

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Division of Law Enforcement Weekly Report**



Patrol, Protect, Preserve

June 28, 2019 through July 11, 2019

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

NORTHWEST REGION

CASES

HOLMES COUNTY

Officers Yates and Gore conducted a roadside shrimp dealer inspection for quality control in Holmes County. The vendor had questions on quality control and was found to be unlicensed. The vendor was cited for no retail saltwater product dealer license and for failure to maintain records of acquisition.

JACKSON COUNTY

Officers Little and Scott were on boating safety patrol on Merritt's Mill Pond. As they were conducting a boating safety inspection of a vessel, they began to detect indicators the operator was possibly under the influence of alcohol. The officers administered field sobriety tasks and the vessel operator was placed under arrest for BUI and transported to the Jackson County Jail. Breath test results were .155 and .159.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Officers Parrish, Greene, and Burkhead were called to find lost kayakers on Econfina Creek in the Econfina Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Officer Parrish was able to determine their location by receiving a screen shot from google maps from one of the lost subjects. The officers rescued them after walking a distance through one of Econfina's hurricane damaged swamps. When back to safety, one of the subjects was

found to have an active misdemeanor warrant and transported to the Washington County Jail.

Officers Parrish and Kinney were patrolling the Holmes Creek area at Cotton Landing on the Choctawhatchee River Wildlife Management Area. The officers encountered a subject passed out in a truck at the boat ramp. The subject was found to be in possession of methamphetamine and 5.1 grams of cannabis. The subject was arrested and booked into the Washington County Jail.

Officers Homan and Gore saw a careless motor boat operator at Culpepper Landing in Vernon on Holmes Creek. The ramp was congested with other boaters. The operator hit the bank while looking backwards at his motor, which threw the front occupant down into the boat. Their investigation found that the subject was operating a vessel while impaired. Officer Homan placed the subject under arrest and transported him to the Washington County Jail. Once there, the subject provided a breath sample of .139 blood alcohol content.

BAY COUNTY

Officers Hellett and Alsobrooks were on water patrol when they were told by FWC dispatch that Coast Guard personnel needed assistance with an operator they believed to be impaired. When the officers arrived on scene, Coast Guard personnel said the vessel operator had cut them off in the Panama pass and evasive action was taken to avoid a collision. They contacted the operator who showed signs of impairment and administered standardized field sobriety tasks. The operator provided two breath samples which were .173 blood alcohol content and .157 blood alcohol content. The operator arrested and booked in the Bay County Jail.

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officers Cushing, Land and Matechik were working Gulf State Waters aboard the offshore patrol vessel NW Fincat, Officer Cushing conducted a marine fisheries inspection of a 25-foot recreational fishing vessel and discovered a bag of fillets in a plastic bag. The captain stated that his wife caught her first "amberjack" and wanted to keep it. He admitted to filleting the fish and putting it in the bag. The appropriate action was taken reference the violations.

Officers Cushing and Land were on water patrol near Big Lagoon State park and saw an eastbound vessel plowing through the idle speed zone. Officers stopped the vessel to address the violation and instructed the operator to place his vessel engine in neutral. He had difficulty placing it in neutral, switching from forward to reverse multiple times. Officers then instructed him to turn the engine off. Officer Land saw a bucket full of empty beer cans in the vessel. The operator's breath smelled of alcoholic beverage and Standardized Field Sobriety Tasks were administered. The operator was arrested and taken to Escambia County Jail.

Officers Clark and Long were on water patrol in the Quiet Water portion of the Santa Rosa Sound when they saw a vessel displaying partial registration numbers. They conducted a vessel stop and saw the operator showing indicators of impairment. Standardized field sobriety tasks were administered, and the operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence. The subject provided a breath sample of 0.133 blood alcohol content and 0.122 blood alcohol content. The operator was cited for BUI and transported to the Escambia County Jail.

Officer Long and Investigator Livesay were patrolling Pensacola Bay and identified a vessel that was adrift with no navigation lights illuminated. A vessel stop was conducted to address the safety violation, and the owner/operator exhibited numerous signs of impairment. The operator was asked to perform Standard Field Sobriety Tasks and was placed under arrest and transported to the Escambia County Jail for operating a vessel while normal faculties were impaired.

Officer Allgood stopped a vessel near Fort McRee after noticing the registration was improperly displayed. The operator of the vessel saw Officer Allgood and switched places with another occupant. While speaking with the operator, Officer Allgood noticed several signs of impairment, including a very strong odor of alcohol. Officer Allgood requested the operator perform several field sobriety tasks. The operator refused to perform any of the tasks. Based on his observation Officer Allgood, arrested the operator for BUI. After being transported to the Escambia County Jail, the operator declined to give a breath sample but admitted to drinking 10-15 beers earlier that day.

Officer Allgood performed a safety check on a personal water craft (PWC) near Big Lagoon State Park. He found the operator was an employee of a nearby livery and he did not have a boating safety card as required. This prompted a livery inspection. Two PWC's were rented out at the time and when they returned to the livery it was found that one of the operators did not have a boating safety card. The owner of the livery was cited for renting a PWC to a person that did not possess a required boating safety card. The employee was also cited for the violation.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd and T. Nelson were checking commercial shrimping vessels while aboard the offshore patrol vessel Guardian. They stopped a vessel in "nearshore" waters and inspected their turtle excluder devices. The officers then measured the vessel's nets and found them to exceed the maximum size of 500 square feet. The nets were approximately 1800 square feet a piece and were seized as evidence. The appropriate action was taken in reference to the violations.

Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd and T. Nelson were checking commercial shrimping vessels while aboard the offshore patrol vessel Guardian. They stopped a vessel and inspected the turtle excluder devices (TEDs). One of the TEDs was almost 50% too small which would have failed to allow a medium sized or larger sea turtle escape the net. The appropriate action was taken in reference to the violations.

Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd and T. Nelson were checking commercial shrimping vessels while aboard the offshore patrol vessel GUARDIAN. They stopped a small shrimping vessel in “nearshore” waters and inspected its turtle excluder device (TED). They found the vessel’s TED opening tied shut which would have failed to allow a turtle to escape. The officers also noticed multiple fuel cans with no bulkhead lying on the deck of the boat in direct contact with some of the fish and shrimp and a vehicle battery lying on the cull board with saltwater products directly touching the battery. An inspection of the vessel’s catch located in the coolers found shrimp and fish not iced or refrigerated. Appropriate actions were taken for the TED violations and the multiple quality control violations. The product was determined to be a possible health hazard and was not allowed to be retained for sale to the public.

GULF COUNTY

Officer Gerber was on patrol at Iola Landing when he saw three individuals pull up in a vessel with no navigation lights. The individuals had been hog hunting on the river and had one hog in their possession. While conducting a resource inspection, Officer Gerber noticed a loaded .22 caliber rifle in plain view inside the vessel. One individual aboard was found to be a convicted felon. The vessel owner was cited for no navigation lights and insufficient number of lifejackets. The firearm was seized, and further charges are pending.

Officer Gerber and Officer Specialist Lipford were on water patrol working the Apalachicola River near Gaskin Park. During a vessel safety inspection, the officers noticed the operator was showing signs of impairment. The operator agreed to submit to the seated battery of field sobriety tasks and was placed under arrest for BUI. He provided breath samples of .115 blood alcohol content and .118 blood alcohol content. The operator was booked into the Gulf County Jail.

Officer Specialist Webb worked JEA dockside patrol over the weekend and checked 7 vessels and 28 users. He issued three warnings and two FWC citations for gray triggerfish out of season and undersized grouper.

Officer Specialist Webb was conducting resource inspections at Indian Pass when he saw a Georgia recreational vessel with several people on board returning from the Gulf of Mexico. After inspecting their harvest, he discovered that they had in their possession two bags of fresh snapper fillets. The captain was issued the appropriate citation for failure to land reef fish in whole condition.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Lieutenant Bartlett and Officer Maltais were on water patrol in the Destin Pass when they conducted a vessel stop on a personal watercraft for violation of the idle speed zone. While interacting with the operator, Officer Maltais saw several signs of impairment and conducted field sobriety tasks. The operator was arrested for boating

under the influence, refused to provide a breath sample, and was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail.

Officer Hahr was patrolling the Yellow River where he stopped a vessel to conduct a boating safety inspection. The operator was showing signs of impairment and after field sobriety tasks, was arrested for BUI. After towing the boat back to the ramp and dropping off the two young children with family members, Officer Hahr transported the operator to the Okaloosa County Jail where he refused to submit to a breath test. He was cited for operating a vessel while normal faculties impaired.

Lieutenant Molnar and Lieutenant Bartlett were on land patrol when they were flagged down by a concerned citizen who wanted to report an impaired driver. They contacted the suspected impaired driver at a nearby vacant gas station parking lot. The operator appeared confused about his location and showed signs of impairment. Field sobriety tasks were conducted, and the operator was arrested for DUI. He was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail where he provided a breath sample of 0.243 blood alcohol content and 0.239 blood alcohol content.

Officer Corbin was on water patrol in the Destin Pass when he conducted a vessel stop on a charter vessel returning from the Gulf of Mexico. A fisheries inspection revealed two undersized red grouper. The captain was issued a citation for possession of undersize red grouper and operating a charter without a state charter license.

Officer Corbin was on water patrol when he saw a charter vessel returning from the Gulf of Mexico with fishing equipment displayed. A resource inspection was conducted at the dock and two undersized red grouper were found on the vessel. A license inspection was also conducted, and the captain did not have a valid charter fishing license. The captain of the vessel was issued a notice to appear citation for possession of undersized red grouper and a resource citation was issued for no charter license.

Officer Corbin was on water patrol when he saw a charter vessel return to the dock and display its catch. Several fish appeared to be undersized and a resource inspection was conducted. Four undersize vermillion snapper were displayed at the dock. The deckhand claimed responsibility for the undersized fish and was issued a notice to appear citation for the violation.

Officers Corbin and Pifer were on water patrol when they saw two subjects renting out vessels from the beach near Crab Island. A livery inspection was conducted and one subject, who was the owner of livery, was issued a notice to appear citation for renting out vessels without any signage displayed at the livery related to the operation of vessels. The other subject was issued a notice to appear citation for providing pre-rental/pre-ride instructions without having taken an approved boating safety course.

Officers Corbin and Wilkenson were on water patrol when they saw a subject operating a vessel on full plane in the idle speed/no wake zone near Crab Island. A vessel stop was conducted to address the violation and to conduct a boating safety inspection. The

operator showed signs of impairment and agreed to let Officer Corbin conduct Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus. The operator refused any further tasks and was placed under arrest for BUI. The operator later provided two breath samples of .147 blood alcohol content and .150 blood alcohol content.

Officers Corbin and Pifer were on water patrol when they saw a vessel being operated without any registration numbers or decal displayed. A vessel stop was conducted to address the violation and conduct a boating safety inspection. During the inspection, the operator showed signs of impairment. The subject agreed to conduct field sobriety tasks and was placed under arrest for BUI.

Officers Corbin and White were on water patrol when they saw a vessel return from the Gulf of Mexico with fishing equipment displayed. The resource inspection found two grey triggerfish in a box. The captain of the vessel was issued a notice to appear citation for possession of triggerfish during the closed season.

Officers Corbin and White were on water patrol when they saw a vessel violating the idle speed/no wake zone around the Destin Bridge. A vessel stop was conducted to address the violation and conduct a boating safety inspection. The vessel had an expired registration and the operator was unable to provide a type IV throwable device or a fire extinguisher. The operator exhibited signs of impairment and there were numerous empty beer cans visible on the vessel. Field sobriety tasks were administered and the operator was placed under arrest for BUI.

Officers Corbin and Tison were on water patrol when they saw a vessel leaving a marina with fishing equipment displayed. A vessel stop was conducted, and the subjects stated they had just returned from fishing, dropped people off at the dock, were returning to the boat ramp, and did not have any fish onboard. An inspection of their coolers revealed four red snapper filets. A notice to appear citation was issued to the captain of the vessel for the violation.

Officers Corbin, Bradshaw, and Letcher were on water patrol and saw a deckhand of a charter vessel displaying its catch. A resource inspection was conducted, and one undersize scamp grouper and one undersize red snapper were found. During the stop, Officer Corbin discovered the deckhand had an active warrant for failure to appear. The subject was placed under arrest and a pat down revealed a pill bottle containing a plastic bag with methamphetamine in his shorts pocket. The subject was issued a resource citation for possession of undersize scamp grouper and was arrested for his active warrant and for possession of a controlled substance.

Officers Corbin, Bradshaw, and Letcher were on water patrol when they saw a vessel returning from the Gulf of Mexico with spearfishing equipment onboard. A resource inspection was conducted and two undersize gag grouper were located in a cooler on the vessel. A resource citation was issued for possession of undersize gag grouper.

Officers Corbin, Bradshaw, and Letcher were on water patrol when they saw a large fishing vessel return from the Gulf of Mexico with fishing equipment displayed. The vessel did not have a registration decal displayed and had a hailing port of Destin, FL. The vessel was documented through the Coast Guard but had not been registered with the state of Florida. A notice to appear citation was issued to the captain and owner of the vessel for failure to register a documented vessel.

Officer Pifer and an applicant ride-along were on water patrol when they saw a personal watercraft (PWC) driving recklessly in the Destin Pass. The PWC was operating in violation of the idle speed-no wake zone towards a pontoon boat and swerving at the last possible moment to avoid a collision and to cause the wake from the PWC to splash the pontoon boat. Officer Pifer and his ride-along saw the PWC perform this maneuver multiple times. A vessel stop was initiated to address the violation. The PWC was determined to be a rental from a local livery and the operator was cited for reckless operation of a PWC.

Officer Pifer and an applicant ride-along were on water patrol when they saw a pontoon boat operating on plane in an idle speed-no wake zone. A vessel stop was initiated to address the violation and to conduct a boating safety inspection. The operator displayed signs of impairment and agreed to perform standardized field sobriety tasks. The operator was arrested for BUI, cited for refusal to submit to a breath test and violation of the idle speed-no wake zone.

Lieutenant Hollinhead and Officer Pifer were on water patrol when they saw a vessel leaving the east side of Crab Island. Shortly after leaving the island, the vessel accelerated and began traveling on plane in the idle speed-no wake zone. A vessel stop was initiated to address the violation and to conduct a boating safety inspection. The operator displayed signs of impairment and agreed to perform standardized field sobriety tasks. The operator was placed under arrest for BUI and at USCG Station Destin, provided a breath sample of 0.197 blood alcohol content and 0.185 blood alcohol content. The operator was cited for BUI and violation of the idle speed-no wake zone.

Officer Maltais was on water patrol in the Destin Pass when he conducted a vessel stop for violation of the idle speed/no wake zone. Officer Maltais determined the vessel was a charter returning from offshore and a resource inspection was conducted. Two undersized red snapper were discovered. The charter captain was issued a resource citation for the violation.

Officers Hahr and Wilkenson were on water patrol at Crab Island when they received a call about a female that had nearly drowned and needed assistance. The officers were able to locate the vessel the female was onboard and had EMS conduct an assessment on her wellbeing. After she was medically cleared, Officer Hahr conducted a boating safety inspection. The operator showed several signs of impairment and field sobriety task were conducted. He was arrested for BUI and later refused to provide a breath sample.

Lieutenants Molnar and Bartlett, along with Officer Hahr were on water patrol in the Destin Harbor when they saw a pontoon boat operating in circles and impeding the flow of vessel traffic at the entrance to the harbor. A vessel stop was conducted to speak with the operator about the navigational concern. During Lieutenant Bartlett's interaction with the operator of the vessel, signs of impairment were evident. After field sobriety task were conducted, the operator was arrested for BUI. He later provided a breath sample of 0.089 blood alcohol content and 0.087 blood alcohol content.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer Land was conducting resource inspections at the Shoreline Park Boat Ramp. He saw a large vessel with multiple people on board return to the ramp and contacted the operator of the vessel to conduct a marine fisheries inspection. During the inspection Officer Land located an undersized cobia. The operator was cited for the violation.

Officer Ramos was on vessel patrol in the Santa Rosa sound and conducted a boating safety inspection on a pontoon boat with a family onboard. The inspection revealed that the pontoon did not have all required safety equipment even though it was rented from a nearby livery. Officer Ramos visited the livery and contacted the manager. The manager stated that the business does not use a check-off sheet to visually ensure all required safety equipment is on-board prior to each rental boat's departure. He was issued a notice to appear citation for renting a vessel without the required safety equipment.

An FWC investigator saw two subjects steal a license plate off a vehicle near the Navarre Beach boat ramp. When the investigator identified himself to the suspects, one of the subjects fled in what later was identified as a stolen vehicle. The subject crashed into a vessel trailer parked at the Navarre Beach boat ramp while fleeing from law enforcement. FWC officers located the stolen vehicle a short-time later, and with the assistance of the Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office, located the subject swimming with a crowd on Navarre Beach in an effort to remain undetected. The subject was placed under arrest for multiple felony and misdemeanor charges.

WALTON COUNTY

Officers Tison and Letcher were on water patrol in the Choctawhatchee Bay. They contacted two subjects on the shoreline of the Eglin Air Force Base property with free roaming dogs that displayed aggressiveness when the officers exited their patrol vessel. Neither of the subjects had an Eglin Recreation Permit or any form of identification. It was later determined that one of the subjects provided a false name and date of birth to Officer Tison. The following day Officer Tison saw the subjects back on the Eglin property without a recreational permit although the violation had been previously addressed the day before. Both subjects were cited for not having an Eglin Recreational Permit and one will be cited for providing a false name to a law enforcement officer. An Eglin Security Force Officer responded and suspended the subjects from Eglin property for a period of six months.

FEDERAL WATERS

While off-duty Lieutenant Marlow received a call from Officer S. Smith from the Southwest Region. Officer Smith provided information that there was a commercial bandit rig vessel fishing within the boundaries of the Madison and Swanson Marine Protected Area which is closed to bottom fishing. Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd and T. Nelson boarded the offshore patrol vessel Guardian and traveled 80 miles to locate the commercial fishing vessel actively bottom fishing in the closed area. The vessel also possessed shark not landed in whole condition. The fish caught in the closed area were seized. The appropriate action was taken for the violations.

While working a land based commercial fishing violation, Lieutenant Marlow received a call from Officer S. Smith from the Southwest Region. Officers Smith and Alvis provided information that there was a commercial longline vessel fishing within the boundaries of the "Stressed Reef Fish Area" approximately 45 miles south of Cape San Blas. Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd and T. Nelson boarded the offshore patrol vessel Guardian and traveled 85 miles to locate the commercial fishing vessel actively deploying longline fishing gear in the closed area. The officers seized the fish identified as being harvested in the closed area. The appropriate action was taken for the violations.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

While aboard the offshore patrol vessel Guardian, Lieutenant Marlow and Officers Boyd and T. Nelson were checking commercial shrimping vessels south of Franklin County near St. Vincent Island. They heard an emergency call over the marine VHF radio from a commercial shrimping vessel to the United States Coast Guard. The emergency call explained that another commercial shrimping vessel had a mechanical failure. A pulley supporting the anchor line had parted under tension during an attempt to retrieve the anchor in heavy storm seas and lightning. When it parted, the pulley and the anchor line struck two of the vessel's crew causing severe injuries. The Guardian's crew proceeded to the vessel's location in rough seas and placed officers onboard. The injured crewmen were accessed, and it was determined that both were injured with one being severe with head injuries and spinal injuries. It was determined that medical air support or airborne evacuation was not an option due to the storm conditions and that transit into a port aboard the shrimping vessel would take a minimum of 3 hours due to the vessel's draft and speed. Due to the injured crewman's deteriorating condition and possible unknown internal injuries, he was placed on a backboard and immobilized, transferred to the Guardian and brought into Indian Pass where emergency medical service staff were waiting.

Officers Gore, Hellett, Burkhead, Coker and Alsobrooks responded to Econfina Creek for a search and rescue involving lost floaters and tubers downstream from Highway 20. There were two adult ladies with six very young children that were lost after dark. The officers found the group and guided them to safety.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

CASES

DUVAL COUNTY

Officers Barry and Lemaster patrolled Black Rock Trail, a part of Little Talbot State Park, conducting night patrols to help deter criminal activity taking place in the park. They conducted a fisheries inspection on a subject and found he was in possession of an undersized black drum. The subject was in the park after closing hours, consuming alcoholic beverages, with no/expired shoreline fishing license. The subject was issued a resource citation for being in the park after closed hours and for the expired fishing license. Written warnings were issued for the undersized black drum and alcoholic beverage consumption.

Officer Stuhr and Lieutenant Wright were on patrol in the Intra Coastal Waterway (ICW) near Sawpit Creek when they were notified of a vessel that was stolen the night before from the area. While the two officers were at the victim's dock, they transmitted the description of the stolen vessel over the radio. Officer Shearer was patrolling nearby and spotted the vessel in question. The officers attempted to stop the vessel, but the operator ignored the officers. When the vessel was stopped, the operator and occupant were arrested. They stated they had no idea the vessel was stolen and that their friend, who was on a vessel nearby, showed up with it in the middle of the night. The three subjects were in possession of narcotics and paraphernalia and were arrested and booked into the Duval County detention center.

DUVAL COUNTY

Officer Lemaster worked a derelict vessel case on a vessel that broke loose from anchor and has been drifting south of the Buckman Bridge. The vessel is listing, has no means of propulsion and the deck flooring is rotted through. Officer Lemaster was able to locate the owner and issue citations for no navigational lights and for expired Florida registration. The owner was also issued a notice to appear for leaving a vessel on state of Florida waters in derelict condition

NASSAU COUNTY

Officer Stuhr was on vessel patrol when he conducted a fisheries inspection on a commercial crabber checking blue crab traps in the Jolly River. The commercial crabber handed Officer Stuhr three expired saltwater product licenses (SPL), two of which were for different vessels. The commercial crabber did not have his registration on board and the aerial display for the vessel was unreadable. Officer Stuhr issued the subject a notice to appear for the expired SPL and written warnings for no registration on board and the aerial display violation.

Officer Tucker checked a subject under the Shave Bridge. The subject had no violations but acted a little nervous. Officer Tucker saw the subject look towards some rocks where he noticed a second subject. When Officer Tucker checked the second subject, he found he did not have a fishing license. When he checked his cooler, he found him in possession of nine sheepshead, five of which were undersized. The second subject was cited for possession of over the bag limit, undersized sheepshead and fishing without a saltwater fishing license.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Officer Robson was working the Steinhatchee River when he saw a vessel operating after dark with no navigation lights displayed. Officer Robson conducted a vessel safety stop and noticed signs of impairment during the stop. After conducting field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for boating under the influence. The suspect was booked into the Taylor County Jail where he provided a breath sample of .096 and .098.

CITRUS COUNTY

Officer Reid was patrolling between Homosassa Bay and Crystal Bay, ensuring boating safety and dive flag compliance. While in Homosassa Bay, he saw a vessel operating on full plane within 100 yards of another vessel with a properly displayed dive flag and with snorkelers in the water. Officer Reid stopped the subject's vessel and conducted GPS measurements and found the subject's vessel was operated 62 yards from the victim's vessel. The operator was issued a misdemeanor uniform boating citation for reckless operation of a vessel.

Officers Crane and Browning were watching a fishing vessel in Crystal River late at night. They saw a subject harvest a large snook and not release it. The subject made his way toward the Fort Island Trail ramp and officers stopped the vessel. A marine fisheries inspection revealed a 32" snook hidden under the gunwale. The season for harvest of snook is currently closed. The subject was issued a misdemeanor resource citation and the snook was released alive.

LAFAYETTE COUNTY

Officer Davenport was patrolling Steinhatchee Springs Wildlife Management Area near an area where he had discovered illegal digging. Officer Davenport saw an individual near this area covered in dirt and carrying a shovel. Further investigation revealed the subject was digging on state land. He was given a notice to appear for damage to state lands.

CLAY COUNTY

Officer Colasanti and Lieutenant Haney were on water patrol and saw a pontoon boat violate a no wake zone. The officers conducted a vessel inspection and during the stop,

saw signs of impairment from the operator. After conducting a BUI investigation, the subject was arrested and transported to Clay County Jail. Two hours after he was operating a vessel, he provided a breath sample measuring .078 g/210L of breath.

DIRECTED CONSERVATION PATROL

CITRUS COUNTY

Officer Ulrich was on water patrol in St. Martin's Keys when he saw an anchored vessel with spear guns, dive gear and divers in the water with no divers down flag displayed. Officer Ulrich contacted the divers when they surfaced and directed them to board their vessel. One of the subjects shot two undersized gag groupers with a spear gun and was issued a misdemeanor resource citation for the violation. The operator of the vessel was issued enforcement documentation for having no divers down flag.

Officer VanNess was on water patrol in the Homosassa River supporting a special event with fireworks. He saw a vessel coming in from the Gulf with fishing gear. Officer VanNess conducted a boating safety and marine resource inspection. The inspection revealed two undersized gag groupers. The captain of the vessel took responsibility for the violation and was issued a misdemeanor resource citation for the violations.

On opening day of scallop season, Officer Reid was on water patrol in the scallop grounds of Crystal Bay when he saw a pontoon boat operating on full plane within 100 yards of another vessel with a properly displayed divers down flag and divers in the water. Officer Reid took GPS coordinates of the pontoon vessel's wake as it passed the victim vessel and measured the distance at 60 yards. Officer Reid stopped the pontoon boat and issued the operator a misdemeanor citation for reckless operation of a vessel.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

DUVAL COUNTY

Officer Haskins conducted multiple interviews and ride-alongs with several of the local media outlets in Jacksonville on July 4, promoting boating safety and Operation Dry Water 2019.

Officer Haskins appeared on a radio talk show for an interview discussing boating safety and promoting Operation Dry Water.

Officer Haskins attended the career day at the Atlantic Beach Police Department. He spoke with approximately 80-100 children, ages 8-15 about FWC responsibilities, as well as the different career options the division offers.

HAMILTON COUNTY

Lieutenants Swan, Douglas, Officers Cline and Nichols organized and instructed a boating operations class for the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office. During this course, FWC members covered and demonstrated, vessel launching and recovery, vessel approaches and contacts, vessel towing methods and general vessel operation. This instruction was provided to deputies as a topic of in-service training for members who operate the Sheriff's office vessels.

NORTHEAST REGION

CASES

MARION COUNTY

Officer Hayes was conducting boating and resource inspections at a boat ramp on Orange Lake. During the inspection of a vessel, he found the single occupant to be in possession of 65 panfish. The subject stated that he knew the bag limit and admitted to catching all the fish. The subject was issued a notice to appear for over the bag limit of panfish, as well as warnings for boating safety violations.

Officers Rice and Simpson received information that a subject was in possession of a black bear in a freezer. The officers located where the subject was living and made contact. The subject denied knowing anything about a black bear and allowed the officers to look inside the freezers on the property. Inside a freezer, the officers located a black bear hidden in a garbage bag. Post Miranda, the male and female residents denied knowing the bear was in the freezer but admitted that the freezer belonged to them. The male subject was a convicted felon and he was found to be in possession of ammunition and methamphetamine. He was booked into the Marion County Jail for possession of a black bear, possession of ammunition by a convicted felon, and possession of methamphetamine. The female was issued a notice to appear for possession of a black bear.

Officers Rice and Simpson were conducting water patrol on Lake Weir when they saw a vessel returning to the ramp. The officers saw a female steering the vessel and a male helping her steer and controlling the throttle. During a boating safety inspection, the officers saw signs of impairment from the male and female subjects. Officers Rice and Simpson conducted Standardized Field Sobriety Tasks on the subjects and placed them under arrest for BUI. The male and female subjects both refused to provide a breath sample. They were booked into the Marion County Jail and cited for boating under the influence.

Officer Dias was conducting recreational freshwater fishing checks on the south end of Orange Lake when he saw a man transfer fish from one bucket to another bucket, then go back to fishing. Officer Dias approached the subject to conduct a license and resource inspection. When the subject was asked how many fish he had, he stated that

he did not know. A resource inspection revealed that the subject had 61 panfish. The subject was issued a notice to appear for over the bag limit of panfish.

LAKE COUNTY

Officer Fahnstock and Captain Frerking were on patrol on Lake Dora in Tavares when they saw a person operating a personal watercraft without a life jacket or kill switch. They stopped the PWC and conducted a boating safety inspection. The officers noticed indicators that the operator was possibly impaired and administered Standardized Field Sobriety Tasks. He was arrested for boating under the influence and transported to the Lake County Jail where he submitted to a breath test that resulted in .200.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Officer McKee was on water patrol just north of Deland on the St. John's River when he saw two vessels crisscrossing within close proximity of each other while heading south towards White Hair Bridge. Officer McKee conducted a stop on both vessels to address the violation. Both operators exhibited signs of impairment and field sobriety tasks were administered. One subject was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and taken to the Volusia County Jail where he refused to submit to a breath sample.

Officer Vanas performed a resource inspection on two men who were fishing from a boat on the St. John's River in Astor. One of the men had an outstanding felony warrant out of Missouri for violation of probation on a child neglect charge. He was taken into custody and delivered to the Volusia County Jail without incident. The vessel owner was cited for not having a freshwater fishing license.

Officer Bellville and Reserve Officer Grigg were patrolling the St. John's River in Astor when they stopped a vessel for operating on plane in a slow speed zone. The officers noticed signs of possible impairment from the operator and administered field sobriety tasks. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence and refused to provide a breath sample.

Officers Bellville and Grigg stopped a vessel for violating the slow speed zone in Hitchens Creek, near Volusia Bar Fish Camp. They noticed signs of impairment from the operator and requested he submit to standardized seated field sobriety tasks. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence and refused to provide a breath sample.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Officer Campbell received information from FWC's Internet Crimes Unit of a subject in possession of an alligator. The subject posted on Snap Chat the capture and footage of himself playing with the alligator in his mom's pool. Officer Campbell located the mother's residence in Flagler Beach with the help of FWC Investigator Brechler and conducted an interview. The subject had stayed at his mother's home while she was

gone, caught the five-foot gator with the help of a couple of friends, taped its mouth shut, took it to the home and threw it into the pool. The subject lives in North Carolina. A phone interview was conducted with the subject and he admitted to capturing the alligator and keeping it overnight, then releasing it the following day. After a conversation with the State Attorney's Office, charges were filed against the suspect.

Officer Ramsey conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle occupied by three adult males. A search of the vehicle revealed 9.5 grams of marijuana and cannabis paste in a backpack. The individual was issued a notice to appear for the violation.

BREVARD COUNTY

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agent Bushnell, Officer J. Humphrey and Lieutenant Riley, worked ATV and off-road patrol on St. John's Federal Property. Several stops were made, and citations and warning were issued for unauthorized entry and illegal discharge of firearms.

Officer Marroquin was conducting land-based water patrol at Christianson's Landing Boat Ramp when he saw a vessel having difficulty docking and an improper display of vessel registration. Officer Marroquin contacted the operator to address the violation and assist the vessel docking. The operator displayed indicators of impairment and after field sobriety tasks was arrested for boating under the influence. The operator provided a breath sample of .136 210g/L.

Officer Marroquin was conducting fisheries inspections on the US 192 causeway when he saw two individuals trespassing in a closed area. After addressing the trespassing issue, Officer Marroquin discovered one of the individuals was in possession of four undersized mangrove snapper and neither subject had a fishing license. A notice to appear was issued to the individual with the undersized mangrove snapper and warnings were issued for no licenses.

Officer Marroquin received a tip about a subject keeping an oversized red drum at Sebastian Inlet State Park. Officer Marroquin radioed Officer Matthews a description of the vehicle where the redfish were being kept. Officer Matthews located the vehicle as it was leaving the state park and conducted a traffic stop. An oversized redfish was found in a cooler in the bed of the truck. The operator admitted to catching the redfish and was issued a notice to appear for the violation.

Lieutenant Lightsey saw a vehicle driving in a reckless manner and almost hit another vehicle. After stopping the vehicle and contacting the operator, signs of impairment were evident. Standardized Field Sobriety Tasks were administered, and the operator was placed under arrest for driving under the influence and reckless operation of a vehicle. The operator refused to submit to a breath test.

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY

Officer Delano saw two individuals fishing at a boat ramp and conducted a resource inspection. Officer Delano saw a snook in the back of the vehicle and asked the individuals if they had any fish in the vehicle and they said they did not. Officer Delano had the subject open the back of the vehicle and reveal the snook next to an FWC saltwater fishing regulations book. The subject admitted to catching the snook in a cast net and was cited accordingly.

Officer Marroquin was on state water patrol investigating a vessel that was at risk of becoming derelict. As he approached the vessel, two individuals were found to be onboard. One of the individuals was unable to produce an identification and Officer Marroquin utilized his RAPID ID fingerprint scanner to attempt to confirm the person's identity. The RAPID ID returned a warrant for an individual utilizing multiple aliases. The individual admitted to having the warrant out of Kentucky. The individual was placed under arrest and transported to the Indian River County Jail. Citations and warnings were also issued to the new owner of the vessel who was also on board.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Officers Summers and Stelzer were on water patrol when they noticed a subject load his boat and fishing gear and leave the boat ramp. A few hours later, the same individual launched his boat and returned fishing. Officer Summers contacted the individual and found the subject had 83 panfish that he caught in one day. Thirty-three panfish were seized and the subject was cited accordingly.

Officer Summers was on land patrol in Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area when he contacted a subject who stated he was scouting and had just set up a tree stand. Upon further assessment, Officer Summers learned the subject knowingly set up hunting equipment months prior to the time frame allowed. The subject was cited accordingly.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

BREVARD COUNTY

Lieutenant Lightsey participated in a Vacation Bible School program. A small American alligator was on display and over 300 kids stopped by to learn about living with alligators in Florida.

SOUTHWEST REGION

CASES

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Officer Hazelwood was on water patrol and noticed a snorkeler in the water near a fishing pier with a large bucket. Officer Hazelwood was unable to inspect the snorkeler from his patrol vessel and called Officer Morrison to assist from land. When Officer Morrison arrived, the subject attempted to conceal the bucket in the mangroves. The officers located the bucket and found multiple large pieces of live coral. The subject admitted to harvesting the coral for her personal aquarium. She was cited appropriately and the coral was returned to water.

Officer Lejarzar was on water patrol when he saw a commercial blue crab vessel pulling traps. He watched the subject for a while and saw him pull, empty out, re-bait and place several traps. When Officer Lejarzar conducted a fisheries inspection on the crabber's vessel, he discovered the traps did not have current trap tags attached. The traps the subject had just pulled and placed back in the water also did not have current trap tags and no effort was made to attach a new tag while he was pulling them. The subject was also missing several pieces of required safety gear. He was issued a misdemeanor notice to appear for the trap tag violation and issued warnings for the boating safety violations.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Gray and Lieutenant Spoede were on vessel patrol in Matanzas Pass when they stopped a vessel for a boating safety inspection. During the stop, the officers noticed that the operator exhibited signs of impairment. After field sobriety tasks, the operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and transported to the Lee County Jail, where he provided a breath sample of .12.

Officer Winton was on vessel patrol in the Gulf of Mexico off Sanibel Island when he stopped a fishing vessel returning from offshore waters. During the stop, it was determined that the vessel displayed incorrect registration numbers. Officer Winton discovered that the vessel was primarily used as a rental and that the rental company owner was using the vessel that day. The owner was issued a notice to appear for displaying unlawful registration numbers and a warning for failure to provide a current copy of his registration.

Officer Winton and Lieutenant Spoede were on vessel patrol at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River when they saw a vessel being operated with an expired registration. A vessel stop was conducted, and it was determined that the vessel's owner had purchased the vessel six months prior; but never transferred the registration or title into his name. The owner was issued a notice to appear for the violation, as well as multiple warnings for related violations.

Officer Winton and Lieutenant Spoede responded to a boating accident near Fort Myers Beach. One of the vessels involved in the crash had left the scene without providing any information. The responsible party was identified, and charges pertaining to the hit and run boating accident are being filed with the State Attorney's Office.

Officer Winton and Lieutenant Spoede were on vessel patrol at the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River when they stopped a vessel for improperly displaying a boater safety inspection decal. During the stop, the officers noticed that the operator exhibited signs of impairment. After field sobriety tasks, the operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and transported to the Lee County Jail, where he refused to provide a breath sample.

Officer Winton was on patrol at the Punta Rassa Boat Ramp when he stopped a vehicle pulling a vessel trailer that did not have a license plate attached. It was determined that the driver had previously purchased the trailer; but had never registered it as required by law. The driver was issued a notice to appear for operating an unregistered vehicle and warnings for related violations.

Officer Furbay responded to a call about someone selling king mackerel on the side of the road. When he arrived at the location, he saw a person holding a king mackerel and offering it for sale to people who were exchanging cash for the fish. The salesperson was also filleting the fish as people bought it. Officer Furbay conducted a retail license inspection and discovered the person possessed a saltwater products license but did not possess a retail license in order to be able to sell to the public. The person was issued a misdemeanor notice to appear for the violation and informed of the regulations and who to contact in order to get properly licensed to be able to sell retail.

Officer Furbay was on land patrol when he saw a vehicle parked on the side of the road near a canal. When he approached the vehicle, he recognized a man near the vehicle from previous contacts. The man was using set hooks to fish with and alluded to having only two lines. A search of the area revealed nine set lines, none of which were labeled as required. The man was issued a misdemeanor citation for the violation.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

While on patrol at the Courtney Campbell Causeway, Officer Pettifer and Officer Rorer saw an individual operating a personal watercraft without wearing the required lifejacket. The officers initiated a boating safety inspection and detected signs of alcohol impairment coming from the operator. After field sobriety tasks, the operator was placed under arrest for operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol. He was transported to the Hillsborough County Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample.

While on patrol at the Civic Center boat ramp, Officer Rivard initiated a boating safety inspection on a vessel in the area. A check of the vessel registration numbers revealed the registration was expired. Officer Rivard noticed the expiration date on the displayed registration sticker did not match the expiration date of the displayed registration numbers. After being advised his Miranda rights, the operator admitted to placing a registration sticker for another boat onto his boat. The individual was cited for expired registration and falsely displaying a registration sticker. Through the course of the

investigation, it was also determined the operator had an active warrant for his arrest. He was transported and booked into the Hillsborough County Jail for the warrant.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Officer Specialist Bibeau saw an individual fishing from a bridge and an inspection revealed multiple undersized sheepshead. Officer Specialist Bibeau conducted a query through agency files and found that the individual was previously warned for undersized sheepshead only a few months earlier. Officer Specialist Bibeau wrote the individual a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized sheepshead.

Officer Specialist Bibeau and Officer Bibler stopped a vessel returning from offshore and conducted a fisheries inspection which revealed two undersized red snapper and multiple undersized vermilion snapper. The operator was issued a misdemeanor citation for possession of undersized red snapper and a warning for the other fisheries violations.

Officer Specialist Bibeau saw two individuals fishing from underneath a bridge and watched the activity until they prepared to leave the area. A fisheries inspection revealed one of the individuals in possession of a five-inch red grouper. Officer Specialist Bibeau wrote the individual a misdemeanor citation for possession of an undersized red grouper.

While wade fishing off duty, Investigator Prouty saw a personal watercraft traveling at a high rate of speed near his location in a marked slow speed zone. The PWC suddenly changed course and began traveling directly at him. Just before hitting him, the operator of the jet ski turned sharply, spraying Investigator Prouty with water. Officer Pettifer responded and stopped the operator of the jet ski. Based on Investigator Prouty's observations, the operator was cited for a slow speed zone violation and for reckless operation of a jet ski.

While on patrol in Honeymoon Island State Park, Officer Freda saw an individual drive through the park entrance without stopping to pay the entrance fee. He contacted the operator and detected signs of alcohol impairment. After standardized field sobriety tasks, the operator was arrested for operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. He was transported to the Pinellas County Jail where he provided breath samples of .14 grams of alcohol per 210 liters of breath.

Officer Hughes and Lieutenant Wells were on water patrol and noticed two people swimming in the water near a boat with a snorkel, mask and fins. The vessel was not displaying a dive flag. The officers approached the vessel and noticed the male subject was holding a mesh bag under the water that contained bay scallops. The subject was asked to swim over to the patrol vessel and instructed to not dump the contents of the bag. When the subject gave the officers the bag, it was empty. The subject was issued a notice to appear for interfering with the duties of a Fish and Wildlife Commission

Officer. The subject was also issued warnings for no dive flag, possession of scallops in a closed area and not having a registration certificate onboard his vessel.

Officer Hughes was told about a subject on Fred Howard Causeway catching redfish and putting them in a cooler. Officer Hughes located the subject to conduct a resource inspection and found three 17" redfish in a cooler. The subject was issued a notice to appear (citation) for possession of redfish during a closure and possession of undersized redfish.

Officer Specialist Smith and Officer Alvis noticed a boat running in very shallow water without the required red/green navigation lights on. They stopped the vessel in reference to the navigation lights and to perform a boating safety inspection. Signs of impairment were exhibited by the operator and standardized field sobriety exercises were administered. The subject was arrested for boating under the influence and provided a breath alcohol sample over the legal limit of 0.08.

POLK COUNTY

While on patrol on the Kissimmee River, Officer DeWeese inspected a subject on a vessel that was in possession of four black bass over 16". It is legal to possess one black bass over 16". Officer DeWeese issued the subject a notice to appear citation, photographed three of the black bass, and returned them to the water alive.

Officer Carter was patrolling the canal that connects Lake Cannon and Lake Idle Wild when he saw and contacted a subject fishing. During the encounter Officer Carter conducted a resource inspection and discovered the subject to be in possession of three black bass that measured 19 ¼", 18 ½" and a 15 ½". The subject was issued a citation for possessing more than one black bass 16" or longer in total length.

MANATEE COUNTY

Officer Dalton, Officer Gonzales and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol in the area of Long Boat Pass. They stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel transiting in the area. The operator of the vessel was showing signs of being under the influence of either alcohol or drugs and sobriety tasks were conducted to determine his level of impairment. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence of alcohol and taken to the Manatee County Jail.

Officer Davidson and Officer Klobuchar were on water patrol in the area of Long Boat Pass. They stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel operating in the area. The operator of the vessel was showing signs of being under the influence of either alcohol or drugs and sobriety tasks were conducted to determine his level of impairment. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence of alcohol and taken to the Manatee County Jail.

Officer Dalton, Officer Gonzales and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol in the area of Long Boat Pass. They stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel operating in the area. The operator of the vessel was showing signs of being under the influence of either alcohol or drugs and sobriety tasks were conducted to determine his level of impairment. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence of alcohol and taken to the Manatee County Jail.

Officer Dalton, Officer Gonzales and Lieutenant Hinds were on water patrol in the area of the Cortez slow speed zone. They stopped and performed a boating safety inspection on a vessel traveling the Intracoastal Waterway. During the inspection, the officers discovered that all three subjects in the vessel were under the age of twenty-one and were in possession of a cooler full of beer. The young men also lied to the officers about their real age. All three young men were cited criminally for possession of alcohol by a minor.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Captain Carpenter and Lieutenant Frantz attended a juvenile snook release sponsored by the Coastal Conservation Association and Mote Marine Institute. The approximately 1,000 fingerling snook were released into Anger Creek and Tippy Canoe Estuary with many people and media in attendance to observe this special event.

PASCO COUNTY

Numerous FWC officers participated in the nationwide “Operation Dry Water” campaign. While on water patrol and conducting inspections, officers encountered two operators that showed signs of impairment. Both operators participated in seated field sobriety tasks and were arrested for boating under the influence.

SOUTH REGION A

CASES

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Leathers completed a boating accident investigation that involved multiple vessels. A large vessel was operated through the Commercial Boulevard Bridge Idle Speed Zone on the Intracoastal Waterway creating a large wake. The wake caused damage to six other vessels. One person was injured as he tried to fend his vessel off the dock. The operator of the vessel that created the wake was cited for the criminal violations of leaving the scene of the accident and reckless operation.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Corteguera responded to a report of a large exotic snake in a residential area. Upon arrival, he identified the snake as a six-foot-long red-tailed boa constrictor. He was able to capture the snake and relocate it. Attempts to locate the owner of the snake have been unsuccessful. Officer Nall assisted on this incident.

Captive Wildlife Investigator Corteguera conducted a follow up inspection at a pet shop that had previous violations documented. Upon the reinspection, sanitation and animal welfare issues were still present. Additionally, the store did not have the required license to sell wildlife. Three misdemeanor citations and two warnings were issued for the violations. The wildlife section of the pet store was closed until a proper license is obtained. Officer Nall assisted on this incident.

MARTIN COUNTY

While conducting vessel patrol near the St. Lucie Inlet State Park, Officers Morrow and Pecko saw a vessel underway with several fishing rods onboard. They conducted a vessel stop for a saltwater fisheries inspection. Upon boarding the vessel, Officer Morrow saw a small child (two years of age) onboard the vessel, without a personal flotation device (PFD). A boating safety inspection revealed that the vessel captain did not have a proper size PFD for the toddler. While speaking with the captain, Officer Morrow saw several clues indicating possible impairment and conducted seated field sobriety tasks. The operator was placed under the arrest for boating under the influence and was transported to the Martin County Jail. He provided a sample of his breath for determining his breath alcohol content (BAC). The operator was cited for BUI (person under 18 onboard the vessel with BAC over .15) and issued a citation for PFD not worn by child under 6 years of age.

Officer Hudson was patrolling offshore from the St. Lucie Inlet when he saw a vessel drifting. He saw an individual cutting fish, multiple fishing rods and initiated a vessel stop to conduct a fisheries inspection. The subject stated he had three kingfish, one over the day bag limit, and that he had already filleted them. The officer took possession of two bags filled with fillets and asked the subject if he had any other fish inside the bags. The subject admitted he had some filleted barracuda and Spanish mackerel inside the bags with the Kingfish. The subject was given a notice to appear for possession of filleted kingfish and warnings for possessing Spanish mackerel and reef fish filleted, over the bag limit of kingfish, and no valid saltwater fishing license.

Officers Moss and Hudson were patrolling off shore from the St. Lucie Inlet and saw a vessel with multiple rods on board heading in from fishing. The officers initiated a vessel stop to conduct a fisheries inspection. Upon inspection, the two individuals on board were found in possession of 8 dolphin, all of which were undersized. The two subjects were cited accordingly for possession of undersize dolphin.

Officer Pecko was on patrol when he saw three vehicles in a turn lane with their hazard lights on. He stopped to check the situation and found that there was an accident involving three vehicles. Officer Pecko saw signs of impairment from the driver of the

striking vehicle and conducted standardized field sobriety tasks. The subject was placed under arrest for driving under the influence causing property damage.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers Schroer and Moss conducted a fisheries inspection on a pay for hire fishing charter vessel drifting in federal waters. During the inspection, Officer Schroer found vermilion snapper onboard. When asked, the captain of the charter advised he did not have a Federal Snapper-Grouper Charter/Head-boat Permit as required by United States federal law. The captain received a federal citation for the violation.

ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Captive Wildlife Investigator Toby performed an inspection of a facility possessing a squirrel monkey. Upon arrival, he learned the individual licensed for the animal passed away several years ago, and his wife continued to submit the renewal applications on his behalf. Caging and sanitation violations were found during the inspection as well. Two misdemeanor citations and three warnings were issued for the violations, and information was provided on how to bring all violations into compliance.

SOUTH REGION B

CASES

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Officer Bruder and Officer Stanton were on water patrol around Haulover sandbar. They witnessed a vessel on plane in a no wake zone and stopped the vessel to address the violation and conduct a safety check. The operator of the vessel exhibited signs of impairment and field sobriety tasks were conducted. The subject was arrested for boating under the influence, refused to provide a breath sample and was transported to jail.

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Tafoya was on water patrol offshore off Islamorada near Alligator Reef. He spotted a vessel running inshore that was displaying several fishing rods and reels and conducted a vessel stop for a resource inspection. Thirty-three dolphin were onboard, thirteen over the daily bag limit. Twenty-five of the dolphin measured undersized. One of the men admitted to catching and keeping all the fish for himself. He was issued a notice to appear in court.

Officer Larios and Mobley responded to a tip of people spearfishing under the Tavernier Creek Bridge in the Upper Keys. When he arrived on scene, he saw a man in the water, searching under rocks along the shoreline with a speargun in his hand; the man's

cousin was on the shoreline as well. Officer Larios asked the subject to exit the water and they walked to the man's vehicle to retrieve his ID card. Officer Larios noticed that there were several fishing poles and coolers in the vehicle. Officer Larios looked in the coolers and discovered six out of season spiny lobster of which five were undersize, thirteen mangrove snapper of which nine were undersize, two undersize schoolmaster snapper, and several other unregulated fish as well as a bonnet head shark. One of the men was arrested for the snapper bag and size limit violations, spearfishing in the upper keys, and the lobster violations. The other man was issued a notice to appear in court for the snapper size and bag limit violations.

Investigator Mattson was on water patrol in the area of Tea Table Channel Oceanside when he saw two men fishing on the shore. An inspection of their cooler revealed a Florida spiny lobster. One of the men admitted to catching the lobster and was arrested for possession of undersize lobster and possession of lobster out of season. He was transported to the Monroe County Jail.

Officer McKay was notified by the local USCG Commercial Vessels Investigator of an incident involving a local glass bottom boat and 2 dive boats. The glass bottom boat was recorded by a commercial dive operator passing between the only 2 boats at Molasses's Reef off Key Largo while diver down flags were displayed and divers/snorkelers were in the water. These two boats were less than 100 yards apart at the time. The video from the glass bottom boat also recorded the violation. Statutes provide that a vessel must first try to avoid passing within 300 feet of a dive flag in open waters. If this is not possible, such as when numerous other boats are present, passage is permitted within 300 feet of a dive flag at idle speed. Another boat captain from the same glass bottom boat operation was arrested 6 months prior for the same violation. Criminal charges are being filed by FWC and the USCG is looking into license suspensions with other potential penalties.

Investigator Mattson responded to a possible lobster violation in the area of Tea Table Relief Bridge by the FWC Dispatch Center. Although, no lobster violations were identified, a resource inspection of a man fishing revealed that he was in possession of four undersize mutton snapper and two undersize gray snapper. He also did not have a saltwater fishing license. He was cited for the violations.

Officer Maldonado and Lieutenant McDaniel were on water patrol in the area of Carysfort Reef in North Key Largo. They saw a vessel near Turtle Reef moving while divers were in the water near the vessel. No dive flag was displayed. As the patrol vessel approached, the operator maneuvered his vessel to shield the divers from the approaching FWC vessel. The officers saw a young female diver and an older male diver, both with snorkeler gear and pole spears. An inspection revealed nine undersize and speared hogfish, the biggest measured fourteen inches in fork length. The female diver was a teenage minor. The father explained to the officers he was teaching his daughter how to spearfish, and he did not realize he was in violation. The father was cited for nine undersize and over the bag limit of hogfish. He was also warned for

spearfishing in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and failure to display a divers down flag.

COLLIER COUNTY

While on federal fisheries patrol, Officers Trueblood, Foell, and Jacobs saw a vessel fishing within the East Hump Marine Protected Area. As the officers approached, they saw people on the port stern deep drop fishing with an electric fishing reel. The officers conducted a fisheries inspection and located multiple snowy grouper and blue line tile fish. Deep drop bottom fishing as well as possession of fish within the South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper complex is prohibited within the East Hump Marine Protected Area. The officers issued federal citations for the violations.

Officer Kleis was on water patrol when he saw a group of people fishing under a local bridge. He conducted a resource and fishing license inspection on the group. Each member of the group had a valid fishing license and denied having caught any fish. An inspection of their vehicle located an undersized redfish and other fish hidden under equipment. One person in the group admitted to catching and keeping the fish. The redfish was seized as evidence and the subject was cited for possession of an undersized redfish.

Officer Reams and Yurewitch were conducting late-night land patrol in Picayune Strand State Forest when they saw a vehicle enter the area after hours. When the officers reached the south end of the forest, they saw a light and multiple gun shots were heard. They continued watching the vehicle, and as it began making its way back they initiated a traffic stop. The investigation determined that the subjects were target shooting with a pistol. The subjects were cited for being in the state forest after hours, driving on non-designated roads/trails, and not paying the appropriate state forest fee.

Officers Wagner and Knutson were on water patrol when they saw a white skiff with one occupant come to plane well before a resume normal operation zone. They conducted a vessel stop and as they came alongside noticed the operator had his eyes closed and was bobbing his head back and forth as if he was dozing off. Field sobriety tasks were conducted to determine impairment. The operator was placed under arrest for boating while normal faculties impaired and transported to Naples Jail Center where he refused to provide a breath sample.

While on water patrol Officers Yurewitch and Reams were flagged down by a Collier County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit. The deputies were engaged in a vessel stop with an illegal charter operation. The vessel failed to meet the requirement for adequate commercial boating safety equipment. The vessel was registered as a recreational vessel, and the captain did not have the proper documentation to be operating as a charter boat. The officers issued multiple citations for the violations and turned the vessel stop over to United States Coast Guard. The USCG is conducting a further investigation into the illegal charter operation.

Officers Araujo and Conroy were on water patrol in Hurricane Pass. They saw a vessel traveling extremely close to the mangroves and initiated a vessel stop for a boating safety inspection. The vessel operator exhibited signs of impairment and standardized field sobriety tasks were utilized. The operator was placed under arrest for boating under the influence and transported to the Naples Jail Center.

Officers Reams and Yurewitch responded to a call that a side by side utility vehicle was stuck in water on a trail in the Picayune Strand State Forest. The operator reported they had been in a bad storm and were in distress. The officers located the adult and child on a flooded trail. The officers were able to winch the vehicle free and guided them back to the main road. The operator was issued citations for several state forest violations.

Officer McVaney was on land patrol and saw a vehicle swerving and following another vehicle too closely. Officer McVaney initiated a vehicle stop and could smell a strong odor of alcohol and marijuana coming from the vehicle. Standardized field sobriety tasks were utilized, and he was arrested for driving under the influence. A search of the vehicle revealed about 5 grams of marijuana. The driver was charged accordingly and transported to the Naples Jail.

Officer McVaney was on foot patrol on the SS Jolley Bridge when he saw a vessel enter the Flotilla Passage, a slow speed manatee zone, on plane. He identified the person operating the vessel and was able to address the violation at the boat ramp. While speaking to the vessel operator, signs of impairment were evident. Standardized field sobriety tasks were utilized, and the operator was arrested for boating under the influence. The operator was cited accordingly and transported to the Naples Jail.

Officer Yurewitch was on patrol near Everglades City and approached several individuals fishing from a bridge. A resource inspection of a cooler revealed one 16-inch Red Drum. The officer determined who had caught the fish during a short investigation and the subject was appropriately cited for the violation.

Officers Arbogast and Stearns responded to a call about several individuals who were cast netting and keeping bass at Freedom Park. Officer Arbogast located two subjects leaving the water's edge and an inspection of their bucket revealed a 19-inch largemouth bass, along with several other unregulated freshwater species of fish. When asked who caught the fish, several family members pointed to one of the male subjects who was holding a cast net with no other means of catching fish. The subject was cited for illegal method of catching freshwater game fish and for not possessing a valid freshwater fishing license.

Officer Kleis was on late night water patrol when he saw a vessel operating with no navigation lights. Upon stopping the vessel to address the violation, it was determined that the vessel was rented from a local livery. The officer contacted the owner of the livery and arranged to meet him at the dock. The livery owner intentionally took the navigation lights off his vessels before renting them to customers. The owner of the company was charged with renting a vessel without proper equipment.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING – EXPANDING PARTICIPATION IN CONSERVATION

MONROE COUNTY

Officer Dube was the guest host on several local radio shows promoting “Operation Dry Water” and Safe Boating for the July 4th Weekend. He shared boating accident and BUI stats as they relate to boating. Officer Dube also discussed diver and dive flag safety and tips on how to stay safe during the long July 4th Weekend.

COLLIER COUNTY

Officer Rubenstein volunteered at the Everglades Youth Conservation Camp held at the J.W. Corbett Wild Management Area, a protected 60,348 acres located in Palm Beach County. Officer Rubenstein spent the week with over 100 very motivated kids and helped the campers with fishing, kayaking, hiking, snorkeling, archery and shooting firearms. Officer Rubenstein assisted with the “Hunter Education Course” and taught the kids how to shoot clay pigeons. The campers were also taught archery, tree stand safety, and how to locate game in the woods.

While on foot patrol in the Clam Pass area, Officers Araujo and Conroy saw two young males fishing with rods and a cast net. The boys had caught a redfin and a snook. The boys showed the officers the undersized redfish but had already returned the snook to the water. The officers saw the opportunity to create a positive conservation teaching point. They educated the boys on the importance of conservation, fishing size limits, seasons, and special closures. Officer Conroy showed the boys how to properly revive the redfish to give it the best chance for survival. The redfish swam away unharmed by the encounter.

MAJOR WILDLIFE ASSISTANCE

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Officer Washington was dispatched to a report of two turtles found chained together in the Miami River. The complainants were removing trash from the river when they discovered the tethered reptiles. They gave the yellow-bellied sliders to Officer Washington which he transported to the Miami field office. He used bolt cutters to safely break the lock and chain then freed the turtles to a freshwater canal where they swam away.

FWC officers assisted Miami Dade County DERM to seek and remove over 110 derelict and otherwise unauthorized blue crab traps, stone crab traps, and several unidentifiable sea-life trapping devices made from household items (lacking the required tagging and construction specifications of approved equipment) from the waters of Biscayne Bay National Park. These illegal, derelict, or abandoned trap removals are critical to the

healthy conservation of the targeted harvest species as well as countless species affected as by-catch, which ultimately die in the untended traps. Additionally, the removal of derelict traps and other debris found in Biscayne Bay National Park is important to the health of the ecosystem, as human interference and pollution are one of the most significant threats to the environment. Officer Coscullela and Officer Delgado spent hours securing the area and helping with the removal of the traps.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

MIAMI DADE COUNTY

Officer Washington was on water patrol when he was dispatched to the area of Haulover sandbar. He was the first responder on scene and found an unconscious victim aboard a pontoon boat anchored at the sandbar. He boarded the vessel and rendered first aid until the subject regained consciousness. When fire rescue arrived, the subject was moved to the FWC patrol vessel and transported to the nearest dock at Haulover Marina. EMTs transported the subject to Aventura hospital.

COLLIER COUNTY

Officers Yurewitch and Reams were on land patrol in a remote area of Hendry County near the Collier County line. They were contacted by an individual who said that his son and friends had just rolled a truck. The officers, with assistance from FWC aviation, located the crashed vehicle in a remote farm field. The officers arrived and saw individuals standing around a crash victim who suffered severe back, hip, and leg injuries. The officers monitored the severely injured victim and a second injured party who suffered a possible head injury. The officers, along with the help of citizens made sure the crash victims were alert and conscious and monitored them until EMS arrived. Due to the location of the crash, the officers used their patrol vehicle to escort EMS to the scene and assisted with preparing the safe removal of the crash victims.

MONROE COUNTY

Officers Dube, Robison and Trueblood responded to an airplane crash near the Taverno airstrip in the Upper Keys. Officers responded by vessel to assist at the crash site. The pilot and passenger were transported to shore by a Good Samaritan vessel and were treated by EMS. They only received minor injuries and were released. Lt. Lyne gathered information from the crash and the report will be turned over to the FAA for their investigation.