

**Law Enforcement Division
Bi-Weekly Field Report
5/2/11 - 5/15/11**

DISTRICT 1

COs Grant Emery, Jason Wicklund and Sgt. Marc Pomroy assisted the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) during an ORV rally in Gogebic County. Several hundred ORVs participated in the event and enforcement action was taken for operating on the roadway, juveniles operating while unsupervised and helmet/seat belt violations.

CO Brian Bacon responded to two wildfire complaints in Dickinson County. Careless burning was determined to be the cause in both. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Ryan Aho responded to the complaint of a turkey shot from a vehicle window. A subject was interviewed and confessed to shooting the turkey out the window of his truck within the safety zone of a residence. It was also determined that he had borrowed a turkey tag and shotgun from a friend. The turkey was seized and enforcement action was taken.

COs Matt Eberly and Dennis Gast checked a boat near the Huron Islands and found 16 Lake Trout aboard, including some filleted and hidden. Two tickets were issued to the occupants of the boat for the overlimit and all fish were seized.

CO David Miller responded to a call of overdue kayakers. A search was started and shortly thereafter the kayakers were located walking out from an area river. The kayakers spent the night in the woods. Both were fine and had experienced kayak problems.

CO Doug Hermanson arrested a subject for keeping Walleye during the closed season on Lake Gogebic. The subject tried to release the fish by dumping a bucket of walleye out of the boat as the CO approached. One walleye that was dead and didn't sink was seized as evidence.

CO Marvin Gerlach reported that several cases from last deer season were adjudicated recently. He had a couple of illegal deer cases where the subjects paid over \$1500 in court costs and fines. In addition, they lost all hunting privileges for two years. Another subject pled to 14 counts of a non-resident purchasing resident licenses over a period of six years. The subject paid \$1500 in restitution.

DISTRICT 2

COs Mike Hammill and Derek Miller received information from a DNR employee that a group of subjects on ORVs had plans to operate in a nearby wetland. The employee had made contact with the subjects at a local gas station and informed them of the regulations with further instructions not to operate in the wetland. The subjects scoffed

and indicated that they could do what they wanted. Upon arrival in the area COs Miller and Hammill located fresh ORV tracks and set up to box them in. The plan worked and nine subjects were charged with illegal operation of an ORV in a wetland and nine ORVs were impounded. Some of those apprehended were repeat customers of the COs.

CO Mike Hammill contacted two anglers at a local trout stream. After checking fish and licenses, the CO found a few extra brook trout. The pair was issued tickets for being overlimit and the fish were confiscated.

CO Derek Miller contacted a subject at the Holland Lake State Forest Campground who failed to pay for his site. The subject explained to the CO that he was certain that the campground doesn't open until Memorial Day and that he didn't have to pay for the site until then. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 3

CO Andrea Albert was summoned to the scene of a large trash pile that was on fire. This was the second day in a row that the local fire department had been called out to extinguish a trash fire that burned out of control at the same location. The subject responsible was warned for unlawful disposal of solid waste and ticketed for burning without a permit.

COs Steve Speigl and Andrea Erratt worked together to nab a subject who was road hunting for turkeys. A father and his two sons were calling in a bird when the road hunter pulled up, stuck a shotgun out of the truck window and shot the turkey. In addition to the three legal hunters who witnessed the incident, both landowners also watched as the subject shot very close to their house. Tickets were issued for hunting from a motor vehicle and for failing to tag a turkey. The subject was also warned for trespassing and for discharging his firearm within a safety zone of another without the permission of the landowner.

CO Andrea Erratt issued a ticket to a subject who was unlawfully burning 25 tires in order to retrieve the scrap metal from the wheels. Tires continue to be a major litter issue whether they are dumped on state land or burned for salvage collection.

COs Carl VanderWall and Duane Budreau have been teaming up to work illegal ORV and monster truck activity at several state land locations. Several wetland areas were being used as mud pits and some forest roads in the area were rutted to the point of being impassable. Multiple warnings as well as several tickets have been issued. In extreme cases, offenders have had their vehicles seized and condemned.

CO Michael Feagan and Sgt. Greg Drogowski investigated the possible possession of an illegally taken elk. The subjects were contacted and a 6x6 elk head was produced at their residence. The investigation confirmed the elk was a winter kill, possibly hit by a

vehicle, which was found by the subjects a month ago. The elk head and antlers were seized, and a warning given regarding the illegal possession of elk parts.

CO Bill Webster was called to the aid of a stranded motorist on state land. The driver had put an address into his GPS that took him through the state land where he became stuck in large ruts in the trail. While waiting for the tow truck with the driver, CO Webster could hear a vehicle coming down the trail revving its engine. CO Webster saw the mudder truck coming around a corner nearly sideways, throwing mud in every direction. CO Webster contacted the driver who stated he knew what he was doing was illegal. The driver of the truck was ticketed for creating erosive conditions and warned about his careless driving.

CO Bill Webster received a complaint of a van stuck on a trail on state land in the middle of the night. When CO Webster arrived in the area he located a snowmobile gate which had been smashed through, destroying the gate and the posts which held it in place. A berm preventing access to the area also had been excavated by a tractor. The van was gone but CO Webster followed tractor tracks back to a farm, where the CO discovered the tractor had been used without the knowledge of the landowner. Further investigation located the operator of the van who stated he and some friends were driving on state land and had gotten stuck, so he used the tractor to get it out. When he came to the gate he did not want to go around so he decided to crash through it. CO Webster issued him a ticket for operating a motor vehicle where prohibited with restitution being sought for the damaged gate. Investigation continues into the unauthorized use of the tractor.

DISTRICT 4

CO Sam Koscinski assisted the Michigan State Police (MSP) and local county deputies with the search for a missing mushroom hunter in northern Osceola County. With the aid of a MSP helicopter the lost hunter was located in a swamp. The mushroom hunter had left his yard in search of Morel mushrooms at approximately 9:00 a.m. and was reported missing at 6:00 p.m. The elderly mushroom hunter had a heart condition and other medical problems, and had to be led one mile on foot from the swamp to an outside road. The grateful mushroom hunter was returned to his home shortly after dark.

While patrolling the Manistee River via a jet boat, COs Steve Converse and Sam Koscinski contacted a subject fishing and discovered he had three outstanding arrest warrants. A local deputy transported the subject to jail.

CO Carla Soper was investigating a turkey baiting complaint along a Consumers Energy power line when she encountered five ORVs operating illegally on the utility easement. Other violations noted included illegal roadway operation, recreational trespass and no ORV licenses. One subject was operating while his drivers' license was suspended. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Jeff Ginn and Brian Lebel patrolled back roads on a cold, rainy day checking for possible illegal road hunting of turkeys. The COs observed a slow moving vehicle approximately a half mile away. COs Ginn and Lebel stopped and watched with binoculars as the vehicle came to a stop several times. At one point the barrel of a shotgun was observed sticking out of the passenger side of the vehicle. The COs drove up to the vehicle and surprised two subjects as they were about to shoot at a wild turkey from the vehicle. The subjects were in possession of open intoxicants and the only turkey license they had was outdated and for the wrong area. Enforcement action was taken.

DISTRICT 5

While off duty, CO Chuck McPherson saw a news story of a local man missing for over a week. CO McPherson was familiar with the subject as he had contacted him for several years in the spring looking for shed deer antlers on state land in a specific area. CO McPherson contacted MSP troopers who were handling the investigation and gave them the information and general location, which led them to the subject's vehicle a few hours later. The subject was found deceased in the vehicle.

CO John Huspen contacted two subjects who were cutting firewood without a permit and in an area closed to taking firewood. A third subject on scene was operating an ORV in a closed area of state land. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Bobbi Lively and Jon Warner reported on the sentencing of a subject who took a deer out of season with a rifle over a bait pile after dark in the fall of 2010. The judge ordered the subject to pay \$1000 in fines and \$1000 restitution plus serve nine days in jail.

CO Mike Hearn responded to a forest fire on a high fire danger day with high winds. The fire was contained to 15 acres and was caused by a campfire left to burn out by subjects who were in the area for the trout opener and camping on state land. Investigation continues to identify the campers.

CO Brian Engelhard responded to a grass fire near Hubbard Lake. In addition to grass, a woodpile containing several mattresses, shingles and other prohibited material was burning. According to the landowner, he was attempting to burn two small plastic grocery bags of garbage when the small fire ignited the large pile. A ticket was issued for allowing fire to escape. This is the second fire the landowner has allowed to escape in the last few years.

DISTRICT 6

CO Jason A. Smith obtained a four count warrant for a turkey hunter this spring. The charges include two counts of possessing an untagged turkey, one count of taking an overlimit of turkeys and one count of hunt turkey without a license.

CO Vicki Goss assisted a local township fire department on an illegal burn. The fire escaped from a dumpster where the landowner was burning old furniture, plastic, tires and various other solid waste. A follow up investigation with the subject determined that he was hauling away furniture for individuals and burning them down for the scrap metal. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Chad Foerster and Jeremy Payne concluded a case in court involving six illegal deer from the 2010 deer season. The two defendants were ordered to pay \$6000 in restitution to the state, \$1200 in fines and costs, loss of hunting privileges for three years, 15 days on tether (house arrest) and the condemnation of the firearms used to kill the deer.

CO Jeremy Payne contacted a subject fishing in Isabella County who advised he had forgotten to buy his fishing license. After the CO ran the subject through LEIN, it was determined that he had an outstanding felony warrant for his arrest. The angler was lodged and given a verbal warning for fishing with no license. The next day and after the subject bonded out of jail, the CO found him fishing again unlicensed. This time the subject was issued a ticket for fishing without a license.

DISTRICT 7

While performing undercover surveillance for illegal ORV activity in the Allegan State Game Area (SGA), CO Mike Mshar contacted subjects who had gotten their truck stuck in a wetland. The subjects explained that they were trying to get a hold of a friend to assist them before the game warden showed up. CO Mshar informed them the game warden had shown up. The vehicle was impounded and tickets were issued for the illegal operation.

CO Ken Cerny worked shore fishing locations on the St. Joseph River and encountered two different subjects keeping bass out of season and one subject with an overlimit of panfish. CO Cerny also arrested two of the subjects on outstanding warrants and turned them over to the appropriate agency.

CO Andy Bauer received a Report-All-Poaching (RAP) complaint of a subject on a lake without a public access, shooting a Canada Goose. CO Bauer responded and obtained a confession from the subject. CO Bauer recovered the dead goose and the firearm used. The subject was ticketed for taking the goose during the closed season.

CO Steve Mooney observed a boat without registration numbers being operated on a local lake in the rain. CO Mooney waited for the subjects to return to shore and discovered that the three anglers did not have fishing licenses and that there were no personal flotation devices (PFDs) in the boat. A ticket was issued to address the marine safety violation.

CO Cary Foster, while patrolling the Portland SGA, located a large pile of household refuse that had been partially burned. CO Foster searched the area and located a

possible name and location for follow up. Upon contact with a resident at the location, the CO learned that an individual at the home had a friend take the trash away with the promise he would burn it at another location. CO Foster interviewed that subject and obtained a confession to the littering. A ticket was issued for the violation and the subject will clean up the site.

CO Cary Foster, while checking fishing licenses, was handed a personal identification card by an angler as ID used to purchase a license. While at this location he observed that person walk to a vehicle and drive away. A quick computer check indicated the person did not have a driver's license and was suspended 32 times with 13 convictions for driving while suspended. CO Foster caught up to the vehicle and conducted a traffic stop to arrest the driver for driving while suspended and another outstanding warrant.

CO Cary Foster encountered a subject fishing at a dam on the Grand River who was in possession of a smallmouth bass that he claimed another angler gave to him. CO Foster ticketed the angler for possession during the closed season, as it was the same person he contacted attempting to take pike during the closed season.

CO Greg Patten contacted a subject trying to register a River Otter for another person at the Muskegon SGA. After investigation of the second subject a ticket was issued for a tagging violation.

COs BJ Goulette and Ivan Perez were on patrol at Muskegon Lake when they observed several shore anglers catching panfish. When contacted, two of the subjects observed catching fish denied fishing. A record check showed that neither subject possessed a current fishing license. Each person was ticketed and one was placed under arrest for an outstanding warrant.

DISTRICT 8

CO Jeff Goss investigated the illegal killing of a turkey. CO Goss' investigation found that one subject had killed a turkey without a license and had used the uncased gun that was found in his vehicle. The second subject admitted to having a loaded .357 handgun in the same vehicle, he did not have any hunting license and was not eligible for a concealed pistol license. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Jeff Goss located two vehicles parked in an area frequented by wild game and observed uncased firearms in both vehicles. During CO Goss' investigation he searched the vehicles and found three additional uncased/loaded firearms, fresh Wild Turkey parts, and a live Snapping Turtle in one of the trunks. CO Goss interviewed the drivers of both vehicles and obtained a confession on the illegal killing of the turkey and the illegal possession of the turtle. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Jason J. Smith and Damon Owens responded to an accident that occurred on a non-motorized trail within a State Game Area. A subject was riding their horse in a permitted event when the horse and rider fell. The rider was uninjured but the horse

broke its leg. The COs calmed the rider down and called a veterinarian to the scene to attend to the horse. Regretfully it was determined that the horse could not be saved and had to be euthanized.

CO Shane Webster assisted a United States Fish and Wildlife Agent with executing a search warrant. The agent had information that a subject had an illegally mounted Wood Duck and hawk in his possession. The subject tried to sell the migratory bird and raptor which is a federal violation. The illegal items were seized and enforcement action was taken.

CO Todd Thorn located a subject fishing on the Grand River in the Lansing area who had an overlimit of steelhead. The recently planted trout were also under the legal size limit. The subject was ticketed for the overlimit violation.

CO Todd Thorn and Sgt. Troy Bahlau observed a vehicle parked on a trail closed to motorized vehicles. Further investigation revealed that the occupants of the vehicle were in possession of marijuana and open intoxicants in the motor vehicle. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Brian Fish assisted a local police department at the scene of a fatal car accident. Three subjects were ejected from the vehicles with one subject pronounced dead at the scene.

DISTRICT 9

COs Kris Kiel, Todd Szyska, and Mark Papineau worked surveillance in St. Clair Shores, stemming from a RAP complaint of subjects taking vast overlimits of panfish. Officers worked throughout the night and were able to make an overlimit case. Two additional subjects were fishing without licenses.

CO Al Schwiderson has been checking a turkey hunter's baited area for the last week. He finally was able to catch the subject in the blind. The subject had a trough feeder with a wire mesh over it to limit access to deer. The subject had been hunting turkeys for years and stated he was convinced he could bait for them. The subject was also hunting three days prior to the season opening. Enforcement action was taken.

Checking an angler fishing in a small stream, CO Dan Walzak asked the angler how he was doing. The angler responded that he was not doing any good and stated "That's OK, there's another place that I go to where I've been catching huge perch every year – I'm just going to go there". When the CO asked to see his fishing license, the angler stated that it was supposed to be in the glove box of his car but he could not find it, and added that he did buy one. CO Walzak asked for the subject's driver's license, and just before running the check, CO Walzak asked the subject if he actually bought a license for the year and the response was "No". Running the check, it was found that the subject's last license purchase was in 2005. Enforcement action was taken.

CO Todd Szyska watched three subjects fishing at Marsac Point. After a few minutes the CO approached and when one of them saw the CO he set his pole down. None of the three had fishing licenses. While CO Szyska was dealing with the subjects, he recognized one of them as a subject that he issued a ticket to at the same location for the same violation two years prior. Enforcement action was taken.

COs Todd Szyska and Ken Kovach checked anglers in the cuts and canals on Harsens Island. CO Kovach observed a man and a woman fishing. Each of them had their own bucket with three Bluegills and two Bluegills respectively. After getting verbal confirmation that there were no more fish, CO Kovach found another bucket with 15 Bluegills in it next to their vehicle. After getting consent to search the vehicle, the CO found a Smallmouth Bass wrapped in a plastic bag in the trunk. The COs obtained a confession and a ticket was issued for the possession of a bass during the closed season.

CO Jon Sklba checked an angler at Veterans Park who advised he was having car issues so he decided to kill some time fishing while his car cooled. CO Sklba asked the subject for his license and was told he didn't have one, as he was only fishing to kill time until his car cooled off. The CO mentioned the fact that the subject had brought with him two large tackle boxes and three fishing poles. The subject finally admitted that he did not think that he would see a CO and was issued a ticket.

Lt. David Malloch and CO Mike Drexler checked numerous anglers at various locations. Five subjects were found fishing without licenses and two other subjects had multiple outstanding warrants for their arrest. Enforcement action was taken.