

**Law Enforcement Division  
Bi-Weekly Field Report  
2/13/2017 – 2/26/2017**

**DISTRICT 1**

Conservation Officers (COs) Denny Gast, Doug Hermanson and Sgt. Grant Emery worked a joint snowmobile patrol with the Houghton County Sheriff's Department in Twin Lakes over the weekend targeting complaints of excessive noise and license violations. Over 400 snowmobilers were contacted during the seven hour patrol, with 19 citations being issued: ten for excessive noise greater than 88 decibels, five failure to display snowmobile registration, three no snowmobile trail permit and one operating a snowmobile with a suspended driver's license. 37 additional warnings were given for improper/fail to display snowmobile registrations and trail permits.

CO Ethen Mapes assisted the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC) in teaching a snowmobile safety class held for Ontonagon 6<sup>th</sup> graders. The young minds were taught about the importance of safe and lawful snowmobile operation. All of the students were eager to learn and over 20 students earned their snowmobile safety certificate.

COs Ethen Mapes, David Miller, Denny Gast and Sgt. Grant Emery conducted a group snowmobile/sound enforcement patrol over the weekend in Twin Lakes. Officers contacted over 150 snowmobiles. The trails were in very good condition with 12 inches of fresh snow overnight. Several citations were issued: six for excessive noise greater than 88 decibels, two fail to obtain a snowmobile trail permits, one careless operation of a snowmobile and one citation for failing to register a snowmobile. Officers gave 29 warnings for improper display of snowmobile registrations and trail permits.

CO Ethen Mapes responded to a complaint of a lost hiker in the Porcupine Mountains. The hiker was reported to be overdue from his family members at a rental cabin in the park. Instead of entering the park from the east side he attempted to drive his vehicle down South Boundary road from the west end, which is closed this time of year and groomed as a snowmobile trail. The driver moved the barricades closing the road and drove down the snowmobile trail approximately five miles before getting his vehicle stuck. After becoming stuck, he loaded his gear onto his sled and walked another 6.5 miles before being located by officers who were out looking for him. With the excessive snow falling during the time in which the subject was walking, CO Mapes said he looked like a ghost, covered in snow. The subject was transported to the rented cabin with no injuries and reunited with his family members.

CO Denny Gast worked the VFW fishing tournament in Chassell on Portage Lake. Participation was good despite the scarce catch. CO Gast took enforcement action for unregistered ORVs and failure to have line in immediate control.

COs Shannon Kritz and Jason Wicklund were on patrol when they came across a snowmobile with an expired registration. The driver revealed he was on probation for marijuana charges. He claimed he had not smoked marijuana since being on probation and that he just passed a drug test. Further questioning and a search of his person revealed he had smoked an hour prior to contact and had a marijuana cigarette in his possession. The subject also had a warrant out of Wisconsin. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Jason Wicklund and Shannon Kritz gave a presentation at the Iron County Predator Hunt registration. The COs went over the laws associated with hunting predators and stayed around during the registration and dinner to answer questions.

CO Jared Ferguson patrolled the local backwaters for an annual fishing tournament that takes place every year. CO Ferguson found high compliance of the fish and game laws. The participants were of good spirit even with the high winds and white out conditions.

CO Jared Ferguson was working a local water impoundment when he came upon a gentleman who had drifted off the path and was stuck coming off the ice. CO Ferguson assisted the fisherman with his shovel and was able to get him out of the slush. Upon returning to his vehicle, CO Ferguson found he left his driver's side door open and had a ride along. The man's dog was sitting contently on his driver's seat. Both parties had a good laugh and the subject was thankful for the assistance provided by CO Ferguson.

COs Brett DeLonge and Mark Leadman patrolled a large section of snowmobile trail in Marquette County near Gwinn and conducted several snowmobile checks for licensing & safety violations. During the patrol, the COs observed a suspicious snowmobile tucked away amongst a stand of jack pines and upon contact with the owner of the snowmobile the officers noticed he was cutting trees on private property without permission. The COs also found several snowmobile violations including no snow permit, expired registration, and a failure to transfer ownership. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Brett DeLonge, Jeffrey Dell, Jeremy Sergey and Sgt. Ryan Aho conducted a group sound enforcement patrol in Marquette County. Approximately 100 snowmobiles were contacted. During the patrol several snowmobiles were sound tested and many were found to be in violation. The officers took enforcement action on several registration and snowmobile trail permit violations during the patrol. The officers also responded to a reported snowmobile accident where the operator of the rolled snowmobile was not seriously injured. Many riders expressed their appreciation for the sound & safety initiative the officers were conducting.

COs Brett DeLonge, Jeffrey Dell and Sgt. Ryan Aho worked a joint group snowmobile patrol with District 2 COs in Alger County. During the patrol, approximately 200 snowmobiles were checked for trail permit and registration compliance. 18 citations were issued during the patrol for snowmobiles that exceeded the 88 decibel sound emissions limit. All of these snowmobiles were equipped with aftermarket exhausts.

CO Brett DeLonge met with SLFP (Student Leader Fellowship Program) students from Northern Michigan University to discuss and plan an upcoming presentation regarding outdoor activities in Marquette County and the safety regulations that apply to those activities. CO DeLonge is participating as a mentor in the SLFP program that encompasses NMU students who strive to become better leaders and active members in their communities. The SLFP is a 2 year program from which CO DeLonge graduated during his time at Northern Michigan University.

CO Mark Leadman assisted Michigan State Police troopers with several untagged fisher that were found in a subject's freezer during the execution of a search warrant. CO Mark Leadman seized the untagged fisher and charges are pending.

## **DISTRICT 2**

COs Robert Freeborn, Chris Lynch, and Mark Zitnik participated in a group snowmobile patrol with several local sheriff's departments over Presidents Day weekend. The COs worked the Grand Marais area setting up a sound meter to test snowmobiles with loud exhausts. The COs tested several snowmobiles and ended up issuing 16 citations for exhaust exceeding 88 decibels with the loudest snowmobile registering at 101. The COs also addressed several registration violations and issued citations on those. A total of 19 citations and numerous warnings were issued by the officers.

CO Robert Freeborn received a complaint of a snowmobile trespass and loud exhausts. CO Freeborn went to the residence and looked at the issue. It was determined that the snowmobiles were traveling through the complainants' property via a power line and crossing his driveway approximately 100' from his house. CO Freeborn advised the complainant that he would patrol the area during peak snowmobile times. CO Freeborn also advised the complainant that the DNR has been issuing several citations for loud exhausts on snowmobiles.

CO Michael Evink assisted the Michigan State Police with a possible domestic assault in a rural area of Schoolcraft County. The call was at a location where a domestic had occurred just two days earlier. The situation was resolved without incident this time.

COs Michael Evink and Pat Hartsig conducted a fishing and snowmobile patrol on Big Bay de Noc. While investigating a complaint of unattended tip-ups, the COs noticed a sled coming off shore and met the individual at one of the tip-ups which he claimed. He told the COs he had not been gone long, an hour or so to go home and have lunch. When asked about the loaded rifle he was sitting on. He indicated it was in case he saw a coyote. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Michael Evink and Pat Hartsig patrolled Big Bay de Noc when they received a complaint of unattended tip-ups set out. While investigating the area, CO Hartsig checked a fisherman to get some information on the location of the tip-ups. While

speaking with the fisherman, it was found he has never purchased a Michigan fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Pat Hartsig and Lt. Skip Hagy met with Governor Rick Snyder, DNR Director Keith Creagh, State Senator Tom Casperson and State Representative John Kivela at the Escanaba Field Office where CO Pat Hartsig was recognized and thanked for his role in the recent rescue of a child from Little Bay de Noc.

CO Pat Hartsig patrolled Little Bay de Noc and found two ice shanties that were unoccupied and had lines down in the water. Two anglers were contacted in a nearby ice shanty and it was found the lines belonged to them. They had gone to a larger ice shanty to eat lunch. The younger anglers were educated about fishing with lines not in immediate control.

COs Calvin Smith, Bobby Watson, and Mark Zitnik attended a winter survival and off trail snowmobile training course hosted by the US Forest Service. The COs were taught how to make winter shelters and fires to survive the harsh elements overnight in the upper peninsula. They were also taught some useful techniques on how to extricate a snowmobile out of deep snow and backcountry operation in case of a rescue.

CO Mark Zitnik was dispatched to an ice climber who was hanging from an ice cliff. Once on scene, CO Zitnik, U.S. Park Ranger Bill Smith, and Alger County EMS Services assisted the professional ice climbing instructors in the rescue of the individual who had been hanging upside down by his feet for over 13 minutes. CO Zitnik escorted the ice climber down the cliff and to the ambulance for medical treatment. As a result of his trauma, he suffered a tension pneumothorax and shoulder injury.

CO Mark Zitnik responded to a possible suicidal subject inside the city limits of Munising. Once on scene, CO Zitnik and Munising City Police Department secured the scene for EMS personnel to treat the individual.

CO Zitnik was dispatched to Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore for an injured ice climber who was roughly 130 feet down an ice curtain and stranded in a crevice over Lake Superior. CO Zitnik responded on foot to the approximate location and located the ice climbers roughly 4 miles in along the lakeshore. CO Zitnik assessed the five ice climbers who were waiting for rescue personnel to come to their aid. The climbers were very cold and concerned about the ice conditions for the injured ice climber below. CO Zitnik started a fire to keep the individuals warm and sent supplies down to the injured climber, who could not get up due to a possible injury from the fall she had taken. Alger County Sheriff's Department's rescue personnel responded to the scene with equipment needed for the all night rescue. Rescue climbers were dispatched to the scene, along with the U.S. Coast Guard out of Traverse City. Several hours later the rescue climbers arrived and assisted the downed ice climber another fifty feet down to the lake shore. Once the climber was on the lake shore, the Coast Guard was able to deploy their rescue swimmer. The rescue swimmer secured the climber in their flight basket and both were transported via helicopter to Munising Memorial Hospital for treatment.

COs Michael Evink, Mark Zitnik, and U.S. Forest Service Officer Dave Tembreull responded to the Au Train River for a snowmobiler who had driven his snowmobile off the trail into the water. They located the driver and the snowmobile, which was fully submerged into the river. The submerged snowmobile was extracted from the water via local tow truck services and law enforcement action was taken.

CO Chris Lynch responded to a call of an unresponsive woman. Once on scene, the woman was found sitting in the passenger seat of a vehicle parked in the garage she was still unresponsive and her lips were blue. CO Lynch, along with a Delta County sheriff deputy, assisted EMS personal in getting the women out of the car to a waiting ambulance. CO Chris Lynch and the deputy blocked traffic on the way to the hospital for the ambulance. Once at the hospital, the woman was responsive.

CO Tom Oberg was on patrol near Raber Bay when he checked an ice shanty with two individuals fishing. CO Oberg asked to see their fishing licenses and any fish they had caught. One individual presented a license and the other stated he must have forgotten his but stated he did buy one. After verifying through the retail sales system the individual didn't purchase a fishing license this year or since 2011, CO Oberg asked the individual again if he bought one. He stated he didn't and that he screwed up. Enforcement action was taken.

While on patrol on Drummond Island, CO Tom Oberg received a complaint from central dispatch of several pieces of rebar sticking out of the ice in front of a house on the island. The complainant was a snowmobiler who almost hit one while riding on the bay. CO Oberg went with the complainant to the location and observed the metal bars sticking out and realized how much of a hazard it is to snowmobilers. The rebar was removed from the ice and CO Oberg will continue to follow up to determine the intentions.

CO Jon Busken attended a recruiting event at Bay College in Escanaba. CO Busken did a presentation on the job of a conservation officer, the hiring process and took questions from the group of criminal justice students.

CO Jon Busken received a complaint of careless snowmobile operation in Seney. While patrolling, CO Busken witnessed an operator apply the brakes so hard in the corner that his sled slid well into the opposite lane of traffic. A traffic stop was conducted and the operator claimed he had been trying to avoid bumps in the trail. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Jon Busken and Robert Freeborn conducted a joint snowmobile patrol in the Seney area during which they observed two snowmobiles on the trail with ORV licenses attached instead of snowmobile trail permits. A traffic stop was conducted and contact was made with the operators. It was also found that the owner had never transferred the snowmobile registration even though he had purchased it more than two years ago. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Jon Busken and Calvin Smith conducted a snowmobile sound enforcement patrol in Seney during the President's Day weekend. The two COs issued eight citations for excessive snowmobile exhaust noise. The COs also observed a group operating snowmobiles against the flow of traffic on M-77. Contact was made with the leader of the group who had gotten his snowmobile stuck while operating against the flow of traffic. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jon Busken was fueling up his patrol truck when he observed a group of snowmobiles operating against the flow of traffic on a state trunk line. CO Busken stopped fueling his truck and conducted a traffic stop. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jon Busken contacted an angler on Big Manistique Lake. CO Busken noted that the angler had eight lines in the water. The angler said that his friend had just left. When the other angler returned CO Busken asked how many lines the pair had. They responded six because tip ups don't count. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jon Busken conducted a demonstration of snowmobile sound enforcement for court staff in Schoolcraft County. The staff said that the presentation provided valuable insight on how snowmobile sound enforcement was conducted and left them well prepared to answer questions from the public.

On his day off, CO Jon Busken received a call from a deputy with the Mackinac County Sheriff's Office of a larceny in progress in West Mackinac County. Deputies were responding from nearly an hour away. CO Busken checked in service and responded with a deputy. Multiple parties were involved and having a second officer was extremely beneficial.

Sgt. Mike Hammill and CO Jon Busken conducted a snowmobile sound enforcement patrol in Grand Marais. The COs observed a snowmobile being operated without a valid trail permit. The COs followed the group to the gas station but could not locate the snowmobile with the rest of the group. A search revealed the sled was positioned alone behind a tanker truck. When the COs began approaching the operator attempted to restart his snowmobile. Contact was quickly made and enforcement action was taken.

CO Kevin Postma was working on Fowlers Bay when he made contact with a fisherman. CO Postma engaged the fisherman in conversation and quickly realized he was fishing with four tip-ups, not to mention two holes were drilled next to the fisherman's snowmobile and a jig pole in a bucket that was baited and ready to go. CO Postma asked the fisherman how many lines he was fishing, he advised "four". CO Postma asked if he knew how lines many he could fish, he advised, "four." Enforcement action was taken.

CO Kevin Postma was on the frozen waters in the Cedarville area checking ice fishermen. While traveling on snowmobile from Cedarville to Hessel, CO Postma nearly hit a tip-up. CO Postma then stopped his snowmobile and waited for the fisherman to at least step out of his/her house on shore and acknowledge the COs presence. After

several minutes with no response, CO Postma followed foot tracks to shore to a nearby house. CO Postma was unable to contact anyone at the house and noticed the tracks led further inland to a second house. CO Postma then walked by the front of the house hoping to catch the eye of the angler. Finally, CO Postma knocked on the door and made contact with the angler who admitted to the tip-ups. CO Postma asked when the last time he had checked or even looked at his tip-ups, he advised about noon. It was now 1:40 in the afternoon and enforcement action was taken.

CO Kevin Postma was checking ice fishermen on Brimley Bay when he made contact with a fisherman fishing with six lines. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Kevin Postma and CO Brett Gustafson assisted Michigan State Police with a personal injury accident north of Eckerman.

COs Kevin Postma and Bobby Watson investigated a personal injury snowmobile accident north of Trout Lake. The driver was pushed off the trail into some trees by an aggressive group of snowmobiles. The officers were unable to identify the reckless riders at this time but are following up on a few leads.

CO Jon Busken and Sgt. Mike Hammill were contacted by a snowmobiler who had his snowmobile run into by another snowmobiler on the trails. The suspect fled after the collision and was unable to be located. A crash report is being generated.

CO Calvin Smith was patrolling Big Manistique Lake when he came across an ice fisherman who was enjoying some success. Unfortunately for the fisherman, he did not purchase a fishing license for the year. Law enforcement action was taken.

CO Calvin Smith was on South Manistique Lake when he came across an ice fisherman who had four tip ups set up. CO Smith asked the fisherman how many lines he was legally allowed to have in the water and the fisherman replied, "three." Law enforcement action was taken.

### **DISTRICT 3**

CO Nick Torsky followed up on a Report All Poaching (RAP) complaint, where a subject had sent photographs of a vehicle parked at a closed trout lake in the Pigeon River Country State Forest (PRC). CO Torsky was able to locate the owner of the suspect vehicle and obtain a confession for fishing during the closed season. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Matt Theunick rode with a group of Michigan legislators during their annual snowmobile ride on northern Michigan trails near Indian River.

COs Nick Torsky, Matt Theunick and Paul Fox conducted a snowmobile sound meter patrol in a sensitive area of the PRC, near prime elk reproduction areas. The area has also had a history of illegal snowmobile operation in closed areas. Several sleds were

contacted on legal roads and were sound tested at levels just under the maximum volume reading.

CO Mark DePew responded to a complaint from snowmobilers that had found an elk that appeared unhealthy near the snowmobile trail in Vanderbilt. It was determined that the elk had contracted brain worm, which is a terminal disease. CO DePew safely dispatched the animal and transferred the head to the DNR Wildlife lab for testing.

COs Tim Rosochacki and Eric Bottorff attended the Sturgeon Advisory Council meeting in Indian River and reported on CO patrol activity related to the completed winter sturgeon spearing season on Black Lake in Cheboygan County.

CO Nick Torsky attended the annual children's fishing derby held at Otsego Lake State Park. Over 100 kids were in attendance. Instructors were on hand to show the kids how to fish and the importance of our natural resources.

COs Nick Torsky, Tim Rosochacki and Paul Fox conducted a snowmobile patrol in the PRC with special attention to noise compliance in this sensitive area. The COs reported a high compliance rate.

CO Matt Theunick completed a presentation at the United Auto Workers (UAW) Camp in Cheboygan County. In attendance were over 50 children who all have various forms of physical disabilities.

COs Andrea Albert, Chad Baldwin and Sgt. Mike Feagan conducted sound meter tests on snowmobiles in Antrim County. Several snowmobiles were found to be operating in excess of 88 decibels and were cited for the violation. One of the operators was also a suspended driver. He was cited for the sound violation and lodged at the Antrim County Jail for operating with a suspended driver's license.

COs Chad Baldwin and Andrea Erratt participated in a Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) sponsored Trapping Weigh-In Event in Emmet County. There were over 30 coyotes, bobcats, and foxes entered in the contest. The COs made many contacts in the trapping community and were able to speak with trappers one on one about progress and issues concerning the sport.

While on snowmobile patrol, CO Andrea Erratt of Charlevoix County checked a family riding on three unregistered snowmobiles. The owner of all three snowmobiles admitted he had not registered any of the snowmobiles and apologized for shirking his responsibilities. He told CO Erratt that he had purchased the snowmobile that expired in 2009 two years ago and had never transferred the snowmobile registration to his name. CO Erratt ticketed him for one unregistered snowmobile and warned him for the two other unregistered snowmobiles and failing to transfer the registration within 15 days of purchase.

While enroute to a group snowmobile patrol, CO Andrea Erratt of Charlevoix County checked a father and son on two snowmobiles with expired trail permits and

registrations. The father had current trail permits and registrations in his pocket; however, he had purchased one snowmobile last summer and failed to transfer it into his name. CO Erratt ticketed him for failing to transfer the snowmobile registration within 15 days of purchase and warned him for not attaching his trail permit and registration decal. CO Erratt also ticketed two snowmobile operators with expired trail permits.

CO Andrea Erratt observed a snowmobiler run through a stop sign without slowing down or looking either way. CO Erratt stopped the snowmobiler who said he thought it was a yield sign. Then he said he thought the stop sign (on the snowmobile trail) only applied to cars. CO Erratt issued a ticket for careless operation of a snowmobile and warned him for failing to stop before crossing a roadway.

CO Duane Budreau gave a talk to the local Cub Scouts in Emmet County at their annual Blue and Gold Banquet. It was about an hour talk about the history and career of a CO as well as fur displays, traps and a vintage Norlund's Fish grabber.

#### **DISTRICT 4**

CO Colton Gelinis was on patrol in Leelanau County when he observed a broken down vehicle on the side of the road. CO Gelinis observed a note in the driver side window stating a tow truck was on the way. Further investigation revealed that the license plate to the vehicle came from another vehicle. CO Gelinis made contact with the tow truck driver, who provided the CO with a phone number of the driver of the vehicle. The driver also admitted that the vehicle had no insurance. A warrant request has been submitted to Leelanau County Prosecuting Attorney.

CO Colton Gelinis was on patrol in Leelanau County when he was dispatched to assist U.S. Parks Service (Sleeping Bear Dunes) for suspicious activity. CO Gelinis along with two rangers made contact with a group of six individuals that were filming a war movie. The group had two air rifles that replicated M4's and air handgun that replicated a Sig Sauer. The group was filming a movie for a school project. The rangers issued the group a citation, under federal law, pertaining to filming without a permit.

CO Sean Kehoe received a call from a subject who noticed fishing equipment on the ice but observed no fishermen for approximately two days. He also reported that some of the flags on the tip-ups were up. Knowing the location and people that live in the area, CO Kehoe made a few phone calls and found out that the fishermen were renting a nearby cabin. CO Kehoe responded to the cabin and was able to account for all the fishermen. During the interview, CO Kehoe determined by admission and lack of foot tracks in the recent snow, that the lines had not been checked for quite some time and were not visible from the cabin. Enforcement action was taken for unattended lines.

CO Patrick McManus and CO Colton Gelinis were patrolling multiple lakes over "Free Fishing Weekend" and contacted numerous first-time anglers taking advantage of the opportunity. After checking participants involved in a perch fishing tournament on one of

the local lakes in Leelanau County, the COs found numerous fishing and recreational safety equipment violations among several groups. After numerous warnings, enforcement action was taken.

During the Free Fishing Weekend, CO Rich Stowe responded to a report all poaching complaint of unattended tip-ups in Wexford County. Upon investigating the complaint, CO Stowe located three unattended tip-ups on a fairly secluded stretch of ice and was able to obtain a name off of the tip-ups. Contact was made with the suspect who admitted to leaving the tip-ups out the previous day. Enforcement action was taken. CO Patrick McManus and CO Colton Gelinus were on patrol in Leelanau County when they observed a vehicle parked on the side of the road near a small area of state land. After exiting their vehicle, the COs noticed a subject walking out of the woods to their location. Upon making contact, the subject said he was scouting for deer and quickly left the area after being identified. When the COs tracked the subject's footprints into the woods, they located several untagged traps. The subject returned to the area when the COs were exiting the woodlot and admitted to not only setting untagged traps, but failing to check them within 24 hours. Enforcement action was taken.

CO William Kinney and CO Josiah Killingbeck were patrolling Wexford County on Lake Cadillac for fishing activity. During the patrol they encountered two snowmobilers and three four wheel ATVs operating without helmets, some carrying passengers. The officers determined during the contacts that one person had been warned earlier in the day and another was operating on a suspended driver's license. Numerous warnings were given by the officers but enforcement actions were taken on each of the operators.

CO Patrick McManus and CO Rebecca Hopkins attended at Search and Rescue management course. In collaboration with local fire and rescue, CERT, MSP and National Park Service attendees, the COs utilized Incident Command protocol to resolve a mock missing boy complaint. The course was presented by the US Department of Interior - National Park Service and the Benzie County Emergency Management Office.

While checking fishermen in Mason County, CO Kyle Publiski noticed a portable ice shanty that he recognized from checks earlier in the week. CO Publiski found tip-ups frozen in the ice with flags up when he approached the shanty. CO Publiski chipped out the ice to the tip-ups and removed a pike that was on one of them. He then gathered up all the fishing gear, including a shanty, ice auger and heater. CO Publiski had previously recorded a license plate at this location from a contact when checking an angler without a license in possession. Using that information he attempted contact with a subject but when unsuccessful, returned to find the correct individual fishing but now missing some gear. Enforcement action was taken for unattended lines.

While checking fishermen on Bass Lake in Mason County, CO Kyle Publiski and CO Brian Brosky were checking a large group of fishermen. CO Brosky was dealing with an ORV violation when he waved CO Publiski over for assistance. Both COs could smell a strong odor of marijuana, and when they asked the angler about it, he replied, "Yes, I

did have marijuana but smoked it all.” CO Publiski replied to the fisherman, “In my experience most people that smoke marijuana never smoke all of it, so go get the rest.” The fisherman replied “okay”, walked over to his fishing bucket and dug out a large mason jar half full of marijuana. Enforcement action was taken.

While conducting a taxidermy inspection, CO Steve Converse found records of a deer that was no longer on site, but the information on the deer seemed suspicious. CO Converse followed-up on the deer and met with the subject who had dropped it off. CO Converse was correct with his hunch and the hunter confessed that he had shot the deer before obtaining his license. CO Converse subsequently seized the 12-point mount off the wall. After clearing the interview, CO Converse made contact with CO Kyle Publiski and CO Brian Brosky to get court info and share the information from the incident because the deer was taken in Mason County. During their conversation, it was discovered that the subject CO Converse had just received a confession from was the primary suspect in another deer case the Mason County that the COs had been investigating. CO Converse returned to speak with his suspect again, but this time the subject was not willing to talk. In the end, the subject was arrested on a two-count warrant and charged for the 12-point. He pled guilty and was fined \$11,000 in restitution, \$750 in fines and costs.

CO Converse was on patrol at Tippy Dam when he observed a subject catch a brown trout and use his foot as a measuring device. CO Converse watched as the subject put the fish in a bucket after taking the not so precise measurement. CO Converse decidedly contact with the subject to aid him in his measuring and discovered that the brown trout was three inches short. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Sam Koscinski and CO Scott MacNeill worked a marine patrol on the lower stretch of the Manistee River. The COs concentrated on fishing and marine violations while making contacted with dozens of fishing vessels. Violations observed during that patrol included fail to provide PFD (throwable <16’), and non-contrasting color/not visible/not legible registrations. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Scott MacNeill responded to an incident on Portage Lake in Manistee County where an ORV had gone through the ice after dark. The man operating the ORV was able to roll away and safely exit the ice before the ORV became completely submerged. COs helped the operator coordinate with local dive teams to locate and remove the ORV. Efforts to recover the ORV are still ongoing at this time.

CO Josiah Killingbeck was on snowmobile patrol on Lake Cadillac in Wexford County when he observed a snowmobiler driving without a helmet. CO Killingbeck stopped the snowmobile and asked the operator where his helmet was. The operator told CO Killingbeck that he was checking tip-ups in the area and figured he did not need a helmet, since he was not operating at a high speed. The operator told CO Killingbeck that he had no registration paperwork for his machine, but that it was registered to him. When CO Killingbeck ran the snowmobile registration, it did not come back to the operator. The operator then admitted to CO Killingbeck that he had purchased the

snowmobile over a year ago and never transferred the title. While talking with the operator, CO Killingbeck observed an ORV in the group that was not licensed. CO Killingbeck asked why there was no ORV license on the ORV. The operator told CO Killingbeck that he did not know he needed one. The subjects were advised of the rules for operating and licensing of snowmobiles and ORVs. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Josiah Killingbeck was on patrol on Lake Mitchell in Wexford County when he observed the operator of an ORV going across the ice without a helmet. CO Killingbeck stopped the ORV and discovered the operator was in possession of open intoxicants operating an ORV that had not been licensed in several years. The operator claimed the open intoxicants were not his and swore that he had purchased a ORV license. CO Killingbeck ran the operator through retail sales and discovered that the subject had not purchased a ORV license for 2016. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Josiah Killingbeck was on patrol on Lake Cadillac in Wexford County when he observed an ORV with two adults along with a young child riding without helmets and on an ORV not designed for passengers. CO Killingbeck stopped the ORV and asked everyone where their helmets were. The riders told CO Killingbeck that they were not familiar with ORV regulations and that it was a friend's ORV, ultimately blaming their friend for not giving them helmets. CO Killingbeck also discovered the ORV had a DNR sportcard displayed in place of a ORV license. CO Killingbeck educated the subjects on ORV regulations and enforcement action was taken.

CO Josiah Killingbeck and CO Will Kinney were patrolling on Lake Cadillac in Wexford County when they observed two snowmobiles operating at a high rate of speed without helmets. The COs were able to make contact with the operators who said that they were fishing on the lake and hadn't brought helmets with them this weekend. Both subjects admitted that they knew it was illegal to ride without helmets, but decided to take the risk, hoping not to get caught. In two other cases, operators were contacted in violation of helmet or licensing laws on ORVs. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Josiah Killingbeck was on patrol in Lake County and ran a license plate on a vehicle operating in front of him due to the plate being obscured. SOS records revealed it was an invalid plate that was cancelled due to expired insurance with an order for plate seizure. CO Killingbeck stopped the vehicle and was given a proof of insurance that was expired in December of 2016. The driver told CO Killingbeck that he was not sure when the last time was that he had actually paid for insurance. The plate was seized and the vehicle was towed until valid insurance could be produced. The driver was cited for operating without insurance.

CO Ryan Andrews was checking ice anglers in Lake County when he came across a group of four people fishing together. Upon checking the tip-ups, it was discovered that several were unlabeled with the anglers' name and address, as well as one of the anglers was fishing with too many lines. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Ryan Andrews was talking to anglers at a lake access site in Lake County when a second group of ice anglers came off the ice. As the group approached the CO, he could see the snowmobile leading the group was not wearing a helmet. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Brian Lebel was working the Muskegon River in Mecosta County as people were fishing in high water conditions. CO Lebel made contact with an out of state expired registration on a boat. The subject had purchased the boat the past fall and failed to transfer the title, as well as update the expired registration. The operator could not provide a PFD of any kind in the cold, high water as well. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Mike Wells was on patrol when he received a complaint of a subject fishing closed waters below the White Cloud Dam in Newaygo County. During his response to the location of the violation, CO Wells passed a location on the same river further downstream of the dam. CO Wells observed, as he drove by, two more subjects fishing in the same section of the closed stream. CO Wells proceeded to the original complaint location and made contact with the first subject, whom upon interview, revealed that he did not know the stream was closed because he had failed to reference the fishing guide. A citation was issued to the first subject for fishing closed waters. CO Wells returned to the second location downstream and made contact with the two subjects he had observed earlier. Upon speaking with the subjects, they also admitted that they did not know the stream was closed and failed to reference the fishing guide. Citations were issued to both subjects for fishing closed waters.

CO Jeff Ginn responded to a complaint where a suspect had allegedly kicked a turkey to death. The suspect was not home at the time, but was able to speak with the current residents regarding the incident. CO Ginn was able to determine the suspect's girlfriend, his ex-girlfriend and her son were outside playing in the backyard of their residence. A jake turkey came from the woods in a full strut and began to approach the three. The two ladies and the small child became afraid and ran into their house to alert the suspect. The two adult females stated they had no knowledge of what took place after that, but the suspect would be home from work shortly. CO Ginn left his card and asked them to have the suspect call when he was home. CO Ginn received an email from the district law secretary, Karen Wingate, explaining the suspect had called and needed to speak to him about a turkey that went "ape crazy and got killed". She asked how it was killed and he said that he was "wrestling with the bird and it got killed". CO Ginn returned to the residence to make contact with the suspect who stated when he heard about the aggressive turkey he decided to go investigate as he was about to leave to return cans. When he came around the back of his vehicle, he noticed the same turkey in a full strut. The suspect called his ex-girlfriend's son to come outside to see that the turkey meant no harm. The suspect asked the boy to go grab him some bread so he could feed the strutting bird. Once the suspect had the bread, he reached out to feed the turkey. The suspect then explained the turkey pecked at the bread a couple times then jumped up onto his shoulders nearly knocking him to the ground. The bird had grabbed him by the shoulders and began beating him in the face with his wings and

pecking at his head. The suspect immediately grabbed the turkey and threw it to the ground. He then ran up toward the turkey and kicked it in the chest. The suspect noticed the turkey was still flapping its wings so he delivered one more kick to the chest area then ran inside. The suspect stated when he returned to his vehicle approximately thirty minutes later, the bird was dead. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Casey Varriale was patrolling Center Lake in Osceola County when an individual approached his patrol vehicle with a map in hand. The individual was hiking while on a retreat at the Kettunen Center about two miles away. The hiker admitted he was lost and asked for assistance from CO Varriale. The hiker was returned to his destination and suffered no injuries during his adventure.

CO Casey Varriale was on patrol at Lake Miramichi in Osecola County when two people were operating ORVs without proper safety equipment. CO Varriale conducted a stop and the couple admitted that they should have had their helmets on. The individuals were cited for the incident.

CO Casey Varriale was on patrol in Reed City in Osceola County where he saw a truck pulled over with damage done to it. CO Varriale spoke with the driver, and the driver explained that his tire blew out which caused him to lose control and hit a tree. The driver sustained no injuries.

## **DISTRICT 5**

COs Matt Liestenfeltz and Craig Neal were returning from a Kalkaska County snowmobile patrol when they came across an overturned Polaris RZR on the side of the road. The driver was able to extract himself from the wreck but the passenger was still trapped inside. The COs were able to assist the passenger out of the overturned vehicle. Upon making contact with the driver, it was discovered that he was highly intoxicated. After conducting field sobriety tests, the driver was placed under arrest for operating while intoxicated (OWI). CO Mike Hearn assisted at the scene and lodged the driver in the Kalkaska County Jail.

CO Ben McAteer was advised by Crawford County Dispatch of a car stuck in the snow at Jones Lake State Forest Campground in Crawford County. CO McAteer located the campers attempting to dig out their car with an ice scraper and machete. After talking with them, CO McAteer learned that the couple's car got stuck two days prior and they had run out of propane, food, and water early that morning. After assisting the couple dig and push their vehicle out, the happy campers went into town to get a hot meal.

While checking ice fishermen on Big Twin Lake in Kalkaska County, CO Sam Schluckbier noticed an ice shanty isolated from the "normal" fishing grounds. After a walk across the lake he found the angler possessing 19 perch, but no fishing license. The angler claimed it was free fishing weekend. CO Schluckbier advised that it was Thursday and the free fishing weekend only works on the weekend. The fish were confiscated and the angler was cited for fishing without a license.

CO Sam Schluckbier checked a small inland lake in Kalkaska County. CO Schluckbier observed an ice shanty with 6 tip-ups set out. Both anglers inside the shanty were also jigging with several lines each. One of the anglers claimed they were meeting another friend out on the lake and decided to set the tip-ups early. CO Schluckbier advised that he would wait for the friend to arrive. Once the angler heard that, he confessed to fishing with too many lines. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Sam Schluckbier observed two set tip-ups from shore on Big Blue Lake in Kalkaska County. With no angler around, CO Schluckbier walked out to retrieve them from the ice. As he approached the sets, a man yelled from shore. The angler claimed he just set them and was watching from his cabin. CO Schluckbier investigated the sets and found both of them frozen into the holes that were drilled. It was apparent the tip-ups were set the night before. After speaking with the angler again, his son admitted to setting the lines over 14 hours before and they had not watched them throughout the night. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Mike Hearn, Matt Liestenfeltz, Ben McAteer, and Craig Neal conducted a snowmobile patrol focusing on sound enforcement in Kalkaska County. A total of 31 contacts were made. Several verbal warnings for snowmobile violations were addressed and four citations were issued.

CO Jeff Panich was on patrol checking ice anglers on a small lake in Alcona County. While making contacts, one group informed him they hadn't caught anything but they had watched the anglers next to them catch a few northern pike. CO Panich made contact with the group, observing blood on the snow as he approached. When asked if they had any success, the anglers explained they hadn't caught anything all day. CO Panich pointed out the fresh blood on the snow and that other anglers had witnessed them catch two northern pike. The anglers eventually revealed two undersized pike hidden in the snow underneath a sled. They stated they never expected to see a conservation officer on such a small lake and figured they were safe. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jeff Panich was patrolling a small lake in Alcona County for ice fishing activity during Free Fishing Weekend when he observed a shanty with ice fishing gear and multiple tip-ups set without anyone around. CO Panich set off three flags in an attempt to get a response from the owner. After waiting over an hour, CO Panich seized the fishing gear and left the lake. At shore, he was met by an angler who he determined to be the owner of the ice shanty and associated gear. The man admitted he and a buddy set the tip-ups and shanty up the previous evening and went home leaving the fishing lines unattended. They figured they would not be caught by law enforcement on such a small lake. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jon Warner and the United States Coast Guard received a complaint of a truck which had fallen through the ice on Tawas Bay in Iosco County. Further investigation revealed the truck had broken through the ice but was sitting on sand in very shallow water. The owner was identified and able to remove the truck safely.

CO Kyle Bader served arrest warrants on two subjects in regards to shooting a deer with a firearm out of season at the end of December in Ogemaw County. Bond was collected and both subjects were issued a court date.

During a taxidermy inspection in Ogemaw County, CO Kyle Bader located a suspicious kill tag on a set of whitetail deer antlers. He followed up at the address listed on file in an attempt to locate the owner of the antlers. CO Bader determined the address belonged to the parents of the subject and didn't receive any cooperation from them in locating their son. After further investigation, CO Bader located a current address for the subject, which happened to be next door to the parent's house. He interviewed the man and received a confession for killing a six point whitetail deer without a license. Charges are being sought through the Ogemaw County Prosecutor's Office.

CO Mark Papineau assisted Gladwin County Sheriff's Department on a felonious assault incident. They were dispatched to a shots fired complaint which stemmed from an altercation between a 25-year-old and his mother-in-law. The incident occurred when the subjects began fighting over the 25-year-old's lack of a job and motivation to make an honest living. At some point during the verbal argument, the man pulled a handgun and fired several times at his mother-in-law. The responding law enforcement officers were able to set up a perimeter on residence and negotiate the shooter from the dwelling. He was taken into custody without incident and subsequently arrested for felonious assault.

COs Steve Lockwood and Josh Wright were on a fish patrol conducting surveillance of multiple anglers on Secord Lake in Gladwin County. The COs witnessed one of the anglers throw an empty beer can into the woods. When the COs made contact with the subjects, they were cited for littering and failure to license an ORV.

CO Josh Wright assisted the Clare County Sheriff's Department with an in progress breaking and entering complaint. The suspects were apprehended leaving the residence by deputies and CO Wright. During a search of their vehicle marijuana was also located. After following up with homeowners, the suspects were arrested and lodged at the Clare County Jail.

## **DISTRICT 6**

CO John Byars observed an ORV driving down the middle of a paved road at a high rate of speed. The CO stopped the ORV but the operator could not produce a driver's license. Later the operator admitted to having a suspended license and the ORV is his only means of transportation. The CO checked with dispatch to confirm that he was operating an ORV with a suspended driver's license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Joe Myers conducted interviews regarding deer taken this past deer season. One hunter confessed to hunting without a license and was convicted of the offense. The suspect was fined \$1,400.

COs Joe Myers and Will Brickel conducted interviews regarding suspiciously purchased deer tags during this past deer season. After conducting the interviews, both suspects confessed to taking a deer without a license and using kill tags of another. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Joe Myers was investigating a complaint in Elwell, Michigan about a deer killed when a large trough of poison was discovered by the CO. After interviewing the suspect about the deer and poison the suspect confessed to placing the poison in order to kill wildlife and not tagging a deer he had harvested. The suspect was convicted of both counts. The suspect was charged \$2,635 for the crimes.

CO Joe Myers was following up on an investigation previously started in Gratiot County of a complaint regarding a hunter killing two deer with only one valid tag. After arriving at the suspect's residence and interviewing the suspect, it was found the suspect was operating a motor vehicle with an uncased and loaded firearm in his truck. The firearm had a round in the chamber, safety off and was located next to large shining light in the front seat. After being lied to repeatedly, the CO gained a full confession of killing two deer with only one tag. The suspect originally told the CO that the second deer 'fell out' of his truck and could not locate the deer after that. However, CO Myers gained the confession and located the deer dumped on state land a mile from the suspect's resident. The suspect was tried and convicted in Gratiot County for the offenses above. The suspect was charged a total of \$1,000 and his firearm was forfeited to the state.

CO Josh Russell conducted a follow up interview with a subject who left his deer blind up for well over a year in Kalkaska County. CO Russell obtained a full confession and sent the information back to a Kalkaska County CO. Charges are pending.

CO Quincy Gowenlock received a call from the Saginaw Bay U.S. Coast Guard station requesting assistance regarding a complaint of a submerged object in the Saginaw River near the Zilwaukee boat launch. Several boaters called in stating they had run into an unknown object and sustained substantial damage to their boats. CO Gowenlock with the assistance of CO Joe Myers launched the jet boat and conducted an extensive search of the area. The COs located the remains of an old electrical tower just below the water line. The COs marked the location with a GPS and dropped a temporary hazard marker until the USCG is able to get out and mark with a permanent marker. The GPS coordinates were relayed to the USCG for an immediate broadcast thru sector station Detroit.

Sgt. Ron Kimmerly took a complaint from a retired Wildlife Division employee regarding a beaver he saw in a trap. The retired employee advised he saw a beaver alive in a trap in December but advised he did not dispatch the beaver due to believing the trapper was a responsible one and would check the trap later that day as the law requires. However, in February, after realizing the beaver was still in the trap, the former employee called Sgt. Kimmerly and made a complaint. Sgt. Kimmerly went to the scene and retrieved the beaver and trap. The trap had an identification tag on it, but the trapper obviously did not check his trap once every 24 hours as the law requires in the

Lower Peninsula. Sgt. Kimmerly made contact with the trapper and issued a ticket for the violation.

COs Seth Rhodea and Kyle Bucholtz patrolled the ice on Saginaw Bay on foot. Multiple citations were issued for possession of marijuana and over-limits of fish. In addition, multiple verbal warnings were given by the CO's.

While patrolling the Rush Lake State Game Area, CO Robert Hobkirk checked the lake for any waterfowl blinds that may have not been removed by the required date. Two blinds were located, but unfortunately only one had a legible name and address still on the blind. The owner of the blind was contacted and was issued a citation for failing to remove his waterfowl blind from public property. The investigation continues as to who placed the other blind on the lake.

CO Robert Hobkirk was contacted by a Huron County resident who notified him of a large fish die off in the canals within Sand Point near Caseville. The complainant was able to photograph the dead fish which CO Hobkirk forwarded to Fisheries Unit Supervisor Jim Baker. Mr. Baker was able to immediately identify the fish die off as young gizzard shad. This is a phenomenon that happens in Michigan each spring with young gizzard shad due to their fragile nature.

CO Seth Rhodea was patrolling when he observed a large amount of black smoke near a farm. After reaching the location, CO Rhodea found a large amount of plastic, mattresses and other items that are not allowed to be burned on fire. Contact was made with person that had started the fire and a citation was issued.

COs Kyle Bucholtz and Seth Rhodea were contacting anglers on Saginaw Bay when contact was made with an angler, who after CO Rhodea identified himself attempted to dump his over-limit of perch back in the water. CO Rhodea was able to stop the angler who still had a dozen fish over his limit. A citation was issued.

CO Seth Rhodea issued numerous ORV citations over the last couple weeks after stopping ORV operators for violations that included no helmets, no ORV licenses, running stop signs, riding double and failing to operate on the right side of the roadway. Citations were issued to address the violations.

CO Seth Rhodea responded to a complaint of a suspicious person and vehicle in the ditch. After locating the suspect, it was learned that he had just left a party store and when he attempted to open his beer in his vehicle he drove off the road and into the ditch when the beer slipped out his hand and onto his seat. The driver was found to not be intoxicated but was cited for the open intoxicants in the vehicle.

CO Mark Siemen made contact with a subject who was trapping in the Sandusky State Game Area in Sanilac County. During the check, several snares were located in the subject's vehicle. The snares appeared to be new and were not tagged. The subject stated he had just bought the snares. CO Siemen educated the subject on the

possession of traps and snares in an area frequented by game and was given a warning for the untagged traps.

CO Jason A. Smith received a complaint of hunters trespassing on some railroad tracks. He was able to be in the area a short time after the complaint came in, but the hunters were no longer on the tracks. The hunters were followed for quite a while, but did not return to the railroad tracks.

Sgt. Scott Brown attended the Annual Thumb Chapter of the QDMA banquet in Ubyly and participated in a Q&A Panel with Chad Stewart from MDNR Wildlife Division and other panel members. Questions from the members attending the panel presentation were answered.

CO Mike Haas responded to a complaint at Lake Isabella where a snowmobile had fallen through the ice. The operator and his passenger were able to get out of the water after a short struggle. Luckily the front skis of the snowmobile had caught on the ice which kept the front of the snowmobile out of the water. CO Haas was able to coordinate a recovery of the machine with a local tow company and the man's snowmobile and fishing gear were recovered.

Many ORV operators took advantage of the warm weather in Isabella County recently. On a busy weekend, CO Mike Haas made many contacts with ORV enthusiasts and issued several warnings and citations for operating without ORV licenses and operating in closed areas.

CO Mike Haas and Mt. Pleasant fire fighters responded to a complaint of an open burn that smelled like burning chemicals. The suspect had dug a large hole behind his house and was in the process of illegally burning garbage, furniture, clothes, paint and other household items when the officers arrived. After a short interview, photos were taken and the man was told to put out the fire. The gentleman had issues in the past for improper disposal and the case was turned over to a representative with the Department of Environmental Quality.

While checking a taxidermist in Isabella County, CO Dan Robinson noticed some issues with the information provided to the taxidermist by hunters. CO Robinson conducted an investigation into several of those issues and found one deer that appeared to be taken without a license. The subject in that case was interviewed and it was determined that he did take the buck without the proper license. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Dan Robinson and Mike Haas worked a Safari Club International event in Mt. Pleasant. The COs fielded many questions and clarification regarding hunting and trapping laws. The COs also listened to many hunters concerned about the deer with CWD found in Mecosta County.

While on patrol in southern Isabella County, COs Dan Robinson and Josh Russell were called to an area where subjects were reportedly taking fish with illegal netting in Gratiot

County. The COs made contact with the subjects and determined they were not actively using the nets, but had in the past. In the course of the incident it was also found that one of the subjects had a warrant for his arrest and was spearing frogs without a license. The subject was taken into custody for the warrant. The other subjects were warned for trespassing and enforcement action was taken for the netting violations.

While on patrol, COs Dan Robinson and Josh Russell made contact with a vehicle that was operating in the closed portion of the Flat River State Game Area. The vehicle had four occupants and smelled strongly of marijuana. A vehicle search didn't come up with the source of the marijuana, but the driver did receive a citation for operating a motor vehicle off the established trail.

CO Joel Lundberg participated in the annual Klondike Derby in Frankenmuth, where he was one of several stations that small groups of Boy Scouts rotated through throughout the day. CO Lundberg taught a brief course on trapping techniques and fur identification to over 350 Boy scouts.

## **DISTRICT 7**

CO Richard Cardenas was patrolling the Middleville State Game Area in Barry County and observed an ORV operating in the middle of the road at a high rate of speed. CO Cardenas paced the ORV doing 45 plus miles an hour and stopped the ORV. The juvenile operator was transported back to his residence along with the ORV. Officer Cardenas found that the parent was aware that their child, who was younger than 16 years old, was driving the ORV on the roadway unsupervised. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Zach Bauer was on patrol in Three Rivers State Game Area when he came across a vehicle parked in a parking lot. CO Bauer pulled up to the vehicle to see if he could see any firearms in the vehicle. After looking into the vehicle, CO Bauer observed that the driver had a shotgun between his legs. The driver was discovered deceased from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound. The Michigan State Police was contacted and investigated the incident.

CO Matt Page checked several anglers out targeting steelhead in the Black River. One angler, when asked for his date of birth, hesitated and acted as if he forgot his birthday. The angler stated that he was born in 2002. After a few minutes, CO Page again asked the angler what his date of birth was and this time the angler stated 2000. After further questioning, the subject fessed up to fishing without a license and being 17 years old. CO Page made arrangements for the angler to purchase a fishing license and educated the subject on the importance of buying fishing licenses and being honest.

CO Matt Page assisted an Ohio wildlife officer in serving several citations from a case that involved two Michigan residents hunting in Ohio without licenses, shooting a large buck, and trespassing. The subjects could face several thousand dollars in fines and

costs and potentially have their hunting rights revoked in both states due to the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact.

CO Jeff Robinette spoke to approximately 25 youth hunters at a youth rabbit hunt held at the Crane Pond State Game Area. CO Robinette reminded the young hunters about important safety rules that need to be followed when hunting. CO Tyler Cole also assisted at the event.

COs Andy Bauer and Zach Bauer were on a local highway in Berrien County on President's Day and were off duty, when they came upon an accident that had just occurred. An ambulance had left the road and rolled in the median and had come to rest on its' roof. Both COs assisted one of the attendants, who had broken bones in her face, a broken arm, and was pinned under the gurney, which still held the patient that the ambulance had been transporting. The COs provided first aid and subsequently assisted with the removal of the patient, who had been trapped upside down. All of the injured subjects were transported to a local hospital by emergency services.

While patrolling city owned property near the snowmobile trail in Cass County, CO Tyler Cole came across a pickup truck driver trespassing. The occupant stated that he knew he wasn't supposed to be there, but couldn't resist due to the nice weather and the "fresh mud". A citation for ORV trespass was issued.

CO Justin Ulberg responded to assist Oakfield Township Fire Department, with a call of two ORVs falling through the ice on a Kent County Lake. Fortunately, the juveniles operating the ORVs did not fall through and were able to get away from the ORVs as they broke through the ice. Upon CO Ulberg's arrival, the ORVs were only partially submerged and the owner was able to retrieve the ORVs using a boat. Further investigation revealed that, the juveniles operating the ORVs were not being supervised and none had taken an ORV safety class. Enforcement action was taken.

## **DISTRICT 8**

CO Mike Drexler checked a vehicle at a state game area that appeared to have occupants sleeping in the rear compartment. After several knocks on the window, a young man and women exited the vehicle stating they slept there the night before after a family argument. CO Drexler made them aware of the laws for camping on state land and enforcement action was taken.

CO Brandon Hartleben attended and testified at a preliminary examination for a subject he arrested for OWI 3rd offense last year. The judge found that there was sufficient probable cause to believe that the defendant committed the felony and bound the case over to circuit court for trial.

CO Brandon Hartleben was patrolling the Sharonville State Game Area when he was flagged down by a man in one of the parking areas. The man had been shed hunting with his young coonhound a few hours earlier and had lost the dog when navigating

some dense vegetation. CO Hartleben had not seen the dog but took down the owner's name and contact information. Two hours later CO Hartleben observed the hound sitting in the woods 15 yards off the road. CO Hartleben approached the dog and noted the blue harness and leash the owner had described earlier. The leash had become entangled around trees and bushes. CO Hartleben was able to secure the dog in his patrol truck and contacted the owner. The dog was reunited with his family a short time later.

CO Brandon Hartleben responded to a call of suspicious activity at a Washtenaw County party store that was locked hours prior to closing on a Friday night. A Michigan State trooper and Washtenaw County sheriff's deputy were already on scene and had detained one subject who had exited the store, but there was at least one other subject still inside. CO Hartleben arrived on scene along with a motor carrier officer and took up position near the rear door of the store. While waiting for the store owner to arrive with keys, a subject exited the rear of the store. CO Hartleben and the motor carrier detained the subject for questioning. CO Hartleben then searched the interior of the store with another trooper. A female subject was still inside the store and was also detained. After a thorough investigation of the situation, it was determined that the second male subject detained was a disgruntled employee and had decided to close the store early and become intoxicated inside the store with the other subjects. The store owner finally arrived on scene and eventually fired the employee after a lengthy discussion. All subjects were released and no charges are being sought.

CO Brandon Hartleben assisted Island Lake State Recreation Area staff with an incident involving a dog getting caught in a foothold trap near one of the hiking trails. After a lengthy investigation and multiple interviews, it was determined that the trapper was legally trapping on public land using legal methods. Both of the tagged traps removed by the dog owner were recovered and returned to the trapper. The dog owner was warned about trespassing on private property adjacent to the recreation area and for allowing his dogs to roam off leash. The dog did not suffer any injuries from its brief encounter with the foothold.

CO Andy Monnich attended a speed networking event at Siena Heights University. The event gave students a chance to be interviewed by businesses and organizations in career fields they were studying. CO Monnich assisted approximately 15 students that showed interest in becoming a conservation officer.

While patrolling Lenawee County, CO Eric Smither encountered two hunters without hunter's orange. CO Smither made contact with the individuals and found that one individual was disqualified from possessing a firearm due to a prior felony conviction. Charges are being sought through the prosecutor's office.

CO Dan Prince talked at the Livingston County Wildlife Conservation Club in Hamburg Twp. in Livingston County. CO Prince talked about the job duties of a Michigan conservation officer to 64 students and parents. CO Prince also talked about safe hunting, laws and ethics.

COs Chris Reynolds and Andy Monnich concluded an investigation in which both COs received information on a suspect who shot a trophy whitetail deer. Many phone calls were made with informants in and out of the area, with most leading to dead ends. The COs finally decided to interview the suspect feeling no more info could be obtained. During the interview, the suspect denied shooting the deer and claimed his son had shot the deer. Later, the suspect was willing to show the COs a picture of the deer, which showed a date after the Michigan firearm deer season. Ultimately, it was found that the deer was shot in Ohio without a license, transported to Michigan and tagged with the suspect's son's license. The COs are working with the Ohio DNR on charges for the deer.

CO Jeff Goss checked four subjects in Calhoun County hunting squirrels with no hunter orange. One of the subjects had never taken hunter safety and had a fraudulent license in his possession. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Josh Jackson was invited to a second annual small game hunting competition in Branch County. The event began last year through a middle school class and has grown into an exciting event for youth. Several local businesses donated prizes for top hunters in several categories and all entry fees are being donated to charities. CO Jackson had the opportunity to answer questions and talk with the young hunters while they shared their hunting stories.

CO Troy Ludwig observed two youths trespassing on a railroad bridge in Eaton County. While discussing the violation with the youths three more individuals approached the CO using the bridge. A total of twelve individuals were contacted trespassing on the bridge. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jason McCullough located a recently discarded pile of debris which included cabinets, tires and a kids baby pool in an area in Calhoun County where dumping has been problematic. CO McCullough was able to obtain a couple of potential suspect names. The investigation led to several different residences and revealed the vehicles used to dump the trash had been borrowed. Upon contact, the suspect admitted to the illegal dumping and a citation was issued.

CO Isaac Tyson observed two subjects fishing a local Branch County lake. The fisherman packed up their gear and left the scene, leaving three beer cans floating in the lake. CO Tyson contacted the group and asked about the cans. One subject stated that he was going to come back and get them the next day. A citation was issued for littering.

While patrolling Tamarack Lake State Game Area CO Troy Ludwig observed a bright white light on Tamarack Lake coming from what appeared to be a watercraft. CO Ludwig made contact with the vessel when it returned to the launch. The vessel was occupied by two anglers who did not have any luck fishing. The CO pointed out that the vessel did not have the proper navigation lights to operate at night, the registration was expired and not registered to the owner, and there was only one PFD between the two

occupants. The owner stated he had not had a chance to register the vessel yet but that he did have a pillow in a garbage bag. The CO pointed out this would not suffice as a PFD if it was needed to save a life. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Todd Thorn located a large pile of trash left in the Dansville State Game Area. CO Thorn located letters, bills and other personal effects with names and addresses. The individual was contacted and confessed to the illegal dumping. A citation was issued and the individual was required to pick up all of the garbage.

CO Matt Neterer observed a SUV in front of him traveling at a high rate of speed on an Ingham County road, weaving across the center line. Upon running the license plate, he discovered it came back registered to a Jeep. The vehicle he was following was a GMC Yukon. CO Neterer conducted a traffic stop and discovered that the driver was on probation for operating under the influence, had a suspended driver's license and did not have proof of insurance. CO Neterer had the vehicle towed and arrested the driver for the misdemeanor violations. The driver stated that the reason he put the wrong plate on the truck is so that he wouldn't get pulled over.

COs Robert Slick and Jason King received a complaint of a subject that dumped two deer carcasses along a roadway. CO Slick performed a necropsy on the deer and determined they had been killed with a firearm. A day later the local sheriff's department received a similar complaint of a suspect vehicle observed in the area on camera. CO King located the vehicle and contacted the suspect a couple of days later at his residence. The investigation revealed the deer had been taken during the firearm deer season and allowed to rot in a barn. The suspect admitted to dumping the deer carcasses. Enforcement action was taken.

## **DISTRICT 9**

While on patrol in Macomb County, CO Joseph Deppen came across a vehicle driving erratically in congested traffic. Upon conducting a traffic stop, the driver admitted to texting and reading a map. The driver could not produce a valid driver's license, current registration, or valid insurance. After running the subject's information through Station 20, the driver was found to have a suspended driver's license. The license plate was confiscated, the vehicle was placed in a nearby parking lot, and enforcement action was taken.

CO Joseph Deppen conducted a couple taxidermy inspections in Macomb County. During one inspection, questions arose due to a lack of proper paperwork and documentation by the taxidermist. One deer rack that grabbed CO Deppen's attention was a six-point with three antler points on either side and was tagged with a restricted tag. Photographs were taken and the rack was seized. The hunter in question will be contacted and prosecution will be sought.

While checking anglers in Macomb County, CO Joseph Deppen came across a group of juvenile anglers. They were excited about a northern pike that they had caught in the

Clinton River which was on a stringer in the water. When questioned about the size of the northern pike, the angler who had caught it said it measured twenty-one inches. CO Deppen informed him that the legal length of northern pike is twenty-four inches. The pike was released back into the river and the anglers were given a warning about keeping short fish.

While on a fisheries patrol in Macomb County, CO Joseph Deppen contacted three anglers along the Clinton River. One angler did not have a fishing license or identification on him. The angler said he was fifteen years old and did not need a fishing license. CO Deppen wanted to verify the subject's age. Two times the subject gave CO Deppen a false name and date of birth. The subject eventually gave CO Deppen his real name and date of birth and was found to be eighteen years old and was already facing larceny charges stemming from a separate incident. The subject was lectured about lying to law enforcement officers and enforcement action was taken on the fishing violation.

While CO Raymond Gardner was conducting a taxidermy inspection, he found that the taxidermist had failed to maintain accurate records and specimen tags. Also, when asked by CO Gardner, the taxidermist was unable to find the seal numbers for two bear he was currently working on. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jacob Griffin responded to a call from the Highland Township Fire Department at 1:00 am regarding a vehicle crash into a local lake. When CO Griffin arrived on scene the vehicle was removed. The White Lake Fire Department simply wanted to notify CO Griffin of the oil and transmission fluid in the water. A complaint was submitted to the Department of Environmental Quality.

COs Kris Kiel and Brad Silorey checked ice anglers on the deteriorated ice conditions of Lake St. Clair. The COs watched as an angler walked off the ice. When the angler noticed the patrol truck, he set his bucket down next to a vehicle and walked away with only his ice spud which he put in his car. When the COs made contact and subsequently looked in the bucket, it was obvious why the angler had set his bucket down. The angler was in possession of 44 panfish, 19 fish over the limit. The fish were seized and enforcement action was taken.

While on patrol in Oakland County, CO Christopher Knights came across an individual trespassing and using the main road on his dirt bike. CO Knights attempted to stop him before he went back into the woods, but was unsuccessful. CO Knights then used a trail he knew went around to the other side of the property where he knew the rider would be able to get out of the property. CO Knights arrived on the other side and waited until the rider approached and stopped the rider. After questioning the rider, he stated he had been told by friends this was an area ORVs could be operated. CO Knights advised the rider of the laws and that the only legal places to ride in Oakland County was private property that he had permission for a landowner. Enforcement action taken.

While working a late night, CO Ken Kovach came across a vehicle parked in a game area. Upon closer inspection of the vehicle, CO Kovach discovered juvenile occupants that were smoking marijuana inside. Both juveniles' parents were contacted and came out in the early morning hours to transport the youth home, and enforcement action was taken.

COs Justin Muehlhauser and Travis Dragomer received a complaint that a local pawn shop was selling waterfowl mounts. The pawn shop posted an ad on craigslist listing a snow goose and three miscellaneous ducks. The COs notified US Fish and Wildlife Service. CO Justin Muehlhauser assisted special agents in the investigation where it was determined that the mounts were already sold before they arrived. The manager, facing federal charges, agreed to provide as much information as he could and stated that he didn't know it was illegal to sell waterfowl mounts. The seller believed that the buyer was a taxidermist which gave the officers a lead to investigate. The seller stated that the buyer told him not to write up the waterfowl and to pocket the cash. The receipt provided by the manager only listed a coyote and an otter for \$270.00. It is unclear how much was paid for the waterfowl. The COs inspected some of the local taxidermists but were unable to recover the mounts. Follow up interviews with the manager at the pawn shop lead to the COs getting a name of the suspected buyer. With the assistance of USFW agents, the COs interviewed the subject at his residence. Knowing that he had been caught, the subject confessed to purchasing the mounts from the pawn shop in Fenton. The buyer also stated that he didn't know it was illegal to purchase waterfowl mounts and placed blame on the pawn shop. A snow goose, a red head, and a widgeon were seized from the buyer. Charges against both parties are being reviewed by the Genesee County Prosecutor's Office.

CO Justin Muehlhauser observed a man fishing at the south end of Lake Fenton. The man was the only person on the ice and appeared to be fishing 3 tip-ups and another line next to him. When the CO encountered the man, he had two lines propped up next to him, two tip-ups, and a homemade wooden fishing pole all with lines in the water. The man claimed that the third tip-up did not belong to him and that someone would come out from shore to check it every so often. He said that he was fishing with his kids who were just picked up approximately 30 minutes prior. The CO instructed the man to gather his gear and meet him back at the patrol vehicle. While checking the third tip-up, the CO spoke to a lake resident. The man informed the CO that the subject had been fishing since 7:00 am and had been by himself for the past couple of hours. The man did not know who the third tip-up belonged to but stated that it could belong to someone else that lives on the lake. All of the tip-ups were unmarked. Enforcement action taken.

CO Dan Walzak, while conducting a taxidermy inspection, found a deer mount with a kill tag that was not validated. Contacting the hunter, CO Walzak explained the reason for the visit. The subject explained that he knew that he was required to validate the tag but forgot to do so. Enforcement action was taken.

CO James Zellinger observed two ORVs operating on the roadway where prohibited. One suspect stopped after the officer activated emergency lights and the other subject

continued down the road. CO Zellinger had the first suspect call the second suspect and have him return to the scene. Enforcement action was taken against both subjects.

## **BELLE ISLE**

COs Carter Woodwyk and Greg Patten were working at Belle Isle State Park in Wayne County when a complaint of a reckless driver was received. The complainant reported the driver had hit a vehicle and continued driving. Multiple other calls were received with other drivers being run off the road. CO Patten located the vehicle and conducted a traffic stop. After investigating the driver for intoxication, it was determined that the driver was falling asleep behind the wheel. Enforcement action was taken.

## **DISTRICT 21**

Det. Dan Lee reports that DEQ WRD received a complaint on July 25, 2016, of a contractor removing sand with a back hoe from a public access site on the Saginaw Bay. They responded and found evidence showing the complaint was valid. They referred the case to EIS for follow up. Det. Lee checked the site and found tracks in the sand, sand on the roadway leading from the beach to the site of a newly poured cement slab. The contractor's vehicles were still at the location. Det. Lee checked with the state, county and township and found that no one had been given permission to remove sand from this location.

Det. Lee contacted the contractor who admitted to taking the sand for fill at the site. He said he took about three yards of sand and that he knew it was wrong, it was simply a choice of convenience; he could drive 30 minutes to pick up sand or he could get it from the beach. He plead guilty to a misdemeanor charge of altering the Great Lakes Shoreline and was sentenced to 12 months' probation and paid fines and costs of \$495.00.