

FWC

Division of Law Enforcement Weekly Report



June 29, 2018 through July 5, 2018

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

Officers Brady, Gore and Coker were conducting resource inspections in Grand Lagoon when they saw a vessel with nine people on board returning from fishing. The officers conducted a resource inspection of the vessel and found the individuals to be in possession of 21 red snapper. The bag limit for red snapper is two per person so they could only possess 18. The captain of the vessel was issued a citation for over the bag limit of red snapper.

Officers Gerber, Hayes and Coker were conducting resource inspections of vessels returning from fishing when they saw a vessel with two people on board near the Panama City Marina in St. Andrews Bay. The officers conducted a resource inspection of the vessel and found two gray triggerfish. Gray triggerfish season is closed. The captain of the vessel took responsibility for the violation and was issued a citation.

Officers Gerber, Hayes and Coker were conducting boating safety and resource inspections in St. Andrews Bay when they saw a vessel with two people on board approaching the Hathaway Bridge. As the officers approached the vessel from the bow, they activated their emergency lights and siren to signal the driver that he needed to stop so they could conduct an inspection. The operator looked at the officers and continued for about 150 yards before he came to a stop. During the boating safety inspection of the vessel, the officers noticed that the operator was showing signs of impairment. After conducting field sobriety tests, the officers placed the operator under arrest for BUI and transported him to the Panama City Beach Field Office for a breath

sample. The operator refused to provide a sample and was booked into the Bay County Jail.

Lieutenant Allen was conducting resource inspections in St. Andrews State Park of individuals fishing after hours. During one of the inspections, he found one group in possession of a 34.75-inch red drum. Officer Basford arrived to assist with the inspection. One of the individuals took responsibility for the oversized fish and Officer Basford issued him a citation for the violation.

Reserve Officer Cooper was conducting resource inspections in St. Andrews Bay of vessels returning from fishing when he saw a vessel with several people on board returning from the Gulf of Mexico. During a resource inspection of the vessel he found seven gray triggerfish in the fish box. Gray triggerfish season is closed. The captain of the vessel took responsibility for the violation and was issued a citation for possession of gray triggerfish during closed season.

Reserve Officer Cooper was conducting resource inspection in St. Andrews Bay of vessels returning from fishing when he saw a vessel with one person on board returning from the Gulf of Mexico. During a resource inspection of the vessel he found three gray triggerfish in a compartment on the vessel. Each of the three gray triggerfish were less than the 15-inch minimum size requirement and the season is closed. He issued the operator of the vessel a citation for the possession of gray triggerfish during closed season and warnings for possession of undersized gray triggerfish as well as for over the bag limit.

CALHOUN COUNTY

While patrolling on the Apalachicola River, Officers Hayes and Homan checked an individual who had five striped bass. The officers saw a wet cast net and the individual admitted to catching the striped bass with the net. Charges were filed for taking freshwater game fish by an illegal method.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officers Clark, Allgood, Manning and Long teamed up in two vessels to work a saltwater fisheries enforcement detail in the Gulf of Mexico. During their patrol, they discovered two different for hire charter boats fishing in federal waters that did not have the proper licenses. A vessel captain conducting a charter fishing trip in federal waters for reef fish is required to have a federal reef fish permit. In addition, one of the charter vessels possessed two king mackerel, which requires a separate permit to possess a coastal migratory species on a for hire vessel. Three federal citations were issued for the violations.

Officer Allgood and Captain Glover were on vessel patrol in the Gulf of Mexico south of Pensacola when the officers arrived on an artificial reef where several vessels were fishing. One of the vessels in the group noticed the officers approaching and attempted

to leave the area. As Officer Allgood approached the vessel, the operator spun his vessel around to attempt to conceal the left side of the vessel. Officer Allgood maneuvered his patrol vessel to the left side of the subject's vessel and Captain Glover boarded the vessel. Captain Glover saw an amberjack laying on the deck of the boat which is currently closed for harvest. After inspection of the fish box, Captain Glover found another undersized amberjack on board the vessel. The operator was issued two federal citations for amberjack out of season and not landing fish in whole condition.

Officer Long was on vessel patrol and stopped a vessel for violating the wake zone near Galvez Landing. After a boating safety inspection, Officer Long noticed several fish tails protruding from the cooler on the vessel. A fisheries inspection revealed that the operator was in possession of five king mackerel, two over the daily bag limit. The operator was issued a citation for over the bag limit of king mackerel and violation of the idle speed zone.

JACKSON COUNTY

Officers Forehand and Scott were conducting boating safety vessel patrols on Merritts Mill Pond. As they neared one of the boat ramps, a vessel pulled alongside them and the operator asked if they would like to race. The officers noticed the operator's speech was slurred and they smelled the odor of an alcoholic beverage. The officers conducted a boating safety inspection and BUI investigation. The officers administered field sobriety tasks and based on the results and other indicators, the operator was placed under arrest for BUI. He provided a breath sample which registered .100 blood alcohol content and .101 blood alcohol content.

Officers Forehand and Scott were on vessel patrol on the Apalachicola River when they saw a person throwing a cast net. When the officers approached, the individual put down the cast net and picked up a fishing pole. The officers located several bream that were harvested with the cast net. The subject was cited for taking freshwater game fish by an illegal method.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Officer Bartlett was on vessel patrol in the Destin Harbor conducting boating safety inspections. The officer received information from the U.S. Coast Guard regarding an ongoing vessel stop they were conducting at the Brooks Bridge. The operator of the vessel had shown signs of impairment. After arriving on scene, Officer Bartlett established communication with the operator. He saw the operator's speech was slurred and was having a tough time understanding his questions. The operator had difficulty in completing the vessel safety inspection and performed poorly on field sobriety tasks (FST). The operator was arrested for BUI and provided two breath samples resulting in a 0.170 blood alcohol content and 0.167 blood alcohol content. The operator was transported to Okaloosa County Jail.

Officers Pifer and Jernigan were on vessel patrol conducting boating safety inspections in the Destin/Crab Island area. The officers saw a 24-foot vessel with four individuals on board on the southeast side of Crab Island towards the Marler Bridge drifting with the outgoing tide. They saw the vessel for several minutes as it continued to drift closer and closer to the bridge and saw the operator stumble twice. The starboard side of the vessel struck the bridge and the four individuals on board began to push the vessel away from the bridge. A vessel stop was initiated to conduct a boating safety inspection and determine if their vessel sustained any damage. Officer Pifer contacted the operator and immediately noticed his speech was slow and slurred and his eyes were glassy. The officer saw a large trash bag behind the helm full of empty beer cans. During the boating safety inspection, the operator was unsteady on his feet and was unable to locate the requested PFDs despite them laying on the deck of the vessel. After the field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for BUI. The operator provided two breath samples resulting in 0.178 blood alcohol content and 0.182 blood alcohol content. The operator was transported to Okaloosa County Jail.

Officers Wilkenson, Jarvis, and Corbin were on vessel patrol in Destin/Crab Island area conducting boating safety and resource inspections. The officers saw a pontoon style vessel leaving the south side of Crab Island with fishing equipment displayed. The vessel had seven subjects on board. As the officers pulled their patrol vessel alongside the pontoon, the operator was instructed to put the throttle of the vessel in neutral. The operator was slow to respond, looked in the officers' direction and appeared dazed. Officer Jarvis conducted the boating safety and resource inspection and noticed an open can of beer next to the operator. He asked if they had been fishing and they stated no. He asked to look inside the cooler and found bottles of water and wine. The operator agreed to perform field sobriety tasks (FST). After the FSTs, the operator was arrested for BUI. The operator refused to provide a breath sample. He was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail.

Officer Corbin and Lieutenant Hahr were on vessel patrol in Destin/Crab Island area conducting boating safety and resource inspections. The officers saw a vessel in violation of the idle speed, no wake zone on the south side of the Destin Bridge, traveling east toward the Destin Harbor. The vessel was being operated on full plane and the officers instructed the operator to slow down. The operator ignored the officers' instructions and after continued instruction to slow down the operator complied. In a short period of time, the operator pushed the throttle forward and continued to violate the idle speed, no wake zone again. The officers stopped the vessel to address the violation. They instructed the operator to place the vessel's throttle in neutral. The operator looked at the officers and continued the vessel's travel into the Destin Harbor. The operator was again instructed to place the throttle into neutral and he complied. While pulling alongside the vessel, the operator stood up and moved to a different seat. A female subject moved to the captain's seat. When the officers addressed the idle speed, no wake violation, the operator denied he was driving the boat. Throughout the safety inspection, the operator was unsteady on his feet, losing his balance and bracing himself against objects to regain and maintain his balance. The operator performed field

sobriety tasks and was arrested for BUI. The operator refused to provide a breath sample. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Lieutenant Hahr was on vessel patrol on the Blackwater River when he stopped a vessel to address a violation of registration numbering. The subject was operating the vessel with a woman and child on board. Lieutenant Hahr saw indicators of impairment from the operator and after field sobriety tasks, determined that the operator was impaired. The man was arrested and cited for operating a vessel while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

DUVAL COUNTY

An officer with FWC's Resource Protection Unit followed a subject transporting saltwater products in the back of a truck across town and conducted surveillance as fish were off-loaded at a Jacksonville Beach restaurant. When two trays of fish were taken into the kitchen, the officer entered and determined that 17 African pompano were being sold by a man who had no saltwater products license or federal fishing permits. An inspection of the truck revealed another 24 African pompano and seven cobia. The man buying the fish for the restaurant admitted to being aware of the license requirements and was cited accordingly. The man selling the fish was cited for license violations and possession limit violations for the fish. Five cobia and 37 African pompano were seized.

Officer Christmas was working boating under the influence violations and encountered a vessel operator exhibiting signs of impairment. The operator had a strong odor of an unknown alcoholic beverage on his breath, his eyes were bloodshot and watery and his speech sounded slurred at times. Officer Christmas advised the subject of his rights per Miranda and requested he take field sobriety exercises. The operator agreed and based on the signs of impairment and his poor performance on the field sobriety exercises, was arrested for BUI.

Officer Wiggins and K9 Chase participated in a detail called Operation Salty Dog. The detail focused on resource violations onboard offshore vessels, boating safety violations and boating under the influence violations. Investigator Izsak, Lieutenant Bevan, Officers Shearer, Starling, Hoover, and Schirbock also participated in this event. During an inspection of an offshore dive boat, K9 Chase and Officer Wiggins located illegal red snapper fillets hidden in a plastic bag and in a dry bag onboard the vessel. The vessel operator was issued citations/warnings for failure to land reef fish in whole condition. The detail resulted in 7 resource citations, 3 resource warnings, 4 boating safety citations, and 13 boating safety warnings.

The Department of Environmental Protection contacted FWC for assistance after they were notified of an open and uncovered 30-yard roll-off dumpster full of electronic waste (e-waste) behind some Jacksonville warehouses. The dumpster was not watertight and contained cathode ray tubes (CRTs) that if not managed properly, become hazardous waste due to the lead in them. Environmental Investigators Terrones and Starling learned that an e-waste recycler was being evicted and that its owner had filled the dumpster with the e-waste as well as abandoning 47,000 pounds of it in the warehouse. The business owner had accumulated the e-waste for five years, failing to recycle any of the waste as required. An arrest warrant was obtained for improper disposal and storage of hazardous waste, a third-degree felony.

CITRUS COUNTY

Investigator Thomason and Officer Reid were working the fireworks display on Lake Henderson in Inverness. After the completion of the fireworks, the officers were patrolling the area to ensure all the vessels leaving the display were operating in a safe manner. Officer Reid spotted a pontoon boat underway with no navigational lights displayed. A vessel stop was conducted to perform a vessel safety inspection and to address the violation. The operator exhibited signs of impairment and after field sobriety tests, was arrested for boating under the influence. The operator was transported to the Citrus County Detention Center where he provided a breath sample which resulted in a blood alcohol content of .118 and .115.

Officer Reid was on water patrol in the Homosassa River when he saw a canoe that had flipped over. He helped get the canoe righted and noticed a bag containing a green leafy substance attached to one of the PFD's. Officer Reid conducted several tasks and determined that the operator was impaired. The subject was arrested and taken to jail where he provided a sample of his breath at .087. He was also cited for possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

GILCHRIST COUNTY

Officers McDonald and Tyler were on water patrol on the Santa Fe River. They stopped a vessel at the US 129 bridge for violating the idle speed zone. While conducting a boating safety check and running the registration numbers, the vessel was confirmed stolen out of Lafayette County. After a brief investigation, the officers learned the boat was co-owned by the operator's mother and was reported stolen by the co-owner's boyfriend. No charges were filed as it was a civil matter. As the officers were preparing to leave the boat ramp they saw a man fall out of a boat onto the boat ramp. He appeared to be impaired and threw a liquor bottle into the Santa Fe River. The man was approached by Officer McDonald, became confrontational, and refused to obey commands. He was arrested for disorderly conduct, an active warrant, cited for littering and taken to the Gilchrist County Jail for processing.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

CLAY COUNTY

FWC officers and investigators assisted the Clay County Sheriff's Office and the Florida National Guard in the search for a missing army soldier on Camp Blanding. The soldier became lost during a land navigation course and disoriented in the extreme heat and terrain. The soldier apparently succumbed shortly after going missing and was found deceased after three days of searching.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Officers Stelzer, Summers and Mendelson conducted airboat patrols focusing on boating safety. During their three-day patrol effort, numerous violations were addressed. Three different vessel inspections resulted in three arrests for boating under the influence. In one of the cases, a vessel operator provided a breath alcohol sample of more than double the legal limit.

Officer McLendon was given a tip about two subjects hunting in a local wildlife management area (WMA) during the closed season. He followed a vehicle's tire tracks down a closed road and heard the subjects shooting. He waited for the subjects to come out of the closed area and contacted them. The subjects stated that they were hunting hogs and target practicing in the WMA. Officer McLendon issued both subjects a notice to appear for hunting during closed season. The subjects were also cited for driving on a closed road and not obtaining a day use permit.

Officer Stelzer received a tip that a subject with a warrant fled from the sheriff's office near Bull Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Officer Stelzer was in the area approximately an hour later when the subject's vehicle pulled out in front of him. He conducted a stop on the vehicle and confirmed the driver's identity. The subject was arrested and turned over to the Osceola County Sheriff's Office.

BREVARD COUNTY

While on vessel patrol, Officer Dubose conducted a resource inspection on a vessel returning from offshore. During his inspection it was revealed that there were two undersized greater amberjack on board the vessel. A citation was issued for the offense.

While on patrol, Lieutenant Lightsey and Officer Matthews saw a vehicle driving recklessly. The vehicle swerved and ran off the road multiple times. A traffic stop was conducted and the operator appeared to be impaired. The operator performed poorly on

field sobriety tasks and was placed under arrest for driving under the influence. The operator refused to provide a breath sample and was transported to the Brevard County Jail.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Officers Platt and Stephenson stopped to assist with a traffic accident and learned that one of the vehicles had fled the scene. A description of the vehicle was put out on the radio. Officer Marroquin saw the vehicle in Indian River County and conducted a traffic stop. The driver of the vehicle admitted to having been involved in the accident and the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) was dispatched to the scene. FWC dispatch advised the officer that the driver had a federal warrant from the U.S. Marshall Service for violation of probation for bank robbery charges and another warrant out of Orange County. The man was placed under arrest for the warrants and booked in to the Indian River County Jail awaiting extradition to Arizona. Charges are pending on the FHP investigation for hit and run.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officer Haskins was on water patrol in the St. Johns River when he stopped a personal watercraft operating on plane in a slow speed zone. During the stop, Officer Haskins smelled the odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from the operator and noticed signs of impairment. The operator performed standardized seated field sobriety tasks and was arrested for boating under the influence. The operator was transported to the Volusia County Branch Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample.

Officers Sapp and Edson were performing resource inspections in New Smyrna when they encountered two women in possession of several blue crabs and several whole stone crabs during the closed stone crab season. Both were issued citations for possession of stone crab during the closed season and warnings for possession of whole stone crab. The live crabs were returned to the water.

Officers Ward and Pelzel were on water patrol in the New Smyrna Beach area when they stopped a vessel for a boating safety violation. During the stop the officers detected signs of impairment from the operator. The adult operator was arrested for boating under the influence and booked into the Volusia County Jail.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officer Lejarzar was on water patrol when he saw a vessel running with its lights on and then later turn them off. He could see the vessel as it neared his location running on full plane without lights on. Officer Lejarzar stopped the vessel and saw signs that the

operator might be impaired. The man was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and refused to provide a breath sample at the jail.

HIGHLANDS COUNTY

Officer Smith was on water patrol on Lake June and saw a vessel approach the boat ramp to unload a passenger. The vessel operator rammed the dock causing the passengers to lose balance. Once the operator loaded his vessel, Officer Smith conducted a boating safety inspection. He noticed empty alcoholic beverages laying in the bottom of the vessel and both subjects were under the age of 21. While he was conducting a BUI investigation, Lieutenant Fugate spoke with the passenger. Lieutenant Fugate smelled the presence of cannabis on the subject and located a cigarette box containing six cannabis cigarettes. Officer Smith concluded his investigation and placed the operator under arrest for possession of alcoholic beverages under the age of 21 years old. Officer Smith placed the second subject under arrest for possession of cannabis under 20 grams and possession of drug paraphernalia. The vessel operator was cited for possession of cannabis under 20 grams, possession of drug paraphernalia, operation of a vessel with breath alcohol level of .02 or higher and no boater I.D card.

Captain Brooks was conducting water patrol on Lake June when he saw an individual allowing a person under 14 operate a personal watercraft. Captain Brooks conducted a boating safety inspection and found numerous violations. The owner was issued a notice to appear for allowing persons under 14 to operate a personal water craft.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on land patrol near the 78th Street Spillover, Officers Godfrey and Wilkins noticed a car running with its door open. The officers approached and saw a man passed out in the driver's seat. The officers made several attempts to wake the subject. Once awake, they determined that the subject had been fishing. Officer Wilkins saw a pipe commonly used to smoke methamphetamine in plain view. Officer Martinez arrived to assist and after being given consent to search the vehicle, found methamphetamine and THC oil. The subject was arrested for numerous felony drug possession charges and possession of drug paraphernalia.

While on water patrol at the Courtney Campbell boat ramp, Officer Pettifer saw an individual operating a jet ski on plane in a marked idle speed zone. Upon initiating a vessel stop and boating safety inspection, he detected signs of alcohol impairment. Seated standardized field sobriety tasks were conducted and the operator was placed under arrest for operating a vessel while under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the extent that his normal faculties were impaired. He was transported and booked into the Hillsborough County jail where he refused to submit to a breath test.

While on water patrol at the Courtney Campbell boat ramp, Lieutenant Laskowski saw an individual operating a jet ski on plane in a marked idle speed zone. Upon conducting

a vessel stop and boating safety inspection, Lieutenant Laskowski detected signs of alcohol impairment. Seated standardized field sobriety tasks were conducted. After completing the tasks, the operator was placed under arrest for operating a vessel while under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the extent that his normal faculties were impaired. He was transported and booked into the Hillsborough County jail where he refused to submit a breath sample.

Officer Rorer planned and led a targeted enforcement action plan directed at checking local businesses that sell saltwater products for the appropriate licenses and seafood quality control regulations. Officers Messman, Caldwell, LaRosa, Pettifer, Rivard and Lieutenant Laskowski participated in the detail. Several businesses were checked. Three businesses were cited for failure to possess valid saltwater products retail licenses. One business was cited for failure to possess a valid freshwater dealer license. One business was cited for failure to possess and display the required oyster tag with expiration date and attempting to sell oysters past their expiration date. One business was cited for failure to possess valid receipts for red snapper.

While on water patrol in downtown Tampa, Officer Wilkins stopped a vessel that didn't have its navigation lights on to conduct a boating safety inspection and address the light violation. While speaking with the operator of the vessel Officer Wilkins noticed numerous signs of impairment. The operator performed poorly on seated field sobriety tasks and was arrested and booked into the Hillsborough County Jail for boating under the influence.

LEE COUNTY

Captain Carpenter, Lieutenant Spoede, and Officer Winton were on vessel patrol in the Gulf of Mexico offshore of Fort Myers Beach when they stopped a vessel to conduct a boater safety inspection. As they came alongside the vessel, the operator and sole occupant appeared to be falling asleep. Field sobriety tasks were administered and it was determined that the subject was operating a vessel while his normal faculties were impaired. As he was being transported in the patrol vessel, the subject began refusing officer's commands and resisting officers as they guided him to his seat. At the jail the subject provided a breath sample of .095, almost 3.5 hours after the arrest. The subject was booked into the Lee County Jail for boating under the influence and resisting an officer without violence.

Lieutenant Spoede and Officer Winton were on vessel patrol in Matanzas Pass when they noticed a vessel being operated without the required navigation lights. A vessel stop was conducted, at which time the operator exhibited signs of impairment. Field sobriety tasks were administered, and it was determined that the subject was operating a vessel while his normal faculties were impaired. Multiple violations pertaining to registration and safety gear were also discovered. The subject was transported to the Lee County Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample. He was issued multiple boating citations/warnings and booked for boating under the influence.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officers Gonzales, Dalton, Davidson and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol around Long Boat Pass. They noticed a vessel being operated in a peculiar manner and stopped the vessel to perform a boating safety inspection. The operator appeared to be impaired and was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and taken to the Manatee County Jail.

Officer Davidson was on water patrol around Long Boat Pass. While on patrol, he performed a fisheries and boating safety inspection on a vessel coming in the pass. He found that the captain of the vessel had caught and kept one undersized red grouper. The captain was charged criminally with possession of undersized red grouper and will have to appear in court for his violation.

Officer Gonzales was on land patrol around the South Skyway Rest Area. He performed a fisheries inspection on an individual that had been wade fishing in Tampa Bay and found that the subject had caught and kept two undersized red drum. The subject was cited criminally for possession of undersized red drum and given a warning for possession of over the bag limit of red drum. The subject will have to appear in court for his violation.

Officers Gonzales, Dalton and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol around Long Boat Pass. They noticed a small vessel that had numerous passengers aboard and stopped the vessel to perform a boating safety inspection. During the inspection, they noticed that it appeared the operator of the vessel was under the influence of alcohol. Officer Dalton investigated to determine the operator's level of impairment and concluded that he was under the influence of alcohol. The operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and taken to the Manatee County Jail where his blood alcohol level was determined to be over twice the legal limit.

Officers Davidson and Klobuchar were on water patrol around Long Boat Pass. They stopped a vessel to perform a boating safety inspection and noticed that it appeared the operator of the vessel was under the influence of alcohol. Officer Davidson investigated to determine the operator's level of impairment and if the operator should be driving a boat. After the investigation, the operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and taken to the Manatee County Jail.

PASCO COUNTY

Officer Balfour was on land patrol in the Richloam Wildlife Management Area (WMA). While sitting on a closed road, a vehicle drove by and fired shots out of the passenger window in his direction. He attempted to stop the vehicle but it attempted to elude the him. After a short chase, he was able to take the individuals into custody. A search of the vehicle and persons revealed numerous firearms, ammunition, and narcotics, which were seized as evidence. The vehicle driver and one passenger were transported to Pasco County Jail for numerous felony and misdemeanor violations.

PINELLAS

While on land patrol near the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, Officer Martinez saw a fishing vessel with a bright white LED light shining as it operated thru the channel. Officer Martinez followed the light as they continued through the channel and as it arrived at the Maximo Boat Ramp. He contacted the vessel occupants to conduct a resource and boating safety inspection and noticed signs of impairment from the operator. The operator performed poorly on field sobriety tests and was arrested for boating under the influence (BUI). The subject refused to provide a sample of his breath and was booked into the Pinellas County Jail for BUI.

While on patrol near Fort Desoto, Officers Litherland and Bibeau saw an individual load up a kayak in the back of a truck. Upon initiating a resource inspection, the officers found the individual to be in possession of two undersized gag grouper and one undersized mangrove snapper. He was issued a citation for possession of undersized gag grouper and a warning for possession of undersized mangrove snapper.

While on patrol at the Fort Desoto Gulf Fishing Pier, Officer Pettifer conducted several resource inspections. He found two individuals to be in possession of 13 Spanish mackerel and 4 king fish. All the heads had been cut off the fish. The largest king fish measured 12 inches in length. The minimum length to possess king fish is 24 inches. The individuals were cited for possession of undersized king fish and failure to land king fish and Spanish mackerel in whole condition.

While on patrol near the North Skyway fishing area, Officer Pettifer saw an individual fishing from one of the relief bridges. Upon approaching the individual to conduct a resource inspection, he saw a fish wrapped in a towel on top of a cooler. The fish was identified as a red grouper and was 11 inches in length. The minimum size limit to keep red grouper is 20 inches. The individual was cited for possession of undersized red grouper.

While on patrol near the Gandy Bridge, Officer Pettifer saw individuals collecting marine life on the grass flats at low tide. A resource inspection revealed the individuals to be in possession of horseshoe crabs, stone crab claws and undersized sheepshead. The individuals were cited for possession of horseshoe crabs without a saltwater products license, possession of undersized and out of season stone crab claws and possession of undersized sheepshead.

While on land patrol in South Pinellas County, Officers Bibeau and Litherland saw four individuals actively fishing from the shoreline. After watching the subjects fish from a concealed location, the officers contacted the individuals to conduct a fisheries inspection. The officers located a small 12-inch snook. Officer Bibeau read the individuals their Miranda rights and after a short series of questions one of the subjects admitted to catching the snook. Officer Bibeau wrote the individual a misdemeanor

citation for possession of an undersized and out of season snook along with a warning for not obtaining a valid snook permit.

While on land patrol in South Pinellas County, Officers Bibeau and Litherland saw an individual returning to shore in a kayak. The officers contacted the individual to conduct a fisheries inspection. The officers located two undersized gag grouper and one undersized mangrove snapper. Officer Litherland wrote the individual a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized gag grouper and a warning for the other fisheries violation.

While on water patrol near the North Skyway Relief Bridge, Officers Martinez and Bibler along with Lieutenant Rosas saw three males fishing underneath the bridge and approached to complete a resource inspection. Officer Martinez found one of the males to be in possession of 10 whole stone crabs. The crabs were out of season, undersized, and one was an egg bearing crab. The subject who possessed the illegal crab was cited accordingly for his violations.

SARASOTA COUNTY

Officers Sierra and Hudson were on water patrol around Siesta Key. While on patrol, they performed a fisheries and boating safety inspection on a vessel that was engaged in fishing activities. The officers found that one individual had caught and kept 5 undersized mangrove snapper. The subject was cited criminally for possession of undersized mangrove snapper and will have to appear in court for his violation.

Officers Ridgway and Grenz were on water patrol around the Black Burn Point Bridge. They performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel transiting in the bay. During the inspection, the captain of the vessel appeared that he may be under the influence of alcohol. Officer Grenz investigated to determine if the captain was impaired and at that conclusion of his investigation, the captain was placed under arrest. He was taken to Sarasota County Jail for boating under the influence and will have to appear in court for his violation.

Officers Ridgway and Grenz were on water patrol around the Black Burn Point. They performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel that was violating a Manatee Speed Zone. During the inspection, the captain of the vessel appeared that he may be under the influence of either drugs or alcohol. Officer Ridgway investigated to determine if the captain was impaired. At that conclusion of his investigation, the captain was placed under arrest. He was taken to Sarasota County Jail for boating under the influence and will have to appear in court for his violation.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officers Bibeau and Litherland were on land patrol when they received a call about three subjects in distress near Ft DeSoto. The two adults and four-year-old child had been kayaking at the Ft DeSoto Park when they suddenly found themselves in a bad thunderstorm. The subjects became lost as well as frightened due to the lightning and worsening conditions. The officers, along with Pinellas County Sherriff's Office and Fire/Rescue located the subjects hidden in the mangroves. Officer Bibeau made his way to the subjects and carried out the four-year-old girl and kayak to safety.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officers Brock and Fuller while on water patrol encountered a livery (rental) violation for renting PWC's to underage individuals without boater ID cards. The livery operator was issued a citation.

Officer Grant was on water patrol just outside Port Everglades and conducted a resource inspection on two individuals spear fishing off kayaks. She found them in possession of undersized hogfish and mutton snapper. One of the two had an expired saltwater fishing license. Both were issued citations.

Officer Vacin conducted a resource inspection on two charter boats and found one with an expired license. Both vessels were cited for MSD (marine sanitation device) violations; open valves. Both captains were issued citations.

Officers Leathers and Seldomridge were on water patrol when they encountered a boater attempting to maneuver a small power boat onto a trailer at the Mizel Johnson State Park boat ramp. Upon closer investigation, they determined that the individual was under the influence. He was cited for BUI and transported to jail.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Corteguera responded to an animal welfare complaint. After the investigation, one subject was cited with nine criminal charges for failure to allow an inspection, wildlife being kept at an unlicensed location, and other related violations. One raccoon and two foxes were placed at a licensed facility with proper caging. Officer Grant assisted on this incident.

MARTIN COUNTY

Officer Carroll was conducting water patrol around the Stuart Causeway when he saw a personal watercraft on plane in a slow speed zone. He conducted a vessel stop on the vessel and identified the operator. He determined the subject to be impaired and arrested the operator and booked him into the Martin County Jail for boating under the influence and refusal to submit to a lawful test of his breath.

Officers Brevik, Carroll and Hudson were conducting water patrol around the Jensen Beach Causeway. They saw two personal watercraft operating in a reckless manner inside a manatee slow speed zone. The officers saw both vessels operating at high speed close to each other and jumping each other's wakes. They also saw both vessels head straight towards each other and turn at the last second to splash each other. The officers conducted a vessel stop to address the violations. After personal contact and investigation, both operators were found to be operating under the influence of alcohol. Both operators were arrested and booked into the Martin County Jail.

Officer Carroll was conducting water patrol around the Manatee Pocket and Sandsprit Park. He saw a vessel with no all-around navigational light pass by the boat ramp. The operator of the vessel turned around and came back to the dock and tied up right next to Officer Carroll's patrol vessel to inform the officer that he was aware the light was not present. During the encounter, the operator exhibited signs of impairment. Officer Carroll conducted a boating under the influence investigation and found the operator to be impaired. Officer Carroll placed the subject under arrest and processed him into the Martin County Jail for boating under the influence.

Officer Moss was on patrol when he received a call from the Martin County Sheriff's Office. They advised that one of their deputies had stopped a vehicle and found a snook in the trunk of a car. After Officer Moss arrived on scene, he confirmed there was a snook in a bucket of ice in the trunk. The subject advised that he had caught it at Rocky Point with hook and line. The subject received a citation for taking snook out of season.

While conducting water patrol, Officers Morrow and Pecko saw a vessel underway with no name, hailing port, decal, or registration. Upon contacting the vessel owner and operator, Officer Morrow saw that the subject was speaking with slurred speech and had glassy, bloodshot eyes. He conducted a BUI investigation, at which time the subject was placed under arrest for BUI. The subject was transported to the Martin County Jail.

While on patrol, Captive Wildlife Investigator Toby saw a zebra inside of a fenced property and noticed the fence was not sufficient height. During the inspection a large variety of animals were inventoried on the property. Sixteen violations were documented at the facility, mainly consisting of caging violations. Three misdemeanor citations and thirteen warnings were issued. The owner was given 30 days to bring all violations into compliance. Officer Krasco assisted on this incident.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Langley and Mann were on vessel patrol near the Palm Beach Inlet when the Coast Guard alerted them of a vessel returning from the Bahamas with queen conch and skinless grouper fillets. It is illegal to possess both in Florida waters. Officers Langley and Mann stopped the vessel and conducted a fisheries inspection. Skinless snapper and grouper fillets as well as queen conch were found aboard the vessel. The captain of the vessel was cited for the violations.

Officer Norbrothen received information from the Jupiter Police Department (JPD) about a vessel that had struck a channel marker in the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). The collision broke the marker and created a hazard to safe navigation of the ICW. The JPD marine unit was behind the vessel that hit the marker and maintained surveillance of the vessel until FWC's arrival. The subject onboard the suspected striking vessel was interviewed and issued the appropriate citation for violation of a United States Coast Guard navigation rules. Notifications were made to repair the broken channel marker.

Officers Boyd, Trawinski and Defeo were on water patrol in the intracoastal waterway during Operation Dry Water when they stopped a vessel to perform an inspection. The captain of the vessel was in possession of filleted mahi. It is required by law to bring harvested fish to land in whole condition. The captain also failed to carry enough personal flotation devices (PFDs) for each person aboard, which is required by law. The captain received citations for the violations.

Officers Spradling and Godward were on patrol when the USCG contacted FWC dispatch for assistance. Officers Spradling and Godward arrived at the Rivera Beach Marina to find USCG tied up to a center console vessel with 3 occupants onboard. USCG advised the operator almost steered his vessel and occupants straight into a moving cruise ship. Officers Spradling and Godward noticed the operator had a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage emitting from him and had blood shot, glossy eyes. Officer Spradling had the operator perform seated field sobriety tasks. The operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence (BUI) and booked into Palm Beach County Jail.

Officer Brodbeck was on patrol at Phil Foster Park in Riviera Beach conducting resource and license inspections. Multiple individuals were actively fishing from the Blue Heron Bridge. As Officer Brodbeck approached on foot, one subject turned away from the officer and reached into a bucket. The officer gave loud verbal commands to not throw any fish. The subject pulled a fish from the bucket identifiable as an undersized mangrove snapper. Officer Brodbeck again gave loud verbal commands to not throw the fish into the water. The subject threw the fish into the water. As Officer Brodbeck detained the subject for the violation, a second subject who was actively fishing began to walk away. The officer instructed the subject to stop. The subject looked at the officer and continued to walk away. Officer Brodbeck again gave loud commands to stop. The subject looked back at the officer and continued to walk away. The officer sat the first subject on the ground and began to walk after the second subject, at which point the subject took off running. Officer Brodbeck quickly caught up to and detained the second subject. After questioning, both subjects were issued misdemeanor citations for Interference/Obstruction of an FWC Officer.

Officer Brodbeck was on vessel patrol in Jupiter Inlet when he saw a vessel return from offshore with fishing equipment in plain view. A vessel stop was initiated to conduct a resource inspection. Officer Brodbeck asked the vessel operator if any fish were on board the vessel, to which he replied "no." During an inspection of a cooler on the

vessel, the officer located a clear bag with two mutton snapper fillets. Officer Brodbeck issued the operator a misdemeanor resource citation for reef fish not landed in whole condition. The fillets were photographed and seized for evidence.

Officer Brodbeck and Lieutenant Russo were on patrol offshore of Jupiter when a vessel was noticed with no registration numbers displayed. Officer Brodbeck boarded the vessel and while speaking with the operator, detected signs of impairment. The operator agreed to perform seated field sobriety tasks and performed poorly. Officer Brodbeck placed the subject under arrest and transported him to the Palm Beach County Jail. While at the jail, the subject provided breath samples of 0.188 and 0.189 BAC. The subject was cited for BUI.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officer Trawinski responded to a call for service in Riviera Beach. Riviera Beach Police Department requested an officer to catch an alligator that was walking around Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Upon arrival, Officer Trawinski quickly took possession of the approximately 4-foot alligator and relocated it.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

PALM BEACH COUNTY

While conducting resource inspections late at night at Phil Foster Park, Officers Loach and Brodbeck were contacted by an individual who stated that his son and son's friend were approximately 6 hours late returning from a kayak fishing trip to Peanut Island. After collecting information and descriptions of the teenagers and kayaks, the officers contacted USCG and PBSO to assist. Officers Loach and Brodbeck began a search by vessel of Peanut Island while Officer Carroll arrived at Phil Foster to stay in contact with the families. After approximately 2 hours, the teenagers were found in good health and reunited with their families.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Officers Saavedra and Cosculluela saw a center console vessel displaying fishing gear. A fishery inspection revealed the subject to be in possession of 20 fish fillets which were believed to be mahi. The evidence in this case was photographed and returned to water.

Investigator Almagro and Officer Washington were on water patrol in Biscayne Bay near Miami Beach. They saw a jet ski making rapid and aggressive tight turns while circling an 18-foot vessel occupied by eight persons onboard and one person on a floating tube. He was on full plane in very close proximity to the individual lying on the tube. The operator was stopped. Except for the life jacket, none of the minimum safety equipment as required by federal law was on the vessel and the operator did not have his required boating education ID card in his possession. The subject was arrested for operating a PWC recklessly. He was cited accordingly for the safety equipment violations.

Officers Delgado, Saavedra and Dominguez were on patrol around Haulover Inlet. They conducted a fisheries inspection on a white catamaran vessel. The inspection revealed 2 undersized hogfish. The captain was cited accordingly.

Officers Delgado, Saavedra and Dominguez were on patrol in the area 3 miles east of Cape Florida. They conducted a fisheries inspection on a white walk-around vessel. The inspection revealed 1 undersized hogfish, 1 undersized yellowtail snapper and 3 dead parrotfish which were all over the 12-inch legal limit. The captain of the vessel was cited accordingly.

Officers Sarmiento and Dominguez were on water patrol in a marked vessel in the area 1/2 a mile north of Government Cut. They conducted a fisheries inspection on a white center console vessel. The captain was in possession of a headless Atlantic sharp nose shark, 3 gray snapper and a mutton snapper. The captain was cited accordingly.

Officers Almagro, Gomez and Dominguez were on water patrol in a marked vessel in the area 4 miles east of Soldiers Key. They conducted a fisheries inspection on a white center console vessel. The inspection revealed 3 males to be in possession of 39 total snapper. The bag was a mixture of yellowtail, gray and mutton snapper. The captain of the vessel was cited for over the aggregate bag limit of snapper.

Officers Sample and Perez were checking boats returning to Crandon Park Boat Ramp for resource and safety inspections. One boat made multiple attempts to approach the dock, making hard accelerations in forward and reverse with other boats nearby. Upon inspection, the operator displayed numerous signs of impairment. Standardized field sobriety tasks determined the subject's normal faculties were impaired. The subject was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and provided a breath sample of .113. He was transported and booked into Turner Guilford Knight Jail.

Officers Sample and Perez conducted resource inspections on several boats returning from fishing. Six of the boats they checked had undersized mahi, and 1 boat was over the bag limit of great barracuda. In total, they confiscated 29 undersized mahi and issued 7 misdemeanor citations. The mahi were returned to the water and the subjects were educated on proper fishing regulations.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Mobley and Investigator Williams were on plain clothes patrol on unmarked jet skis in the Middle Keys. They saw four subjects exit the water. One man had a spear gun and another had a white bucket. As they approached and identified themselves as law enforcement officers, the two male subjects dumped the white bucket into a blue cooler. They contacted the subjects and after searching the cooler they found 8 out of season lobster of which 6 were undersized, two wrung tails, one speared lobster and two undersized mangrove snapper. After Miranda and interviews, two of the subjects admitted to fishing from the shoreline, lobstering out of season with no device, spearing the lobster and stated they found the two wrung tails. The two subjects were placed under arrest and transported to Plantation Key Detention facility.

Lieutenant Peters was patrolling in an unmarked vessel wearing plain clothes when he conducted a resource inspection on two subjects south of Johnston Key. A resource inspection revealed one undersized mangrove snapper and 13 undersized yellowtail snapper. In total the subject was found to be in possession of: 18 total snapper, 8 over the one day aggregate bag limit, 13 undersized yellowtail snapper, and 1 undersized mangrove snapper. He was issued a notice to appear citation.

Officer Wagner was on plain clothes patrol in the lower keys when he saw a snorkeler without a dive flag on the shoreline under a bridge. The man came out of the water with a spear gun and a mesh bag. Officer Wagner approached the man, displayed his badge, and announced himself as law enforcement. The man immediately went to hide the mesh bag. Officer Wagner asked for the bag and the man said he found it and it wasn't his. The bag had one wrung lobster tail and a knife in it. After reading the man his Miranda rights he admitted to harvesting the lobster by stabbing it with a knife, separating the tail from the body and putting it in the bag. Dispatch advised Officer Wagner that the man had an out of state warrant. The man was placed under arrest and transported to the Stock Island Jail by Lieutenant Payne. He was cited for wrung lobster, lobster out of season, and harvesting lobster by illegal method.

Officers Powell and Garrison were on water patrol on the bayside of Indian Key Fill when they saw a male and female in the water. As they approached the individuals Officer Powel could see the female was holding a spiny lobster and that the male did not have a snorkel on his mask. Officer Powell got the attention of both individuals and asked to see their hands. Officer Powell noticed that the male let go of a spear gun and plastic bag before bringing his hands out of the water. Officer Powell instructed the individual to give him the plastic bag, containing an additional spiny lobster, and spear gun. The male told Officer Powell that he speared both lobster and did not measure them. Upon inspection of the lobster, they showed obvious signs of being speared and were undersized. The male was cited for spear fishing in the upper Keys, harvesting lobster out of season, harvesting lobster without a measuring device, harvesting lobster by illegal method, and possession of undersized lobster. He was also issued citations for no saltwater fishing license and no lobster stamp. The female was issued a citation for no dive flag.

Officers Piekenbrock and Wagner were on water patrol in the lower Keys when they saw an individual fishing along the shoreline by a bridge. Officer Piekenbrock was put onshore to conduct a resource inspection. Officer Piekenbrock inspected a nearby cooler and found nothing. He noticed a yellow duffle bag with clothing on top and fishing gear next to it. Upon inspection of the bag he found many undersized snapper. The man stated that the clothing and fishing gear were his but the bag of fish belonged to his friends who were at the store. Officer Piekenbrock asked the man if he could see inside his vehicle. An inspection of a cooler in the bed of his truck revealed more snapper violations. Two other individuals came from under the bridge and admitted to catching all the fish. In total, the two men had 51 mangrove snapper (of which 42 were undersized), three schoolmaster snapper (of which two were undersized), one undersized mutton snapper, one undersized dog snapper, and one lane snapper. Both men were placed under arrest and transported to the Stock Island Jail.

Officers Alvarez and Garrison were on patrol near Quay Boat Ramp when they saw 3 individuals sticking a net and fishing pole in the shallow water. Officer Alvarez saw the individuals catch 3 spiny lobster and place them in a nearby cooler. Officer Alvarez approached the individuals and upon questioning, all 3 individuals admitted to harvesting the lobster. An inspection of the cooler revealed 7 undersized spiny lobster. A search of showed one of the individuals had an active warrant out of Manatee County. He was placed under arrest and the other two individuals were cited accordingly.

Officers Piekenbrock and Wagner were on land patrol when they received a tip of a man catching undersized fish in Key West. The officers located the individual and a bucket containing two undersized mutton snapper and one undersized hogfish. The man admitted that the bucket was his and appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Wagner was on water patrol in the lower Keys when he saw a vessel with a man spearfishing in the water. As he approached to conduct a resource inspection the man saw the patrol vessel and said something to a woman on their boat. The woman immediately went into the cooler on the front of the boat and tossed a fish in the water. Officer Wagner asked the man to retrieve the fish which was an undersized hogfish. The man claimed he was the only person spearfishing and was issued a citation for the undersized hogfish.

COLLIER COUNTY

While conducting water patrol, Officers Plussa and Stearns saw a vessel collide with mangroves as it approached a busy boat ramp. A safety inspection revealed the operator was impaired. He was arrested for BUI.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

MONROE COUNTY

As part of the National “Operation Dry Water” Boating Under the Influence Campaign Investigator Williams and Officer Mobley were on water patrol oceanside of Whale Harbor. They saw a vessel with the engine trimmed all the way up and the operator start the engine and put it in gear. Once alongside the vessel they saw signs of impairment from the operator. The operator consented to seated field sobriety tasks and was arrested for operating a vessel while normal faculties impaired. The subject was booked in to Plantation Key Jail and refused to provide a breath sample.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube and Mr. Delgado from FWC’s FWRI lab in Marathon gave multiple presentations to approximately 100 campers from the Founders Park Summer Camp Program in Islamorada. Mr. Delgado brought for display queen conch, horse conch and lobster. The campers were given a chance to touch and feel all these animals after Mr. Delgado taught them common knowledge facts. Officer Dube gave the campers the do’s and don’ts on these animals and the laws and regulations protecting them. Officer Dube gave them a pledge for all of them to be good stewards of their oceans and reefs to help protect their future.