzheimer's.

INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Agency recently was approved to create a new Captain position to oversee and implement the

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system that will provide officer location in addition to providing incident reporting, dispatching records along with record and data management. In addition this new position will also be responsible for oversight for all statewide communications.

The Agency is now collecting our law enforcement officer's submission of tweets for Twitter and posts for Facebook. A theme of "Wild Wednesdays" has been created to highlight our officer's work efforts and inspections with the general public enjoying our resources to demonstrate the work our officers conduct on a daily basis and to also educate the public with either a safety message or an informational message.

STATE ISSUES/LEGISLATION AFFECTING LAW

Legislature has directed TACIR (Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations) to study boat titling; the study group is currently putting a fiscal note together to determine what those costs would look like.

A Public Chapter was signed that gave clarification that TWRA has no authority over water quality investigations and must involve Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) if complaint is received on a water quality violation.

Guns are now allowed in boats for personal protection.

Trapping laws were changed to define and allow different types of traps that can be used and in addition a change in the required inspection time.

If the Legislature creates a new discounted and/or free hunting/fishing license, then the Agency will be reimbursed for all lost revenue from the General Fund.

Court costs for violations of individuals having insufficient amount of fluorescent orange will now be limited to same as maximum fine for that violation (in this case \$50, so court costs would be limited to \$50 as well).

Percentage of marine fuel tax that is allocated to the Agency was raised creating one-time payment of \$2.8 million to TWRA – recurring payment annually of \$2.3 million.

COST SAVINGS INITIATIVES

The Agency partnered with the Tennessee Advanced Communications Network which includes: Tennessee Highway Patrol (THP); Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC) and Tennessee Valley Regional Communications System (TVRCS) that allowed the installation of a radio repeater that will enhance the Agency's digital 800 MHz communication abilities with other state agencies.

SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

Law enforcement is continuing their discussions on the issues of CWD and what the best direction the Agency needs to take to prevent this disease from entering Tennessee.

TEXAS

Grahame Jones, Colonel

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Significant advances have been made by TPWD-LE in support of major conservation law enforcement trends. Whether working traditional conservation law enforcement efforts in federal waters or working border operations, Game Wardens continue to adapt and excel as their job duties change and expand.

Non-Game conservation enforcement continues to be increasing. TPWD continues to work with USFW on operations such as Wild-Web. This is a concentrated multi-day effort focusing on the illegal trade on the internet. An example of similar efforts was TPWD assisting with a multi-year USFW Lacey Act case. In this case and organized group illegally trapped Alligator Snapping Turtles in Texas and transported back to Louisiana to be sold.



CID investigations also continue to increase in the area of illegal commercialization of our resources. A recent example involves a case where numerous charges were filed on a Houston restaurateur and two local restaurant companies who stand accused of operating an illegal seafood network that funneled nearly 28,000 pounds of unlawfully-caught finfish through their establishments at a profit estimated at more than \$400,000.

Based on evidence gathered during an extensive two-year investigation,

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

Texas game wardens believe the illegal network has been ongoing since at least 2013 and could be the largest of its kind in Texas history.

The illegal catches were made by a web of about a dozen unlicensed commercial fishermen and sold to the restaurants. Their catches consisted primarily of highly-regulated red snapper, along with other protected game fish species, including tuna, amberjack, grouper and red drum.

Game wardens have issued more than 200 Class C misdemeanor citations related to the investigation thus far on an array of violations, including unlawful purchase of aquatic products by a restaurant, sales and purchases of protected finfish, operating without a wholesale fish dealer's license and related commercial fishing-related issues. Additional cases are anticipated.

National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) special agents and the U.S. Coast Guard provided assistance in the investigation. NOAA also filed felony charges against two recreational anglers in Freeport in connection with the case.



The scope of the investigation expanded significantly last April after U.S. Coast Guard crews stopped an unlicensed commercial fishing boat in coastal waters near Freeport with 488 red snapper weighing approximately 1,900 pounds. Texas game wardens and

the National Marine Fisheries Service seized the fish, which were illegally caught in the Gulf of Mexico off Freeport and Galveston, and investigators were able to link the subjects with the illegal seafood operation.

"This is a big deal and exemplifies the critically important work our Texas game wardens do to protect the state's natural resources," said Col. Craig Hunter, TPWD law enforcement director. "Not only did these unscrupulous actors violate recreational fishing regulations at an extreme level for personal profit, but they also circumvented restrictions and rules governing the possession, safe handling and sale of commercial aquatic products intended for human consumption. That is not something we in law enforcement will tolerate and we are confident these individuals will be prosecuted to the fullest extent the law allows."

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE, ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Texas Game Wardens continue to maintain a strong working relationship with our partners at the United States Coast Guard. In 2017, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department was recognized for the significant number and type of assets deployed along the gulf coast. Texas Parks and Wildlife maintains 380 equipped vessels with the capabilities to be used in a myriad of situations and environments. Texas Game Wardens are present on each of the USCG Sector Area Maritime Security Committees within the state and work with all the partners to share intelligence and conduct directed operations. The Texas Game Warden Maritime Tactical Operations Group (MTOG) recently trained with USCG Maritime Security Response Team (MSRT)

east on deep draft ship boarding's and takedowns. Texas Game Wardens continue to maintain a number of Memorandum's of Agreement (MOA) including one which allows our agency to communicate on the US Coast Guard Encrypted radio channels.

TPWD continues to maintain a presence along the Texas-Mexico border and in the Gulf of Mexico, serving as a force multiplier alongside local, state and federal partners. Game Wardens are uniquely situated and equipped to fill a vital niche on both water and land. This includes navigating the waterways and patrolling the back country areas in rural Texas. In addition to performing their vital conservation law enforcement duties, Game Wardens encounter drug trafficking, human trafficking and human smuggling activities.

COST SAVINGS INITIATIVES

Use of online training opportunities to save on travel expenses.

The Law Enforcement Division has been aggressively implementing SharePoint as an online two-way CJIS-secure collaboration tool. It allows disparate teams to join in discussion groups, document sharing, and even simultaneous editing. This decreases travel/meeting cost.

The division has also implemented Skype for Business. This allows video/conference calls at no direct cost. Screen sharing is also enabled. So wardens may get together in workgroups to have ad hoc meeting without any travel costs. Bandwidth remains a concern; the division is upgrading servers and going to open market to increase bandwidth at lower costs.

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

One Drive is scheduled for a 2018 rollout. Thus will enable Game Wardens to store CJIS-secure data in the cloud. It will decrease risk, as items are stored securely online. It will also speed up laptop replacement, since old laptops will no longer be sent to headquarters in advance for data transfer.

VIRGINIA

Bryan Young, Major

STAFFING

At the close of 2106, the Law Enforcement Division had 166 Conservation Police Officers made up of 22 academy recruits, 12 probationary field officers, 99 non-supervisory field officers, 24 Sergeants, 3 Lieutenants, 4 Captains and 2 Majors. The division was also supported by 17 full-time and 5 wage civilian positions. The staffing level in 2016 increased 14% from 2015 due to the successful start of the 9th Basic and Modified Academies on September 25, 2016. The Modified Academy, with a total of 11 previously sworn officers, graduated on December 9, 2016 and the Basic Academy, with a total of 22 new recruits, graduated on March 29, 2017. Along with the Academies, the Law Enforcement Division also completed the promotion process for two Majors. Lt. Scott Naff was promoted to the position of Operations Major and Sgt. Bryan Young was promoted to the position of Administration Major.

This past year Virginia Conservation Police Officers have been involved in many outdoor events. Their outreach activities included 12 career/recruitment fairs, 6 disabled

veteran hunts, 43 boater education classes, 36 hunter education classes, 32 kids fishing days, 78 special events and 3 youth hunts. Outreach efforts increased 32% from 2015 to 2016.

After residing in our new facility for over a year, the 24/7 CPO Communications Center has settled into a groove with 8 full-time and 2 part-time dispatchers and is currently in pursuit of another part-time position. The built in dual redundancy for phone, radio, and power to the center greatly enhances agency continuity and continues to aid in the Commonwealth's ongoing emergency preparedness efforts.

During 2016 the division expanded its recruitment efforts to diversify sworn staff. The agency partnered with a marketing and communication firm that specializes in diversity recruiting and the agency recruited at numerous colleges, universities, high schools, middle schools, military facilities, civic groups, hunt clubs, churches and other organizations seeking good quality applicants. Contacts were made by telephone and email, and recruitment brochures were sent to individuals on a mailing list. This diversifying effort proved successful as five females and one African American were invited to attend the 9th basic law enforcement academy beginning in September 2016. We continue to improve, and put strong emphasis on, diversity recruiting and hiring as we move forward in 2017 in pursuit of 25 new recruits for the 10th Basic Academy.

TRAINING

In-Service training was provided for non-supervisory officers in March 2016. This training was conducted in the new headquarters in Henrico County and included four different blocks of training over a two week period. Those completing the training met the state mandated requirement of 40 hours of training every two years. In September of 2016, all Conservation Police Officers completed mandatory Off Road Drivers Training at our Fort Pickett Off-Road Driving Course.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Virginia Conservation Police 24/7 dispatch recorded a 1% increase of CAD calls from 2015 to 2016 with a total of 37,991 calls for service. This included 4,058 Crime Line calls (Hunt, Fish, Boat and Trap). The number of Conservation Police Officer initiated calls during patrols decreased 5% in 2016 with a total of 17,255 calls. Even though there were more officers on the payroll than the previous year, 33 of them were not fully sworn at the time. This actually resulted in a decline in field force numbers from 2015 to 2016. It is anticipated with the March 2017 graduation that these numbers will increase in 2017. The two largest increases in call types for 2016 were Environmental Issues/Fish Kills (63% increase) and Wildlife Nuisance/Permit/Injured calls (23% increase).

The decrease in field officers in 2016 is clearly demonstrated by the 20% decrease in the number of summonses from the previous year. Of the major categories, CPOs issued 3889 hunting, 3589 fishing, 2265 boating and 1028 other

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

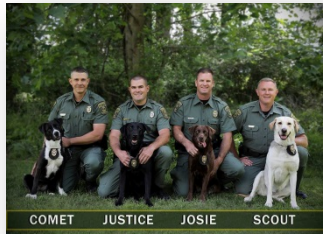
related summonses. Looking at violations in 2016, the highest number of summonses were issued for fishing without a freshwater license (2386), followed by not having a personal flotation device (904), and validating tags and checking deer (314). Many violations were committed by repeat offenders and officers successfully obtained 130 revocations (109 hunting, 9 fishing, and 12 boating) to help make the Commonwealth a safer place to hunt, fish and boat.

In 2016 officers seized a total of 178 firearms with the majority of them being seized during the hunting season. (November-75). Per court order CPOs destroyed 5 previously seized weapons, returned 16 to their owners and transferred 5 to other jurisdictions.

K-9 PROGRAM

The primary purpose of the Canine (K-9) Program is to further the mission of the agency by providing a specifically trained scent discrimination canine team to assist law enforcement personnel in tracking violators, detecting concealed wildlife and firearms, and conducting area searches for evidence recovery. Additionally, high visibility patrols will act to deter potential violations. A secondary purpose of the K-9 Program is education and deterrence through K-9 demonstrations and presentations for schools, interested groups, and the media. By providing resource management information during K-9 demonstrations and presentations, a sense of wildlife resource stewardship is developed, and the agency has a renewed recognition for the great work it

does. K-9 units will also assist other enforcement agencies by tracking, recovering evidence at crime scenes, and locating missing or lost persons when requested and when available.



OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Senior Officer Timothy S. Dooley was selected as Conservation Police Officer of the Year for 2016. Senior Officer Dooley's dedication to protecting the Commonwealth's wildlife resources, his participation in community outreach, and his commitment to education and instruction made him the top candidate for the award.

"Senior Officer Dooley has established himself as a leader within the Law Enforcement Division in the area of wildlife investigations. He has worked diligently to increase his knowledge and skills in the use of technology to not only discover wildlife violations, but to effectively gather many forms of evidence to successfully prosecute the offenders. His passion for this line of work is obvious, and the agency and the Commonwealth are fortunate to have him as a conservation police officer," said Major Scott Naff, Law Enforcement Assistant Chief of Operations for DGIF.



Throughout 2016, Senior Officer Dooley led his District in arrests and violations detected—as he has for the last nine years. The range of violations spanned everything from illegal deer hunting on public school property, to 28 separate investigations of illegal harvest of turkeys, and possession of controlled substances. When checking out suspicious activity at a fishing lake in Albemarle County, Dooley found two men in possession of marijuana-laced "gummy" candies, which was the first known seizure of this type of edible marijuana in the county.

Officer Dooley is a veteran officer with 9 years of dedicated service. He serves the DGIF Law Enforcement Division as a Field Training Officer, a Driver Training Instructor, a Cell Phone Technology and Forensic Data Analyst, and a Background Investigator. He graduated from Virginia Tech in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Sciences.

Officer Dooley attended the DGIF Basic Law Academy in 2008, where he earned the Colonel's Award for Top Academic Achievement, as well as the Outstanding Driver Award for

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

overall highest driver training qualification scores.

BOATING OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Virginia Conservation Police Senior Officer Kenneth R. Williams has been selected for the prestigious honor of The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) Boating Officer of the Year for 2016. NASBLA is a national nonprofit organization that works to develop public policy for recreational boating safety.

Senior Officer Williams' outstanding efforts in boating safety education and boating law enforcement, as well as his dedication to training as a member of the Boating Cadre, were all an integral part of his selection. Williams is assigned to Northumberland County.

"Ken engages in numerous boater education opportunities in and around the Northern Neck of Virginia, where he uses his expertise to provide instruction and education to the public. His knowledge and understanding of the boating laws make him a very effective enforcement officer as well as an instructor and mentor for our new officers," said Major Scott Naff, Law Enforcement Assistant Chief of Operations for DGIF.

Senior Officer Williams has served



the boating community in the Virginia's Northern Neck since

2006. He conducted 35 on-water boat patrols and 101 boat inspections on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries in a five-county area in 2016. Williams is a certified criminal justice instructor and serves on the agency's boating training cadre. Officer Williams led his district with 30 boating arrests, 5 of which were alcohol related.

During 2016, Williams also assisted emergency management personnel with inventorying debris and placing hazard markers in the Rappahannock River in the aftermath of a tornado; assisted the Virginia Port Authority when a cargo ship lost a portion of its load in the Chesapeake Bay; and he responded to a distress call in the Coan River that resulted in the rescue of a sailboat operator through rough waters and extreme wind chill.

NWTF OFFICER OF THE YEAR



Senior Officer Neil Kester was named the 2016 Virginia National Wild Turkey Federation Conservation Police Officer of the Year. The citizens of Virginia have benefited greatly from the efforts of this conscientious and dedicated officer. Officer Kester has utilized various investigative techniques in the apprehension of illegal hunters and turkey poachers; successful

cases included using decoys, electronic calls, aircraft and informants. An example includes the conviction and prison time for suspects that fled the scene during a decoy operation. Officer Kester was able to use DNA evidence to link the suspects to the scene and ultimately get a convicted felon that was in possession of a firearm off the streets. In another incident, CPO Kester tracked an ATV to a remote camp that was used in illegal turkey hunting. This case resulted in convictions for trespassing, shooting from the road and revocation of hunting privileges. Another case involved Officer Kester while he was off duty at a doctor's office. He overheard a young woman bragging about how her father had killed three gobblers behind her house that morning. This prompted Officer Kester to investigate and ultimately led to the father being convicted on two counts and had to pay a \$1,000 fine for replacement cost of two gobblers. Senior Officer Kester initiated, planned and executed a multi-jurisdictional operation in Highland County in reference to a complaint of illegal baiting during the spring gobbler season. Two suspects were apprehended, charged and found guilty of baiting turkey. This is one of many operations that Officer Kester has been the lead, and successfully planned and worked with other Law Enforcement Agencies to apprehend, arrest and take to court, wildlife criminals.

Senior Officer Neil Kester's efforts and commitment towards the community was demonstrated in the summer of 2009 when he located a missing 6 year old boy in the National Forest in Augusta County. He also represented VDGIF at a town hall meeting in Rockbridge County concerning a new track of land that VDGIF had purchased

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

called "Short Hill". Officer Kester immediately answered about the law and hunting practices. This meeting could have resulted in an angry citizenry but due to his calm response to the questions and ability to answer them in a professional manner, the meeting went smoothly. CPO Kester is also involved in resolving disputes between hunters and landowners, bringing them together to a mutually beneficial solution, oftentimes leading reduction in crop damage and more opportunities for hunters.

Officer Kester is very enthusiastic about getting novice hunters involved in the outdoors. He often assists with Hunter Education Classes, volunteers at "Wheelin' Sportsmen" Hunts, JAKES events, and assists at booths at Sportsmen's Shows and other venues to inform the public about our valuable resources. He is always ready to answer a question and speak with the public. When he volunteers at JAKES events, he often does the safety talk and stays for the day talking with parents and youth. On his off-duty time, he takes disabled hunters and youth hunting. Using his contacts from landowners and his expertise in the field, has made some very happy and unforgettable moments for disabled and novice hunters. Officer Kester yearly speaks at several area High Schools to promote hunting and fishing and the outdoors.

Senior Officer Kester is an avid turkey hunter and has served as a member of the turkey regulation committee for the past ten years. He was the lead on a regulation

regarding fall turkey hunting in some counties that were seeing a decline in their turkey populations. The new regulations needed to be done to promote population recovery. Officer Kester also met with Staunton City Officials to assist them with their hunting ordinances and deer problems in the city. His input led to Staunton adopting new plans for city hunting to take care of the deer problem at no cost to the city. New laws were written for the use of crossbow and bow for hunting on land parcels of less than 5 acres, shotgun for parcels greater than 5 acres, and hunters being in an elevated stand.

Officer Kester's leadership skills allow him to expertly direct teams of law enforcement, and coordinate activities that include many scenario's involving illegal activities as well as assisting with rescue activities. He is also a Background Investigator for the DGIF and became a Certified General Instructor in 2012. He attended Shenandoah Criminal Justice Academy to complete his certification. He is a member of the Driver's Training Cadre and has assisted with Driver Training in all four regions. Officer Neil Kester has 24 years of experience as a Law Enforcement Officer and 16 as a CPO for VDGIF. Officer Kester is an exemplary representative of the Virginia Conservation Police Officer Corp and represents the Department and the Commonwealth in the highest manner.

LIFE SAVING AWARD

Officer Mark Shaw began his career with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) as a Conservation Police Officer in 2011. He was assigned to Dinwiddie County in District 17



where he served for five years before transferring to Craig County in 2016. Officer Shaw brought with him years of experience as a Lieutenant with the Fire Department in Salem, Virginia. In addition, he was also certified as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Officer Shaw has maintained his status as an EMT during his tenure with VDGIF. He recently assisted with recertifying the officers in Region 1 with First Aid and CPR. Officer Shaw has been able to demonstrate his Emergency Medical Service (EMS) abilities on more than one occasion while on duty as a Virginia Conservation Police Officer. While patrolling the Appomattox River by boat on April 19, 2015, to monitor the annual American Shad run, Officer Shaw observed a woman fishing from the bank, near a campsite. When Officer Shaw approached and requested to see her fishing license, the woman stood and produced a fishing license. Officer Shaw noticed that the woman seemed very unstable on her feet Recognizing this, Officer Shaw told the woman to stand still and he would come to her. The woman disregarded his instructions

2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN

and she took two steps forward, lost her footing and fell into the Appomattox River. The woman was in a semi-seated position for several seconds then rolled over face down in the river and was unable to right herself. Without regard for his own safety, Officer Shaw dove from the boat, swam to the woman and was able to grab her by the waist and get her to the bank, preventing her from drowning. Officer Shaw then monitored the woman for signs of hypothermia. After keeping her under observation for a period of time and not observing any symptoms of hypothermia, Officer Shaw advised the woman to go into her tent to obtain dry clothing. The local authorities were notified and they arrived and took control of the care of the patient. Without the quick actions on behalf of Officer Shaw, this incident could have possibly had dire consequences.

On December 13, 2015, Officer Shaw drove to the Dinwiddie County Sheriff's Office to complete administrative duties that resulted from a busy weekend in the general firearms deer season. Before he could get out of his patrol vehicle, Officer Shaw was approached by a very emotionally distraught man who stated that a baby was choking. Officer Shaw quickly ran into the Sheriff's Office and activated EMS to respond. Shaw soon discovered that there was a language barrier in this incident. Not to be deterred by this, Officer Shaw continued to run towards the baby's location. The baby was then thrust into Officer Shaw's hands where he did a quick patient assessment. Officer Shaw determined the baby had a pulse,

but was not breathing. The baby had gray skin, blue lips, and was completely unresponsive. Officer Shaw administered two back blows and two abdominal thrusts. After the completion of the two abdominal thrusts the baby discharged some mucus and blood and took a deep breath on its own. Officer Shaw continued to maintain the open airway as the baby began to breathe normally on its own accord. Officer Shaw watched as color returned to its face and as it began to move its arms. EMS arrived shortly thereafter and a paramedic took control of the care of the patient. The baby was flown by the Med-Flight helicopter to Southside Regional Hospital for advanced life support and was reported to be in stable condition. Thanks to Officer Shaw's response to his training and quick actions, a child's life was saved.



YEARS OF SERVICE

At the end of 2016, Law Enforcement Division had 188 salary and wage employees. A total of 24 officers are over 50 years old and have over 25 years of service making them eligible for full retirement at any time.

WEST VIRGINIA

Jerry B. Jenkins, Colonel

OFFICER TRAINING

Officers received training in wildlife forensics, scenario-based defensive tactics, search and seizure, enhanced firearms equipment training, ginseng training, environmental law enforcement, search/rescue, and basic land navigation. Some of the courses were instructor based and will enable us to continually update officers in the respective fields of instruction.

DNR officers received training utilizing the seated battery for BUI and DUI apprehension. Two new NASBLA approved Seated-Battery Instructors were certified.

The Section Honor Guard attended opening ceremonies, special events and funerals. Feedback from this program has been overwhelmingly positive. The Section has training additional officers for the Honor Guard Program.

FUNDING & STAFFING

The WV DNR Law Enforcement Section normally has a staffing level of 128 Natural Resources Police Officers (NRPO) and 11 support personnel. During FY2017, two officers retired, nine officers resigned, and four new officers were hired.

During FY 2017, one officer was promoted to NRP Captain, and two officers were promoted to NRP Lieutenant, and two were promoted to NRP Sergeant.

The Spring 2017 Legislature gave the directory authority to grant the salary increases proposed by the officers, effective FY 2018.

**2017 Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN**

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

The Section renewed efforts towards water safety and increased lifejacket usage by the public thru our *Wear It Campaign*.

The public and media are following the work done by officers on the WV Natural Resources Police Officer Facebook page. The Facebook page continues to see an increase in media contacts for additional information, state and national, and the reporting of wildlife law violations and the email reporting system.

The purchase of an online event manager for the hunter education program has been completed and several new hunting and boating classes have been offered within this new system.

The Section is continuing to move reports to a computer-based process since the purchase of laptop computers for the officers. The officers can now log their activity directly into the payroll system and supervisors can electronically approve their entries. This change has resulted in less administrative time and travel.

Duty pistols were replaced to avoid costly preventative maintenance costs and malfunctions due to age and wear. Secondary pistols were also purchased for each officer for use on- and off-duty and during special details.

The duty patrol rifles were upgraded with new EOtech optics and a Surefire light.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Four officers and one sergeant have been assigned to work the Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority. The Authority reimburses the Section for salaries, benefits, and associated equipment expenses.

DNR officers participated in the nationwide program, *Operation Dry Water*, June 30, 2017 thru July 2, 2017, to reduce alcohol-related boating incidents. This operation resulted in 3 BUI arrests and 127 other citations/warnings being issued.

COST SAVING INITIATIVES

The Section continues to conduct a vehicle/boat accident review board semi-annually to identify incident types and causes. Thereby, allowing the Section to focus on needed training to reduce accidents, thus reducing our insurance rates.

The Section continually utilizes technology to reduce travel costs. Cell phones, computers, radios, and the internet are used to transmit reports, complaints, and information.

Older equipment such as radios, boats, and vehicles are being cycled out in attempts to avoid costly repair bills that often found to be short term and repetitive. By direction from the director, the Section reduced its overall fleet by 10 vehicles to comply with fleet reduction mandates.

The Section continues to work with federal and state agencies to

procure grants to assist with equipment purchases. Grants are being utilized to replace older portable radios with the new dual band handheld radios. The hunter education and boating grants are being monitored to maximize returns from our expenditures of time and resources.

Conference calls are being used to conduct meetings, boards, or planning sessions to cut down on in-state travel.

USFWS

Louis Santiago, SAC Region IV

(Continued, Next Section)

Southeast Region

The Southeast Region extends from the Appalachian Mountains south to the Caribbean, west to the Ozarks, and includes the southern half of the Mississippi River basin. Special agents conduct investigations in 10 states (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee) plus Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Region contains 23 percent of the endangered and threatened species in the United States; 26 percent of the U.S. coastline; over 20 percent of U.S. hunting and fishing license holders; and over 25 percent of the Nation's population.

The Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) in the Southeast maintains relationships and coordinates enforcement activities with state counterparts as well as with federal officers at almost 130 national wildlife refuges, 70 national parks, and 40 national forests. Wildlife inspectors monitor wildlife trade and intercept smuggled wildlife at five designated ports: Miami, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; New Orleans, Louisiana; Louisville, Kentucky; and Memphis, Tennessee. (The latter two are hubs for major international express delivery companies.) Service inspectors also work out of Tampa, Florida, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Investigations prioritize crimes involving mainly violations of the Endangered Species Act, Lacey Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Special agents in this Region work cooperatively with

PHOTO OPPOSITE PAGE:

The Southeast Region investigated numerous deer cases that discovered the illegal take and interstate transport of deer. This illegal activity costs each state valuable natural resources and spreads diseases such as chronic wasting disease (CWD). CWD affects all members of the cervid family including deer, elk, and moose.

Photo: USFWS



Operation Longtooth discovered over 250 successful elephant ivory smuggling efforts from the U.S. to China. Photo: USFWS

states to enforce migratory game bird hunting regulations and investigations of large-scale wildlife trafficking. Rapid population growth, which is predicted for the Region over the next two decades, represents a major challenge for both the enforcement program and for wildlife conservation.

Accomplishments

The Southeast Region has conducted many high priority investigations and inspections while continuing to support Service, federal, state, and foreign partners whenever possible. In 2016, special agents of this region were involved in 2,927 open investigations - 1,852 were new cases.

Due to the location, special agents of this Region investigate a variety of wildlife trafficking cases such as elephant ivory smuggling, Native American cultural artifacts poaching; American ginseng poaching; illegal marine life activity such as live coral poaching and illegal fishing; deer trafficking; and numerous migratory bird law violations.

In 2016, several subjects were sentenced in federal court as a result of the diligent casework of these officers. One such case was Operation Longtooth, a Service led, multi-year, multi-agency, international, and complex undercover operation executed with the Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; U.S. Postal Inspection Service; and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) that focused on the international and domestic "supply side" in the black market trade of elephant ivory. The operation began when CBP officers, in Miami, Florida, referred two packages to a Service wildlife inspector who determined the packages contained elephant ivory. The contents were falsely declared, valued at \$60 U.S. dollars (USD), addressed to a recipient in Guangdong, China, and had a return address to a residence in Dania, Florida. Federal law enforcement was able to identify the subject despite his attempts to elude nationwide enforcement efforts by utilizing numerous false identities, and using false sender and destination information.



Luis Santiago has been the Special Agent in Charge for law enforcement operations in the Southeast Region since 2011. Originally from Puerto Rico, Luis joined the Service as a wildlife inspector in Miami in 1986, working in both Miami and the Honolulu ports of entry. He became a special agent in 1995 and conducted criminal investigations for the Service in Miami, Florida. He was then stationed in Puerto Rico from 1996-2001. After working as a senior special agent in the program's headquarters office from 2001-2004, he became the Resident Agent in Charge for Central and Northern Florida, and served in this supervisory position until being promoted to Assistant Special Agent in Charge in the Southeast in 2007. Santiago holds a Bachelor of Science in biology from the University of Puerto Rico, completed the Senior Executive Fellows program at Harvard University in 2011, and is also a graduate from the Advance Leadership Development Program, Cohort VI.

Service special agents identified and photographed the elephant ivory carvings, and secured additional evidence documenting export activity to China. The inter-agency team also identified and inspected six additional export shipments created by the subject, which were all falsely labeled as wood or resin carvings, but actually contained elephant ivory carvings. As the investigation progressed, Service special agents were able to connect over 250 successful elephant ivory smuggling efforts by the subject from the U.S. to China and also linked numerous auction companies and Chinese nationals that assisted with his smuggling scheme. In 2016, the defendant was sentenced 12 months of house arrest with electronic monitoring, three years of supervised release, and 100 hours of community service for smuggling elephant ivory from the U.S. to China. Two more subjects under this comprehensive investigation are in various stages of prosecution.

Enforcing federal laws that protect the cultural heritage of Native Americans is also important to OLE of this Region. In 2016, seven defendants were sentenced in federal court for violations against the Native American Graves Protection Repatriation Act and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act. Service special agents, with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks, discovered an illegal excavation and sale of Native American cultural artifacts from USACE property in north Mississippi. The investigation, which began in 2012 and continued through 2016, resulted in the successful federal prosecution of five defendants on felony counts and two defendants on misdemeanor counts of conspiring or aiding and abetting to excavate and

remove archaeological resources and Native American artifacts located on designated historic public lands. In total, these subjects received 14 months of incarceration, 17 years of federal probation that also prohibits any of the defendants from entering any USACE property including navigable waterways, \$30,350 in fines, and 2½ years of home detention.

This Region continues to see an increase in the poaching of American ginseng. Due to its popularity as an active ingredient in "Traditional Asian Medicinals" and herbal medicine, and its unique habitat requirements, this native North American wild plant is under constant threat of over-exploitation, commercialization, and illegal harvest on federal lands. Ginseng has been overharvested and is now considered "rare" in the U.S. and Canada; therefore, it is quite valuable on the black market.

In 2016, Service special agents conducted several ginseng investigations. In one case, special agents documented federal



Poaching of wild North American ginseng is a serious conservation issue. Poachers sell illegally taken wild ginseng on the black market for use in herbal and Traditional Asian Medicinals.
Photo: USFWS



The Archaeological Resources Protection Act "...secures, for the present and future benefit of the American people, the protection of archaeological resources and sites, which are on public lands and Indian lands..." The picture on the left shows a hole dug by defendants searching for artifacts. The picture on the right shows an artifact that was seized during the investigation. Photos: USFWS

law violations across multiple states and tracked the illegal sale of the poached ginseng to customers in the U.S. and in South Korea.

Between 2011 and 2014, Operation Man Root discovered that a Tennessee man illegally bought and sold ginseng in Tennessee, North Carolina, and in other states. Throughout this period, the subject purchased over 50 pounds of fresh ginseng, black bear gallbladders, and bear meat from an undercover Service special agent, paying over \$9,600. In 2016, the subject was sentenced to three-years of supervised probation and 100 hours of community service.

A second ginseng case successfully prosecuted 45 defendants from seven states and two foreign countries. In total, these defendants received 218 months of incarceration, 210 months of suspended sentences, 162 months of probation, 64 months of community service, and over \$209,000 in federal and state fines. During this joint undercover investigation with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR), 430 pounds of wild ginseng roots were seized, and subsequently sold at an auction for \$150,000. The proceeds, equally shared between the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and the GADNR, were used to conserve, protect, and enhance the survival of wild American ginseng, including promoting and educating parties about the legal harvest, purchase, sale, recording, and transporting of ginseng.

Operation Rock Bottom has been a multi-year, undercover operation involving the illegal harvest and sale of various marine life from the national parks, national marine sanctuaries, the Service's refuges, and other protected areas in or surrounding the Florida Keys, south Florida, and Puerto Rico. The operation was named after the way in which corals are illegally chiseled from the ocean floor with large pieces of live rock attached. Targets have ranged the entire span of the industry and have included initial harvesters, wholesalers, retailers, smugglers, and public aquarium officials. To date, the ongoing investigation has led to the execution of 12 search warrants and 24 subjects or businesses have been criminally charged. Subjects were convicted for felony conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and for violating the Lacey Act. Sentencing totals included almost 10 years of incarceration, 24 years of probation, \$111,000 in criminal fines, and the forfeiture of three boats, two vehicles, and numerous commercial fishing licenses worth several hundred thousand dollars.



Conservation Law Enforcement Officers (CLEOs) are assigned to Florida and work cooperatively with state and local water patrols, and the U.S. Coast Guard, to educate the public and enforce regulations to protect manatees. In 2016, CLEOs issued 356 violation notices and warnings, logged 885 hours on water patrol, and saved a woman who had fallen out of her kayak wearing an unzipped and oversized life jacket. Photo: USFWS



A Mississippi man was sentenced to pay a \$30,000 fine for the illegal take of migratory birds. The investigation discovered that the subject planted corn on his duck impoundment and drove his ATV through his cornfield to knock down stocks of corn thus spreading grains throughout the impoundment. The photos show the flooded cornfield from the air and a sampling of the illegally taken ducks. Photos: Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks



The photo shows one of the men shooting a captured red-tailed hawk. The men ran a quail hunting business and trapped the raptors so they would not kill the quails. The raptors are lured into the trap by caging a live animal underneath the floor of the main trap. The raptor is caught after it enters the cage to eat the bait. The investigation resulted in three South Carolina men being sentenced to pay a total of \$77,000 and banned from hunting for one year. Over 30 raptor carcasses were retrieved. Photo: USFWS



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
 Office of Law Enforcement
 Prepared by Stacey Pieters on August 15, 2017



August 2016 - July 2017 LEMIS Adjudication Statistics for Region 4

Criminal Fines/Penalties

Fines Imposed	Fines Suspended	Restitution	Forfeiture of Collateral	Criminal Forfeiture	Property Forfeited	Other Directed Sanctions
\$185,259.40	\$0.00	\$15,168.73	\$92,278.50	\$0.00	\$15,000.00	\$10,766.00

Civil Penalties

Property Forfeited	Negotiated Other Payments	Negotiated Agreement	Civil Penalty Assessments	Other Negotiated Payments
\$138,339.00	\$100.00	\$124,750.00	\$97,250.00	\$11,242.97

Other Negotiated Payments

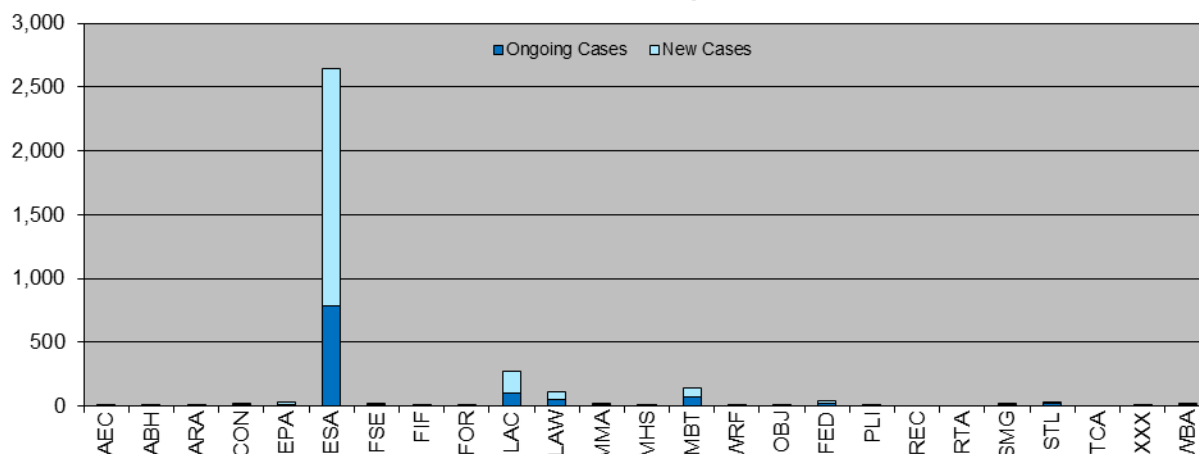
Sentencing Summary

Jail (months)	Suspended (months)	Probation (months)	Home Confinement (months)	Halfway House (months)	Community Service (hours)	Suspension/Revocation of Privileges (months)
21.7	0.0	1,218.0	47.3	0.0	402.0	672.0

August 2016 - July 2017 LEMIS Violation by Act Statistics for Region 4

Act Description	Act	Ongoing Cases	New Cases	Total Cases	Act Description	Act	Ongoing Cases	New Cases	Total Cases
African Elephant Act	AEC	5	4	9	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	MBT	68	71	139
Airborne Hunting Act	ABH	1	1	2	National Wildlife Refuge	WRF	3	1	4
Archeological Resources	ARA	2	1	3	Obstruction of Justice	OBJ	4	1	5
Conspiracy	CON	9	2	11	Other Federal Laws	FED	25	12	37
Eagle Protection Act	EPA	14	12	26	Permit/License	PLI	1	1	2
Endangered Species Act	ESA	788	1,855	2,643	Recreational Act	REC	0	0	0
False Statements	FSE	7	1	8	Rhino Tiger Act	RTA	0	0	0
Federal Insect/Fungi/Rodent	FIF	2	2	4	Smuggling	SMG	15	7	22
Foreign Laws	FOR	0	2	2	State Law	STL	19	13	32
Lacey Act	LAC	102	172	274	Tariff Classification Act	TCA	0	0	0
Lacey Act - Wildlife	LAW	51	63	114	Undefined	XXX	1	4	5
Marine Mammal Act	MMA	11	13	24	Wild Bird Conservation Act	WBA	6	2	8
Migratory Bird / Stamp Act	MHS	1	4	5	Total All Cases		1,135	2,244	3,379

Total Cases by Act





United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Office of Law Enforcement

Prepared by Stacey Pieters on August 15, 2017

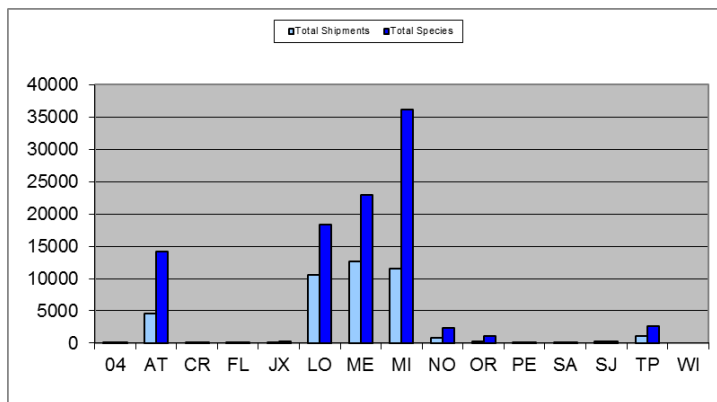


August 2016 - July 2017 LEMIS Port Statistics for Region 4

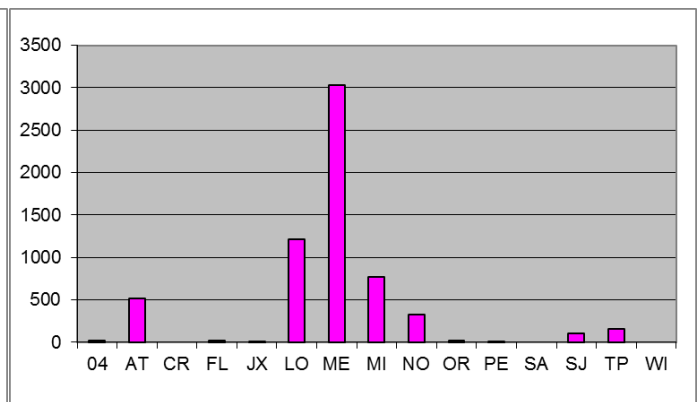
Port	Total Shipments	Total Species	Avg. Number of Species per Shipment	Total Declared Value	Total Number of Inspections (by shipment)	Percent Inspected	Total Number of Seizures (by shipment*)
All Other (04)	42	128	3.0	\$175	19	45.24%	17
Atlanta (AT)	4,624	14,207	3.1	\$88,155,013	512	11.07%	47
Charleston (CR)	5	6	1.2	\$276,194	0	0.00%	0
Fort Lauderdale (FL)	21	33	1.6	\$1,509	20	95.24%	14
Jacksonville (JX)	124	286	2.3	\$4,155,778	6	4.84%	2
Louisville (LO)	10,521	18,345	1.7	\$59,511,762	1,218	11.58%	70
Memphis (ME)	12,619	22,982	1.8	\$47,617,083	3,031	24.02%	55
Miami (MI)	11,531	36,155	3.1	\$322,596,112	773	6.70%	296
New Orleans (NO)	751	2,338	3.1	\$123,272,396	321	42.74%	3
Orlando (OR)	255	1,116	4.4	\$662,728	20	7.84%	5
Port Everglades (PE)	10	17	1.7	\$285,615	5	50.00%	6
Savannah (SA)	9	11	1.2	\$143,620	0	0.00%	0
San Juan (SJ)	204	303	1.5	\$12,597,732	109	53.43%	8
Tampa (TP)	1,076	2,635	2.4	\$6,372,055	154	14.31%	18
Wilmington (WI)	0	0	0.0	\$0	0	0.00%	0
Total	41,792	98,562	2.4	\$665,647,772	6,188	14.81%	541

*Seizure count is for all shipments which were fully or partially seized.

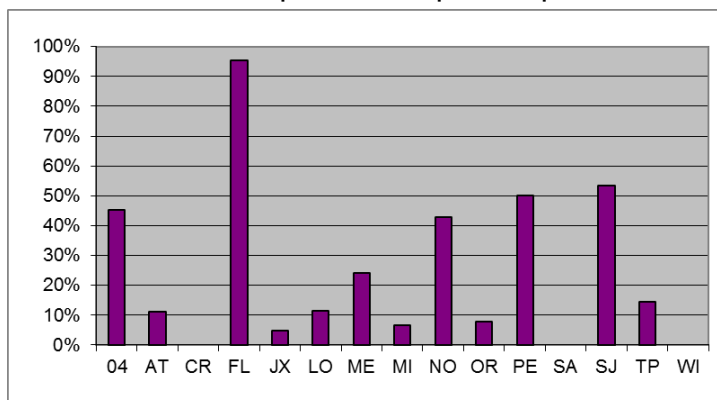
Total Shipments and Species per Port



Total Number of Inspections per Port



Percent of Shipments Inspected per Port



Total Number of Seizures per Port

