

FWC
Division of Law Enforcement



Weekly Report
May 26, 2017 through June 1, 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

BAY COUNTY

Investigator Thomas received a complaint regarding a 12-foot tiger shark that had been landed on the Bay County Pier earlier in the week. The complainant reported that, after being caught with hook and line, the subjects put additional lines its head and tail and, with the help of nineteen people, pulled the shark up and over the rail onto the pier. The shark lied on the pier for approximately six minutes while people sat on its back and had their picture taken. The shark was then released by dropping it approximately twenty-two feet to the water below. The subjects stated that the shark swam off upon being released. Appropriate citations and four written warnings were issued for possession, harvest and landing of a prohibited species of shark.

Officers Hellett and Alsobrooks conducted a vessel stop in St. Andrews Bay near the Panama City Port. Both the operator of the vessel and the passenger appeared to be intoxicated. While trying to conduct a BUI investigation on the operator, the passenger was verbally abusive to the officers. The operator agreed to perform field sobriety tasks and was subsequently arrested for BUI. Officer Hellett asked the operator if he was a member of SeaTow and the operator answered "yes." Officer Hellett asked dispatch to contact SeaTow to come and get the vessel and female passenger. When SeaTow requested the operator's member number, the operator told officer Hellett that it was on his key ring in his boat. As Officer Hellett stepped onto the operator's vessel, the female passenger told the officer to get off her boat and pushed the officer. The female passenger was then arrested for interfering with an officer and resisting arrest without violence. Both subjects were transported to the Bay County Jail. The operator gave breath samples at the jail, which were .113 for both samples, and was charged with BUI with a breath alcohol level (BAL) of .08 or higher.

While patrolling in federal waters approximately 12 miles southwest of Panama City on board the OPV *Vigilance*, Officers Rockwell, Cushing and Land located a charter vessel headed south further into federal waters. While making way toward the vessel, it turned around and headed due north abruptly. The officers proceeded to the charter vessel rapidly and stopped it at approximately 10.5 miles offshore. During the inspection, the vessel and occupants were found to be on an active charter trip and in possession of red snapper during closed season. The captain did not possess a federal reef fish permit or a valid charter license. The appropriate action was taken to address the violations.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

While on water patrol, Officer Cushing conducted a fisheries inspection on a recreational fishing vessel entering Bayou Chico. A large red drum was protruding from a cooler, and he confirmed who caught the fish and that they had knowledge of the

regulations. The red drum measured 35 inches and a citation was issued for the violation. Another individual was issued a warning for an undersized red snapper.

While on vessel patrol aboard the Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) *Vigilance*, Officers Cushing, Land, Nelson and Rockwell conducted an inspection of a commercial shrimping vessel in the Pensacola Bay area. During an inspection of the vessel's Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs), it was revealed that one of the nets being fished had a TED that had the netting around it sewed in a manner that would not allow a turtle to pass through the TED and out of the net as intended. The appropriate action was taken in regards to the violation and the TED was fixed by the shrimping vessel's crew prior to departure of the officers.

While on vessel patrol in Big Lagoon State Park, Officers Clark and Long approached a vessel after noticing the operator throw a cigarette into the water. They initiated a vessel stop and while talking with the operator, he showed signs of impairment. Officer Clark conducted field sobriety tasks and determined the operator was impaired. The operator was taken into custody and transported to the Escambia County Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample. The operator was booked into Escambia County Jail and cited for BUI and refusal to submit a breath test. He was also issued a warning for littering.

Lieutenant Hahr was working in the Perdido River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) at Fillingim Landing and saw several subjects drinking beer. Two of the men smoked a cannabis cigarette and placed it in a backpack. As they were leaving, Lieutenant Lambert stopped them in the parking lot. The officers located three cannabis cigarettes and issued the two men a notice to appear for possession of not more than 20 grams of cannabis.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

While patrolling in the Apalachicola Bay on board the OPV *Guardian*, Lieutenant Marlow, Officers Boyd and Nelson located seven commercial shrimping vessels. During the boarding of those vessels, the officers inspected the catch, gear, and licenses. Three of the vessels had TEDs with illegal dimensions. The appropriate action was taken for the violations and the vessels were instructed to fix their gear to prevent any drownings of sea turtles.

While patrolling in the Gulf of Mexico on board the OPV *Guardian*, Lieutenant Marlow, Officers Boyd and Nelson located a large commercial shrimping vessel just south of St. Vincent Island. They watched the vessel for approximately 30 minutes while conducting another vessel inspection. Upon completion of the vessel stop and approach of the shrimping vessel, they recognized that the vessel was one that typically uses 4 nets simultaneously for offshore shrimping use. The vessel was boarded in nearshore waters and upon hauling the gear, the vessel was found to be trawling with 4 large nets. The nets were measured and found to be over 2,000 square feet a piece, thus exceeding the 500 square feet maximum. The nets had additional measurements that exceeded

legal thresholds and inspection of their catch revealed 5 undersized Spanish Mackerel. The appropriate action was taken for the violations.

While patrolling in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico on board the OPV *Guardian*, Lieutenant Marlow, Officers Boyd and Nelson located two vessels together in federal waters south of St. George Island. Upon inspection of the vessels, the occupants of one vessel were found to be in possession of red snapper and gag grouper during federal closure. The other vessel was found to be in possession of red snapper during federal closure. The appropriate action was taken for the violations.

While patrolling in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico on board the OPV *Guardian*, Lieutenant Marlow, Officers Boyd and Nelson located a vessel approximately 11 miles south of St. George Island. Upon inspection of the vessel, the occupants were found to be in possession of red snapper during federal closure, lane snapper not landed in whole condition and use of reef fish for bait. The appropriate action was taken for the violations.

While patrolling in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico on board the OPV *Guardian*, Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd and Nelson located a vessel approximately 12 miles south of East Pass. Upon inspection, the occupants were found to be in possession of red snapper and gray triggerfish during federal closure. The appropriate action was taken for the violations.

While patrolling in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico on board the OPV *Guardian*, Lieutenant Marlow, Officers Boyd and Nelson located a vessel approximately 11 miles south of St. George Island. Upon inspection, the occupants of the vessel were found to be in possession of red snapper during federal closure and were using cut up red snapper for bait. The appropriate action was taken for the violations.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers conducted vessel patrol throughout the Memorial Day holiday weekend. There were approximately 1,000 recreational and commercial vessels each day. Officers conducted boating safety inspections and Officers Bartlett, Pifer and Wilkenson made four 4 BUI arrests. Officers Pifer, Corbin, Jarvis and Investigator Schafer investigated 4 separate boating accidents. Citations were issued for no life jackets, violation of idle speed zone, expired vessel registration, livery violations and underage boat operators.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officers Clark, Hutchinson and Long were in Blackwater State Forest checking fisheries and alcohol violations when they approached two individuals on a sand bar. One male was fishing and could not produce a valid freshwater fishing license. They also saw open containers of alcohol. Officer Long found the subjects in possession of 8 grams of Methamphetamine, numerous pills, cash and paraphernalia. Both subjects were placed

in custody and transported to the Santa Rosa County Jail. They were charged with a total of seven felonies, three misdemeanors and two infractions.

Officer Lewis was on patrol in Blackwater River State Forest at a primitive campsite when he saw an adult male, adult female and two children camping. The officer saw alcoholic beverages and glass containers within their campsite, and explained to them that those items were prohibited in the area. The children were sleeping in the tent, and the officer could smell a strong odor of cannabis emanating from the tent. The officer explained the odor to the adults. The adult female retrieved cannabis and paraphernalia items from the tent and stated that the items belonged to her. Officer Lewis seized the cannabis and paraphernalia from the female, and issued her a notice to appear for possession of cannabis not more than 20 grams, and possession of drug paraphernalia. The officer issued them both warnings for the alcoholic beverages and glass bottles.

Officers McHenry and Ramos were patrolling the Perdido River WMA and saw two Jeeps enter the WMA. Almost immediately after leaving the paved road, they began to fish-tail and drive in a careless manner. When they came across a large clearing used for horse trailers, each of the vehicles began cutting donuts in the sand, leaving large ruts and destroying the recreation area. The officers stopped both vehicles and citations were issued for the violations. One of the suspects did not have a valid driver's license and received the corresponding criminal citation.

While on vessel patrol in Escambia Bay, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) notified Officer Ramos that they had received a distress call from a woman on board a sailboat. She stated that her husband, who was operating the vessel, was extremely intoxicated and she was fearful for her safety. The USCG reported that they heard the man make multiple threats to his wife while she was speaking. The USCG relayed identifying information of the vessel to Officer Ramos, enabling him to locate the vessel underway in open water approximately 20 minutes later. The USCG launched a cutter to assist Officer Ramos at the sailboat. Officer Ramos conducted a BUI investigation of the operator of the vessel. The vessel operator was highly uncooperative and subsequently taken into custody due to extreme signs of impairment. He was transported to a nearby boat ramp and taken to the Santa Rosa County Jail where he was booked for BUI.

RESCUES

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Bartlett responded to a report of a vessel passenger who fell off a personal watercraft (PWC) at the Marler Bridge. The distressed swimmer was located, but he lost sight of her when she went underneath the water's surface. He located her quickly when she briefly resurfaced and pulled her from the water and onto his patrol vessel.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officer Stanley found five large bags of garbage and an old TV dumped on the side of a dirt road in Alachua County. After digging through the garbage, he found three names and three different addresses. Officer Stanley tracked down and interviewed several subjects. Two of the subjects admitted to the violation and gave sworn written statements. Sworn complaints for misdemeanor dumping were filed with the state attorney's office.

Officer Stanley received a phone call from a member of a hunting club who stated that someone had dumped a large amount of garbage at one of their main gates. He located the garbage and found several items that belonged to one individual. The individual was contacted and informed that they had moved and the house was for sale. The realtor was contacted and they provided the name of the person who was paid to clean the house. Officer Stanley met with one subject who admitted to taking payment and dumping the garbage on the side of the road. Charges were filed for felony dumping with the state attorney's office.

Officers Troiano and Reith worked area lakes over the holiday weekend. With an unusually large number of people fishing area lakes, the officers saw several fishermen catching specks on Lochloosa Lake. After observation, they began stopping vessels for fishing licenses and safety gear. One vessel had 71 specks with only two fishermen on boat. After a brief conversation, one of the fishermen admitted that the 21 fish over the limit were their fish. The individual was cited for over the daily bag limit and the fish were properly disposed of.

CITRUS COUNTY

Officers targeted impaired boaters during the holiday weekend and conducted 15 impaired boater investigations, which resulted in six BUI arrests and multiple boating safety citations and warnings. One BUI arrest resulted in an additional charge of resisting with violence when the impaired operator became physically resistant to the officers' attempt to arrest him. The subject attempted to jump overboard while handcuffed. The subject was subdued and later transported to jail.

Numerous other arrests included: two possessions of alcohol of persons under 21; possession of cannabis under 20 grams; possession of redfish over the slot limit; and three boating accidents. There was one search and rescue for a missing boat operator. The operator was later reported to have abandoned the vessel at the ramp and failed to inform FWC.

DIXIE COUNTY

Officer Butler received information from a local landowner about subjects actively trespassing on his property. K-9 Officer Wiggins was asked to assist in the investigation and saw two subjects actively trespassing on the property. Both subjects were issued a notice to appear for the violation.

Lieutenant Futch, Officers Allen, Butler and Wilder received information that commercial oyster harvesters were harvesting oysters from prohibited waters in Dixie County. The officers began surveillance on the area and determined several subjects were harvesting oysters from prohibited waters. Appropriate citations were issued for the violations.

DUVAL COUNTY

Captain Angiuli and Officer Shearer were conducting surveillance in an unmarked vessel and spotted a vessel on plane under the Beach Boulevard Bridge in a restricted speed zone. The vessel slowed when the operator saw a marked FWC vessel conducting a vessel stop nearby. Captain Angiuli and Officer Shearer conducted a vessel stop on the speeding vessel and noted that the driver appeared to have been drinking. The vessel was escorted to a nearby dock to address the violation where further signs of impairment were detected. The subject admitted to consuming alcoholic beverages and all seated field sobriety tasks indicated impairment. He was transported to jail and booked for BUI.

LEVY COUNTY

Officers Fox and Johnston were on patrol and conducting vessel safety/resource inspections at the main boat ramp in Cedar Key during the Memorial Day weekend. During one inspection, the captain of the vessel informed Officers Fox and Johnston that he had four black tip sharks inside his cooler. The officers saw three black tip sharks in whole condition and two fillets from an additional black tip shark. The captain was issued a notice to appear for over the bag limit of sharks.

Officer Fox was on patrol in Cedar Key near the main boat ramp when he heard a vessel revving its engine. The vessel was traveling at a high rate of speed and nearly collided with another vessel in a narrow channel near the boat ramp. It was also navigating erratically near the shore where several children were playing in the water. During the subsequent vessel stop, the strong odor of an alcoholic beverage was immediately smelled from the operator's breath. The operator was asked and agreed to perform seated field sobriety tasks. The operator performed poorly and was arrested for operating a vessel while impaired. The vessel was towed to the boat ramp where Officers Johnston, Starling and Lieutenant Umhoefer assisted with the investigation. The operator later refused to provide a breath sample and was transported to the Levy County Jail.

Lieutenant Umhoefer performed a vessel stop during the Memorial Day weekend and conducted a safety inspection and resource check. When asked if there were any fish

on board, the captain of the vessel said he and his fishing companion had three sharks in his cooler. Lieutenant Umhoefer seized one bonnet head shark and the captain of the vessel retained two blacktip sharks (legal bag limit). The appropriate citations were issued to the captain for over the daily bag limit.

Officer Schulz was conducting a vessel safety and resource inspection on a boat with three male occupants. When the owner/operator opened a cooler for inspection, Officer Schulz noted a 13-inch spotted sea trout and a 13.5-inch gag grouper among the numerous fish in the cooler. The undersized spotted sea trout (must be a minimum of 15 inches) and gag grouper (must be a minimum of 24 inches) were seized for evidence and misdemeanor citations were issued to the captain who claimed both fish.

Officers Willis and Fox were on water patrol on the Withlacoochee River when they saw a vessel speeding through the manatee zone. The officers stopped the vessel for this violation and discovered the vessel had fish on board. Officer Willis inspected the cooler containing fish and found the subjects to be in possession of three undersized spotted seatrout. The operator was issued a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized spotted seatrout. The undersized seatrout were seized and documented as evidence.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officers Wilcox, Robson, Albritton, Lieutenant Guy and K-9 Officer Anderson responded to the Lower Econfina WMA regarding a report of a suspicious vehicle. K-9 Officer Anderson located a male subject near his vehicle at the creek cleaning sand from his arms and out of breath. A female was located swimming down the river. Further investigation revealed that the subjects were actively digging and collecting artifacts on state land. When the subjects saw the officers, they attempted to flee the dig site on foot. Officer Anderson deployed his K-9 partner and located the dig site with tools still present, and located the female's shoes where she jumped into the creek to clean up. Both subjects were charged with two felonies and two misdemeanors each. Several artifacts were seized as evidence.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officers were busy on all lakes over the holiday weekend. The officers issued several citations and warnings for boating violations. They also responded to complaints regarding a five-foot monitor lizard walking through an apartment complex in Gainesville and shots being fired in San Felasco State Park. The gunshots were on private property. Paynes Prairie State Park had hundreds of people walking the trails to view and observe all the alligators, bison and mustangs that live in the area. With water levels at extremely low levels, large alligators sunning had some of the trails blocked. All individuals made it back safely after waiting for the alligators to move back into the water.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

ALACHUA COUNTY

Officer Troiano assisted Investigator Holmes with a public speaking event in Alachua County. The event included topics on the duties of a FWC officer and boating safety gear and laws.

RESCUES

DIXIE COUNTY

Lieutenant Futch and Officer Allen were patrolling the Suwannee River during the Memorial Day weekend when they saw a vessel stop and the passengers began waving them over. Upon their approach, they discovered a female on board who had just been struck in the leg by a jumping sturgeon. The officers administered first aid and cautioned the boaters to continue to be on the lookout for jumping sturgeon, especially during this time of year.

LEVY COUNTY

Officers Johnston and Schulz were on water patrol on the Suwannee River during the holiday weekend when a vessel approached them and reported that two occupants on their vessel had been struck by a Gulf Sturgeon. The officers saw a middle-aged male on the front of the vessel with abrasions on his stomach and leg. A juvenile on the vessel had also been struck in the head by the sturgeon and moderate swelling was evident. The officers quickly rendered first aid and escorted the vessel to the nearest boat ramp. Dixie County EMS and fire personnel quickly responded to the scene and treated the two patients. Both patients were released by EMS and went to the hospital in their personal vehicle. The boating accident is currently under investigation.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

BREVARD COUNTY

While on foot patrol at Sebastian Inlet State Park, Officer Balgo received information that an individual was keeping undersized fish and placing them in his vehicle. After getting a description of the individual and his vehicle, a fisheries inspection was conducted. One undersized mutton snapper and one undersized sheepshead were found. Proper citations were issued to the individual.

While on foot patrol at Freddie Patrick Boat Ramp, Officer Balgo saw a vessel come in from the south jetty. A fisheries inspection revealed that the individual had four

undersized mangrove snapper, two undersized black drum, one undersized mutton snapper, and one undersized sheepshead. Proper citations were issued to the individual.

While on foot patrol under the SR520 causeway, Officers Balgo and J. Humphrey saw an individual catch one large black drum and place it by his vehicle. Shortly after, the same individual caught another large black drum and placed it by his vehicle. After performing a fisheries inspection, both black drum were found to be over 24 inches. Proper citations were issued to the individual.

LAKE COUNTY

Lieutenant Chase and Officer Teal were contacted in April by park staff at Lake Louisa State Park about a subject who tried to cash a gift card that was not activated. The subject returned the following day with another gift card and rented a cabin for three days. During the three days, it was discovered that the gift card was obtained with a worthless check. The park asked the subject to leave and after she checked out, park staff found her cabin had extensive damage on the inside. Upon further investigation, Officer Teal obtained an arrest warrant for defrauding an innkeeper for more than \$300 and criminal mischief for more than \$1,000.

Officer Morrow received information that a subject was taking gopher tortoises off State Roads 44 and 46A. He located the subject and immediately noticed two gopher tortoises inside a green plastic tote container and a rifle in the cab section of the truck. In the distance, Officer Morrow spotted a subject shoveling dirt. As he got closer, he saw that the subject was shoving a large stick down the hole of an active gopher tortoise burrow. The subject was approached and admitted that he was trying to catch another gopher tortoise and was going to take it home to eat. Upon closer inspection of the gopher tortoises, it was discovered that one was injured. Lieutenant Tye arrived on the scene and took possession of the injured tortoise and transported it to the Florida Wild Animal Hospital in Deland. The subject was charged with the unlawful possession of a gopher tortoise.

MARION COUNTY

Officer Rice was conducting water patrol on Lake Weir when he saw a vessel not displaying a boating safety decal. He approached the two subjects on the vessel to conduct a boating safety inspection. During the inspection, Officer Rice saw that the operator's eyes were bloodshot and watery. He could smell a strong odor of alcohol coming from the operator and noticed the subject's speech was slurred. While walking up the boat ramp, the officer saw that the subject was unsteady on his feet and staggering. Field sobriety tasks were conducted and the subject was determined to be under the influence and was arrested. The subject provided two breath samples with results of .260 and .264. He was transported to the Marion County Jail and booked for BUI.

Officer Rice was conducting water patrol on Lake Weir when he saw a vessel improperly displaying the registration decal. He encountered three subjects on the vessel to address the violation and conduct a boating safety inspection. During the inspection, the operator was very unsteady on his feet and used the sides of the boat to hold himself up. The officer saw that the operator's eyes were bloodshot and watery and could smell a strong odor of alcohol on his breath. While walking up the boat ramp, the subject was staggering and stumbled over his feet. He also had to use poles along the boat dock to brace himself as he walked. Field sobriety tasks were conducted and the subject was determined to be under the influence. The operator was placed under arrest and transported to the Marion County Jail for BUI. At the jail, the subject refused to provide a breath sample.

Officers M. Jones, Bernard and Lieutenant Dickson investigated the report of the theft of dead-head logs from Chapman Logging of the TV Series "Ax Men." An arrest warrant was acquired and served on a subject for grand theft.

K-9 Officer Simpson and Officer Barber conducted a vessel inspection in Salt Springs Run. The operator of the PWC was found to be impaired and was charged with BUI.

K-9 Officer Simpson, and Officers Barber and Bernard were on vessel patrol in Salt Springs Run when they noticed the smell of burning marijuana. They located the vessel the smell was coming from and encountered the persons on board. One female was charged with possession of cocaine, possession of cannabis under 20 grams and possession of drug paraphernalia. Two males were charged with possession of cannabis under 20 grams.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officers Sapp and Haskins responded to a residence in Deland after receiving a report of a fresh alligator head on the front porch. The officers arrived and saw the alligator head on the porch where the reporting party said it would be. The head showed evidence of a gunshot or bang stick wound. When questioned, the homeowner said he found the head and brought it home for his daughter. He was cited for unlawful possession of alligator parts.

Officer Ward was on patrol at DeLeon Springs State Park when he saw a suspicious vehicle leaving the parking lot. He ran the license plate and the tag came back as stolen out of Deland. Officer Ward initiated a traffic stop on the vehicle and found that the operator had no driver's license. A computer check of the vehicle identification number showed that it was not stolen, but that it was not currently registered. The operator was arrested and booked into the Volusia County Jail for knowingly driving on a suspended license, operating an unregistered vehicle and petit theft.

Officers Sapp and Haskins were patrolling the St. John's River on Memorial Day weekend when they stopped a PWC violating the Astor slow speed zone. During the stop, the officers detected signs of impairment from the operator. After conducting

standard field sobriety tasks, the officers placed the operator under arrest for BUI. He was transported and booked into the Volusia County Jail where he refused to give a breath sample.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

BREVARD COUNTY

Officer Balgo and Lieutenant Davis attended a youth angler fishing outreach at Kiwanis Island Park. They handed out fishing and boating regulations and answered questions. Approximately 80 kids attended the event.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Lieutenant Frantz contacted a vessel that was coming from a sand bar party. The operator showed signs of impairment, and admitted to drinking eight beers during the day. The operator was arrested for BUI and transported to Charlotte County Jail.

DESOTO COUNTY

A statewide investigation resulted in the arrest of five men from Arcadia, and executed search warrants. The five men were charged with illegal take of alligator, alligator eggs, and conspiracy to commit racketeering. Many items were seized during this investigation.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Officers Infante, Adams, Smith, Investigator Ervin and Lieutenant Fugate were floating off Bishop Park Boat Ramp on Lake June when they noticed a large vessel approaching on plane. The operator did not alter his course until the vessel was near the officers. Lieutenant Fugate and Officer Infante followed the vessel to shore to conduct a boating safety inspection. Officer Infante conducted field sobriety tasks on the individual that revealed the operator's normal faculties were impaired. The individual was arrested for BUI and Highlands County Sheriff's deputies transported him to jail.

Officer Adams responded to a boating accident with injuries involving two personal watercraft. The accident occurred on Lake Isis in Avon Park. He is conducting an ongoing investigation.

During the Memorial Day weekend, Officer Infante and Lieutenant Fugate were patrolling Lake June's busy sandbar. One evening, they stopped a pontoon vessel with

nine people on board who had been drinking throughout the day, including the captain. Seated field sobriety tasks were administered on the captain of the vessel and he was determined to be impaired. Officer Infante transported the individual to the Highlands County Jail where he provided a breath sample of .144, almost twice the legal limit.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on water patrol near Beer Can Island, Lieutenants Laskowski and Van Trees stopped a vessel for a boating safety inspection. After completing the vessel inspection and noticing some indicators of impairment, Lieutenant Laskowski asked the operator to do some seated field sobriety tasks to make sure he was okay to drive the vessel. The tasks revealed the operator was impaired and he was then arrested for BUI. The operator refused to give a sample of his breath to determine his breath alcohol content and was transported to and booked into the Hillsborough County Jail.

While on foot patrol at Cypress Point Park in Tampa, Lieutenant Van Trees saw three individuals wade fishing just off the beach. He watched them from a concealed position and waited for them to return to the beach. When the men began to pack up their belongings, he approached the subjects and identified himself, at which point one subject threw a bait bucket down off the seawall and out of sight. When asked if they caught any fish, the subjects said they did not have any. When asked about the bait bucket that was thrown down, the subjects said it just had bait in it. An inspection of the bait bucket revealed an 11-inch spotted sea trout and stone crab inside. The subject with the bait bucket was cited for possession of undersized spotted sea trout and possession of out-of-season stone crab, and warned for possession of whole stone crab and possession of undersized stone crab.

LEE COUNTY

While on patrol around the boat ramp at Pineland Marina, Officer Hardgrove saw a vessel pull up to the dock and moor up. Upon approaching the vessel, he asked the captain if they had any fish on board. The captain responded that they had some grunts, snapper and grouper on board. Three gray triggerfish, all of which were under the legal minimum length of 14 inches fork length, were found. The captain was issued a notice to appear for possession of undersized gray triggerfish and possession of out-of-season gray triggerfish.

While on patrol at the Punta Rassa Boat Ramp, Officer Hardgrove saw a vessel pull up to the boat ramp dock and moor up. A resource inspection revealed five gray triggerfish, all of which were under the legal minimum length of 14 inches fork length. The captain was issued a notice to appear for possession of undersized gray triggerfish and possession of out-of-season gray triggerfish.

Officer Hardgrove was patrolling the boat ramp at Pineland Marina when he saw a vessel pulling up to the dock and mooring up. A resource inspection of the cooler revealed an undersized gray triggerfish and two undersized yellowtail snapper. The

subjects were both issued a notice to appear for possession of undersized gray triggerfish, possession of out-of-season gray triggerfish, and possession of undersized yellowtail snapper. Additionally, both subjects were issued written warnings for not having valid saltwater fishing licenses.

MANATEE COUNTY

While Officer Davidson and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol around Long Boat Pass, they stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel transiting the pass. The vessel had numerous safety violations and the operator was also found to be in possession of cannabis. The operator was given warnings for his safety violations and a criminal citation and court date for the possession of cannabis.

Officer Dalton had just returned to his patrol truck from a day of water patrol when he got a call from dispatch, who advised him that an individual on Long Boat Key was keeping snook off the beach. The subject was in possession of two undersized and out-of-season snook. Officer Dalton cited the subject criminally for possession of snook out of season, and gave him a warning for over the bag limit of snook and undersized snook. The subject must appear in court for his violation.

Officers Dalton, Davidson and Lieutenant Hinds responded to a fight that broke out on the sand bar in front of Jew Fish Key. The three officers, with the help of Long Boat Key Police Department and the Manatee County Sheriff's Department, broke up the fight and arrested two of the instigators. While breaking up the fight, Officer Davidson was shoved by both subjects, and a sixteen-year-old girl was struck in the face by one of the subjects. Subsequently, the two men were charged for battery on a Law Enforcement Officer, resisting, causing an affray, and the one subject that struck the sixteen-year-old was charged with child abuse. Both were taken to jail.

PINELLAS COUNTY

While on land patrol in Tierra Verde, Officer Bibeau saw a group of individuals that were actively fishing from the seawall. At the conclusion of a resource inspection, he located a 12-inch gag grouper. Officer Bibeau wrote one of the individuals a citation for possession of undersized and out-of-season gag grouper.

Officers Burks and Smith were on patrol in full uniform and utilizing an unmarked vessel during the Memorial Day weekend. The officers inspected numerous boats for fishing and boating safety violations. They also arrested two operators for BUI.

While on water patrol at Bunces Pass, Officers Martinez and Pettifer conducted a resource inspection on a vessel that was returning from offshore. The operator of the vessel advised he only had lane snapper on board. Officer Martinez requested to see his fish; at which point the operator opened the cooler revealing a gag grouper. The grouper was out of season and undersized. After being read his Miranda Rights, the

operator admitted to catching the grouper and knowing the rules. The subject was cited accordingly for his violations.

Officers Pettifer, Alvis, Bibler and Enos were on water patrol when they received a call from St. Petersburg Police Department about an intoxicated operator at the Maximo Boat Ramp. Officer Pettifer approached the subject and asked the subject if he would do seated field sobriety tasks since he had reason to believe he was impaired. The subject became belligerent with the officers and, while falling over, continued to refuse to complete any sobriety tasks. The subject was placed under arrest and refused to give a sample of his breath to determine his breath alcohol content. The operator was booked into the Pinellas County Jail for BUI.

While on foot patrol at the North Skyway Fishing Pier, Officer Bibeau contacted two individuals that were actively fishing to conduct a fisheries inspection. The two subjects told the officer that they didn't have any fish and had only been fishing for a little bit. Officer Bibeau asked to look inside the trunk of their vehicle since he saw one individual place something in the trunk and close it prior to the inspection. The subjects permitted Officer Bibeau to inspect the vehicle and, after the inspection, he found a 16-inch gag grouper. One of the subjects admitted to catching the grouper and was given a misdemeanor citation for the violations.

Officer Bibeau was on land patrol near the North Skyway Fishing Pier when he saw two individuals that were actively spearfishing along the shoreline. Officer Bibeau watched the individuals from a concealed location and contacted them as they returned to their vehicle to conduct a fisheries inspection. After the inspection, Officer Bibeau found one of the subjects to be in possession of a 23-inch cobia. Officer Bibeau wrote the subject a misdemeanor citation for the fisheries violation.

While on water patrol near Tierra Verde, Officer Bibler saw a jet ski violating a slow speed zone. Officer Bibler initiated a stop to address the violation and noticed the operator was quite nervous. It was found that the operator had an out-of-county warrant and was booked into the Pinellas County Jail.

POLK COUNTY

Officer Carter was patrolling the Winter Haven Chain of Lakes during the Memorial Day weekend when he saw a vessel try to leave Lake Howard with the vessel still anchored. During a vessel stop, signs of impairment were evident. After conducting field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for BUI.

Officers Earls and Young were patrolling Lake Shipp during the Memorial Day weekend when they saw a vessel with a navigation light violation. During a vessel stop, signs of impairment were evident. After conducting field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for BUI.

Lieutenant Brooks and Detective Farrell of the Polk County Sheriff's Office were on water patrol during the Memorial Day weekend when they saw a vessel with improperly spaced registration numbers and no boating safety decal. Lieutenant Brooks and Detective Farrell conducted a vessel stop and saw signs of impairment. After conducting field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for BUI.

RESCUES

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Lieutenant Fugate, Bontrager, Brooks, Officers Cloud, Smith and Stephens responded to Lake June to search for a missing person who disappeared while swimming. The Southwest Dive Team responded to assist Highlands County Dive Team on searching for the missing swimmer. Using the sector scan sonar, the dive team recovered the missing swimmer. A Highlands County Sheriff's deputy is conducting the death investigation.

LEE COUNTY

Over the Memorial Day weekend, officers and investigators responded to a single-vessel boating accident that occurred on the Caloosahatchee River, resulting in serious injuries. The vessel was coming up on a plane in the Caloosahatchee River near Jaycee Park when the vessel abruptly turned hard to the side causing the operator and one passenger to be ejected into the water. The injured parties were transported to a local hospital. This is an active and ongoing boating accident investigation.

During the Memorial Day weekend, officers and investigators responded to another single-vessel boating accident that occurred on the Caloosahatchee River, also with serious injuries. The vessel struck the fender system of the Midpoint Bridge, ejecting two juveniles. Both juveniles were recovered from the water and all injured occupants were transported to a local hospital for evaluation. One of the passengers, a juvenile, was pronounced deceased at the scene. This is an active and ongoing boating accident investigation.

POLK COUNTY

Lieutenant Brooks and Detective Farrell of the Polk County Sheriff's Office were on water patrol during the Memorial Day weekend when they received a request to assist with a subject making suicidal threats and attempting to drown himself on Lake Fox. Lieutenant Brooks and Detective Farrell recovered the subject from the water and the subject was Baker Acted.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

PASCO COUNTY

During the Memorial Day weekend, officers provided an enhanced presence in the Pasco County area by checking numerous vessels for boating safety compliance. The officers also assisted with the arrest of an impaired vessel operator, and responded to the report of a stolen vessel that occurred on Anclote Key Preserve State Park.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

LEE COUNTY

K-9 Officer Collazo and Officer Stanley participated in an outreach event at St. Michael's School in Fort Myers. Officer Collazo conducted a K-9 demonstration and Officer Stanley spoke about the Burmese Python population in South Florida. K-9 Rosco was popular with the students and a 10-foot Burmese Python was brought in as an aid for the talk about non-native species.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Tarr saw a group of individuals fishing from Highway US 27. While performing a fisheries inspection, one of the individuals was found to have four warrants out of Broward County. The subject was arrested and booked into Broward County Jail.

MARTIN COUNTY

While on foot patrol at a boat ramp, Officer Morrow and Investigator Patterson encountered a subject who was driving erratically through the parking lot, nearly striking a truck with vessel in tow. The officers initiated a traffic stop, at which time the subject appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. Following completion of field sobriety tasks, the subject was then transported to the Martin County Jail. He provided a breath sample and was determined to be over twice the legal limit. The subject was charged with DUI.

During a routine traffic stop, Officer Morrow detected the odor of marijuana emitting from inside the vehicle. Upon being questioned about the odor, the subject admitted to possession and indicated he had marijuana in the vehicle. Officer Morrow then located two large containers of marijuana, weighing 79.4 grams, a scale, and a grinder. The subject was charged accordingly and the illegal items were seized and placed into evidence.

While conducting fisheries inspections at the Stuart Causeway, Officers Morrow and Cobo encountered a subject who was found to have multiple warrants out of two

counties for charges ranging from burglary to reckless driving. The subject was taken into custody and booked into the Martin County Jail without incident.

Officers Morrow and Cobo responded to a report of a subject who was illegally harvesting undersized snook. The reporting party stated that the subject had left the area, but provided the license plate number of the suspect. Officer Morrow then responded to the subject's residence where she saw the subject unloading the back of his pickup truck. While speaking with the subject, Officer Morrow heard a loud thumping sound coming from the back of the subject's vehicle, consistent with the sound of a fish out of water. She then asked the subject about what fish he had in his possession, and the subject walked to the bed of his truck and removed a sheepshead (which was determined to be undersized) and a sand perch. Officer Morrow then inspected the bed of the truck and saw two, 20-inch snook covered in sand in a plastic bag. The subject was then issued three misdemeanor citations for two counts of undersized snook and one count of over the bag limit of snook, and three warnings for an expired fishing license, an expired snook stamp, and an undersized sheepshead. The illegal fish were seized and returned to the resource.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officers Allen and Keen found a boat moored near E-Lock on the Kissimmee River and encountered three subjects trespassing and fishing on the lock. Two of the subjects stated they were in their boat and saw the third subject catching sunshine bass from the lock and could not resist trespassing on the lock themselves to catch the fish. All three were issued notices to appear in court for trespassing on a South Florida Water Management District Water Control Structure.

Officers Allen and Keen checked three subjects fishing near the Okee-Tantie Boat Ramp. One of the subjects stated he had caught some fish and indicated they were in a cooler in his vehicle. Officer Allen inspected four black bass in the cooler and found two that were 19 inches long and one that was 22 inches long. The daily bag limit for bass 16 inches or greater is one. The subject received a notice to appear in court for the violation.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

While on patrol in western Broward/ Palm Beach County, Officer Tarr saw an individual stop on a levee, pull a rifle from the back of his vehicle and discharge several rounds into a canal system in the direction of US 27. Officer Tarr stopped the individual and an inspection revealed an AK 47 assault rifle. The individual who discharged the rifle was arrested and booked into the Belle Glades Jail on charges of public discharge of a firearm and exhibiting a firearm in a careless manner. The assault rifle, a 30-round magazine and 9 rounds of ammunition were seized as evidence. The subject was also a convicted felon out of Georgia and an additional charge of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon was later filed with the state attorney's office.

Officers Spradling, Godward and Mclendon patrolled from Peanut Island to the Boynton Beach Inlet over the holiday weekend. The officers performed search and rescues, assisted a swimmer in distress, rescued people from an overturned jet ski and issued numerous boating safety and resource citations/warnings.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Investigator Turner conducted patrols at the Fort Pierce Inlet State Park. During the 3-day holiday weekend, he issued 2 resource-related warnings, 12 traffic-related warnings, 20 traffic-related citations, 1 arrest for operating a motor vehicle with no driver's license, 1 arrest by active warrant, 2 arrests for possession of marijuana less than 20 grams and 2 arrests for possession of drug paraphernalia.

RESCUES

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Alford saw a female subject on the side of Highway 27 at Lake Harbor with her two young children. The woman was pulling her children in a wagon and was visibly in distress. Officer Alford pulled over to see if he could be of assistance. The family had no water and was walking to Belle Glade. Officer Alford provided water and had the children sit in his truck to cool off while he talked with their mother. The female subject had already called 911 due to fatigue and a deputy was in route. Officer Worrell arrived to assist. Officers Alford and Worrell assisted the Palm Beach County deputy in transporting the family to Belle Glade.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

PALM BEACH COUNTY

At the annual Palm Beach County A.S.I.S. Law Enforcement Awards banquet, Duty Officer Brianne Muniz was nominated for and won the Christine Braswell PEERS Award (in honor of the Delray Beach Police Officer that was killed in April). Brianne was accompanied to the event by Captain Ardelean and Lieutenant Haworth. Every state and local law enforcement agency in Palm Beach County was represented, with more than 500 people in attendance. It was an outstanding honor for Duty Officer Muniz and the FWC.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Barringer and Lieutenant Mahoney conducted a fisheries and boating safety inspection on a vessel in Gordon's Pass. During the inspection, multiple boating safety equipment violations were found. A resource inspection revealed six undersized gray (mangrove) snapper. The average size of snapper was around eight inches in total length. Multiple citations were issued and the mangrove snapper were released alive.

Lieutenant Shea was conducting resource patrol near Tiger Tail Beach, in Marco Island, when he saw subjects fishing with cast nets near the mangroves. As he watched, two of the subjects produced a monofilament entanglement net (gill net) and began working the area. Lieutenant Shea requested backup units and Lieutenants Sushil, Bulger, Officers Johnson, Lugg and Osorio responded to the area. Lieutenant Sushil captured photos of the subjects working the illegal net, but when the subjects were detained on the beach, they did not have the net in their possession. Lieutenant Bulger and Officer Lugg began searching the area, and located the net partially submerged in knee-deep water. The illegal net and 10 mullet were seized as evidence and the subjects were cited accordingly.

Officers Yurewitch, Plussa, and Kleis were conducting holiday weekend water patrol near Marco Island and saw a pontoon vessel drifting in Marco River with multiple people in the water. They conducted a vessel stop on the rental vessel and found multiple safety violations regarding safety equipment. Rental companies failing to equip vessels properly and failing to provide adequate pre-ride instruction as to their use are both misdemeanor criminal violations in the State of Florida. Officers followed the vessel back to the livery (rental facility) and discussed the violations with the owner. Officer Yurewitch issued him a combination of citations and warnings for the violations.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Officers concentrated their efforts on boating safety over the busy Memorial Day holiday weekend. They collectively issued 262 uniform boating citations, 184 warnings, 48 citations, 10 misdemeanor citations and arrested 15 suspects for BUI. In addition, the officers worked 12 boating accidents over the weekend and were an integral part of the marine security detail for the Miami Beach Air and Sea show.

MONROE COUNTY

Investigative Lieutenant Peters and Investigator J. Munkelt were on routine plain-clothes vessel patrol when they saw a subject snorkeling in the water without a dive flag and with a spear gun in an area where spearfishing is prohibited. Investigator. D. Munkelt and Resource Protection Officer (RPO) Garrison were also in the area on plain-clothes vessel patrol. RPO Garrison was dropped off on shore out of the subject's sight. The subject in the water passed a bag up to a subject on land. RPO Garrison met the subjects in the parking area and gained consent to search the cooler. The subjects possessed 5 out-of-season, undersized, and wrung Spiny Lobster tails. One of the lobster tails had a puncture mark consistent with it being speared. The cooler also

contained 3 oversized speared angelfish and 3 oversized speared parrotfish. RPO Garrison issued them citations accordingly.

Investigator Adams and Officer Wagner were on water patrol in an unmarked vessel when Investigator Adams saw an individual snorkeling near the shoreline without a dive flag. Investigator Adams dropped Officer Wagner on land around nearby so he could conduct a resource inspection. Officer Wagner inspected the cooler and found a bag with four speared lobster. The individual was issued four criminal charges for undersized lobster speared out of season and not using a measuring device. He was also issued three citations for no licenses and no dive flag.

Investigator Munkelt and RPO Garrison were in plain clothes at the Channel 5 Bridge as they watched a group of people snorkeling. RPO Garrison saw an individual exit the water carrying a silver-handled, green mesh net containing wrung lobster tails. Once onshore, he watched the man walk behind some mangroves and place the net under a wooden plank in the rocks. After retrieving the mesh bag, RPO Garrison found 12 undersized, wrung lobster tails and placed the subject under arrest and transported him to Monroe County Jail in Marathon. He was charged with possession of 12 spiny lobster out of season, possession of 12 wrung tails on the waters of the state and possession of 12 undersized lobster.

Officers Richards, Mattson and Foell were on board the OPV *Interceptor* patrolling off shore south of Big Pine Key when they stopped a commercial trap boat with stone crab traps on board. During a fisheries inspection, the officers located out-of-season stone crab, noted improper vessel identification markings and confirmed the vessel did not have authorization to possess stone crab traps on the water and out of season. The subjects were cited and booked into the Monroe County Jail.

Officers Hettel and Way were called by dispatch to assist an Animal Control Officer and the Director of the Florida Keys Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to assist them with a case in the Key West area. The officers met with and took them out to check on a dog and cat that were left on a vessel. The man on board was arrested for 4 misdemeanor counts of cruelty to animals.

Officers Baumgartner and Schroth responded to Carysfort Lighthouse after hearing the report of a vessel collision over VHF radio. Witness statements from all parties involved concluded that the operator of a 35-foot Rampage yacht was pulling anchor when the operator left the vessel's helm while the vessel was still in reverse. The operator's actions resulted in the Rampage colliding with two vessels at anchor, a 43-foot Azimut and a 31-foot Boston Whaler. Both vessels at anchor had swimmers in the water at the time of the collision. No injuries were sustained, and the operator of the Rampage was cited for multiple violations.

Officer Baumgartner and Lieutenant Haney were on patrol at Whale Harbor when they noticed a vessel plowing off the stern of an FWC patrol vessel in a restricted area. The officers conducted a vessel stop and a boater safety inspection, and the operator

indicated significant signs of impairment. Field sobriety tasks were conducted and the operator was arrested for BUI with normal faculties impaired. The operator refused a breath test and was cited for BUI and other boating safety violations. The operator was transported to the Plantation Key Jail.

RESCUES

COLLIER COUNTY

While working in Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park on Memorial Day, Lieutenant Mahoney was approached by a frantic man stating his four-year-old cousin had been missing from the family picnic area for at least thirty minutes. After gathering the information for the missing child, park staff and the Collier County Sheriff's Office were notified of the incident. Just as the search began, the Collier Sheriff's Department received a report that a beach goer found a child at a resort approximately two miles away matching the description of the lost child. The officers responded to the location and determined that he was the missing child. After assessing his condition, he was reunited with his family in the state park. The entire family was thankful for the quick response and efforts made to safely return the child to them unharmed.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Baumgartner and Schroth were traveling north through Grouper Creek when a flats boat flagged them down. The flats boat stated there was a vessel that had just crashed into the mangroves. The officers searched the creek and located the vessel that crashed. The wreck caused the vessel to enter approximately 25–50 feet back into the mangroves. The operator sustained head injuries and was transported to shore and to EMS. On shore, the operator advised the officers that his dog was still on board the vessel. The officers returned to the scene and crawled through the mangroves and safely recovered the dog, later reuniting it with his owner at the hospital.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Rubenstein and Piekenbrock assisted the turtle hospital in honor of National Turtle Day with the release of "Don," a Loggerhead Sea Turtle. The turtle was previously rescued in Vaca Cut in Marathon with tangled fishing line on his flippers. Don was rehabilitated at the Marathon Turtle Hospital until he was ready to be returned to his home in the ocean. He was released off the Sombrero Beach in Marathon.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube taught the “BOAT SMART” Boating Course, along with members of the USCG Islamorada. Officer Dube taught the law portion of the course in addition to giving a presentation on the core missions of the FWC. As always, Officer Dube gave recruiting information for the FWC and had a couple of students that were interested. There were approximately 30 students in attendance.

Officers Sapp, Mobley and Carroll participated with a Career Day event at Stanley Switlik Elementary School in Marathon. The officers spoke with over 100 students in grades K-5 about FWC’s core missions, why it’s important to protect our state’s natural resources, and how to be safe on the water. The students were entertained with some of our equipment as well as baby alligators.