

**NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
Monthly Highlights
Bureau of Law Enforcement
February 21, 2021- March 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 6176.1 hours of duty (6726.5- 2020). These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Total Law Enforcement	4396.1	4763.6
Fishing	931	648.1
Marine Resources	1365.2	1149.5
Hunting	160.9	104.5
Deer Hunting	46.5	64.2
Trapping	94.1	50.2
Wildlife Mgt. Areas	736.6	572
NG & Endangered Species	49.5	31.2
Court	77.1	53
Regional Meetings	3	67.7
Pollution Investigation	26.4	45
Training	383	1454.4
Other Law Enforcement	522.8	523.8
Administration	1623.4	1758.7
Fish Management	57.5	37.2
Wildlife Management	76.1	52
Information & Education	23	115

Bear Control	0	7.2
Bear Patrol and Investigation	0	8.7

During patrols, officers performed 1785 field inspections (1712 -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	22	113	23	11	0	169	147
Criminal Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Warnings issued	2	0	0	5	0	7	16
Bear Feeding Warnings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Field Inspections by Region

Administration	0
Northern Region	501
Central Region	486
Southern Region	400
Marine Region	398
Total	1,785

Field Inspections by Activity:

Hunters	64
Freshwater Anglers	753
Trappers	9
Commercial Fishermen	62
Marine Rec. Anglers	330
WMA non-hunting/fishing	449
Other	68

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>	<u>Adm.</u>
Fishing	17	9	1	0	0
Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Waterfowl Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Deer Hunting	0	2	4	0	0
Trapping	0	0	0	0	0
WMA	0	97	15	0	0
Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
Shellfish	0	0	0	1	0
Title 2C	0	0	0	0	0
Marine-Commercial	0	0	0	4	0
Marine-Recreational	5	0	1	6	0
Nongame & Exotic	0	0	0	0	0
Title 58	0	0	0	0	0
Title 39	0	5	0	0	0
Other	0	0	2	0	0
Bear Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Bear Feeding	0	0	0	0	0
Marine Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	22	113	23	11	0

Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: \$34,452.01

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

North	* numbers not reported due to office closure
Central	158
South	* numbers not reported due to office closure
Marine	136

Total calls received: 294

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of 3/20/21:

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

District 1 CPOs continued to conduct patrols focusing on ice fishing activity. The patrols resulted in a total of 233 inspections. Summonses were issued for the following: seven summonses for fishing without a valid license and one summons for wrongful procurement of a resident fishing license.

On Saturday, March 20th, 2021 CPO Merritt conducted freshwater fishing patrols in Musconetcong River and Budd Lake in Mount Olive. Eight fishermen were inspected, and five summonses were issued. One summons for possession of four black crappie over the daily limit and four summonses for fishing without a valid license.

Central Region Highlights

CPO Riviello gave a presentation and answered questions during the antler shed hunting webinar presented by the Division of Fish and Wildlife. CPO Riviello provided information pertaining to the rules and regulations of antler shed hunting.

CPO Riviello inspected a bow hunter during the winter bow season. During the inspection, several numbers on the hunter's bow license appeared to be incorrect. CPO Riviello continued his investigation by utilizing the license database. CPO Riviello concluded that the hunter did not complete a hunter education course as required. The individual was charged with purchasing two bow hunting licenses without completing hunter education.

Lt. Mascio, CPOs Riviello, Garofalo, Mutone, McManus, Carmen and Bickerton focused the past month on the increase in illegal activities on the state wildlife management areas (WMAs) in the Central Region. The CPOs increased their patrols on the Greenwood and Colliers Mills WMAs. Even with the colder weather, the CPOs saw extremely high numbers of people engaged in illegal activities on the WMAs. The amount of illegal ATVs/dirt bikes/off-road vehicles, and large parties greatly outnumbered the CPOs. Well over 100 summonses were issued. The summonses included entering a state wildlife management area after legal hours, operating an ATV/dirt bike on a WMA, unregistered vehicle on a WMA, destruction of vegetation/soil, interference with the duties of a conservation police officer, operating a motor vehicle/ATV/ dirt bike in a prohibited area, build/maintain a fire, camping on a WMA, consume alcohol on a WMA, operating a motor vehicle/ATV/ dirt bike off an established road, operated motor vehicle without a seatbelt, failure to exhibit driver license. Four ATVs were also impounded.

CPO Carman has been conducting CPR recertifications for the CPOs throughout the various regions. In addition, officers were retrained on treating patients involved in motor vehicle and ATV accidents.

Capt. Martiak performed ice rescue training at Lake Hopatcong for the new conservation police officers. The NJ State Police Marine unit also attended the training. Officers were instructed on techniques to perform self-rescues and how to safely rescue victims that fall through the ice.

CPO Carman responded to Allenhurst Borough for a complaint of a contractor removing an osprey nest from a construction site. During the investigation, CPO Carman determined that there existed a CAFRA permit and one of the conditions of this permit was to secure a permit from NJDFW to relocate the nest. Unfortunately, this permit was not applied for. CPO Carman is currently working with the contractor to construct another nesting platform as a condition of the CAFRA permit.

Southern Region Highlights

CPOs Faith and Bahrle investigated a motor home that was left for several weeks at the Malibu Beach WMA in Egg Harbor Twp., Atlantic County. They found the motor home to be in a state of disrepair, with license plates removed. A look up of the VIN revealed a NJ registration that had been expired for ten years, but the vehicle did have a current PA registration. Through further investigation and records search the CPOs located an associated local address. The CPOs contacted the registered owner who told them that she had recently given the motor home to a family member but had not transferred the title. When asked, the woman refused to give contact information for the family member and would only say that they lived in Pennsylvania somewhere. The woman was advised that as the registered owner of the vehicle she was responsible for it. The motor home was impounded and the woman was issued the appropriate charges for abandoning the motor vehicle on a WMA.

CPO Kille was notified of an incident involving a man who was caught in a beaver trap in Woolwich Township, Gloucester County. The police department had reached out to the officer explaining that they had responded to a home where a man was entangled in a 330 conibear trap. After two officers

attempted to release the man without success, the fire department was called and utilized the jaws of life to cut the man free. The follow up investigation revealed the homeowner had set the beaver trap around the perimeter of his home to control the woodchuck issues he had been experiencing. The homeowner was issued summonses for setting a killer type trap that was not submerged and for untagged traps.

Marine Region Highlights

On February 25th, 2021 CPOs Moscatiello and Henderson conducted an inspection of a commercial fishing vessel in Point Pleasant Beach, Ocean County. Prior to the inspection, the CPOs had confirmed that the vessel had notified the Department with their intent to land 4000 pounds of summer flounder. Upon inspection, the vessel was found to be in possession of nearly 300 pounds over the 4000-pound trip limit. When CPO Moscatiello confronted the operator with his final pack-out weight, the operator then claimed that the extra summer flounder were supposed to have been left on the boat under the vessel's Possession in Excess of Daily Limit Vessel license which allows vessels to enter port and offload New Jersey's trip limit while retaining summer flounder and black sea bass onboard that is bound for another state. The vessel had failed to notify the Department of any excess summer flounder landing, which is a requirement in the new law. The vessel and operator were issued summonses for landing summer flounder over the daily trip limit and failing to notify the Department prior to landing summer flounder in excess of the daily trip limit.

On March 12th, 2021 officers in district 8 received a complaint from the Marine Mammal Stranding Center regarding a possible Harbor Seal harassment incident that occurred in Atlantic City. According to the complaint, an individual had taken video of himself approaching and petting a Harbor Seal that had hauled out onto one of the jetties in Atlantic City. CPOs Szelc and Meyer obtained the videos and identification of the suspected individual and conducted an interview the following day. Through the course of the interview, the suspect admitted to creating the video and making contact with the seal. The individual was advised of the protections provided to seals under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and that his actions constituted a harassment violation. The case was forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Law Enforcement for further enforcement action.

CPO Meyer conducted inspections of commercial surf clam vessels in Atlantic City last month and encountered multiple Federal violations. The violations included unlawful possession of undocumented Atlantic sea scallops, failure to accurately complete fishing vessel trip reports, and expired Federal operator identification cards. The cases were referred to National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Law Enforcement for further enforcement action.

Training Highlights

The Training Unit hosted an Accelerated Handgun Skills training class for the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center at Colliers Mills Training Facility. The class was presented by Retired Capt. Mike Boyle. The block of instruction explored some alternate drills that go well beyond the typical police qualification course. The course was heavily focused on operational skills and basic tactics and balancing speed vs. accuracy. The class was attended by multiple state and local law enforcement agencies and well received.