

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement



Weekly Report

July 1 through July 7, 2016

This report represents some events the FWC handled over the past week; however, it does not include all actions taken by the Division of Law Enforcement.

Patrol, Protect, Preserve

NORTHWEST REGION

CASES

BAY COUNTY

Felony litter charges were filed by Environmental Investigator Brown in connection with the dumping of a mobile home on St. Joe Timberland property. Investigator Brown's investigation revealed that the suspect was paid to tow a mobile office unit from a construction site to the local landfill for disposal; however, the suspect tried to sell the unit to a third party. When the deal fell through, and the suspect developed mechanical problems while towing the unit, he abandoned it on St. Joe Timberland property. After a three-month investigation, the suspect was ultimately identified through a combination of leads developed during a neighborhood canvas and follow-up with state and local agencies. The volume of the unit was calculated at over 6,000 cubic feet and the cost of disposal is estimated to be between \$2,000 and \$5,000. The suspect is currently awaiting trial for environmental charges.

Officers T. Basford, S. Wicker and Major Rowe were patrolling the waters of St. Andrews Bay at night in the area of Grand Lagoon and observed a vessel without its bow navigational lights on. They conducted a vessel stop and the operator appeared to be under the influence. After the operator completed the field sobriety tasks, it was confirmed that he was impaired. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence (BUI) and cited for inoperable navigational light and refusal to submit to a breath test.

Officer Palmer was on night water patrol near Carl Grey Park when he observed a vessel with no navigational lights heading to the boat ramp. When Officer Palmer conducted a stop, the operator told Officer Palmer that he had just checked his crab traps and was heading back to the ramp. Officer Palmer conducted a resource inspection and found ten whole stone crabs in a bucket at the stern of the vessel. The operator was issued a citation for possession of stone crabs out of season and a written warning for possession of whole stone crabs. The crabs were returned to the water alive.

WAKULLA COUNTY

Officers Robb and Nelson were patrolling the Wakulla River when a vessel drove by on full plane. After the vessel passed, the officers identified the operator of the vessel and conducted a vessel stop. Immediately the officers smelled a strong odor of alcohol and observed multiple signs of impairment from the operator. After conducting field sobriety tasks, the subject was placed under arrest for BUI and was booked into jail. The subject provided a breath sample of .218 BrAC.

Officer Raker was conducting state park patrol in the Cherokee Sink portion of Wakulla Springs State Park when he made contact with eight individuals who had not paid the

park entrance fee and were in the park after hours. While speaking with the individuals, one of the individuals fled the scene on foot into the wooded area of the park. Officer Raker pursued the individual on foot and located him a short time later. The individual complied this time and was transported to the Wakulla County Jail. Officer Nelson arrived on scene to assist and the appropriate actions were taken for all individuals.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

While conducting an offshore patrol aboard the patrol vessel *GUARDIAN* south of Franklin County in federal waters, Lieutenant Marlow, Officers Boutwell, Fletcher and Raker conducted numerous vessel stops in federal waters. During the patrol, a commercial vessel was stopped and was found to be in possession of undersized vermillion snapper and using reef fish for bait. Other vessel stops resulted in multiple cases for possession of undersized and over the bag limit of red snapper. The appropriate actions were taken for these violations.

While conducting offshore vessel patrol aboard the patrol vessel *GUARDIAN* south of Franklin and Gulf counties, Lieutenant Marlow, Officers Raker, Hughes and Nelson conducted numerous fisheries inspections of both commercial and recreational vessels in federal waters. A stop of one vessel approximately 20 miles offshore, resulted in locating multiple red snapper during federal closure. Another stop resulted in an undersized greater amberjack being thrown overboard upon the approach of the law enforcement vessel during federal closure for greater amberjack. The evidence was quickly recovered. The stop of a commercial vessel approximately 50 miles offshore resulted in finding a fillet of an amberjack and the use of reef fish for bait. The stop of a commercial longline vessel approximately 70 miles southwest of Carrabelle resulted in locating an excessive amount of gear aboard the vessel. The appropriate action was taken for these violations.

GADSDEN COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigators Williams and Louque received a complaint about a subject purchasing a bobcat from out of state. Investigators Williams and Louque interviewed the suspect and confirmed the suspect did purchase and possess a bobcat kitten; however, the suspect did not possess a valid license to possess the bobcat. A citation was issued for violation.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

While patrolling at a recreational swimming area within the Blackwater State Forest, Lieutenant Hahr, Officers Clark and Hutchinson observed a woman holding a glass container while in the creek. After making contact with her, she was issued a citation for possession of a glass container while in a waterway. After issuing the citation, the officers overheard the man ask the woman if she had told them his name. They made contact with the man who admitted to having a warrant for his arrest. The officers

confirmed a warrant for failure to pay child support. The subject was placed under arrest and transported to the Okaloosa County Jail.

Officers Pifer, Bartlett and two Petty Officers from U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Station Destin conducted a Marine Sanitation Device (MSD) Detail in the Destin Harbor. Throughout the day, the officers focused on inspecting charter vessels returning from offshore and local live-a-boards. A total of 15 vessels and 48 users where checked. Out of the 15 vessels, 8 of them were issued citations for MSD violations and 1 was issued a written warning.

Officers Molnar, Bartlett and Major Rowe conducted a vessel stop at Crab Island for violation of the idle speed zone. Upon making contact, the operator showed multiple signs of impairment. After field alcohol tasks were conducted, Officer Molnar arrested the operator for BUI. The subject later provided a breath sample of .130 BrAC and .142 BrAC. The subject was booked into the Okaloosa County Jail for BUI and issued a citation for violation of the idle speed zone.

Officers Pifer and Corbin were on routine water patrol in the Destin Harbor when they observed a charter fishing vessel return to its slip with fishing gear and customers on board. A fisheries inspection was conducted and three undersized red snapper and one undersized cobia were found. Citations were issued for the violations.

Officers Pifer and Corbin were on routine water patrol near Crab Island when they observed a rental pontoon boat violating the idle speed zone. A vessel stop was initiated, during which the operator showed signs of impairment. Field sobriety tasks were conducted and based on the operator's performance, the operator was arrested for BUI. The operator was transported to USCG Station Destin and provided a breath sample of 0.122 BrAC and 0.127 BrAC.

Officers Bartlett and Molnar were on water patrol at Crab Island when they observed a passenger on a jet ski that was wearing an improper life jacket. After making contact with the operator about the violation, Officer Bartlett observed several signs of impairment. The operator agreed to perform field sobriety tasks which he performed poorly on. Officer Bartlett arrested the individual for BUI and later he refused to provide a breath sample. The individual was booked into the Okaloosa County Jail for operating a vessel while normal facilities impaired. He was also issued an infraction for the safety violation and refusal to submit to lawful breath test.

Officers Pifer, Bartlett and Major Rowe were on water patrol in the Destin Harbor when they observed two different pontoon vessels that were not displaying any navigation lights. Both of the vessels' navigation lights were determined to be non-operational and were rented from two different liveries nearby. Officers Pifer and Bartlett made contact with both liveries and cited two different individuals for renting a vessel without the proper safety equipment.

Officers Bartlett, Pifer and Major Rowe were on water patrol in the Destin Harbor when they observed a vessel that was not displaying any navigation lights. When the officers initiated a vessel stop, the operator stepped away from the helm and another person on board took over operation of the vessel. Officer Bartlett made contact with the individual who was initially operating the vessel and advised him the reason for the stop; he then began a boating safety inspection. Throughout the inspection, the individual displayed several signs of impairment. When asked to perform field sobriety tasks, the individual agreed after a few minutes of hesitation. Officer Bartlett arrested the individual for BUI after performing poorly on the tasks. He was booked into the Okaloosa County Jail for operating a vessel while normal facilities were impaired. He was also issued a citation for refusal to submit to a lawful breath test and for the navigation lights violation.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Ramos observed an ATV traveling on a paved public highway and initiated a traffic stop. When he activated his lights and siren, the operator of the ATV veered off the highway and attempted to lose the officer in the woods. Officer Ramos intercepted the man in a nearby mobile home park and a foot chase ensued. After several minutes of running, the man attempted to hide inside a mobile home. Santa Rosa Sheriff's Office and FHP assisted by maintaining a perimeter around the home until the subject finally surrendered several hours later. A cursory search of the mobile home revealed illegal narcotics. The man was booked into the county jail for fleeing and attempting to elude and narcotics charges.

While on patrol in the Blackwater State Forest, Officers Clark and Hutchinson observed a male subject recreating at a camp site near a creek. While speaking with him, they discovered that the subject was consuming alcoholic beverages in an area where alcoholic beverages are prohibited. After the subject consented to a search of the camp, the officers located a container containing a bag of marijuana and drug paraphernalia. While continuing the search of the subject's belongings, they discovered a bag containing several syringes and two baggies of methamphetamine. The subject admitted to possessing the methamphetamine but denied ownership of the marijuana. He claimed that the marijuana belonged to a female friend who left the camp earlier in the day. The subject was placed under arrest and booked into the Santa Rosa County Jail.

While patrolling at night in the parking lot of a boat ramp at the Blackwater River, Officers Clark and Hutchinson observed a vehicle parked in a restricted area. The officers pulled next to the vehicle and observed two subjects inside the vehicle. The officers made contact with the female subject who was seated in the driver's seat. While speaking with her, they observed her making several overt movements as if trying to conceal something. The officers gained consent to search the vehicle. They made contact with the male passenger of the vehicle, who admitted to possessing a bag of methamphetamine. The officers located the methamphetamine and illegal drug paraphernalia inside of the vehicle. After further investigation, the female subject

admitted to possessing the illegal drugs and paraphernalia. Both subjects were placed under arrest, transported and booked into the Santa Rosa County Jail.

Lieutenant Hahr and Officer Hutchinson were patrolling by vessel during the fireworks event at the Blackwater River. While patrolling after the event, they observed a vessel occupied by four subjects who were shouting at several subjects on the shore. The officers noticed that the vessel didn't have the required navigational lights. They conducted a stop on the vessel and made contact with the man who was operating the vessel. The subject had a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage on his breath. While conducting a vessel safety equipment inspection, the man showed several signs of impairment. He consented to one field sobriety task, but when asked to perform more tasks, he refused. Based on the several indicators of impairment, the man was placed under arrest for DUI. A female passenger who was under the age of 21 was also found to be in possession of an alcoholic beverage. The female was charged with possession of an alcoholic beverage by a person under 21 years of age. The operator was transported and booked into the Santa Rosa County Jail. While at the jail, the subject was found to be in possession of a concealed handcuff key. The subject was charged with two felony counts for possession of the hand cuff key while in custody and introduction of contraband into a jail.

RESCUES

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Molnar, Jarvis and Investigator Armstrong responded to a possible drowning at the Destin Bridge. Upon arrival, the officers observed a subject holding onto a bridge span in strong tidal current. The subject was rescued from the water with minor injuries. The following day, the father of the individual called to express how thankful he was to the officers who rescued his son from the dangerous situation.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officer Stanley was on land patrol on a piece a private property with past issues of trespassing and illegal dumping. Officer Stanley found a large pile of a garbage dumped illegally. He found a name and address in the garbage and, the next day, went to the address and found another large pile of garbage on the curb at the residence. Officer Stanley observed a couch without cushions and remembered cushions found at the dump site. The officer made contact with the subject who stated he was moving out. Officer Stanley explained why he was there and was able to get a sworn written statement. Simple trespass and criminal dumping will be direct filed with the Alachua County State Attorney's Office.

BAKER COUNTY

Officers Burnsed and Griffis were on land patrol in Baker County when they saw two vehicles backed up to a locked gate that enters a hunting club. After making contact with three subjects, the officers realized the subjects were catching their hunting dogs that were chasing hogs. After talking with the subjects, the officers found out two more subjects had fled into the hunting club while catching their dogs. Officer Jenkins and Lieutenant Huff responded to assist. While interviewing the subjects, the officers heard a hunting dog bark inside the club. The officers went to catch the dog and found the other two subjects hiding in the woods with their ATV and the rest of the hunting dogs. The subjects were placed under arrest for trespassing. The subjects admitted to running when they saw law enforcement approaching. The subjects were booked into the county jail for trespass and allowing dogs to pursue game on property without permission.

CLAY COUNTY

Officer Barber and Lieutenant Glover responded to a 911 call about a fight that occurred on the Black Creek area between boaters during the July 4th holiday. The officers assisted the Clay County Sheriff's Office in obtaining written statements from all parties involved, and collecting evidence. The case was turned over to the Clay County Sheriff's Office for further investigation.

DIXIE COUNTY

Officer Allen was on water patrol along the Dixie County coast when he conducted fisheries inspections and found a subject with 5 undersized speckled sea trout and 1 undersized gag grouper. Two citations were issued for the violations.

DUVAL COUNTY

In late May, Officer Sweat received information about a possible cannabis grow area in the Thomas Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA). He located the plants in early June and, with the use of surveillance tools, was able to predict the times, frequency of visits and number of people involved in the care of the plants. In the early hours of late June, Officer Sweat, Investigator Holleman and Jacksonville Sheriff's Deputy Holmquist set up surveillance at the grow area. At approximately 3:30 a.m., a truck approached the area. The driver exited the truck and walked down his usual path to his plants. He was carrying a large Crystal Spring water bottle on his shoulder. He was approximately twelve feet from his plants when he was surprised by the three law enforcement officers. The suspect admitted that the plants were his and he also admitted to having several containers of cannabis and paraphernalia in his truck. A Ruger pistol and an AR 15 rifle was also located in his truck. The suspect was found to be a convicted felon and was booked into the Duval County Jail on two felony charges and two misdemeanor charges. He was also issued two written warnings for violation of WMA rules.

A Jacksonville resident observed a person underneath a van which was parked over a storm drain at a closed shopping center. The witness then observed the same man and another that was with him adding oil to the vehicle. After documenting the vehicle's tag number, the witness questioned the men about what they were doing at which time they hurriedly left the area. The witness observed fresh oil on top of the storm drain grate and inside the drain. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection responded and determined that the storm drain outfall led to Little Pottsburg Creek and eventually to the Arlington River. Criminal charges will be filed by FWC Environmental Investigator Terrones with the State Attorney's Office.

GILCHRIST COUNTY

Officer Wiggins concluded an investigation that lasted 15 days in reference to an alligator that was killed and discarded on the side of a road in Bell. Investigator Ayers and Officers Cline and Allen assisted with the investigation. Over the course of the investigation, approximately 20 individuals were contacted and interviewed either as witnesses or suspects. After interviewing the main suspect on two separate occasions, it was discovered that he had killed an alligator in Columbia County at the Georgia line and another in Lafayette County in the Mallory Swamp area. Charges for taking alligator were filed with the Columbia and Lafayette County State Attorney's Offices.

LEVY COUNTY

Officer Wiggins received information that 2 deer had been killed in the area of Camp Azalea in Levy County. Officer Wiggins contacted Officer Allen and Investigator Ayers for assistance. While putting a plan together on the side of Manatee Highway, one of the suspects drove past, heading toward his residence. Officers Wiggins and Allen followed him and noticed that he drove past his house and circled the block. He then went to a boat ramp close by and the officers made contact with him there. During a discussion with the suspect, it became apparent that the reason for driving past his home was because he had seen the officers' patrol vehicles. Officers Wiggins and Allen had taken note of a vehicle in the driveway at the suspect's home and asked Investigator Ayers to conduct surveillance of the residence in case someone tried to leave with the deer meat. While talking with the suspect at the boat ramp, Investigator Ayers contacted Officer Wiggins and informed him that the vehicle was leaving the house. Officers Wiggins and Allen and the suspect then returned to the suspect's home and met with Investigator Ayers and the two females who were attempting to leave. After interviews had been completed, the deer meat was located in the vehicle that was attempting to leave the residence. Charges were filed with the Levy County State Attorney's Office on the three subjects for taking deer at night by gun and light, possession of deer out of season and shooting from a roadway.

Officers Cline and Wiggins were patrolling an area in Gilchrist County for illegal hunting activity when around midnight, the officers saw a spotlight shining from a back road where night hunting has occurred in the past. The officers made contact with the vehicle

and while Officer Cline was talking with the driver, he noticed 2 firearms inside the vehicle. Both firearms were loaded and ready to be used. While interviewing the subjects, they made statements that they were looking to shoot a deer. Written statements were provided and Officer Cline issued notice to appear citations to the three subjects for attempting to take deer at night with gun and light.

Officer Allen received a complaint from a plantation owner in Gilchrist County regarding illegal dumping on the edge of the Quail Plantation. Officer Allen utilized tire sign and other evidence left at the scene to track the individuals. Two citations for misdemeanor dumping were issued.

Officer Johnston was assisted by Lieutenant Williams' squad with boating safety inspections at Hart Springs in Gilchrist County. During the inspection, Officer Johnston arrested a subject for BUI. Breath sample results were .147 BrAC and .150 BrAC.

RESCUES

CLAY COUNTY

Officers Justus, Barber and Lieutenant Glover were called to a wooded area off of County Road 214 to assist Clay County Sheriff's Office with a search and rescue call. An employee with a timber company was traversing the dense vegetation on a private piece of property in preparation for a timber harvest. After hours of walking through the dense vegetation, the victim became disoriented and dehydrated to the point where he collapsed. The officers arrived on scene where there were numerous Clay County Sheriff's Office deputies and fire rescue on scene. Lieutenant Glover conversed with Clay County Fire Department to try to determine where the victim was and came up with an approximate location. Officer Justus and Lieutenant Glover entered the thick vegetation in an attempt to find the victim. The vegetation was so thick in some areas that the only way to traverse it was to lay down and crawl on hands and knees. After traveling about a quarter mile and following the yelling of the victim, they were able to locate him, laying down disoriented and in pain from muscle cramps caused by dehydration. The victim's co-worker was present with him and was exhausted from trying to carry the victim. Officer Justus and Lieutenant Glover placed the victim's weight on their shoulders and attempted to carry him out moving only a few inches at a time. After approximately an hour and a half, Officer Justus and Lieutenant Glover were able to carry the victim out of the woods to the waiting EMS workers who treated him for severe heat exhaustion and dehydration.

SUWANNEE COUNTY

Officers Mobley, Boone, Davenport, Ransom and Yates responded to Little River Springs on the Suwannee River in reference to a possible drowning. Once at the scene, it was determined by witnesses that the victim fell into the river and did not resurface. The officers immediately began searching the area along with Suwannee County Sheriff's Office. Assistance from the Columbia County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) dive unit

was requested. When CCSO arrived at the scene, their divers were able to locate and recover the drowned victim's body.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

ALACHUA COUNTY

FWC officers in Alachua County assisted Taylor and Gilchrist county units over the Holiday weekend. Officer Troiano issued several warnings and boating citations while working with Taylor County units during the busy scallop season. Officer Troiano was also involved with several over the bag limit cases of scallops.

Officers continue efforts on checking area lakes for game fish violations. With the new bass laws, several lakes that have been recently stocked were given specific attention. Along with issuing the new boating safety decals to qualified vessels, several fishing license violations and boating safety violations cases were written throughout the county.

TAYLOR COUNTY

A boating safety and natural resource detail conducted during the holiday weekend resulted in six over-the-limit scallop cases being made in Taylor County waters. The goal was to arrest boaters who operated in a manner that put others at risk and to protect the bay scallop resource. The effort included officers and investigators on the water and land.

The cases included:

July 1: Officers seized 4 gallons over the bag limit when a vessel with 3 people on board was found with 9 gallons of whole bay scallops. Officers also seized 12 gallons over the bag limit.

July 2: Seven gallons of bay scallops seized.

July3: Officers seized five gallons of bay scallops. Also 16 gallons of bay scallops seized.

July 4: Approximately 14 gallons of bay scallops seized.

These violations included over the daily bag limit or individuals making multiple trips to obtain more than the allowed daily limit. Officers were able to return most of the scallops to the waters. Officers also issued 33 citations and 59 written warnings during the weekend for dive flag and other boating safety rule violations, as well as other resource and fishing license infractions. Despite the high volume of boating traffic in Taylor County waters, there were no reported boating accidents or injuries for the area during the holiday weekend

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

CLAY COUNTY

Lieutenant Glover held a training session with the Clay County Sheriff's Office supervisors in Orange Park. Lieutenant Glover addressed approximately 50 supervisory deputies on what the FWC can provide in the form of support. Topics included the equipment FWC can provide along with new boating and hunting laws. He also addressed response to bear calls by deputies due to the increase in calls in Clay County.

DIXIE COUNTY

Officer Cooper conducted a boating safety talk with approximately 300 workers at the Suwannee Lumber Company in Dixie County. The talk was well received.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

BREVARD COUNTY

Officer J. Humphrey was patrolling the north end of Brevard County when she checked a vessel that had been fishing in the Mosquito Lagoon. There were two subjects on the vessel along with three red drum in a cooler. A notice to appear was issued to one of the subjects for being over the daily bag limit of red drum.

Officer J. Humphrey was patrolling the north end of Brevard County when she checked a vessel that had been fishing in Haulover Canal. There were three subjects in the vessel along with seven black drum, six of which were over 24 inches, putting the group over their limit of one black drum over 24 inches per person. The captain of the vessel was issued a notice to appear for being in possession of oversized black drum.

While conducting patrols on the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, Officer Hallsten conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for having a faulty headlight and faulty trailer light. Officer Hallsten discovered that there were four oversized black drum in the vessel being trailered. Officer Hallsten issued the driver and passenger a notice to appear for over the bag limit of black drum.

Officer Hallsten conducted a fisheries inspection on a subject fishing the banks of the Barge Canal in Brevard County. An inspection of the subject's cooler revealed four undersized sheepshead. A notice to appear was issued to the subject for possession of undersized sheepshead.

Investigator Horst observed a vessel violating a manatee zone off of Christianson's Landing in Grant. The vessel stop and investigation resulted in the operator being placed under arrest for BUI. The subject also received a citation for safety equipment violation. The subject was booked into the Brevard County Jail.

Officer M. Humphrey was on water patrol on the Banana River near Ski Island when he observed a personal watercraft (PWC) violating the manatee speed zone. During the stop, Officer M. Humphrey observed the operator to have slurred speech and he could smell the odor of alcohol coming from the operator. Officer M. Humphrey conducted standardized field alcohol tasks. During the tasks, indicators of impairment were observed and the man was placed under arrest for operating a vessel on state waters while normal faculties were impaired.

While on water patrol, Officer Maslo responded to a complaint of underage drinking in the area of Ski Island on the Banana River. Upon arrival, Officer Maslo observed a male subject who appeared to be underage consuming two alcoholic beverages. Further investigation revealed the subject to be 18 years old. The subject exhibited signs of impairment and had a strong odor of alcohol coming from his person. The subject was issued a notice to appear for consumption of alcohol by a person under 21.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

While on patrol, Lieutenant Lightsey observed a vessel with numerous people on board returning to the dock. After speaking with the operator, the officer observed several indicators of impairment. Officer Rutherford arrived on scene and conducted standardized field sobriety tasks. After concluding the investigation, the man was arrested for operating a vessel on state waters while normal faculties were impaired and refusal to submit to a test of his breath. He was then booked into the Indian River County Jail.

Lieutenant Lightsey observed a man struggling to load his vessel at a local boat ramp. After watching the man for some time, the officer approached to check on him and conduct a vessel safety inspection. After concluding the inspection, the man consented to field sobriety tasks. During the tasks, the man admitted to drinking alcoholic beverages throughout the day as well as using prescription medications. During the tasks, indicators of impairment were observed and the man was placed under arrest for operating a vessel on state waters while normal faculties were impaired. Toxicology reports are pending in reference to the drugs in his system.

LAKE COUNTY

While on water patrol during the holiday weekend, Officers Morrow and Scrambling were notified of a vessel operator that was driving erratically. Officers Morrow and Scrambling were able to track down the suspected vessel and made contact with the operator. While speaking to the vessel operator, it was apparent that he may have been impaired due to the smell of alcoholic beverage coming from his person and his slow and slurred speech. The seated field alcohol tasks were conducted and it was determined that the operator was impaired. The subject was transported to the Lake County Jail where his breath sample was .132 and .136. The subject was booked into the Lake County Jail on charges of BUI.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officers West and Meurlot responded to a reported domestic incident on an island in the Ponce Inlet area. During the course of the investigation, an adult male continued to interfere with the officers' investigation and was arrested for obstruction/resisting without violence. He was transported to the Volusia County Jail.

Officer Bertolami stopped a vessel for a safety equipment inspection. Following the inspection and issuing the operator a citation for failing to have the required personal floatation devices, the adult male operator was subsequently arrested for BUI. He was transported to the Volusia County Jail.

Officer Laroche responded to the diver's entry within Blue Springs State Park in reference to a possible drowning. Park guests and family members brought an unresponsive adult female to the diver's entry dock. Officer Laroche assessed the unresponsive adult and began CPR. Officer Nichols, Lieutenant Eason, and Major Russel also responded to the area. Lieutenant Eason met fire/rescue personnel and delivered them to the scene along with their equipment in an agency utility all-terrain vehicle (UTV). When assistance arrived on scene, Lieutenant Eason took over chest compressions while fire/rescue re-established airway (bagged) and hooked up AED. After a few cycles of CPR, the AED advised not to shock. A pulse was located and the victim was transported by EMS to the hospital. The victim survived and remains in stable condition.

Officers Laroche, Nichols and Lieutenant Eason responded to a reported fight at French Landing within Blue Springs State Park. Once on scene, all parties were separated and statements were provided by witnesses not affiliated with either group. The subjects involved in the physical confrontation refused to press charges. One involved subject was identified during the investigation and was arrested by Officer Laroche for disorderly intoxication. The subject was transported to the Volusia County Jail after refusing treatment for his injuries sustained in the fight.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Officer J. Miller was off duty when he observed a fisherman with undersized fish at Oyster Creek. He contacted Officer Lawrence and advised him of the violations. Officer Lawrence arrived at Oyster Creek and approached the described fisherman and conducted a resource inspection. Inside the fisherman's bucket, Officer Lawrence found three undersized snook and two mangrove snapper, one of which was shorter than the 10-inch minimum size limit. Officer Lawrence cited the fisherman for possession of undersized snook, and issued him written warnings for possession of undersized mangrove snapper, failure to possess a snook permit, harvesting snook out of season, and exceeding the daily bag limit of snook.

SEMINOLE COUNTY

While on routine water patrol on the St. John's River, Officer Cogburn, Captain Frerking and Lieutenant Hudson observed an individual operating a vessel at Mullet Lake Park. Officer Cogburn conducted a vessel safety inspection and observed that the operator appeared to be intoxicated. Standard field sobriety tasks were conducted as part of the BUI investigation. Based on initial observations and the tasks, the subject was placed under arrest for BUI.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

FWC Officer Norris received a complaint about subjects catching and keeping snook at the Boca Grande Fishing Pier. When he arrived, he found a cooler with three snook inside that nobody on the pier claimed. The subjects standing closest to the cooler initially said the fish were not theirs. The subjects stated they were packing up for the night. Officer Norris, wanting to investigate further, walked the men back to their vehicle. While walking back, one of the men asked to speak to the officer in private. The subject then admitted that the illegal snook were all his. He was charged with several misdemeanor charges and infractions.

FWC officers patrolled the Independence Day Freedom Swim in Charlotte Harbor. Approximately 150 people participated in the 1.5-mile swim from Port Charlotte across the harbor to Fisherman's Village. Upwards of 150 spectator vessels were in attendance as well as the Punta Gorda Police Department and Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Marine Units. No major incidents were reported during the event.

HERNANDO COUNTY

While on patrol near Hernando Beach, Officer Little observed a vessel above idle speed in an idle speed zone. Upon contact, he observed signs that the operator was impaired. The subject refused to perform field sobriety tasks. He was arrested and taken to the Hernando County Jail where he also refused to provide a breath sample.

While on patrol on the Weeki Wachee River, Lieutenant Grover observed a vessel operating in a reckless manner. The vessel was stopped and, upon contact, the operator was apologetic saying that he knew what he was doing was dangerous. The operator was issued a notice to appear for reckless operation.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Lieutenant Brooks, Officers Alvis, Smith and Stephens were conducting boating safety enforcement on Lake Jackson during the annual fireworks show. The officers observed

a vessel with several people on board. Officer Alvis and Stephens stopped the vessel and observed signs of impairment from the operator. After conducting a field sobriety task, Officer Alvis arrested the operator for BUI. The operator refused to provide a breath sample and was transported to the Highlands County Jail.

Officer Rogers was leaving the Cape Coral Yacht Club after a day of patrol when a vehicle leaving the parking lot nearly struck his patrol truck, then proceeded to drive down the wrong side of the street. Officer Rogers was able to safely get the vehicle stopped and, when speaking to the driver, noticed several signs of impairment. After the driver performed poorly on field sobriety tasks, she was arrested and booked into the Lee County Jail for DUI.

K-9 Officer Collazo was patrolling the South Florida Water Management District property and observed a Jeep Wrangler sunk on the side of the road. The only visible part of the Jeep Wrangler was the windshield and top portion of the hood. Officer Collazo made contact with a local towing company from Bonita Springs for removal of the vehicle. The vehicle owner and her son showed up on scene and stated they had just purchased it less than a month ago. The vehicle was deemed a total loss by their insurance company. Officer Collazo issued the 22-year-old driver a warning for operating a motor vehicle inside the South Florida Water Management District's Vacant Lands section and was given a trespass letter.

PASCO COUNTY

Officers Beckman and Cocke responded to Anclote River Park Boat Ramp in regard to an individual who was injured by an outboard engine propeller. According to information received, the individual was assisting with the placement of an anchor when he came in contact with the propeller. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) transported the individual to Bayonet Point Medical Center for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries. Officer Beckman completed the boating accident report.

Officer Williams was on land patrol at Nick's Park Boat Ramp where he was inspecting vessels for boating safety and fisheries compliance. While waiting for vessels, he observed an individual under a pavilion strike another individual and walk away. Officer Williams confronted the suspect, who failed to comply with commands. The suspect continued to resist and Officer Williams deployed his Taser. After gaining compliance, Officer Williams took the suspect into custody. Several other FWC officers and personnel with Port Richey Police Department arrived to assist. After receiving treatment for injuries, the suspect was transported to the Pasco County Jail. Officer Williams charged the individual with felony battery, resisting arrest without violence and disorderly conduct.

Officer Pulaski and Lieutenant Parisoe were on water patrol on the Pithlachascotee River when they observed a vessel violate the idle speed zone. They pulled alongside the vessel to address the violation, and conduct a boating safety inspection. While speaking with the operator, the officers noticed signs of impairment. Lieutenant Parisoe

administered field alcohol tasks, and the operator performed poorly. Lieutenant Parisoe arrested the operator for BUI. While at the Pasco County Jail, the operator provided a sample of his breath which measured .141 BrAC.

PINELLAS COUNTY

While on land patrol at Fort Desoto, Officer Bibeau observed an individual returning to his vehicle after fishing. Officer Bibeau made contact with the individual and conducted a fisheries inspection. At the conclusion of the fisheries inspection, Officer Bibeau found the individual to be in possession of an undersized trout and an undersized, out-of-season snook. He wrote the individual a misdemeanor citation for possession of an out-of-season snook and warnings for the other fisheries violations.

While on land patrol at the North Skyway fishing pier, Officer Bibeau observed an individual wade fishing from the shoreline. While watching from a concealed location, the officer observed the individual return to his vehicle with a large redfish and place the fish in the back seat. The individual was almost finished packing up his belongings when Officer Bibeau stopped him to conduct a fisheries inspection. At the conclusion of the inspection, Officer Bibeau located a 29-inch redfish and wrote the individual a misdemeanor citation for possession of an oversized redfish.

Officers Smith, Burks and Freemon were on water patrol in the Johns Pass area. They observed a commercial fishing vessel with stone crab fishing gear and several traps on board. The harvest of stone crab is closed, so the officers decided to investigate further. During the investigation, the officers observed multiple stone crab traps that belonged to multiple owners. The subject advised that he was harvesting marine life and collecting ghost traps that were in the area while he was diving because they were destroying marine life habitat. The traps had buoys and line attached to them which is not consistent with ghost traps being on the bottom. Additionally, the line on the traps appeared to be somewhat clean without significant marine growth which is consistent with being hauled by a trap puller. The officers contacted the respected owners of the traps and they wanted to press charges for theft. The traps were seized and will be returned to their owners. Charges will be filed with the Pinellas County State Attorney's Office.

POLK COUNTY

Officer Wester was conducting fisheries inspections at Lake Clinch when he observed an individual fishing without a fishing license. Officer Wester conducted a warrants check on the individual. The subject had an active warrant for trafficking in cocaine. The subject was arrested and transported to the Polk County Jail.

Officer Young received information that several subjects were using cast nets in the Saddle Creek Fish Management Area (FMA). Upon arrival, Officer Young observed two subjects with cast nets near the water's edge. Both subjects were issued citations for possession of cast nets in Saddle Creek FMA.

RESCUES

PASCO COUNTY

FWC Dispatch received information from the United States Coast Guard (USCG) of an overdue personal watercraft (PWC) with five persons aboard. Multiple FWC officers responded to the area of Anclote Key Preserve State Park to assist with search efforts. After a brief search, the PWC was located abandoned on a canal near Green Street, Port Richey. The USCG later canceled the response because all the individuals were located safe.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officers Dearborn, Patterson and Gaudion responded to a 911 call that a vehicle went off of a bridge and into the water. FWC was the first boat on scene and assisted local fire rescue with pulling three persons from the waters of Tampa Bay.

Lieutenant Wells and Officers Smith and Burks were on water patrol around Hurricane Pass. They observed a subject with a lifejacket on being swept out to sea due to the strong outgoing tide. There was an outgoing tide with a west wind, therefore, the current and winds were creating approximately 3-foot waves in the Pass. As they approached the subject, the officers observed a PWC with no one on it doing circles (run away PWC) and another PWC with a person on it waving their hands. The officers eventually got the runaway PWC stopped and as they went to rescue the other two subjects, the FWC vessel's engines were striking bottom due to a sandbar and waves. Lieutenant Wells jumped in the water and assisted the person on the PWC waving his hands and Officers Smith and Burks went and rescued the other subject being swept out to sea. The people fell off their PWC's in the Pass and they did not have their lanyard properly secured, so one of the PWC's never shut off. Everyone was rescued with no injuries and no vessel damage.

Lieutenant Martin was responding to a call about a person that jumped off a boat and had not been found. Lieutenant Martin responded by land and Officer Baker responded by water to search for the missing person. The search was called off several hours later and turned over to the St. Petersburg Police Department as a missing person's case.

Officers Baker and Caldwell were dispatched to a vessel that struck a rock pile. As the officers arrived, they could see two people, one outside the vessel and one still inside the vessel. Officer Baker jumped in the water to render first aid as Officer Caldwell went to the boat ramp to pick up paramedics. Both subjects were transported by Officer Caldwell to land and were then transported to the local hospital. Officer Caldwell is conducting the accident investigation.

POLK COUNTY

Officer Creel was on land patrol when he noticed a gentleman with a Ford Bronco in a parking lot that was smoking heavily. Officer Creel pulled in and grabbed his fire extinguisher from his patrol truck to help the man with the fire. The man fell out of the truck as flames started to shoot straight down from the motor. Officer Creel helped the man get away from the vehicle. Flames became larger and were now coming from under the hood. Officer Creel was able to safely extinguish the fire and get the man to safety.

Officers Alvis and Tyer were working on Lake Kissimmee when they responded to a boating accident that involved a swamped airboat. Officer Alvis and Tyer determined the damage was less than \$2,000 and issued a self-report form. Officers Alvis and Tyer assisted the operator with recovering the vessel from the lake.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

LEE COUNTY

Lieutenant Andriano responded to a loggerhead sea turtle that was entangled in crab trap fishing gear off of Fort Myers Beach. While the turtle definitely needed assistance in getting untangled, it was too quick for Lieutenant Andriano to handle on his own. Officer Spoede met Lieutenant Andriano on the beach and they returned to the entangled turtle. Officer Spoede realized there was no way to free the turtle while on board the patrol boat, so he grabbed a mask and snorkel and jumped in the water. Officer Spoede was able to safely remove the crab trap line and allow the turtle to swim free.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

LEE COUNTY

Officers Spoede, Thompson and Rogers, along with Lieutenant Barrett, took advantage of the beautiful holiday weekend weather to conduct an offshore fisheries patrol. The officers patrolled popular fishing areas in federal waters between 30 and 50 miles offshore. The officers found most boats in compliance with fisheries regulations, but documented violations on seven different boats including the possession of undersized grouper and snapper, the harvest of triggerfish during closed season, and multiple reef fish gear rule violations.

Officers in the Fort Myers area recently concluded a three-month directed patrol operation in Boca Grande Pass. They spent approximately 352 hours patrolling in the pass to deter boating safety and resource violations and to enforce area-specific gear restrictions. In all, they checked about 1,515 fishermen in 602 boats and issued 18 warnings for gear-related violations along with eight citations for resource and safety equipment violations.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officers Salem and Stasko participated in an outreach event at Babcock Ranch. The event was for middle school students in a Junior Law Enforcement Academy Summer Camp put on by the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office. The officers presented many different types of FWC special purpose equipment, K-9 Pierson and spoke about the unique tasks performed by FWC officers.

Officers Morrison and Goggin participated in a summer camp outreach with the YMCA. During the four day-event, the officers spoke with more than 150 kids ages 5-13 years old. The officers spoke about water safety, wildlife safety and wildlife regulations. Also, participants had the opportunity to meet and interact with live American alligators.

SOUTH A REGION

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Vacin was on patrol in Von Mizell/Eula Johnson State Park. He was on the jetty in the park and made contact with a fisherman. After a marine fisheries inspection, the individual was found to be in possession of 2 undersized mutton snapper and 2 undersized yellowtail snapper. He issued the individual a criminal notice to appear. The dead fish were seized as evidence.

Officer Brock was dispatched to the area of the 14 Street Bridge in Pompano Beach to meet with a Broward County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit deputy. The deputy had stopped a vessel for violation of a manatee zone. With information gathered from the deputy and field alcohol tasks completed, Officer Brock placed one individual under arrest for DUI and delivered him to the Broward County Jail.

As major holidays result in increased activity in Florida's state parks, Investigator Teems was on land patrol at Mizell-Johnson state park's main entrance. She performed a traffic stop on a vehicle bearing a temporary Florida registration. A records check reported an expired registration. The driver of the vehicle presented a Florida driver's license. A records check on the Florida driver's license indicated it was suspended in April 2015 for failure to submit to an alcohol test. A records check also indicated the driver had an active warrant for failure to appear. The entering agency (Miami-Dade) stated "no extradition". The driver was issued a notice to appear citation for charges of driving with an expired tag, driving while license suspended or revoked, and no motor vehicle registration. The driver's vehicle was towed and impounded.

Investigator Teems responded by land to a call for assistance regarding a vessel explosion resulting in serious injury. Ft. Lauderdale Fire Rescue was on the scene when Investigator Teems arrived. Witness statements indicated that gas was pumped into the fresh water holding tank instead of the gas tank. The gas pumping incident occurred at

the 15th Street Marina in Ft. Lauderdale. The subjects were advised not to operate the vessel. The vessel was then towed back to the owner's residence. The subjects attempted to use wet/dry shop vacuum to siphon the gas out of the fresh water holding tank. It is suspected sparks from the vacuum and gas fumes caused the explosion. One of the subjects was transported to Broward General Hospital for treatment. Ft. Lauderdale Fire Rescue will investigate the incident.

MARTIN COUNTY

While conducting fisheries inspections at the Hobe Sound Bridge, Officers Cobo and Morrow made contact with a subject who had just returned to his vehicle from a popular fishing spot underneath the bridge. When asked what he had caught, the subject stated that he had caught what he believed to be mutton snapper. Upon inspection of the fish, the officers found the subject to be in possession of undersized gray (mangrove) snapper. The subject was educated on fish identification and provided literature on recreational saltwater regulations and was issued a warning for the undersized fish. The undersized mangrove snapper were returned to the water at the conclusion of the call.

Officer Aswall stopped an incoming fishing vessel at Sandsprit Park. When she asked the subject if he had caught anything, he advised that he caught a Cobia. He advised that he failed to measure the Cobia and, upon measuring, the Cobia was found to be undersized. Officer Aswall issued the subject a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized Cobia.

While on vessel patrol, Officer Aswall stopped a vessel returning from an offshore fishing trip. The operator of the vessel advised her that he had an undersized dolphin on board. He was aware of the legal size limit for dolphin; however, he decided to keep the undersized dolphin. Officer Aswall issued the subject a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized dolphin.

Investigator Woolrich, with assistance from Investigator Turner and Lieutenant Ornold, worked an internet crimes complaint involving a subject selling shrimp without a retail license. Investigator Woolrich went undercover posing as a buyer and purchased nine pounds of shrimp from the subject. Investigator Turner issued a resource citation for the illegal sale of shrimp without a saltwater retail license.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officers Davis and Allen were on vessel patrol at the OkeeTantie Marina when they encountered a subject who was operating a vessel and was exhibiting signs of impairment. The man was also angry at being detained for the boating safety stop. After the subject attempted to perform the field sobriety tasks, he was arrested for BUI and transported to the Okeechobee County Jail where he refused the breath test. He was then booked into the jail for BUI and issued a citation for refusing to take the breath test.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Mann responded to an alarm call at Macarthur State Park. The guard house windows were completely shattered. Two large rocks were thrown through the windows causing significant damage. After investigating, the suspect was apprehended and confessed to the burglary. The suspect was charged with felony burglary and booked into the Palm Beach County Jail.

In June, FWC received an internet crimes complaint referencing a subject that was possibly stealing sea turtle eggs from the Jupiter Inlet Colony Beach. The anonymous tip advised that every night at approximately 10:00 p.m., a subject would set up camp on the beach and wait for sea turtles to come in and start laying their eggs, and the subject would take them. Later in June, a second compliant came in from the same location and with the same approach to poaching eggs. Officer Stone and Investigator Sierra set up surveillance on that night and for the following five days with no results. On the night of July 1, Officers Stone and Church and Investigator Sierra went back to the same location at approximately 10:00 p.m., and started surveillance again for the sixth night. At approximately 10:32 p.m., Officers Stone and Church observed the subject actively stealing sea turtle eggs from a loggerhead sea turtle as she was laying them. The subject was arrested and booked into the Palm Beach County Jail on a 3rd degree felony charge. All species of sea turtles are protected by the Endangered Species Act, as either a threatened or endangered species.

Officer Mann was on foot patrol at Phil Foster Park when he observed a male fishing. The fisherman had two bonefish with no heads or scales in his possession and was charged accordingly.

Officer Mann was on foot patrol at Phil Foster Boat Ramp and while doing a vessel inspection, he discovered a bag containing 16 dolphin fillets. The captain of the vessel was charged accordingly.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Officers Shermetaro and Fretwell were on water patrol in the Fort Pierce area when they made contact with a vessel operator at a local boat ramp. The operator appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. Officer Shermetaro requested the subject perform field sobriety tasks at the boat ramp, which the subject complied with but performed on poorly. He was subsequently arrested for BUI.

Officer Shermetaro was assisting Officer Fretwell with another case when he observed a vessel having a difficult time getting to the boat ramp and tying off his vessel to the dock. Officer Shermetaro made contact with the subject, along with officers from the USCG Station Fort Pierce. A boating safety inspection was conducted, at which time the operator appeared to be under the influence of alcohol and refused to conduct field sobriety tasks. During the investigation and contact made with the subject, enough probable cause was developed to arrest the subject for BUI.

Officers Fretwell and Shermetaro were on water patrol in the Fort Pierce area. While they were assisting another officer with a BUI investigation at a local boat ramp, they observed a vessel arrive at the boat ramp. The operator exited the vessel and began to walk to his vehicle until he saw the officers and then tried to get back in his boat. The operator was having difficulty walking and appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. Officer Fretwell made contact with the subject and conducted a boating safety inspection and asked the operator if he would perform field sobriety tasks. The operator refused to perform the tasks. At the conclusion of the field investigation, enough probable cause had been developed to arrest the subject for BUI. The information on the passenger was verified through dispatch and returned a confirmed active warrant. He was then arrested and transported to jail.

Over the holiday weekend, officers worked heavily traveled boating corridors looking for impaired boat operators. Overall, seven arrests were made for BUI. Along with those arrested for impairment, several were arrested and booked into jail for other offenses such as threats made to an officer, active warrant and disorderly intoxication. Approximately 41 warnings and 21 boating citations were issued.

RESCUES

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Godward and Newman were on vessel patrol under the Okeechobee Bridge in the ICW when they heard a vehicle crash on the bridge. They responded to the accident and assisted two injured motorists until EMS arrived. The accident investigation was turned over to West Palm Beach Police.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Hankinson and Spradling assisted investigations in late-night marine turtle protection, primarily focusing on sea turtle egg theft and harassment of sea turtles.

Officers Spradling, Newman and Hankinson responded to a deceased hammerhead shark on shore at the south Lake Worth inlet. After determining the shark's death was by natural causes, Officers Spradling and Newman transported the approximately 14-foot hammerhead shark five miles off shore.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Mann attended the Junior Park Ranger graduation ceremony at Macarthur State Park. Officer Mann answered the kids' questions and took photos with them.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

K9 Officer Payne and K9 Morgan conducted a presentation and a K9 demonstration for a kids' summer camp in Fort Pierce. Officer Payne discussed fish and wildlife regulations, becoming an FWC officer and the FWC K9s. This was followed by a short K9 demonstration. A patrol vessel and patrol vehicle were also on display for the kids to see.

SOUTH B REGION

CASES

COLLIER COUNTY

While on vessel patrol in federal waters offshore of Marco Island, Officer Lugg observed a vessel with two occupants on board actively fishing. When he approached the vessel and asked how the fishing was, both individuals on board said "terrible." The operator stated that the grouper biting had been terrible all day and that they only had a few lane snapper. After completing a thorough marine fisheries inspection, three undersized red grouper and one undersized mutton snapper were located along with drug paraphernalia and marijuana shake. All violations were cited accordingly.

Officers Araujo and Polly were patrolling the Picayune Strand State Forest during the holiday weekend when Officer Polly received a tip from the forestry staff that there was illegal target shooting taking place in area. Officer Araujo located a vehicle matching the description that the staff provided and noticed that it did not display the proper entrance fee tag. Officer Araujo conducted a traffic stop and made contact with three subjects inside the vehicle. Officer Polly found 9mm rounds littered on the ground at the shooting site and noticed a sign that had matching bullet holes in it. Officer Polly asked the driver if he had any firearms and to show them to him. One of the subjects handed Officer Polly a 9mm handgun that was empty. The driver later admitted to target shooting and was given a warning for discharging a firearm in a public place. He was also issued a littering citation. In addition, all three subjects were given citations for failure to pay the forestry day-use fee.

During the National Operation Dry Water weekend, Officers Johnson and White were on vessel patrol in Naples Bay. They observed a 43-foot Viking vessel enter a residential canal. The vessel was operating without an all-around white light. Officers activated their blue lights and pulled into the narrow canal behind the vessel. The operator never noticed the officers' blue lights, and once they arrived at the operator's residence, the officers made contact with the operator to address the navigational light violation. The officers detected signs of impairment from the operator, including the odor of alcohol, and the operator tried to hand over a credit card as a driver's license. The operator performed one field sobriety task, but refused all other tasks. During the test, Officer White observed sufficient clues to indicate impairment. The totality of the circumstances

led Officer White to arrest the operator for DUI. The operator refused to provide a breath alcohol sample.

MONROE COUNTY

Lieutenant Robison and Officer Adams observed two individuals using pole spears at night near the Quay Boat Ramp in Marathon. Using night-vision equipment, the subjects were observed stabbing what appeared to be spiny lobster, removing them from their spears and storing them nearby. Upon approaching the individuals, one male informed the officers he was harvesting lobster, showing the officers his hidden cooler under some dead palm fronds. His cooler contained 11 whole lobster, all of which had been speared, 5 of which were undersized. He also had no measuring device. The second individual informed us he was not doing anything. He had seen or heard us approach, and had hidden his homemade pole spear and stash of lobster. The first individual helped officers locate the second subject's pole spear and a plastic bag which contained 11 lobster tails, one with a puncture hole, and six undersized lobsters. The second subject was also charged with interference with an FWC officer, no valid fishing license, no Lobster Endorsement, as well as a citation for littering. The first subject was given a notice to appear with the second subject being transported to the county jail.

Officers Munkelt and Garrison were on water patrol working resource protection on the ocean side of Ann's Beach when they observed three individuals walking in the shallow water. One of the individuals was carrying a plastic bag with unknown contents. Another individual had his shirt wrapped around his right hand and would occasionally shove his hand in what appeared to be holes in the sand. As they came closer, the officers asked them what they were doing and the individual with the bag stated that they were catching crabs. Officers Munkelt and Garrison identified themselves as law enforcement and asked the individuals to come to their patrol vessel. Once at their patrol vessel, they inspected the contents of the plastic bag and found several legal blue crabs along with two live stone crabs. The crabs were separated and the individuals were advised that the stone crabs were out of season. After being told to leave the crabs where they were, one of the individuals grabbed one of the stone crabs and threw it in the water. The officers were unable to locate it. One individual was charged with possession of undersized stone crab, possession of whole body stone crabs, and possession of stone crab out of season, and no saltwater fishing license. The other individual was charged with harvesting stone crab out of season, possession of whole body stone crab, possession of undersized stone crab claw, interference with an FWC officer and no saltwater fishing license.

Officers Munkelt and Garrison were on water patrol working resource protection on the bayside of Long Key when they observed an individual snorkeling without a dive flag. Officer Munkelt positioned the patrol vessel so they could keep a constant eye on the individual with binoculars. They officers could clearly see that the individual was swimming next to a buoy commonly used with lobster/stone crab traps. Once at the trap, the individual dove underwater next to the buoy then resurfaced and called for a nearby vessel to come over to him. Once next to the vessel, he placed a white mesh

bag on board, boarded the vessel and the vessel began to leave the area. The officers stopped the vessel and identified themselves as FWC Officers. While next to the vessel, they could clearly see one lobster inside the white mesh bag. They tied the vessels together and went back to the buoy. Upon inspection of the buoy, it was tied to two concrete blocks. After reading Miranda, the individual admitted to harvesting the lobster from the concrete blocks and that he did not have a measuring device. He was charged with harvesting lobster out of season, no measuring device, harvesting lobster from artificial habitat and no saltwater fishing license. The operator/owner of the vessel was charged with not having a HIN on his vessel and issued a citation for a boating safety violation.

RESCUES

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Sutter, Wilkins and Boyd responded to a major boating accident in the Vaca Cut area of Marathon late one evening. The vessel crashed up into mangroves as it departed the marked channel. Three vessel occupants were injured, one seriously with multiple fractures. Officer Plussa was the first officer to arrive and assess the scene. He assumed the role of primary investigating officer and completed the investigation with the help of Officers Martino and Baumgartner. Officer Plussa determined that the factors contributing to the cause of the accident were (1) the operator failing to maintain proper lookout and avoid a collision, (2) operating at an unsafe and excessive speed in diminished visibility considering night and backlight scattering, and (3) operator inattention. The operator received citations for two navigation rule violations and warnings for seagrass and mangrove damage. After the vessel was successfully recovered and finally removed from the mangroves, it was determined the vessel was a total loss.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Osorio-Borja and Tidwell responded to a call at Clam Pass in reference to a report of a sawfish beaching itself. Upon arrival, the officers observed the sawfish near the shoreline. They were able to grab the tail of the sawfish and push it back into deeper water; however, the sawfish was not able to swim and was being washed onshore by the waves. The officers continued to push the sawfish into the water while they waited for a biologist to respond. After a few hours, the sawfish appeared to be getting worse and was not moving at all. The sawfish appeared to die just before the biologist arrived. Officer Johnson also responded and assisted the officers with transporting the sawfish until the biologist arrived and took possession of it.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

COLLIER COUNTY

The FWC, as well as the Collier County Sheriff's Office, Naples Police Department, and Marco Island Police Department conducted a proactive boating safety and BUI patrol spanning three days. During the detail, FWC officers stopped a total of 199 vessels, checked 723 users, issued 16 uniform boating citations, 2 resource citations, 34 warnings, and made 1 BUI arrest.

Officers from Collier and Lee counties conducted Panther Zone speed enforcement over a two-day period. During the detail, the officers issued 16 uniform traffic citations, 14 warnings, 1 misdemeanor citation and made 1 physical arrest. The officers not only performed enforcement duties, but they also provided educational approaches to drivers to make them aware of the panther habitat.

MONROE COUNTY

In an effort to prevent vessels in neglected or deteriorating condition from reaching a likely and foreseeable state of disrepair, the 2016 Florida Legislature passed a new law prohibiting vessels at risk of becoming derelict from occupying Florida waters. This includes vessels with cabin areas left exposed to the elements, vessels stored aground and left unattended, partially sunken vessels, and other situations involving the vessel approaching a wrecked, junked, abandoned, or substantially dismantled condition. Derelict vessels frequently cause environmental and navigational hazards for the community. Officer Plussa applied this new law on its first effective day in the Boot Key Harbor area of Marathon. He issued fifteen citations to owners and operators of vessels meeting this pre-derelict criteria in an effort to garner compliance from the owners to prevent their vessels' situations from deteriorating further into derelict status.

Officer Plussa responded to Knight's Key Bank where a 24-foot vessel had run over the grass flat and was completely hard aground. After waiting for the next high tide some 7 hours later, salvage operators successfully removed the vessel. Because of the extensive damage caused to the seagrass on the flat by the operator attempting to power off and by the vessel remaining there an entire day as tidal currents washed out around it, the operator was cited for scarring seagrass in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Aquatic Preserve.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube participated in the Upper Keys July 4th Parade held on US Highway 1 in Key Largo. Officer Dube pulled a marked FWC vessel through the parade route while kids aboard the vessel passed out candy and treats to the onlookers. Lieutenant Lyne and Officers Schroth and McKay assisted the Florida Highway Patrol and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office with traffic control during the parade.

Officer Dube was the guest host on a local radio show in the Upper Keys and talked about the upcoming July 4th holiday weekend and how to stay safe on the water. Officer Dube gave tips on boating safety, BUI, and dive safety advice.

Officer Dube assisted the USCG Auxiliary Post in Islamorada with teaching the “Boat Smart Boating Course”. Officer Dube taught 35 students at the History of Diving Museum weekender boating class. Students were taught navigation, boating law, and GPS usage, among other requirements. All students passed their boating exam and will receive their Boating License “Bobber Card” in the mail.