

2009



ANNUAL REPORT



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Department of Environmental Protection
Division of State Environmental Conservation Police

**Governor M. Jodi Rell
State of Connecticut**

**Commissioner Amey Marrella
Department of Environmental Protection**

**Deputy Commissioner Susan Frechette
Department of Environmental Protection**

**Bureau Chief Matthew Fritz
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation**

**Colonel Kyle Overturf
Director
Division of State Environmental Conservation
Police**



CONNECTICUT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION POLICE OFFICERS

Connecticut Environment Conservation (EnCon) Police Officers are appointed by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to enforce the state's fish & game, boating, recreational vehicle, and park & forest laws and regulations as well as a majority of the state's motor vehicle and criminal laws and regulations on a statewide basis. These officers are also appointed by the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety with full police powers on all DEP owned and managed lands and facilities. These dual appointments require that all EnCon officers attend the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council Academy. All officers are also appointed as Deputy Special Agents with both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service. These appointments mandate that each officer receive specialized training in such areas as natural resource protection, wildlife and plant identification, vessel and recreational vehicle operation, boating safety, commercial fisheries, shell fishing, wildlife management, tranquilizing large animals, boating accident investigation, hunting related shooting investigations in addition to the statutory training that all police officers are required to have.

Connecticut EnCon Police Officers assist State and Municipal Police Departments in narcotics enforcement, domestic disputes, assaults and many other law enforcement functions and are the primary response units to assist the United States Coast Guard.



Cold Weather Firearms Training

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Division of State Environmental Conservation Police is the protection of the public and our natural resources through the efficient and effective use of Division resources for education and public outreach, the prevention of crime and accidents and the enforcement of laws and regulations.

Goals

Goal 1: To fairly and impartially enforce state and federal laws and regulations.

Goal 2: To enhance the protection of the public and our natural resources through cooperative crime prevention and awareness efforts with constituency groups and the public.

Goal 3: To promote a progressive working environment through training, career development and equal opportunity for advancement.

Goal 4: To maintain the professionalism of officers and staff and promote public service.

Goal 5: To promote cooperation with other disciplines both inside and outside the Division.

Goal 6: To acquire and maintain technology and equipment to improve efficiency, effectiveness and safety.

FISH AND GAME ENFORCEMENT

Connecticut EnCon Police Officers not only have the responsibility of enforcing Connecticut's fish and game laws and regulations, but are also Deputy Special Agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service and as such may also enforce U.S. Federal Codes concerning the taking of fish and wildlife. Their duties in fish and game enforcement include a wide range of activities from checking sporting and commercial licenses, tags and permits to undercover assignments investigating suspected violations of fish and game law.

The purpose of enforcing fish and game laws is to ensure that the state's wildlife populations are not harvested in excess or illegally exploited for commercial gain. Excessive harvesting or exploitation of a species can lead to an overall decline of the resource or contribute to the extinction of a species. Through the enforcement of fish and game laws and regulations EnCon Police Officers help to maintain sustainable populations of wildlife species for future generations to enjoy.



Rifle Seized During Illegal Hunting Investigation

BOATING

EnCon Police Officers are responsible for patrolling all waters within the State, including Fishers Island and Long Island Sound, for recreational boating safety enforcement. Officers enforce state boating laws and regulations to ensure a safe and enjoyable boating experience for the many recreational boaters that enjoy Connecticut waterways each year. To enhance the safety of boaters, EnCon Police Officers inspect boats for compliance with safety equipment requirements and operator certifications as well as monitoring boating traffic for moving violations.

EnCon Police Officers utilize various sized patrol vessels to patrol Connecticut's waters. A 42' Wesmac commercial fisheries patrol vessel, the "GUARDIAN", powered by a 700 HP Luger diesel engine, is equipped with a commercial hauler and state-of-the-art electronics and provides EnCon Police Officers with all weather capability for enforcement and search & rescue missions on Long Island Sound.



Patrol on Long Island Sound

EnCon Police Officers also investigate boating accidents that occur on Connecticut waters. In 2009 EnCon Police Officers investigated 68 boating accidents. The Division maintains a Boating Accident Reconstruction Unit (B.A.R.U.) whose members investigate boating accidents that involved the death or serious physical injury of a person. The B.A.R.U. consists of 10 officers supervised by a sergeant, all of whom are specially trained in the field of boat accident reconstruction.

COMMERCIAL FISHING

EnCon Police Officers are responsible for enforcing Connecticut's laws and regulations pertaining to the commercial harvesting of fish and shellfish. As Deputy Special Agents of the National Marine Fisheries Service they may also enforce Federal Codes concerning the commercial harvesting of marine fish and shellfish. EnCon Police Officers routinely inspect commercial fishing vessels to ensure compliance with species limitations, licensing and permit requirements, and other laws pertaining to the commercial fishing industry.

The EnCon Police Division's Marine District officers work closely with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Aquaculture and the United States Food & Drug Administration to help ensure that contaminated shellfish do not reach the consumer market. In 2009, EnCon Police Officers conducted 2,423 shellfish bed checks in 24 different towns.



Shellfish Enforcement

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

EnCon Police Officers respond to reports of sick, injured or nuisance wildlife. Officers responding to such reports make every effort to save the life of the animal or to relocate the animal to a more suitable habitat to reduce conflict between the animal and humans. In the case of injured wildlife, if possible, the officer will turn the animal over to a

licensed wildlife rehabilitator for care with the goal of eventual return of the animal to its natural environment.

EnCon Police Officers work with Department biologists to monitor Connecticut's growing black bear population and work to protect the public through education about living with black bears. In 2009 there were 1,931 reports of bear sightings and nuisance bear complaints. During winter months hibernating bears are located and data regarding population, health and the number of cubs with sows is gathered.

In addition to black bears, Connecticut has a growing moose population. EnCon Police Officers assigned to the Chemical Immobilization Team are experienced at tranquilizing and relocating moose from urban to rural areas of the state. Moose require special handling when tranquilized. Officers must cover the moose with ice to keep the moose from overheating and in many cases provide the moose with oxygen during transport. Once a moose is relocated, officers and biologists monitor the moose until it can safely return to the wild.



Bear tranquilizing and tagging

PARKS AND FORESTS

EnCon Police Officers serve as the primary police agency within our state parks and forests. Criminal activity of the same type that occurs in urban or residential areas also occurs within these areas. Officers conduct patrol work within our state parks and forests to act as a deterrent to such criminal activity. When crimes do occur in these areas, EnCon Police Officers respond to the complaints and conduct investigations with the goal of apprehending those responsible for the criminal activity. During 2009, officers responded to 3,099 incidents and made 1,196 arrests and issued 529 written warnings in our state parks and forests for crimes against people and property as well as narcotics and alcohol violations.



State Forest Winter Patrol

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

EnCon Police Officers enforce state laws and regulations pertaining to the operation of snowmobiles and all terrain vehicles on state owned or managed properties and on frozen bodies of water. Officers utilize snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles and off road motorcycles to patrol for potential violators. In addition, the Division is assisted by the Connecticut State Police Aviation Unit. In 2009, EnCon Police Officers responded to 384 incidents related to recreational vehicles and made 112 arrests and issued 50 written warnings for violations.



EnCon Police ATV Enforcement Training

SEARCH & RESCUE

During 2009, EnCon Police Officers responded to 85 Search & Rescue (SAR) and missing person incidents in Connecticut State Parks and Forests, on the state's lakes and rivers and on Long Island Sound. These missions ranged from locating lost hikers to recovery of drowning victims. EnCon Police Officers provide a valuable service to local and state police, fire departments and the US Coast Guard in SAR missions due to their extensive knowledge of the remote areas of the state and our offshore waters. Officers utilize patrol vessels, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles to augment these search efforts.



Search & Rescue Operation

HOMELAND SECURITY

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the EnCon Police Division has been tasked with a number of responsibilities related to Homeland Security. As a result of these attacks, the mission of the United States Coast Guard has involved additional off shore patrol assignments. These assignments have had an impact on the Coast Guard's ability to respond to Search & Rescue missions on Long Island Sound. In order to protect public safety, and to assist the Coast Guard, the EnCon Police Division serves as their primary backup. EnCon Police Officers actively patrol public watershed areas by vehicle and on foot to enhance the level of security of public drinking water supplies. Officers also conduct waterborne security patrols of the major harbor areas of the state to augment U.S. Coast Guard resources to protect this infrastructure that is vital to Connecticut's economy. Officers also conduct Homeland Security patrols in the waters off the Millstone Point Nuclear Power Plant in Waterford. Officers patrol this area on a 24 hour/7day a week basis during times of elevated terrorist threat levels.



Tactical Firearms Training



Millstone Basin Security Zone

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The EnCon Police Division dedicates numerous hours every year in educating the public on such topics as the protection of our natural resources and safety concerns while enjoying the outdoors. EnCon Police Officers often appear at agricultural fairs, schools, fish & game clubs, businesses, civic and youth group organizations to accomplish this important goal. Officers utilize two mobile trailers that are stocked with educational materials and mounts of indigenous wildlife. In 2009, officers conducted 163 programs, totaling 602 hours that reached approximately 31,034 people.



Western District Officers Conducting an Outreach Program

STAFFING

The Environmental Conservation Police Department experienced nine retirements in 2009 prompting the search for qualified individuals to carry on our rich tradition. Due to these retirements the department began the hiring process to fill six new positions. The hiring process ended in the spring of 2010 with the hiring of six new officers. Two new officers entered the department as certified Municipal Police Officers and are completing their yearlong Agency Police Officer (APO) training. Upon completion of this phase they will be promoted to Environmental Conservation Police Officer. The remaining four officers hired will enter the Connecticut Police Academy to become certified police officers. Upon successfully completing the police academy and the 12 week field training phase, the officers will be upgraded to the position of Agency Police Officer (APO). As an APO, the officer will work independently on Department owned properties. After a period determined by education and/or experience, the officer will be elevated to the position of Environmental Conservation Police Officer.

DIVISION STRUCTURE

Within the DEP's Branch of Environmental Conservation, the Division of State Environmental Conservation Police is part of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation along with the State Parks Division and the Division of Boating Safety. Colonel Kyle Overturf commands the Division. The Division is comprised of three districts, East, West and Marine and the Hartford Headquarters Command Staff. A Captain commands each District. East and West Districts are divided into two patrol sectors each of which is under the supervision of a Sergeant.

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

MARINE DISTRICT

The Marine District covers the Connecticut shoreline towns from Stonington to Greenwich and includes the waters of Long Island and Fishers Island Sound. There are three sergeants, nine Conservation Enforcement Officers and two Agency Police Officers assigned to the Marine District. Capt. Paul O'Connell is the District's Commanding Officer. Their responsibilities and duties include commercial and recreational fishing, shellfish, lobster, boating safety and hunting enforcement. These Officers are also responsible for all the law enforcement at State shoreline parks and campgrounds. Officers also assist in homeland security efforts by patrolling the major ports of New London, New Haven and Bridgeport and the area surrounding Millstone Nuclear Power Plant. Officers work in close cooperation with Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound which includes stations New London, New Haven and Eaton's Neck, to coordinate boating enforcement efforts, search and rescue operations, homeland security patrols, and commercial fishing enforcement. The Marine District coordinates multi-agency Boating Enforcement Initiatives throughout the boating season with the Coast Guard and local marine law enforcement agencies. Officers from the Marine District handled 2,812 incidents which include 767 arrests and 407 written warnings in 2009.



Marine District Officers – 2009

L-R – **Rear:** Todd Chemacki, Richard Persico, Stanislaw Mieldzioc, John Hey, Sgt. Jim Kane; **Front:** Col. Kyle Overturf, Karen Reilly, Ryan Healy, Michael Tavares, John Chickos, Sgt. Eric Lundin, Jeffrey Samorjczyk

Marine District Highlights

Recreation Area Enforcement

On 1/26/2009, Officer John Esteban served an arrest warrant on a subject wanted in connection with evading a motor vehicle accident that occurred at West Rock State Park in September of 2008. On 9/19/2008, the principal from the Dixwell New Light High School suffered severe injuries when he was struck by a motor vehicle while walking in the park. The vehicle that struck him fled the scene. Witnesses gave a description of the vehicle and a partial marker plate. After an extensive investigation, Officer Esteban was able to ascertain the identity of the driver of vehicle. A warrant was prepared and submitted by Officer Esteban then served on 1/26/2009. The subject was charged with Assault in the second degree, Reckless Endangerment, Reckless Driving, Evading Responsibility, Operating with a Suspended License and Operating a Motor Vehicle without Insurance. The subject is scheduled to appear in New Haven Court in February.

In February of 2009, the EnCon Police's Marine District was notified that several power tools were discovered missing from the maintenance shop at Hammonasset Beach State

Park in Madison. Officer DeFelice was assigned to investigate the case. After several months of investigation which included numerous interviews, computer record checks and background investigations, Officer DeFelice developed a suspect in the case that was a former employee of the park. Officer DeFelice submitted an arrest warrant to New Haven Superior Court which was signed and served on the subject on 4/30/2009. The suspect in the case, who was incarcerated at the time, was charged with Burglary in the third degree, Larceny in the third degree and Criminal Mischief in the third degree.

Search & Rescue Operations

On 2/14/2009, Officers Chemacki and DeFelice responded to the Housatonic River in Milford to assist the U.S. Coast Guard on a search for a missing person. A dinghy was found adrift that belonged to a subject that was living aboard his boat moored in the river. Upon arriving on scene by vessel, the officers commenced a shoreline and water search with area police and fire departments. Sgt. Warren also responded and met with the officers. Officers DeFelice and Chemacki along with Coast Guard personnel boarded the missing subject's vessel to make sure he was not aboard. They found the vessel cabin unlocked and went inside to check on the welfare of the owner. Once on board, the officers noticed several firearms lying in plain view. The subject was located unharmed on shore a short time later. After interviewing the subject and after further investigation, six firearms were seized for safe keeping. One of the firearms was a Tec-9 pistol that is classified as an assault weapon. Officer DeFelice is continuing his investigation.

Shellfish Enforcement

On 2/15/2009, Officer Tavares was working with Rhode Island Environmental Police Officer Schipritt on a complaint of illegal commercial fishing activity occurring in the port of Stonington. The information was that a commercial lobsterman was taking lobsters less than the legal length in Rhode Island waters and landing them in Stonington. The officers observed the suspect vessel engaged in pulling lobster gear in Rhode Island waters. When the vessel came into Stonington, the officers boarded the vessel. The officers discovered a holding car in the water next to the suspect's vessel that the suspect admitted was his. Inside the holding car were fourteen lobsters less than the minimum legal length. The holding car was not marked with the suspect's license number as required. The suspect was arrested and released after posting a \$200.00 cash bond because he was a resident of Rhode Island. The lobsters were seized as evidence.

Boating Enforcement

On 08-15-09 at approximately 1830 Officer Samorajczyk and Acting Sergeant Kane were conducting boating safety checks as part of a Boating Enforcement Initiative at the Devon State Access Area on the Housatonic River in Milford. The officers saw a vessel approach the boat ramp with four people on board. The operator of the vessel appeared intoxicated and was uncooperative. As Officer Samorajczyk and Acting Sergeant Kane

attempted to obtain information from the operator and attempted to conduct a standardized field sobriety tests, the operator became combative. After a brief struggle and assistance from officers from the Milford Police Dept., the operator was taken into custody and placed under arrest. A criminal history check revealed the operator was a convicted felon with 19 prior arrests. The subject was transported to Milford Police Dept. for processing. He was charged with operating a vessel while under the influence and interfering with a police officer.

On September 3, 2009 at approximately 9:30 p.m., the Guilford Police Department notified the EnCon Police of a report of a serious boating accident that occurred in the area of Old Quarry Rd. An open power boat struck a sea wall and there were injuries reported. Officers Mieldzioc, Persico, Ruggiero, and Chemacki initially responded to the scene. Upon arriving, they found one of the vessel occupants had been pronounced dead on the scene and three other persons had been transported to area hospitals, one with critical injuries. Sgts. Healy, Lundin and Capt. Overturf responded to the scene while Officers Hey and Reilly were dispatched to the hospitals where the accident victims were taken. Guilford and Branford Fire Departments were on scene along with the U.S. Coast Guard conducting a water search of the area for more victims. Initially it was not known how many persons were on the vessel when it struck the sea wall. When Officer Reilly was able to confirm with the vessel's owner that there were only four persons on board when the accident occurred, the search was discontinued. The vessel was seized and transported to Old Lyme Headquarters so the Boating Accident Reconstruction Unit could examine the vessel. The investigation into the cause of the accident is continuing.

MARINE DISTRICT OFFICER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

Officer Karen Reilly #639

The Marine District Officer of the Year for 2009 is Conservation Enforcement Officer Karen Reilly. Officer Reilly has been with the State Environmental Conservation Police since March of 2007. From the time of her hiring, she distinguished herself by being selected sergeant for her class at the Connecticut Police Academy. Since her graduation, she has been invited back to serve as part of the cadre of police officers that initiate new recruits at the police academy on their first day. She was chosen due to her command presence, uniform appearance and professional attitude and demeanor.

Since joining the EnCon Police, Officer Reilly has served in the Marine District, Central Sector. During this period she has successfully learned all the different aspects of being a Conservation Enforcement Officer in the Marine District. In 2008, she attended the Marine Law Enforcement Training Program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Georgia. She has issued numerous infractions and warnings for marine

fisheries, shellfish and boating violations. She has made arrests for turkey and deer hunting violations. She has also made two arrests for lobster violations at seafood dealers.

Since she is assigned to the Central Sector of the Marine District, Officer Reilly spends many hours patrolling Hammonasset Beach State Park. Her proactive approach to law enforcement has resulted in numerous arrests for motor vehicle violations, including two driving under the influence arrests, narcotics arrests, arrests on domestic violence cases, breach of peace arrests and numerous public safety and medical assists.

In June of 2008, Officer Reilly and Officer Chemacki responded to a lightning strike at Hammonasset. There were numerous people injured and both officers performed CPR on one of the victims. Officer Reilly received the division's Lifesaving Medal and was recognized by the American Red Cross for her actions that day. In November of 2008, Officer Reilly along with several other officers responded to Hammonasset for a report of a suicidal woman in the park. The woman was located and had taken numerous pills in an attempt to take her own life. Medical assistance was summoned and the woman was transported to a medical care facility for treatment. If not for the quick intervention by Officer Reilly and the other officers, the woman would not have survived. Officer Reilly and the other officers were awarded a Unit Citation for their actions. In July of 2009, Officer Reilly and Officer Savage responded to the campground at Hammonasset on a medical call. Upon arriving, they found a male party in cardiac arrest and performed CPR on the subject. They were able to bring back a faint pulse and continued CPR until advanced medical care arrived. In July of 2009, after a lengthy investigation, Officer Reilly served an arrest warrant on a subject that had been stalking a female park patron and her daughter; the subject was taken into custody and held at a Dept. of Correction facility. Officer Reilly continued her investigation and in August 2009 served a second warrant for stalking in the first degree on the same subject for stalking the patron's daughter. Also in August of 2009, Officer Reilly arrested a subject for sexual assault in the fourth degree. The subject lured a D.E.P. seasonal employee into his trailer and assaulted him. The victim fled the trailer and gave a description of the offender and his camper to officers and Officer Reilly along with other officers arrested the subject at his home in Branford.

Officer Reilly has formed an excellent working relationship with the police departments in her area and the State Police of Troop F in Westbrook. On numerous occasions she has been called upon to search female prisoners at Troop F when they have no female troopers on duty. She often backs up the state police on traffic stops and in one case on I-95, assisted with the arrest of a subject who had assaulted his girlfriend while they were driving.

Officer Reilly's enthusiasm for her job is evident to anyone she has worked with. She is well respected by her supervisors, peers and officers from other agencies. She is often requested by other supervisors to attend public outreach events. She is currently a staff sergeant with the National Guard and has been a Guard member for over ten years, including a combat deployment with her unit to Iraq. Officer Karen Reilly is an

outstanding representative of the State Environmental Conservation Police, an asset to her agency and the state, and is most deserving of the honor of Officer of the Year.



Vessel boarding for lobster enforcement



Checking lobster pots

EASTERN DISTRICT

The Eastern District includes the 60 towns in the eastern half of the State north of the Marine District. The District is separated into two patrol Sectors that are each supervised by a Sergeant. Captain Rick Lewis is the District's Commanding Officer. The Northeast Sector covers Hartford and Windham counties from the Connecticut River east to Rhode Island and is patrolled by seven officers. The officers in this area have an excellent working relationship with their counterparts in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island and conduct interstate operations with them. The Southeast Sector covers Middlesex and New London counties from Durham/Middlefield east to Rhode Island and is patrolled by six officers. Officers assigned to this area are responsible for patrolling the Connecticut River from Haddam south to Old Lyme. This Sector is dominated by very large contiguous tracks of State Forest that contain several large inland campgrounds which requires constant patrols. Officers from the Eastern District handled 2,964 incidents which include 733 arrests and 483 written warnings in 2009.



Eastern District Officers – 2009

L-R – **Rear:** Sgt. Christopher Dwyer, Bill Meyers (Retired), Jason Williams, Eric Johnson (Retired), Harold Lindo, Capt. Paul O’Connell; **Front:** Sgt. Mike Enright (Retired), Edward Pyznar, Joseph Ruggiero, William Vroman, Anthony Rose, Sgt. Robert Zabilasky (Retired)

Eastern District Highlights

Wildlife

On 1/25/09, EnCon Police Sgt. Zabilansky and Officer Wojcik were working on a complaint of an illegally killed deer in Lebanon. Officer Wojcik back tracked the suspect’s tracks and deer’s blood trail approximately 2.5 miles to the scene of the crime. He encountered the homeowner exiting his residence with knife in hand ready to butcher the deer. The deer had been killed out of season, over bait, and was picked up by the suspect in the neighborhood where the blood trail ended. The suspect was arrested and the suspect’s weapon a compound bow and a large automatic feeder loaded with corn were confiscated with the deer.

On 1/23/09, EnCon Police Officer Pyznar was called to a complaint of a possible illegally killed 10 point buck in East Hartford. He back tracked the suspect’s tracks and deer’s blood trail leading to the rear of a house that backed up to Pratt and Whitney property. Through investigation and interviews, Officer Pyznar was able to develop enough

information to arrest a suspect who had been arrested three times for similar offenses. The deer was shot with a crossbow, from a stepladder, over a chain link fence, out of season, without tags, without consent and over bait. The suspect's crossbow and deer were confiscated.

On 7/5/09, an individual attending a party in Marlborough was bitten by a rattlesnake, after he attempted to relocate the reptile by hand. EnCon Police Officer Dwyer handled the complaint and took possession of the 54" snake after it was decapitated with a shovel by another individual at the party. The snake was a subject of scientific study and was equipped with a computer chip to be turned over to researchers for analysis.

On the 11/8/09, Officer Lindo arrested two individuals for numerous charges associated with Sunday hunting in North Stonington. In addition to Sunday hunting the two were charged with not having consent, trespass, insufficient orange clothing, hunting during the closed season, negligent hunting, and reckless endangerment as a result of hiding their loaded firearms in the woods.

Drugs/Narcotics

On 5/9/09, EnCon Police Officers Johnson and Williams were performing a routine license check of a couple of fisherman on the Quinnebaug River in Thompson when they smelled the odor of marijuana emanating from their vehicle. After investigating they were able to determine the older individual was supplying marijuana to his juvenile cousin. His actions resulted in arrest for Risk of Injury to a Minor, Interfering with an Officer, Possession of Marijuana, Motor Vehicle charges, and Fishing without a License.



Recreational Vehicle Enforcement

On 7/5/09, EnCon Police Officer Dwyer attempted to stop several ATV's on the railroad tracks in Windham. They evaded Officer Dwyer, nearly striking him in the process and he pursued them to a nearby property where over 30 individuals had assembled to have an ATV party on property where they had no permission. At the scene of the party, Officer Dwyer was nearly struck when two pickups fled the party site. One of the subjects drove directly at Officer Dwyer to affect his escape. Officer Dwyer called for assistance and Officer Vroman and numerous Troopers from Troop D responded to the scene where they arrested over thirty individuals who had arrived in several rental trucks and private vehicles. Due to Officer Dwyer's quick response in broadcasting the offender's license plates, Troopers from Troop K stopped the pickup a short time later and arrested the driver for numerous charges including Attempted Assault on an Officer and Interfering with an Officer as well as trespass and ATV offenses. The individual admitted to attempting to take an irregular route back to New Britain via Massachusetts to evade capture by authorities.

Boating Enforcement

On 8/1/2009, Sgt. Lundin, Officers Vroman, Pyznar, Johnson and seasonal Officers Graves and Thompson were dispatched to a boating accident on Quaddick Reservoir in Thompson. Two vessels were approaching each other from opposite directions. The vessels tried to evade collision and in doing so a female who was being towed on a tube was struck by the approaching bass boat. The unconscious victim was transported to UMass Medical Center in Worcester by Life Star helicopter where she was admitted with blunt trauma injuries to her head and a collapsed lung. She died one week later from

complications. The EnCon Police Boating Accident Reconstruction Unit is investigating the accident.

EASTERN DISTRICT OFFICER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

Officer Joseph Ruggiero # 674

Officer Ruggiero is well versed in all areas of conservation law enforcement, and has displayed his ability during 2009. Officer Ruggiero's case load was over 100 incidents above all other officers in the district. Officer Ruggiero's case load included 27 deer incidents, 38 boating incidents, 34 inland fishing incidents, 21 public safety incidents, 9 littering/dumping incidents as well as waterfowl, small game hunting, trapping, narcotic and public outreach. Officer Ruggiero is available after hours, and is eager to handle all complaints and assignments. Below are a few examples from the monthly highlights which clearly show the ability and dedication that Officer Ruggiero displays towards conservation law enforcement.

On May 7, 2009, opening day of turkey season Officers Ruggiero and DeFelice were on patrol in Middlefield and were checking a hunter on private property who attempted to tag his turkey as they approached him at his vehicle, long after his bird should have been tagged in the field. He was charged with failure to immediately tag his bird.

On May 3, 2009, while patrolling Dooley Pond Launch in Middletown, Officers Ruggiero and DeFelice observed a suspicious vehicle at the launch and while investigating smelled the odor of burnt marijuana. The female operator of the vehicle was arrested for possession of narcotics and illegal acts at a boat launch.

On the May 15, 2009 Officer Ruggiero arrested an individual at Miller's Pond who was in the act of smoking a "blunt" marijuana cigar. He was also found to be in possession of 25 small packaged bags of suspected marijuana and was charged with intent to sell narcotics as well as other related charges.

On February 4, 2009 EnCon Officers Chickos and Ruggiero arrested an individual for numerous trapping violations in Durham Meadows Wildlife Management Area. The individual was charged with several counts of failure to check traps and failure to label traps. On another incident on the 14th, again at Durham Meadows, Officer Ruggiero investigated another trapping case where traps were left unattended for more than 24 hours. A suspect has been identified and the incident is still under investigation.

WESTERN DISTRICT

The Western District is comprised of the 96 towns in the western half of Connecticut. The territory that the district encompasses covers a wide variety of terrain and population densities. The District is divided into two patrol sectors, each supervised by a Sergeant. The Northwest Sector of the district stretches from the highest point in Connecticut and the Litchfield Hills to the Connecticut River Valley. The population of the Northwest Sector varies from sparsely populated farm and forest areas in the northwest corner to the densely populated areas of greater Hartford. The Southwest Sector which was primarily farmland in the past is now large tracts of suburban development and industrial parks with pockets of forest and farmland. The Southwest Sector also covers the highly industrialized lower Naugatuck Valley, Waterbury, Danbury and the towns surrounding Bridgeport and New Haven.

Officers assigned to the Western District are responsible for patrolling the larger inland water bodies including Connecticut's largest lakes. These include Lake Candlewood; Bantam Lake, Highland Lake, Winchester Lake, Twin Lakes, Lake Zoar, Lake Lillinonah and Lake Housatonic. In addition to the smaller lakes, ponds and rivers, the Western District is also responsible for the Connecticut River from the Massachusetts border to Haddam and the Housatonic River from Massachusetts to Shelton.



Western District Officers – 2009

L-R – **Rear:** Tim Hill, Sean Buckley, Raul Ramos, Keith Williams, Steve Stanko, Dean Wojcik, Tate Begley, Paul Hilli; **Front:** Sgt. Keith Schneider, Capt. Raul Camejo, Erin Crossman, Ed Yescott, Britni Scatena, Holly Bernier, Sgt. Mark Shaw. (missing from photo Ralph Concepcion)

Western District Highlights

Public Outreach

During 2009 Western District EnCon Police Officers performed public outreach and education activities at number of venues. These included the Goshen Fair, various sporting groups, school career days, boy and girl scouts and tours at the State Fish Hatchery in Burlington. EnCon Police Officers also conducted training for basic recruit classes at the Connecticut Police Academy and to the Western Regional Police training program relating to fish and game laws.

Fish and Game Enforcement

Federal and State Officers Search Massachusetts Bait Dealer

On 2/25/09, EnCon Police Sergeant K. Schneider and Officers Hilli, Yescott, Crossman and Williams assisted the US Fish & Wildlife Service and Massachusetts Environmental Police in searching a wholesale bait dealer shop in Springfield, Massachusetts. The search was a result of an ongoing investigation being conducted by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Connecticut and New York EnCon Police officers were called upon to provide assistance as information was obtained that there was the possibility of interstate transportation of illegal bait into Connecticut and New York. The investigation is continuing by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Turkey Poachers

On 5/16/09, EnCon Police Officers Tomassone, Hilli, Begley and Sergeant K. Schneider arrested four New York residents on several charges related to illegal wild turkey hunting in the area around Cobble Rd. in Kent. Working with information they had developed on the illegal hunting ring, EnCon Police set up a surveillance operation that led to the arrest of the three men and one woman. Over the past year, EnCon Police officers had determined that an organized group of poachers was illegally killing a significant number of deer and wild turkey in northwestern Connecticut. Information was developed that the poachers were being dropped off by a vehicle which would return to pick them up once they had illegally killed deer and/or turkey.

On 5/16/09, EnCon Police Officers stopped the transport vehicle and driver and then entered a nearby wooded area and apprehended the other three poachers involved. They were able to determine that the three were linked to the transport vehicle and driver. Upon being interviewed by EnCon Police Officers, the suspects readily admitted to having killed numerous deer and turkey in Connecticut over the past year. They admitted with the aid of a turkey call they would sometimes shoot turkey from their vehicle. When the suspects were arrested a video camera was found in their possession and seized along with their firearms and hunting equipment. The suspects admitted to videotaping their illegal activities and said they were hoping to supply the footage to a hunting show available on cable television.

Hunting Related Shooting on Opening Day

On 10/17/09, EnCon Police Sergeant K. Schneider and Officers Hilli and Tomassone responded to a Hunting Related Shooting at the DEP- owned Robbins Swamp Wildlife Management Area in Canaan. Members of the EnCon Police Hunting Related Shooting Investigation Team determined that the victim had been pheasant hunting at Robbins Swamp with another hunter. At approximately 10:30 am, while crossing an open field the victim was struck with bird shot when a hunter in a group approximately 75 yards away in the field shot a pheasant. The victim was struck in the face, head, neck and arm and transported to Sharon Hospital for treatment of non-life threatening injuries. The hunter who fired the shot was arrested by EnCon Police and charged with Negligent Hunting in the 2nd Degree. The hunter was released on a written promise to appear in court at Bantam on 11/02/09.

Illegal Deer Hunter Shoots Bobcat

On 11/5/09, EnCon Police Officer Yescott received a call that a man had just shot a bobcat while deer hunting in Plymouth and he was still on the property getting a tractor to retrieve the bobcat and bring it back to his house. When Officer Yescott pulled into the driveway he saw a dead bobcat on an upturned log. Officer Yescott observed the subject wearing camouflage clothing putting his shotgun down on a picnic table bench next to the barn. The subject told Officer Yescott that he shot the bobcat. He told Officer Yescott that he had been deer hunting since early that morning. In the afternoon he thought that he saw a coyote in the woods and that he had been asked by the landowner to shoot any coyotes he sees while he is deer hunting because coyotes in the area were killing and harassing some of the livestock on the farm. The subject told Officer Yescott he looked at the animal with his binoculars and saw it was a bobcat. He said that he then watched the bobcat for about fifteen minutes while it cleaned itself and slowly walked towards him. The subject said that when he had a clean shot he took one shot, killing the bobcat. Officer Yescott determined that the subject did not have a valid deer permits for 2009 and did not have written permission to deer hunt on the property. In addition, the subject was not wearing any safety orange clothing. The subject was arrested by Officer Yescott for Negligent Hunting 3rd degree, illegally killing a bobcat, failing to wear blaze orange while deer hunting, and illegal deer hunting.

Illegal Deer Hunting

In early December 2009 EnCon Police Officer Wojcik found two deer kill sites over a three week period in a wooded area in Windsor. Blood and tracks indicated that the deer were killed by a hunter hunting from a vehicle. On December 19th Officer Wojcik was on foot patrol in this area after finding a third deer kill site when he observed a vehicle approach down the dirt road access where the deer had previously been killed. Officer Wojcik immediately approached the subject vehicle where he observed the subject place a long object that appeared to be a rifle or shotgun from the front seat to the back seat. After seeing Officer Wojcik approaching, the subject attempted to back his vehicle out of the area but was stopped by Officer Wojcik. Officer Wojcik asked the subject if he had any weapons in the vehicle, which the subject told him that he did. Officer Wojcik took

the subject out of his vehicle and observed fresh blood on his shirt and boots. Officer Wojcik conducted a search of the vehicle and found a fully loaded 12 gauge shotgun that had one in the chamber in addition to rounds in the magazine. The shotgun was directly behind the driver's seat and appeared to be the weapon that Officer Wojcik observed the subject move prior to the stop. Officer Wojcik also recovered another shotgun and rifle which were unloaded but had ammunition lying next to each gun. Officer Wojcik observed large amounts of fresh blood on a carpet in the rear of the vehicle. A sealed plastic bag was also found containing a fresh deer heart and liver along with a folding knife covered in blood. The subject told Officer Wojcik that he was hunting in this area but that the deer parts were given to him from a friend, whose name he could not remember. Officer Wojcik determined that the subject did not have permission to hunt on the property and did not have any deer tags issued. The subject was arrested by Officer Wojcik for illegal deer hunting, loaded weapon in a motor vehicle, deer hunting without written permission, and deer hunting without deer tags.

EnCon Police Extradite Wanted Person from New York State

In November 2008, EnCon Police Officers Stanko and Hilli arrested a New Milford resident on charges related to illegally killing a 13 point buck in the town of Washington. On 5/1/09 when the subject went to trial on the charges, the subject's 25- year old nephew, also of New Milford, testified under oath as a defense witness in court in Bantam Superior Court. The subject testified that although he never hunted a day in his life, nor fired a rifle, he shot the 13 point buck in question at his uncle's trial. The subject testified he used a "223 rifle" to shoot a deer in Washington. As the subject was a convicted felon, he was advised by court personnel that he could face a minimum penalty of two years in prison in the state of Connecticut for possessing a firearm and he was asked if he wanted to continue to incriminate himself. The subject stated he wanted to continue and testified that he shot the deer and gave further details.

On 5/8/09 the trial against the original subject found him guilty and the court convicted him of probation violation and illegal hunting violations which resulted in a sentence of 9 months in prison. As a result of his testimony, an arrest warrant was issued in June of 2009 for the subject's nephew for the charges of: Negligent Hunting; Hunting/Discharge firearm from Public Highway; Illegal Hunting of White Tail Deer; Hunting without a License; and Criminal Possession of Firearm by a Convicted Felon. Officers Stanko and Hilli attempted to locate the subject throughout the summer of 2009. In September of 2009, the EnCon Police Officers assisted by the New Milford Police Department learned that the subject was in custody in the state of New York on a 45 day jail sentence for motor vehicle and reckless endangerment charges relating to a high speed pursuit in Warren County New York and was being held at the Warren County Sheriff's Office in Lake George New York.

EnCon Police Officers requested that extradition proceedings begin for the subject which was granted by the Superior Court in Bantam. On 9/24/09 the subject was released from the Warren County New York Correctional Center and taken into custody by Officers

Stanko and Hilli. The subject was returned to Connecticut where he was held on a \$10,000 bond pending trial.

Drugs/Narcotics

Reckless Driving Leads to Weapons and Narcotics Charges

On 4/3/09, EnCon Police Officer Stanko was traveling northbound on Route 8 in Torrington when he observed a vehicle being operated recklessly. Officer Stanko stopped the vehicle and when he asked for the vehicles registration the operator opened the glove compartment. Officer Stanko observed a black colored semiautomatic type handgun sitting on top of paperwork in the glove box. Officer Stanko was able to reach into the vehicle's glove box and grab the handgun. At this point no one in the vehicle articulated that the handgun was legal or that they had a permit for it. Fearing another weapon may be in the vehicle; Officer Stanko called for a backup and removed the three occupants from the vehicle. Officer Stanko determined that the handgun was a replica facsimile type look alike of a Walther PPK/S handgun. The replica was metal, functionally identical to a cartridge type handgun with moveable slide and cocking hammer. The operator was arrested for Reckless Driving and Weapons in a Motor Vehicle. Officer Stanko conducted a search of the vehicle incident to the arrest. Inside the driver's side door shelf he found a 'Black Jack' weapon (leather wrapped flexible lead striking implement). Inside an opened change compartment on the driver's side dashboard he observed an aluminum screw type vial. Inside the vial he found 12 tablets ultimately identified as Oxycotin and Percocet tablets. Additional narcotics charges were added to the reckless driving and weapons charges.

Boating Enforcement

Serious Boating Accident on Candlewood Lake

On 7/19/09 at approximately 3:00 am, EnCon Police Sergeant Schneider and Officers Hill, Ramos, Crossman and Bernier responded to a report of a serious one boat accident in New Milford on Candlewood Lake at Vaughn's Neck. A 24' powerboat with the operator and two occupants had grounded at speed against rocks on the shoreline of Vaughn's Neck. The damage was severe enough that the New Milford Fire Department had to extricate one of the passengers from within the damaged hull of the vessel. All of the vessel's occupants suffered severe injuries. The operator of the vessel was flown by Life Star Helicopter to Danbury Hospital. One of the passengers was flown to St Mary's Hospital in Waterbury by Life Star and the second passenger was transported to Danbury Hospital by the New Milford Ambulance. The EnCon Police Boating Accident Reconstruction Unit was dispatched to the scene and conducted a reconstruction of the accident.



Illegal Dumping Enforcement

Septic Truck Illegally Dumping Waste

On 10/5/09, EnCon Police Officer Tomassone was on patrol in Goshen. As he rounded the corner before North Goshen Road he noticed a septic pumping truck heading from North Goshen Road onto East Street North in a northerly direction. As Officer Tomassone pulled onto North Goshen Road heading west, he noted an extremely strong smell of sewage. At this time Officer Tomassone noticed approximately 50 gallons of raw sewage had been released past the stop sign on the south side of North Goshen Road. The smell was extremely noxious and strong enough that it had obviously just been released. Officer Tomassone noted that the grass in the area had been 'washed' down with the sewage and it appeared to have come from a high capacity hose or other stationary unit. There was still a puddle of grey matter and liquid in the middle of the downed grass.

Officer Tomassone also noticed a large spot in the roadway approximately twenty yards west of the stop sign on North Goshen Road that appeared to have been 'washed' with sewage as well. This second spot was still wet and running off onto the side of the roadway. This spot covered the entire south half of North Goshen Road covering an area approximately ten feet by ten feet. Officer Tomassone estimated this spot to have been a spillage of approximately 25 gallons. As he continued further west on North Goshen Road and approximately 250 yards further, Officer Tomassone found a third area that had some amount of sewage. Again, this area was on the south side of the roadway and in this spot it appeared that the spillage was entirely off the roadway and into the roadside drainage. The surrounding area is Torrington Water Company land and is all watershed area, ultimately leading to Reuben Hart Reservoir in Torrington.

Officer Tomassone set off in immediate pursuit of the septic tanker truck that he had just seen in the area. Officer Tomassone caught up with the possible offending vehicle and recognized it as the one he had seen a few minutes earlier. Officer Tomassone questioned the driver about the sewage spilled on North Goshen Road and initially the driver told Officer Tomassone that he had no idea what he was talking about. When Officer Tomassone advised the driver that he had seen him on North Goshen Road the driver then claimed that the valve on a small pipe on the rear of the tanker must have leaked. Due to the volume of the spills, the DEP HazMat Division was notified and responded to the scene.

Officer Tomassone determined that the driver had pumped a septic tank on North Goshen Rd just before he was seen leaving the area and that the spill was not caused by a leak, but had been intentionally dumped alongside the road by the driver. Officer Tomassone arrested the driver for failure to secure a load and for a Water Pollution Control violation.

WESTERN DISTRICT OFFICER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

Officer Erin Crossman #618

Officer Erin Crossman has been employed by the Division of Law Enforcement as a EnCon Police Officer assigned to the Western District since October 14, 2005.

Officer Crossman has demonstrated that she is confident and comfortable with performing the duties, with minimal supervision that are required of an EnCon Police Officer. Her caseload shows that she can transition easily from the traditional Fish and Game enforcement to the criminal violations that are a part of the State EnCon Police mission.

Officer Crossman is an enthusiastic Officer and has shown great initiative and dedication in performing her duties. More importantly, she is highly respected by her fellow Officers, DEP Staff and it is her personal character, to go out of her way, to help fellow Officers.

During Officer Crossman's service to the department she has taken on numerous critical incidents as lead investigator.

7/19/08 Boat accident Candlewood Lake, 2 fatalities, 3 injuries:

Officer Crossman was assigned as the lead investigator. A ten (10) month investigation ensued that concluded in a 300-page report. Her investigative skills covered a wide range of disciplines that was required to complete this investigation.

Officer Crossman is recognized for her organizational abilities and attention to detail. The investigation required numerous interviews of witnesses and separate reports, submitted by individual Officers. The large volume of information was evaluated by Officer Crossman and with minimum supervision, developed leads and investigated as

needed. Officer Crossman remained focused and maintained an enthusiastic demeanor during the course of the investigation, while maintaining routine patrol responsibilities. In the fall of 2006 Officer Crossman was the first officer in the State of Connecticut to make a DUI arrest for operation an ATV under the influence. In the same month officer Crossman was also assigned a fatal motor vehicle accident in Nepaug State Forest. Her dedication and compassion to the family of the deceased was outstanding.

EnCon Police Officer Erin Crossman has proven herself to be well suited to our profession of Environmental Law Enforcement. Erin is found to be resourceful, a self-starter and maintains a professional attitude in difficult situations. Officer Erin Crossman would be recognized as a fine representative of the Division of Law Enforcement and the Department of Environmental Protection.

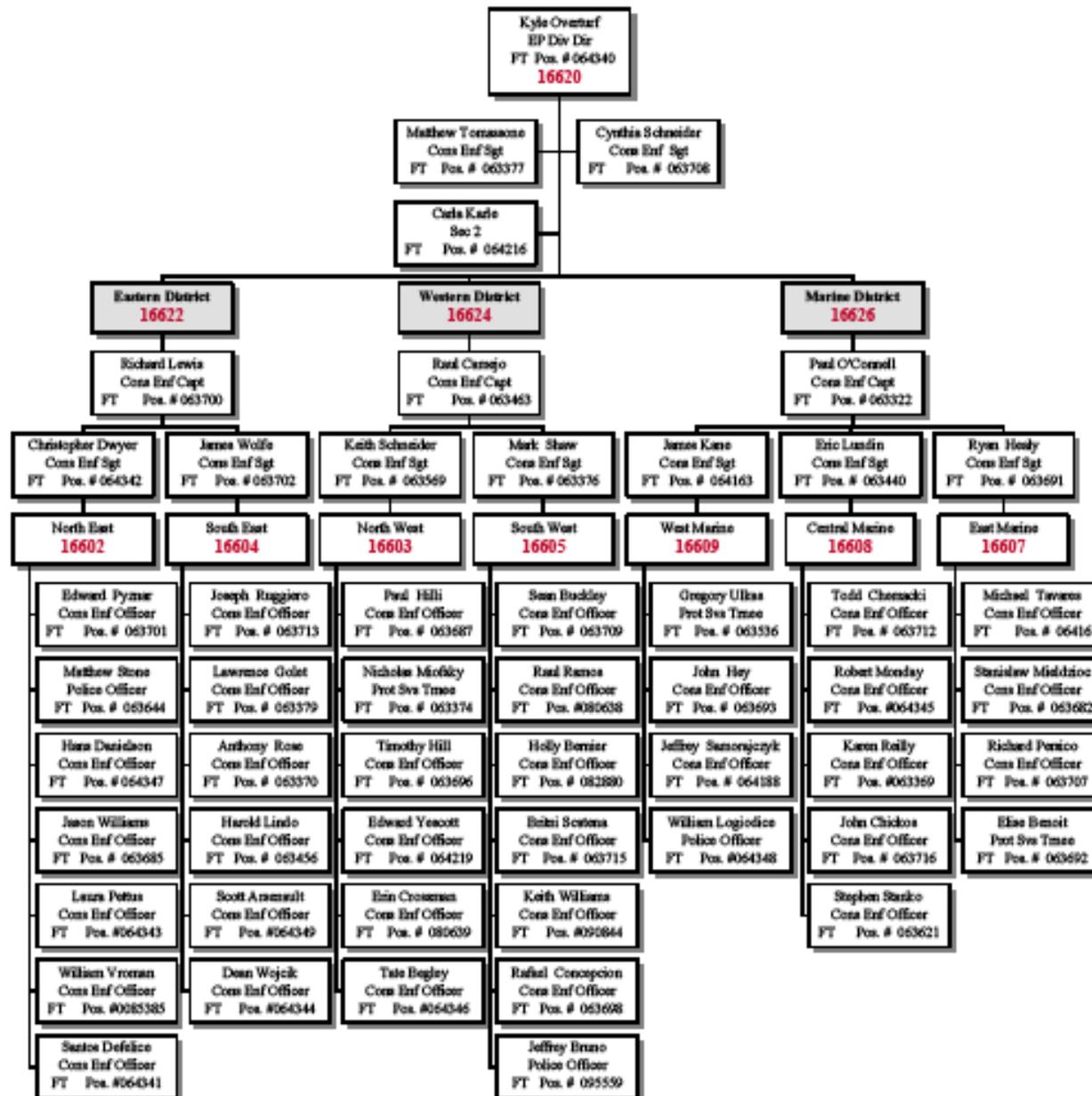
2009 OFFICER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENT

Officer Joseph Reggiero # 674

Officer Joseph Ruggiero is a fifteen year veteran of the EnCon Police Department. Officer Ruggiero is well versed in all areas of conservation law enforcement, and has demonstrated his abilities throughout his career and during 2009. He is always ready and willing to protect the citizens of our State, conserve Connecticut's natural resources, serve the Department and assist his fellow Officers. Whether it is during his normal shift or after hours, Officer Ruggiero is available and eager to handle all complaints and assignments. His case load speaks for itself with over 300 incidents to date that include 27 deer enforcement, 38 boating, 34 inland fishing, 21 public safety, 9 littering/dumping as well as waterfowl, small game hunting, trapping, narcotic and public outreach incidents.

**Bureau of Outdoor Recreation
Environmental Conservation Police Division
DEP44300-16620**

EC 06/10

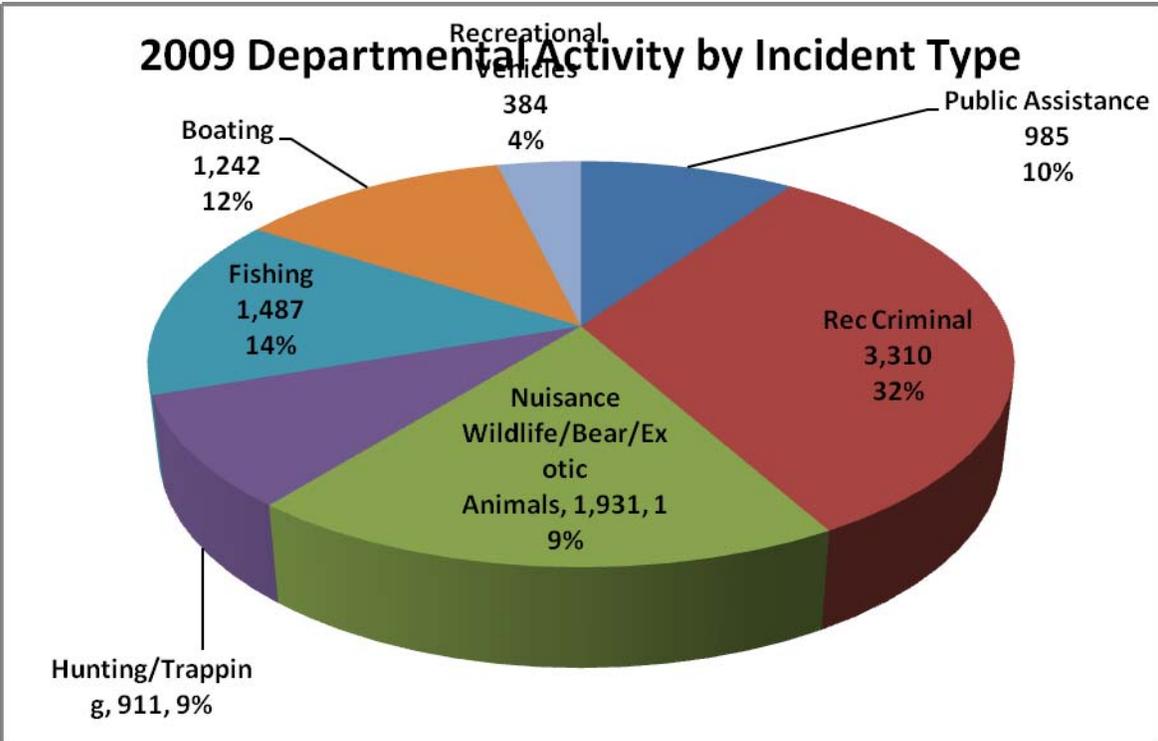
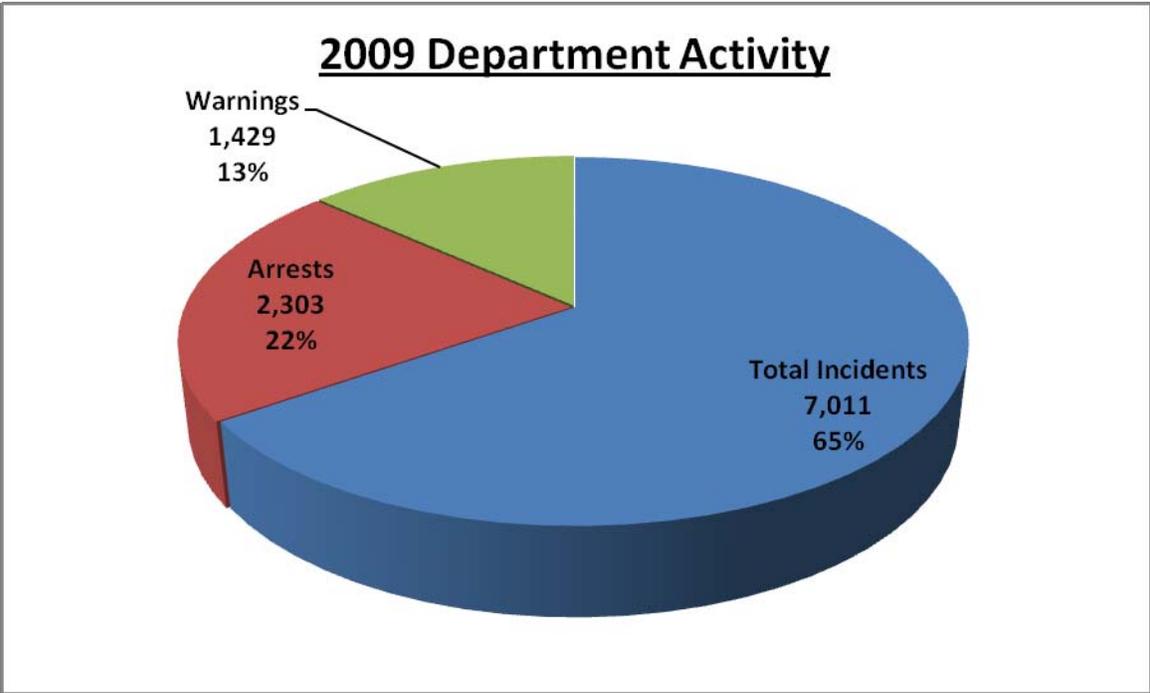


2009 DEPARTMENT STATISTICS

2009 Summary of Activity

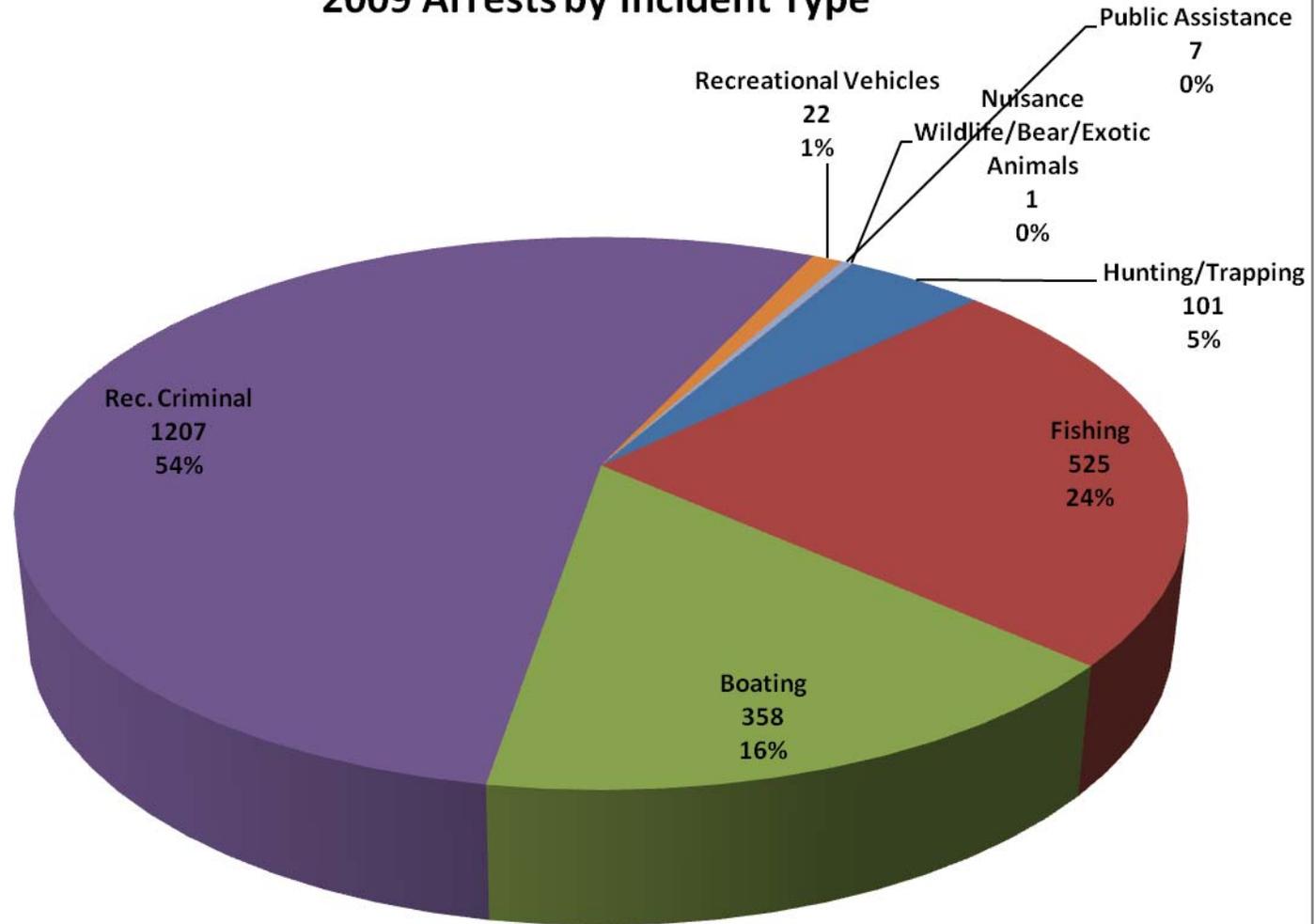
Incident	Total # of Incidents*	Total # of Arrests	Total # of Warnings
Hunting/Trapping	911	101	82
Fishing	1,487	525	450
Boating	1,242	358	308
Motor Vehicle	1,239	590	191
Trespassing	618	196	163
K-9 Violations	127	22	36
Recreational Vehicles	384	112	50
Alcohol/Narcotics	303	191	80
Crimes Against Persons	501	145	51
Crimes Against Property	522	63	8
Safety/Medical	847	7	1
Search & Rescue/Missing Persons	85	0	0
Nuisance Bear	1,173	0	0
Exotic Animals	30	1	5
Sick, Injured, & Nuisance Wildlife	728	0	4
Background Investigations	56	0	0
Homeland Security/Suspicious Person	488	2	0
Total	10,741	2,313	1,429

***Includes all arrests and warnings**



*Includes all arrests and warnings

2009 Arrests by Incident Type



2009 Warnings by Incident Type

