

**Law Enforcement Division
Bi-Weekly Field Report
8/9/10 – 8/22/10**

DISTRICT 1

CO Marv Gerlach worked a complaint of ORVs disregarding signed berms and operating through a creek in Menominee County. While watching the creek, CO Gerlach observed two dirt bikes and a four-wheeler go around the barricade and drive through the creek. When contacted, the operators stated they thought the berm and signs were for “trucks only”. Enforcement action was taken against the operators for driving through the creek.

CO Brian Bacon observed four anglers fishing from a small boat on Gene’s Pond. CO Bacon launched his patrol boat and contacted the anglers. When he approached, only three of the anglers were fishing. A short conversation with the subject who was not then fishing resulted in the subject admitting to fishing without a license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Grant Emery stopped a boat operator with an expired registration. Further investigation found the boat to be last registered in 2001. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jason Niemi was contacted by a Montana game warden in reference to a Michigan resident who had illegally retrieved the head of a road killed elk and brought it back to Michigan. The subject was ticketed and the antlers were turned over to the state of Michigan. CO Niemi arranged to have the elk antlers mounted and displayed for educational purposes.

CO Mark Leadman observed a subject casting a line and catching fish on Harlow Lake while a couple of kids played nearby. When contacted, the subject did not have a fishing license and claimed he wasn’t fishing. Enforcement action taken.

CO Brett Gustafson and Sgt. Steven Burton conducted an ORV patrol this past weekend and during the patrol, located an illegal fire. Upon investigating, an interview with a subject found that he was paid to dispose of an abandoned house. His idea of disposing of it was to burn it piece by piece. The COs informed him otherwise and enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 2

CO Derek Miller encountered two subjects shooting .22 rifles in a State Forest Campground (SFC) near Seney. Along with disturbing the peace, they were shooting in an unsafe direction. CO Miller issued tickets for shooting within a designated campground.

While conducting a foot patrol, CO Derek Miller observed a watercraft with an expired registration. The CO got the operator's attention and waved him to shore, but the angler put away his fishing gear and sped away. CO Miller returned to his patrol truck and worked the shoreline in an attempt to locate the subject. After a short time the angler was located and tickets were issued for fish without a license and unregistered watercraft. The subject admitted he sped away because he figured the CO wouldn't be able to find him.

CO Mike Hammill responded to a call for assistance from Michigan State Police (MSP) troopers on a domestic violence call in which the male subject had become aggressive and fled the scene. CO Hammill located the subject hiding under a car and he was taken into custody.

CO Jared Ferguson handled several trespass complaints in northern Schoolcraft County. The suspects involved are bear hunters who are training their dogs. The complainants are landowners who own land on both sides of public roads. The land is posted No Trespassing on both sides. The suspects continue to train their dogs by letting them loose on the roadways with private property on both sides.

DISTRICT 3

CO Nick Torsky located a large litter pile and evidence that led to a confession from a suspect. A ticket was issued.

CO Joe Molnar conducted a marine patrol on a remote section of the Thunder Bay River. He contacted a subject fishing who had not purchased a license because he did not think he would get checked. Enforcement action taken.

CO William Webster contacted two anglers fishing on Long Lake. They were in possession of two smallmouth bass, one of which was undersized. A ticket was issued.

CO Mark DePew was called out to a possible suspicious vehicle on a Monday night about midnight. CO DePew went to the area and located a similar vehicle. He made a traffic stop and found three loaded guns in the vehicle. Statements from the subjects led to admissions of taking small game and trapping during the closed season. Further investigation located that evidence, then additionally finding they had shot a hen turkey with a rifle. The evidence was seized and the subjects lodged.

CO Mark DePew has been working illegal bear baits since June. After several weeks of surveillance he contacted three subjects who were baiting early. One of the subjects denied any knowledge of the baiting until CO DePew provided specific dates and circumstances of his baiting activity. The subject then "remembered" baiting the site and accepted his ticket.

While patrolling Lake Huron, CO Rich Stowe located two vessels whose passengers were fishing with too many lines. One vessel had three lines over and the other one line over. Tickets were issued.

CO Eric Bottorff and PCO Quincy Gowenlock followed up on a complaint of a camp on state land that had been there beyond 15 days, had extensive litter, and live trees cut. The subjects were contacted and enforcement action was taken. The subjects cleaned up their camp site and returned it to the condition it was in prior to their arrival.

CO Matt Theunick, ECO Vence Woods and Sgt. Greg Drogowski in conjunction with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) are working on the sunken tug boat that resulted in a diesel fuel spill on Duncan Bay. In addition to the sunken tug boat, there is an additional tug boat and an old car ferry that remain beached on a sand bar in Duncan Bay. Officers are attempting to facilitate their removal.

DISTRICT 4

CO Mike Wells responded to a litter complaint in Newaygo County on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands that included a large pile of shingles and household debris. CO Wells located the site and obtained information in the litter as to a suspect. The investigation took CO Wells to a Kent County residence where he was informed that the owner of several rental units had paid the subject to use his dump truck to haul the debris to the landfill. An interview with this subject resulted in a confession that the subject pocketed the money and dumped the load on Federal Land. The subject informed CO Wells that he was happy he got caught due to how guilty he felt for dumping the trash in the woods. The subject even offered the use of his dump truck for future litter initiatives on state and federal lands.

CO Steve Converse received a complaint of persons fishing too close to the Little Manistee Weir in Manistee County. It was fortunate that CO Converse was about one minute away from the complaint location and was able to apprehend two subjects as they were casting into a group of king salmon collecting in the closed area.

CO Brian Brosky and PCO Mike Evink received a complaint from the USFS regarding persons operating several Jeeps in a closed area in northern Mason County. The COs responded to the area and located five vehicles being operated illegally off-road. Tickets were issued to the operators for the ORV violations.

CO Jeff Ginn was monitoring county radio when he heard MSP being dispatched for two young children playing in the roadway. CO Ginn responded and located two twin three year old boys building sand castles in the mud along the shoulder of the roadway in front of their residence. CO Ginn attempted to locate an adult but instead found a six year old child sleeping on the couch. After searching the residence, he located the babysitter sound asleep in an upstairs bedroom unaware of the children being outside. MSP responded and turned the case over to protective services.

When CO Jeff Ginn attempted to stop an ORV for operating on a roadway, the operator fled through the woods on a narrow ORV trail. CO Ginn tracked the suspect vehicle to the edge of a corn field where the ORV was located and established a perimeter. CO Ginn located the operator hiding in the corn and placed him in custody for flee and elude and operating an ORV on the roadway. The subject's family later confronted CO Ginn and assisting officers regarding the impounded ORV and perceived trespass. After a very loud and disorderly group of family members arrived, additional arrests were made for obstructing an investigation.

Working with local marine deputies, CO Troy Vangelderren patrolled Lake Michigan in five to six foot waves. The officers contacted two individuals in a kayak who were not wearing personal flotation devices (PFDs). The officers advised the kayakers to put their PFDs on due to the rough water conditions. A short time later the officers received a complaint of an overturned kayak in Lake Michigan. The officers responded and located the same two kayakers clinging to their overturned kayak. The officers assisted the exhausted boaters to shore and reminded them of the need to wear their PFDs.

CO Brian Brosky and PCO Mike Evink were working near Indian Bridge on the Pere Marquette River in Mason County when they observed three subjects making motions that would indicate they were attempting to snag fish. The COs parked their patrol vehicle in a secluded location and watched the trio from a nearby hiding spot. After verifying illegal gear and attempts to snag fish, the three violators were contacted and ticketed.

DISTRICT 5

CO Chuck McPherson and PCO Jeff Panich assisted local law enforcement in attempting to locate an overdue boater on Houghton Lake. The subject's boat had broken down and he was adrift overnight but was located shortly before sunrise.

CO William Cherry is investigating an illegal transfer station where paint and oil have been dumped on the ground along with leaking batteries and trash. The site is slated for clean-up.

CO John Huspen evicted late night partiers from a SFC after numerous complaints from other campers.

CO Matt Liestenfeltz located a car stuck on a berm designed to block state land from vehicular traffic. Beyond the berm, he located the vehicle owners' illegal camp on state land. During the investigation, CO Liestenfeltz also seized marijuana from the campers.

Conservation officers from District 5, along with USFS law enforcement officers, Oscoda County deputies, and a Michigan State Police trooper, worked together in patrolling a stretch of the Au Sable River for marine safety, alcohol and narcotics violations, and public safety issues. Over three hundred canoers were contacted and arrests made for

minors in possession of alcohol, drunk and disorderly, public nudity, possession of narcotics, litter, and marine safety violations.

CO Warren MacNeill was the first on scene of a fatal car accident where the driver was ejected. CO MacNeill helped to secure the scene and assisted with traffic control.

CO Rebecca Hopkins and PCO Carey Foster checked an angler who stated he had caught a few trout but his wife was carrying them in her creel. A short time later, the wife showed up along the stream with no fish. A search of the nearby woods from which the wife had come produced three undersized brook trout in a plastic bag. She then confessed to hiding the fish in hopes that the COs would not find them.

CO Brian Olsen received a complaint regarding a vehicle that had run over a turkey. The complainant was able to provide the plate number of the vehicle which led to a confession from the owner of intentionally hitting the turkey. Warrants are being sought.

DISTRICT 6

COs Seth Rhodea and Bob Hobkirk were conducting a marine patrol on Waterfowl Bay when they contacted two people fishing from a boat. One of the subjects did not have her fishing license with her, but insisted she had bought one in March. A check of the retail sales system indicated that she had never purchased a license. She was issued a ticket for fishing without a license.

While working Saginaw Bay during the Cheeseburger Festival, COs Bob Hobkirk, Seth Rhodea and Josh Wright contacted occupants of a vessel who were fishing with too many lines, an expired boat registration and were in possession of three short bass. Tickets were issued.

While checking for illegal ORV activity on the Great Lakes exposed bottomlands, CO Jason Smith contacted a subject driving out of a closed area. After observing empty ammunition boxes, CO Smith asked if there were any firearms in the vehicle. The subject said he was target shooting and had a .22 in a case in the back seat. A quick search revealed the .22 rifle along with another uncased gun hidden in the vehicle. Along with operating a motor vehicle in a closed area, he was also transporting an uncased firearm and littering. The subject received a ticket for the uncased firearm and was warned for the other violations.

CO Dan Lee reports that a subject who shot a deer decoy in Saginaw County during the 2009 firearm deer season has been sentenced. The subject was convicted of attempting to take a deer from a motor vehicle and recreational trespass. He will be paying \$520 in fines, \$520 in restitution for damage to the decoy, hunting licenses privileges revoked for two years and his shotgun was condemned.

While patrolling Saginaw Bay, COs Bob Hobkirk and Seth Rhodea checked two anglers at the end of the Sebewaing River channel. One of the anglers did not possess a

license and was ticketed. As the ticket was being written, a vessel passed them displaying an expired registration. After the ticket was issued, the vessel with the expired registration was located. The COs conducted a safety inspection of this vessel and found the flares on the boat had expired in 1975. Many additional violations were encountered. Enforcement action was taken.

During a marine patrol in Saginaw Bay near Caseville, COs Bob Hobkirk, Josh Wright and Seth Rhodea checked numerous recreational boaters. The COs contacted one boat where the anglers were using too many lines. The operator also had a number of equipment violations. He was ticketed for fishing with more than three lines and warned for the other violations. COs contacted a personal watercraft (PWC) operator 25 minutes after sunset and found the operator to be 15 years old with no safety certificate. His mother was ticketed for allowing her son to operate a PWC with no safety certificate.

While checking a location bordering state land for illegal deer feeding, CO Bob Hobkirk observed a golf cart operating on the state land. When contact was made with the operator, CO Hobkirk realized that he had spoken to the owner of the golf cart three days prior regarding ORV laws. The operator was ticketed for the violation. CO Hobkirk also found a pile of corn and ticketed the person responsible.

CO Scott Brown worked the ORV activity around Rush Lake State Game Area (SGA). The activity was fairly high during the second weekend of Cheeseburger Festival. CO Brown issued five tickets for operating an ORV in a closed area. Many other warnings were given for equipment and registration violations.

CO Nick Atkin responded, along with MSP, to a suicidal subject with a knife to his throat. The trooper was able to disarm the subject and officers took him into custody. The subject was then transported to the hospital for a psychological evaluation.

CO Nick Atkin was patrolling state land when he observed a subject operating a vehicle recklessly. While attempting to contact the subject with his lights and siren, the subject nearly sideswiped several vehicles, as well as almost hitting other vehicles head on. He claimed that his reckless driving was due to him being scared by the lights and sirens. He was arrested for operating under the influence.

CO Nick Atkin received a complaint of subjects operating ORVs recklessly. Upon investigation, CO Atkin issued tickets to several subjects for careless operation of an ORV. Additional subjects received tickets for operating ORVs in a closed area. Warnings were also given for registration violations.

CO Nick Atkin responded to a personal injury motorcycle accident. The driver sustained severe injuries, including a fractured femur, and was airlifted to a nearby hospital. The accident remains under investigation with criminal charges pending. It appears that alcohol was a factor in the accident.

DISTRICT 7

CO Chris Holmes issued 16 tickets for fishing without licenses and bass violations as well as one marine ticket in and around Kalamazoo County. He also reported three persons arrested for outstanding warrants during these patrols.

CO Ken Cerny received a complaint of an individual having eastern box turtles in their possession. CO Cerny went to the location and observed four eastern box turtles in a 10 gallon aquarium outside the residence. A ticket was issued and turtles were seized and released.

While on marine patrol in Berrien County, CO Mike McGee and Sgt. Bob Torres contacted occupants of a vessel displaying a Texas boat registration indicating an expiration date of 1995. While investigating the unregistered vessel, another boater approached the scene. The other boater was a friend of the unregistered boater. Seems the friend had observed the DNRE on the water and had placed a cell phone call to the expired boater warning him that the law was out. He advised the unregistered boater that he should proceed back to the dock. The friend had also informed the expired boater where on the lake the DNRE was and told him to follow a different course to get back to the dock. His directions mistakenly led the unregistered boater to the patrol boat.

CO Andy Bauer contacted an angler on the St. Joseph River in possession of fresh water mussels, a short catfish, and an undersized bass.

DISTRICT 8

CO Jeff Walker has been responding to numerous complaints of illegal use of the firearm range in Dansville. Patrons have been shooting at things other than targets such as signs, posts, baffles and backstops. Patrons have also been very disrespectful to other users by leaving litter and garbage on the range. CO Walker has taken enforcement action in every instance.

Evidence in a drug case found at a local access site was turned over to COs Damon Owens and Jonathan Warner. The evidence included a case containing marijuana and a Red Cross CPR card. The owner of the card was interviewed and confessed to using the illegal drugs while boating at the access site. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Peter Purdy received numerous complaints of two PWCs being operated recklessly on a local lake. After numerous attempts CO Purdy contacted the operators and noted that both were less than 12 years of age, had never taken the required boater safety class and were operating unsupervised. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Dan Bigger followed up on a complaint of a subject who was shooting all the fox squirrels near his home. While interviewing the subject he admitted to shooting numerous squirrels and putting them in the trash can. The subject stated that his wife

was angry at the squirrels for getting into the bird feeders, so he shot them. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Dan Bigger responded to a complaint of trespass and observed four subjects on the complainant's property. The subjects had cut down trees to make benches and were constructing a fire pit. The subjects claimed that they were trying to survive in the wild and were emulating the TV show "Survivor Man". The subjects claimed they didn't know whose property they were on. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Peter Purdy noted that the marine activity on Livingston County lakes is still in full swing. CO Purdy contacted individuals who were fishing without licenses, operating unregistered watercraft, and who failed to provide the correct amount of PFDs while on board a watercraft. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Peter Purdy contacted a subject who was fishing without a license. The subject stated that he had mistakenly left his license at home. CO Purdy's investigation showed that the subject was wanted on a felony warrant and had not purchased a fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Peter Purdy received a complaint about two subjects illegally hunting from the railroad tracks. CO Purdy located two subjects with pellet guns who stated they were shooting frogs in a pond adjacent to the tracks. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 9

COs Mark Ennett and Jonathon Sklba assisted with a controlled burn conducted on the marsh/nature trail section of Sterling State Park. The COs were on scene at the request of Monroe Central Dispatch, as they were being overwhelmed with 911 calls reporting the smoke and flames. Much of the burning occurred alongside I-75, and hundreds of people saw and reported it.

CO Lacelle Rabon contacted an angler at Newburgh Lake who did not have a current fishing license nor did he have his identification. CO Rabon waited for the subject's family to bring his identification to the scene. As CO Rabon was writing the ticket for fish without a license, the subject commented to his family, "You give a person a little authority and they think they own the world."

CO Lacelle Rabon attended a hearing in the 19th District Court for a subject he'd ticketed for purchasing a fishing license while his privileges were revoked. The subject was found guilty and was fined \$250 and the continuation of his revocation to December 31, 2012. He further received instructions from the judge, should he violate his revocation again, he would be fined a third time, and would be given time in jail. The statement of jail time from the judge opened the subject's eyes.

CO Brandon Kieft was checking trout anglers along the Paint Creek when one angler on the opposite side of the creek decided to flee on foot because he had not purchased a

2010 fishing license. However, CO Kieft had already obtained the subject's name and date of birth. After running the information through the dispatch center, a nearby address was obtained even though the angler had just moved back to Michigan from out of state and had not yet obtained a Michigan Drivers License. CO Kieft responded to the residence and issued the subject a ticket for fishing without a license.

CO Brandon Kieft was checking anglers and vessels at an Oakland County access site when he contacted a subject and his brother who seemed familiar. After obtaining identification, CO Kieft realized that he had written a ticket to one of the brothers in the past and had given the other a warning. This time the subject had no fishing license and was issued another ticket.

CO Ben Shively assisted MSP troopers with a domestic violence call that turned into a fight in the street with a baseball bat. One subject was arrested for domestic violence and assault and battery.

CO Ben Shively stopped an ORV that was operating on a dirt road after dark. The operator had no helmet or eye protection, but did have on a pair of ear muffs for the noise. The father of the 17 year old was called to pick up his son and the ORV. The subject was ticketed for no helmet.

After a recent breaking and entering at the CSX railroad yard in Wixom, CO Ben Shively has been checking the area for trespassers. While patrolling through the area, CO Shively observed a guitar and two cans of beer in the roadway next to the office building. CO Shively located an individual who was climbing down the 100' yard light pole. The subject was ticketed for railroad trespass.

CO Ben Shively contacted two subjects who were fishing in a gravel pit in southern Oakland County. Neither subject had permission to be on the property, neither had valid fishing licenses and one subject had three outstanding warrants. He also was in possession of marijuana. The subjects were ticketed for recreational trespass and advised and released on the warrants due to jail overcrowding.

COs Ben Shively and Kris Kiel were checking lakes in northern Oakland County and came across an individual walking back up to his vehicle dragging a stringer behind him. The only fish on the stringer was a 12 inch bass. The subject was ticketed for possession of an undersized bass.

CO Kris Kiel responded to a Report-All-Poaching (RAP) complaint of a subject in a boat who had an undersized bass. He located the boat and found the angler had one bass that measured exactly 14". CO Kiel then observed the occupants of a nearby boat were reeling in their equipment fast and preparing to leave. CO Kiel checked the subjects and one stated he had caught his limit of bluegills. One subject had 23 fish and the other had 25 in a garbage bag in a cooler and 10 more hidden in the murky water in the bottom of the cooler under the garbage bag. The subject was issued a ticket for the overlimit.

COs Todd Szyska and Ken Kovach worked the annual "Float Down" on the St. Clair River from the Coast Guard Station in Port Huron to Marysville. The COs assisted numerous rafters that drifted into the commercial shipping channel and were keeping motorized vessels away from the rafters. COs Szyska and Kovach were flagged down to help a subject who kept falling off of her tube. They maneuvered through the crowd of tubes and rafts to get to the subject. CO Kovach operated the boat and radioed the USCG advising of the location and requesting medical assistance. As the COs got next to the subject she went under the water and had to be pulled to the surface. CO Szyska reached into the water and was able to grab the subject and helped pull her onto the patrol boat. The emergency medical technician (EMT) got on board and stabilized the subject until they got her to the docks, where she was transported by ambulance to the hospital. Later the COs found out she had been drinking and taking prescription medication.

COs Todd Szyska and Kris Kiel responded to a RAP complaint of baiting in Richmond and found two tree stands with an auto feeder and a salt block. They located two trail cameras in the area and checked the memory cards and found pictures of two subjects setting up the feeder and the salt block. The COs contacted the subjects and returned the trail cameras and issued a ticket for baiting.

While preparing to launch her patrol boat on Kearsley Lake, CO Linda Scheidler observed a subject fishing from shore. Upon contacting the subject, he admitted he did not have a fishing license. The subject stated that he kept fishing after the CO saw him because he knew he was caught if the CO checked him. If the CO did not check him then he was going to leave after she launched. Enforcement action was taken.

While checking marine activity on the small lakes in the Lapeer SGA, CO Al Schwiderson heard ORVs in the woods on an illegal trail. The CO met the ORVs as they went over a mound of dirt blocking the trail and into the parking lot. The three operators were surprised to see the CO. Enforcement action was taken for operating in a closed area.