

Law Enforcement Session Article

Conservation and the Courts: Barriers to Wildlife Law Enforcement in Georgia

Mary Eleanor Wickersham, Valdosta State University, 1500 North Patterson Street, Valdosta, GA 31698

Abstract: In Georgia, where this study was conducted, the size of the fine a violator pays for a wildlife citation is dependent on the county and the specific court in which he or she is sentenced. A highly politicized court system and complex intergovernmental relationships have led to uneven enforcement of game and fish laws in the state. This lack of uniform enforcement reduces the deterrent effect of the work of conservation rangers. Data from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and interviews with stakeholders in the system confirm greatly enhanced power in local courts, where convictions and fines are often a matter of politics and personal opinion rather than law. Even the perpetrator's chances of getting caught are linked to the ability of the conservation ranger to effectively perform the work due to the politics that surround enforcement of hunting and fishing laws. The intricacies of the intergovernmental relationships among the entities responsible for enforcement of wildlife laws are more like a "crazy quilt" than the orderliness that is demonstrated in many other intergovernmental relationships, primarily because of the high degree of local control within the context of state and federal laws. The result is uneven enforcement of state laws due to greatly enhanced local power that flows primarily to probate and state court judges, some of whom play politics with their judgments.

Key words: law enforcement, wildlife, intergovernmental relations, local courts

Proc. Annu. Conf. Southeast. Assoc. Fish and Wildl. Agencies 65:156–161

The world record largemouth bass, 10.1 kg, is prominently displayed near the entrance of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Law Enforcement Office in rural Walton County. In the back offices, however, taxidermied specimens of illegally taken wildlife, including a Georgia black bear and a Colorado big-horn sheep, form a "wall of shame" for hunters and anglers who have broken state and federal game and fish laws. Less obvious than the trophies and ill-gotten species, but nonetheless present, is a persistent challenge to the wildlife enforcement bureaucracy's ability to fulfill its mission "to conserve our natural resources and to protect the people we serve" and to "maintain public support through fair and vigorous law enforcement, quality education, and community involvement" (Georgia Department of Natural Resources 2011). Nowhere else in state government are the intergovernmental relationships more complex and interwoven than in the area of wildlife management, where state and federal agencies interact with local, state, and federal courts and elected officials, made all the more complicated by local power and politics.

In Georgia, the size of the fine a violator pays for a wildlife citation is dependent on the county and the specific court in which he or she is sentenced. Even the perpetrator's chances of getting caught are linked to the ability of the conservation ranger, previously known as the game warden, to effectively perform the work

due to the politics that surround enforcement of hunting and fishing laws. The intricacies of the relationships are more like a "crazy quilt" than the orderliness that is demonstrated in many other intergovernmental relationships, primarily because of the high degree of local control within the context of state and federal laws. The result is uneven enforcement of state laws due to greatly enhanced local power that flows primarily to probate and state court judges, some of whom play politics with their judgments.

Methods

Data on adjudicated wildlife citations from 2000 through 2009 was provided for this study by the Law Enforcement Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Citations are routinely provided by conservation rangers to the state law enforcement office for the agency's database and include the following information: the county in which the violation took place, the date and time of the citation, the code section of the law that was violated, a description of the violation, the species (if applicable), the disposition (cash bond, guilty plea, *nolo contendere*, for example), the fine amount when available, the court of jurisdiction, and the name of the judge. Because there is no state requirement for courts to report fines either to DNR or to any administrative arm of the courts, the linkage of citations to fine amounts is done manually by the ranger, despite the

fact that many counties have electronic case management systems. In general, rangers make periodic visits, sometimes only once or twice a year, to the courts where their cases are heard to collect fine amounts for each citation written if the case has been adjudicated. Because cases may take as long as two years to work through the court system and because reporting of fines in the state database is dependent on the ranger, the database is not perfect, especially for more current years. To provide a more accurate view of totals, adjudicated cases from 2000 through 2007 were used for purposes of calculating revenues and case load by court. A total of 58,663 adjudicated violations with fine amounts were listed in the database for the 2000 to 2007 time period for cases in city, magistrate, probate, state, federal, and “other” courts, which include juvenile courts. To improve reliability of the data, a second database of violations and fines developed by DNR to look for problem areas and trends, was queried by DNR law enforcement for 14 similarly-sized small counties for a closer look at local court systems. DNR also provided information on the total number of rangers and licenses.

Some fines in the databases may reflect multiple violations, for example, boating while intoxicated and fishing without a license, may have one fine that covers both violations. Despite some missing data, the large number of citations helps ensure reliability of the findings. To further verify data, gain perspective, and clarify information from the database, interviews were conducted with a former DNR Commissioner, two Superior Court judges, and approximately 20 probate and state court judges and court clerks, some of whom provided fine/bond forfeiture schedules. Interviewees who were directly quoted asked to remain anonymous due to the highly charged political atmosphere that surrounds local enforcement and prosecution of wildlife violations.

Results

While voluntary adherence to the law is the goal of wildlife enforcement, part of successful compliance is the deterrent effect of sanctions on lawbreakers. Successful enforcement of wildlife laws in Georgia requires intergovernmental cooperation between the executive branch, represented by the Department of Natural Resources, the multi-pronged judicial branch, local elected officials, and, to a lesser degree, members of the legislature. The public also plays a role. The roles these intergovernmental actors play in enforcement are discussed through the lens of DNR citations and court fines as described in the DNR databases that were accessed.

The Courts

In Georgia, the local system of courts dictates the venue for misdemeanor wildlife cases. As with courts in other civil and criminal matters, the higher the court, the broader the venue. While Georgia

law gives jurisdiction for misdemeanor wildlife violations to probate courts, local decision-making based on the number and capacity of courts allows other courts to handle cases that are within their purview, thereby adding magistrate, city, superior, state, and in rare cases, juvenile courts, to the court milieu. In general, most cases that go to federal court relate to federal laws concerning protected or migratory species or illegal actions on federal lands, although some of these cases are misdemeanors. Superior courts are more likely to hear felony cases, but in some instances, these courts are hearing misdemeanors either because of distribution of court load or absence of a lower court that could handle the violations in the county where the violation occurred. Some misdemeanors in the superior courts are associated with other violations that carry felony status.

Since nearly all hunting and fishing violations are misdemeanors, the great bulk of cases, 90 percent, go to probate and state courts with 7% heard in superior courts and much smaller percentages going to federal, magistrate, city, and other courts. Most cases end up in bond forfeiture or fine payment following a guilty or *nolo contendere* plea, although many are dismissed. Superior courts hear only 7% of cases but produce 10% of fine revenue. Probate courts hear 49% of cases with 48% of revenue, and state courts hear 41% of cases with 39% of total revenue. Federal courts hear 2% of the cases and take in 2% of fines.

The fines collected by the counties do not go to the state agency. Georgia law allows the court that has assigned jurisdiction to keep the fine receipts to cover court costs with approximately 40% in state-mandated surcharges on top of the base fine going to other funds including indigent defense, the victims’ assistance fund, the jail fund, and costs of law libraries. The remainder of the money goes into the general treasury of the county (O.C.G.A. §27-1-14). Magistrate and “other” court average fines are less meaningful because of the small number of cases assigned to these venues in comparison with local state and probate courts. From 2000 through 2007, the mean superior court fine was approximately 36% higher than locally-based probate courts and 39% higher than state court fines. These higher averages likely relate to the fact that Superior Courts are hearing more felony cases and misdemeanors that are considered of a “high and aggravated nature” (O.C.G.A. §27-3-48(b)) although in some smaller counties, all cases are heard in Superior Court.

Because probate and state courts are local courts, there is much speculation that local politics may influence judges to lower fines. The supposition is not, however, entirely supported by examination of specific fines. “Hunting deer at night,” for example, carries a minimum US\$500 fine in state statute (O.C.G.A. §27-3-48). DNR data for adjudicated fines indicates that “hunting at night” fines are higher in probate and state courts than in superior courts, where the average fine for the years 2006 and 2007 was \$471, compared

to \$676 in probate court and \$523 in state court. These averages do not tell the complete story, however. For this two-year time period, approximately one-third of the 278 citations for hunting deer at night had fines lower than the state mandated minimum. Of those fines below the state minimum, 53% were in state courts, 19% in probate courts, and 35% in superior courts. Other courts were not analyzed for variation because of the small number of cases. Some discretion on the part of the judge is clearly important, since ignorance of the law, age of the perpetrator, and perhaps the need for food might be excuses; however, this data demonstrates that the fine depends not only on the violation, but also on the jurisdiction and the judge's sympathies.

Some fine and bond forfeiture schedules are published, although all are flexible. In certain counties, the fines are completely up to the discretion of the judge, sometimes on the advice of the solicitor. Clarke County State Court, for example, has no fine schedule and reported in an e-mail that most of the fines are between \$50 and \$200 (Clarke County State Court personal communication). Gwinnett County State Court has no published schedule and reports that the solicitor "usually recommends \$50" (Gwinnett County State Court personal communication). Personal inquiries by the researcher and requests from the presiding officers of both the State Court and Probate Court Councils returned fewer than 15 fine schedules, but others were obtained through a request from the Georgia Administrative Office of the Courts. Not all schedules provided information on all types of violations. A limited number of sample fine amounts were taken from actual fine databases provided by counties from their case management systems. Table 1 demonstrates the wide range of fines by county for the same offenses.

Where politics does come into play in some counties, however, is in the setting of fines, in uneven imposition of fines among individuals and classes of violators, and whether fines are issued at all. Since nearly all fines are discretionary, there is considerable variation from county to county. One state court judge reports that in his first year of office, he referred to the published fines of his predecessor. Since that time, he has met regularly with the conservation ranger to ensure that fines are appropriate, and he also contacts other counties to determine their fines. "I work with the ranger," he explains. "If people come to my court with bad attitudes, I have the discretion to adjust the fine accordingly." Politics, he admits, come into play in some counties with which he is familiar. "People get angry when the judge requires them to forfeit 'granddaddy's rifle' or when they are required to pay a big fine, so in some counties, the judges just minimize or dismiss local cases in order to keep their supporters happy," he continued. "They don't want to lose a vote." One state court judge who uses a schedule of fines commented that in some local courts, "Out-of-state hunters get eaten up with fines,

Table 1. Fine amounts (in US\$) for sampled Georgia state and probate courts.

	Fishing without a license	Hunting big game over bait	Hunting deer at night	Non-resident hunting without a license	Resident hunting without a license	Hunting without fluorescent orange	Interference with an officer
	25	122	100	89	72	25	200
	58	125	300	100	75	75	351
	72	148	500	139	89	75	700
	84	150	500	150	94	75	800
	89	200	500	200	95	100	1300
	94	212	500	204	100	100	
	96	250	650	250	100	100	
	100	285	679	260	100	130	
	100	295	688	300	104	180	
	100	300	700	300	120		
	100	342	700	405	135		
	140	350	700	418	140		
	260	390	705		140		
	300	396	805		150		
		405			150		
		550			260		
					300		
Avg	115.57	272.50	573	234.58	130.82	90.55	670.2
SD	19.95	30.18	50.79	31.36	14.96	14.25	192.01
CI	43.09	64.32	109.73	69.02	31.72	32.86	533.22

while the locals get off light." The mean fine from sampled counties is about 44% higher for non-residents, but in some counties the non-resident fine is almost three times as high.

Such discretion creates other difficulties that have ramifications on both the local and state levels. One county Clerk of Court reported a verbal altercation with a hunter from a neighboring county who was appalled at his fine of \$408 for hunting deer over bait. In his home county, he reported, the fine was only \$60. In another instance, a court officer reported that the court fine for out-of-state hunters for hunting without a license was lower than the cost of the license itself. In her county, a mecca for out-of-state hunters, many hit the woods, fields, and lakes without benefit of a license, figuring it is cheaper to take their chances of getting caught than to purchase the license. This attitude, in turn, fosters non-compliance with the law in other areas.

One other court factor inhibiting the work of rangers is the ranger's response to negative treatment at the hands of the judges. One DNR official who asked to remain anonymous reports that rangers and other law enforcement officers, including state troopers, "are being tried" in some local courts. "At some point," he explains, "the rangers get tired of being belittled, so they don't make cases or they try to make cases in a different court." Since rangers are deputized as federal rangers, if the violation is covered under federal law, cases can be sent to federal courts. In counties where judges have the most egregious records of negativity or disinterest,

Table 2. Summary of adjudicated game and fish citations and total and sample fines by court in 14 similarly sized Georgia counties, 2000 and 2008. Some citations may be missing due to manual reporting.

County	Percentage in forest land 2009 ^a	Adjudicated citations 2000 ^b	Adjudicated citations 2008 ^b	Total fines 2000 ^b	Total fines 2008 ^b	2008 fine for hunting big game over bait ^b	Primary court hearing misdemeanor cases
Bacon	79.2%	26	27	\$3100	\$3650	\$100	state
Candler	58.4%	28	2	\$3575	\$176	\$358*	state
Charlton	89.4%	28	21	\$4570	\$2529	\$305	state
Hancock	90.0%	14	8	\$2821	\$2635	\$537**	probate
Irwin	46.2%	43	40	\$5359	\$6426	\$110**	probate
Johnson	74.3%	14	0	\$1600	\$0	\$217*	probate
McIntosh	62.9%	148	0	\$16681	\$0	NA***	state
Pulaski	50.8%	38	38	\$14335	\$8587	\$396	probate
Seminole	28.5%	6	15	\$945	\$775	\$110	probate
Terrell	71.5%	31	14	\$9778	\$3869	\$364	probate
Towns	78.9%	84	48	\$10338	\$12202	NA***	probate
Turner	39.3%	2	10	\$325	\$2294	\$282	state
Wilkes	78.6%	37	37	\$4037	\$3959	\$204	probate
Wilkinson	96.0%	43	14	\$4800	\$4252	\$404	probate
Totals		542	274	\$82,264	\$51,354		
Average		38.7	19.7	\$5876	\$3668	\$282	

^a2007 figure
^{**}Most commonly imposed fine
^{***}NA – no cases 2007–2009
 a. University of Georgia Statistics System, 2009
 b. Georgia DNR Data

it is not uncommon to see misdemeanor offenses in federal court. From 2000 through 2006, for example, at least 505 Rabun County game and fish cases were adjudicated in federal court.

To drill down into the county-level data, all Georgia counties with populations between 9000 and 11,500 were selected for closer study. Most of these counties are rural counties, where hunting and fishing activities may be more accessible than in more urban counties. Most are heavily forested, and others are major agricultural centers providing food and cover for wildlife. McIntosh has a large commercial and game fishing industry, and Seminole and Towns are home to major lake systems. Table 2 provides a summary of the number of adjudicated citations and total fine amounts for 2000 and 2008, the percentage of the county in forest as an indication of rurality, a sample fine common to most of the counties to show range, and the main court venue for game and fish violations. The number of adjudicated citations dropped by nearly 50% and fine revenues decreased by approximately 38% from 2000 to 2008.

DNR officials and judges agree that there are pressures on local courts to disregard state law, especially in a few rural communities. The power of the bench and the prestige it engenders play a role in decision-making for small-time politicians who can win friends and influence, as well as another term in office, by doing favors for influential citizens. A story told by an anonymous DNR official and confirmed by other elected officials concerns a small Georgia

county, where a few property owners who rent hunting lands pressured the probate judge to dismiss fines for hunters. The probate judge, in turn, complained to her state representative, a member of the state Senate Natural Resources Committee, who asked the Department of Natural Resources leadership not to allow a ranger to enter that county except in extreme cases. From 2008 through 2010, there were virtually no citations issued in that county. Although strictly forbidden by the rules of the court, another tactic that goes unpublicized, but that is used by sympathetic and highly politicized judges, is to confer with the violator on a new court date without informing the ranger. When the ranger misses the court date, the citation is dismissed for his or her failure to appear.

The Agency

Aside from those counties in which judges in local courts have essentially decided not to enforce state laws for certain constituents, there are other issues working to reduce the number of fines and citations in Georgia over the last decade. First, there has been a significant decrease in hunting and fishing in the United States since 1991 (Aiken 2010). According to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service national report, fishing dropped by nearly 8% and hunting by nearly 2% between 1991 and 2006 (Aiken 2010), although the declines have been less dramatic in Georgia and have occurred mainly in freshwater fishing and small game hunting. The suburbanization of America has reduced convenient hunting access to persons in urban areas, and fewer citizens are growing up with ready access to an afternoon in the woods or on the pond. Hunting, in particular, is less a part of current culture than it was even a generation or two ago, when shooting a deer or killing a dove was often more a means of putting food on the table than simply sport.

The correlation demonstrating the downward trend in the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses since 2000 tells part of the story of decreased fine revenues ($R^2=0.39$), but the more direct correlation is between declining fine revenues and the number of conservation rangers ($R^2=0.71$) during a decade when the state's population has increased by over 18% (U.S. Census Bureau 2011). While the need for wildlife law enforcement varies from area to area, rangers are stretched thin across the state. DNR data for 2010 indicates that there are 208 rangers for Georgia's almost 58,000 square miles, about 279 square miles per ranger if the assigned areas were divided equally. Fewer rangers means fewer people in the field, of course, but a type of multiplier effect compounds the problem as the number of rangers per square mile is reduced. Hall notes, "Insufficient violator risk or fear provided by traditional wildlife law enforcement techniques was illustrated by Smith (1982) who reported that deer poacher detection rates in California, Idaho, and Maine were estimated to be 2.2%, 1.1%, and 1.2%,

respectively” (Hall 1992, 534). Eliason summarizes other studies indicating “that ratios of discovered offenses to actual offenses ranged from 1:83 to 1:30” (Eliason 2003, 226). When the risk of getting caught is minimal, and clearly the apprehension rates are low, penalties become less of a deterrent to breaking the law. The declining number of citations in Georgia reflects a lower deterrent level than in past years when more rangers were in the field.

Other Elected Officials

The Department of Natural Resources is most effective, according to DNR rangers, in counties in which the conservation ranger works cooperatively with the Sheriff’s Department and the courts. One local sheriff commented on the expert training the rangers bring to their jobs: “We often call them in for help. They are the best trained law enforcement officers in the state.” Conservation rangers must have at least two years of college and have intensive training in law and firearms, far surpassing the requirements for most certified police officers and many of the probate court judges, who are required to have only a high school education if the county has a population of 96,000 or fewer citizens. In some counties, the sheriff’s department shares resources, like boats, with the DNR rangers or works cooperatively to cover problem areas where wildlife and environmental issues are tied into drug violations. Another sheriff commented that the rangers have more powers than other certified officers. “They can arrest people anywhere, for all practical purposes, so they have a lot of power,” he said. That power can only translate to effectiveness, however, with the cooperation of the local courts.

One state court judge commented that sheriffs also have the capacity to arrest violators of wildlife laws, but they seldom do so for the same reasons local judges dismiss cases. “Sheriffs need local votes just like judges do, so they’re less likely to arrest somebody for a wildlife violation,” he explained. There are advantages to the state employment of rangers, who are less subject to local political pressures and conflicts of interest than local judges and sheriffs. Upholding the laws often rests on the determination of the local ranger and the landowners who make complaints about trespassers and illegal hunting. In some Georgia counties where rangers are unwelcome, landowners with illegal hunters have little to no recourse.

The Public

Another factor that has local influence on the imposition of penalties for game and fish law violators is a prevailing attitude in some communities that landowners and their hunting and fishing guests have the right to do whatever they choose. Hall wrote about the “general social acceptance of those who violated hunting and fishing laws,” while game wardens are “stigmatized” (Hall 1992, 533). The popularity of the 1980s television comedy, “The Dukes of Hazzard”

was based in part on the young, male stars as folk heroes whose chief attribute was their ambivalence about the law. They were reinvented Robin Hoods, for all practical purposes, and represented long-held opinions held by some Americans of individual rights.

Hunting and fishing are rooted in the culture, as evidenced by the Georgia Constitution, which includes the following: “The tradition of fishing and hunting and the taking of fish and wildlife shall be preserved for the people and shall be managed by law and regulation for the public good” (Georgia Constitution, Article 1, Section I. Paragraph XXVIII). Title 27 of the Georgia Code includes the following:

In recognition of this cultural heritage and the tradition of stewardship it embodies, and of the important role that hunting and fishing and the taking of wildlife play in the state’s economy and in the preservation and management of the state’s natural communities, the General Assembly declares that Georgia citizens have the right to take fish and wildlife, subject to the laws and regulations adopted by the board for the public good and general welfare, which laws and regulations should be vigorously enforced (O.C.G.A. § 27-1-3(a)).

Many Georgians interpret this “right” granted in the Constitution and state law as an entitlement and find little value in limits or controls on the take or even the necessity of purchasing a hunting or fishing permit. Such values are often reflected in those who are elected to judgeships and to other county offices, which have power and influence over court decisions.

There are also other excuses for illegal hunting behavior, which are often accepted in communities where hunting and fishing are passions more than pastimes. Eliason (2003) points to several “neutralization techniques,” excuses in plain language, which may be exhibited by the errant hunter or judges who choose not to penalize lawbreakers:

- The Denial of Injury (i.e., no one was hurt because of the activity (Sykes and Matza);
- The Metaphor of the Ledger (i.e., an individual feels all of his/her good qualities make up for the instance(s) in which they violated the law (Klockars);
- The Denial of the Necessity of the Law (i.e., occurs when individuals feel the law is not fair or just, and use this as justification for engaging in deviance) (Coleman); [and]
- The Claim that Everybody Else is Doing It (i.e., an individual feels if everyone else is doing something, they should be able to do it also without getting punished) (Coleman).

Such excuses make violations of law a matter of individual rather than societal concern. If protection of wildlife and the environment are, in fact, in the best interest of society at large, then individual interests should be referred to a higher plain. Lewis writes, “Claiming to represent the public good, some public officials and

technical experts may confound the public interest by confusing it with their own preferences and biases” (Lewis 2006, 698). The excuses cited by Eliason reflect a focus on individual and private interests in lieu of the greater good.

Discussion

Hall writes, “The American judicial system was founded upon the principle that law violators are punished to protect the public’s interest, thereby promoting respect for the law while affording adequate deterrence to others . . . (Hall 1992, 534). The public interest in terms of wildlife violations is obviously defined differently from county to county in Georgia. If, in fact, protection of wildlife resources and public lands is in the public interest, it becomes an ethical duty of public administrators and officers of the court to protect that widely held interest. The disconnect lies, perhaps in part, in the concepts of current interests and future interests. Carol Lewis, who considers “sustainability” of resources as a matter of public interest, writes, “The moral responsibility here rests on future generations’ vulnerability to current decisions with irreversible repercussions” (Lewis 2006, 698). Some local judges fail to defer their own personal interests in future re-election to the higher long-term public interest of wildlife protection.

The adjudication of wildlife violations in some counties of the state also fails to meet ethical standards for current public interest. The county gets no revenue from violators, the state loses revenue from hunters who fail to purchase licenses, and, in counties where there are impediments to the work of wildlife rangers, state taxpayers pay for services that they do not receive. There are also other negative ramifications to the average citizen, including lack of enforcement for related crimes like littering, hunting or boating while intoxicated, destruction of wildlife habitat and archaeological sites, protection of endangered species, lack of oversight for hunting and fishing safety, lack of funding for game and fish management, and no enforcement activities to control impact on game and fish species. Lack of respect for laws can foster further noncompliance and, when witnessed by others, Eliason’s “neutralization techniques” may become endemic.

One of the challenges of ethical analysis of enforcement of game and fish laws is that it is difficult to put a value on wildlife. How much is a dove worth? How much is a deer worth? The traditional cost/benefit analysis is not a workable methodology. Also important to the ethics equation is that animals are not generally “residents” of one specific county, nor do they belong to any individual. One judge’s dismissal of violations for pollution, taking too many animals or fish, or killing of protected wildlife affects others far beyond the borders of that county. In a recent incident, three whooping cranes of the total wild population of fewer than

400 were killed in Calhoun County, Georgia. The widely disparate fines for endangered species cases reflect varying values placed on protected wildlife. Recent fines for taking the protected alligator snapping turtle, for example, varied from a high of \$1500 to a low of \$225 in federal court. The lower fines may reflect a lower value placed on endangered plants and animals in that community or by that individual judge.

Because the agency whose employees write the citations receive none of the income or have control over collections, opportunities for conflict of interest are reduced. While the ranger has a mission to protect wildlife and the environment through enforcement of state and federal laws, the personal “best interest” of the collector of the fines may be another matter altogether. In some counties, “sticking it to outsiders” is a means of raising revenue, while other counties dismiss fines, viewing enforcement as a deterrent to economic development or at least to the economic well-being of a few landowners. Such misalignment of goals creates problems and poor outcomes.

A former Georgia DNR Commissioner makes clear that the role of DNR enforcement has never been to raise revenues from fines. The goal, he explains, has always been voluntary compliance with the law through appreciation and education (Barrett 2011). The deterrent was intended to be secondary. Clearly, in any endeavor, compliance is a package deal. Respect for the environment and the law requires intergovernmental solidarity, including using enforcement as a tool to achieve compliance. Playing politics with any aspect of enforcement confounds the agency’s ability to meet its mission.

Acknowledgements

Appreciation is expressed to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and to Captain Mike England, in particular, for sharing data for this paper.

Literature Cited

- Aiken, R. 2010. Trends in fishing and hunting 1991–006: A focus on fishing and hunting by species. Addendum to the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (December).
- Barrett, L. 2011. Personal communication.
- Eliason, S. L. 2003. Illegal hunting and angling: The neutralization of wildlife law violations. *Society and Animals* 11(3):225–243.
- Hall, W. D. 1992. Compliance: The mission of wildlife enforcement. Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 46:532–542.
- Lewis, C. 2006. In pursuit of the public interest. *Public Administration Review* (September–October):694–701.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 2011. U.S. Census Bureau delivers Georgia’s 2010 census population totals, including first look at race and hispanic origin data for legislative redistricting. (March 17). <http://2010.census.gov/news/releases/operations/cb11-cn97.html>. Accessed 28 May 2011.
- University of Georgia Statistics System. 2011. <http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu>. Accessed 28 May 2011.