

FWC
Division of Law Enforcement



Weekly Report
March 24, 2017 through March 30, 2017

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

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Bartlett was dispatched to a complaint reporting that a blue heron was intentionally shot in a community in Destin. When Officer Bartlett arrived, he spoke with the complainant and captured the injured bird. The officer saw the bird's left wing was injured and it was actively bleeding. Officer Brooks transported the blue heron to a local wildlife rehabilitation center. Key information was gathered that led to a residence where the shooter lived. He spoke with a 19-year-old male who admitted shooting the bird with a pellet gun. The individual was issued a notice to appear citation.

Officer Pifer was dispatched to a complaint of an individual catching freshwater turtles, turning them over on their backs and leaving them to die in a Fort Walton Beach community. Information was received about the residence where the turtles were being harvested. When the officer arrived, he saw an individual matching the description provided by the complainant in the driveway getting into a vehicle. After an interview, with consent from the homeowner, Officer Pifer went to the backyard which backs up to a pond. Two turtles were lying upside down on the dock. The individual was issued a notice to appear citation for taking over the bag limit of freshwater turtles and given a citation for no freshwater fishing license.

Officer Bartlett was on land patrol after hours on the Eglin Wildlife Management Area (WMA) targeting after-hours access violations and saw a familiar vehicle parked off the shoulder of a road. He had previously issued the owner of the vehicle a written warning for being on the management area without a permit. There was a female outside the vehicle leaning on the hood of the truck. He asked where the owner of the vehicle was and she stated that he was in the woods. She guided the officer to the location of the driver/owner of the truck. The subject was issued a notice to appear citation for accessing Eglin WMA after hours.

Officers Bartlett and Nichols responded to a request from the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office concerning a possible domestic violence disturbance off Highway 85 just south of Crestview. The vehicle matching the description was located traveling north on Highway 85. The driver was the only occupant in the vehicle. It was determined no physical altercation had occurred between the two individuals. However, during the investigation, Officer Bartlett had cause to believe the driver was impaired. After field sobriety tasks were performed, the driver was arrested for DUI and taken to the Okaloosa County Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Jones encountered an oysterman returning to a boat ramp on the shore of East Bay near the community of Holley. There were oysters on the cull board of the boat and

a routine inspection of the catch was conducted. He found that more than 10% of the oysters were less than the 3-inch minimum size limit allowed by state law. A citation was issued to the oysterman with a mandatory court appearance.

While off duty, Officer Hutchinson received a call late at night from a Santa Rosa County deputy about a large group of people riding ATVs at Keyser's Landing in the Escambia River WMA. He went on duty and headed to the landing and met the deputy who was speaking with a group of teenagers who were riding ATVs. Several of the teenagers told the officers that a man and his girlfriend were in a truck spinning out and tearing up the campsites at Keyser's Landing. The officers then saw a truck coming towards them from the landing. The teens identified the truck as being the one that was destroying the campsites. Officer Hutchinson encountered the man driving the truck and recognized him as a person about whom several complaints have been reported. The subject was under the age of 21 and was in possession of alcoholic beverages. While conducting his investigation, fresh tire ruts in the middle of a campsite and dirt thrown from the ruts onto a nearby picnic table were observed. The subject admitted to spinning out in the campsite and was issued a notice to appear for destruction of state lands by a motor vehicle and possession of alcohol by a person under 21. The group riding the ATVs were warned for operating ATVs on a public roadway.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Officers Gore and Hellett were patrolling the Choctawhatchee River WMA when they encountered four subjects hunting hogs with dogs from the river. The subjects were cited for attempting to take game during a closed season and issued written warnings for numerous other violations.

Officer Alsobrooks was off duty when he heard a feeder go off on adjacent private property. A few minutes later, the officer heard someone calling turkeys at the same location. Suspecting a violation, he came on duty, approached the location and discovered an individual and two juveniles hunting turkeys approximately ten yards from the feeder. The subject was cited for attempting to take turkey within 100 yards of bait.

RESCUES

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Arnette and J. Rockwell responded to a call regarding two kayakers on Shoal River in need of assistance. One of the subjects was diabetic and overturned his kayak and lost his paddle. The officers located the subjects and returned them to safety.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Pifer and Corbin provided a ride-along for a reporter with the Northwest Florida Daily News who was writing an article on the day-to-day life of an FWC officer. The officers took the reporter on vessel patrol on Choctawhatchee Bay, Crab Island, Destin Pass and Destin Harbor. The officers made numerous boating safety vessel and resource inspections. The Northwest Florida Daily News posted the article and video on their website.

WALTON COUNTY

Lieutenant Clark coordinated with Topsail Hill Preserve State Park in an outreach event at the park. The FWC's Habitat and Species Biologist, Ms. Manis, presented a coastal PowerPoint presentation for the staff, volunteers, campers and members of the surrounding communities. The focus was how to identify shorebirds, sea turtles and other coastal wildlife and the importance in protecting their natural habitat. Approximately 30 people attended.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Officer Johnston was on patrol at the Alligator Lake Fish Management Area conducting boating safety and resource inspections when he located a subject who had an active warrant. Officer Johnston checked registration information and discovered that the registered owner of the vehicle had a "no bond" active warrant for violation of probation in Holmes County. The warrant was confirmed and Officer Johnston arrested and transported the subject to the Columbia County Jail.

DUVAL COUNTY

The FWC's Jacksonville Resource Protection Service (RPS) Squad worked a trespass complaint at a small local airport where a fence was found cut. Three baited blinds were identified and a subject was located calling turkeys near one of the feeders. The subject lives in a house adjacent to the airport and admitted to regularly hunting in the area. He was cited for trespassing and attempting to take turkey over bait. He was also issued warnings for license violations.

Officer Christmas was on routine patrol when he contacted two subjects trespassing on railroad property off Zoo Parkway. The subjects were fishing, so Officer Christmas conducted a resource inspection of their catch. One subject had seven red drum, six of which were undersized, and one undersized black drum. This subject was from Georgia and did not have a non-resident fishing license. The other subject was in possession of two undersized red drum. The fish were seized and the subjects were cited accordingly.

LAFAYETTE COUNTY

Officer Davenport was on patrol when he saw a truck exiting a hunt club. During a conversation with the two subjects sitting in the vehicle, they admitted that they had been turkey hunting. Further investigation revealed cannabis stored in the case of a turkey call that was in the possession of one of the subjects. The information was filed with the state attorney.

NASSAU COUNTY

Officers Griffis and Waldo were on land patrol on private property looking for turkey baits when they saw two parked vehicles further down the road. In the back of one of the trucks was a bag with remnants of feed with corn. As the officers followed the foot sign, they heard a shot. An individual was encountered shortly thereafter with a gobbler. Officer Griffis stayed with the individual while Officer Waldo walked in the direction of the shot. Turkey feathers and fresh blood were found close to an active feeder filled with corn. Officer Waldo located the spot where the individual was hunting which was less than 100 yards from the feeder. The subject gave a post-Miranda confession about shooting the gobbler over bait and was issued a notice to appear for taking turkey over bait.

SUWANNEE COUNTY

Officer Mobley located two turkey bait sites baited with cracked and whole corn and witnessed an adult with a 14-year-old female walking into the baited area and began calling turkeys with a push button turkey call. The adult hunter was cited for taking or attempting to take turkeys over bait.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

BREVARD COUNTY

While on late-night patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park, Officer Cybula and Lieutenant Lightsey saw a vehicle operating in a careless manner. A stop of the vehicle revealed the operator had a suspended driver's license and no insurance. While speaking to the man, the officers smelled cannabis coming from the vehicle and saw a glass pipe in plain view. A search of the vehicle revealed two bags containing cannabis and multiple pieces of drug paraphernalia. The man was issued a notice to appear for the violations.

During a resource and records inspection at a local bait shop. During the inspection, Officers Maslo and Kearney saw an 18-inch snook swimming in a large bait well. After speaking with the shop owner, a citation was issued for possession of undersized snook. The snook was released alive in a nearby local waterway.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

While Officers Hallsten, Lejarzar and Eller conducted foot patrols on the west end of Indian River County targeting illegal turkey hunting in the area, Officer Hallsten saw an individual actively hunting turkeys near a bait site. A resource inspection was conducted which confirmed that the individual was hunting turkeys over feed. A citation was issued for the violation and the subject's shotgun was seized.

Officers Balgo and Hallsten were conducting water patrol at night in the Indian River south of Sebastian Inlet when they saw a commercial fishing vessel with no navigation lights. They conducted a vessel stop and, as they were pulling up to the other vessel, the operator threw a fish overboard. A fisheries inspection revealed six undersized sheepshead and one puffer fish. Citations were issued for the violations.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Officer Mendez responded to private property to assist the Osceola County Sheriff's Office. His investigation determined that a subject had illegally exited Three Lakes WMA to harvest a turkey on the private property. The subject was issued a notice to appear for the violation.

Officer Mendez received information about individuals that jumped the fence into Three Lakes WMA. Officer Mendez waited for the three subjects to return and approached them to address the violation of illegal entry/illegal exit of a WMA. The subjects were issued notice to appear citations for the violations.

While working a baited turkey hunting site, Officer Balgo and Lieutenant Davis saw a hunter fire a rifle while sitting within 30 yards of an active feeder. The officers tracked the hunter back to his camp after he attempted to locate the turkey. It was determined the hunter had shot at a turkey, but missed. He was issued one citation for attempting to take a turkey within 100 yards of a game feeder. He was also issued a warning for not having a valid turkey permit.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officers Malicoat, West, Bellville and K-9 Officer North were watching a large piece of property in the New Smyrna Beach area in the early morning hours to enforce turkey hunting laws. At daybreak, an adult male was found attempting to take turkeys within 100 yards of bait. He was issued the criminal notice to appear citation for that offense and was issued additional citations for not having the appropriate licenses. While conducting this investigation, gunshots were heard nearby. Officer West located where someone had shot and killed a turkey over a baited area. Meanwhile, Officers Sapp and Thornton met a hunter leaving the area by vehicle and asked how successful his hunt had been. He claimed to have shot and killed a hog. Upon further investigation, he was

subsequently charged with the intentional take of turkey over the bait that Officer West had discovered.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

BREVARD COUNTY

Officers Balgo and Humphrey worked a two-day public outreach event at the Harbortown Marina Flea Market. The event had more than 2,000 visitors over the weekend. The officers manned a booth representing the FWC and answered various questions about boating safety, hunting, fishing, manatees and derelict vessels.

Officer Kearney spoke to a group of 25 anglers at the Ladies Fishing Clinic at Sebastian Inlet State Park. During the event, many topics were discussed including saltwater fishing regulations and boating safety.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

While on patrol in Gasparilla Island State Park, Officer Morrison found three subjects fishing in the park after hours. None of them had an after-hours state park pass and they were in possession of alcohol in a state park. Furthermore, after a fisheries inspection, a snook measuring 33 inches exactly was discovered. A closer examination of the fish revealed that the tail had been trimmed to meet the slot requirement. After questioning, one subject admitted to cutting the tail and took full responsibility. A criminal citation was issued for the illegal snook and appropriate warnings were issued for park violations.

HARDEE COUNTY

On opening weekend of spring turkey season, Officer Infante charged an individual who was attempting to harvest an Osceola turkey 18 feet from a bait station.

HERNANDO COUNTY

Officer Wolff responded to a complaint in Hernando Beach of a large vessel which pulled up to a dock at an empty lot, offloaded a large cooler and left the area. K-9 Chaos was deployed to the location, located the cooler and gave a final response on it. Inside the cooler were multiple Spanish mackerel and king mackerel. Surveillance was set up in the area and a black truck soon backed into the lot. There were multiple visual indicators that the vehicle's occupants had been fishing. They must have seen the surveillance vehicle and quickly exited the lot without retrieving the cooler. The vehicle

was stopped and contact was made with the occupants who fit the description of the subjects in the vessel. With assistance from Officer Scinta, the vessel was located at the Hernando Beach Marina in dry storage. The registered owner of the vehicle and vessel were the same person. While interviewing the subjects, they admitted to fishing that day and placing the cooler at the dock. The operator was advised that K-9 Chaos would be deployed again to conduct a free air sniff around the vehicle. The operator then admitted that there was a fish in the bed of the truck. The fish was a very large gag grouper. All of the fish were seized as evidence and the subjects were cited for taking over the daily bag limit of king mackerel and for taking gag grouper out of season.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Officers Kobs, Bontrager, and Reserve Officer Johnson were watching an area where someone had placed a large amount of corn on the ground during opening day of spring turkey season. Approximately 45 minutes before scheduled sunrise, the officers saw an individual walking through the woods with a headlamp on. The individual sat in an improvised blind made from palmetto fronds he had assembled the week before. Shortly before sunrise, the individual attempted to call in a gobbler turkey with various turkey calls. Officer Kobs announced himself as an FWC officer and instructed the individual to come out of the turkey blind. The individual admitted he knew that he was hunting over turkey bait, and that it was illegal to hunt turkey within 100 yards of the bait. The individual was given a notice to appear for hunting turkey over bait, and his shotgun was seized as evidence.

LEE COUNTY

Officers Furbay, Zampella and McColgin received information from a landowner about trespassing and poaching problems on his property. After some time of getting to know the area, the officers figured out where the issues were happening and set up a camera to catch the trespassers in the act. A couple of days after installing the camera, they caught two men armed with rifles entering the property. The men vandalized the chain around the camera and attempted to steal it. When the men saw a sticker on the back of the camera that said "property of FWC," they decided to leave an apology note instead of stealing the camera. The officers located one of the men in a nearby residential neighborhood and received a full confession about the crimes. The officers were also able to identify the second subject, who later admitted to the crime. Both subjects admitted to stealing the property owner's personal game camera on a previous visit. The officers returned the camera to the owner, and the two men will have to appear in court for the trespass violations.

Officer Hardgrove was patrolling in the northern Matlacha Pass area when he attempted to stop a commercial mullet skiff and the subject refused to stop. When the vessel finally stopped, he noticed that there were numerous Spanish mackerel and pompano on board with gill net marks on them, and they were not properly iced down. A search of the area where the subject refused to stop revealed discarded pompano that matched those on board. The subject was issued multiple citations and must appear in court.

PINELLAS COUNTY

While on water patrol near Pass-a-Grille, Officer Bibeau stopped a vessel returning from offshore to conduct a fisheries inspection. During the inspection, a triggerfish and a red snapper were located. After reading all the occupants on board their Miranda Rights, two of the occupants admitted to catching the triggerfish and red snapper. Both individuals were issued a misdemeanor citation for harvesting the fish during the closed season.

SARASOTA COUNTY

While on land patrol in Myakka River State Park, Officer Davidson performed a fisheries inspection on an individual who was returning from fishing. The subject had two largemouth bass, both over 16 inches. One bass was 18 inches and the other was 17 inches. The subject was cited for possession of more than one black bass over 16 inches and issued a warning for fishing without a valid freshwater fishing license.

RESCUES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officers Perry and Hardgrove received a call in the middle of the night from a commercial shrimping vessel, stating that one of the crew members had fallen into the water and was missing in the middle of Charlotte Harbor. The officers responded to the area and began searching for the missing fisherman along with the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office, USCG, and numerous other agencies. The other crew members didn't realize he was missing for quite some time. They were unsure where and when the person fell in, which made it difficult to know exactly where to search. The officers factored in the wind and tides and started searching in an area with night vision. Around 1:00 am, within 25 minutes of searching, the officers located the missing fisherman alive in the water and pulled him to safety. He was not wearing a life vest and is believed to have been treading water for almost two hours before being found. Aside from being cold and exhausted, the fisherman was uninjured.

POLK COUNTY

The Southwest Dive Team members had just completed cavern diving training at Jackson Blue Springs in Jackson County when they saw a large brush fire. The team members used their fire extinguishers to control the spread of the fire until Division of Forestry and Marianna Fire Department could extinguish the fire.

The Southwest Dive Team members had just completed training for the day at FSU in Bay County, when they saw a subject that had jumped from a moving vehicle. They provided first aid to the subject until EMS arrived on the scene and transported the subject to the hospital.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

LEE COUNTY

Officers Price, Furbay and Bradshaw worked panther zone enforcement in the Lee County protection areas. The officers performed speed enforcement as an effort to reduce speeding and protect the panthers when they are most likely to be moving. After several hours of enforcement, the officers issued seven written warnings and nine citations for violations. The highest speed was 79 miles per hour in the 45 miles per hour posted area.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officers from Lee, Charlotte and Sarasota counties participated in a Boating Safety Campaign to educate boaters about the importance of being alert while on the water. The campaign included television and radio media coverage to help spread the word. Officers focused water patrols on high-traffic areas looking for careless operators, boating under the influence and inattentive operators.

HARDEE COUNTY

Officer Cloud and K-9 participated in an outreach for Peace River Electric. There were approximately 400 people in attendance. Officer Cloud talked about the FWC K-9 program, and the job FWC is tasked with.

POLK COUNTY

Officer Young participated in the Heritage Festival Day. He handed out regulation handbooks and talked about boating safety, game and fish regulations, and new rule changes. More than 150 citizens attended the event.

SOUTH A REGION

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Vacin was on patrol near Fort Lauderdale and responded to a tip of a subject taking an undersized snook near a water flow structure in Davie. He arrived on the scene and spoke to several individuals fishing in the area. With information gathered, he issued one individual a citation for possession of over the bag limit of snook and

possession of undersized snook. One undersized snook was released back into the water alive.

GLADES COUNTY

Officer Nasworth was dispatched to a report of a sinking tug boat in the rim canal of Lake Okeechobee. When he arrived on scene, he saw a tug boat which was partially submerged and tied off in the Moore Haven wake zone. Officers Nasworth and Crosby launched a vessel at the Alvin Ward Boat Ramp and responded. They saw a sheen in the water behind the vessel and could smell diesel fuel. They docked next to the tug and boarded it and during an inspection of the vessel, located a piece of paper with the name of a subject and phone number. Officer Nasworth contacted the owner who said that the vessel was used the day prior and was afloat. The owner told Officer Nasworth that he didn't know how the vessel began to sink and that it was mechanically sound. The owner said that he would have crew members respond to pump the water out and he would contact SeaTow to get booms to contain the diesel fuel. Officer Nasworth contact the State Warning Point (Department of Emergency Management) to inform them of the situation and then completed a boating accident report for the incident.

HENDRY COUNTY

Officer DeWeese saw a turkey hunter on a private hunting lease. After some surveillance, he witnessed the hunter attempting to take turkey within 100 yards of bait. The subject was issued a citation for attempting to take turkey within 100 yards of bait.

MARTIN COUNTY

Officers Carroll, Cobo and Morrow, along with the Martin County Sheriff's Office and Stuart Police Department, responded to the report of a subject possibly in the water in the St Lucie River near the Roosevelt Bridge. An unoccupied dinghy had been found adrift and eyewitnesses had seen the vessel occupied a short time earlier. The officers began searching the area and spoke with the subject that had located the dinghy who provided a vessel registration number. The sailboat that the dinghy was registered to was located a subject on board that vessel was contacted. He said that the dinghy had come disconnected and that he was stranded on his sailboat. The officers then provided the subject with assistance getting to the dock, so that he could retrieve his dinghy from the reporting party.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

On the opening day of spring turkey season, Officer Allen conducted surveillance on an area north of State Road 70 where he had previously found corn and milo set out as bait. An adult and a child arrived just before dawn and, approximately ½ hour later, the adult shot a male wild turkey over the bait. He was issued a notice to appear citation for the violation. The turkey was seized as evidence then donated to a local wildlife rehabilitator.

Lieutenant Harris, Investigator Lafoy, Officers Davis, Allen and Boulware conducted surveillance targeting recreational fresh water fisheries violations in the Lake Okeechobee and Kissimmee River areas. Reports indicated fisherman specifically near Highway 78 in the Kissimmee River were violating the regulations for black crappie. A subject was seen fishing in the area and storing his catch in a cooler on land. The subject resumed fishing and was later seen passing his catch to an unidentified subject on land and returning to fishing again. When he returned in the late afternoon, a fisheries inspection was conducted revealing that he was in possession of 24 black crappie. The subject was then seen retrieving the white cooler stored on land. The subject was subsequently stopped for numerous traffic violations in Glades County. During the traffic stop, the subject verbally consented to an inspection of his vessel/vehicle and admitted he was over the daily bag limit of black crappie (daily bag limit 25). The subject was in possession of 45 black crappie and was issued a notice to appear citation for the fisheries violation. He was also issued written warnings for the traffic violations. The 45 black crappie were seized and photographed.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

The Martin County Sheriff's Office was involved in a pursuit that ended with the fleeing vehicle hitting a civilian vehicle near the West Palm Beach FWC Regional Office. The subject fled on foot after the crash into the Grassy Waters Preserve, which is a very wet marsh. Numerous Palm Beach County deputies responded to assist the Martin County deputies in locating the subject. Due to the swampy conditions, the FWC was asked to assist in the search. A swamp buggy and UTV were deployed and seven FWC officers assisted in the search. Shortly after dark, the suspect was located with the aid of a drone equipped with a FLIR. He was apprehended a short time later and arrested on multiple charges.

Officers Brock, Banks, Vacin and Lieutenant Laubenberger were on patrol in Boca Lake and saw a vessel pulling into the Silver Palms Park Boat Ramp. Officer Brock conducted a boating safety inspection of the vessel and issued the operator a BUI citation for underage drinking. The individual must appear in court.

Officer Nasworth was flagged down at the Pahokee Marina parking lot by a citizen who informed him that SeaTow had just pulled in a vessel that had been stranded on Lake Okeechobee. At the dock, the operator said that the vessel hit a big wave coming across the lake and knocked out their GPS, causing them to get off course. When he saw the Pahokee Marina, he drove straight towards it and ran onto the rocks. The operator said that he called the U.S. Coast Guard and the local sheriff's office who did not send any units to assist, and his vessel started to take on water. He then called SeaTow for assistance. The accident is under investigation.

Officer Toby saw an individual fishing on Lake Okeechobee with a cast net at the Belle Glade Structure and conducted a fisheries inspection. The individual was in possession of nine bluegill and two black crappie, one of which was undersized. After examining the

fish, they showed evidence of having been taken by a cast net, which is illegal as they are all freshwater game fish. The individual was issued a misdemeanor citation for the possession of the one undersized black crappie and a misdemeanor citation for taking the game fish by illegal method. Additionally, the individual was issued a written warning for fishing without a valid freshwater fishing license.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officer Boulware conducted patrol in the Okeechobee Battlefield State Park for the Seminole War reenactment. Attendance was approximately 3,500 people for the three-day event.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Stone, Payne, Leblanc and Morrow attended the annual Becoming an Outdoors Woman seminar at JW Corbett WMA. During the three-day event, the officers instructed students on archery and firearms, hunter safety, hunting basics, and reading/interpreting the woods.

SOUTH B REGION

CASES

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Plussa was conducting water patrol near Gordon Pass and Naples Bay when he saw a vessel exit the channel and enter a slow speed manatee zone while on full plane. Because of the ensuing investigation by the officer, the subject was eventually charged with BUI, providing false name/identity to law enforcement, failure to transfer registration within 30 days change of vessel ownership, and failure to apply for vessel title within 30 days of change of ownership. Six citations for boating safety equipment violations and a seventh citation for violation of the Manatee zone were also issued. He was booked in the Collier County Jail on a \$6,000 bond for the four charges.

Officers Kleis and Arbogast were on water patrol on the Marco River when they saw a vessel create a large "rooster tail," attempting to spray the docks at a water front restaurant. The vessel was also improperly displaying its registration decal. The vessel was stopped to address the violation and to conduct a safety inspection. Multiple signs of impairment were observed from the operator during the encounter. Seated field sobriety tasks on the operator were conducted, on which he performed poorly. Officer Kleis placed the subject under arrest for BUI. The subject, who has two previous convictions for DUI, refused to provide a breath sample. The subject was transported to the Collier County Jail.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Lieutenant Haney was on patrol at a boat ramp in Miami and conducted an inspection on a PWC. During the inspection, he determined that the HIN on the PWC had been altered. The trailer was confirmed to be stolen and had been fraudulently registered. The owner was interviewed and subsequently arrested and charged with 4 felonies and 1 misdemeanor relating to the theft and fraud of the trailer and PWC. The PWC and trailer were seized as evidence.

MONROE COUNTY

Investigator J. Munkelt was observing marine life collectors in an unmarked patrol vehicle snorkeling on a flat in the lower keys. Due to the length of time they were in the water he concluded that they might be over their daily bag limit and called a nearby uniformed officer to conduct a routine fisheries inspection. Officer Mason arrived on scene and checked their licenses and catch when they came back to shore. The individuals were found to be over their commercial bag limit of star snails (commonly referred to as "Turbo Snails"). Officer Wagner assisted with evidence collection and documentation.

Officer Mattson saw a man selling "premium fish dip" on the side of US Highway 1 in Tavernier. Officer Mattson had dealt with the man in July 2016 and issued him a warning for no retail license. Officer Mattson asked the subject if he had his license and had come into compliance. The man said that he was "going through the process" of getting his license. He did not have a current license to sell retail to the public and he was issued a misdemeanor citation for the violation.

Officers Wagner and Piekenbrock were on water patrol in an unmarked vessel when they saw a vessel with divers in the water under a bridge in the lower keys. They watched one diver hand a spear gun into the vessel and the other hand a lobster net, tickle stick, and lobster bag with what appeared to be lobster in the bag. The officers waited for the individuals to get in the vessel and then approached and announced themselves as law enforcement officers. Officer Piekenbrock asked the individuals if they had any fish or lobster on board, and they replied that they did not. While checking registration and fishing licenses, Officer Wagner asked again if they had any fish or lobster, and they again replied that they did not. Officer Wagner approached the gunwale and asked if he could come on board to conduct a fisheries inspection. One man handed Officer Wagner the lobster bag and said he did have lobster in a bag, but had not measured them yet. Seven lobster were in the bag, and six of them were undersized. One more legal lobster was discovered in a cooler on the vessel. The man was charged with undersized and over the bag limit of spiny lobster. He was warned for not carrying a measuring device while harvesting lobster.

RESCUES

COLLIER COUNTY

While responding to a call, Officer Plussa saw a car several vehicles ahead of him quickly exit the travel lane and stop off the roadway in a rapid and panicked manner. When the vehicle stopped, the occupants exited and smoke began emitting from under the vehicle. Officer Plussa quickly advised dispatch to send Fire Rescue Services, stopped his patrol truck in a manner that would block the travel lanes, and exited with his fire extinguisher. As he approached, he could see large flames coming from underneath and inside the vehicle. Due to the possibility of an explosion with the vehicle's fuel tank, he repositioned his patrol truck further back from the burning vehicle to block all travel lanes and stop traffic at a safe distance. Marco Island and Naples Fire Rescue units quickly arrived on the scene and put out the fire. Collier County Sheriff's deputies and FWC Lieutenants Sushil and Mahoney arrived on the scene to assist with traffic and scene management. The deputy on the scene confirmed that no injuries were reported.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Osorio and Lieutenant Mahoney conducted patrols during the 70th anniversary celebration at Collier-Seminole State Park. The event consisted of free admission to the park, live music, local vendors and a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the campground re-opening after the remodeling and upgrades. During the event, FWC officers had the opportunity to answer many questions about fishing and hunting as well as their role as FWC law enforcement officers.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube took a local newspaper reporter out on vessel patrol for a ride-along to write a story on FWC officers. He conducted recreational and commercial vessel checks which included a sponge vessel, stone crab and lobster vessels. Officer Dube described to the reporter all the different areas that FWC officers patrol such as state and federal parks such as the Everglades National Park, protected areas, environmental and management areas, areas managed by the county and city. Officer Dube was also dispatched to multiple vessel groundings in the state park at the end of his shift. The reporter from Pennsylvania enjoyed her day out on water patrol with Officer Dube.