

**Law Enforcement Division  
Bi-Weekly Field Report  
2/20/12 – 3/4/12**

**DISTRICT 1**

COs Mark Leadman and Marv Gerlach approached an angler on a lake in western Marquette County. As they neared, the COs observed the subject quickly toss an object into his fishing shack. When questioned, the angler produced a trout that he had caught earlier. Unfortunately, he had failed to buy an all species fishing license and was ticketed for the violation.

CO Jason Wicklund was on patrol when he was contacted to be on the alert for a stolen vehicle. A short time later the CO observed the vehicle in question pass him. The vehicle was stopped and the driver was questioned about the theft. The driver, who was suspended, also informed the CO that he had stolen some checks from a family member and cashed them at a local grocery store. The driver was turned over to Michigan State Police (MSP) troopers who are handling the investigation.

CO Jason Wicklund worked the Michigamme Reservoir the night before a local fishing tournament. A couple hundred people were already on the ice in anticipation of the next day's event. The CO observed several vehicles stuck out on the ice and contacted the occupants of the vehicles. CO Wicklund found two intoxicated drivers and five individuals in possession of marijuana. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Dave Painter, Jason Wicklund and Sgt. Marc Pomroy teamed up with local deputies for a group patrol effort related to a large local fishing event. Hundreds of contacts were made throughout the day with violations found for unattended lines, snowmobile registration violations, and alcohol violations.

**DISTRICT 2**

COs Jerry Fitzgibbon and Robert Crisp assisted MSP troopers and local deputies with the capture of several individuals involved with an armed robbery of a residence in Alger County. The subjects had taken the resident hostage in his residence. A meter reader had observed the victim bound to a chair and the armed subjects nearby, and immediately called the police. When officers arrived, the subjects attempted to flee into the woods near the residence, and all but one were quickly apprehended. The victim reported all the subjects were in possession of handguns. COs Fitzgibbon and Crisp and a local deputy then tracked the last subject over three quarters of a mile through waist deep snow. At several points, the subject held up and appeared to be waiting for the officers. The officers pursued the subject into a plowed back yard, then again into deep snow where he fell and officers closed in. A TASER was used to apprehend the subject after he refused to obey commands from the officers. He was then subdued and taken into custody.

CO Kevin Postma was conducting a routine snowmobile patrol when a subject blew through a stop sign. Upon contact CO Postma found that the subject had a DNR warrant out of Kalamazoo. Enforcement action taken.

CO Kyle Publiski received a complaint of untagged snares, and upon investigation, the CO located the snares and determined they were set to target rabbits. The snares were illegal sets and untagged. After working the area for several days, interviews were conducted with a subject which led to 76 illegal snares and four rabbits being seized. The subject was also charged with possession of a loaded gun in a motor vehicle and no hunting or trapping license. Restitution is also being sought for the illegally taken rabbits.

CO Jeff Panich located untagged traps on state land ticketed a subject for the violation. The subject has had five prior convictions for the same violation.

### **DISTRICT 3**

CO Andrea Albert investigated a complaint regarding an individual who had used Craig's List to offer computer repair services in exchange for fresh venison. After interviewing the subject, it was determined that the subject did not hunt and appeared to be totally unaware of the illegal nature of his offer. One exchange had already occurred and a total of five pounds of venison was seized by the CO. The meat was donated to a local food pantry and after a warning was issued, the offer was immediately pulled off Craig's List.

CO Steve Speigl ticketed a subject for using six tip-ups. The complaint had originated as a Report-All-Poaching (RAP) complaint a month earlier, and CO Speigl had worked the same subject on several occasions before catching up to him. When interviewed, he lied and attempted to blame a nearby angler; however, fresh tracks in the snow implicated the subject who was promptly issued his sixth DNR ticket for conservation law related violations.

CO Andrea Erratt ticketed a subject who had parked a snowmobile in front of a locked gate on private property, entered the property and was hunting for bobcats. The individual ticketed had several prior trespassing issues, and the CO was contacted by the owner who had given permission to another hunter.

In a separate bobcat hunting incident, CO Andrea Erratt warned two men for violations of the Michigan concealed weapons laws and explained the proper methods for legally carrying a concealed pistol on their person and for transporting firearms in a motor vehicle.

COs Carl VanderWall and Duane Budreau arrested a subject who was already lodged in the Emmet County Jail for purchasing a hunting license while his hunting privileges were revoked. Michigan Law prohibits individuals from purchasing hunting licenses due to violations regarding certain hunting laws, from a multi-state violator compact and for

failing to pay child support judgments as ordered by the Court. The subject had an extensive history with the COs regarding other violations.

While on snowmobile trail patrol, COs Mike Feagan and Eric Bottorff attempted to stop a group of six snowmobilers. Three of the operators stopped and three continued. The three who stopped claimed they didn't know the other three who had continued down the trail. The COs finished checking the first group, and then found the others down the trail waiting for their buddies. None of the group had trail permits and tickets were issued.

COs Matt Theunick and Mike Feagan responded to a complaint of an angler using over the legal limit of three lines on Mullett Lake. The COs located the angler, who had been ticketed numerous times before, and found him using too many lines. His tip-ups also did not have his required name/address on them. Tickets were issued for both violations.

CO Jon Sklba and Sgt. Greg Drogowski found five set lines on Burt Lake, buried beneath the snow near a shanty, with nobody around. A walleye and rainbow trout were hooked on two of the lines, both of which were released alive. The shanty had been recently moved and a considerable amount of trash had been left at the previous location. The illegally set lines were seized. The following day, the shanty owner was contacted at his residence and provided a full confession. Violations included using unattended lines, using too many lines, no name/address on tip-ups, and littering. Enforcement action was taken.

While talking to a group of snowmobilers at an intersection, COs Eric Bottorff and Mike Feagan observed a snowmobile approach at a high rate of speed and totally disregard the stop sign at the intersection. The COs were able to catch up to the snowmobiler and issued a ticket for careless operation.

CO Matt Theunick and Sgt. Greg Drogowski worked the North Central snowmobile trail after dark, observing intersections. One snowmobiler and his partner were stopped for disregarding a stop sign at high speed. The lead sled operator stated he always stops for the signs, except that particular one was totally covered with snow. CO Theunick then advised him he had personally removed any snow from the sign and surrounding brush just prior to his arrival. The subject then stated "Oh". A ticket was issued for careless operation of a snowmobile.

A complaint is being investigated that involved a person driving home on a county road, who was forced to pull over due to several vehicles coming head on. One of the vehicles stopped and a subject exited his vehicle and ran straight toward the complainant's vehicle with a rifle. He ran past the driver's door and then fired the rifle at the rear of the vehicle. The complainant saw a coyote, being chased by dogs, cross the road at the same time. The suspect was not identified, but the investigation continues.

CO Nick Torsky learned of an individual who had purchased a fishing license and was fishing while his fishing privileges were revoked. CO Torsky had been attempting to contact the angler for most of the winter and was finally able to contact him after numerous hours of surveillance. The angler was in possession of a 28" pike and his fishing shanty did not have his name and address on it. He was ticketed and his license was also seized.

CO Bill Webster responded to a call for assistance from the City of Alpena Police Department when they had a snowmobile operator flee from one of their officers. CO Webster responded to the location where the snowmobiler had fled on foot after having gotten his snowmobile stuck. CO Webster proceeded on foot into the woods and tracked the subject down. The pursuit went on for over two miles, with the subject running from CO Webster. He was eventually taken into custody and lodged in the Alpena County Jail for flee and elude and on the 10 active warrants for his arrest.

#### **DISTRICT 4**

CO Steve Converse finished up a case from last deer season involving a person who had stolen a trail camera in a failed attempt at evading detection while trespassing on a landowner's property. The subject failed to realize that there was a second camera capturing his exploits throughout the deer season. CO Converse contacted the subject and showed him the dated pictures. The subject confessed that he had filled his tags for the season prior to his criminal activity and that he had taken the camera. Warrants were served for hunting without a license, trespassing, and larceny.

COs Brian Lebel and Jeff Ginn responded to a complaint in Mecosta County of fresh blood in the snow. The COs followed the blood trail to a nearby residence where a freshly killed deer was located. A subject at the residence admitted to shooting the deer out of season, and further investigation revealed two additional deer were taken illegally during the hunting season. The subject had not purchased any deer licenses and had his grandson tag the deer with his junior combination licenses. Upon tagging the deer for his grandpa, the minor purchased replacement licenses and continued hunting. The deer and firearm were seized and enforcement action was taken.

CO Jeff Ginn of Newaygo County was responding to a RAP complaint of shots fired after dark. CO Ginn contacted Sgt. Mike Bomay for assistance and patrolled to the area of the complaint. CO Ginn had investigated a complaint of shots fired in the past at the same residence and was familiar with the lighted bait pile behind the residence. Fresh blood was found on the bait pile that led the COs to a pole barn where the subject was field dressing and hanging the deer. The subject received a phone call and admitted to shooting two deer with one shot. Upon making contact with the subject two fresh deer were located and a confession obtained of a third deer that was recently taken out of season. The subject also had two outstanding warrants for his arrest. The deer and the subject's firearm were seized and he was lodged in the Mecosta County Jail.

COs Troy VanGelderren, Jeff Ginn, Troy Mueller, Carla Soper, and Angela Greenway worked a group snowmobile patrol on the Lake and Newaygo County lines. The group issued several tickets for operating snowmobiles with expired registrations and no trail permits. Two operators were also ticketed for driving while license suspended. One snowmobile operator also had an outstanding warrant for his arrest.

CO Troy VanGelderren of Oceana County responded to an illegal burn and located several subjects burning household furniture in a field. The subjects were issued a ticket for illegal disposal of solid waste.

CO Mike Wells of Newaygo County received a complaint of household trash dumped along a roadway. CO Wells investigated the discarded items and located information that led him to a residence. CO Wells interviewed subjects at the residence and received confessions to the illegal dumping. The individuals responsible returned to the site and picked up all the trash. CO Wells issued a ticket for the litter.

COs Mike Wells and Jeff Ginn were working snowmobiles when two juvenile ORV operators were located in a closed area riding double with no helmets, and no ORV licenses. The juveniles were turned over to a parent responsible for allowing the juveniles to operate unsupervised. Enforcement action was taken.

## **DISTRICT 5**

While patrolling state land on his snowmobile, CO John Huspen observed a coyote hunter head into the woods to hunt and return a while later tossing his firearm into the front seat of his pick-up without unloading it and putting it in a case. The hunter was stopped, and enforcement action taken for the loaded gun in the motor vehicle.

CO Warren MacNeill assisted in locating two separate off road enthusiasts who had gotten stuck and were stranded on public land. Neither subject knew where they were but CO MacNeill was able to pinpoint their locations via cell phone directions.

## **DISTRICT 6**

COs Phil Hudson and Nick Atkin investigated a complaint of a hunter who shot a bobcat in Montmorency County and brought it to Arenac County without a furbearer kill tag. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jason A. Smith observed a group of eight snowmobiles traveling toward him along both shoulders of the roadway. Officer Smith was able to get five of the snowmobiles stopped; the three others turned around and drove off across the section. Out of the five snowmobiles, none of them had a trail permit, two had registrations that expired in the early 1990's and two of the operators were operating with a suspended driver's license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Nick Atkin received information that anglers were catching a lot of undersized walleye on the Saginaw River. During his patrol he contacted an angler in possession of three undersized walleyes. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Nick Atkin was checking perch anglers when he observed a subject dumping fish as he approached. The CO ran to the subject and collected 97 perch from the angler. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Robert Hobkirk and Scott Brown arrested a subject on two felony firearm charges and two misdemeanors wildlife warrants. The warrant was the result of an investigation conducted by the Wildlife Resource Protection Special Investigations Unit during the 2011 waterfowl season. The subject was lodged in the Huron County Jail.

COs Robert Hobkirk and Scott Brown responded to a RAP complaint of two anglers in the Sebewaing Marina who were keeping short northern pike. As the COs arrived, one of the anglers attempted to return some of his fish to the water. He was instructed by the COs not to touch any of his fish, and complied with the COs' request. One individual was in possession of five undersized northern pike (the largest being 20 inches) and 18 perch over his limit. The second subject was in possession of five northern pike with the largest being 15 inches. Tickets were issued to both anglers. Prior to leaving the marina, four separate anglers thanked the COs for stopping the blatant fishing violations.

CO Scott Brown received a complaint of trespassers along the Lake Huron shoreline at a cottage where the owners had not been in residence since last fall. Further investigation resulted in contact with the trespasser who had gotten their ORVs stuck in the muck along the shoreline the day before and had returned to retrieve the machines.

COs Jay Person and Joel Lundberg responded to a complaint that anglers were keeping undersized walleye on the Saginaw River. Most anglers reported catching 100 to 150 fish to get five legal sized fish. The COs checked a truck and trailer leaving the boat ramp. All the fish in the boat were legal and within possession limits. During the check another member of the fishing party also stopped in his own pickup truck. A quick look in the bed of that vehicle yielded an undersized walleye. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jeremy Payne responded to a RAP complaint of a subject burning garbage. CO Payne located the residence and found the man who was operating an unlicensed refuse business in an agricultural area. The man would deliver and pick up refuse containers and then deposit the waste at various landfills. He stated that he hadn't had time to take the trash to the dump so he burned it. The information has been turned over to the Department of Environmental Quality for further investigation.

## **DISTRICT 7**

CO Ken Cerny was on patrol checking small game hunters in the Three Rivers State Game Area (SGA), when a truck drove by with a load of old tires in the back . When the driver saw CO Cerny, the driver sped away. CO Cerny stopped the truck and the driver admitted that he was going to dump the tires on an existing pile of dumped tires before he saw CO Cerny. The subject was instructed on the proper way to dispose of tires.

CO Gary Raak and Sgt. Jeff Rabbers responded to a complaint from Wildlife division of damage done to a turkey trap on state land. The trap had been set up to capture wild turkeys for a relocation project for the Mio region. An internet blog forum led to the discovery of four juveniles responsible for damaging the equipment. Confessions were obtained from the subjects and tickets were issued for damage caused by illegal ORV activity. The juveniles met with Wildlife staff to apologize and will be involved in local state land clean-up projects instead of receiving charges of malicious destruction of property.

## **DISTRICT 8**

CO Pete Purdy patrolled the Shiawassee County Hunter Access Property and contacted two rabbit hunters, neither of whom had a small game license. The subjects had failed to sign in at the property as posted and required, and one of the subjects had driven to the property on a suspended driver's license. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Shane Webster and Damon Owens performed a taxidermy inspection and discovered evidence of a deer that was taken illegally. CO Webster and CO Jeff Goss interviewed the subject and received a confession that the seven point buck had been taken prior to the purchase of her hunting license. A warrant is being sought for the illegally taken deer.

CO Shane Webster utilized the fresh snowfall to work snowmobiles, and encountered an individual riding down the center of a public roadway without a helmet. CO Webster caught up with the subject and made a stop. Along with the violations of operating on a public roadway and without a helmet, the snowmobile was unregistered and without a trail permit. Enforcement action was taken.

While patrolling after the latest snowfall, CO Todd Thorn observed a man riding a snowmobile on his own property. CO Thorn continued to observe the man, but then lost sight of him as he went behind his house. CO Thorn then observed the same man on the snowmobile, but now he had two young children riding with him. None of the riders had helmets on and as they rode the snowmobile down the road in CO Thorn's direction, he stopped them. The man stated that he was just turning around in the roadway. Enforcement action was taken and CO Thorn explained that this was a serious safety concern.

CO Todd Thorn located two sets of antlers during a taxidermy inspection that were both tagged with 2011 firearm deer tags by the same female hunter. Following up on this violation, CO Thorn was able to obtain confessions from the subject and her husband that he had actually shot both deer and used her tags so he could keep his combination tags in case he shot another deer. The husband admitted to having shot a six point buck during the 2011 deer season in addition to the other two antlered deer that he used his wife's tags on. Enforcement action was taken against both individuals.

CO Todd Thorn responded to a complaint of a boy who had shot a Canada goose on March 1<sup>st</sup> behind his house. CO Thorn spoke with the boy and his parents and found that the boy was hunting by himself and thought that it was all right to hunt geese any time of the year if he was on his own property. The dead goose was seized and enforcement action was taken against the parent for allowing his son to hunt unsupervised. The boy was educated on hunting laws and how to look them up in the guide.

CO Derek Miller worked an area Sunday afternoon that has been seeing a lot of ORV activity on the roadways. As CO Miller approached the area, he observed two dirt bikes racing up and down the road, spinning doughnuts and riding wheelies. CO Miller made contact in their driveway and during the investigation he discovered that both subjects had prior drunk driving arrests and officer safety cautions. One subject had a suspended drivers license and neither of them had ORV licenses. CO Miller wrote the subjects tickets for driving an ORV while suspended and operating on the roadway.

COs Jason J. Smith and Derek Miller responded to a trespass complaint of a vehicle stuck in a field. The COs arrived at the location and learned that the subject had driven through several parcels of property without permission only to get stuck in a cornfield. The subject tried blaming his little brother for the incident but later confessed he was the one driving the van. Enforcement action was taken for the trespass and the vehicle was towed off the property.

## **DISTRICT 9**

CO Mark Ennett contacted two subjects driving along a section of railroad property that has had numerous complaints in the past. One man was picking up scrap and junk metal and tossing it into the bed of the truck. The driver was unlicensed, but had only been driving along the tracks while the other subject sorted the metal. CO Ennett ticketed the subject for railroad trespass and he was arrested and turned over to local deputies on an outstanding warrant. CO Ennett warned the driver and allowed him to remain with the vehicle until a licensed driver arrived.

COs Mike Drexler and Dan Walzak assisted MSP troopers and local deputies in locating an intoxicated motorist who rolled his vehicle over and then fled on foot into the Point Mouillee SGA. The subject was found by two trappers who contacted 911 knowing that law enforcement was searching for the subject.

CO Lacelle Rabon completed an investigation on a RAP complaint of subjects hunting waterfowl in a Federal Wildlife Refuge. After interviewing the subjects and witnesses, and talking to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) officers he discovered the subjects had been warned in the past about being on that island. The three subjects were ticketed for recreational trespass and hunting within a refuge.

CO Brandon Kieft reports that two young men involved in the poaching of three deer in Genesee County during October 2011 were recently sentenced. The men shot the three deer while using spotlights from a motor vehicle with a .22 caliber firearm during the archery season. The men were ordered to serve five days in jail with 20 additional days of jail work release, retake a hunter education course, their hunting privileges were suspended, all equipment used in the crime was condemned, and \$3000 in restitution for the deer was assessed.

CO Ben Shively contacted two subjects returning to their vehicle with firearms while not wearing any hunter orange in Highland Recreation Area in Oakland County. After explaining the requirements for hunter orange and when it has to be worn while predator hunting, CO Shively asked for their small game licenses. One subject produced his small game license and the other subject stated that he could not locate his unused 2011 archery license which he thought he could use to hunt coyotes. The subject was ticketed for hunting without a small game license and both were warned and educated on the hunter orange violation.

CO Linda Scheidler assisted Grand Blanc Township with a hunting accident. The victim said he decided to climb his tree stand and hunt for coyote and fox with his .22 rifle. He ran the haul line rope through the trigger guard. When he released his grip of the gun, the resulting tension caused the firearm to discharge, shooting him in the thigh. The recoil caused the firearm to jump up and when it relaxed, it discharged again, shooting him in the other thigh.

CO Kris Kiel reports closing out a case this week from last spring where he and CO Mike Drexler investigated a subject for failing to remove his ice fishing shanty three weeks after the date that it was required to be removed from Lake St. Clair. When the COs finally contacted the subject, he asked if he could retrieve it that day. The COs advised the subject that he would need a boat since the shanty was observed floating on an ice flow out into the center of the lake. The subject paid \$1653 in fines and costs.

CO Todd Szyska and Sgt. Tom Wanless responded to a complaint of subjects keeping undersized walleye at the Clinton River Spillway. When they arrived on scene, the complainant was still there and pointed out the alleged violators. The complainant had called in numerous other complaints at the same location in the past. This complaint was unfounded, just like the others. The COs ran the complainant in LEIN and found he had two warrants for his arrest.

While checking anglers on the Clinton River Spillway, CO Todd Szyska and Sgt. Tom Wanless contacted two anglers fishing on the bank. One of the subjects was not able to

provide a fishing license. Upon checking, the angler had not purchased a fishing license since last February. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Kris Kiel was conducting surveillance of the spillway dam on the Clinton River when he observed a subject casting a large spoon. While the CO approached, the subject broke his spoon from the line and dropped it off the bank into the water. The CO asked the subject what he had just dropped into the water. The subject pointed to a (floating) Rapala in his tackle box. The CO told the subject to retrieve the large spoon from the water or receive a ticket for littering. The subject reached into the water and handed the CO the spoon. The subject was issued a ticket for using a multi-pointed hook greater than 3/8" between point and shank in a stream. On the same patrol of the spillway dam, CO Kris Kiel contacted six other anglers in violation. All six anglers were using single-pointed hooks greater than 1/2" between point and shank. Enforcement action was taken. The majority of the anglers had to leave because they had no legal lures with them. One northern pike was checked that had multiple fresh snag marks on its sides and back.

CO Ken Kovach assisted local authorities with an armed robbery. The subject entered the facility, brandished a pistol and fled the scene with an unknown amount of money. The responding officers took statements and canvassed the area but could not locate the subject. The local authorities are handling the investigation.