



2019 Bulletin

Law Enforcement Section

ALABAMA

Michael M. Weathers, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Law Enforcement Section of the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division provides assistance in the protection and management of Alabama's wildlife resources and the safety of the public through a fair and balanced enforcement program.

TRAINING

During 2019 the Law Enforcement Section conducted its most ambitious training program in Section history with the implementation of the Rural Operations Training Program.



The goal of the Rural Operations Training Program is twofold, initially its purpose is to give new Conservation Enforcement Officers a head start in their careers with skills and techniques such as man tracking and wilderness first aid that often take years to become proficient in. Further, this program serves an outreach function in offering rural technique training to other state and local law enforcement agencies as well as rescue squads that often work in the same environment.

Throughout the month of May five sessions were conducted across the state with all law enforcement officers from four of the five Divisions of the Alabama Department of Conservation receiving this training. The Rural Operations Training Program has been wildly successful with requests for the course far outreaching our time to conduct it.



The Law Enforcement Section continued the introduction of the Colt Model 6720 lightweight AR15 carbine across the state as a replacement for the government owned 1033 M16 rifles. The new Colt carbines are equipped with Aimpoint PRO Red Dot Optic and have been exceptionally well received by all officers who have been issued them. Each officer receiving this new rifle has attended an 8-hour training course detailing its operation and maintenance.

Throughout 2019 Law Enforcement Section instructors taught our Survival Swim Training and Basic Water Rescue Course to local law enforcement agencies that requested the training. This course better prepared officers to defend themselves against combative individuals while swimming and defending themselves with firearms while swimming. This training was in response to multiple deadly force assaults witnessed nationwide against LE officers while in or around water.



In addition to the survival swim training, instructors of the Law Enforcement Section conducted several Basic Patrol Boat Operators Courses in the summer of 2019 for local law enforcement agencies that requested the training. Assisting other state and local law enforcement agencies serves to make everyone more aware of our agency and capabilities.

FUNDING AND STAFFING

The Law Enforcement Section was able to hire 8 new officers during the past year, however due to retirements we are still at historically low staffing levels. Budget cuts are likely, due to a continued decrease in hunting license sales; it is unknown when we will be able to significantly increase our staffing levels. Additional dedicated funding from license sales or other sources is necessary to safeguard public resources and continue current levels of public service.

Communications remains a major officer safety concern as we continue to rely on a commercial carrier for law enforcement dispatch. As other local agencies have upgraded their own communications, our officers continue to struggle for reliable communications with local agencies when assistance is needed. In addition, our own system is often inadequate in emergency situations. We have spent thousands of dollars in equipment in recent years attempting to improve officers' ability to communicate with local agencies. This year the Law Enforcement Section made the decision to explore entirely new methods of dispatching for our agency. After researching all currently available options a plan was implemented to merge our 24-hour dispatch center with that of the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC). AFC maintains a statewide analog radio repeater system that has far superior coverage to any of the many current digital systems across the state. From an

officer safety standpoint this is a huge leap forward albeit with dated technology. The analog system was very favorably accepted by all enforcement officers as confidence in their current Southernlinc systems had dropped to an all-time low.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

A new online "Game Breeder Database" went live this year. All licensed deer breeders throughout the state must now comply with regulations requiring them to keep their inventories up to date in this database. Taking approximately five years to develop and implement, the database is a massive step forward in oversight of this industry. The Alabama Deer Association, a collective representing the monetary interests of the commercial deer breeder industry in Alabama, fought against the implementation of the database. To date the database has been very successful in detecting unlawful deer movements and even theft on deer breeder facilities in our state. Though resistance to the database was severe, most in the industry have now embraced the database and with the training that our Law Enforcement Section offered in its use, have now begun to understand why it was needed. In the event of Chronic Wasting Disease detection in Alabama the database will prove a valuable tool if deer breeder operations are involved.

The hunting of white-tailed deer and feral swine by the aid of bait was made lawful with the passage of legislation establishing a "baiting privilege license" for those species. Now all residents and nonresidents may purchase a license allowing them to hunt by the aid of bait. Residents pay \$15.00 for the license and nonresidents pay \$51.00. This issue was fought over by the Alabama state legislature for the last sixteen years in some form or fashion. At the time of writing it is unknown how many will choose to purchase the license, but it is believed that the license will be successful. The funds generated by the sale of this new license will be distributed to the Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division and due to the fact that no exemptions to the license exist some funds are eligible for federal match. Under this new license, groups previously exempted from license requirements including those under 16 years of age and those over 65 along with landowners hunting on their own property must purchase the license.

This year Conservation Enforcement Officer William Freeman was promoted to the rank of Area Sergeant with the creation of a new position tasked with outreach and minority recruitment. Sgt. Freeman has served on the SEAFWA MINRC committee and been very active in furthering the Division's recruitment programs. The creation of this position marks a change in how our Division undertakes these activities. Now Sgt. Freeman will represent all three Sections of the Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries and be a truly shared staff member. The benefit from this change will be seen across the Division.

This year the Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF) donated 20 cell phone based game cameras to the department for use in combating illegal dumping of deer carcass' and illegal hunting. To date the use of the cameras has proven successful, generating many arrests that have been attributed to their use. With the continued successful use of the cameras we anticipate adding more for officer's use in the future. This has been an ongoing program with AWF and has the effect of force multiplication within our Section. As it has been described by supervisors in the field, the game camera is like having an extra officer who is never off duty and always willing to work surveillance regardless of weather. The usefulness of the camera evidence in court can't be overstated.

STATE ISSUES/LEGISLATION AFFECTING LAW ENFORCEMENT

Avian influenza is a continuing worry with the commercial poultry farmers of this state. Because hunting activities commonly occur on poultry farms our officers protect against the possible spread of this virus. This is done through the use of disinfectant spray and protective boot covers recommended and provided by the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries when on or around farms.

Lack of minimum standards, licensing and permitting of hunting enclosures continues to pose a threat to our public wildlife resources through the potential for illegal importation of deer. Reports of illegal or questionable activity within enclosures are often received, but difficult to investigate do to access limitations.

As other states restrict or limit the ability to possess dangerous exotic animals we have received inquiries from individuals that would like to move to the state and bring with them various exotic animals. Tigers, elephants, lions, and varied reptiles are often the focus of these inquiries. Though there are limited regulations prohibiting importation of some animals, we do not currently have laws or regulations to prevent the import or possession by private collectors of these dangerous exotic animals. Continuing to be a refuge for these animals may well fuel the illegal trade in wildlife on a global scale and possibly endanger our citizens should an animal escape. The numbers and locations of dangerous non-native animals being housed in the state are not completely known.

AWARDS / ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Alabama Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation presented their Conservation Officer of the Year award to Officer Jason McHenry of Autauga County. The Shikar Safari International Club awarded Officer Jason Bassett of St. Clair County with their Officer of the Year award. Conservation Officer Jody Yancy of Cherokee County was the Alabama Wildlife Federation Officer of the Year. Sergeant Jonathan Bartlett received the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies award for Officer of the Year. These

recognitions were based upon superior performance in the field of wildlife law enforcement.

ARKANSAS

Greg Rae, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

We have added some new faces to our ranks. In July we graduated the cadet class of E-1-19. Ten new Wildlife Officers graduated the 18 week academy and were sent out across the state to begin their careers in wildlife law enforcement. Once they arrive in their districts they will begin another 8 weeks of training in the FTO program. We had the pleasure of hosting a group from Tennessee who reviewed our training program and got a taste of our process for training new recruits. Thank you, Tennessee; we hope you took away something that can make your training of new officers successful. We are in the process of preparing for the next cadet class. The advertisement closes July 31st. We are looking at beginning the class the first week of January 2020.

TRAINING

Once again Arkansas hosted the IHEA Hunting Incident Investigation Academy March 4th through the 8th of 2019. Officers from across the country came to Arkansas to hone their skills to help them investigate these incidents.

Since the last report Arkansas has had one participant graduate the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Leadership Academy, Captain Nathan Hellums of Southwest Arkansas completed the academy in September of 2018. Captain Matt Flowers began the training in April of 2019 and will complete the training in September. Captain Flowers supervises six counties located in Central Arkansas.

Captain Bill Ruby, who supervises 6 counties in Northwest Arkansas, graduated from the FBI National Academy in Quantico Virginia. Lieutenant Tracey Blake who is part of our training center staff has been selected to attend the National Academy in 2020. Lieutenant Blake will be the third officer from our agency to attend.

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. These teams are also made available to assist other states. In the past our disaster response teams have been dispatched to other states to help with search and rescue efforts among other duties after natural disasters. This past spring Arkansas experienced historic flooding in the Arkansas River valley stretching from border to border. Towns flooded, levees failed leading to severe agricultural damage. Through it all our disaster response teams were some of the first on the scene. Officers preformed rescues, conducted law enforcement patrols and performed humanitarian relief to the citizens throughout the river valley.

The AGFC Dive Team currently consists of 7 members from across the state. They responded to 19 activations 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. The dive team assisted with evidence and drowning recovery. 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 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.

The Colonel had the privilege of attending National Police Week activities in Washington DC again this year. Every year we send 4 Honor Guard members to assist with Police Week activities. Our delegation had new responsibilities this year. Our Officers participated in the airport detail. They were assigned a specific family and would meet them at the airport gate. From that point they would help them navigate through the airport and to their waiting transportation to get the families to their hotel accommodations. If you have never experienced this it is very sobering. In last year's address I said we were in the process of adding a bag pipe and drum element to our honor guard. I am proud to say "pipe and drum" corp. is up and running. Their first detail was at the Arkansas Law Enforcement

Memorial in May and they were outstanding. If you would like to view their performance you can watch videos on the Arkansas Wildlife Officer Facebook page. Very proud!

I am proud to announce our UAS (drone) program is up and running. We now have 6 drones and 4 FAA certified pilots. The drones were especially useful during the flooding events this year. By using the drones they were able to recon areas and inspect levees from a different view, without putting personnel in danger. Our program was featured in the March-April 2019 issue of "Air Beat", a publication of the Airborne Public Safety Association. This article outlined scene assessment, search and rescue, operations and training as they pertain to wildlife law enforcement. Very useful tool!

Arkansas has been going through the process of updating some of our weapons platforms we issue to Officers. We upgraded our service pistol, Glock 21 .45 Cal and have placed our duty weapons on a 7 year replacement schedule.

Arkansas's 2019 boating officer of the year was Lyndle Crownover. Lyndle is an officer in Baxter County which is in north central Arkansas. This is usually not a big deal however, Lyndle was selected the boating officer of the year for the southern region of the United States. This will place him in the running for the national boating officer of the year which will be selected at the NASBLA conference in Anchorage Alaska.

Safe Schools: It is alarming the number of active shooter incidents that continue to occur. We have asked each of our officers to take the time to spend at their local schools. Visiting with children and staff, walking the halls and eating lunch even sitting in the parking lot being visible during bus drop offs and pick-ups. We believe spending time at the local schools might deter one of the incidents from happening.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

Funding continues to be an issue. As it is with many other states revenue continues to play a major role in attaining our mission. Our hunting license sales are down 10% and fishing license sales are down 9% from the previous year. We were tasked with cutting our division's budget by 20% from the previous year's expenditures. This decrease presented us with some unique challenges. The funding issues have impacted staffing issues. In some cases the agency is not backfilling open positions which increases pressure on staff. Fortunately, it has not affected enforcement at this time however, we are exploring ways to reduce the cost of training so we can continue to remain as close to full staff as possible. We are moving forward with a class of cadets that are certified officers coming into school.

This will allow us to cut the training time more than half. The class will only be 8 weeks long instead of the 18 weeks that it is currently. This will drastically decrease the cost of training. This will help with both funding and staffing issues.

We are still fully involved with our intern program. These college students apply for a summer intern position and it gives us a chance to evaluate them to see if they would be a good fit for our profession. This program has proved successful for us in the past. We are also exploring reducing our minimum qualifications in an effort to increase our applicant pool. We are in no way going to relax or reduce our standards just our qualifications. We want to be able to look at as many people as we can.

We have formed a recruitment team that attends college and high school job fairs in an effort to attract new and interested people into this profession. We will have two of these officers assisting with a recruitment presentation at SEAFWA. I think it will be very interesting.

We continue to pursue new and innovative ways to protect our wildlife, fish and natural resources. Networking and information sharing are great avenues to pursue these objectives.

We are attending conferences across the country 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 as well as being active members of the Mississippi Flyway Council.

FLORIDA

Curtis Brown, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Division of Law Enforcement's consists of 848 sworn personnel who 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 state 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. Additionally, FWC's cooperative agreements with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cross-deputize our officers allowing them to enforce federal marine fisheries and wildlife laws, 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; dignitary protection; mutual aid requests; and domestic security initiatives.

TRAINING

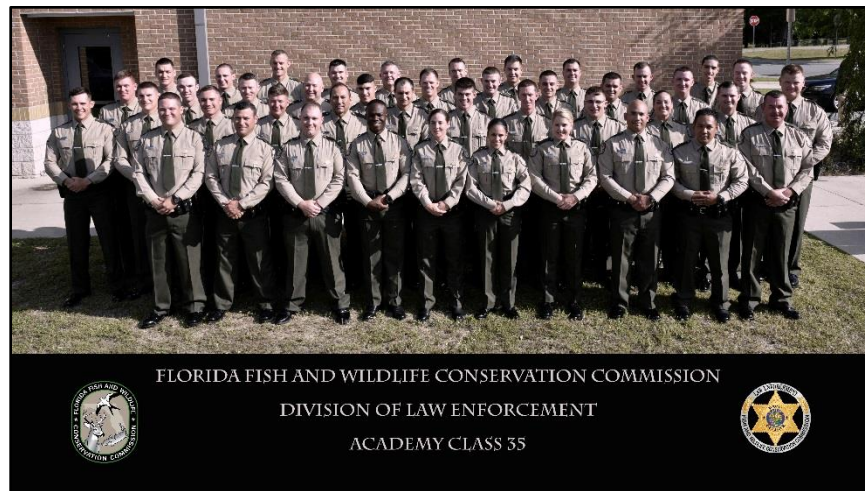
FWC Training Center

In 2018, the FWC Advanced and In-service Training Section conducted multiple training programs for all sworn employees covering defensive tactics, non-lethal weapons and firearms. Primary firearms instructors received a one-week continuing education course to develop their skills and ultimately better develop their students. Additionally, a new career development program provided mission critical training courses to assist in creating a more educated and informed officer corps. The Division recruiters traveled to Tampa to network and attend continuing education training, assisting them in meeting the many challenges of recruiting a diverse workforce.



FWC Officers with Senator Rick Scott

The FWC Law Enforcement Academy held two academies over the past year graduating 75 new officers. During the eight-month academy, recruits were trained in both traditional and conservation law enforcement. Following the aftermath of Hurricane Michael, the Training Section staff assisted with relief efforts by responding directly to areas devastated by the storm. The FWC Training Center also established a transition area on campus, feeding and housing over 200 officers during their deployment to and return from impacted areas.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Boating and Waterways

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 US Coast Guard. These reports are compiled annually to create Florida's Boating Accident Statistical Report. The BSU uses the statistical data to create radio, television and print media outreach promoting boating safety and education. This data is also used to improve the boating safety related educational materials purchased each year. The Unit reviews and approves boating safety education courses, issues Boating Safety Education ID cards to students who have passed the approved courses and manages Florida's boater safety education temporary certificate program allowing boaters to more quickly comply with Florida's boater education requirement.

The BSU participated in the Florida State Fair, the Miami Boat Show, the Florida Sportsman Outdoor and Boat Show, the International Boating & Water Safety Summit, and the International Convention of Allied Sport Fishing Trades. They coordinated National Safe Boating Week press conferences and search and rescue demonstrations across the state. The BSU has also conducted five boating safety instructor workshops, training over 120 United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and Power Squadron instructors around the state.

Collectively, these events allowed FWC to reach millions of boaters with vital safety messaging.

The FWC's Boating Under the Influence (BUI) enforcement efforts in 2018 were a tremendous success. Statewide, FWC officers made 536 BUI cases, removing impaired operators from the water. The BSU trained over 100 state attorneys on BUI law and seated field sobriety tasks around the state.

The BSU was directly involved in training new and current officers through boating accident investigation and reporting courses. The Unit also conducted several training sessions for vessel rental business employees on compliance with personal watercraft and livery requirements. More than 48,000 boating safety identification cards were issued to individuals, and the temporary certificate exams are now available through an online vendor.



Captain Tom Shipp conducting a prosecutor training on how to enforce BUI in court



FWC employee, Brian Rehwinkel, teaching a Boating Safety Instructor Workshop

The Boating Access Unit (BAU) is responsible for the coordination and administration of Florida's Boat Access Program. The State Game Trust Fund, the Marine Resources Conservation Trust Fund and the Federal Grants Trust Fund support the Unit's strategy to identify, develop, maintain and expand boating access sites in coordination with local governments and stakeholders.

The BAU coordinates and administers two grant programs: the Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) and Florida's Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIGP). The FBIP is a state financial assistance program that provides funding through competitive grants for boating access projects and boating-related activities on coastal and inland waters within the state. Eligible program participants include county governments, municipalities, and other governmental entities of the State of Florida. In 2018-19, 16 applications were awarded totaling \$2,128,949 in grant dollars.

The BIGP is administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and FWC is the designated State Administrative Agency (SAA) for the BIGP in Florida. The BIGP provides funding for the

construction, renovation, or maintenance of boating infrastructure for transient (those staying at a facility for 15 days or less) recreational vessels at least 26 feet long that are used primarily for pleasure. In 2018-19, four applications were awarded totaling \$1,575,055 in grant dollars.

Since the mid-1950s, the Commission has built boat ramps in the state that are available to the boating public free of charge. Most sites are open 24 hours a day. Due to the public need for access, FWC staffs a full-time crew to handle construction and repair. The Boat Access Field Unit inspects and maintains all 244 ramps owned and operated by FWC or maintained by FWC with cooperator agreements. Additionally, the BAU aids with waterway marker inventory which includes inventories and assessments, installations, inspections of contractor installations, and flipping waterway marker signs during manatee seasons.

The BAU created the Florida Public Boat Ramp Finder, which provides descriptive information, maps and photographs for over 1,900 public and commercially maintained boat ramps throughout Florida.



FWC's Boat Access Field Unit working on boat ramps

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 boating restricted areas and manatee protection zones implemented under its authority. Statewide, the WMU is responsible for more than 10,000 regulatory

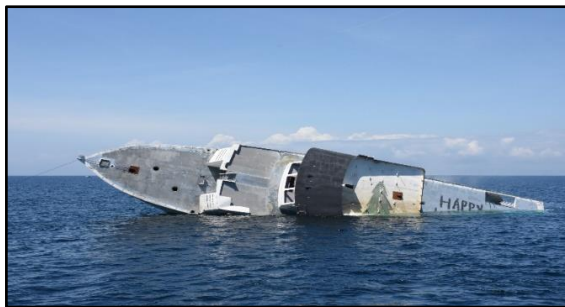
markers and buoys. This can be a challenging task - especially in the aftermath of natural disasters, such as hurricanes. Most recently, Hurricane Michael directly hit Florida resulting in damage to numerous locally maintained waterway markers. The resulting assessment and repair of affected markers challenged the Unit's response plan and required extensive coordination with state and local government entities. In addition, the WMU completed uniform waterway marker construction projects in Volusia, Duval, Clay, and St. Johns counties. These included state and federal manatee protection zone markers and state boating safety markers. The WMU maintains an On-Call Response Program system for identifying and correcting discrepant waterway markers throughout the state of Florida that may pose a threat to public safety. During 2018, the WMU responded to a total of 166 incidents; an increase of 46 percent when compared to historical averages.



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. Currently \$1,000,000 has been allocated for the Derelict Vessel Removal Grant Program for 2018-2019. To date, 12 contracts representing 28 vessels in the amount of \$302,413.10 have been obligated for removal funding assistance to cities and counties throughout Florida. A total of \$697,586.90 remains for additional assistance through December 2019. Applications are being received with additional opportunity announcements statewide. Thanks to the Florida Legislature, this continuing program has been able to help state, county and local governments with the costs related to the removal of derelict vessels, stimulating removal activity throughout the state.

In response to Hurricane Michael, the FWC partnered with the US Coast Guard, NOAA, state, county and municipal partners for a collaborative storm related derelict vessel

response. In total, 544 vessels were assessed by the US Coast Guard and FWC personnel, 175 vessels were removed from state waters in Bay, Franklin, Gulf and Wakulla counties by US Coast Guard contractors and processed and disposed of or returned to owners by the FWC. The total cost of this operation was \$16,515,671.71, of which the FWC is responsible for \$4,128,917.93. The FWC managed one central storage site in Bay County, Florida, to transition the vessels from the water to land, transfer to storage, await owners to recover or process for ultimate disposal. A total of 141 vessels were disposed of with 34 vessels being returned to their owners. The total weight of derelict vessel material removed from the public waters of the state and disposed of in this operation was 891.82 tons or 1.78 million pounds. Additionally, 54,997 gallons of oily water was also mitigated. The final vessel in the project was a 147' vessel named, "El Dorado." This vessel was prepared for reefing and sunk in a designated reefing site in Bay County, Florida. The "El Dorado" now sits at a depth of 110', becoming the newest diving attraction and fish habitat in the area. The mitigation costs for the "El Dorado" was approximately 1.2 million dollars.



CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

Offshore Patrol

The Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) fleet consists of fifteen specialized boats strategically dispersed across Florida's extensive coastline. Of the agency's two heavy endurance vessels, the Gulf Sentry operates out of St. Petersburg while the CT Randall is at Marco Island. Heavy endurance & endurance vessels 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 and recreational fishing vessels. Missions also include providing a reliable operations platform for FWC's dive team program. Many of the OPV vessels provide the space, range and stability for dive related search and recovery and training missions that occur in open waters. The OPV crews' primary enforcement efforts consist of Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) patrols of Federal Exclusive Economic Zone (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 functions for the State of Florida. OPV members have utilized interdisciplinary collaborative communication between law enforcement and research personnel of the Fish & Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI). Joint missions have been made to the Madison-Swanson Marine Reserve and other locations within the Gulf of Mexico. During these missions, marine biologists from FWRI have been onboard to conduct Acoustic Telemetry research within the Madison-Swanson boundaries. Through this joint mission, both groups gain a better understanding of each's knowledge and long-term conservation objectives.



OPV crews have also collectively built upon the agency's relationship with the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) through working joint enforcement efforts during the year. The two agencies have teamed up to work details and patrols to address TED regulations, reef fisheries enforcement and Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuaries enforcement within the Tortugas Ecological Reserves.

Through the 2018-19 JEA year, OPV teams have completed over 3,100 hours of dedicated Federal JEA offshore patrol. These efforts have resulted in over 430 Federal fisheries violations being documented and referred to NOAA OLE. An additional 150 marine fisheries violations have been documented through state citations.

STATEWIDE INVESTIGATIONS / INTELLIGENCE

Statewide Investigations

This section works to uncover criminal conspiracies, identify covert actions, and criminal networks. Reports are prepared along with other intelligence information in support of FWC staff, law enforcement partners, and stakeholders. This information is used for crime prevention and decision-making purposes while also protecting stakeholders and legal businesses from unfair competition by unlicensed, illegal entities.

The primary role of the Investigations Section is to conduct, coordinate and support investigative operations statewide. The section provides specialized training, administrative, and technical support for regional investigations as well as uniform patrol in each of the six regions around the state. The section works closely with other local, state and federal partners as well as stakeholders, with a primary focus on the illegal commercialization of Florida's natural and historical resources. The Investigations Section also supervises Class 1 Covert Operations which focus on large scale resource violators who illegally commercialize natural resources over multiple jurisdictions for personal financial gain and those habitual wildlife offenders that have not been brought to justice via more overt means.

The Investigations Section provides 5 unique services statewide.

- Covert Resource Investigations
- Digital Forensics and Electronic Surveillance Support
- Internet Crimes Unit Coordinator
- Intelligence Unit
- Fish and Wildlife Forensics

Case Spotlight



Northeast regional law enforcement officers identified suspicious behavior in the Lake County area pertaining to the illegal commercialization and exploitation of fish and wildlife. The FWC Statewide Investigations section took action and initiated a long-term investigation called Operation Northbound. The investigation quickly expanded to include a large number of individuals loosely connected and involved in the illegal black-market trade of more than 26 different fish and wildlife species. In 2018, the undercover operation resulted in officers arresting numerous individuals in Lake County and serving multiple others with notice to appear citations in Palm Beach, Polk, Orange and Lake Counties for crimes committed over the course of more than a year during an undercover investigation by the FWC. Charges included, but were not limited to, the illegal take of fish and wildlife, illegal sale or purchase of illegally harvested wildlife, and possession of a firearm by a felon. Individuals engaged in this type of activity illegally commercialize fish and wildlife for personal profit and deplete Florida's natural resources from law-abiding citizens. The success of this long-term investigation demanded an exhausting amount of work by the undercover officer and other investigators. Over 200 misdemeanor and 35 felony violations were documented during the investigation.

Intelligence

Intelligence analysts are Interagency Fusion Liaisons within the Florida Fusion Center located at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. Working directly with the Fusion Center provides the Intelligence Unit the ability to receive classified and unclassified information from federal partners and disseminate threat information from other state, local, tribal, territorial and private sector entities.

Intelligence Liaison Officers around the state coordinate with municipal, state and federal law enforcement agencies regarding law enforcement intelligence and domestic security. The officers work jointly with federal partners such as the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, United States Coast Guard (USCG) Intelligence, Department of Homeland Security, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

FWC analysts responded to 1,559 requests for information to include work-ups on individuals and companies. In one case alone, analysts completed over 200 work-up requests for the Miami office. FWC analysts completed over 45 photo lineups for our agency, as well as other agencies and prepared and disseminated 97 FWC bulletins. FWC analysts also forwarded over 50 officer safety bulletins from other agencies to our Regional Intelligence Officers (RIO's) for distribution. They assisted with 703 tips received from the public, via social media and the tip line, and conducted 223 background investigations for FWC employment (sworn, non-sworn). During this fiscal year in Florida, 1,625 vessels and motors were reported as stolen. The Intelligence Section prepared quarterly reports that

were shared with law enforcement agencies around the state to facilitate awareness of these thefts and assist in recovery.

This unit has access to vast amounts of information through multiple databases and the Florida Fusion Center.

Some of the services the unit provides include:

- Work Ups (individual and companies)
- Social Media
- Photo Lineups
- Facial Recognition and composite capabilities
- GIS/Mapping
- Link Charts
- Telephone Analysis
- Trip Tickets/FWC History
- Wage Information
- Associates, last known addresses, phone numbers
- Out of State Information
- Audio/Video/Photo Enhancement
- Charts/Graphs for Court
- Derelict Vessels

Digital Forensics/Electronic Surveillance Unit

FWC's Digital Forensics and Technical Surveillance Unit is staffed with two statewide investigators and one lieutenant. The unit's responsibility is to support law enforcement investigations and uniform patrol with forensic evidence recovery, forensic and data analysis, technical investigative assistance and financial crime analysis. The unit specializes in technical surveillance equipment, IP and covert camera deployments and mobile tracking technology. The investigators are certified by the National Technical Investigator's Association as Certified Technical Investigators. The lieutenant conducts the digital forensic and financial analysis component of the unit's field support and has obtained certifications in computer forensic and cellphone forensic investigations and is also certified by the National White-Collar Crime Center as a Certified Economic Crime Forensic Examiner.



Case Spotlight Digital Forensics

Southwest Region K-9 Officer Joe Wolf was working the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area (bordering the Weeki Watchee River) when he encountered a suspicious subject climbing a gate and exiting the state lands. A K-9 search of the area located a spear gun hidden in the woods. Spear fishing in the Weeki Watchee River is illegal. The K-9 subsequently alerted on the suspect's vehicle and a search located additional spear guns and two GoPro cameras. Search warrants were then obtained to forensically examine the cameras. Multiple violations were discovered on video files including spear fishing in freshwater, spearing gamefish and harassing manatees.



After the takedown phase of Operation Alligator Thief (Class 1 undercover operation), 18 devices containing forensic evidence were seized for analysis. The analysis produced volumes of incriminating evidence documenting the racketeering activity. Photographs, videos and business records were stored in multiple computer files. A previously unknown elaborate fraud scheme was uncovered by forensic analysis showing \$168,928 dollars were embezzled from a Louisiana alligator farm. Seven of the nine defendants have now been sentenced with the ringleader receiving three years in

prison and \$110,000 dollars payable to FWC for restitution. In addition, the Louisiana alligator farm received a civil judgment covering the \$168,928 embezzlement.

Case Spotlight Technical Surveillance Unit



In a partnership agreement with the Division of Hunting and Game Management, an IP camera was installed on the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area check station in the Southwest Region. It was feared that the newly built facility might be vandalized in its rural setting. The automated camera documents vehicles and license

plate numbers of people entering and exiting the state lands. Shortly after installation, vandalism occurred in the area in which the camera documented the suspects and vehicle tag. The camera's data has also assisted in a search and rescue mission where it was quickly confirmed the subject never entered the management area.



Surveillance on a mangrove island can be tasking for officers to enforce due to accessibility, mosquitos and yellow flies. In a recent North Central Region investigation of trap robbing, an IP camera deployed on a mangrove island was able to document video footage of the suspects molesting another fisherman's crab traps. Charges have been filed in the case.

Internet Crime Unit

FWC's Internet Crimes Unit (ICU) is staffed by 24 regional investigators and coordinated by one Statewide Investigations Lieutenant. Investigators are trained to collect evidence generated from internet-based social media and advertising sites such as Facebook, Craigslist, Instagram, and eBay. Investigators document criminal evidence and conduct undercover operations of illegal wildlife sales over the internet. Additionally, FWC coordinates the Wildlife Cybercrimes Enforcement Group (WCEG), a national collaboration of wildlife conservation internet crime investigators.

Case Spotlight

The North Central Region received a tip of four individuals night hunting large bucks and posting pictures on social media. Officer Bret Gill and Investigator Todd Hoyle served multiple search warrants on social media accounts, telecommunication providers, and seized cell phones for forensic examination



The investigation resulted in charges filed for grand theft, felony trespass, taking deer at night, breaking/injuring fences and child neglect.



The Northeast Region has been conducting a series of internet stings titled Operation IBIS (Internet Buy, Internet Sell). Three organized details resulted in 28 arrests and 31 warnings. Various charges were accessed for unlawful sale and purchase of wildlife, fish and seafood products.

Fish and Wildlife Forensics

FWC's forensic laboratory is equipped with advanced conservation technology containing capabilities that include species identification, identification of animal remains, cause of death determinations, marine forensics, and other conventional forensic proficiencies. The laboratory uses taxonomical and morphological analysis, biochemical systematics, and forensic DNA techniques to make identifications from whole animals to sources of DNA such as blood and other body fluids.

The laboratory maintains evidence management procedures as per agency accreditation standards. It uses the division's unique capabilities to further the agency's mission and assists with coordination of mutual-aid efforts with local, state and federal partners.



Hector Cruz-Lopez, DLE Wildlife Forensics Scientist

Marine Law Administrator

The Marine Law Administrator (MLA) serves as the Division liaison for all fishery related issues assisting statewide LE operations on conveying consistent FWC philosophy and enforcement practices. The MLA coordinates with the Division of Marine Fisheries and Freshwater Fisheries on all stakeholder issues including rule development and guidelines. This liaison position serves as a conduit with the other divisions to facilitate open communication and messaging of law enforcement roles, priorities, limitations, and expectations. The MLA reviews applications for special activity licenses and permits being considered by the Divisions of Marine and Freshwater Fisheries and provides law enforcement consultation. The Administrator also works with the Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) with regards to shellfish patrol policy documents and shellfish patrol concerns.

The Marine Law Administrator also serves as the agency representative for law enforcement issues related to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Law Enforcement Committee, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Law Enforcement Advisory Panel and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Law Enforcement Technical Committee. Additionally, this position serves as the agency representative for the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference and federal fisheries issues. As a member of these organizations, there is opportunity to sit on various advisory and technical groups, as well as act as chair or co-chair as experience dictates.

Wildlife Law Administrator

The Wildlife Law Administrator (WLA) serves as the DLE liaison to FWC's Division of Hunting and Game Management and Division of Habitat and Species Conservation. The WLA provides input during rule making and revision processes. This law enforcement input helps ensure that rules and regulations are consistent and enforceable. This liaison position between divisions serves as an internal bridge across disciplines to facilitate open communication and understanding of roles, priorities, limitations, and expectations. This interaction assists with managing the expectations of those partners with regards to LE capabilities and historic enforcement philosophy on certain rules and statutes. It also allows the Division the opportunity to create a clear message standardizing operation through consistent enforcement practices as well as establishing priority focused patrols. The Wildlife Law Administrator supervises one lieutenant who serves as an intel liaison with USCG, one lieutenant working with the FBI Joint Terrorism Task force, and a two-person DLE GIS mapping team. The WLA provides statewide coordination of the Wildlife Alert, Wildlife Violator Compact, Port Investigations, and DLE GIS programs.

Wildlife Alert

The Investigations Section coordinates the Wildlife Alert Reward Association Program. During the fiscal year, the program received 258 calls, 1,193 email or web tips, 1,088 text and 18 field tips totaling 2,557 tips statewide. Rewards totaling \$31,100 were dispersed to concerned citizens that provided information leading to an arrest. Donations totaling



\$66,994 were received by the Association for the year. The Wildlife Alert program recently purchased a mobile trailer, which is currently in development as an outreach tool. This trailer will be available for use by FWC personnel around the state to increase awareness of the Wildlife Alert program and encourage the public to partner in resource conservation by providing confidential information.

Wildlife Violator Compact

The Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact (Compact) is an agreement that recognizes suspension of hunting, fishing, and trapping licenses in all Compact member states. Currently 48 of the 50 states have enacted legislation that makes them a part of the Compact.



Any person whose license privileges or rights are suspended in a Compact member state may also be suspended in all other Compact states. The Compact prevents poachers who are under revocation in one state, from hunting, fishing, or trapping in other states. This cooperative interstate effort enhances the FWC's ability to protect and manage our wildlife resources.

Port Investigations Unit

Florida's ports are the front lines of an ongoing war between law enforcement and those who unlawfully import or export illegal fish and wildlife. The illegal importation and exportation of wildlife through Florida's ports is a significant and growing issue. The FWC has expanded the Port Investigations Canine (K-9) Unit to support its existing Division of Law Enforcement Port Investigators to enhance the agency's capabilities to detect and stop illegal shipments. The K-9 unit consists of five dogs and their law enforcement handlers. These teams are geographically dispersed across the state, located near the ports of Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Orlando, and Jacksonville providing consistent inspections and enforcement at Florida's major ports. Their mission is to detect the unlawful commercial trade and trafficking of fish, wildlife, and related contraband.

DLE GIS Team

Geographic Information System (GIS) software is designed to capture, manage, analyze, and display all forms of geographically referenced information – of which 95% of all DLE data can be presented. GIS is a tool that provides users with the technology to reference complex spatial data to help understand and find solutions for a variety of questions or problems.

Recent mapping related projects include a vessel asset location tracking system, as well as an intelligence mapping tool used by officers to more efficiently enforce resource violations during peak seasons. By overlaying data including prior violations, biological records, and real time intelligence including feeder, tree stand, and property boundaries, officers can work smarter to be in the right place at the right time to encounter violations. GIS staff also deploys as part of the displaced vessel recovery mission following hurricanes, utilizing mapping technology to accurately represent the size and scope of the problem and mission. Additionally, the Captive Wildlife Permits locations mapper is a resource used by personnel when responding to natural disasters.

Captive Wildlife



The FWC promotes responsible ownership of captive wildlife and it is our goal to develop the best regulations possible to 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. They also make sure cage and security requirements are followed to ensure public safety. Florida Statutes and captive wildlife regulations provide the tools investigators need to address issues when violations occur. During the 2018-19 fiscal year, FWC's Captive Wildlife Program conducted 6,231 inspections of facilities possessing wildlife. These inspections generated 855 citations and warnings. Additionally, inspectors responded to 234 wildlife alert complaints, 74 escaped exotic wildlife complaints, and seized 216 specimens of wildlife. There were 6,637 captive wildlife applications possessed during 2018. Currently the Captive Wildlife Section is working towards automation of the licensing system which will allow online purchase and processing of licenses.



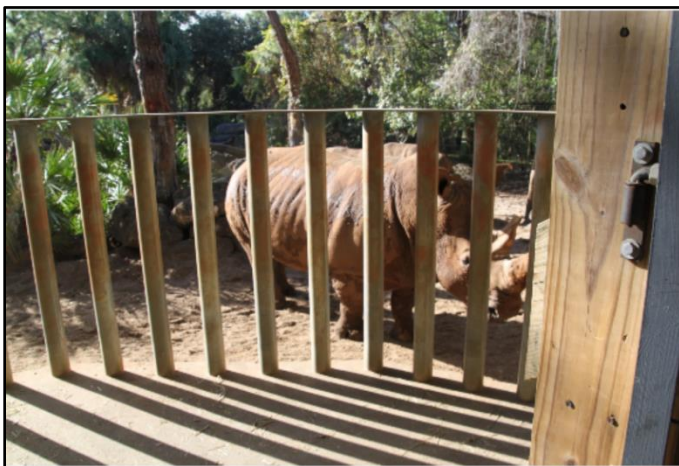
Examples of Class 1 captive wildlife

Case Spotlight

On January 1, 2019, there was an incident involving a rhinoceros at one of the captive wildlife facilities in Central Florida. Facilities are allowed, under certain limitations, to have encounters with captive wildlife. On this day, a family with a toddler, just under two years of age, was participating in a rhinoceros encounter. The encounter has an educational

component and allows guests to touch the animal with hands or brushes in a controlled and supervised environment.

The caging requirements for this type of animal require the use of steel bars. However, the steel bars used in this encounter were vertical with a spacing of eight inches apart. During the encounter, the toddler fell through the vertical bars into the enclosure with the rhinos. The rhinos became startled as the parents tried to retrieve their child but were having trouble getting the



child through the eight-inch space between the bars. The rhinos were using their snouts, pinning the parent's arms and child against the steel bars. The parents and zoo keepers were finally able to get the child back through the steel bars and the child was airlifted to the hospital. The parents sustained minor injuries to their arms, but the child sustained substantial internal injuries and was placed in a medically induced coma. The child recovered and was released from the hospital five days later. The FWC worked with the industry and this facility to help mitigate any future type incidents.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Aviation



*Aerial view of the annual Gasparilla
Pirate Festival in Tampa, FL*

Aviation plays a vital role in the agency's efforts to enforce conservation and boating laws. It is also a unique tool that is essential for the protection of endangered and threatened species, environmental resources and safeguarding the public. The aviation section is instrumental in many of the approximately 1,000 rescues the FWC Division of Law Enforcement performs each year. Aviation Unit personnel participated in several multi-agency training initiatives which included training for air and ground crews for aerial cannabis detection with the Florida Domestic Marijuana Eradication Program. Pilots also provided aviation boating safety support for holiday boating weekend activities and specialized events such as Billy Bowlegs in Fort Walton, spiny lobster mini-season, and Gasparilla in Tampa.

Aviation Unit personnel conducted numerous flights to assist Fish & Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) personnel in response to the red tide event along the Gulf Coast of Florida.

In preparation for the upcoming 2019 hurricane season, aviation unit personnel participated in planning meetings with the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) and the State of Florida Emergency Operation Center (SEOC).



Aerial view showing red tide algal bloom along the Gulf Coast of Florida



FWC's Aviation Section providing support at the Emergency Operation Center following Hurricane Michael



Aviation unit personnel and assets provided support for the State of Florida, Emergency Operation Center response to Hurricane Michael. This included air coordination as Air Operations Branch Director (AOBD) working with other federal, state, county and local partners and aviation support to provide geo-tagged photographs for emergency response to areas affected by Hurricane Michael. Aviation Unit personnel and Urban Search and Rescue teams conducted multiple flights to areas affected by Hurricane Michael. These flights were to identify inaccessible structures and conduct searches for victims in rural areas affected by the hurricane. Aviation unit personnel provided support for the emergency response for vessels displaced by the hurricane.



INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

K-9

The FWC K-9 program has 17 K-9 teams statewide. Twelve traditional teams provide services such as search and rescue, fugitive apprehension, evidence recovery and illegal fish and wildlife detection. Five teams are part of the Port Investigations section and provide services enforcing import/export laws pertaining to exotic and protected species. The FWC K-9 program has its own in-house K-9 training section which provides initial K-9 acquisition, handler/K-9 placement and training. Initial training for the traditional teams consists of a 400-hour K-9 academy instructed by the FWC K-9 training officers. The Port Investigations teams receive specific detection training at the USDA Detector Dog Training Facility in Newnan, Georgia. All teams are members of the United States Police Canine Association and are certified in the disciplines for which they are trained. The dedicated members of the FWC K-9 program make up the country's largest K-9 organization committed to natural resource conservation law enforcement.



Fleet and Technical Services

FWC's Fleet and Technical Services Section is comprised of the Fleet Services Unit and Technical Services Unit. Section personnel consist of skilled sworn and civilian members that consistently solve some of our unique conservation law enforcement equipment issues. The section's primary responsibility is to support and provide division members with the best available equipment, technology and data-related services that keep our members safely focused on mission responsibilities. Section staff serve as a force multiplier that keeps the Division of Law Enforcement mission ready. The division has been transitioning toward mission specific vessel platforms that should out last our traditional

fiberglass patrol vessels. In the past, our efforts to solicit recreational boat vendors to build a patrol vessel that is safe, efficient, and met our core mission expectations had not been successful. Today, we are investing in watercraft that is specifically designed for first responders, will be around for a greater period of time, and will keep our law enforcement members safe.



The division was successful with implementing Body Worn Cameras (BWC) to officers, lieutenants and reservists. A total of 800 cameras were purchased. Preliminary research indicates that departments who have effectively implemented BWC programs have received fewer public complaints, filed fewer use-of-force reports, and showed a reduction in adjudicated complaints resulting in a decrease of settlements. To date, the cameras have helped in several complaints against officers where the officer was exonerated based on video evidence. Legislative funding provided costs of the cameras and associated management software, cloud-based storage of recorded videos, and required support staff. Additional staff is required to support the cameras and respond to the increase in public records requests for videos associated with the cameras. The public records staff is also responsible for redacting portions of the videos that contain confidential and exempt information.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

Officer of the Year: Michael Rice, Northeast Region



Officer Michael Rice began his conservation law enforcement career as a DEP park patrol officer in St. Lucie County. After the FWC/DEP law enforcement merger in 2012, he became a conservation law enforcement officer with Florida Fish and Wildlife. Shortly after the transition, Officer Rice transferred from St. Lucie to Marion County, where he serves today. Rice has an associate degree in criminal justice and a bachelor's degree in business and public safety as well as an innate ability for long term

investigations. Throughout 2018, he closed numerous felony dumping cases, including one involving multiple charges relating to the manufacture and possession of methamphetamine. He was awarded the FWC's Lifesaving Award in 2018 for actions which led to the rescue of a woman who did not resurface after a fall overboard from a PWC. He currently serves as the Northeast Region's Intoxilyzer 8000 Agency Inspector, Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) and was recently promoted to the rank of Officer Specialist. He has organized or participated in multiple targeted enforcement details and operations in 2018. Rice dedicates time to youth initiatives and has assisted with the Halpata Youth Deer Hunt, Halpata Youth Spring Turkey Hunt and Operation Outdoor Freedom. He enjoys spending time with his wife Devin, son Brantley, and new daughter Harper and works extremely hard, day-in and day-out, serving the Marion County community and surrounding areas he cares so much about.

Investigator of the Year: Todd Hoyle, North Central Region



Investigator Todd Hoyle is an Investigator 2 assigned to the North Central Region's Internet Crimes Unit. Hoyle joined FWC in 1998 and spent six years in Highland/Polk Counties before transferring to Columbia County in 2004. He is the go-to investigator for the region's internet investigations and camera placements. With his knowledge and experience, he instructs the FWC Covert School as well as provides Internet Crimes Unit training. In 2018, he executed 45 search warrants, conducted three Class II Investigations, organized two operational plans, and issued 41 felony FWC citations. Many of the cases he's closed with charges are from investigations stemming from tips on social media. One example of Hoyle's hard work was when he led the charge on information gained by patrol and conducted intense camera surveillance, cell phone and social media warrants, along with vehicle trackers to apprehend eight subjects involved in a multi-jurisdiction illegal bear poaching and dog training case that gained nationwide attention. Hoyle enjoys hunting, cooking, spending time with his two children, Morgan and Travis and attending his kids sporting events.

Boating Officer of the Year: Britton Corbin, Northwest Region

Officer Britton Corbin graduated from FWC Academy Class 23 in 2014 and is assigned to Okaloosa County where he was born and raised. He implements strategic initiatives such as Boating as a Gateway to Conservation and treats every vessel stop as an educational opportunity. He is an SME in derelict vessels and works closely with the City of Destin to keep an updated tally of all at-risk and derelict vessels in Okaloosa County. In 2018, Corbin organized multiple boating-focused operations including Operation Lights Out (Nav light usage) and Operation Clean Landing (MSD compliance). He has made BUI enforcement a priority and has assisted other officers in his region with BUI training. He has been



exemplary regarding on the water resource enforcement and has provided for public safety – assisting 20 distressed swimmers in 2018. Officer Corbin is a member of the NW Region SOG team and regularly volunteers with the community during events such as the Destin Beach Safety Junior Lifeguards.

Reserve Officer of the Year: Alexander Dinu, South Region Bravo



Reserve Officer Alexander Dinu has worked closely with Investigator Rene Taboas on Migratory Bird Treaty Act enforcement and conducting agency training courses to teach other officers how to target these violations. Together, they have worked more than 30 cases, cited 42 defendants and released more than 200 migratory birds back into the wild. Dinu and Taboas have perfected their patrol patterns targeting specific known

areas, listening for birds, looking for bird traps and have become very proficient at extracting pertinent information from subjects which often leads to future cases. Dinu's participation in this joint effort has had a major impact in the protection of our protected MBTA species in South Florida and nationwide. Originally from Romania, Dinu moved to the United States when he was eight years old and found a passion for the outdoors and nature while working for Miami Dade PD. He became an FWC officer in 2009 and transitioned to a Reserve Officer in 2012. In addition to his work in the field, he is very involved in the community and represents the FWC at school presentations and career days.

Team of the Year: Okaloosa Squad, Northwest Region (Shelton Bartlett, Charles Jarvis, Andrew Maltais, Justin Pifer, William Wilkenson, Britton Corbin, Heath Nichols)



The Okaloosa Squad has a mixture of experience between members that plays a key component in their cohesiveness and communication. There are several informal leaders on the squad and when a new officer is transferred or hired to work within Okaloosa County, the squad rallies around them to make sure they are ready to face the next year of nonstop activity. The Okaloosa Squad has taken ownership of their county and never turns down an opportunity to help surrounding counties with any issues that may arise. The busiest county in the Northwest Region during the summer takes all seven squad members pulling their own weight to make sure residents and visitors who come to the area are safe. In 2018, the Okaloosa Squad participated in nine major outreach events and several smaller events, totaling several hundred educational contacts. All seven members of the Okaloosa Squad deployed to Hurricane Michael to serve the citizens of Panama City and help local officers who were affected by the storm put their lives back together.

The seven members work in cooperation with numerous partnering agencies and sections of the FWC to ensure water and land patrols are safe and properly enforced. On top of going above and beyond in daily duties, the Okaloosa squad coordinated an operation plan dubbed "Operation Hornet's Nest" with the goal of reducing the number of vessel accidents on the water. The operation was extremely successful, generating many vessel checks and user contacts. Numerous citations and warnings were issued during the operation and 40 BUI arrests were made. Thanks in no small part to the squad's efforts on BUI enforcement, there were zero fatal boating accidents within Okaloosa County in 2018.

Duty Officer of the Year: Jason Silva, Southwest Region



Duty Officer Jason Silva has been with FWC since 2017 and works in the Tampa Bay Regional Communications Center. From a young age, the outdoors has been a big part of his life and in his spare time he enjoys hunting, fishing, and hiking. He is married to his wife, Lexi and has three daughters Sydnee, Addison and Zaylie. Silva always remains enthusiastic, energetic and charismatic during high stress situations. He works closely with South A and South B regions on midnight shifts and oftentimes goes above and beyond his duties to pick up extra shifts and work special details if needed. Silva is constantly trying to better the TRCC and strives to increase efficiency by updating old forms and regularly participating in ride-alongs to increase his knowledge and abilities. This year, Silva conducted a training segment as part of a statewide

initiative to provide continuing education to duty officers on the topic of “Working Under High Stress Conditions,” and received a letter of commendation for his presentation. Duty Officer Silva has a strong drive for success and is extremely motivated in his efforts to progress to the next chapter and become a law enforcement officer with the FWC. In the short time that Duty Officer Silva has been a part of the TRCC Team, he has made quite an impact on his fellow duty officers and was selected by many of his peers for this prestigious nomination. Silva is humble, highly respected, and extremely loyal to his obligations and commitments.

Employee of the Year: Paul Coglon, North Central Region

Paul Coglon is one of only two Master Marine Equipment Technicians in the entire agency. His primary focus is to service and repair FWC Law Enforcement vessels, trailers, motors and trolling motors. This year, he has completed hundreds of work orders, many of the which involved multiple motors, repowering vessels and extensive trailer repairs. Paul has also implemented the statewide electric door lock and gun box installation project and has traveled out of his region to teach and assist other regional technicians. Paul is known for his strong work ethic and can-do attitude. He never turns down an opportunity to expand his



expertise and is a key component to ensuring our officers can navigate on water and land with the proper equipment. Paul has several qualities that make him a great team player including genuine commitment and enthusiasm for the FWC and the agency's mission. Throughout his career, Paul has participated in virtually every disaster response in which the agency has been involved. This past year was no different when Hurricane Michael ravaged the Florida Panhandle. Because of his knowledge, experience and mechanical talents, Paul keeps the deployment teams he is assigned to practically self-sustaining, which is invaluable during disaster response. Paul was born and raised in Lake City, Florida and has been with the FWC since 2005. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his family, hunting, fishing and boating.

Prosecutor of the Year: Cynthia Honick, South Region Bravo



Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Cynthia Honick has played a key part in the success of Operation Thimblorig, an undercover case which exposed criminal activity undermining the South Florida commercial fishing industry. In early 2017, FWC South Region Bravo investigators approached the Fort Lauderdale Office of Statewide Prosecution regarding the undercover operation. The investigators met with Deputy Statewide Prosecutor Julie Hogan and Assistant Statewide Prosecutor Cynthia Honick. Honick took an active role in the development of the case and served as an integral legal advisor to the investigations

team. In the spring of 2018, she participated in two briefings for approximately 80 state and federal officers and was on site the entire day of the search warrant. In October 2018, she began working with investigators to compel the surrender of illegally obtained Restricted Species (RS) endorsements and recover funds defrauded from the State. Over the course of two interview days, Honick questioned 55 suspects, surrendered 45 RS endorsements, and uncovered a total of \$148,490.25 in defrauded funds. Honick has committed considerable time to learn the complex laws and statutes that conserve Florida's natural resources and continues to remain steadfast in her support of the extensive investigation that Operation Thimblorig has become.

Biologist of the Year: Sarah Helm, North Central Region

Sarah Helm grew up in Vermont enjoying hunting, fishing and hiking, and achieved her Bachelor of Science degree in biology from St. Lawrence University. After working for the Jacksonville Zoo, she joined the FWC's Division of Habitat and Species Conservation as a Wildlife Assistance Biologist. North Central Region officers have had the distinct pleasure of working with Sarah for the past few years. Her working knowledge of different types of wildlife and her ability to discuss solutions to wildlife complaints with the public is impressive. Sarah excels in public speaking, outreach, education and stakeholder



engagement skills and specializes in rehabilitation for tortoises and raptors. One of Sarah's many strengths is her willingness to be a team player. Sarah is regularly seen in law enforcement offices asking questions about areas of the law she is not familiar with, which in turn encourages law enforcement officers to approach Sarah with issues and advice in various situations. She regularly coordinates with our law enforcement officers and regional call center staff to assist officers with the capture of bears and offer solutions on how to seize wildlife as evidence. To date, Sarah has provided direct technical assistance to

thousands of callers throughout the state and has conducted numerous educational outreach presentations to help FWC stakeholders address and resolve human-wildlife conflicts. Dealing with constituents is a demanding role in managing wildlife and people, and Sarah excels in providing a top-notch service that is to be commended.

The FWC Division of Law Enforcement prides itself on professionalism in all aspects. It is an accredited law enforcement agency, achieving its initial accreditation from the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFLA) in 2009 and awarded reaccreditation in 2018.

Florida encompasses an incredible variety of habitats and is unique in the variety and productivity of its natural resources, hence FWC officers have a unique mission. Specially trained and equipped, FWC officers provide complete service response and protection services to the resources and public anywhere in Florida.



The three vital words of our motto guide everything we do:

PATROL, PROTECT, PRESERVE

GEORGIA

Thomas Barnard, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Law Enforcement Division, currently has 212 POST-certified Game Wardens with statewide authority and full arrest powers and 28 non-sworn staff members. 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, two Majors, nine Captains (7 Region Supervisors, 1 Training Director, 1 Pilot), seven Lieutenants (database management, special permits/captive wildlife and wild animals, boating law administrator/administrative support, professional standards, investigations, 2 pilots), and 194 field Game Wardens (Sergeants, Corporals, Game Wardens First Class, and Game Wardens).

TRAINING

In early 2019, the Division hired 25 new Game Warden cadets and one Game Warden pilot. Revenue generated as a result of the passing of HB 208 in 2017, which increased hunting, fishing, and recreational license fees, provided salary and benefit funding, as well as a full complement of equipment for 13 of the new hires. This funding will also provide money for additional personnel, equipment and operational costs in the future.

The 33rd Game Warden Academy began on January 6th at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center. During the 23-week academy, the cadets completed Basic Peace Officer Certification as well as the Advanced Game Warden Academy which totaled 935 hours of training. The Academy includes 80 hours of NASBLA BOAT training for BCM (Boat Crew Member) and BOSAR (Boat Operator Search and Rescue). The Division's in-house NASBLA certified instructors delivered these comprehensive courses at Lake Walter F. George.

Officer Water Survival training was also taught within the 33rd Game Warden Academy. Cadets spent approximately 40 hours in the pool learning essential water survival skills. The course involved self-rescue, survival swimming, and tactics for surviving physical and armed confrontations in the water. Training was conducted in full duty uniform and body armor, while wearing weighted gun belts.



Nineteen Game Warden Cadets graduated from the 33rd Game Warden Academy on June 14th. They are currently in the process of completing the Division's field training program in their assigned counties throughout the state.

During the year, in-service training for all Game Wardens statewide included NASBLA Seated Battery and a Standardized Field Sobriety refresher, Police Legitimacy and Procedural Justice, De-escalation, Use-of-Force, Firearms training/re-qualification, and Policy/Legislative Updates. Game Wardens also underwent statewide Officer Water Survival Training. This 16-hour course was the result of the pilot program that was implemented during the 33rd Game Warden Academy and involved the same training that the cadets of the 33rd completed during the academy.

Eight Game Wardens participated in Swift Water Boat Operations training on the Chattahoochee River in Zodiac swift water rescue vessels that were issued to selected personnel last year. Instructors from the Whitewater Rescue Institute in Missoula, Montana were brought in to train the Game Wardens in the operation of swift water rescue vessels in areas of white water in the Chattahoochee River south of West Point Dam.



During 2019, the Division's firearms training staff was tasked with researching and selecting a new duty handgun. After testing several models, the decision was made to transition from the current Glock Gen4 model 22, .40 caliber pistol to the Glock model 45, 9mm pistol. The pistol was issued to Game Wardens in the field statewide in early October. Each

Game Warden is now issued the Glock Models 45 and 43 9mm handguns, the Daniel Defense DDM4 5.56 Tactical Rifle and the Remington 870 12-gauge shotgun.

The first two Phases of X2 TASER deployment were completed during 2019. Seventy-three Game Wardens were trained and have been issued X2 TASER units for use in the field. The deployment of TASERs concentrated on field level Game Wardens under the rank of Lieutenant and will continue until all field personnel are trained and equipped.

A committee was also formed to explore and research possible changes to the Game Warden hiring and selection process. The goal of the committee was to recommend changes that would increase the number, quality and diversity of candidates for the position of Game Warden. Recommendations were made to exempt honorably discharged veterans, with a minimum of four years of active duty military service, from the current minimum educational requirement of an Associate Degree or 60 Semester/90 Quarter hours of completed college credit. The committee also recommended a restructuring of the current pre-employment physical agility tests. The recommendations included combining the two $\frac{3}{4}$ mile runs in to one 1.5-mile run, and the addition of a push-up and sit-up event. The recommendation was made to modify the current swim event by replacing the 50-yard fully-clothed swim with a 20-meter swim assessment. This assessment was determined by the Division's water survival instructors to be sufficient in determining the minimum amount entry level ability necessary for a cadet to enter the water survival training program. Cadets will then be required to complete the academy swim and Officer Water Survival training programs.

EXECUTIVE TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

NCLELA

Major Mike England graduated from the National Conservation Law Enforcement Leadership Academy (NCLELA) at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. NCLELA prepares conservation law enforcement executives to successfully carry out the conservation law enforcement mission in a rapidly changing world. They provide education on contemporary issues, trends, management and leadership skills and abilities needed by executive-level conservation LE leaders in state and federal agencies. During the training, Major England engaged in such topics as adaptive leadership, leading change, resource management, personnel management, shaping organizational culture, strategic planning, surviving and succeeding as an executive liability, establishing a leadership legacy, and more.



DIVISION'S CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

The Investigative Unit (IU) is comprised of two full-time investigators and one Intelligence Analyst. The IU is responsible for undercover investigations, administration of the Critical Incident Reconstruction Team (CIRT), the Marine Theft Unit (MTU), as well as investigation assistance to the Special Permit Unit (SPU). The primary function of the Investigative Unit is to provide field Game Wardens with investigative support. The Investigative Unit is able to fulfill this mission with the support of 13 Game Wardens that perform a collateral duty called "Regional Investigator." Regional Investigators assist the IU with overt and covert investigations. The IU also serves the field as a central point of contact for information sharing on a statewide level. Since last year, the Investigative Unit significantly expanded its support capabilities with the addition of an Intelligence Analyst, gaining access to multiple intelligence databases, and through extensive use of new technologies such as ZetX. This past year, three investigators completed the ZetX 40-Hour Advanced Cellular Investigations Training. This technology is requested and used daily not only by Georgia Game Wardens but also by state prosecutors, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and countless police and sheriff's departments. Through this assistance, the Investigative Unit and the Department have strengthened working relationships with other law enforcement agencies throughout the state, benefiting Georgia law enforcement and more importantly, the citizens we serve.

UNDERCOVER INVESTIGATIONS

The Investigative Unit is responsible for undercover investigations which are used when traditional enforcement methods would be problematic or unsuccessful. The Regional Investigators are full-time Game Wardens who have received training in undercover operations and specialized equipment and are used throughout the state as needed.

Last year, the Investigative Unit conducted and managed 285 investigations and calls for assistance from the field and from other agencies (both in and out-of-state). 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

Georgia has 15 CIRT investigators assigned throughout the state. CIRT investigates fatality and serious injury boating, hunting and state park incidents. Each investigator receives

specialized training on investigating and presenting these cases. Last year, CIRT was activated to investigate four boating incidents. These incidents resulted in one fatality.

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, hidden hull identification number location assistance, 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 47 abandoned vessel/stolen boat requests from the public and fielded numerous phone calls related to the abandoned vessel process.

AVIATION

The LED Aviation Support Unit supports all DNR Divisions and other state agencies utilizing two Bell 407 helicopters, one Bell L4 and a fixed wing Quest Kodiak 100 airplane.

The Aviation Unit flew 588 hours in support of the Division's Game Wardens as they conducted their core mission of protecting the states waterways and woodland areas. This consisted of flying support 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. Additionally, the Aviation Unit flew 50 hours over a four-day period providing support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Natural Resources and multiple local agencies after Hurricane Michael devastated Southwest Georgia in October 2018. 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. Thirty-eight hours assisting with prescribed burns on the State WMA's were also flown during the late winter months of January through March 2018.

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. This past year the Aviation Unit trained to insert a Game Warden from the aircraft, via rappel technique, into rugged and remote locations. This training was placed into service when responding to a request for assistance for a SAR in the Cohutta Wilderness Area in Fannin County. SGT James Keener and Aerial Observer GWFC Roger McConkey executed the unit's first rappel operation in May 2019, rescuing an injured hiker who was located several miles from any motorized access and assistance. The Aviation

Unit conducted five other successful long line rescues and flew 98 hours for search and rescue (SAR), drownings and missing person missions with aerial observers.

The TASE 500 camera system equipped Kodiak Quest fixed-wing aircraft, with trained camera operators 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. This capability was evident in the increased apprehension of illegal night poachers throughout the state this past year.



The Unit was very fortunate at years' end receiving funding for a new Bell 407. This 407 will replace the 23-year-old Bell L-4; increasing our capabilities while decreasing training and maintenance costs for the Division, while increasing safety.

SPECIAL PERMITS

The Georgia DNR Law Enforcement Division Special Permits 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. This past year, the Special Permits unit issued 2,242 permits issued, collecting \$68,735 in generated fees.

UNIQUE LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

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. Last year, eight tips were received by email for various violations.

SPLASH

The Division continued the messaging effort with the multi-agency water safety initiative, SPLASH. Along with a number of federal, state, and private partners, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Georgia Department of Public Health, Georgia Power, and the Shepherd Center, the aggressive, yet unfunded, anti-drowning campaign encourages

citizens to follow these tips when enjoying beaches, pools, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water. The partners meet every 4-6 weeks to share promotional ideas and discuss implementation. Fourteen meetings have been held so far. SPLASH is an acronym used to encourage safety around the 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.
- **Life Jackets/Look before you leap**– Always wear a life jacket and 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.

During the year, the campaign distributed bilingual brochures, provided public service announcements to local radio stations, increased social media messaging, and stenciled painted safety messages on boat ramps. Currently, the Department is in the process of adding 250 life jacket loaner boards at public boat ramps and state parks statewide, with these locations now included on the Georgia Outdoors app.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

HURRICANE MICHAEL

In October of 2018, Game Wardens responded to Hurricane Michael in South Georgia and provided first responder operations, debris clearing, damage assessment, search and rescue and security roles. Due to the path of the storm, Game Wardens in all areas of the state were called into action and the Division logged 6,809 man-hours during the event.



JEAPATROLS

The Joint Agreement #17 between Georgia DNR and NOAA Office of Law Enforcement called for Georgia DNR enforcement personnel to provide a total of 1,717 hours of marine law enforcement or related work under the agreement. Georgia has five Execution Priorities. Execution Priority 1 was the Endangered Species Act. There were 383-man hours and 144 hours of at-sea vessel patrol hours dedicated to this priority, along with 36 hours of aircraft flight hours and 36 hours of aircraft personnel hours. These patrols were

checking shrimp trawlers for TED and net compliance. Execution Priority 2 was dedicated to Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. There were 445-man hours and 165 hours of at-sea vessel patrols dedicated to priority 2. These patrols were to check Red Snapper compliance and any other violation dealing with Snapper/Grouper and HMS species. Execution Priority 3 was the National Marine Sanctuaries Act. There were 240-man hours and 80 hours of at-sea vessel patrols dedicated to Priority 3. Execution Priority 4 was the Lacey Act/International (IUU). There were 28 personnel hours dedicated to IUU enforcement. These patrols were assisting NOAA Enforcement Officers with the inspection of containers at the Georgia Ports. Execution Priority 5 was Marine Mammal Protection Act. There were 120-man hours and 40 at-sea vessel hours dedicated to Marine Mammal Protection. These patrols were during the months of November through March and were specifically targeting Right Whale enforcement.

VEHICLES & EQUIPMENT

Throughout the year, the Law Enforcement Division acquired some new vehicles and equipment, utilizing funding from various sources. Vehicles obtained included two new enclosed trailers for statewide disaster response, 14 4x4 patrol vehicles, and seven patrol boats. New equipment included 28 sets of night vision goggles, 73 TASERs, seven boat motors, four FLIR camera systems for boats, body armor for the new cadets, and LTE Southern Lincs for all sworn personnel.

KENTUCKY

Eric Gibson, Colonel, Director of Law Enforcement

PERSONNEL

The Kentucky Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Division has recently undergone numerous changes focused on recruitment and retention. A recent increase in boat registration and resident hunting/fishing license fees provided a budget increase sufficient to support a 5% pay increase for all current officers within the law enforcement division in October 2018. Reallocation of funds within the current law enforcement budget allowed for another pay increase during July 2019. This increase standardized the salaries for each rank across the board.

In an effort to increase low personnel numbers through active recruitment efforts, the starting salary of a Conservation Officer Recruit increased from \$29,100 to \$35,080. Upon completion of one year of probation and obtaining Peace Officer Professional Standards certification, officers will receive an annual \$4,000 training stipend and a 10% increase in salary. Second year Conservation Officers will be paid \$42,675.

The first class of recruits were hired under this new salary structure on August 16, 2019. 23 recruits started the academy with a graduation date scheduled for April 15th.

Other personnel related changes taking place include the implementation of random drug screening for all Conservation Officers, physical fitness standards and a complete revision of the current policy manual. These changes are taking place but are still in the implementation stage.

EQUIPMENT

Recent equipment purchases include 20 Yamaha Big Bear 700 ATVs which officers will utilize for patrol and search/rescue operations across Kentucky.

Sig M400 patrol rifles equipped with an optic and weapon mounted light were purchased and will be issued to field officers in the fall of 2019 to replace the current issued DRMO rifles.

Twenty Dodge 1500 Ram trucks have been equipped with emergency equipment and will be issued to field officers for general patrol vehicles.

The division purchased and is awaiting delivery of 5 Pioneer patrol boats from Carolina Composites.

All field officers and Sergeants have been issued CEWs.

LEGISLATION

The Kentucky General Assembly voted on and passed legislation this past session which granted Kentucky Conservation Officers full police powers to enforce all laws within the Commonwealth. This codifies Conservation Officer authority in law and takes the place of the previous MOU that was in place with the Kentucky State Police.

Other significant legislation included indemnification of officers which protects them from personal civil liability when performing their job duties within policy and consistent with their training. Any judgement against them would be paid by the agency, not the officer.

Boating under the influence also received some long overdue attention during the legislative session. This has traditionally been a violation in Kentucky which did not carry any jail time. New legislation included jail time as part of the penalties and included the ability for officers to make a BUI arrest based on probable cause when there has been an accident involving property damage or physical injury.

LOUISIANA

Sammy Martin, Colonel

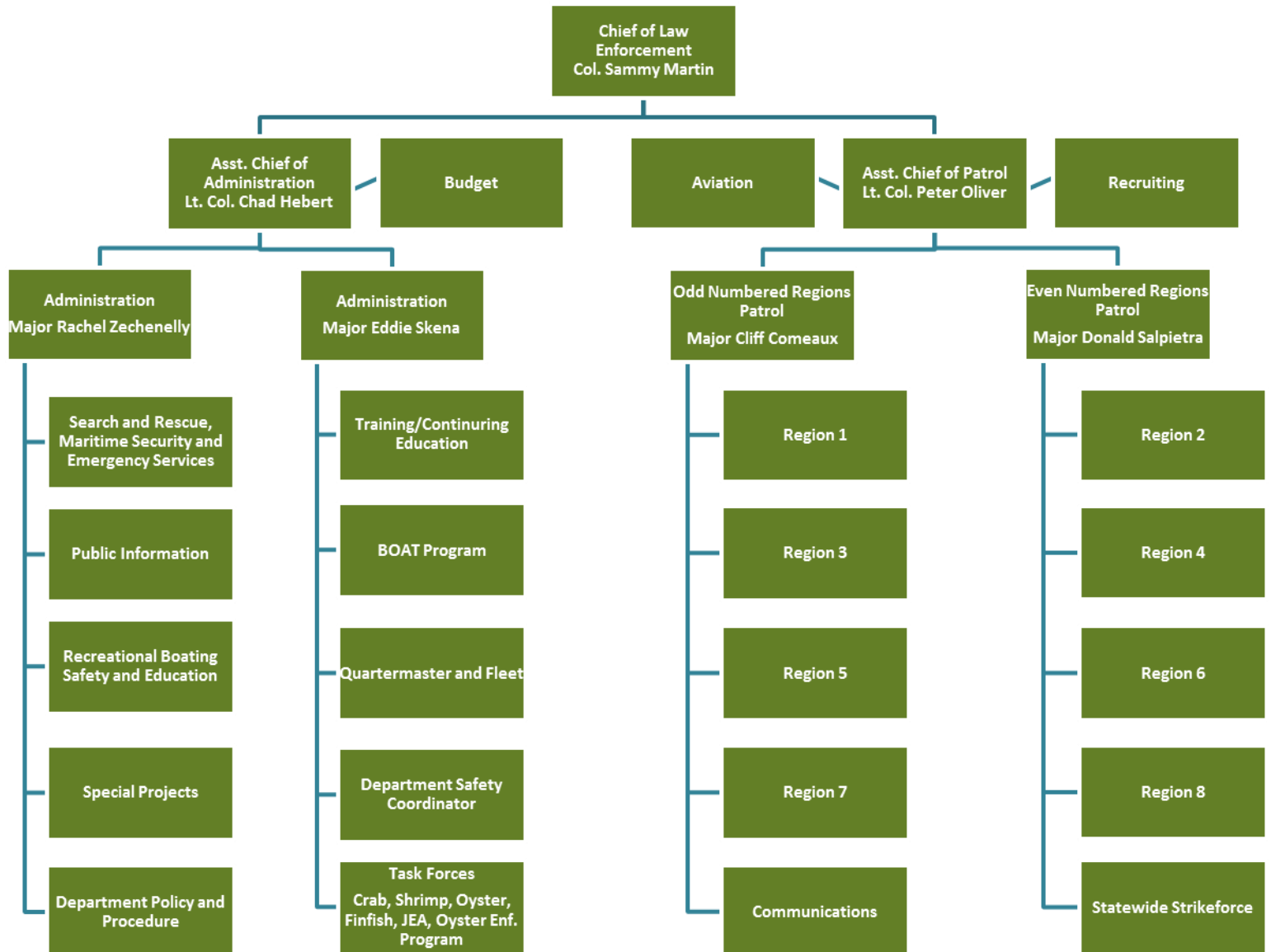


The LDWF Law Enforcement Division's (LDWF-LED) operating budget for fiscal year 2018-2019 was approximately \$39 million. Enforcement Division funding is derived from the Conservation Fund (LDWF self-generated revenue), Federal Boating Safety Funds, United States Coast Guard Grant funding, Homeland Security Grant funding, and the LDWF Enforcement Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) with NOAA for Federal Fisheries and various local grants.

LDWF-LED conducted 247,995 patrol hours in FY 2018-2019: 199,468 on land and 48,527 on water. Agents made 585,558 contacts with the public, the majority of whom were in compliance with state and federal wildlife and fisheries regulations. LDWF-LED agents issued 12,394 criminal citations and 5,916 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 (*Figure 1*). 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 recreational boating safety and education, emergency services, training, support, public information and budget. The other Lieutenant Colonel serves as the assistant chief of patrol and supervises all state regional field operations, statewide communications, aviation and recruiting. There are four majors: one over the even-numbered enforcement regions of the state and statewide strike force; one over the odd-numbered regions and the statewide communications sections; one over training, support (quartermaster and fleet), JEA, safety and serves as the LDWF Enforcement representative for the shrimp, oyster, crab and finfish task forces; one over the recreational boating safety and education programs, emergency services, special projects, policy and procedure, and serve as the state's boating law administrator.

The LDWF Enforcement Division headquarters staff works out of Baton Rouge headed by Col. Sammy Martin who was promoted to the head position in September of 2017. Col. Martin, a native of Terrebonne Parish, graduated from the Louisiana POST Training Academy in 1982, receiving his POST certification from Louisiana State Police, and has been an agent for over 36 years.



The Enforcement Division is divided into eight enforcement regions 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.

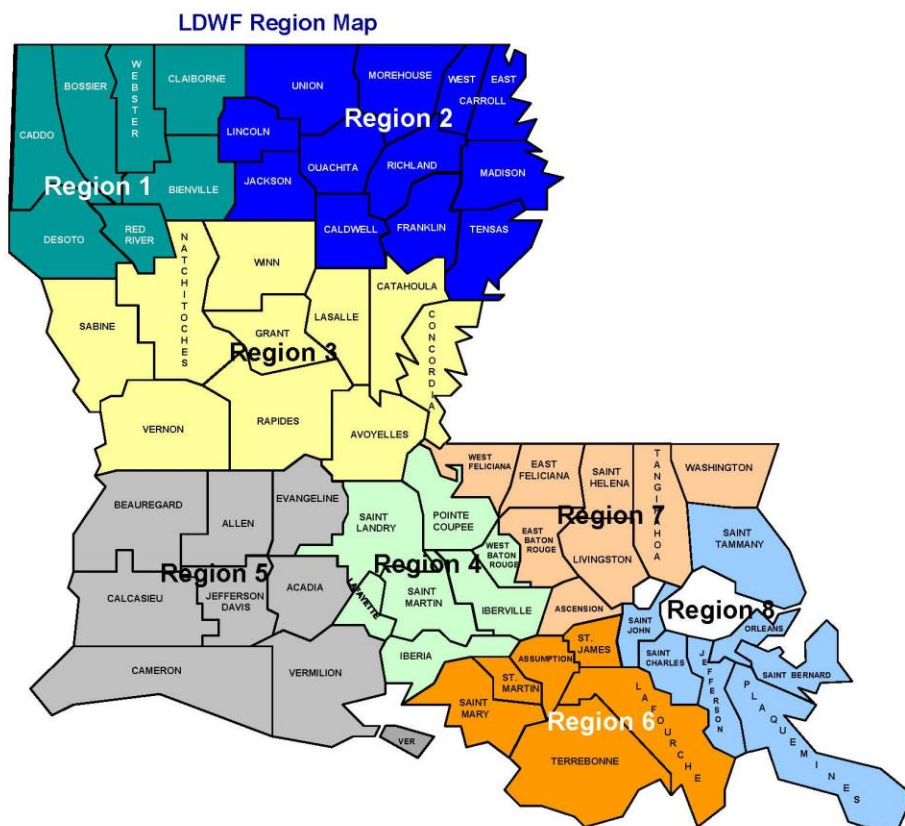
Total division head count is 257 positions including 234 enforcement agents, 15

administrative staff, six communications officers and two pilots. The actual number of filled positions (as of June of 2019) is 239.

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 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.



OYSTER / SEAFOOD / STRIKE FORCE (OSSF)

OSSF is assigned to work problem areas on the coast. They devote attention to commercial fisheries with a focus mainly on oysters, license fraud and white collar crimes. Violations include smuggling, interstate commerce violations and false reporting, and under-reporting of commercial fish harvests. Violations pertaining to oysters include harvesting polluted oysters, theft of oysters, illegal tagging, oyster size regulations, and sanitary code violations. The agents are licensed FAA Drone pilots. The unit has three drones assigned, which are capable of night or day surveillance. OSSF agents also work with regional agents on coastal patrols.

LDWF ENFORCEMENT NEWS

LDWF AGENT HONORED WITH BOATING AWARD

A Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries enforcement agent was awarded the Louisiana's National Association of State Boating Law Administrator's (NASBLA) "Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year" for Louisiana.

Sgt. Austin Arteaga, of Slidell, received the NASBLA award at the monthly Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission meeting on Sept. 6 in Baton Rouge.

Sgt. Arteaga has been an LDWF agent for over 10 years and he mainly patrols the waterways in southeastern Louisiana including Lake Pontchartrain, the Mississippi Sound, the Gulf of Mexico, and Lake Borgne.

Sgt. Arteaga has distinguished himself by becoming a NASBLA Boating Program Instructor and a Louisiana Boating Education Course Instructor for the department. Since 2013, he has trained enforcement cadet classes in the NASBLA Boat Crew Member course (BCM) and the Boat Operations/Search and Rescue Course (BOSAR).

Sgt. Arteaga is also an instructor in the more advanced NASBLA Tactical Boat Operators Course (TOC) and the NASBLA Pursuit and Stop (PAS) course.



Sgt. Arteaga accepts the NASBLA Award from Major Rachel Zechenelly

LAW PROVIDES SURVIVOR BENEFITS TO FAMILIES OF LDWF CADETS

The family of a Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries enforcement cadet who died last year while in training will be eligible to receive survivor benefits because of legislation Gov. John Bel Edwards signed as Act 378 on June 20, 2019.

Without the legislation, the wife and two minor children of Cadet Immanuel Washington would not be entitled to survivor benefits. Washington, a native of Franklin and resident of Youngsville, was in LDWF training academy in 2018 when he died.

The bipartisan legislation, House Bill 170, authored by State Reps. Sam Jones, D-Franklin, and Stuart Bishop, R-Lafayette, passed unanimously in both the House and the Senate. It allows spouses and children of cadets that died while training to receive full financial benefits even though the cadets were not fully commissioned LDWF agents at the time of their death.

Cadet Washington passed away on July 19, 2018, while in the third week of training at LDWF's Training Academy in Baton Rouge. Act 378 will extend eligibility for survivorship benefits to spouses and children of all LDWF enforcement personnel participating in the LDWF Enforcement Training Academy on or after July 1, 2018, even though the cadet had not been commissioned as an enforcement officer.

The new law also extends to members of the Louisiana State Police, including any cadet participating in the LSP Training Academy on or after July 1, 2018.

LDWF AGENT CREDITED WITH SAVING LIFE OF MOTORIST

A Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries enforcement agent saved the life of a motorist on May 19 in East Feliciana Parish.

Senior Agent Mason Spillman was on patrol when he came across a car in the ditch at the entrance of the Port Hudson State Historic Site off of Hwy. 61 around 9:30 a.m.

When he got out of his truck, Spillman found two good Samaritans pulling a 27 year old New Roads woman out of the car that was in the ditch. Her leg was severed at the knee. Spillman immediately applied a tourniquet to her severed leg to stop the bleeding and called 911.

While waiting for the emergency medical services (EMS) ambulance, Spillman learned that the good Samaritans witnessed the car hit a guardrail before going in the ditch and that he

arrived within 30 seconds of the accident happening. When the accident happened, it was during a severe thunderstorm with heavy rains.

The East Baton Rouge Parish EMS ambulance arrived around 9:45 a.m. and transported the woman to Our Lady of the Lake Hospital where she is listed in stable condition. It is believed that the tourniquet that Spillman applied prevented her from bleeding to death.

The Zachary Fire Department, East Feliciana Parish Sheriff's Office and the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office also arrived on scene and assisted with traffic and loading the woman into the ambulance.

LDWF AGENTS RESCUE FATHER AND SON IN VERMILION BAY

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) enforcement agents performed a successful search and rescue mission on Nov. 3 in Vermilion Bay.

LDWF agents were notified about two overdue boaters on board a vessel about 9 p.m. on Nov. 3. The missing boaters were a 57-year-old father and his 10-year-old son both from Erath.

LDWF agents immediately began conducting search and rescue efforts in conjunction with U.S. Coast Guard and the Iberia Parish Sheriff's Office to locate the missing boaters.

LDWF agents located the missing boat with both boaters safely inside the vessel on Nov. 4 around 1:25 a.m. LDWF loaded the father and son onto their vessel and transported the boaters back to the dock where they were evaluated by Emergency Medical Services and released to go home.

Agents found out that the boat battery died leaving the two boaters in need of assistance.

LDWF Recognized for Re-Accreditation of NASBLA BOAT Program

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Enforcement Division is being recognized for its achievement of re-accreditation with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators' (NASBLA) Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program. LDWF was the first law enforcement agency to receive this national accreditation in 2011. Since then the agency has been an exemplary role model for other agencies pursuing accreditation.

LDWF's instructor cadre has played an integral role, not only in the training of Louisiana's maritime operators, but also as instructors for NASBLA's direct delivery courses throughout the nation. At the end of 2017, LDWF's Enforcement Division had trained all of their agents

in Boat Operations Search and Rescue (BOSAR), Boat Accident Investigations, and the Seated Battery of Field Sobriety Tests.

An additional 68 agents were trained in Boat Crew Member (BCM), 53 in Officer Water Survival, and 34 in the Tactical Operator Course discipline. LDWF has also trained an additional 73 officers in BCM and 8 officers in BOSAR from other marine law enforcement agencies throughout the state.

Through the BOAT Program Accreditation process, an agency, division, department or unit and its maritime training policies, procedures, curricula, qualification process and documentation are assessed to ensure alignment with the National Standard. This process and subsequent Accreditation ensures interoperability with marine units across the country in specific applicable competencies. By accrediting agencies and departments throughout the country, NASBLA's BOAT Program creates more trainers and qualifies more officers than any other program in the nation, truly enhancing the safety and security of America's waterways. Agencies accredited are required to go through a re-accreditation process every three years.

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 317,000 registered boats, Louisiana contains many geographic, demographic and economic features that pose special challenges for boating safety enforcement. LDWF-LED agents made 145,882 public contacts during the course of 34,569 patrol hours dedicated to boating enforcement, education and accident investigation in FY 2018-2019. Of those hours, 25,528 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 2018-2019, LDWF-LED agents issued 61 citations for careless and reckless operation of a vessel and 88 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 2018-2019, 7,407 citizens were certified in classroom and online classes. LDWF-LED continues to recruit and train additional volunteer instructors to

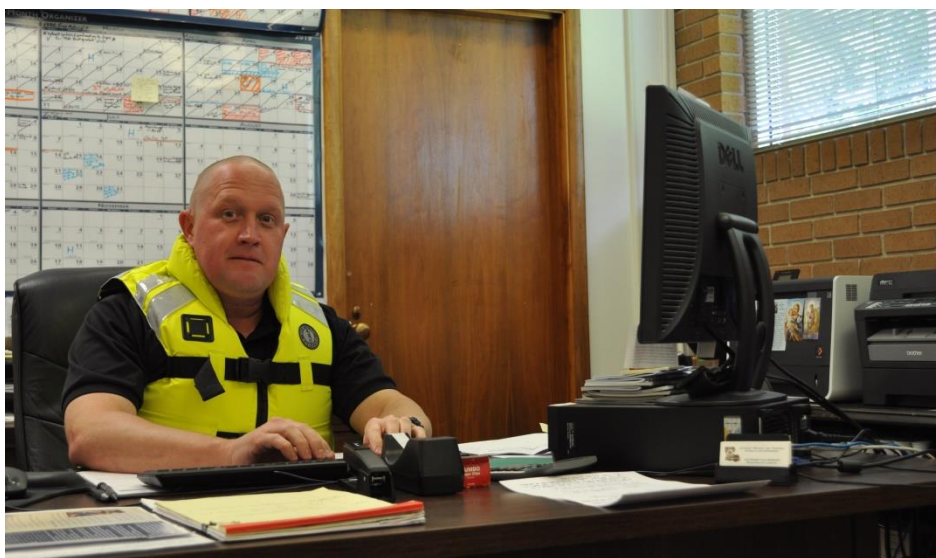
complement and enhance the efforts of its own agents. Since the inception of the boating safety education course in 2003, LDWF has certified 120,316 students.

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

LDWF certified 37 students during the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) "Spring Aboard" national marketing campaign from March 17-23 to promote opportunities for boaters to enroll in a boating education course.

LDWF also certified 113 boaters statewide after their ninth "Boating Education Lagniappe Day" on April 27. Lagniappe Day ran from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at eight 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 17, "Ready Set Wear It" on May 18 and the "Safe Boating Week" in Louisiana from May 18-24. 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.

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 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 TRAINING ACADEMY

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Law Enforcement Academy on Jan. 4, 2019 graduated its 32nd 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 six months of intensive physical and academic training at the academy, the 12 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.



RECRUITING

LDWF created a recruiter position within the enforcement division. The recruiter position focuses on reaching more qualified candidates who have the motivation and interest in becoming an LDWF agent while also diversifying the workforce.

IN-SERVICE

At the end of 2018, 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/Use of Force with scenarios
- HIATT Tactical Handcuffing
- Firearms (Combat Rifle & Combat Pistol)
- DWI Intox. 9000, Standardized Field Sobriety Testing Wet Lab, Boating Under the Influence (BUI) Seated Test Battery, ARIDE Retrainer (Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement)
- Officer Survival (scenario based simunitions force on force training)
- Legal Review

FIREARMS

LDWF/LED 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. He 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

Four agents were certified as Drug Recognition Experts (DRE), bringing the LDWF-LED total to 21 DREs.

MARINE LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

At the end of 2018, 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 (LSP) 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 2018, 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 successfully completed a three-day training exercise as well as a full scale exercise.

ACQUISITIONS FOR 2018-2019

EQUIPMENT:

- 2 search and rescue vessels
- 19 replacement outboard motors
- 37 (4x4) patrol trucks
- 2 administration SUVs
- 50 replacement iPads
- 7 replacement/new personal ballistic vests
- 4 boat 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 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 2018 year, OGT paid out \$16,750 in rewards. In 2018 the LOGT board reviewed 44 cases that led to 95 subjects getting cited or arrested and a total of 617 citations issued. From 1984 till the end of 2018 the LOGT board has paid out a total of \$418,200 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 \$820,626 in FY 2018-2019 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 114 enforcement related press releases during FY 2018-2019. 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/MATION

Are officers 100% Wildlife Law Enforcement or Mixed?

-Officers are mixed between (3) Wildlife, (4) Fisheries & (176) Law Enforcement Bureau's

Straight Line Reporting Structure: Yes

-Number of Officers: 183. Officers are full time Law Enforcement

TRAINING

Officers were issued Taser (CEW), Eotech weapon sights and Glock 42 handguns during FY 2019 In Service training. The Glock 42 weapons will be utilized as a backup weapon. All officers also received replacement Point Blank ballistic vests.

FY 2019 In Service training focused on CEW certification, ambush situations, briefing our officers on trends that have developed within the past year, and utilized 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.

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 three Conservation Officers. The addition of the three Conservation Officers increased our state wide numbers to 183. Maintaining adequate numbers in the workforce continues to be a challenge due to (17) retirements. However, continued funding from HB 1151 allows MDWFP to hire and retain more Conservation Officers. MDWFP is on schedule for a spring cadet class for FY 20.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

With the discovery of CWD in February 2018, officers focused efforts on sampling with our Wildlife Bureau. A CWD management zone was implemented in the southern portion of the Mississippi Delta where the one CWD positive deer was found. As of March 2019, Mississippi has 19 confirmed CWD-Positive white-tailed deer across six counties. Efforts to monitor for and mitigate spread of the disease will certainly continue. MDWFP is dedicated

to leading the charge to manage CWD using the best science available, and with continued support of hunters, landowners, and conservation partners. Regulations were put in place to contain deer within the CWD Management Zones. Carcass transportation is prohibited and supplemental feeding is banned in all zones. Officers will work diligently towards public compliance of these regulations to prevent CWD in other parts of MS.

Due to CWD concerns, officers will also continue investigations of High Fenced properties that may be involved in illegally transporting white-tailed deer into the state.

Since March 2019 there have been 20,198 samples taken. Counties that have tested positive include Benton, Issaquena, Marshall, Panola, Pontotoc, and Tallahatchie.

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.

40 MS Admin. Code Part 2, Chapter 2:

- Rule 2.7 - Prohibition on Cervid Carcass Importation to Protect Mississippi from Chronic Wasting Disease
- Rule 2.4 – Supplemental Feeding - closing supplemental feeding in the CWD Management -Zone. Prohibit supplemental feeding from March 1 to the last day of turkey season.
- Rule 2.8 – Prohibition on use of natural cervid urine
- Rule 3.4 – Mandatory harvest reporting for wild turkeys

INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

During FY 2019, MDWFP took delivery of two (2) CBRN equipped Port Security vessels purchased through the national port security grant program. These two vessels assigned to patrolling on the yellow creek port on the Tenn-Tom Waterway in the North East corner of the state and the other on the Mississippi River Port of Vicksburg in Port Security capacity.

Mississippi is seeing an increase in the usage of Canoes and Kayaks on public waters throughout the state for recreational boating and fishing. During Memorial Day weekend as well as July 4th, there was a noticeable increase in unregistered vessels and those numbers has increased to over 25% of users on the public waters operating in unregistered vessels (Kayaks, Canoes).

During FY 2019, MDWFP utilized drones in multiple recovery efforts statewide. This technology enhances the ability to identify areas to focus search efforts and provides a

real-time video feed to MDWFP's command center. The SRT team provided support to other agencies for missing persons and provided natural disaster response including assistance to Florida during Hurricane Irma.

MISSOURI

Randy Doman, Chief

TRAINING ISSUES

For the first time in five years, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) did not conduct an Agent Training Academy in 2018. Although, the nine-month hiring process did begin for the 2019 Agent Training Academy which is currently in session. The Academy is Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certified, and consists of constitutional law, conservation law, defensive tactics, emergency vehicle operations, boating operations, waterfowl school, firearms training, land management practices, trapping, hunting incident investigations, fish kills, etc.

Protection Division graduated one district supervisor from the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Leadership Academy (NACLEC) in September. One additional supervisor is currently attending the 2019 NACLEC Leadership Academy.

Protection Division also graduated four female agents from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Women's Leadership Institute (WLI).

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

The Department has implemented a priority-based budgeting program specifically tied to the Department's Strategic Plan: Design for the Future. This plan identifies three goals to direct the development of specific FY20 Department priorities, and Protection Division is essential to the implementation of this plan:

- MDC Takes Care of Nature (two related outcomes & six strategies)
- MDC Connects People with Nature (two related outcomes & seven strategies)
- MDC Maintains Public Trust (two related outcomes & four strategies)

Protection Division is well represented in all three goals, with the primary focus being in Goal #1 – MDC Takes Care of Nature, Outcome #2 – Missouri has sustainable fish and wildlife, Strategy #6 – Increase voluntary compliance with the Wildlife Code of Missouri through a community policing approach to resource law enforcement.

Additional priorities include; Chronic Wasting Disease management, feral hog elimination, Asset Management Inventory, and Priority Geography Management.

The Conservation Commission also approved a market-based salary adjustment, as recommended by a prior Department-wide job study, at their May 2018 Commission meeting. The approved salary adjustments included increasing some positions to market-based salary grade minimums and implementing compression fixes. To help finance these important salary adjustments, individual division budgets were reduced by 10% from the previous year's approved budget allocation.

Protection Division currently has approximately 200 Full-time employees which has remained constant for several years. To provide superior customer service while addressing emerging priorities such as disease management and wildlife trafficking, we occasionally reclassify existing positions to better accomplish our mission. Currently, we are in the process of reclassifying our five-person Confined Wildlife Team from a temporary (leadership development) status to a permanent status. The strength of this Team has been maintaining fair, firm, and consistent enforcement of confined wildlife and commercial permit regulations across the state. In addition, this Team played a vital role in the Department's favorable Missouri Supreme Court ruling in a lawsuit filed by the captive cervid industry. The Court ruled in the Department's favor by clarifying that all cervids, regardless of which side of a fence they're on, are considered wildlife and not livestock. This landmark ruling reaffirmed the Commission's authority to regulate not only the captive cervid industry, but all native wildlife held in confinement.

With the retirement of Protection Division Chief Larry Yamnitz in May 2018, after almost 38 years of faithful service, Protection Division Field Chief Randy Doman was promoted to fill that role in December 2018. With this new appointment, Chief Doman has made it a priority to focus on improving organizational health, implementing Design for the Future, improving communication, and providing better equipment and training for all division staff.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

In 2018, Missouri's Operation Game Thief (OGT) program received 528 violation reports which resulted in 297 convictions and \$7,000 in rewards paid. Our OGT trailer was not

used in 2018 as it was down for redesign and fabrication of new exhibits. Protection Division actively promotes the OGT program through a variety of media outlets, including our Department's social media pages. These efforts resulted in several great cases as noted below:

Based on information reported through OGT, several conservation agents and a wildlife biologist initiated an investigation within the Peck Ranch Conservation Area Refuge (where Missouri's reintroduced elk herd resides). The reporting party indicated a certain suspect had been targeting Peck Ranch late at night and killing large deer. This information was validated on November 14, 2018 at 11:55 p.m. as the vehicle below was captured on a



Spartan trail camera entering the Peck Ranch Refuge through the east gate road. At 1:14 a.m., the vehicle was again captured on camera leaving the refuge. The pictures were taken with two of Protection's Spartan trail cameras which send photos directly to agents' iPhones. Consequently, agents were promptly able to contact the driver

and his two occupants, just after the last picture was taken. Upon contact with these individuals, the agents discovered numerous firearms (one containing an illegal homemade suppressor), military thermal imaging units (later determined to be stolen from the Missouri Army National Guard), night vision equipment, spotlights, and other hunting equipment. Agents interviewed all three subjects, and the fruits of their investigation resulted in retrieving four large sets of antlers illegally taken. In addition to the numerous wildlife violations uncovered, this case is being jointly investigated by the FBI, ATF, and Missouri Army National Guard with charges pending.



Timber theft was also on the rise in 2018 across the state with numerous investigations resulting in successful prosecution such as the one described below:

St. Roberts Man Sentenced for Stealing Timber from the Mark Twain National Park

St. Louis – Richard McKinnon, 38, of St. Roberts, Missouri, was sentenced to 18 months in prison on Thursday for theft of Government property. He appeared in federal court before U.S. District Judge Stephen Limbaugh.

According to court documents, between September of 2016 and December of 2016, McKinnon and his co-defendants, Dale Connour and Delmar Connour felled walnut trees located on federal land, from the Mark Twain National Forest in Laclede County and Pulaski County. They removed at least 39 trees without authorization from the Mark Twain National Forest and then sold the stolen timber at a walnut sawmill located in Texas County, Missouri. McKinnon and the Connours damaged at least 21 trees as a result of driving prohibited vehicles onto restricted areas of the Forest in order to cut down and remove the walnut trees. The total estimated value of the National Forest timber and the cost of rehabilitation to Nation Forest land was \$35,862.50.

The case was investigated by the Missouri Department of Conservation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service. Assistant U.S. Attorney Gwen Carroll is handling the case for the U.S. Attorney's Office.



During the 2018 deer season, 5,257 hunters donated 278,155 pounds of venison to Missouri's Share the Harvest program. Conservation staff, in addition to our program partner, the Conservation Federation of Missouri, are continually working on raising awareness and securing funding for this valuable program.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE, ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

Operation Game Thief (OGT), a hotline sponsored by MDC and the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM), led to the arrest and conviction of a Greene County man in one of the state's largest ever poaching investigations, which involved approximately 100 state, federal, and Canadian wildlife officers. The convicted, along with two of his family members, are linked to the illegal killing of furbearers, fish, small game, and hundreds of

deer over a three-year period. Lawrence County Prosecuting Attorney Don Trotter remarked, "The deer were trophy bucks taken illegally, mostly at night, for their heads, leaving the bodies of the deer to waste". More than 300 charges have been filed on the group in state, federal and international jurisdictions. To date, this group of poachers have paid over \$51,000 in fines and court costs with the most egregious violators receiving lifetime revocations from the Conservation Commission. The primary suspect was sentenced to 120 days in the Department of Corrections and one year in the Lawrence County jail where he was also ordered by the court to watch the movie Bambi once a month during his year-long incarceration. This story went viral, with over 1,700 media outlets running the story resulting in an audience reach of over 1.2 billion people across the globe.

NEW INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

Protection Division continues to embrace technology to better protect Missouri's fish, forest and wildlife resources. In 2018, after much work with our Information Technology (IT) staff and an outside program developer, Protection launched an electronic incident reporting system which is fully integrated with our existing Agent Mobile and Agent Online programs.

The Agent Incident Reporting System provides significant improvements to our previous incident reporting efforts. Missouri statutes require law enforcement agencies to document reported or discovered crimes by completing incident reports, arrest reports and/or investigative reports. Prior to the creation of this system, Protection Division utilized a fragmented system for collecting information and completing these reports. The previous system proved to be inefficient for sharing information, answering Sunshine Law requests, and resulted in many wildlife crimes going undocumented. The new Incident Reporting system has unified reporting procedures to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, reduced administrative burdens, and improved information sharing throughout the Department. In addition, this new system interacts with the current Agent Online program, Agent Mobile application, Permits system, Telecheck system, Arrest database and Warning database. This allows for a very efficient user experience by eliminating duplicative entry of information that has already been collected in other databases (e.g.; identifying information of suspects, victims, witnesses, or charges pursued). It also allows us to identify locations with higher public service demands, and enable us to allocate resources more effectively. These efficiency and process improvement procedures save staff time and improve both the internal and external customer experience.

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

On July 3, 2018, the Missouri Supreme Court issued its decision in the Hill v. Missouri Department of Conservation case, overturning a lower court ruling by upholding the Commission's authority to regulate captive elk and deer. The lawsuit was originally filed by members of the captive cervid industry over the authority to regulate confined cervids. The Court ruled that captive deer are wildlife "resources of the state" and their activities are not farming or ranching under the Right to Farm amendment. This landmark decision is critically important to the health of Missouri's fish, forest, and wildlife resources beyond just captive cervids.

In 2018, prior to the aforementioned Missouri Supreme Court decision, the Missouri Legislature passed Senate Bill 627 which amended certain Missouri Department of Agriculture definitions in the "Meat Inspection" statutes to include "captive cervids" alongside livestock and poultry. This Senate Bill ultimately opened the door for the legal sale of venison (i.e., whitetail and mule deer) in Missouri. The Department filed a preliminary injunction and declared the Missouri Revised Statutes contained in Senate Bill 627 were contrary to the constitution and the Conservation Commission's authority. The Circuit Court of Cole County later ruled, in the form of a final injunction, that the Legislature cannot enact laws that usurp constitutional authority and cannot trump the Constitution which expressly forbids laws inconsistent with the Conservation Commission's authority.

COST SAVINGS INITIATIVES

Protection Division continues to utilize a very active and successful Protection Volunteer Program consisting of approximately 120 volunteers spread across the state. These volunteers assist conservation agents and other Department staff with projects including: enforcement patrols, outreach and education programs, training scenarios and wildlife surveys. This volunteer program has also proven to be a valuable recruitment tool.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

Protection Division continues to work diligently with other divisions and local, state, and federal partners to eliminate feral hogs from the landscape in Missouri. Corral trapping and aerial gunning continues to be our most effective control measures. The Department is diligently working with numerous partners on this issue including; Missouri Department of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture, Missouri Farm Bureau, United States Army (Fort Leonard Wood), Missouri Corn Growers Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Missouri Agribusiness Association, and countless others. Conservation agents remain actively involved in the trapping efforts and continue to enforce the state statutes prohibiting the transportation and release of feral hogs.

The restoration of elk in Missouri is supported and appreciated by many people and organizations, and elk tourism has proven to be a benefit to local communities. The elk herd continues to grow and plans for a limited hunting season may soon be forthcoming in the next year or two.

Unfortunately, on the evening of Friday, February 8, 2019, two elk were illegally shot and killed near Log Yard in Shannon County. One elk was a 10-year-old bull brought to Missouri from Kentucky in 2011, and the other was a mature cow born in Missouri. These elk appear to have been killed for nothing other than “thrill”, as no parts of either animal were removed by those responsible for their deaths.

This is the fifth known elk poaching incident in the area, with the others involving a mature bull in December of 2015, and a two-month-old calf in August of 2018, and investigations are ongoing. Our partners at the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM) have raised \$8,500 as a reward for any information leading to the arrest and conviction of the poacher(s).



Another significant law enforcement issue in Missouri is the ongoing abuse of our landowner/lessee permitting system. A statewide review in 2018 by conservation agents found over 30 percent misuse of no-cost landowner permit privileges (i.e., landowner fraud). A common violation was the misuse of lessee privileges. For those who lease property, they must lease and live on at least five continuous acres, owned by others, or be an immediate household member age six years or older of someone who does. Participation in a hunting or farming lease alone does not qualify an individual for landowner permits.

Some common violations encountered by agents were people using landowner permits on land they do not own, or lease and live on; fraudulently obtaining no-cost landowner permits by claiming ownership of more than five acres, or fraudulently obtaining landowner permits for properties they no longer live on.

Based on this information, the Conservation Commission removed lessee permit privileges from the *Wildlife Code*, and are in the process of instituting a landowner registry system to ensure no-cost permits are only being issued to qualifying landowners. The Commission is also considering an increase of the qualifying land acreage from five to 20 acres.

NORTH CAROLINA

Jon Evans, Colonel

AGENCY OVERVIEW

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) 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.

BASIC LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

In 2019, the NCWRC Law Enforcement Division advertised 18 law enforcement positions. The 56th Basic Law Enforcement Academy began in January 2019 and ended June 27, 2019. The 16 graduates began their six-month field training program with their Field Training Officers in July 2019, and the field training will go through February 2020. 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.

Approximately 1,200 individuals applied for these 18 positions when they were advertised in June 2018. The NCWRC does not plan to hire new Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers again until 2021.



NEW INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

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

YOUTUBE VIDEOS OF OFFICERS EXPLAINING NORTH CAROLINA HUNTING LAWS

The Law Enforcement Division partnered with the Wildlife Education Division in 2019 to produce five pilot videos to a “video regulation digest.” This project was aimed at educating the public and increasing compliance with North Carolina wildlife laws. The topics covered in these videos were:

- [Landowner Protection Act Video](#)
- [Sunday Hunting Video](#)
- [Tagging and Registering Big Game Harvests Video](#)
- [Blaze Orange Video](#)
- [Legal Shooting Times Video](#)

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

During the beginning of the 2017 whitetail deer hunting season, the Special Operations Unit (SOU) opened an investigation into reports of two separate hunting clubs taking deer during the closed season, exceeding season bag limits, trespassing, and failing to register harvested animals properly. Both clubs hunted private property as well as state-owned game lands where a large majority of violations were documented. The investigation continued for two deer seasons and both investigations ended in January 2019. During the two investigations, investigators documented 372 criminal violations and charged 41 defendants with 310 criminal violations. Investigators discovered and documented 67 whitetail deer had been unlawfully taken during the two-year investigation by the defendants charged. All defendants are currently awaiting trial for criminal violations.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT

NC / SC 3RD ANNUAL ENFORCEMENT MEETING – BASS PRO SHOPS / CONCORD, NC

Officers from North Carolina and South Carolina met to discuss enforcement issues pertaining to wildlife and boating issues in counties along the state line. During this annual meeting, each state discussed its enforcement efforts during the year, talked about upcoming law changes, shared enforcement ideas and strategies, and planned future joint boating enforcement details on shared lakes along the state line.



NC / SC STATE LINE CHECKPOINT DETAIL

During the opening of day of the North Carolina archery deer season, North Carolina Wildlife Enforcement Officers were asked to assist a NC DWI Task Force Team with a License Checkpoint along the North Carolina/South Carolina state line. Officers from North Carolina and South Carolina worked the checkpoint at several locations coming into and leaving North Carolina. Wildlife Officers from both states collaborated and used this opportunity to educate hunters about new laws pertaining to transporting deer into North Carolina. Officers handed out nearly 100 fliers that explained the new law in detail to hunters passing through the checkpoint.

“ON THE ROAD, ON THE WATER, DON’T DRINK AND DRIVE CAMPAIGN”

This is the ninth year the NCWRC and its partners have committed to the “On the Road, On the Water, Don’t Drink and Drive” campaign.

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 NCWRC, State Highway Patrol and Forensic Tests for Alcohol, and is supported by local police and sheriffs’ offices, along with participating non-governmental organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Memorial Day weekend kicks off this campaign.

Memorial Day 2019 Totals

# of Officers	172
# of Vessels Contacted	1663
# of Boaters Contacted	5448
# of Boating Citations	538
# of BUI's	37
Highest BUI	0.17
# of Boating Warnings	877
Media Contacts	24
Non-Boating Violations	266
# of Boating Incidents	10



Operation Dry Water 2019 Totals

# of Officers	166
# of Vessels Contacted	944
# of Boaters Contacted	2909
# of Boating Citations	280
# of BUI's	29
Highest BUI	0.19
# of Boating Warnings	572
Media Contacts	17
Non-Boating Violations	150
# of Boating Incidents	5



HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT

In November 2018, the NCWRC Law Enforcement Division received a new 23' SAFE Boat. This patrol boat was purchased with a grant awarded to the agency by the Port Security Grant Program through the Department of Homeland Security – FEMA.

This V hull 23' center console boat is made of heavy-duty aluminum with a beam width of 8'-6". The dry weight without motors and fuel is 4,786 lbs. This boat is powered by twin 200 hp Suzuki four stroke engines, holds 100 gallons of fuel, has six seated positions, and can draft in 17" of water. Some of the electronics on this boat consist of a 12" touch screen Garmin Chartplotter with 24" radar dome, a 10" Hummingbird Helix side scan sonar, a

wireless Virtual Lifeline kill switch system, a FLIR M-625CS color stabilized thermal camera, and a LAURIS Mini Rad-V detector to notify operators of nearby radioactive materials. This patrol boat is equipped with gun mounts in the t-top bolster, a Raymarine CAM220 Day/Night Eyeball IP camera, a handheld FLIR Ocean Scout 240 thermal imager, and two pairs of Steiner Commander 7x50 military grade binoculars.



This boat is currently stationed in Brunswick County, on the North Carolina coast. This patrol boat is used for daily patrol on the ICW/Cape Fear River and enhances the Maritime Security Plan for the port area. As an active participant of an Area Maritime Security Committee, the division uses this patrol boat to help with joint operations between multiple state, federal and local agencies.

COST SAVINGS INITIATIVES

The NCWRC completed its transition to the Glock 45 handgun in June 2019. After months of research, the agency decided to adopt the Glock 45 9mm handgun as its primary duty weapon. The handguns were issued with X300UB weapon lights to increase officer safety. The agency will be sending all firearms instructors through the Glock Operator's Course and the Glock Armorer's course in the fall.

This process began with a conversation between the Glock representatives who attended the 2018 SEAFWA convention and NCWRC Law Enforcement staff attending the conference.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

On July 1, 2019, a new law came into effect that grants a free lifetime sportsman hunting and fishing license to the spouse, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of any N.C. Wildlife Law Enforcement Officer who is killed in the line of duty. This legislation was sponsored by N.C. Rep. Jimmy Dixon, who represents the fourth district in North Carolina. There have been 11 N.C. Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers killed in the line of duty. The NCWRC hosted a ceremony to present the families of these officers with their lifetime licenses on June 21, 2019 in Kenansville, North Carolina.



HURRICANE FLORENCE AND U.S. COAST GUARD ESF-10 MISSION SUMMARY

Hurricane Florence's landfall in North Carolina on Sept. 14, 2018 resulted in extensive property damage and flooding throughout North Carolina. This event triggered a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for the disaster declared zone and a subsequent issuance of National Response Framework Emergency Support Function (ESF)-10 Mission Assignments to both U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA and USCG supported the State of North Carolina.



This protocol defined the process to mitigate pollutants from vessels within the 18 counties identified in the Presidential Major Disaster Declaration that threaten or may threaten the environment. USCG contractors raised sunken, displaced and submerged vessels. USCG, Resolve Marine Group and Tetra Tech removed batteries, fuel, flares, fire extinguishers and other pollutants. After the pollutants were removed, the vessels were placed back at their original locations, and the State of North Carolina acknowledged completion of USCG actions on the vessel disposition form. Applicable North Carolina laws or future Executive Orders will apply to the disposition of the vessel once the vessel is no longer a threat to the environment. A displaced vessel is a vessel that was affected by the storm. If a vessel was not displaced from the storm, meaning it was upright at a dock or in a boat slip, it was not considered displaced unless it had noticeable damage.



NCWRC Law Enforcement Division's responsibilities during the ESF-10 mission were to be a member of the unified command, identify and contact all state-registered vessel owners who were listed on the USCG information program (Survey 123), and notify the owners of their displaced vessels to determine what their intentions were as far as recovery of their vessel. Wildlife Officers were part of a team that consisted of USCG, marine salvage contractors, NOAA, and N.C. Department of Environmental Quality. These teams assessed and mitigated each vessel that was listed in Survey 123. After the pollution mitigation, Wildlife Officers signed off on the vessel disposition form acknowledging completion of the mitigation.

The mission budget was \$10 million. Charges against the budget were \$6.65 million. With a cost share of 25%, the state's portion was \$1.66 million. A total of three-hundred and sixty-two vessels were assessed by the teams with 3,883 gallons of fuel and oil removed. In addition, 210 batteries, 182 fire extinguishers, 265 flares, and 255 HHW greater than 1 quart were collected and removed.



UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE USE

The NCWRC Law Enforcement Division received a DJI Phantom drone through a donation from a Wildlife Commissioner. The LED UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) has already been used for a wide range of applications. The UAV has assisted many agency divisions, saving numerous hours of labor. It also has been used as a tool to assist the Law Enforcement Division with wildlife crime investigations. The UAV has been used to:

- To assess the channel at a boating access area that is going to be dredged in the future to determine the changes in the river channel after several floods. The drone footage was used for navigational buoy placement within the river channel.
- To evaluate the damage a microburst caused to timber on state-owned game lands. The UAV also allowed for a timber salvage in a protected area that normally wouldn't have allowed a harvest, even for downed trees. This provided a significant financial gain for the agency.
- To produce promotional and recruitment videos and photos of the Law Enforcement Division's boating enforcement efforts. The UAV also was used to document a district youth hunter education tournament for future recruitment efforts

- To locate and monitor a log jam on a game land after severe flooding threatened homes downstream. It also was used to evaluate the damage to the game land road infrastructure from the flooding.
- To monitor controlled burns on game lands and to check that the fire was extinguished.
- To assess a pontoon boat that was teetering on the edge of a dam on Lake Adger after a flood. Officers were able to examine the water level going over the dam and the percentage of the pontoon hanging over the edge and were able to retrieve the boat without loss of life or property damage. The footage was featured on the Weather Channel and local media outlets.
- To fly over a turkey bait and waterfowl bait report to locate blind locations for officers, minimizing foot patrol, which saved time and hours. It successfully located waterfowl bait, which helped officers make several arrests for illegal waterfowl hunting. Officers were able to look for bait and locate spent shell casings hanging on tree limbs from previous illegal hunts after zooming in on drone photos taken of the swamp.
- To conduct search-and-rescue efforts for humans and injured wildlife. The UAV was used to search for an injured bear and injured waterfowl, and to assess a fish kill after a tractor trailer crash spilled the contents of its tanker into a stream.
- To assist a local fire department in locating a brush fire in a remote location after the fire department received a smoke report.
- To document and analyze a large land slide near game lands on a mountain above several homes that posed a serious threat to public safety. Geologists were called and sensors were placed on the slide to monitor movement. The landslide was repaired and stabilized before it caused any damage.

NALOXONE ISSUED TO N.C. WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

In 2018, the NCWRC enacted a Naloxone program to serve North Carolina citizens better. Throughout the United States an opioid epidemic has claimed an unprecedented number of lives. From 2010 to 2015, heroin overdose deaths in North Carolina became a crippling issue —increasing by 800 percent while overdose deaths from commonly prescribed opioid medications increased by 350 percent. One of the reasons for the substantial heroin overdose increase is drug dealers mixing fentanyl with their product to make it significantly more potent, which is appealing to their users. With substances as dangerous as fentanyl being discovered more frequently, there is a new lethal threat for Law Enforcement. The

stronger product not only creates a growing risk for the public but it also creates a considerable hazard for law enforcement officers who may encounter fentanyl during the performance of their duties.

The NCWRC began researching how to better serve the public and protect its officers. During this research period, staff discovered there were no state agencies that carried Naloxone across the entire state. Staff also determined that only 79 out of 100 counties in North Carolina had law enforcement officers carrying Naloxone.

The NCWRC worked closely with local emergency medical service personnel, emergency management personnel, the North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition, and the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services to implement a solution. Within a few months, the NCWRC was able to obtain Naloxone kits for over 200 Wildlife Officers in North Carolina, covering all 100 counties. The NCWRC then implemented a training program for the officers, including a standard operating procedure. Every county in North Carolina now has a Law Enforcement Officer carrying Naloxone.

OKLAHOMA

Nathan Erdman, Colonel

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 19 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 four week training and orientation at Department Headquarters in Oklahoma City. A new warden will then spend ten weeks in a Field Training and Evaluation Program with a Field Training Officer, two weeks of which the new game warden will spend working with his Lieutenant. In addition, they also attend the 580-hour Oklahoma Basic Law Enforcement Academy, all-totaling nearly 30 weeks of training prior to solo assignment. This year we have begun to certify the training of the first four weeks so the specialized elements of the law enforcement training are credited and become part of the warden's permanent training record.

All game wardens are required by state mandate to complete twenty-five hours of certified law enforcement training with two hours of mental health training each calendar year. The Division has 57 certified instructors and we have written and certified the continuing education courses so that wardens do not have to rely on outside sources or agencies to complete their mandated training. 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.

All commissioned wardens and reserves are required to train and qualify annually with issued pistols, shotguns and carbines. In addition, game wardens and reserve officers must also attend a certified annual 8-hour defensive tactics refresher course.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

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

We currently have four warden vacancies the open positions are a result of retirements. No new game wardens were hired during this period.

We were able to purchase 21 Dodge four-wheel drive extended cab pickups and 2 crew cab pickup, all with the Dodge cargo management system. The equipment installed on this year's trucks include LED light bars, locking double gun racks, and grill guards. We purchased two eighteen foot jet boats with 110-80 horsepower motors and one sixteen foot flat bottom boat equipped with a 25 horsepower outboard jet prop motor. We purchased fifteen radios, ten digital high-band and five 800 megahertz radios to replace aging equipment. We have added a Streamlight TLR flashlight to the duty handgun and replaced all holsters to accommodate the added light.

We are currently researching body worn cameras to document contacts with the public and critical incidents. We have field tested a body worn camera system by Visual Labs which will

provide download of video via a cell phone at a much lower cost than current Law Enforcement camera companies.

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

Wardens worked with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service on the commercialization of ornate box turtles in Creek County. Two individuals were charged and paid. \$500 in court costs and \$10,000 in restitution.

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

The Department took a major leap in technology by contracting with Brandt Information Services to manage license sales. All licenses sold by the agency are now acquired through Brandt including commercial licenses, on line checking of game, and special drawing hunt applications. Sportsmen can now carry proof of license on electronic devices and wardens can check licenses, license history, and harvest data via their telephones in the field.

We continue to support 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 form 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 Division 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

New legislation and administrative rules:

The Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission made changes to simplify rules on legal firearms for the taking of Big Game. Legislation has been proposed to allow the

Commission to modify trapping rules and remove language from statute. A second case of CWD was discovered in a captive elk herd in northeast Oklahoma. 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.

We have discontinued the installation of CNG on vehicles due to repair and maintenance costs.

OTHER SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

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 anglers and hunters and the sale of licenses to them is vital to our agency.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Chisolm Frampton, Colonel

DIVISIONAL PRIORITIES

DIVISIONAL PROMOTIONS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We have had many changes within the upper command staff over the past year with retirements of many of our senior staff members. The following senior staff promotions have taken place:

Major James Landrum promoted to Lieutenant Colonel
Captain Mike Isaac promoted to Major over Field Operations Region 1, 2, & 3
Captain Billy Downer promoted to Major over Staff Operations
Lieutenant Steve Simpson promoted to Captain over LE Education & Outreach
Lieutenant George Dukes promoted to Captain over Staff Operations
Lieutenant DJ Riley promoted to Captain over Field Operations Region 1

Lieutenant Michael P Thomas successfully completed the FBI National Academy.

OFFICER SAFETY

This is our first priority as our game wardens are our most important resource to protect. In 2018 we were able to secure funding and procure 265 FN Patrol Rifles for our LE staff. These rifles will be replacing our aging shotguns and original patrol rifles obtained through the 1033 program. We are continuing with our ballistic vest replacement program annually and looking to procure the most innovative vests available to encourage daily wear by our officers.

Vehicle lighting packages have been updated to not only allow for 360 degree visibility the new lighting allows for multiple flash patterns, take down lights, and a constant on patrol light. These are great improvements over the standard two blue dash lights in our older fleet vehicles.

Radio communications are currently being upgraded from the standard Vhf radios to tri-band portable and mobile radios. By moving to the tri-band models we are allowed greater inter-operability with other state, local, and federal partners. The tri-band radios allow for conventional VHF, Uhf, and 800 Mhz channels all contained within the same radio.

TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES

The Division began meeting with vendors for our electronic reporting program in early 2018. After comparing vendors, the Division selected Thin Blue Line Systems, Inc (TBL). They have a proven eCitation and eReporting system that is being used by larger departments throughout the United States. One of the best features of TBL is that their applications use the iPhone and iPad to generate forms and citations, which make this a great fit for our officers who are already equipped with iPhones. Furthermore, their software package has the ability to expand to fill many needs other than just eReporting and eCitation such as modules for special events tracking, JEA reporting, and computer aided dispatch functions. In September-October 2019 the first pilot of 20 officers will receive equipment and training on the new devices and if successful a full divisional roll out should occur in mid to late 2020. The initial rollout of the program will allow for eWarning tickets and modules for reporting Boating Accidents, Hunting Accidents, and general Incident Reports.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The Division hired 18 new game wardens during the calendar year at a starting salary of \$37,500.00. This starting salary matched the initial increase in starting salary for the Class of 2017 (from \$33,600.00 to \$37,500.00). This increase in salary did cause some compaction between prior hired classes. In an effort to correct this, the Division secured funding through the legislature to begin addressing compaction between classes. The Division will continue to seek funding to address compaction concerns in the future.

PUBLIC SERVICE AND OUTREACH

The LE Division held 28 regional youth fishing rodeos with 3,901 participants. Thanks to funding provided by sponsors, one lifetime hunting and fishing license (\$500 value) was given away to a lucky youth at each rodeo.

The National Archery in Schools Program continues to be a huge success for our Law Education & Outreach Section. South Carolina currently has 240 active schools with approximately 43,823 students participating statewide in the National Archery in the Schools Program. Two thousand six hundred fifty-three (2,653) students participated in 3 Super Regionals held across the state in January and February. Officers assisted at each Regional serving as line judges. In March of 2018, one thousand thirty-four (1,034) students from across the state participated in the three-day state tournament. Thanks to sponsors, \$52,500 in college scholarships were awarded to graduating seniors at the State event. In addition, the SCDNR sponsored the third annual State NASP/IBO 3D Tournament held in conjunction with the State NASP event. Five hundred seventeen (517) youth participated in this event with \$9000 in scholarships awarded to graduating seniors.

Scholastic Clay Target Sports continues to be one of our most popular Law Enforcement Outreach programs. The Division sponsored four skeet and trap events this year as well as a sporting clay event. These events are open to any youth in grades 6-12 who have successfully completed a hunter education course and is a part of a DNR sanctioned school or club team. Officers serve as trappers at all five events and offer the opportunity for youth to engage with law enforcement in a unique and non-threatening environment. Five hundred thirty shooters (530) participated at Skeet events and five hundred eighty-two (582) participated at Trap events. Six hundred twenty-five (625) youth shooters participated in the SCDNR Youth Sporting Clay Open with 2,000 people in attendance. Thanks to sponsors, \$64,000 in college scholarships were provided to graduating seniors who attended clay target events.

The Division renovated the 48-foot Take One Make One Heritage Trailer in 2018. This renovations included the addition of a walk-through wildlife restoration exhibit which highlights restoration efforts of the white-tailed deer, black bear, wild turkey, wood duck and mottled duck in South Carolina. The renovated truck and trailer were wrapped in Realtree Edge pattern and unveiled at the annual South Eastern Wildlife Expo in

Charleston, SC where over 5,000 people per day visited the new exhibit. Officers working the trailer were able to engage the public and answer questions.

In addition to other Education and Outreach Programs, field officers gave a total of 3,414 public presentation during 2018.

COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES & PARTNERSHIPS

The Division acquired a \$150,000.00 mobile Breath Alcohol Testing unit (BAT Mobile) from the Department of Public Safety. The unit was updated and vinyl wrapped in a boating safety theme to attract public attention. The BAT Mobile is used to support the Division's boating safety and BUI enforcement campaign. The BAT Mobile can be set up at area landings during large marine events to support the field officers in enforcing Boating Under the Influence.

The Division purchased an additional Didson dual frequency acoustic imaging unit with accessories. The two Didson units are state of the art technology used for the location of evidence and recovery of victims of drowning and boating related deaths. These units have been used to assist other local and state agencies in recovering valuable evidence. 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 continued a successful partnership with local US Power Squadron volunteers to erect two additional life jacket loaner boards at the Limehouse Landing in Charleston and at Larry Koon Landing on Lake Murray. The Division now has three life jacket loaner boards across the state. Volunteers from the Power Squadrons keep up with the lifejackets at each loaner board and ensure that they are serviceable and kept up to date.

The Division continued its successful partnership with US Coast Guard Auxiliary for teaching boater education and has continued to distribute over 12,000 SC Boater Handbooks annually to local landings and marinas across the state.

The Division continued our partnership with the Wendy's Food Chain for the "I Got Caught Wearing My Lifejacket" campaign. Youth caught wearing their PFDs during routine boating inspections are given a "ticket" by officers which entitles them to receive a free Frosty at their local Wendy's restaurant.

Boating Safety radio commercials aired at all University of South Carolina & Clemson University Baseball games March through April. Boating Safety displays using the Division's wrapped Pioneer boat were at several Clemson University and University of South Carolina baseball games.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Currently we are reviewing all Directives, Policies, and Regulations to ensure they are current, enforceable, defensible, and relevant. Review and revision cycles are not only mandated it is an integral best practices approach for any law enforcement agency.

We are also trying to ensure that we do not lose our history as game wardens and our historical duties that are expected of us. With the revisions it is allowing us to set forth with relevant directions to our game wardens as we face the new challenges and enforcement expectations placed on us in this ever changing career in law enforcement.

LE Division Statistics – Jan 2018 – Dec 2018

Officers issued **7,217** summons.

Officers issued **20,359** warnings.

Officers spent **44,478** hours on boating patrols.

Officers inspected **61,459** boats.

Officers spent **16,452** hours conducting Search and Rescue Missions.

Officers spent **26,469** hours assisting other agencies.

Officers conducted **42,092** night patrol hours.

K-9 UNIT

2018 was the first full year of deployment of our K-9 Team. K-9 Teams were deployed 187 times resulting in 148 DNR related cases and 57 cases made by other agencies.

Pfc. Patrick Nettles and K9 Cash deployed in Bamberg County in search of a missing 2 year old boy who wandered away from his grandfather's house. K9 Cash located the child in 8 minutes after tracking for over ½ mile through the woods. The story was covered in Guns and Garden Magazine as a feature story.

Sgt. Freddie Earhart and K9 Blue deployed in Berkeley County in search of a missing suicidal subject. Subject was tracked and located at a tree where he had placed a hang man's noose this action saved the subjects life.

The K-9 Team was nominated for the 2018 Conservation Law Enforcement Award through AFWA.

FBI JOINT TERRORISM TASK FORCE

Officers assigned to the FBI JTTF in Charleston and Greenville assisted with the investigations of multiple domestic terrorist threats from militia extremist, white supremacists, sovereign citizens, ANTIFA, Anti-Semites, global extremists, and Islamic Extremist groups. Their hard work resulted in these notable cases:

Conviction of Islamic State Terrorist Wesley Dallas Ayers for weapons of mass destruction and firearms charges.

Arrest of Pickens County, SC Courthouse and DSS Office bomber Michael Lambert Seabrooke. Subject was positively identified as the subject who bombed 2 governmental buildings and is currently undergoing mental evaluation pending trial.

SEAHAWK

The Division continues to assign an officer assigned to Project Seahawk. Based in Charleston, South Carolina, Project Seahawk is a partnership between state, local, and Federal partners to improve overall situational awareness, increase information sharing and continue to collaborate to find more effective and efficient ways to protect our ports.

GOVERNORS DETAIL

The Division continues to provide four (4) officers to assist with the protection of the Governor and the first family.

TENNESSEE

Darren Rider, Colonel

TRAINING

Sixteen 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 – Annual in-service training now consists of blended learning, officers must complete learning modules from Virtual Academy, this year's modules consisted of 4th amendment, 6th amendment, arrests and Terry stops and warrantless searches, child sex abuse, ethical issues for law enforcement and stress management in addition to this year's annual training included: domestic violence; defensive tactics and fire arm re-qualifications.

FUNDING AND STAFFING ISSUES

Agency employees in a wildlife class position in which wildlife officers are included were given a 2.5 % 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.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

In July 2019, TWRA partnered with state and local law enforcement agencies across the state in Operation Dry Water (ODW) from July 6 – July 7. These joint operations identified and removed impaired operators from Tennessee waters. ODW resulted in 148 officers participating; 2,089 total officer hours; 3,149 total vessels checked; 138 citations written; 62 warnings written; 3 BUI arrests and 128 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.

INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

A new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Record Management System (RMS) through a contract with Smart Cop went live in November.

Panasonic "Tough Book" laptop computers were purchased for all field officers as a result from grant monies the Agency received from the Department of Justice and Homeland Security.

The Agency was able to implement and conduct the very first Tennessee Wildlife Officers Training Academy. TWOTA is a twenty week law enforcement training program for all newly hired law enforcement commissioned personnel. This newly established academy focus will be on conservation law enforcement.

STATE ISSUES/LEGISLATION AFFECTING LAW ENFORCEMENT

The T.C.A. code 69-9-226 was amended to provide an orientation course for boat rentals for all operators except those who have completed a NASBLA approved course and received certification, is a nonresident who shows completion of an approved NASBLA course, has an operator license issued by the Coast Guard, or was born on or before January 1, 1989.

A new T.C.A. code 69-9-227 was established that authorized the TFWC to establish rules, regulations, permits and procedures regulating all aspects of commercial operations that lease or rent non-motorized vessels for non-commercial use by the public on the waters of Tennessee.

T.C.A. Title 70, Chapter 3 ammunition tax was repealed in its entirety. There is no longer a required ten cents ammunition tax stamp required to be placed on each individual container of ammunition. The revenue from this program will now be annually allocated to the Agency through the General Fund.

SPECIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

CWD was initially discovered in two western Tennessee counties, an emergency rule was passed by Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission to restrict carcass exportation out of these counties, in addition to extending the hunting season an additional 30 days.

The TFWC has now passed a permanent rule that established a CWD Unit with specific regulations for five CWD positive counties and seven CWD high risk counties. An Earn-A-Buck program will allow the hunter to harvest one additional antlered deer in this unit if that hunter harvest two CWD Unit antlerless deer in addition to a Replacement Buck program is available for hunter's that harvest a CWD positive antlered deer in the CWD Unit.

TEXAS

Grahame Jones, Colonel



TRAINING

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Law Enforcement Division (TPWD-LE) continues to develop and adopt training to ensure game wardens are prepared to meet the demands of their job.

- The 63rd Game Warden Academy will begin September 23, 2019, with 40 Game Warden Cadets and 15 Park Peace Officers. The trainees will endure 30 weeks of extensive training in state and federal law. Upon graduation the individuals will be certified Texas Peace Officers and commissioned by Texas Parks and Wildlife.
- Jujitsu is being included in the defensive tactics training curriculum for the enhancement of officer safety.
- The Game Warden Training Center has added a Lieutenant from State Park Police to assist with training.

FUNDING AND STAFFING

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Law Enforcement Division maintains a force of over 550 game wardens statewide. TPWD-LE works with agency leadership, legislators, and constituents to ensure Texas Game Wardens can complete their mission.

In the 86th legislation the department was appropriated 5 million dollars to replace aging two-way radios. The newer and more advanced radio equipment, capable of interoperability across different systems and bands (i.e. trunking, VHF, UHF, 700/800 MHz) will enable communication with a centralized dispatch center, across Game Warden units, various law enforcement personnel and agencies including the Texas Department of Public Safety, local sheriff's offices, local police departments, and federal partners including the US Coast Guard and Border Patrol which is paramount to the overall safety and effectiveness of Texas Game Wardens.

MAJOR CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Significant advances have been made by TPWD-LE in response to major conservation law enforcement trends. Texas Game Wardens continue to adapt and excel.

- Commercial fisheries enforcement continues to be a high priority for resource sustainability and food safety (finfish, oysters, shrimp)



UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE, ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

- TPWD-LE continues to see increasing activity along the US/Mexico border and Gulf of Mexico with illegal fishing incursions by fishermen from Mexico. This year alone, Texas Game Wardens have confiscated 30k feet of illegal gill nets and 16 miles of illegal long lines placed in Texas waters. As international demand for products such as red snapper and shark fins increases we expect the illegal fishing pressure to parallel on Texas' fisheries. A recent week-long saturation enforcement effort from Brownsville to El Paso resulted in over 200 citations and warnings ranging from serious health violations involving illegal importation of oysters to administrative issues such as commercial license violations. TPWD-LE works closely with federal partners like NOAA, USGC, and CBP, not only in information sharing but joint patrol efforts as well.



- Game wardens have focused on Non-Game violations in and around the state's urban/metro areas in addition to their more traditional duties. They continue to develop relationships with USFW, USDA, and US Customs agents to facilitate interdiction of shipments of endangered and/or invasive species. A few of those species seized are:

Needle Fish



Freshwater Rays



Asian Swamp Eels



- Game wardens worked closely with the federal agents identifying plants, animals, and merchandise that are forbidden, illegally possessed, or improperly documented. Over the course of five days, game wardens rotated working agents at various ports of entry. Northbound traffic from Mexico was inspected resulting in several seizures of protected plants and wildlife, along with incidental discoveries of non-resource related contraband. Staff met with the Mexican Consulate and Mexican Game Wardens prior to our border-wide operation to coordinate fish import inspections with our Mexican counterparts while also providing educational information to purchasers and retail fish dealers in the city of Acuña, Mexico.

NEW INNOVATIONS IN CONSERVATION LAW ENFORCEMENT

- For the past several years the TPWD LE Forensic Reconstruction and Mapping Team (STORM) has trained and deployed to boating accidents involving serious injury or death, hunting accidents, officer involved shootings and other critical incidents. During these trainings and deployments, the team utilizes sophisticated scanning and mapping equipment and software to re-create the event. More recently, the team acquired a cutting-edge FARO 3D laser scanner. This system enables the team to digitally capture the scene, analyze the data in 3D and deliver compelling courtroom presentations.
- The Law Enforcement Division has developed and implemented a UAS program division-wide. Currently, the program has 21 Drones and 15 FAA-licensed, TPWD trained and qualified UAS pilots. The program is constantly encountering new missions and uses, but primary mission focuses are: search and rescue, disaster assessment, crime scene investigation, tactical overwatch, accident reconstruction, fugitive apprehensions and improvements to training.

STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVES

- Through strategy planning the department was able to purchase all new rifles and pistols for the Game Wardens. Through a trade in method, which entailed trading the currently issued firearms in on new firearms, we were able to greatly reduce the cost to replace the firearms.
- The agency operates a fleet of 650 four-wheel drive trucks, with a five year or 100k mile power train warranty. LE tries to replace vehicles at the 100k mile mark to reduce maintenance and repair costs. Also, the four-wheel drive trucks have a high resale value at the 100k range, which aids in replenishing capital funds to purchase new vehicles.
- Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) have entered into a partnership to merge state-wide communications infrastructure. This will result in increased radio coverage and greater situational awareness for both agencies. This strategic partnership will create a savings to tax payers regarding labor, purchasing and contracting expenses, and equipment, maintenance, and infrastructure costs.

VIRGINIA

Bryan Young, Major



STAFFING

At the close of 2018, the Law Enforcement Division had 169 Conservation Police Officers including 130 non-supervisory field officers, 26 Sergeants, 5 Lieutenants, 6 Captains and 2 Majors. All were fully certified officers through the Department of Criminal Justice Services, with the authority to enforce all of the laws of Virginia. As Deputy US Fish and Wildlife Special Agents, they may conduct investigations and cross state lines when violations of federal wildlife laws have been committed. The Law Enforcement Division is also supported by 17 full-time and 5 part-time civilian positions which include dispatchers, administrative assistants, asset managers, records, and IT staff. Table 1 looks at the number of full time sworn and support staff over the past five years.

Description	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
CPO (Recruit and non-supervisory)	125	114	133	122	130
SERGEANT	24	24	24	17	26
LIEUTENANT	3	3	3	5	5
CAPTAIN	5	4	4	6	6
MAJOR/LT. COLONEL/COLONEL	1	1	2	2	2
SWORN SUBTOTAL	158	146	166	152	169
DISPATCH	8	8	8	8	9
ADMIN/OFFICE	8	7	8	8	7
IT SUPPORT	1	1	1	1	1
SUPPORT SUBTOTAL	17	16	17	17	17
TOTAL SWORN/SUPPORT (FULL-TIME)	175	162	183	169	186

The 11th Basic Training Academy is tentatively scheduled to begin in February of 2021. The division will begin actively recruiting candidates for this class in early 2020. In the meantime, the recruiting team is keeping engaged with communities across Virginia. Sergeant Mike Hill and other officers have been participating in numerous career days, community events, and collegiate criminal justice programs. The division receives nearly 200 inquiries a week from individuals who are interested in pursuing a career in natural resource law enforcement. An informational card was developed to quickly provide answers to the most common questions the recruiters receive.

In 2018, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Law Division conducted its 10th Basic and Modified Law Enforcement Academy: The Muskies. In 2004, DGIF undertook establishing its own academy in order to tailor the program to the specific needs of Conservation Police Officers. Their training program consists of DCJS requirements as well as courses designed to prepare them for careers in natural resource law enforcement. The academy is based at DGIF Headquarters in Henrico, but many courses are presented at various field locations throughout the Commonwealth. These officers learned how to operate patrol boats on Kerr Reservoir in Mecklenburg County, and how to conduct hunting incident investigations at the Virginia Public Safety Training Center in Hanover County. After their academy training was complete, each of them successfully completed Field Training with an experienced officer.





TRAINING

January of 2018, the first Introduction to Supervision Class was conducted at the Academy. This class was held for the 10 CPO's who were promoted to the position of sergeant or lieutenant. The 30 hour training included the following: division updates, Spanish for law enforcement, evaluations, employee work profiles (EWPs), handling demeanor complaints, media relations, handling workplace conflict, reports for supervisors, liability and constitutional law, supervisor round table.

March of 2018, the bi-annual officer In-service was held. CPO's attended one of the four sessions of In-service that were offered which included 24 hours of training. The following topics were covered: Spanish for law enforcement, fentanyl, boat fraud and theft, annual firearms qualification, Zuercher updates, and advanced search and seizure.

May of 2018, Professional Standards In-service was held at the state capital. All of the division's officers attended the session together. This was the first time in over 20 years all of our officers have been assembled at one time. Four hours of Constitutional Law was provided by Timothy Longo, Retired Chief of Charlottesville Police Department.

Later in the year, driver training was conducted at various locations



around the state. In this training, CPO's learned how to safely operate UTV's.

Training in Zuercher, our new CAD and record management system, was provided in August to all officers in the Agency as well as park rangers with Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. This training was held at DGIF headquarters and at Natural Bridge State Park.



A Field Training Officer Basic Class was also offered in August for 16 CPO's, preparing them to be FTOs for the 10th Academy graduates who entered the field in September.

Also in September, 17 officers attended our Advanced Tracking and Rural Operations Course. This course expanded on the basic tracking skills they learned while attending their basic training.

In October, an Exterior Response to Active Shooter Events (ERASE) class was held for CPOs in the field. This training prepares CPOs to effectively respond to active shooter events.

During 2018 the Firearms Cadre held Spring, Summer, and Fall firearms training sessions. These sessions fulfilled the DCJS qualification requirements and provided an opportunity for CPOs to hone their skills and remain proficient with their issued pistol and rifle.

OUTDOOR EVENTS

When Conservation Police Officers are not spending their time protecting the Commonwealth's natural resources, you can find them involved in their communities across the state. CPOs support special events such as sportsman shows, wild game dinners, DARE programs, town hall meetings, fireworks shows, county fairs, Ruritan Clubs, and river festivals just to name a few. You can also find them supporting kid's fishing days, youth hunts, disabled veteran/wounded



warrior hunts, career fairs, and all kinds of education events such as boater and hunter education courses. In 2018, CPOs participated in 191 outreach events. Specifically they assisted in 90 special events, 4 disabled veteran hunts, 2 non-veteran disabled events, 13 boat education courses, 13 hunt education courses, 37 kids fishing days, 7 youth hunts and 25 career/recruitment fairs.



OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The Office of Professional Standards (O.P.S.) with the guidance of the O.P.S. Advisory Council identified a need to market and showcase the unique differences between a Conservation Police Officer (CPO) compared with other law enforcement officers. In addition, it became evident management would benefit, especially from constructive employee suggestions and additional citizen feedback in order to build upon and enhance our reputation and public trust.

Go to our Professional Standards Webpage at: dgif.virginia.gov/ops

Some of the O.P.S. initiatives and results during the first year include the following:

- Created and implemented a Professional Standards CREED for the officers and staff within the DGIF Law Enforcement Division.
- Initiated selective interview process for Internal Affairs Investigators and required the successful completion of a related specific training school offered by the Virginia

Internal Affairs Investigators Association and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation. Established an eight-member team of Internal Affairs Investigators; three of these investigators have received national certification as an IA Investigator/Supervisor through the Internal Affairs Institute of the Public Agency Training Council (PATC).

- Held a Professional Standards Training Session for the entire Law Enforcement Division at the State Capitol on May 23 & 24, 2018. The keynote speaker was Retired Police Chief Timothy Longo, Sr., who provided additional instruction on constitutional law. We were also honored to have Chief Justice Donald Lemons, of the Supreme Court of Virginia, as the official conducting the swearing-in of officers from our 10th Modified Academy.
 - Established standardized Dispatcher/Office/Supervisor Handling SOPs for receiving CPO Commendations and Complaints from citizens, to include tracking numbers.
 - Created an opportunity for additional positive and negative Citizen Feedback, to include:
 - Officer Commendations/Complaints and Law Enforcement Praise/Dissatisfaction
 - Developed and implemented a Citizen Feedback and Tracking System to include various handling protocols, training, and associated forms. In addition, created a Professional Standards Website dgif.virginia.gov/ops with citizen feedback workflows along with multiple types of handouts to present this new citizen feedback program to the public.
- ❖ **RESULT** - (Measuring Professionalism) - In just 7 months (5/25/2018 to 12/31/2018) through this "New Citizen Feedback System", Virginia Conservation Police Officers have collected from their efforts in the field:

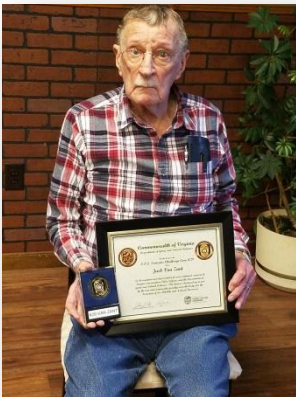


63 Positive (Commendations) : 3 Negative (Complaints) = 21:1 ratio

- ❖ Tracking all types of feedback delivery sources (including letters, emails, voice messages, phone calls, etc.):

85 Positive : 18 Negative = 5:1 ratio.

- Established Employee Suggestion Program with a process for officers/staff to submit suggestions with the creation of teams to develop and implement worthwhile projects.
 - ❖ **RESULT** - As of 12/31/2018, there have been **22** Projects and work teams created, which has led to the completion of **17** projects, using group creativity and innovation to build these employee initiatives.
 - ❖ **91** Law Enforcement Officers and Staff (about half of our personnel) have participated as Team Members in this Employee Suggestion Program, with **13** of them taking on the responsibility as a Project Leader.
- Designed an exclusively numbered O.P.S. Protector Challenge Coin for constituent supporters of the DGIF Mission "Protect" Pillar along with a nomination process.



- ❖ Selected first round of **23** recipients, with each given an exclusively numbered coin and certificate.
 - ❖ One recipient provided their feedback on the meaning of this recognition program:
"The fact that the law enforcement organization is taking the time to single out citizens to say thanks left a significant positive impression with me and to those I told about it"
- Started GW/CPO Retiree Appreciation Program - Care Packages / Retiree Newsletters

- ❖ After creating a new retiree contact database with years of service, mailed out **121** Retiree Packages, containing 14 items each. (Note: These retirees represented over **3,417 years of DGIF Service**, in comparison with our current greater number of 173 CPO's who have just 1,937 years of DGIF Service.
- Completed Accreditation Research and Recommendations Report and entered into an agreement with DCJS to begin the self-assessment phase of Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC) Accreditation process.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

As police department 'Lip Sync' videos became popular with the public during the summer of 2018, Senior K-9 Officer Wayne Billhimer approached the DGIF media team with the idea to produce the first lip sync video in the nation featuring conservation police officers. 'Huntin' Fishin' Lovin' Everyday,' a popular song by Luke Bryan, was chosen for the soundtrack. It turned out to be the perfect choice to highlight DGIF and Virginia Conservation Police.

Officer Billhimer was joined in the video by Molly Billhimer, Major Scott Naff, Sgt. Rob Ham, Sgt. Steve Garvis, Officer Katiana Quarles, Senior Officer Richard Howald, Officer Jim Patrillo, Officer Beth McGuire, Kim McCarthy, Dispatchers Kevin Leonard and Katelyn Wright, and the 10th Basic CPO Academy. The project was completed in a little over two weeks—an amazing feat of teamwork!

With stunning scenery from the mountains to the sea, a humorous 'no fishing' segment, and even a 'decoy deer,' the DGIF Lip Sync video became a hit with the public and went viral on social media. Positive reviews and appreciative comments rolled in from the U.S. and many countries around the world.

DGIF's Lip Sync video racked up 3.4 million views on DGIF's Facebook channel, with over 89,000 shares. With more 'reach' than any previous DGIF marketing effort, the Lip Sync video introduced the work of Virginia CPOs to many new audiences. Congratulations to all who participated in making the video a success!



In 2018, DGIF employed 10 full time and 3 part time dispatchers. Beginning after Memorial Day of 2018, the Communications Center became the holder of record and main dispatch center for the Department of Conservation and Recreation Rangers that patrol and enforce laws on all of the Commonwealth's state parks. In September of 2018, DGIF's Law Enforcement Division and DCR's Rangers switched to a new CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) called "Zuercher." This upgrade has allowed for validation of addresses for officers to respond to, name records to search back through for subject histories, and a quicker records and case development. In 2018 DGIF's Communications Center managed 48,442 calls for service (CFS). 2,170 of those calls originated through the Wildlife Crimeline. Twice a year the Virginia Sportsmen Reward committee reviews Crimeline reports to reward callers whose information resulted in a positive impact on the final disposition of the case. Officer patrols of the Commonwealth have continued to increase each year, especially with the addition of dispatching for park rangers. Other significant increases include abandoned boat reports and distress/overdue person related calls. Welcomed reductions were observed in stolen property, as well as nuisance wildlife type calls. With the increase in calls in general, these numbers will undoubtedly change in 2019.

In 2018, Conservation Police switched its record management system for tracking crime data from Tritech's Inform RMS to Central Square Technologies' Zuercher Suite. This switch has facilitated a change within law enforcement from CAD-centric to case-centric reporting, creating a culture shock during launch. This software change vastly improved the officers'

ability to use case management which was not possible in the old records system. Records containing offenses are submitted to the FBI through Virginia State Police using a National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) report.

Conservation Police Officers began entering their own summonses using FBR in 2012 using Tritech Inform FBR. In September 2018, officers no longer used Inform FBR, but rather created their own cases using Zuercher. 2018 was a very difficult year for summary review because of the two different systems producing different types of data sets. Some information we gathered in the past could not be combined and has been removed from this year's report. In 2019, Law will have a complete years' worth of case information that will allow us to look at many case details, including those that have been dropped in 2018 as well as much more. Combining both sets of data from Tritech and Zuercher, officers created 5419 cases that resulted in 6814 arrests (Table 3)

The top ten violations resulting in a summons being issued in 2018 are listed in Table 5. The top two violations have consistently held their rank since 2014. Fishing without a license, § 29.1-335(FRESH), is number one, and not having the appropriate personal flotation device (PFD) on a boat, Virginia Administrative Code 4VAC15-430-50, is number two. The third highest violation resulting in a summons being issued was trespassing, Virginia statute § 18.2-132.

Table 5: Top 10 Arrest Charges Issued in 2018 by Conservation Police.

RANK	CODE DESCRIPTION	CODE	2018
1	LICENSE: FISH W/O FRESHWATER LICENSE	29.1- 335(FRESH)	1892
2	WATERCRAFT: PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES REQUIRED	4VAC15-430-30	824
3	TRESPASS	18.2-132	342
4	LICENSE: HUNT W/O BIG GAME LICENSE	29.1-335(BIG)	301
5	LICENSE: HUNT W/O LICENSE	29.1-335(HUNT)	261
6	HUNT OVER BAIT	29.1-521(4)	232
7	HUNTING: UNLAWFUL HUNT/POSSESS OF WILD ANIMAL	29.1-521	211
8	FISHING WITHOUT A SALTWATER LICENSE	28.2-302.1	177
9	DEPT OWNED, CONTROLLED, MANAGED LAND VIOLATION	4VAC15-40- 280	174
10	LICENSE: FISH W/O STOCKED TROUT LICENSE	29.1- 335(TROUT)	174

HONOR GUARD

In May 2018, the division held its first all division meeting in downtown Richmond in the Pocahontas building. This building is currently home to the Virginia General Assembly while the General Assembly building is taking on renovations. To open this historic meeting, the newly formed Conservation Police Honor Guard posted and retrieved colors for the first time as a unit. This activity was symbolic in many ways, from the new beginning of the team, to the new way forward for the division. Since its



symbolic inception in May 2018, the Honor Guard has been busier than most would ever have imagined. Over the last year the unit has posted and retrieved colors at the academy graduation, represented the agency at funerals of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty across the mid-Atlantic, and presented flags to various families in memoriam and appreciation of their loved one's service to the Commonwealth.

In order to ensure the unit is prepared for all assignments they have instituted a fairly rigorous training schedule and have taken their training very serious. The unit trains together at least quarterly and have utilized venues such as private gymnasiums, an armory, and three separate funeral homes.

They have built solid relationships with supporters across the state such as funeral home directors that have given them very beneficial information, taught them common customs, and even participated in their training. The unit has put together a myriad of specialized equipment such as flags, poles, stands, uniform attire, and other miscellaneous necessary equipment that have all proven vital in many different applications. Finally, the Honor

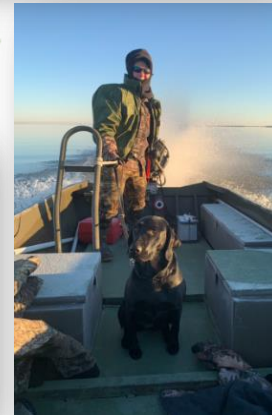
Guard worked with Flora Funeral Service in Franklin County, along with the Batesville Casket Company, to take possession of a donated casket to ensure their training is as realistic as absolutely possible.

K9 PROGRAM

2018 was a busy year for the DGIF K9 Unit. CPO James Patrillo and K9 Bailey, and CPO Richard Howald and K9 Sky attended the K9 Academy from January until May, while CPO Frank Spuchesi was promoted to District Sergeant and K9 Comet was retired. A review of the program then took place and 2 new handlers were selected for the team. CPO Glenn Cramer and CPO Mark VanDyke joined the team in late summer and completed searches for their new K9 partners. Due to generous donations from DGIF constituents, we were able to purchase a German Short-haired Pointer for CPO Cramer and a Black Lab for Officer VanDyke. These two officers and their K9 partners began the K9 Academy in February of 2019. The following table contains summary information for K9 since 2014 and includes a snapshot of what these officers, along with CPO Wayne Billhimer and K9 Justice and CPO Wes Billings and K9 Josie, completed during 2018:

Table 9: Summary for K-9 Activity from 2014 to 2018 (*separation of uses and patrols starting 2018)

DESCRIPTION	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
TOTAL USES	159	154	76	127	267
TOTAL PATROLS	*	*	*	*	182
PUBLIC APPEARANCE	57	42	33	60	85
TRACKS	45	78	64	52	63
WILDLIFE DETECTION	28	29	26	21	28
AREA SEARCH	38	87	51	42	51
NONSPECIFIC USE	16	21	16	35	40



OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Officer Mark Shaw was selected for the prestigious honor of Virginia Conservation Police Officer of the Year for 2018. Since beginning his career as a Conservation Police Officer in 2011, Officer Mark Shaw has fully embraced DGIF's mission of Conserving, Connecting, and Protecting the Commonwealth's natural resources and its citizens.

Officer Shaw has been assigned in both Central and Southwest Virginia and has excelled in both of these diverse work areas. He is currently assigned to Craig County. His



dedication and professionalism along with his efforts in serving his community have led to numerous recognitions and awards which include: Mothers Against Drunk Driving Award (2014), Region 1 Boating Officer of the Year (2015), Region 3 Boating Officer of the Year (2016), NASBLA State Boating Officer of the Year (2016), Fort Lee Volunteer of Excellence Award (2016), and the DGIF Life Saving Award (2016).

Officer Shaw is a DCJS certified Instructor, Arson Investigator, and EMT. In addition, he instructs the Agency's Complimentary Work Force in identifying and issuing damage permits for nuisance wildlife. In 2018, Officer Shaw participated in multiple newspaper and television public service campaigns, initiated or responded to 560 calls for service, made 118 arrests, and participated in 26 educational events including both hunter education and boating safety education courses. He also received seven commendations through our Office of Professional Standards.

BOATING OFFICER OF THE YEAR



Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) Conservation Police Officer Joe Rollings was selected for The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators' (NASBLA) Butch Potts Memorial Award, also known as the Boating Officer of the Year for 2018.

Officer Rollings is a highly dedicated officer who places a significant emphasis on the enforcement of the Commonwealth's boating laws and regulations. He takes great pride protecting lives of the citizens of the Commonwealth and the boating public through vigorous efforts to detect and apprehend anyone boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In addition, he is very active in the Agency's boating safety and education outreach efforts, and enjoys educating the young boaters of the future.

"Officer Rollings is an outstanding officer and strives for excellence in all he does. His care for the boating public is reflected in his boating safety outreach efforts as well as his determination to remove impaired and reckless operators from Virginia's waters," said Major Scott Naff, the Assistant Chief of Operations for Virginia's Conservation Police.

Officer Rollings has served the boating community of the Middle Peninsula since 2011 and has recently transferred to Surry County. Throughout the year, Officer Rollings spent a considerable amount of his patrol efforts on the water. He led his district in arresting violators and was nominated for the MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) Award for the Northern Neck area.

In April of 2018, Rollings, along with a fellow CPO, played a vital role in the rescue of a woman who overturned her canoe in cold-water conditions. Fortunately, they were able to act quickly and the officers were able to rescue the woman and transport her to an awaiting ambulance. Due to Officer Rollings level of preparation and quick response, the woman was treated for hypothermia and released.

LOUISA COUNTY CRIME SOLVERS OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

On January 15, 2019, Louisa County Crime Solvers, Inc. held their annual Law Enforcement Officer of the Year breakfast. During the breakfast, DGIF Officers Katiana Quarles and Daniel Eller received the Officer(s) of the Year Award. Officer Eller was on duty and unable to attend but both Officers were surprised and humbled by the recognition.



On July 21, 2018, Officers Quarles and Eller were patrolling Lake Anna and responded to a call about a few people missing from their boat. Upon arrival, the Officers observed several people in the water attempting to dislodge a grounded boat. As weather conditions quickly deteriorated, one individual began struggling and Officer Quarles entered the water in an attempt to rescue him. During the rescue, two others jumped from the boat into the almost unbearably cold water attempting to assist Officer Quarles. Officer Eller positioned the patrol boat to help two of them while the third man responded to Officer Quarles lifesaving efforts and began breathing. The three victims were pulled into the patrol boat and returned to shore.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE TURKEY FEDERATION OFFICER OF THE YEAR

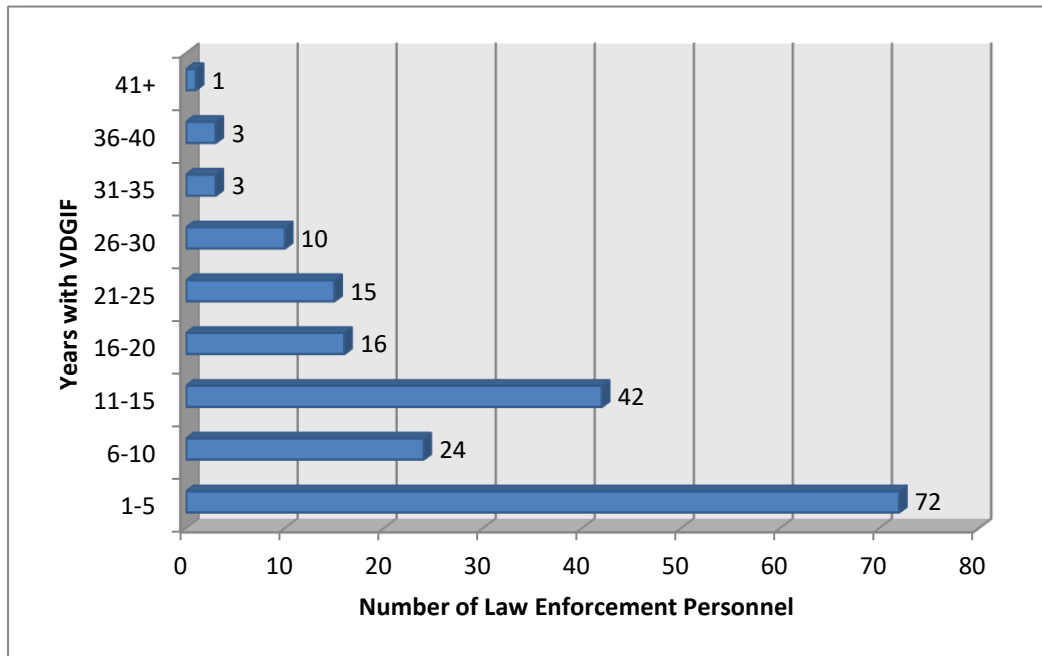
Senior K9 Officer Wes Billings and his K9 partner Josie were recognized as Conservation Police Officer of the Year by the Virginia National Wild Turkey Federation State Chapter. They were recognized at the Virginia National Wild Turkey State Chapter's Leadership Banquet in Roanoke. They were honored at the NWTF National Convention held in Nashville, TN on Feb. 16, 2019. In the photo to the right pay particular attention to the dog tag at the bottom of the plaque that Josie will be able to wear with her badge. This is the first time we have had one of our K9's recognized as an officer of the year.



YEARS OF SERVICE

At the end of 2018, the Law Enforcement Division had 186 full-time employees. Figure 4 shows a five year incremental breakdown of how long these employees have been with DGIF. A total of 17 officers are over 50 years old and have over 25 years of service making them eligible for full retirement at any time. Table 10 lists the names of the Law Enforcement personnel that have reached years of service milestones in 2018.

Figure 3: Years of Service as of December 31, 2018, for Law Enforcement Personnel in Five Year Increments



WEST VIRGINIA

Jerry B. Jenkins, Colonel

OFFICER TRAINING

Natural Resources Police Officers received training in handcuffing and searching, water survivability, swift water rescues static line training, wildlife trafficking and smuggling, waterfowl enforcement, law enforcement investigations utilizing social media, cannabis SFST training, enhanced firearms training, and secondary weapons training. A yearly Seated-Battery refresher for BUI and DUI enforcement occurs for all sworn officers. Some of the courses were instructor-based and will enable us to continually update officers in the respective fields of instruction.

All post-academy Natural Resources Police Officers received training utilizing the Seated-Battery for BUI, DUI apprehension, and ATV patrol certification training.

This year we held a statewide law enforcement meeting, we spent three days at Camp Dawson. The officers were able to interact with each other in different training scenarios,

meet officers from other districts, discuss topics of interest, meet with state magistrate court representatives, and enjoy getting to spend some down time with each other.

The Law Enforcement Section Honor Guard/Color Guard continues to attend opening ceremonies, special events, and funerals. This year, the WV Natural Resources Police Officer Honor Guard was again tasked with laying the wreath at the State Law Enforcement Memorial located on the grounds of the WV State Capitol Complex. They were also featured in the magazine, Wonderful West Virginia. It was a very informative article and indorsed our law enforcement officers.

Senate Bill 100 passed that will allow an increase in court costs to cover law enforcement training costs and expenses. This should allow continued Police Academy training classes for our newly hired officers.

FUNDING AND STAFFING

The WV DNR Law Enforcement Section normally has a staffing level of 126 Natural Resources Police Officers (NRPO) and 11 support personnel. During FY2019, two officers retired, six officers resigned, four officers were hired. Two officers were promoted to NRP Sergeant. One support staff retired, one support staff resigned, one support staff was promoted, and one support personnel was hired.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

The Law Enforcement Section continues are focus on water safety and increased lifejacket usage by the public through the *Wear It Campaign, Operation Life Jacket, and Spring Aboard*.

The public and media continue to follow the work of our officers on the WV Natural Resources Police Officer Facebook page, www.Facebook.com/DNRpolice. The Facebook page continues to see increases in media contacts for additional information within the state and nationally. The reporting of wildlife violations on the DNR website, www.wvdnr.gov/enforce/poachers.shtm or 844-I-TIP-DNR is increasingly useful.

The Law Enforcement Section's Chaplaincy program has six uniformed officers who are available to assist other officers in times of personal need whether work-related or not. Advanced crisis management training is scheduled in the future to better serve the needs of agency personnel.

UNIQUE CROSS BOUNDARY OR COOPERATIVE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

One Sergeant and four officers are working the Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority. The Authority reimburses the Section for salaries, benefits, and associated equipment expenses.

This trail system is growing, and we are working together to make sure we have coverage for the safety of the public. It is our hope that more officers will be added as the system grows.

Senate Bill 317 passed which allows three or more adjacent counties to form a multi-trail network authority for mountain bikes and other similar activities. The program is similar in structure to the Hatfield-McCoy Trail system. This bill also allows the system to utilize Natural Resources Police Officers to be contracted for Law Enforcement activities.

Natural Resources Police officers participated in the nationwide program, *Operation Dry Water*, July 5-7, 2019, to reduce the number of alcohol-related boating incidents.

COST SAVING INITIATIVES

The Section continues to conduct a vehicle/boat accident review board semi-annually to identify incident types and causes. Since newer vehicles have the backup cameras and sensors, we have seen a reduction in backing incidents. We are always looking for ways to reduce insurance premiums.

The Section continually utilizes technology to reduce travel costs. Cell phones, computers, radios, and the internet are used to transmit reports, complaints, and information. Conference calls are used to conduct meetings, boards, or planning sessions to cut down in-state travel.

The Section keeps vehicles, if the vehicle is operating efficiently, 5 years or 125,000 miles to reduce vehicle expenditures. We are also being limited on the number of vehicles we can purchase at one time, we currently purchase six on an order. High maintenance cost vehicles are traded earlier to avoid excessive repairs.

The Section continues to work with federal and state agencies to procure grants to assist with equipment purchases. The hunter education and boating grants are being monitored to maximize returns from expenditures of time and resources.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

1. Updated our commercial outfitter license rule.
2. DNR now has organ donation election on hunting and fishing license. (SB613)
3. Permitting certain fur bearer parts now to be used commercially: urine, bones, gland, etc. (HB2521)
4. Wanton Waste for big game and game fish. Carelessness or neglect to let edible portions go to waste needlessly. (HB2540)
5. Expanded definition for Class Q Permits to include breathing issues. (HB2715)
6. Updated motorboat laws to match Federal Regulations. (HB2716)

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Luis Santiago, SAC

The Southeast Region implemented Service priorities, OLE Strategic Plan, and investigative priorities. The Region has conducted many high and medium priority investigations and inspections during this fiscal year under SAC and ASAC leadership and direction. Region 4 has continued to support Service, State, Federal and foreign partners whenever possible, as well as providing strong support to the SIU as needed.

A query of the Law Enforcement Management Information System-LEMIS reflected the following casework handled by R4 during this period:

- New cases opened in FY 2019: **1102**
- Total # of cases currently active: **1983**

Inspection Area:

- Total Shipments: **30479**
- Declared Value: **\$496,876,692**
- Total # of inspections: **3,008**
- Total seizures: **428**

Selected regional accomplishments and activities include the following:

- Focus enforcement efforts on those issues identified as high priority in the OLE Strategic Plan and Investigative Law Enforcement Priorities
- Field investigations continue to be focused on the highest priorities
- National Permit and License Application process is taking advantage of technological advances to improve processing procedures, full implementation of eLicense
- Effectively interacted with peers from other Service programs and continue building strong relationships with other federal, state, and local agencies, providing support to the RACs, SWIs, field agents and inspectors as needed
- The Southeast Region conducted joint investigations and worked cooperatively with all States in the Southeast and Puerto Rico, NPS, FDA, USDA, ICE, CBP, and BATF among others
- Provided investigative support to other states inside and outside the region, and foreign governments in the form of investigative leads

- Region 4 WIs, WIAs, ECs and SAs conducted outreach activities reported throughout the year, including: training at State Wildlife Officers' academies, presentations at schools, brokers associations, federal agencies, NGOs, and other venues in the interest of promoting wildlife conservation, facilitating the trade, and creating awareness of wildlife laws and regulations in general
- Trilateral Conference participation- participation representing OLE in the Law Enforcement Working Table in Victoria BC Canada and coordinating with Mexico and Canada counterparts maintaining cooperative working relationships in the international arena

TRAINING:

INTERNATIONAL:

Marine Crime Scene Investigation Training - participated in the Marine Crime Scene Investigation (MCSI) training held in Jakarta, Indonesia. The eighteen-student class was comprised of personnel from Indonesian customs, coast guard, and various natural resource conservation agencies. Some of the topics covered included: Illegal Marine Wildlife Trade Investigation, Vessel Boarding Techniques, Illegal Blast Fishing Investigation, Vessel Grounding and Oil Spill Field Investigation. The MCSI training was a collaborative effort involving: State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), USFWS Office of Law enforcement, USFWS International Affairs, and a private contract company comprised of retired federal agent.

R4 SA served as Team Leader at the El Salvador International Law Enforcement Academy from September 24, 2018 to October 5, 2018.

R4 SA assisted as an instructor for the Ghana, Africa International Law Enforcement Academy from July 29, 2019 to August 9, 2019.

R4 SA assisted as an instructor for a customized wildlife trafficking enforcement course in Majing and Hong Kong, China from September 7, 2019 to September 19, 2019.

Data Summary from LEMIS

FY 2019 LEMIS Adjudication Statistics - Region 4

Criminal Fines/Penalties

Fines Imposed	Fines Suspended	Restitution	Forfeiture of Collateral	Criminal Forfeiture	Property Forfeited	Other Directed Sanctions
\$103,767.00	\$0.00	\$15,900.00	\$73,713.00	\$264,500.00	\$90.00	\$8,932.00

Civil Fines/Penalties

Property Forfeited	Negotiated Other Payments	Negotiated Agreement	Civil Penalty Assessments	Other Negotiated Payments
\$30,047.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,030.00	\$11,249.86

Sentencing Summary

Jail (months)	Suspended (months)	Probation (months)	Home Confinement (months)	Halfway House (months)	Community Service (hours)	Suspension/Revocation of Privileges (months)
89	0	657	17	0	500	720

FY 2019 LEMIS Violation by Act - Region 4

Total Cases by Act

Act Description	Act	New Cases	Ongoing Cases	Total Violation Investigations	Act Description	Act	New Cases	Ongoing Cases	Total Violation Investigations
African Elephant Conservation Act	AEC	4	3	7	Marine Mammal Act	MMA	6	4	10
Airborne Hunting Act	ABH		1	1	Migratory Bird / Stamp Act	MHS	1	5	6
Archeological Resources	ARA	3	2	5	Migratory Bird Treaty Act	MBT	36	67	103
Assimilated Crimes Act	ACR	1		1	National Wildlife Refuge	WRF		4	4
Conspiracy	CON		21	21	Obstruction Of Justice	OBJ		6	6
Eagle Protection Act	EPA	6	11	17	Other Federal Laws	FED	8	25	33
Endangered Species Act	ESA	865	494	1359	Permit / License	PLI	1		1
False Statements	FSE		9	9	Rhino Tiger Act	RTA	3	1	4
Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)	FIF		1	1	Smuggling	SMG	3	23	26
Foreign Laws	FOR		3	3	State Law	STL	2	38	40
Lacey Act	LAC	99	113	212	Undefined	XXX	6		6
Lacey Act - Wildlife	LAW	56	44	100	Wild Bird Conservation Act	WBA	2	5	7
Major Crime	MJC		1	1	Total Acts for All Cases		1,102	881	1,983

FY 2019 LEMIS Port Statistics - Region 4

Port	Port	Total Shipments	Total Species	Avg. Number of Species per Shipment	Total Declared Value	Number of Inspections (by shipment)	Percentage of Shipments Inspected	Total Number of Seizures (by shipment *)
04-Region 4	R4	23	126	6	\$ 7,546	1	4.3%	1
AT-Atlanta	AT	3309	9967	3	\$ 50,315,800	144	4.4%	24
CR-Charleston	CR	171	195	1	\$ 5,974,645	0	0.0%	0
ER-Erlanger	ER	1671	2754	2	\$ 4,097,016	98	5.9%	20
Fernandina Beach	FE	6	13	2	\$ 4,854	0	0.0%	0
FL-Fort Lauderdale	FL	264	314	1	\$ 494,161	255	96.6%	184
JX-Jacksonville	JX	66	162	3	\$ 3,566,628	6	9.1%	1
LO-Louisville	LO	7859	13370	2	\$ 28,020,355	890	11.3%	47
MB-Mobile	MB	1	2	2	\$ 1,528	0	0.0%	0
ME-Memphis	ME	6145	10120	2	\$ 34,333,625	900	14.6%	16
MI-Miami. FL	MI	8790	25446	3	\$ 224,408,355	262	3.0%	108
NO-New Orleans	NO	468	1142	2	\$ 109,394,226	259	55.3%	4
OR-Orlando	OR	151	616	4	\$ 749,805	12	7.9%	9
PE-Port Everglades	PE	258	621	2	\$ 2,874,589	11	4.3%	2
SA-Savannah	SA	412	478	1	\$ 10,040,396	4	1.0%	2
SJ-San Juan	SJ	166	245	2	\$ 16,748,191	84	50.6%	2
TP-Tampa	TP	709	2320	3	\$ 5,814,963	82	11.6%	8
WI-Wilmington	WI	10		1	\$ 30,009	0	0.0%	0
Total		30,479	67,891	2	\$496,876,692	3,008	9.9%	428

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