

FWC
Division of Law Enforcement



Weekly Report
July 7, 2017 through July 13, 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

HOLMES COUNTY

Environmental Investigator Brown, while off duty, received a call from a Commander of a local Sheriff's Department. His deputy was out on a traffic stop in a remote part of the county with a fuel tanker suspected of dumping waste fuel. The deputy had not made an environmental stop before and needed guidance. Investigator Brown provided the deputy with advice and instruction on interviewing the driver, collecting commercial documentation, evidence, miscellaneous considerations, and relative charges. Based on this guidance, the deputy obtained the necessary probable cause and made the charge. Investigator Brown later made the necessary contacts with the Department of Environmental Protection, went to the scene, and helped to get the site assessed for any possible cleanup required. Further investigation revealed that the tanker was on the way for repairs to the trailer. The driver admitted to intentionally discharging an estimated volume of 3-15 gallons of fuel to facilitate the repairs.

CASES

BAY COUNTY

Officers Hellett and Alsobrooks were on water patrol near the DuPont Bridge and saw three subjects fishing in a vessel under the bridge. They conducted a resource inspection on the vessel and the subjects were in possession of 29 juvenile red snapper. All three subjects were issued citations for over the bag limit of red snapper and issued written warnings for the undersized violation.

Officers Lipford and Hayes were conducting patrols in Grand Lagoon when they saw a vessel with four people on board violating the posted wake zone. During an inspection of the vessel, it was determined that the operator was impaired and no one on board was over the age of 21. During the field sobriety test, the operator showed multiple signs of impairment. He was placed under arrest for BUI. During the BUI investigation, one of the passengers continually interfered with the investigation and was also placed under arrest. During the arrest, he began to resist and fought with the officers. At the Bay County Jail, the operator refused to provide a breath sample and was charged with BUI, refusal to submit a breath sample, and possession of alcohol under 21 years of age. The passenger was arrested for battery on a law enforcement officer, resisting arrest with violence, possession of alcohol under 21 years of age and interference with an FWC officer.

Officers Basford and Hayes were conducting patrols in Grand Lagoon when they saw a vessel violating the posted idle speed zone. During the stop for the violation, they discovered that the vessel had been fishing for the day. While conducting a resource inspection, the operator of the vessel showed the officers several fish in their fish box. During an inspection of a second cooler that contained mostly bait, the officers found two plastic bags containing fish fillets. The fillets were determined to be gag grouper and gray triggerfish. The operator was issued citations for gag grouper and gray triggerfish not landed in whole condition and possession of gray triggerfish during closure.

Officer Basford was on patrol at Bay Point Marina in plain clothes when he saw a large vessel returning to the dock. After the vessel was secured at the dock, he saw six individuals begin to remove personal gear and fishing gear from the vessel. After a few minutes, he saw an individual come out of the cabin and begin to look up and down the dock. After doing this, the individuals brought two large coolers from inside the cabin of the vessel. Officer Basford walked down the dock and as he approached, he noticed the two coolers contained multiple bags of fish fillets. Officer Leonard arrived to assist and conducted a resource inspection along with Officer Basford. During the inspection, the officers found 211 fish fillets. The fillets consisted of suspected red snapper, gag grouper, red grouper, amberjack, and gray triggerfish. Charges pending will be landing reef fish in other than whole condition, possession of gray triggerfish during closure, and possession of amberjack during closure. Other charges will be pending after analysis of the fillets.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officer Clark saw an individual operating his vessel in a careless manner. The individual had the outboard motor trimmed mostly out of the water revving it up, while several people were standing near the prop. He was attending the Blue Angel Air Show and was attempting to leave the area. Officer Clark stopped the vessel and immediately noticed signs of impairment from the operator. The operator agreed to perform several field sobriety tasks. He performed poorly on these tasks and was arrested for BUI. The

operator gave a breath sample of more than double the legal limit. Officer Clark transported the individual to the Escambia County Jail.

Officer Bartlett was on vessel patrol providing public safety enforcement at the Blue Angels Airshow when he encountered a highly-intoxicated individual. The officer was concerned for the welfare of the individual and brought him to the nearest dock and instructed him to stay on land. Within a few minutes, Officer Bartlett saw the same individual attempting to swim across a vessel channel, barely keeping his head above water, obviously struggling to stay afloat. The officer quickly reacted and rescued the individual. For the welfare of the individual, the officer arrested him for disorderly conduct and transported him to the Escambia County Jail for processing.

Officer Bartlett was on vessel patrol providing public safety enforcement at the Blue Angels Airshow, when he saw a boat being loaded/trailerred at the 17th Avenue Boat Ramp. The boat speed was too fast causing it to strike the vehicle. The officer approached the operator who showed signs of impairment and was asked to perform field sobriety tasks. Based on the operation of the vessel and the performance of the tasks, the operator was arrested for BUI. The operator refused to provide a breath sample and was transported to the Escambia County Jail for processing.

LEON COUNTY

Investigator James Bryant responded to assist the Leon County Sheriff's Office on a complaint regarding illegal dumping of used tires on Sand Drive in Tallahassee. Upon arrival, they discovered 70 used tires which had been dumped along the roadside bordering the Apalachicola National Forest. Information and a photograph was provided about a U-Haul rental truck leaving the scene. The Sheriff's Office began a search for the vehicle and shortly thereafter, the suspect vehicle was located. Investigator Bryant identified and interviewed the driver who admitted to dumping the tires. The subject was taken into custody and charged with felony commercial dumping over 500 pounds and transported to the Leon County Jail.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Corbin responded to a boating accident that occurred at Liza Jackson Park. The investigation revealed that a personal watercraft (PWC) struck the pier at the park. The impact ejected the operator, who landed on the pier. The operator was the sole occupant on the PWC. The operator sustained a hematoma to her head and spiral fracture to her tibia and fibula. She was transported to a local hospital for treatment. The accident is still under investigation and charges are pending.

Officers Wilkenson and Corbin responded to a boating accident involving a single vessel in Choctawhatchee Bay near Crab Island. Officer Wilkenson determined the rented personal watercraft (PWC) was traveling at an unknown high rate of speed when it struck a wave. The impact caused the operator's and passenger's heads to collide against each other. Both occupants sustained injuries. The passenger was found

unconscious, had water in the lungs causing inflammation, and facial bruising. Both were transported to a local hospital for treatment. The passenger was later admitted.

Officer Nichols was patrolling at Henderson Beach State Park when he received a report of a dog locked in a parked car. The officer located the vehicle and saw the dog in the car and the windows were barely cracked. There was no one around the vehicle and the car owner could not be found. This occurred at 4:00 pm and the outside temperature was about 90 degrees Fahrenheit. The officer pushed the window down enough to unlock the car. The dog displayed signs of heat exhaustion. While the officer was providing the dog with water, the dog owner returned to the vehicle. The dog owner was issued a notice to appear citation for animal cruelty.

Officer Nichols was patrolling the beach at Henderson Beach State Park when he saw several individuals openly consuming alcoholic beverage. The officer approached the individuals and determined they were all under the age of 21. Five individuals were given a notice to appear citations. One of the individuals provided the officer with a false name to hide his age/identity.

Officer Corbin was on land patrol conducting state fisheries inspections in the Destin Harbor, when he saw an inshore charter vessel displaying on the cleaning table what appeared to be undersized red snapper. The fisheries inspection revealed one grossly undersized red snapper. The owner/operator of the charter boat was cited and issued a notice to appear citation.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

While on his way home from working the Blue Angels Air Show, Officer Hutchinson saw a truck being driven erratically and almost causing an accident. He stopped the driver and immediately determined that the man was showing signs of impairment. The man's young son was also in the truck. After field sobriety tasks, Officer Hutchinson determined that the man was under the influence of alcoholic beverages and placed him under arrest for DUI. He later provided a breath sample of .12 g/210L. The man's son was taken to a family member's home.

Officer Mullins and Lieutenant Hahr were patrolling at the Blue Angel Air Show when they were requested to respond to assist Fire Rescue with a vessel that was seen operating in a reckless and erratic manner. As they approached the vessel, the officers saw that the sole occupant was covered in fresh blood and had a partially bandaged hand that was dripping blood. The man told the officers that he had gotten a rope burn on his hand. Due to the amount of blood, the officers requested assistance from EMS. While waiting for them to arrive, they saw multiple indicators of impairment. After EMS bandaged the man's hand properly, Officer Mullins conducted field sobriety tasks and determined that the man was intoxicated. The man was arrested for BUI and later refused to provide a breath sample. After receiving several stitches at the hospital, the man was booked into jail for operating a vessel while normal faculties are impaired.

RESCUES

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Corbin and Wilkenson were on vessel patrol conducting public safety and boating safety enforcement near the Marler Bridge. During a vessel stop, the officers heard people from shore yelling "Lifeguard." The officers quickly noticed two children being swept away by the swift tidal current, taking them further away from shore. The children were struggling to stay afloat and were not strong enough to swim toward shore. As the officers approached, one of the children went under the water and could not be seen. When the child surfaced, Officer Corbin quickly grabbed and pulled the child on the vessel. The second child was quickly taken aboard the vessel. Neither child was injured, just exhausted. Two Good Samaritans noticed the children and were swimming out to their rescue before the officers arrived on the scene. They were also placed on board the officers' vessel, and the children were reunited with their parents.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Officers Greene, Brooks, Baber, Hayes, Walker, Rice and Leonard responded to a search and rescue on Econfina Creek. Eight subjects were lost after tubing down the creek earlier in the day. With help from the Washington County Sheriff's Office and Bay County Sheriff's Aviation Unit, all subjects were located unharmed and taken back to their vehicles.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

FWC officers made several fisheries cases this week. Multiple citations were issued for possession of gray triggerfish, possession of undersized red snapper, possession of red snapper not in whole condition and interference with an FWC officer. The interference charge was made when an individual dumped red snapper fillets overboard as the officer approached.

FWC officers took part in the annual Blue Angels Airshow on Pensacola Beach where approximately 500,000 people attended over the three-day period. FWC officers, along with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and the Escambia County Sheriff's Department, were responsible for waterborne security and all public safety on area waterways during this event. Over the three-day period, FWC law enforcement officers conducted 952 hours of law enforcement patrols, 714 of which were on the water. The officers issued several citations and warnings for boating safety violations, including four BUIs, conducted four boat accident investigations and had numerous public assists and calls for service. At the peak of the event, it was estimated that there were more than 2,500 vessels with over 12,500 people on board, within a ten-square-mile area along Pensacola Beach.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officers Jarvis and Maltais spoke to a group of Junior Lifeguards at Henderson Beach State Park. The officers discussed water safety and the work that FWC officers do on a routine basis. There were 65 kids and 7 lifeguard instructors in attendance.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

CITRUS COUNTY

FWC officers worked the opening of scallop season and the holiday weekend. They checked over 2,000 users which resulted in 18 reckless citations, 3 BUIs and 150 boating safety warnings. There was also one boating accident involving a diver being hit by a passing vessel. The diver was treated at a local hospital and released.

Officer Suttles was on water patrol in Crystal River when he saw a vessel inbound with evidence of having been fishing that day. A fisheries inspection revealed the vessel occupants had harvested nine American red snappers over their bag limit. The nine snappers were seized as evidence. The vessel operator was issued a citation to pay or appear in Citrus County Court.

DIXIE COUNTY

Lieutenant Futch received information that a dog was attacking an injured deer near a road in a subdivision in Old Town. He arrived on the scene and saw a dog standing near a dead, six-point buck. The dog had a collar with the owner's name on it. Lieutenant Futch called K-9 Officer Wiggins to assist with the investigation. The officers back-tracked the deer by blood and determined it was shot almost half a mile away from where it expired. The officers met with the owner of the dog to question him about the incident. He admitted to shooting the deer in the neck with a .22 rifle near his home. He stated when he went to recover it, the deer jumped up and ran off. The man went back to his house and got his dog to trail it. Charges for taking deer out of season and allowing dogs to pursue deer out of season will be direct-filed with the state's attorney office.

DUVAL COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigators Doricchi and Bean conducted a follow-up inspection at a Jacksonville reptile business. After the inspection, the licensee was issued citations for failure to provide clean drinking water, failure to properly dispose of fecal and food waste and possession of venomous reptiles with an expired license. The licensee was

also issued one warning for selling wildlife with an expired License to Possess Class III for Exhibition and/or Public Sale, which allows for the legal possession of Class III wildlife for exhibition or public sale.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officers Robson and Butler were working from a vessel in the Steinhatchee River when they conducted an administrative inspection. Officer Robson determined that the operator appeared to be impaired. Field sobriety exercises were conducted and probable cause was obtained for an arrest. The subject was transported to the Taylor County Jail where a breath test was conducted by Lieutenant Guy. His breath alcohol content (BAC) was recorded at .144.

Investigator McMillan saw a group of people scalloping from a vessel in the Steinhatchee area. While conducting surveillance, he saw the vessel bringing in a limit of scallops to the ramp, offload them and return to the scalloping area. When they returned to the ramp, they were met by Officers Burnsed and Tyler who found them to be in possession of nearly another vessel limit. The appropriate citations were issued after the occupants admitted to “double dipping.”

DUVAL COUNTY

Officers Christmas and Sweat were working a routine patrol checking vessels at Jim King Boat Ramp in Duval County when they saw a vessel operator loading his boat onto the trailer. The officers approached him to do a safety inspection. The operator showed signs of impairment such as having bloodshot, watery eyes, slurred speech and a smell of alcohol on his breath as he spoke. Officer Christmas requested that the operator perform seated field sobriety exercises and the operator performed poorly. The operator was arrested and transported to the Duval County Jail where he blew .115 and .114 BAC on the breath test.

Officer Barry was patrolling the area around White Shell Island when she stopped to speak with an angler. Another angler thought her attention was diverted, reached down, picked up an obviously undersized mangrove snapper and tossed it into the water. Officer Barry questioned the subject who admitted to throwing the fish in the water. He was cited and given a court date for failure to return the food fish immediately to the water since it was not being retained due to the size.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

LEVY COUNTY

FWC Officers Hilliard, Schulz, Starling, Willis, Fox, and Lieutenant Umhoefer, patrolled the Withlacoochee, Waccasassa and Suwannee rivers along with the Gulf of Mexico off the Levy County coast over the four days of the Independence Day holiday. They completed a total of 182 vessel inspections, speaking with 649 people collectively. The

officers issued 80 boating safety and resource warnings and citations, and effected one custodial arrest for BUI. Twenty-nine boating safety compliance decals were issued and 289 waterborne and terrestrial patrol hours were conducted.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Environmental Investigator Conlin investigated a subject who was running an illegal landfill. The subject was burning most of the debris that was coming in and using fill dirt to fill in wetlands. Investigator Conlin obtained an arrest warrant for the subject and a search warrant for the property. With assistance from the Special Operations Group (SOG) and patrol officers, the arrest warrant and search warrant were served and additional evidence was gathered. The subject was booked into jail on charges of felony commercial littering and running an unpermitted landfill. Additional charges for wetland violations may be forthcoming.

PUTNAM COUNTY

Officers Jones and Bernard were conducting a fisheries inspection at Rodman Dam when Officer Jones detected the odor of marijuana emitting from a vehicle. The vehicle's owner initially stated that he had a couple of marijuana cigarettes and, upon subsequent investigation, was found to be in possession of 126 grams of cannabis in various storage containers. The suspect was arrested and charged with possession of cannabis over 20 grams, a felony amount, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officers Lawshe and Meade attended an outreach event at Daytona Public Safety College. They spoke to approximately 30 people on several different topics including what an FWC officer does routinely, hunting and fishing regulations, boating safety and the different types of flotation devices and living with alligators and bears. Officer Lawshe also displayed his agency-issued Pathfinder vessel and discussed the different types of vessels used by our officers.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officers Sehl and Morrison responded to a call about a hit-and-run boating accident. The officers located the vessel and after interviewing the operator, they got enough evidence to determine the man was involved in the accident. The man also showed signs of being impaired and after sobriety exercises, the man was placed under arrest for BUI and failing to report a boating accident. While placing the man in handcuffs, he resisted by pulling his arms away and the officers had to use control techniques to gain compliance. The man was delivered to the Charlotte County Jail where a drug recognition expert identified signs of the man being impaired on narcotics.

DESOTO COUNTY

The Desoto County Sheriff's Office contacted the FWC regarding a vessel accident on the Peace River. Lieutenant Bontrager, Investigator Ervin, Officers Salem and Kobs responded to Lettuce Lake Boat Ramp. Apparently, one subject had fallen from a vessel and suffered injury. The subject was airlifted to an area hospital.

HARDEE COUNTY

Officers Kobs, Franks, and Lieutenant Bontrager saw a vehicle moving slowly down a roadway with a spotlight shining from the driver's side window. After the vehicle stopped in the middle of the roadway, the officers heard what sounded like a gunshot from the same location of the truck. The driver of the truck admitted to shooting a rifle out of the window, but said he was not shooting at any animals. Three loaded rifles were seized from the driver and he was charged with hunting from the roadway and hunting with a gun and light.

LEE COUNTY

Lieutenant Ruggiero was on land patrol at the Cape Coral Yacht Club. He conducted a fisheries and safety inspection on a vessel which had approached the ramp after a rain storm. During the inspection, Lieutenant Ruggiero saw signs of impairment by the operator because he was unsteady, appeared to be experiencing mood swings, and admitted to drinking. The man was later arrested for BUI and delivered to the Lee County Jail where he would not submit to a lawful breath test. He was charged with boating while his normal faculties were impaired and issued a \$500 civil fine for refusing to provide a breath sample.

Officer Perry responded to a report of a person who caught a snook and filleted it. Officer Perry located the person and found the fillets in a cooler. While speaking with the owner of the cooler, it was determined his girlfriend was the subject who caught and filleted the fish. Officer Perry located a picture of the subject posing with the snook at the location. She was issued a citation for possession of a snook during closed season.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officers Dalton, Davidson and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol around Jew Fish Key. While on patrol, they performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel leaving the sandbar surrounding the key. During the inspection, the officers had probable cause to believe that the captain of the vessel was operating while under the influence of alcohol. After the operator performed field sobriety tasks, the officers had enough evidence to place the captain under arrest for BUI and he was taken to the Manatee County Jail.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officer Ludtke and Lieutenant Laskowski were dispatched to Tierra Verde by water to investigate the report of a person stealing items from an anchored sailboat. Upon arriving by vessel, the officers saw an individual in the cabin of a vessel located near the sailboat where the alleged crime occurred. The officers approached the individual who advised he was trying to move and reposition the sailboat, which was marked as derelict, further away from the seawall of an apartment complex at the request of the homeowner's association. No items of value appeared to be taken from the derelict sailboat. The individual provided several spelling variations of his name and gave his middle name as his first name to the officers. Further investigation revealed the individual had two confirmed warrants for his arrest out of Florida. He was transported and booked into the Pinellas County Jail.

While on water patrol near the Skyway Bridge, Officer Bibeau conducted a fisheries inspection on a vessel with five occupants that were actively fishing. After the inspection, Officer Bibeau located two gag grouper which were both 15 inches long. Officer Bibeau read the occupants on board the vessel their Miranda Rights and after a short series of questions, one occupant admitted to catching both grouper. Officer Bibeau wrote the individual a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized gag grouper.

During late-night resource inspections at the Dunedin Causeway, Officers Ferguson and Lieutenant Van Trees checked three individuals to see if they were fishing and discovered they were in possession of drug paraphernalia and a small amount of marijuana. One of the subjects also had an active warrant for his arrest for violation of probation. As the officers were arresting the subject with the warrant, one of the individuals fishing said a man had been harassing them while they fished underneath the bridge. Lieutenant Van Trees went to address the issue with the man and once the subject saw him coming, he threw what was later identified as a prescription pill. Officer Phillippi arrived to help, and it was determined the subject was illegally in possession of a schedule II narcotic. The subject was arrested and became belligerent, yelling racial slurs at an individual, and threatening to hurt people. The subject was booked into the Pinellas County Jail, along with the first subject, for possession of a schedule II narcotic, disorderly intoxication, and threatening harm to a public servant or his family.

POLK COUNTY

While conducting water patrol on the Winter Haven Chain of Lakes, Officers Earls and Tyer saw a PWC operating after legal sunset. Officers Earls and Tyer conducted a vessel stop and saw a 13-year-old operating the PWC, with her father riding behind her. The operator reported that her father had instructed her to operate because he was too drunk to operate. The officers saw signs of impairment with the father and Officer Earls asked the father to complete field sobriety tasks, and he refused. The father was arrested for allowing a person under the age of 14 to operate a PWC and BUI.

Lieutenant Brooks and Deputy Farrell were conducting water patrol on the Winter Haven Chain of Lakes when they saw a vessel with improperly spaced registration numbers. Lieutenant Brooks and Deputy Farrell conducted a vessel stop and saw signs of impairment. Lieutenant Brooks conducted field sobriety tasks and determined the operator was impaired. The operator was arrested for BUI and refused to provide a breath sample.

Officer Carter was patrolling Saddle Creek Fish Management Area when he saw a vehicle in the park during closed hours. Officer Carter contacted the operator of the vehicle and saw signs of impairment. Officer Carter conducted field sobriety tasks and determined the operator was impaired. The operator was arrested for DUI, and refused to provide a breath sample at the jail.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROLS

LEE COUNTY

Officer Furbay conducted speed enforcement in the Lee County panther protection areas. While on patrol, he stopped several vehicles for speed-related violations. The operators were educated on the protection areas and the enforcement resulted in five written warnings and two infractions being issued. The fastest documented speed was 72 miles per hour in the 45 miles per hour zone.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

POLK COUNTY

Officers Kobs, Sweat and Lieutenant Bontrager staffed an FWC-sponsored booth at the Big Buck Expo in Lakeland. Over 15,000 people attended and the officers answered many questions. The new hunting regulations, management area brochures, and fishing regulations were popular items and were handed out at the booth. Officer Cloud and Lieutenant Fugate helped score antler racks that were brought in from those attending the show.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officers Grant and Brock were on vessel patrol in Port Everglades. They conducted a marine fisheries inspection on a vessel coming in from the ocean. Officer Grant issued one individual a criminal notice to appear citation for possession of undersized dolphin. Four dead dolphin were seized as evidence.

Lieutenant Carcasses and Officers Brock, Vacin and Matthews were on patrol near the Las Olas Bridge area of the ICW. They saw fishermen filleting fish at a dock. After approaching the individuals and inspecting the fish, Officer Vacin issued a criminal notice to appear citation for possession of undersized dolphin. Five dead dolphin were seized as evidence.

Lieutenant Laubenberger and Officer Brock responded to a boating accident with injuries at Markham Park. Officers Vacin and Matthews responded to Broward General Hospital to check on the individuals involved in the boating accident. The investigation is ongoing.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

Officers Dial and Toby saw an individual fishing with a cast net on Lake Okeechobee at the Nubbin Slough. The officers conducted surveillance in the area and approached the individual to conduct a resource inspection. The individual went to his vehicle and began leaving the area quickly. Officers Dial and Toby attempted to stop the vehicle for a resource inspection, but the individual sped past the officers despite their attempts. Officers Dial, Toby and Lieutenant Harris located a house near the area where the individual had stopped. The homeowner provided consent to search the property and the officers located a trash can hidden under the home's foundation siding that contained a cast net and twelve game fish, five of which were undersized. The homeowner stated that the individual had stopped by briefly and hid the fish and net. Officers Crosby, Keen, Mclendon and Investigator Lafoy assisted in the investigation which led to the positive identification of the individual. A large rock was located inside the plastic bag with the cast net and game fish, believed to have been included as a tool used to sink the bag into the water to avoid inspection. While conducting the investigation, multiple witness statements were obtained from the homeowner and other fishermen. Additionally, multiple photo lineups were conducted that positively identified the individual. After concluding this investigation, four misdemeanor charges and two infraction charges will be direct filed with the state attorney's office for failure to allow inspection by an FWC officer, resisting without violence, taking freshwater game fish by illegal method, possession of undersized black crappie, expired freshwater fishing license, and driving with a suspended license.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

The FWC responded to the report of a boating accident that occurred at the Lake Worth Inlet. A couple was fishing offshore from the Boynton Inlet to the Lake Worth Inlet. The male fisherman was bringing in the trolling gear before going into the Lake Worth Inlet while his wife maintained control of the boat at idle speed. The fisherman reached toward the water to grab something and fell overboard. His wife attempted to throw him a line and then brought the boat back to him to throw the line again. When her husband sank below the surface, she called 911. A search and rescue by multiple agencies was conducted over a two-day period. The fisherman is still missing.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MARTIN COUNTY

Environmental Investigator Luher and Officer Cobo completed a boating safety talk for a group of approximately 20 Boy Scouts at Jonathon Dickenson State Park. The two reviewed the required safety equipment and other pertinent regulations. The Boy Scouts were camping at the park and learning skills related to outdoor safety.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Yaxley and Kleis saw two individuals fishing the docks behind a condominium complex from a concealed location late at night. The complex and its docks are posted No Trespassing areas. The officers saw the subjects fishing the snook lights for approximately 20 minutes, at which point one of the subjects caught a snook. The officers then watched the subject run with the snook towards a building, and then return to the dock without the snook. Snook season is currently closed, and when the officers searched the area, they found an undersized and out-of-season snook, concealed in the bushes near the building, that had been freshly killed. After speaking with the property manager and explaining the situation, he advised the officers that he wanted to pursue trespassing charges on both individuals. One individual was issued a criminal notice to appear for trespassing and the second was issued a criminal notice to appear for trespass, as well as the snook violation. The snook was seized as evidence.

Officers Barringer and Reams conducted surveillance on a group of fisherman near Doctor's Pass Jetty. During their surveillance, they saw one of the fishermen catch a snook and wrap it in a towel. The snook was placed in a bucket and covered with a cast net. Eventually, the individual left the area and proceeded to a nearby parking area. The officers met the individual as he approached his vehicle to conduct a fisheries inspection which revealed the fisherman in possession of an out-of-season and undersized snook. The fisherman was cited accordingly and the snook was seized as evidence.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Landa and Officer Dunn responded to a complaint regarding the possible illegal possession of wolves. After examining the animals, it was determined the animals were wolfdog hybrids and a license was not required for their possession. While on location, a porcupine was seen in a cage as well. Further investigation revealed the owner of the property was not licensed to possess the porcupine, and the animal was on loan from a licensed individual that was traveling. A citation was issued for the illegal possession and arrangements are being made to return the porcupine to the licensed individual.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Smith concluded an investigation regarding the illegal sale of two Class I Gibbon Apes. The investigation revealed an individual licensed to sell the apes sold them to an unlicensed individual. One misdemeanor citation was issued for the illegal sale. The apes were placed at a licensed facility.

Two FWC lieutenants were on patrol near a boat ramp in Miami and stopped 2 PWCs for a boating safety inspection. They determined that the PWCs had been illegally rented and contacted the individuals who rented them. One subject was charged with 5 misdemeanor charges for operating an illegal livery and not complying with the statutory requirements.

An FWC lieutenant was on patrol at a boat ramp in Miami and conducted a vessel stop on a PWC returning to the ramp. His inspection revealed the PWC had the Hull Identification Number altered. The owner was arrested and charged with 8 felonies and 2 misdemeanor charges related to title fraud and altering the serial numbers on the PWC and trailer. The PWC and trailer were seized as contraband and FWC will seek forfeiture.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Piekenbrock and Carroll were on water patrol near Vaca Cut in Marathon and conducted a vessel stop to perform a boating safety and resource inspection. Seven males from out of town (6 from Alabama and 1 from Georgia) were on board. The resource inspection revealed a bag containing 137 out-of-season wrung spiny lobster tails. The officers determined 117 of the out-of-season tails were undersized. Also in the bag were 4 out-of-season stone crab claws, 2 of which were undersized, and 8 reef fish fillets. The men admitted to spearing the lobster, which is an illegal method. The officers searched the house the men were renting nearby and located another 183 out-of-season spiny lobster tails or parts (109 of these were undersized), 1 out-of-season stone crab claw, and 1 undersized black grouper carcass that the men admitted to taking the day before. All 7 individuals were arrested and transported to the Monroe County Jail. Their spear guns and snorkel gear were seized for forfeiture. Each man was charged with 2 third-degree felony counts for more than 100 undersized lobster, 586 first-degree, misdemeanor counts for out-of-season lobster and wrung tails, 14

second-degree, misdemeanor counts for speared lobster, out-of-season stone crab, undersized stone crab, and reef fish not landed in whole condition. The operator of the vessel received an additional second-degree misdemeanor for the undersized black grouper.

Officers Mobley and Garcia were on water patrol near the Whale Harbor Sandbar when they saw a jet ski overturned in the middle of the channel. They saw three males in the water and one subject flipped the jet ski over, climbed on board and switched seats with the original operator. Officers Mobley and Garcia activated their blue lights to conduct a vessel stop. The jet ski came on plane and rolled over again. Once alongside, they saw signs of impairment from the original operator and the operator at the time of the stop. After conducting a BUI investigation, both operators were arrested for BUI and transported to Plantation Key Jail.

Officer Rubenstein watched 3 individuals fishing from the Bahia Honda Bridge area. Officer Rubenstein watched them harvest what appeared to be 2 undersized schoolmaster snapper and put them on a stringer in the shade. Officer Rubenstein approached the 3 individuals and asked how the fishing was going? They said they had been fishing for a couple of hours and had caught a fish on the stringer. On the stringer were 42 schoolmaster snapper, a barracuda, and a dog Snapper, 33 of which were undersized. The 3 individuals were cited accordingly.

A Monroe County Sheriff's Office Deputy conducted a traffic stop in the southbound lane on US-1 in the Lower Keys. He advised FWC Dispatch that the vehicle had 2 subjects with two endangered Key Deer in the backseat. Deputy Hopp explained that he initiated a traffic stop because the vehicle's tail light was out and when he approached the vehicle, he noticed the deer bound in the back seat. Officers Wagner and Rubenstein arrived on the scene, approached the vehicle and saw two Key Deer "hog tied" with twine in the back seat. The deer had wounds all over their body and head and were struggling to break free. Blood was soaked into the seats and deer hair was heavily scattered throughout. The officers opened the trunk to find a third, bound Key Deer alive inside. The Key Deer were checked out and released, but the buck that was in the vehicle trunk was euthanized after suffering a broken leg. The 2 men were arrested and transported to jail and charged with 3 felonies, 6 counts each for first-degree misdemeanors.

Officer Messier was patrolling south of Sisters Creek in the Atlantic Ocean near Marathon when he conducted a vessel stop with fisherman on board. The men were in possession of 47 dolphin, 44 of which were undersized. The men had no valid fishing licenses on board the vessel and they possessed 17 dolphin over the bag limit. All 3 fisherman were cited for 17 dolphin over the bag limit, 44 undersized dolphin and no saltwater fishing license.

Investigator Hein was on state land patrol when he noticed there was no license plate on a PWC trailer that was being towed. Investigator Hein conducted a traffic stop and determined the PWC to be fraudulent. The owner was arrested and transported to a

detention facility and was charged with numerous felonies and misdemeanors. The PWC was taken as evidence.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube took part in a multi-agency Honor Guard detail to present colors at the Trump National Hotel in Dade County. The detail was for the 65th Annual Chief of Police Conference where agency leaders gather to explore and talk about new methods and ideas for policing in the future.