

**NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife  
Monthly Highlights  
Bureau of Law Enforcement  
January 21, 2021- February 20, 2021**

J. Sean Cianciulli, Chief  
Frank Panico, Deputy Chief  
Jason Snellbaker, Deputy Chief  
L. Anne Quirk, Captain – Administration  
Tom O'Rourke, Lieutenant - Training  
Paul Toppin, Lieutenant– Training  
Joseph Soell, Conservation Police Officer - Administration

**Northern Region (908) 735-8240**

Douglas Applegate, Captain  
Steven Sutton, Lieutenant (District 1)  
Joseph Kuechler, Lieutenant (District 2)  
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator  
Vacant, Administrative Assistant 1

**Central Region (609) 259-2120**

Shannon Martiak, Captain  
Bryan Mascio, Lieutenant (District 3)  
Vacant, Lieutenant (District 4)  
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator  
Shari Irick, Technical Assistant 2

**Southern Region (856) 629-0555**

Lisa Lacroix, Captain  
Zane Batten, Lieutenant (District 5)  
Craig James, Lieutenant (District 6)  
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator  
Sue Canale, Agency Services Representative

**Marine Region (609) 748-2050**

Vacant, Captain  
Brian Scott, Lieutenant (District 7)  
Chris Petruccelli, Lieutenant (District 8)  
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator  
Noreen White, Agency Services Representative

Conservation Police Officers report a total of 6367.3 hours of duty (6196.7- 2020). These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

	<u><b>2021</b></u>	<u><b>2020</b></u>
Total Law Enforcement	4398.1	4336.1
Fishing	293.3	228.9
Marine Resources	971.5	1031.2
Hunting	401.4	300.7
Deer Hunting	1094.2	550.7
Trapping	204.2	140.3
Wildlife Mgt. Areas	530.9	315.8
NG & Endangered Species	8.8	54.3
Court	58	109.9
Regional Meetings	0	0
Pollution Investigation	26.7	74.3
Training	252.1	935.4
Other Law Enforcement	557	594.7
Administration	1915.9	1806.6
Fish Management	1	0
Wildlife Management	47.8	44.3
Information & Education	4.5	9.7

Bear Control	0	0
Bear Patrol and Investigation	0	0

During patrols, officers performed 1820 field inspections (1218 -2020) of hunters, fishermen or trappers and the resultant caseload is tabulated:

Law Enforcement Regions

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>	<u>Adm.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>2020</u>
Summonses issued	40	42	83	5	0	170	117
Criminal Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Warnings issued	5	1	0	3	0	9	5
Bear Feeding Warnings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Field Inspections by Region

Administration	0
Northern Region	667
Central Region	378
Southern Region	636
Marine Region	139
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,820</b>

Field Inspections by Activity:

Hunters	623
Freshwater Anglers	501
Trappers	27
Commercial Fishermen	34
Marine Rec. Anglers	84
WMA non-hunting/fishing	510
Other	41

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>	<u>Adm.</u>
Fishing	21	0	0	0	0
Hunting	1	0	4	0	0
Waterfowl Hunting	0	3	1	0	0
Deer Hunting	18	27	18	0	0
Trapping	0	0	1	0	0
WMA	0	9	58	0	0
Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
Shellfish	0	0	0	0	0
Title 2C	0	0	0	0	0
Marine-Commercial	0	0	0	1	0
Marine-Recreational	0	0	0	4	0
Nongame & Exotic	0	0	0	0	0
Title 58	0	0	0	0	0
Title 39	0	3	1	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Bear Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Bear Feeding	0	0	0	0	0
Marine Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: \$32,868.55

Call volume (reports of violations, general questions, requests for assistance, etc.) received at region offices:

North	* numbers not reported due to office closure
Central	166
South	* numbers not reported due to office closure
Marine	90

**Total calls received: 256**

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of 2/20/21:

Administration - 7

1 Chief  
2 Deputy Chief  
1 CPO I - Admin  
2 CPO IIs – Training  
1 CPO III- Admin

Northern Region – 11

1 CPO I  
2 CPO IIs  
8 CPO IIIs

Central Region - 9

1 CPO I  
1 CPO IIs  
6 CPO IIIs  
1 Technical Assistant 2

Southern Region - 12

1 CPO I  
2 CPO IIs  
8 CPO IIIs  
1 Agency Services Rep

Marine Region - 15

2 CPO IIs  
12 CPO IIIs  
1 Agency Services Rep

**Total Employees: 54**

**Northern Region Highlights**

With most lakes in District 1 having 6-12 inches of ice on them, District 1 CPOs conducted numerous patrols focusing on ice fishing activity. The patrols resulted in a total of 461 inspections. Summonses were issued for the following: Eleven summonses for fishing without a valid license, four for ice fishing with more than 5 devices, three for possession of undersized pickerel and one for possession of over the limit of pickerel.

On Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 Lt. Sutton received information about a hunter who was suspected of hunting from his vehicle over a bait pile in Hope Township, Warren County. Lt. Sutton was able to setup surveillance on the suspect vehicle, which was parked at the edge of a fallow field, overlooking a large pile of corn. Lt. Sutton observed the occupant of the vehicle seated in the driver seat, wearing camouflage clothing and approached the vehicle on foot. He contacted the occupant, who was in possession of a loaded and uncased shotgun inside of the vehicle. CPOs Hausamann and Della Vella responded to assist. An interview of the hunter revealed that he had previously harvested two antlered deer during the permit shotgun season but failed to register them. A total of seven summonses were issued for possess a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle, possess an uncased firearm in a motor vehicle, hunt with the aid of a motor vehicle, fail to exhibit a valid hunting license upon request, hunt with a

firearm without wearing fluorescent hunter's orange and fail to register a deer by 7pm on the day of harvest.

On Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021, CPO A. Sutton was patrolling in Hope Township, Warren County when he observed a vehicle parked in a field. He approached the vehicle and contacted the occupant, who was in possession of a loaded and uncased shotgun inside of the vehicle. After an inspection, measurements were taken, which showed that the hunter was also inside the safety zone of a nearby residence. Summonses were issued for possess a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle, possess an uncased firearm in a motor vehicle, hunt with the aid of a motor vehicle and possess a loaded firearm within 450 feet of an occupied dwelling.

On Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, CPO Holmes received an Operation Game Thief Complaint of possible trespass to recover a deer that may have been shot on Friday, January 29<sup>th</sup>. The complainant advised that they located blood on their property before the snowfall and learned that their neighbor had given a hunter permission to recover a deer. The hunter provided their phone number to the neighbor. The owner of the phone number was found to have had a current hunting license but did not register any deer in the database for 2021. A subsequent interview of the hunter was conducted and although the possible trespass could not be determined, the hunter did recover and remove the deer from the area but had not registered it as required. The appropriate summons was issued.

On Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021, CPO Anderson received a complaint of a captive deer in Franklin Township, Somerset County. From a public road, CPO Anderson was able to see a whitetail deer in a homeowner's backyard, that was completely surrounded by a 6 foot high fence. CPO Anderson and Lieutenant Kuechler interviewed the property owner who admitted to finding the deer in the spring when it was a fawn. The homeowner claimed it was injured at the time and that they were rehabilitating it in her home. Personnel from the Wildlife Control Unit tranquilized the deer and removed it from the residence. The appropriate summons for possessing the deer was issued.

#### Central Region Highlights

CPO Riviello, on his off day, received a complaint of two deer hunters within 450 feet of an occupied building in Evesham Twp., Burlington County. Lt. Mascio responded to the complaint and observed one hunter without the required fluorescent hunter orange while he was deer hunting. Upon inspection, both hunters did not possess a 2021 hunting license, and possessed a loaded firearm within 450 feet of an occupied building. The hunters were issued a total of five summonses.

In Evesham Twp., Burlington County, Lt. Mascio and CPO Garofalo responded to a complaint of a hunter possibly trespassing. Lt. Mascio and CPO Garofalo each proceeded on foot patrol on two different pieces of property. Lt. Mascio observed an individual in a tree stand hunting without the required fluorescent hunter orange. Upon inspection, the hunter possessed a loaded firearm after the legal hunting time and was hunting without the required orange. The hunter did have permission to hunt on the posted property. The appropriate summonses were issued.

CPOs Garofalo and Riviello were investigating a complaint of an individual that harvested a deer during the closed deer season. CPO Garofalo observed in the snow a fresh blood trail and gut pile. The footprints and drag marks in the snow led directly to the backyard of a nearby house. The following morning, as CPO Riviello was walking to the door of the individual's house, CPO Riviello observed a dead deer in the bed of a pickup truck. CPO Riviello contacted the individual, who

admitted to harvesting the deer. The individual was issued summonses for illegally harvesting a deer during the closed season and failure to tag/register a deer.

CPO Mutone recently concluded an illegal solid waste dumping case that occurred in Greenwood WMA that involved a homeowner discarding the material from his kitchen renovation. A fine of \$1000 and restitution for \$1266 totaling \$2266 was imposed by the municipal court.

Lt. Mascio received a call very early in the morning from a local police department. A police officer had responded to an individual that was requesting a roadkill permit, but felt the individual was not being truthful. CPO Garofalo met with the officer and, upon further investigation, agreed that the evidence on scene did not match the driver's story. It appeared that the deer was killed with an arrow. CPO Garofalo seized the antlered deer and the individual was charged with unlawful possession of deer parts, failure to tag/register a deer, and illegal manner and means.

CPO Bickerton and Capt. Martiak performed a virtual Zoom presentation to a Rutgers University Criminal Justice class. The presentation discussed the history, mission, and duties of the NJ State Conservation Police. CPO Bickerton also spoke about his experience as a new officer in the law enforcement profession.

CPO Garofalo and USFW Officer Butler were working a joint patrol in Upper Freehold, Monmouth County. The officers observed a hunter walking out of the woods with two firearms. The hunter stated his friend was behind him dragging a deer. CPO Garofalo followed the footprints in the snow and observed an individual dragging a deer. The hunter stated that he was not hunting and just helping his friend drag a deer out. Upon further questioning, the hunter admitted that he did not have his license on him and that he had shot the deer. CPO Garofalo did a search in the license database and learned the hunter was an apprentice hunter. The hunter did not have a permit for the zone. The appropriate summonses were issued to the hunter.

Lt. Mascio was patrolling on the last day of firearm deer season in Robbinsville Twp., Mercer County, in an area known for frequent safety zone violations. Lt. Mascio observed a group of hunters starting to perform a deer drive. CPOs Garofalo, Riviello and Carman responded to the area. Lt. Mascio observed the drive to its completion and noted one hunter shot numerous deer. Upon completion of the drive, that hunter was charged with fail to tag deer upon harvest, and over the limit of deer. A second hunter was charged with two summonses for fail to tag/register deer and was charged criminally for being a person that is prohibited from possessing a firearm. The hunter was released on his own recognizance on three different warrants.

CPO Carman responded to Stafford Forge WMA late one night to locate a stranded motorist. With the assistance of the NJ State Police, the occupants were located attempting to walk out to a roadway. The vehicle was removed and reunited with the occupants.

### Southern Region Highlights

Conservation Police Officers responded to a large party in the White Oak Wildlife Management Area in Monroe Township, Gloucester County. Officers arrived prior to the 9PM closure time to find more than 150 individuals gathered around a bonfire. As the officers arrived, individuals fled in multiple directions and were intercepted at entry locations to the WMA. Officers issued approximately 75

summonses for violations of alcohol possession, litter, operation of vehicles off established roadways and ATV violations.

CPOs Vazquez and Killie conducted an investigation on a Washington Township, Gloucester County hunter who harvested a deer during the permit shotgun season prior to purchasing a permit. The harvest was registered by a properly licensed hunter as if it was legal. Ultimately the deer was taken to the state of New York by the individual who shot it. The interview produced a confession from the individual who registered the deer, that he did not harvest it. CPO Vazquez contacted NY Conservation Officers who conducted a second interview of the shooter who forfeited the deer's antlers and confessed to having shot it without a permit. Both individuals were charged with fictitious registration, borrowing/ loaning a license & illegal possession.

In 2019, CPO Vazquez initiated an investigation of a Winslow Twp., Camden County hunter who was found to have anomalies in his "earn a buck" requirements. The respondent provided enough information to satisfy the requirements of having shot a doe prior to harvesting a trophy class buck. In 2020, additional "timestamped" information was provided indicating the buck was shot prior to the doe being harvested. CPO Vazquez conducted a secondary interview to no avail. The individual was charged with illegal possession, failure to properly register, interference and failure to harvest antlerless deer before an antlered.

#### Marine Region Highlights

CPO Sloan conducted a commercial fishing inspection on a commercial vessel that entered Cape May Harbor and headed directly to a secluded dock area. The inspection revealed that the Federally required Vessel Trip Report had not been completed, and that other Vessel Trip Reports were incorrect. The operator made a comment that he was glad he had checked the hold before the officer had arrived, as he had found about a dozen undersized summer flounder and disposed of them. CPO Sloan still found thirty undersized summer flounder on board the vessel. The operator was issued a state summons for possession of commercially undersized summer flounder and the trip report violations were referred to National Marine Fisheries Service for Federal enforcement action.