

**NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
Monthly Highlights
Bureau of Law Enforcement
December 21, 2020- January 20, 2021**

J. Sean Cianciulli, Chief
Frank Panico, Deputy Chief
Vacant, Deputy Chief
L. Anne Quirk, Captain – Administration
Tom O'Rourke, Lieutenant - Training
Paul Toppin, Lieutenant– Training
Joseph Soell, Conservation Police Officer - Administration

Northern Region (908) 735-8240

Douglas Applegate, Captain
Steven Sutton, Lieutenant (District 1)
Joseph Kuechler, Lieutenant (District 2)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Vacant, Administrative Assistant 1

Central Region (609) 259-2120

Shannon Martiak, Captain
Bryan Mascio, Lieutenant (District 3)
Vacant, Lieutenant (District 4)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Shari Irick, Technical Assistant 2

Southern Region (856) 629-0555

Lisa Lacroix, Captain
Zane Batten, Lieutenant (District 5)
Craig James, Lieutenant (District 6)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Sue Canale, Agency Services Representative

Marine Region (609) 748-2050

Jason Snellbaker, Captain
Brian Scott, Lieutenant (District 7)
Chris Petruccelli, Lieutenant (District 8)
Vacant, Lieutenant Investigator
Noreen White, Agency Services Representative

Conservation Police Officers report a total of 5772.8 hours of duty (4901.6- 2020). These hours are charged to the following categories of duty:

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
Total Law Enforcement	4308.2	3663.3
Fishing	91.1	86.3
Marine Resources	961.1	893.3
Hunting	503.8	600.7
Deer Hunting	1541.7	1087.1
Trapping	92.8	95.3
Wildlife Mgt. Areas	253.9	123.5
NG & Endangered Species	12.1	62.3
Court	43.1	49.1
Regional Meetings	0	0
Pollution Investigation	32.2	33.7
Training	429.6	295.6
Other Law Enforcement	346.8	336.4
Administration	1416.6	1159.5
Fish Management	0	0
Wildlife Management	48	41
Information & Education	0	37.8

Bear Control	0.8	0
Bear Patrol and Investigation	0	47.6

During patrols, officers performed 2129 field inspections (2080 -2020) 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>Adm.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>2020</u>
Summonses issued	70	71	31	9	0	181	157
Criminal Charges	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Warnings issued	12	1	4	3	0	20	14
Bear Feeding Warnings	1	0	0	0	0	1	0

Field Inspections by Region

Administration	0
Northern Region	605
Central Region	499
Southern Region	795
Marine Region	230
Total	2,129

Field Inspections by Activity:

Hunters	1525
Freshwater Anglers	119
Trappers	25
Commercial Fishermen	26
Marine Rec. Anglers	125
WMA non-hunting/fishing	235
Other	74

Listed below are the types of summonses issued:

	<u>North</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Marine</u>	<u>Adm.</u>
Fishing	10	2	1	0	0
Hunting	2	3	9	5	0
Waterfowl Hunting	1	6	4	1	0
Deer Hunting	53	13	13	0	0
Trapping	1	0	0	0	0
WMA	0	32	4	0	0
Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
Shellfish	0	0	0	0	0
Title 2C	3	0	0	0	0
Marine-Commercial	0	0	0	3	0
Marine-Recreational	0	0	0	0	0
Nongame & Exotic	0	0	0	0	0
Title 58	0	0	0	0	0
Title 39	0	14	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	0	0
Bear Hunting	0	0	0	0	0
Bear Feeding	0	0	0	0	0
Marine Striped Bass	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	70	71	31	9	0

Penalties collected during this report period by Conservation Police Officers: *not reported due to office closures.

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

North	* numbers not reported due to office closure
Central	164
South	* numbers not reported due to office closure
Marine	109

Total calls received: 273

Bureau of Law Enforcement personnel status as of 1/20/21:

Administration - 6

1 Chief
1 Deputy Chief
1 CPO I - Admin
2 CPO IIs – Training
1 CPO III- Admin

Northern Region – 11

1 CPO I
2 CPO IIs
7 CPO IIIs
1 CPO Recruit

Central Region - 9

1 CPO I
1 CPO IIs
5 CPO IIIs
1 CPO Recruit
1 Technical Assistant 2

Southern Region - 12

1 CPO I
2 CPO IIs
6 CPO IIIs
2 CPO Recruits
1 Agency Services Rep

Marine Region - 16

1 CPO I
2 CPO IIs
10 CPO IIIs
2 CPO Recruits
1 Agency Services Rep

Total Employees: **54**

Northern Region Highlights

District 1 CPOs conducted follow up investigations into antlerless deer harvested in closed zones during the six-day firearm deer season. A total of eighteen summonses were issued.

On December 26, 2020, CPO Driscoll received a complaint regarding illegal fishing at the Pequest Trout Conservation Area in Liberty Township, Warren County. CPO Recruit Della Vella and CPO Hausamann assisted CPO Driscoll at the scene. CPO Driscoll located three individuals in possession of eleven trout over the legal limit, possession of scented bait, and one undersized trout. Appropriate summonses were issued.

On January 1, 2021, an Operation Game Thief complaint was received for illegal deer hunting in Stillwater Township, Sussex County. The caller described hearing several shots near his residence. He went outside and saw a pickup truck parked along the road with a hunter standing near the tailgate

holding a shotgun. He confronted the hunter about shooting close to the residences. He then noticed two additional hunters on the Trout Brook WMA with a deer. An argument ensued and all hunters quickly left the area without the deer. CPO Hausamann responded and took possession of the deer and contacted the New Jersey State Police Sussex Barracks and provided them with the registration of the suspect's vehicle. NJSP Troopers located the vehicle at a 7-Eleven on Rt. 206. Lt. Sutton and CPO Hausamann arrived on scene and observed two uncased firearms in the pickup truck along with a set of antlers in the back seat. An interview was conducted, and the hunters admitted to cutting the rack off a roadkill earlier in the day. They claimed they only shot one deer on the WMA but left after the run in with the caller. The initial caller then informed the officers of an additional dead deer that was located on the other side of the road. The CPOs found the ballistic components including a spent shell on the west side of the road and a plastic wad on the east side of the road. They also located an area covered in deer blood and hair where the shotgun slug entered and exited the deer. Just beyond the blood was a residence, and when observed in a linear direction it became clear it was an unsafe shot. A total of seventeen summonses were issued, including: hunting without a valid 2021 license, failure to exhibit a valid hunting license upon request, hunt deer with a muzzleloader in wrong deer management zone, hunting deer with a shotgun during closed season, possession of unregistered deer parts, possession of uncased firearm in motor vehicle, shooting across a road, and careless discharge of a firearm.

On January 2, 2021, CPO Recruit Della Vella and CPO Hausamann conducted a foot patrol near Kerr Road in Frelinghuysen Township, Warren County. CPO Recruit Della Vella observed a blind roughly two hundred yards off the roadway without fluorescent hunter's orange affixed to the top. An inspection of the hunter utilizing the blind revealed that he was hunting without a valid 2021 hunting license. A second hunter was observed in a nearby tree stand. An inspection of that hunter revealed that he was also hunting without a valid 2021 hunting license and without a valid DMZ 5 shotgun permit. He also failed to wear the required fluorescent hunter's orange. CPO Recruit Della Vella and CPO Hausamann then learned an additional hunter was across the road and they had reason to believe he was in the wrong zone, possessing only a DMZ 8 permit. CPOs A. Sutton, Merritt and Lt. Sutton arrived to assist. A third hunter was located across the roadway by CPO Merritt, revealing an additional violation of hunting in the wrong deer management zone. Six summonses were issued in total, for hunting without a valid license, hunt deer during permit shotgun season without a valid permit, hunt deer during permit shotgun season in wrong deer management zone, hunt with a firearm without wearing fluorescent hunter's orange, and fail to display fluorescent hunter's orange on a ground blind during firearm deer season.

On January 11, 2020, Lieutenant S. Sutton received information regarding an individual suspected to be deer hunting after legal hours at Hainesville WMA. Lt. S. Sutton and CPO Merritt located the suspect vehicle and set up surveillance. Shortly after legal hunting hours ended CPO Merritt heard the distinct sound of a crossbow being discharged, along with deer scattering through the woods. At 1820 hours, CPO Merritt contacted the hunter who was exiting the woods and in possession of a cocked crossbow equipped with a bolt on the rail. The hunter advised that he had shot a deer from his ground blind and was unable to locate blood, hair, or his crossbow bolt. Lt. S. Sutton and CPO Merritt searched the area near the hunters blind and located several empty bags of deer corn, an empty plastic jug of attractant and the wrapper from a mineral lick. The hunter informed that it was his garbage and that it had been there for approximately one week. He was issued summonses for hunting deer after legal hunting hours and for littering while hunting.

Central Region Highlights

Conservation Police Officers in the Central Region focused on illegal ATV/dirt bike/off road vehicles being operated at Greenwood Wildlife Management Area, Lacey Twp. On a cold Sunday afternoon, thirty summonses were issued for multiple violations involving the use of off-road vehicles. In addition, two motor vehicles were impounded.

On Christmas Day, a complaint of illegal hunting along the Delaware River was called into Trenton Dispatch. The complaint stated that two individuals harvested two bucks and were hunting from a boat and shooting deer in Pennsylvania. Both NJ and Pennsylvania were closed to deer hunting on this day. The two individuals had launched their boat from New Jersey and were NJ residents. CPO Garofalo began to investigate the complaint along with PA Game Commission. CPO Garofalo was able to obtain a search warrant for the residence of where the boat was being stored. Officers from PA Game Commission and the Central Region executed the warrant. The Officers were able to seize and gather evidence that was used in the illegal harvest of both antlered deer. CPO Garofalo charged one individual with two counts of unlawful possession of deer, two counts of failure to tag/register deer and one count of wanton waste of deer parts. The other individual was charged with a count of unlawful possession of a deer, failure to tag/register a deer and wanton waste of deer parts.

CPO Mutone discovered a large pile of discarded debris relating from a kitchen remodel project in Greenwood WMA, Lacey Twp. On the bottom of the discarded countertop, the name of the installation contractor and date of install were discovered. The contractor was interviewed and stated that was only time he ever wrote his company's name and install date on a countertop. He provided the address of the installation he did in 2014. When CPO Mutone interviewed the homeowner, he immediately confessed and accepted responsibility. Summonses and restitution costs for cleanup were issued.

Southern Region Highlights

CPO Trembley received information from a hunter about an illegally harvested deer. CPO Trembley reviewed the information and initiated the investigation, ultimately interviewing the hunter who registered the deer. During the interview process, the hunter stated that he purchased the wrong deer management zone permit. He admitted to shooting the deer in a zone he did not have a permit for and registering the deer incorrectly. Summonses for hunting in the incorrect zone, failure to properly register and illegal possession of a white tail deer were issued.

During the extended permit shotgun season, a 911 call was placed by a hunter complaining about trespassers on his leased property. NJSP responded to the complaint located in Deerfield Township, Cumberland County. CPOs Fox, Kille, Trembley, and Lt. Batten also responded. A motor vehicle stop of two suspected hunters was conducted and the CPOs located an uncased and loaded shot gun in the motor vehicle. CPO Trembley assisted NJSP officers who identified three hunters in the field that were in violation of the trespassing statute. All three individuals were charged with trespassing for the purpose of hunting. During a license inspection of one of the trespassers, Lt. Batten identified one of the hunters as being a non-resident hunter who procured a resident license. The same individual had been charged with procuring a license wrongfully two additional years so Lt. Batten added a 2021 charge for the same violation.

Marine Region Highlights

Field Training Officers Tomlin, Moscatiello, Klitz, and Henderson have spent the last five months working with Recruits Capri and Szelc who graduated the Gloucester County Police Academy at the end of August. With two new officers added to the roster, the Marine Unit is in the process of adding a third patrol district supervised by an additional Lieutenant. The Marine Unit has also been preparing to vacate the current office in Nacote Creek and move operations to the former Green Bank school in February.

Training Unit Highlights

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit everybody hard. The Training Unit, with the help of CPO Soell, has found a safe way to continue to educate officers with Power DMS software. Power DMS is allowing us to remotely push out mandatory Attorney General training information through lesson plans and videos on officers' computers. CPOs can log into their personal accounts to receive this information in lieu of traditional in-person lecture. This first quarter firearms training focused on close quarters engagement training, specifically different gun retention positions. We also focused on day and night firearm qualifications.