



**NJDEP Fish and Wildlife**  
**Monthly Highlights**  
**Bureau of Law Enforcement**  
**June 21, 2024 to July 20, 2024**

Frank Panico, Chief  
Jason Snellbaker, Deputy Chief  
Douglas Applegate, Deputy Chief  
Joseph Soell, Captain - Administration  
Vacant, Lieutenant - Administration  
Robert Driscoll, Lieutenant - Training

**Northern Region** (908) 735-8240  
Joseph Kuechler, Captain  
Jordan Holmes, Lieutenant (District 1)  
Brice Paey, Lieutenant (District 2)  
Hannah Koch, Agency Services Representative

**Central Region** (609) 259-2120  
Linda Quirk, Captain  
Andrew Riviello, Lieutenant (District 3)  
Sean McManus, Lieutenant (District 4)

**Southern Region** (856) 629-0555  
Paul Toppin, Captain  
Zane Batten, Lieutenant (District 5)  
Craig James, Lieutenant (District 6)  
Sue Canale, Agency Services Representative

**Marine Region** (609) 748-2050  
Brian Scott, Captain  
Chris Moscatiello, Lieutenant (District 7)  
Ryan Harp, Lieutenant (District 8)  
Chris Petrucci, Lieutenant (District 9)  
Noreen White, Agency Services Representative

Conservation Officers report a total of 6,403.8 hours of duty (6,075.5 - 2023 )  
These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

|                         | <b>2024</b> | <b>2023</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Law Enforcement         | 4,595.6     | 4,041.5     |
| Fishing                 | 1,496.1     | 1,297.8     |
| Marine Resources        | 1,178.1     | 1,274.6     |
| Hunting                 | 41.5        | 69.8        |
| Deer Hunting            | 10.5        | 18.9        |
| Trapping                | 7.7         | 4.0         |
| Wildlife Mgt. Areas     | 867.6       | 719.4       |
| NG & Endangered Species | 35.6        | 318.3       |
| Court                   | 33.3        | 41.5        |
| Regional Meetings       | 4.0         | 43.1        |
| Pollution Investigation | 15.0        | 74.2        |
| Training                | 632.6       | 302.0       |
| Other Law Enforcement   | 759.0       | 371.6       |
| Administration          | 1,568.7     | 1,744.1     |
| Fish Management         | 18.4        | 5.0         |

|                         |      |      |
|-------------------------|------|------|
| Wildlife Management     | 49.4 | 74.9 |
| Information & Education | 50.8 | 66.2 |
| Bear Control            | 3.2  | 3.0  |
| Bear Patrol & Invest    | 21.5 | 16.5 |

During patrols, officers performed 3767 field inspections (5 1 0 7 - 2023 ) of hunters, fishermen or trappers and the resultant caseload is tabulated.

Law Enforcement Regions

|                           | <u>North</u> | <u>Central</u> | <u>South</u> | <u>Marine</u> | <u>Admin</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>2023</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Summonses Issued          | 133          | 33             | 212          | 89            | 0            | 467          | 252         |
| Criminal Arrests          | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            | 0            | 0           |
| Warnings Issued           | 11           | 0              | 4            | 24            | 0            | 39           | 34          |
| Bear Feeding Warns Issued | 2            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            | 2            | 2           |

Field Inspections By Region

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Administration  | 0           |
| Northern Region | 649         |
| Central Region  | 320         |
| Southern Region | 1406        |
| Marine Region   | 1392        |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>3767</b> |

Field Inspections By Activity

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Hunters              | 15   |
| Freshwater Anglers   | 788  |
| Trappers             | 0    |
| Commercial Fishermen | 21   |
| Marine Rec. Anglers  | 1293 |
| WMA non hunt/fish    | 1185 |
| Other                | 28   |

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

|                     | <u>North</u> | <u>Central</u> | <u>South</u> | <u>Marine</u> | <u>Admin</u> |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Fishing             | 85           | 7              | 5            | 0             | 0            |
| Hunting             | 17           | 0              | 5            | 0             | 0            |
| Waterfowl Hunting   | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Deer Hunting        | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Trapping            | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| WMA                 | 25           | 12             | 188          | 0             | 0            |
| Striped Bass        | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Shellfish           | 5            | 9              | 0            | 16            | 0            |
| Marine-Commercial   | 0            | 0              | 0            | 4             | 0            |
| Marine-Recreational | 0            | 2              | 8            | 69            | 0            |
| Nongame & Exotic    | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Title 58            | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Title 39            | 0            | 0              | 3            | 0             | 0            |
| Other               | 1            | 2              | 2            | 0             | 0            |
| Bear Hunting        | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Bear Feeding        | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Marine Striped Bass | 0            | 0              | 0            | 0             | 0            |
| Title 2C            | 0            | 1              | 1            | 0             | 0            |
| <b>Totals</b>       | <b>133</b>   | <b>33</b>      | <b>212</b>   | <b>89</b>     | <b>0</b>     |



Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: \$22,825.00

Call volume (reports of violations, general questions, requests for assistance, etc.) received at region offices:

|                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| North                       | 115        |
| Central                     | 99         |
| South                       | 163        |
| Marine                      | 175        |
| <b>Total Calls Received</b> | <b>552</b> |

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of Jul 20, 2024

Administration - 8

- 1 Chief
- 2 Deputy Chiefs
- 1 CPO II Training
- 2 CPO I Training
- 1 CPO III Admin
- 1 CPO I Admin

Northern Region - 12

- 1 CPO III
- 2 CPO II
- 8 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Central Region - 10

- 1 CPO III
- 2 CPO II
- 7 CPO I

Southern Region - 12

- 1 CPO III
- 2 CPO II
- 8 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Marine Region - 14

- 1 CPO III
- 3 CPO II
- 9 CPO I
- 1 ASR

Special Investigations Unit - 3

- 1 CPO III
- 1 CPO II
- 1 CPO I

Total Employees: 59

General Highlights

The NJDEP Conservation Police Spark Internship concluded on June 28th following five weeks of intensive learning. The three interns experienced days in the field with conservation police officers and biologists from across the agency to learn how wildlife management practices shape the role of Conservation Police Officers in protecting NJ's wildlife and wildlife habitat. At the conclusion of the internship, each student presented their final project: recommendations on how NJ Fish and Wildlife can better communicate the importance of wildlife conservation to young adults. The Bureau of Law Enforcement thanks the following staff for their time in making the internship a success: Mike Madonia, Bill Pitts, Sam Forlenza, Barbra Stoff, Al Ivany, Michelle Smith, Megan Mills, Megan McCafferty, Eric Boehm, Peter Winkler, Craig Lemon, Christina Davis, Brian Zarate and Fish and Game Councilman Ed Kertz.

### Northern Region Highlights

On July 15, 2024, CPO Hughes responded to an illegal hunting complaint in Branchburg Township, Somerset County. The complainant advised that an individual killed multiple geese with a .22 caliber rifle at Fox Hollow Golf Club. Upon arrival, CPO Hughes located four dead geese floating in the pond in front of the clubhouse. The suspect was identified and issued a total of seventeen (17) summonses for the following violations: did take waterfowl out of legal season, did hunt waterfowl in a manner other than prescribed, did hunt waterfowl without a valid NJ waterfowl stamp, did hunt waterfowl with illegal missile/toxic shot and did fail to retrieve game.

### Central Region Highlights

Central Region Officers have been patrolling the region's wildlife management areas at night to reduce the misuse of the property. Evening patrols of Assunpink WMA on June 22nd and June 29th resulted in multiple summonses for entry after hours, possession of alcoholic beverages, camping, and fishing without a license.

Central Region officers represented NJ Fish and Wildlife at the Burlington County Farm Fair from June 16th to the 20th. The mobile education trailer served as the backdrop for the officers and biologists from the Bureau of Wildlife Management's deer project to meet with fairgoers and answer questions on a wide range of wildlife topics.

On June 23rd, CPO Bickerton was patrolling Lake Riviera Park in Brick when he observed three individuals diving in the water and placing shellfish in a bucket. Upon inspection CPO Bickerton found the men had collected 215 freshwater mussels from the lake. The harvest of any freshwater shellfish is prohibited due to water quality concerns. Furthermore, several species of freshwater mussels are listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern. The three men were each issued summonses for failure to obtain a shellfish license, possession of an indigenous species without a permit, and harvesting shellfish from restricted waters. The mussels were returned to the water.

At the request of Manchester Police Department, CPO's Rooke, Bickerton and Lt. Riviello assisted with a special operation at the SARCO site and neighboring Whiting WMA on Saturday July 20th. The primary goal of the detail was to target the areas of ASARCO/Heritage Minerals not normally accessible to routine patrols for quality-of-life issues in the surrounding neighborhoods. These complaints are noise complaints, parking complaints, trespassing complaints, ATV usage complaints, and to reduce the risk of wildfires. CPOs utilized the new UTV to access remote areas of the properties during the operation.

### Southern Region Highlights

Conservation Police Officers in district 6 concentrated efforts on enforcing WMA regulations for the month of July. The targeted enforcement effort resulted in over 130 WMA summonses between Winslow WMA, White Oak Branch WMA, and Menantico Ponds WMA.

CO Kille received a complaint of a boat that was dumped in Elmer Lake WMA, Salem County. The CO responded to discover the boat was in fact floating on the lake. The last registered owner, who resides in Millville City, Cumberland County, was identified and interviewed. He explained that he had given the boat away on Facebook Marketplace back in May 2024 and provided a photograph of the recipients' driver's license. An interview was then conducted with that man who also resided in Millville City, only to find out he gave it away for free less than a week ago on Marketplace. Further investigation eventually



led the CO to the suspect's home where he was interviewed and charged for disposing of solid waste and for discarded refuse on state WMA.

Conservation Police Officers in district 6 deployed a digital signboard at the Tuckahoe WMA boat ramp in Upper Township on several dates to educate boat ramp users on the requirement of needing a boat ramp maintenance permit or receipt from a valid hunting, fishing, or trapping license. Permanent signs will be placed on the boat ramp soon regarding the requirements for use.

### Marine Region Highlights

Lieutenant Petruccelli located fish traps deployed on the Ocean City Reef. The Ocean City Reef is one of 13 artificial reef sites federally designated as a special management zone (SMZ) and is off limits to trap gear in an effort reduce user group conflicts and maintain the intended socioeconomic benefit of the sites. Despite these federal measures being in effect for the last six years, the fisherman claimed to not know the rule existed. The case was referred to National Marine Fisheries Service for enforcement action.

During a patrol onboard the Bureau's patrol vessel *Integrity*, Conservation Police Officers Tomlin, Szelc, and Lt. Petruccelli found multiple lobster traps unlawfully deployed outside of the designated full-access zones on the Axel Carlson artificial reef site. One commercial and one recreational fisherman were charged with state violations. It will be the second offense for the commercial fisherman charged in this case.

Conservation Police Officers Henderson and Raguz were on boat patrol off Sandy Hook when they conducted an inspection of a vessel engaged in fishing for tuna. The inspection revealed a bluefin tuna with a curved fork length that measured 90 inches. The season for bluefin tuna that have a curved fork length of 73 inches or greater was closed. The case was referred to National Marine Fisheries Service for enforcement action.

Lieutenant Moscatiello conducted an inspection of a local commercial fishing vessel that was landing in Point Pleasant. The inspection revealed that the vessel failed to call in for a summer flounder offload. Commercial fishing vessels that are participating in the directed summer flounder fishery are required to notify the Department at least two hours prior to offloading their catch. During the investigation it was revealed that the vessel failed to call in on at least three prior summer flounder fishing trips. Lt. Moscatiello issued summonses to the captain and company for the violations. The vessel faces a 60-day suspension of their summer flounder landing permit and up to a \$3,000 penalty for each offense.