

FWC DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT FIELD OPERATIONS

**WEEKLY REPORT
September 4 - 10, 2009**

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

NORTHWEST REGION

ESCAMBIA COUNTY

Officer Kenneth Manning and Lieutenant Brian Lambert stopped a vessel on Pensacola Bay in which all occupants were fishing. Two undersize gag grouper were discovered during the inspection. One of the occupants admitted he caught both fish. Officer Manning issued the individual a notice to appear citation for the violation.

Officers Fred Rondeau and Keith Clark checked a vessel near the Pensacola Bay Bridge. The occupants were in possession of five undersize red snapper and one oversize red drum. Citations were issued citations for undersize red snapper and possession of red snapper in a closed season. A warning was issued for the oversize red drum.

Lieutenant Dan Hahr was conducting enhanced patrol in the Escambia River Wildlife Management Area when he observed two trucks parked at an secluded landing. The drivers were not present, but Lieutenant Hahr located them a short distance down the bank of the river. He watched them for a while as they fished and then observed one of them place a homemade pipe in his mouth. The subjects then walked back toward the trucks. When the subject with the pipe saw Lieutenant Hahr, he nonchalantly put the pipe on the bank and kept walking. The pipe appeared to contain drug residue and Lieutenant Hahr soon secured a small baggie of what appeared to be methamphetamine. After arresting and securing the subject, Lieutenant Hahr checked the other man's fishing license and noticed a pair of owl feet on the dash of the man's truck. A search of the truck revealed methamphetamine, various drug paraphernalia and methamphetamine manufacturing products and supplies. Lieutenant Hahr called the narcotics unit of Escambia County Sheriff's Office to assist. The makings of a meth lab were discovered and documented before being turned over to a hazmat contractor. Both men were charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia. The second subject was also charged with possession of listed chemicals, manufacture of meth, possession of cannabis and possession of protected migratory bird parts.

Officers observed several people fishing on Pensacola Bay near the Pensacola Bay Bridge. A boating safety and fisheries inspection found the fishermen to be in possession of an undersize red snapper. Officers issued the owner of the vessel a citation for possession of red snapper during the closed season.

Officers Fred Rondeau and Keith Clark stopped a vessel on Pensacola Bay and found the operator in possession of two undersize red snapper. Officer Rondeau issued a notice to appear citation for the violations.

Officer Fred Rondeau was unloading his gear from his patrol vessel when he overheard several people arguing at the Bayou Texar boat ramp. Officer Rondeau discovered the disturbance was the result of an incident occurring moments earlier at the Bayou Texar

Bridge. Apparently, an individual fishing from the nearby bridge threw his fishing lure over and hit a vessel that was passing by in a marked channel. The bridge fisherman and his wife walked down to the boat ramp and yelled obscenities at the vessel operator. When Officer Rondeau tried to speak with the bridge fisherman, he continued to be very agitated and refused to give his name or identification. At one point, he threatened to fight with Officer Rondeau. When Officer Rondeau pulled his pepper spray out, the individual reacted by picking up an approximately one-year-old child to shield himself. Officer Rondeau did not spray the individual but requested back up. Within moments, several Pensacola Police Officers arrived to assist. Officer Rondeau arrested the individual for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest without violence. The female subject was also arrested by Pensacola Police Officers on the same charges.

Officer Kenneth Manning and Captain Mary Sumner checked a vessel on Pensacola Bay. Twelve undersize red snapper were located on the vessel, with the largest measuring 11½ inches. The season is currently closed for red snapper and the possession limit is two. Officer Manning issued the vessel operator a notice to appear citation for possession of undersize red snapper and two warnings for the other violations.

Officer Fred Rondeau and Lieutenant Brian Lambert checked a vessel near Pensacola Pass. The vessel operator was found in possession of two undersize king mackerel. Officer Rondeau issued the individual a notice to appear citation for the violation.

SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Officer David Jernigan and Lieutenant Dan Hahr were checking fishermen at the foot of the Navarre Bridge. One subject was found in possession of two undersize spotted sea trout. Officer Jernigan issued the subject a notice to appear for the violation.

Officer Gary Ridaught and Lieutenant Dan Hahr were conducting fisheries inspections at the Garcon Point Bridge when they observed three subjects fishing at the base of the bridge. One subject was in possession of two redfish and admitted to catching both of them. Additionally, one of the fish was over the slot limit. The subject was issued a notice to appear citation for the bag limit violation and a warned for the oversize fish.

OKALOOSA COUNTY

Lieutenant Mark Hollinhead and Officers Steve Bartlett, Pete Rockwell and Danny Arnette responded to a boating accident in Fort Walton Beach after two vessels collided in Choctawhatchee Bay. Three occupants on board one vessel were fatally injured as a result of the crash. A preliminary investigation revealed navigational lights were displayed on both vessels when they collided. FWC investigators are waiting for results of blood samples taken from both operators to determine if alcohol contributed to the accident.

Lieutenant Mark Hollinhead observed a subject discard a bottle from a vehicle while traveling on Highway 90. When the driver was stopped, he provided a false name and date of birth. Lieutenant Hollinhead later obtained the driver's social security number which revealed his true identity and an active arrest warrant for writing numerous bad checks. When the driver was placed in custody, he continued being untruthful about his identity, but admitted to providing false information. He was booked into the Okaloosa County Jail for the active warrant and also charged with providing a false name while in custody.

Officer Matt Webb conducted fishery inspections in Destin Pass which revealed three separate fish violations for undersize trigger fish and amberjack. One of the captains with the undersize trigger fish had been charged earlier in the summer with undersize king mackerel. All three captains were cited for the fish violations.

Officers Pete Rockwell and Alan Kirchinger responded to a minor boating accident on Crab Island in Destin. The accident occurred when an operator of a personal watercraft (PWC) lost control of the vessel due to equipment failure. The PWC collided with another vessel, but only caused minor damage.

While on water patrol near Crab Island, Officers Alan Kirchinger and Pete Rockwell stopped a personal watercraft (PWC) towing a large inner tube with three occupants. The PWC operator was wearing a competition vest that was not U.S. Coast Guard approved. The tube passengers were not wearing the required life jackets. Officer Kirchinger observed signs of impairment from the PWC operator including confusion, slurred speech, slowed response and an odor of alcoholic beverage. Field sobriety tasks attempted by the PWC operator at the U.S. Coast Guard Station confirmed impairment. The operator was transported to the Okaloosa County Jail where after a two hour wait provided a breath sample of .027. Officer Kirchinger charged the PWC operator with operating while impaired and issued a warning for failure to wear U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets.

Officer Matt Webb stopped two vessels in Destin Pass to conduct fishery inspections. The inspections revealed undersize king mackerel on one of the vessels and undersize trigger fish on the other. Both captains were cited for the fish violations.

Officer Ryan Nelson and Captain Mary Sumner conducted an inspection on a vessel fishing near the rocks adjacent to the U.S. Coast Guard Station Destin. The inspection revealed undersize red fish on board. Officer Nelson issued a notice to appear citation for the violation.

OKALOOSA COUNTY COPS

Officer Ryan Nelson and Captain Mary Sumner provided a ride along for a Channel 3 news crew. The officers were filmed conducting vessel safety equipment inspections.

Officer Matt Webb taught the laws portion of the Hunter Safety course at the Okaloosa County Extension Office in Fort Walton Beach.

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Officer Carmon Brownell received information from an FWC Investigator that a vessel had been illegally harvesting oysters from the Eleven Mile area of Apalachicola Bay. After receiving a description of the vessel, Officer Brownell located and boarded the vessel as it returned to port and conducted a vessel safety and saltwater products inspection. The two harvesters denied having any oysters on board when asked by Officer Brownell. Upon further inspection, two and a half bags of oysters were found concealed within the vessel. The harvesters then admitted to harvesting the oysters from closed waters. Officer Brownell cited both individuals with misdemeanor charges of harvesting oysters from a conditionally approved area during a closure and returned the two and a half bags of oysters back to the water alive.

Officer Travis Huckeba located two commercial oyster vessels that appeared to be harvesting oysters from restricted waters adjacent to the Apalachicola River Channel. Officer Huckeba elicited the assistance of Officers Steven Cook and Chasen Yarborough to get a better look at the precise location of the vessels and to ascertain if the two vessels were actively engaged in harvesting oysters. Officers Cook and Yarborough confirmed the vessels' location and the activities of the occupants from a concealed location on the mainland. Officer Huckeba then proceeded to the vessels, which attempted to leave the restricted waters as he approached. Officer Huckeba stopped both vessels and then directed them to the mainland for inspection. Upon inspection, the two vessels were found to contain 14 bags of oysters harvested from the restricted waters. The four harvesters admitted to knowing they were in restricted waters while harvesting. The four were cited for ten misdemeanor charges pertaining to harvesting oysters from conditionally restricted waters, no saltwater products license and no Apalachicola Bay oyster permit. The 14 bags of oysters were seized and returned alive back into the restricted waters.

NORTH CENTRAL REGION

BAKER COUNTY

Officers Leslie Sharp, Harold Barry, and Todd Hoyle completed an investigation they had been working on for almost a week. Hunt club members alerted Officer Sharp to night time spot lighting occurring in their hunting lease. A member found a dead doe deer and additional drag marks where another deer had been shot and removed. The officers had been working the area and had additional information that the shooters were also hunting at night within Union County. A club member caught two individuals that were stuck in the mud and in possession of a loaded rifle. This information was relayed to Officer Sharp. Officers Sharp and Barry went to the three subjects' houses and interviewed them. The trio admitted to shining and shooting deer on the private

hunting lease. A rifle, two spotlights, and deer meat was seized and the three were charged with attempting to take deer at night with a gun and light and taking antlerless deer.

SUWANNEE COUNTY

Lieutenant Jeff Swan, Officer Dwain Mobley and Reserve Officer Bill Sargent participated in a buck scoring event at R & R Tractor and Hunting Supply in Live Oak. They scored a total of 22 deer heads. One individual drove as far as Sumter County to have his deer head scored. The officers answered a lot of questions about the upcoming hunting season.

DIXIE COUNTY

Officer Todd Nichols conducted a vessel boarding on the Suwannee River. The operator displayed signs of impairment. Field sobriety tasks were conducted and the individual was placed under arrest for boating under the influence.

CITRUS COUNTY

While patrolling King's Bay, Officers B.J. Johnston and Jamie Allen assisted the U.S. Coast Guard with a vessel stop. During the fisheries inspection they observed signs of impairment from the operator. Field sobriety tasks were conducted from the vessel and on land. The operator was arrested for boating under the influence. At the jail he submitted to a breath test results BAC .092 and .085.

While on water patrol at night, Officer Justin Henry responded to a complaint of shots fired from a vessel in the King's Bay area. He located the suspect vessel running with improper navigational lights and attempted to conduct a boarding. The operator of the vessel showed signs of impairment and refused to comply with any direction or orders from Officer Henry. Two small children were on board and were visibly crying and upset. The subject made evasive maneuvers and went in to the cabin area of the vessel. Officer Henry saw an empty holster in the vessel and continued to give verbal commands to the operator. The operator continued to ignore Officer Henry. Officer Henry took cover in his vessel and gained distance from the non-cooperative operator. The operator fled the area in the vessel and went to a local boat ramp. Officer Henry followed with his blue lights and spot light. Officer Henry maintained a safe distance and view while calling for back-up units to assist. FWC Officers, Citrus County Sheriff's Office Deputies and U.S. Coast Guard personnel responded to assist. Lieutenant Jay Russel and Citrus County Deputies conducted a high risk traffic stop on the subject as he attempted to leave the ramp at a high rate of speed in a truck pulling the boat and trailer. The subject was taken into custody without further incident and was arrested for fleeing and eluding, resisting arrest, boating under the influence and driving under the influence. The children were unharmed and released to their mother. During an inventory search pistol rounds were located, no firearm was recovered.

DUVAL COUNTY

Officer Jamey Stowell was patrolling the St. Johns River near Mayoport when he stopped a vessel for a safety inspection and discovered saltwater resources aboard the vessel. Officer Stowell inspected the catch and found an undersize black sea bass and an undersize black drum. The owner, who took responsibility for the fish was issued a citation for possession of the undersize fish and written warnings for not having a fishing license and for the safety equipment that was not on board.

Officer Jamey Stowell was patrolling the Cecil Field Commerce area when he surprised two individuals that were trespassing on ATVs with hunting dogs. One tried to turn around but couldn't. Officer Stowell stopped the pair and asked why they had dogs. They admitted that they were going to turn them loose and try to catch some hogs. Both defendants also admitted they were aware they were trespassing. Citations were issued for trespassing.

Officer Jamey Stowell was on patrol in Jennings Forest where he observed a truck drive around a closed gate. The truck proceeded into the forest and stopped to watch some deer feeding under the power lines. As Officer Stowell approached the vehicle, he smelled the odor of marijuana. Officer Stowell asked the subject if he had any marijuana and the defendant produced a bag containing less than 20 grams. Officer Stowell also found a .22 cal rifle in the front floor board of the vehicle. The defendant was charged for entering the forest at an undesignated entrance, possession of a firearm in a closed area and possession of cannabis.

Officer Adam Small was on patrol in the area of Myrtle Creek in Talbot State Park when he noticed two individuals fishing from the bank. He approached one of them and asked if they had any luck. The subject stated that they had "caught a couple". An inspection of the catch of both individuals revealed that they were in possession of six black drum, all of which were undersize. Appropriate citations were issued.

Officer Adam Small and Tom Tucker were on patrol on Heckscher Drive where they noticed a person fishing from the conveyer belt which extends across the Old St. Johns River to Blount Island. The officers made contact with the subject and asked him if he knew he was trespassing, to which the subject responded, "No." The officers then pointed out a No Trespassing sign posted about ten feet away. The subject then admitted that he knew he was trespassing. After further investigation, the subject was found in possession of a loaded .38 caliber Torus pistol. A background check revealed that the defendant was a convicted felon. The subject was arrested and booked into the Duval County Jail for trespass and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

Officer Adam Small was traveling southbound on I-295 when a tan Chevrolet pickup passed him at a high rate of speed and operating carelessly. Officer Small conducted a traffic stop and found that the driver did not have a valid driver's license. A warrant check revealed that the subject was wanted in Duval County on a warrant for worthless

checks. The driver was cited for not having a driver license and was booked into the Duval County Jail for the outstanding warrant.

While on water patrol in Sawpit Creek, Officers Adam Small and Tom Tucker noticed a Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Officer in the parking lot with three other people. The officers docked their patrol vessel at the boat ramp and Officer Small stayed with the vessel while Officer Tucker walked up to the parking lot to see if they could assist the DEP Officer. Officer Tucker learned that the DEP Officer was taking a report on a stolen trailer and that one of the three men had a warrant out of Duval County. Another one of the three men went back down to his boat which was still at the ramp and Officer Small asked him if they had any luck. The individual opened a cooler revealing three red drum, three spotted sea trout and one flounder. All three of the trout and the flounder were undersize. Officer Small noticed that the individual was acting nervous and as a result of a thorough inspection of the vessel, discovered another red drum hidden under the anchor line in the front of the vessel. The two remaining individuals admitted to catching the illegal fish. Citations were issued for over the bag limit of red drum, undersize spotted sea trout and undersize flounder. The third man was arrested by the DEP Officer for the active warrant.

Officers Jamey Stowell and Adam Small were patrolling the St. Johns River at the Intracoastal Waterway when they noticed a personal watercraft traveling eastbound toward the jetties. There were two people on the craft and the passenger was not wearing a life jacket. The officers initiated a stop and could smell the odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from the operator. They asked him where he was heading and the individual stated that he was going to his parent's house. The officers asked where his parent's house was and discovered that he was going the wrong way. The subject advised the officers that he had been at Fort George and that he had been drinking and was probably drunk. The officers took him to a nearby boat ramp where the subject was asked to perform field sobriety exercises. It was determined that the subject was impaired and he was placed under arrest. The defendant's blood alcohol level was .20, over twice the legal limit.

Officer Chris Holleman was approaching a vessel in the St. Johns River near White Shell Rocks to conduct a boating safety/fishery inspection. The officer observed two large redfish, clearly over the legal size limit, on a stringer attached to the vessel. One subject in the vessel untied the stringer and let the fish sink to the bottom. The subject was arrested and booked into the Duval County Jail for interfering with the duties of a conservation officer.

Officer Sandra Blackburn observed two subjects fishing from shore at Simpson Creek. With only four fish in their bucket, one black drum, two red drum and one pinfish, the subjects could not remember who had caught the two undersize red drum which were 12 ½ and 13 inches in length. After some time, the male member of the group stated that they had each caught a red drum. Each subject was issued a citation for possession of undersize red drum.

While on water patrol in Pumpkin Hill Creek in the area of Black Hammock Island, Officer Sandra Blackburn and Reserve Officer Jim Pickard noticed a crab trap in the creek. This area's season for crabbing was closed at the time. The owner of the trap was found a little further down the creek and stated that he had about 50 traps out in the area and knew that the area was closed. The subject was issued a notice to appear for crabbing during closed season.

Officer Jill Izsak issued a commercial fisherman a citation for trawling in state waters at night.

After watching three individuals fishing from shore at the Blount Island Marine Terminal Basin, Officer Aaron O'Reilly noticed a fourth individual pull-up in a truck. After a few minutes, one individual pulled a red drum from its hiding place in the rocks and placed it in the back of the truck. Officer O'Reilly stopped the truck when it was out of sight of the other three individuals and found the red drum was of legal size. After finding the identification of the person who had caught the fish, the fourth individual was sent on his way. Officer O'Reilly continued to observe the three individuals, who after a brief time packed up and left. He stopped the three vehicles and found two oversize red drum and one legal size red drum. The subject who possessed the legal red drum was also the person who had given the other red drum to the fourth individual. This subject was issued a citation for over the bag limit red drum and a warning for oversize red drum.

NASSAU COUNTY

Officer Hope McGregor was on patrol in the Nassau Wildlife Management Area when she came up on truck that was in inside the forest. She asked the defendant if he had a recreational use permit and the defendant stated that he was just checking the area out and was planning on obtaining a permit the next day. Officer McGregor explained that he was not allowed in the management area without a permit and that this time of year he was not allowed in the area at all. A citation was issued.

NORTHEAST REGION

BREVARD COUNTY

Officers Corey Bridwell and Michael Slotin were on water patrol in the area of the Haulover Canal when they stopped a vessel for a safety inspection. The vessel operator had a strong odor of alcoholic beverage coming from his person. A subsequent BUI investigation revealed several signs of impairment and a misdemeanor amount of cannabis as well as drug paraphernalia. The operator was arrested by Officer Slotin and transported to Bair's Cove where a breath test was administered. The results of the test were .116 and .109 breath alcohol content.

Officer Bridwell and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Officer Phillip Amoroso were on water patrol in the area of the Titusville Marina when they received an update to a previous "be on

the lookout” hit-and-run accident. A vessel had left the marina and struck two vessels on his way out and left the scene without reporting the accident. The update from the fuel dock attendant stated the man had gone to a local island called Spider Island. Officer Bridwell found the man at the island and interviewed him about his actions. He admitted to the incident and gave no valid excuse. He was issued two misdemeanor citations for leaving the scene of an accident and for failure to report an accident to the proper authorities. The accident investigation is being handled by Officer Bridwell.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

While on patrol in Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area, Officer Caitlyn Staskiewicz observed an Osceola County man taking freshwater fish from a flowing creek using a cast net. During an inspection, Officer Staskiewicz found the subject was in possession of 20 undersize bass and several bream. She issued a notice to appear for possession of undersize bass and taking game fish by an illegal method. She also issued warnings for possession of over the bag limit of bass and fishing without a fishing license.

While on water patrol on East Lake Toho, Officer Paul Mendez and Lieutenant Guy Carpenter II stopped an Orange County man after observing him towing a tube with two small children on it without the required observer or mirror. While addressing the violation and conducting a boating safety equipment inspection, the officers observed the man was showing signs of impairment. After having the man perform field sobriety tasks, Officer Mendez arrested the subject for operating his vessel while under the influence of alcoholic beverages and transported him to the Osceola County Detention Center. At the jail, the man provided a sample of his breath for the purpose of determining his breath alcohol level. Two hours after his arrest the result was .058.

PUTNAM COUNTY

Officer Mike Florence was on patrol near the Ken Wood boat ramp when he checked a fisherman in possession of 86 bream, 36 over the bag limit. The subject was cited and released with a court date.

VOLUSIA COUNTY

Several weeks ago, Officers Don Meurlot and Clay McDonough were targeting fishermen poaching snook from a popular fishing site in coastal Volusia County. Information was obtained from a reliable source that some of the fishermen were also involved in illegal drug use and activity. This, and additional information gathered by the officers, was given to the Volusia County Drug Task Force. Due specifically to this exchange, a “grow operation” which included 365 cannabis plants and 11 pounds of cannabis were seized and involved individuals and businesses in neighboring counties.

SOUTHWEST REGION

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Officers Jon Saltzgaver, Ken Thompson and Jacob Ahlers responded to a boating accident near the Gandy Bridge involving a capsized vessel that left three people in the water. Good Samaritans recovered the three individuals.

LEE COUNTY

Officer Ewing was on land patrol when he observed two Lee County deputies running toward the woods near the edge of a road. Officer Ewing stopped to assist and observed the deputies attempting to gain access to a vehicle that had crashed into a pine tree. Officer Ewing used his baton on the rear passenger side window, breaking the glass and gaining access to the lock on the door. A deputy reached inside the vehicle to assist the driver. Emergency medical personnel arrived and Officer Ewing assisted with removing the driver from the vehicle and beginning CPR. Emergency medical personnel were able to establish a pulse and the driver was transported to the hospital, where she was stabilized.

Officers Brian Cazalot and Justin Koble were working netting enforcement near Bokeelia on Pine Island. The officers observed a commercial netting vessel being operated without lights by an individual who had been previously arrested for netting violations. The vessel was later observed again on the east side of Charlotte Harbor. The officers attempted to stop the vessel and a short chase took place with the vessel fleeing to the Turtle Bay area in Charlotte County. With assistance from a Charlotte County Sheriff's Office Aviation Unit, a search of the area was conducted, but failed to locate the vessel or its occupants. On September 7, the owner of the vessel filed a stolen vessel report with the Lee County Sheriff's Office and with assistance from Investigators Larry Jernstedt and Greg Stanley the operator of the vessel was located and arrested for the offense.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

On September 6, Lieutenant Joe Allen checked four subjects who were hunting alligators in Pool D of the Kissimmee River. The hunter, who had two permits for Pool C in the Kissimmee River, and an agent had killed four alligators. The subjects were issued notices to appear in court for taking alligators out of their assigned area.

OSCEOLA COUNTY

Lieutenant Joe Allen, Pilot Mike Wood, Officers Dirk Williamson, Kevin Sweat and Robert Adams participated in a helicopter surveillance detail on Lake Kissimmee, targeting careless boat operation during unsanctioned airboat races. Two subjects participating in a race received careless operation citations. The spectators on both

sides of the race course were approximately 60 yards apart while up to three airboats abreast would race at one time, creating a dangerous condition.

PASCO COUNTY

Officer Jackey Angelis responded to a complaint regarding snook and redfish that were being kept in a tank inside a bait and tackle shop. While in the shop, a fugitive who was wanted by the U.S. Marshall entered the establishment. Officer Angelis recognized the subject as a wanted fugitive and stepped outside the business and alerted authorities to his location. He monitored the subject until Pasco County deputies, U.S. Marshals and other law enforcement agencies arrived on scene. The fugitive was secured without incident.

Officer Jeff Manson stopped a vessel returning from sea approximately three miles from Hudson. After conducting a fishery inspection, Officer Manson found the subjects in possession of two mangrove snapper, a cobia that was approximately ten inches short and a 15-inch gag grouper. Before the cobia could be measured, it was released by the operator while Officer Manson was distracted. The operator took responsibility for both undersize fish and was charged for the possession of a short gag grouper and was issued a warning for the cobia.

Officer Paul Van Ost was on patrol on the Anclote River when he observed an airboat with four people onboard violate a restricted zone. After stopping the boat for the violation, Officer Van Ost realized the operator was impaired and administered field sobriety tasks, which the subject could not perform. The subject was transported to the Pinellas County Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample. He was charged with operating a vessel while impaired and violating a restricted zone.

Officer Paul Van Ost responded to Anclote River Park to assist the U.S. Coast Guard with an impaired operator. Based on statements and information from Coast Guard personnel, the subject was transported to the Pinellas County Jail where he refused to provide a breath sample. He was charged with operating a vessel while impaired.

PINELLAS COUNTY

Lieutenant Edward Prouty and Officer Tom Chase conducted a vessel stop in Boca Ciega Bay near the Skyway Bridge on a personal watercraft (PWC) that did not have registration numbers displayed on the port side. During the boating safety inspection, it was apparent the operator was impaired. Field sobriety tasks were performed, which the operator unsuccessfully completed. The operator was arrested for boating under influence and transported to the Pinellas County Jail where he refused to provide a sample of his breath to determine his BAC. The operator was booked into the Pinellas County Jail for his third under the influence arrest within 10 years and charged with a felony.

Officers Rich Schefano and Randy Hart arrested a subject for boating under the influence after they stopped the subject for careless operation near the Clearwater Memorial Causeway. The subject showed obvious signs of impairment, but refused all field sobriety tasks and did not provide a sample of his breath to determine his BAC. The subject was transported and booked into the Pinellas County Jail.

Lieutenant Edward Prouty arrested a subject for boating under the influence after he stopped a personal watercraft (PWC) for violating the slow speed zone near Gandy Beach. The subject showed obvious signs of impairment and failed the field sobriety tasks. During several of the tasks, the operator stopped halfway through and admitted that he was too intoxicated to complete the task. The operator was transported to the Pinellas County Jail where he provided a sample of his breath, which was .14 BAC. The individual was arrested and booked into jail.

SOUTH REGION A

BROWARD COUNTY

Officer Darral Thomason observed a subject catching game fish with a cast net. The subject was cited and the net was seized as evidence.

Officers Eric Alford and Robert Kuester were on water patrol when they encountered a subject spearing lobster. The subject was cited for the violation.

GLADES COUNTY

Officer Greg Louque was on land patrol near Ortona Locks when he encountered a subject fishing for snook. An inspection of the subject's catch revealed that he was in possession of more snook than allowed by law. The subject was cited for the violation.

Lieutenant Brown stopped the operator of a vessel that had returned to a Lake Okeechobee boat ramp and asked him if he had caught any fish. The subject replied, "A few pan fish." Lieutenant Brown then asked to see his catch. While Lieutenant Brown was checking the fish that had been presented to him, he heard something move from elsewhere in the vessel and asked the subject what that could be. The subject stated, "I forgot about that" and Lieutenant Brown found an undersized black bass. The subject was issued a citation.

During the midnight hours, Lieutenant Brown and Captain Ardelean were checking alligator hunters. They observed a vessel with three subjects on board leave their assigned hunting area and enter a different zone for over thirty minutes. The vessel was stopped and the subjects were issued citations for the violation. Later that night, Lieutenant Brown responded to a distress call of two airboats that had had broken down and were taking on water. Lieutenant Brown arrived and transported four of the six

subjects back to the ramp. The remaining two subjects elected to stay with their vessels until friends could return with the necessary repair items.

OKEECHOBEE COUNTY

On September 5 at approximately 8:00 AM, multiple law enforcement agencies responded to a report of a possible drowning victim who had been pulled from Lake Okeechobee by local bass tournament fishermen. Rescue personnel pronounced the victim deceased. At approximately 9:00 AM, rescue personnel received a report of a second victim still in the water. FWC law enforcement officers, Okeechobee County Sheriff's Deputies and fire/rescue personnel immediately responded to the second location. The second victim was pulled from the water and was also pronounced deceased. An investigation into the circumstances of the accident has been initiated.

PALM BEACH COUNTY

Officers David Fowler, Jamie Young and Amanda Phillips participated in a joint agency boating under the influence (BUI) detail with the local Sheriff's Office in the area of Peanut Island. Arrests for BUI and underage drinking were made by the team of deputies and FWC officers.

Officer George Anchors responded to a call of an injured ten foot alligator with an arrow embedded in its back in Royal Palm Beach. The alligator was sighted and removed by a licensed trapper.

Officer AJ Maynard was on water patrol near South Bay when he inspected a vessel for safety equipment and catch compliance. During the inspection, Officer Maynard observed a line tied to the opposite side of the vessel that trailed off into the water. Officer Maynard asked the subject to show him his catch. The subject directed the officer to a cooler containing bream and catfish. Officer Maynard retrieved the line and pulled up a basket containing more bream and bass. The subject stated that he had forgotten about those fish. Officer Maynard measured the bass and found it to be undersize. A citation was issued for the violation.

SOUTH REGION B

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

On September 9, at approximately 2:00 AM, Officers Erik Sullivan and Mike Albert were on patrol in the area of Haulover Inlet when they encountered several subjects fishing. The subjects were checked for the newly required shoreline fishing license but one of them did not possess it. A computer check revealed that subject to be a fugitive from Lee County. He was arrested, transported to jail, and issued a warning for not having the required fishing license.

MONROE & COLLIER COUNTIES

Officer Janette Fernandez responded to assist U.S. Customs Agents who discovered a suspicious vessel being launched near Card Sound. U. S. Coast Guard located the vessel tied to a dock, emitting a very strong smell of fuel. It appeared the vessel was equipped for smuggling activity. Four subjects arrived and the Officer's investigation resulted in the arrest of one subject for felony unlawful conveyance of fuel in a vehicle and one misdemeanor unlawful conveyance of fuel in a vessel. Four hundred fifty gallons of fuel were removed from the vessel and sixty-seven gallons of fuel were removed from the vehicle. The vessel was seized and may be subject to forfeiture pending further investigation.

Officers Martin Messier, Seth Wingard and Investigator John Brown arrested the owner of a derelict vessel after their investigation revealed an active warrant issued through North Carolina for felony larceny.

Officer Erik Steinmetz responded to a public disturbance at a sandbar in Islamorada. The officer separated several men who were fighting, but one of them escaped through the crowd. No charges were filed since the victim could not be located.

Officer Anders Bergstrom issued several misdemeanor citations to a fisherman near Crawfish Key for possession of three over the bag limit of lobster and failure to possess a measuring gauge. The fisherman possessed a special recreation spiny lobster license, but admitted he had harvested lobster for his friend who was onboard the vessel. The officer explained bag limits and rules.

Officers Steve Golden, David Graham and Lieutenant Ed Maldonado issued a misdemeanor citation to a commercial lobster fisherman for possession of 63 undersize lobster. The fisherman possessed 152 undersize lobster with only 39 traps onboard the vessel.

Region activity documented for South Bravo (Monroe, Dade, Collier, Investigations, and Aviation) during Labor Day Weekend 2009 included 345 water patrol hours, 12.4 air patrol hours, and 261 boating safety hours resulting in 2,368 users checked, 779 vessel inspections, 59 uniform boating citations, 22 resource citations, 24 other citations, 125 boating safety warnings, and 73 other warnings. A total of 14 boating accidents included 10 with injuries and no fatalities. Officers responded to 93 calls for service and one search and rescue mission.