

# 2006



## ANNUAL REPORT

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
**Department Of Environmental Protection**  
**Division Of State Environmental Conservation Police**



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

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**Commissioner Gina McCarthy  
Department of Environmental Protection**

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**Bureau Chief Thomas Morrissey  
Bureau of Outdoor Recreation**

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**Colonel Eric C. Nelson  
Director  
Division of State Environmental Conservation  
Police**

## DEDICATION



*The 2006 Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of Environmental Conservation Police Officer James V. Spignesi Jr. Officer Spignesi, a 21-year veteran of the DEP, became the first EnCon Police Officer to die in the line of duty when he was shot and killed while on patrol in Scotland, Connecticut on November 20, 1998.*

*Officer Spignesi began his career at the DEP as a seasonal employee in the Wildlife Division before moving into a permanent position as a wildlife biologist in the deer research program in 1981. He became an EnCon Police Officer in 1991 and was assigned to the Division's Marine District before transferring to the Eastern District.*

*Jim's work ethic and dedication to protecting the state's natural resources is a model today for all of our officers to follow.*

## **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 2006 annual report of the Department of Environmental Protection Division of State Environmental Conservation Police (EnCon Police). Within these pages you will find information concerning the responsibilities of the EnCon Police and the accomplishments and activities of the Division over the year 2006.

Every state agency faces challenges that affect the services it provides and it's ability to provide adequate services to those that request or need them. The EnCon Police are no different. Our challenges, however, may be somewhat more varied than other state agencies. Not only do we face challenges from changes in society, technology and funding but also from changes in Connecticut's landscape and natural resources and how often the landscape and natural resources are used and sometimes abused.

The EnCon Police constantly search for ways to improve the services we provide to continue to enhance public and officer safety and the protection of our natural resources. In 2006 the EnCon Police underwent a comprehensive review by the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee. The Department and the EnCon Police welcomed the review in hopes that a review by an outside entity with an objective look at how we do business would reveal ways to improve that we had not recognized. Although the final report on the review has not yet been published, insight gained through the process has helped us to identify and implement some changes we believe will improve the EnCon Police.

One finding of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee recognized that the EnCon Police would benefit from an increase in its staffing level. After conducting a comprehensive review of Division patrol coverage the Committee found that an increase in staffing would allow for enhancements in the delivery of the services provided by the EnCon Police to the public. Although the Committee was unable to ultimately determine an optimum staffing level for the EnCon Police it is important that they recognized the potential benefit of an increase.

I consider it an honor to serve as Director of the DEP Division of State Environmental Conservation Police. I sincerely thank the officers and staff of the Division for their efforts and professionalism and their dedication to duty.

Sincerely;  
Col. Eric C. Nelson



## **CONNECTICUT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION POLICE OFFICERS**

Connecticut 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.



**EnCon Police Winter Patrol**

## **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.

## **BOATING**

EnCon Police Officers are responsible for patrolling all waters within the State, including Fishers 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 new 42' Wesmac commercial fisheries patrol vessel, 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.





**42' Wesmac, PV "Guardian"**

The Division is responsible for oversight of lake authority marine patrol units on Lake Candlewood and Lake Housatonic. These lake patrol units work under the supervision of an EnCon Police Sergeant who coordinates their patrols and training activities. Each lake patrol officer must successfully complete a 60-hour training course that provides comprehensive training in boating laws, boating under the influence enforcement, vessel boarding procedures, officer safety and first aid. In addition to training lake patrol officers the Division provides EnCon Police Officers to serve as instructors for the Boating Safety Division's law enforcement training programs for marine police units.

EnCon Police Officers also investigate boating accidents that occur on Connecticut waters. In 2005 EnCon Police Officers investigated 56 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 boating accident reconstruction.





**Boating Accident Investigation**



**The “Guardian” (L) and SafeBoat (R) at Old Lyme HQ**

## **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 Stonington Town Dock-Fishing Fleet**

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 2006, EnCon Police Officers conducted 2,345 shellfish bed checks in 24 different towns.



**EnCon Officers Hauling Lobster Pots**

## **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 it's 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 2006 there were 1,298 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.

## **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 2006, officers responded to 2,360 incidents and made 979 arrests and issued 375 written warnings in our state parks and forests for crimes against people and property as well as narcotics and alcohol violations.



**State Forest Motorcycle Enduro Speed Compliance**

## **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 2006, EnCon Police Officers responded to 616 incidents related to recreational vehicles and made 273 arrests and issued 47 written warnings for violations.



**EnCon Officers Conduct All Terrain Vehicle Training**



## **SEARCH & RESCUE**

During 2006, EnCon Police Officers responded to 43 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 Training**

## **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.



**Submarine Leaving the Port of New London**

## **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 2006, officers conducted 134 programs, totaling 513 hours that reached approximately 70,000 people.



**Officers Tomassone and Crossman**

## **NEW STAFFING**

The Division hired two new officers (trainees) in 2006. One officer was assigned to the Marine District and has since left state service for a federal law enforcement position and the second officer is assigned to the Eastern District. This new officer will be in the Trainee phase for up to one year after graduating from the police academy at which time she will work daily with an EnCon Police officer. Upon successful completion of the Trainee phase, the officer will be upgraded to the position of Agency Police Officer (APO). As an APO, she will work independently on Department owned properties. After one year, this officer will be elevated to the position of Environmental Conservation Police Officer. The Division expects to hire six more officers in 2007.

## **EQUIPMENT/ UNIFORM ACQUISITIONS**

During 2006, the EnCon Police Division acquired the following equipment and uniforms:

- 2006 Mako 264 center console T-top patrol vessel powered by twin 225 HP outboards
- 26 new liberty light bars, accessory emergency lighting and sirens for Division fleet vehicles
- 2005 42' Wesmac commercial fisheries patrol vessel powered by a 700 HP lugger diesel engine and all allied electronic navigational equipment
- Twenty-one 2008 Ford F250 pickup trucks and three Ford Crown Victoria police interceptors as replacement vehicles for the fleet.
- 7 Kenwood mobile radios and vertec portable repeater radios
- 5 CSP portable high-band radios
- 14 Mustang "hydro vest" Type V personal flotation devices
- 64 pairs of uniform pants and 64 sets of uniform shirts for Special Conservation Officers
- 32 new badges for Special Conservation Officers

## **LEGISLATIVE REVIEW**

In April 2006, the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee voted to undertake a study of the Division of State Environmental Conservation Police. The focus of the study was to evaluate their performance in enforcing fish and game laws, state park and forest rules, boating laws, and applicable criminal laws and in conducting related functions. The report examined the adequacy of the Division's authority, the deployment of officers and sufficiency of overall staffing, the trends in the nature and types of incidents and enforcement actions, the conditions of EnCon Police equipment and facilities and a number of selected management practices. The following web link will describe those findings: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2006/PRIdata/cm/2006CM-01214-R001000PRI-CM.htm>



## **DIVISION STRUCTURE**

The Division of State Environmental Conservation Police is part of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation along with the State Parks Division, Land Acquisition & Management and Boating Safety within the Branch of Environmental Conservation of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Colonel Eric C. Nelson 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. The Western District has an additional Sergeant assigned to supervise Lake Authority marine patrol.



### **Hartford HQ Staff**

**L-R, Sgt Jim Wolfe, Capt. Rick Lewis, Secretary Carla Karle, Col. Eric Nelson  
Sgt Tom Lewoc, Office Assistant Shauna Hamelin**

## **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, twelve Conservation Enforcement Officers and one Agency Police Officer assigned to the Marine District. Captain Kyle Overturf 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.



**Marine District Officers on board the 42' "Guardian"**

In June of 2006, the Connecticut General Assembly appropriated one million dollars to fund a lobster restoration program for Long Island Sound. A Lobster Restoration Advisory Committee, whose members were defined through legislative language, was formed to develop and implement a "V" notch program to protect female lobsters in an effort to rebuild the Long Island Sound lobster stock. The plan, which was approved by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for its conservation value, calls for students from three Connecticut vocational high schools that specialize in aquaculture studies to conduct notching aboard commercial lobster vessels during routine harvest trips. The students will be employed by the City of Bridgeport and paid for their time and the commercial fishermen will be paid for each female lobster "V" notched. Beginning in November, officers from the marine district, in conjunction with the D.E.P.'s Marine Fisheries lobster biologist, began training faculty and students from the Ella T Grasso Technical School in Groton, The Sound School in New Haven and the Bridgeport Regional Vocational Aquaculture School. Utilizing the 42' Guardian and 36' JC, DEP staff hauled commercial pot gear in Long Island Sound with students and faculty on board. During these training sessions, students and faculty were taught the basics of personal safety equipment use and maintenance, vessel and commercial operations safety and the methodology for recording biological observations for lobsters caught, including determining the sex and length as well as proper handling for "V"-notching. Over sixty students and faculty were trained in November and December and the program is expected to begin in January of 2007.



**Students from the Ella T. Grasso Technical School attend a training session aboard the 42' "Guardian"**

On 6/9/2006, five EnCon Officers from the Marine District participated in training on proper use of coldwater immersion suits and life rafts at Old Lyme Headquarters. The newly acquired 42' Guardian and 36' JC are both equipped with life rafts as required by Coast Guard regulations for commercial fishing vessels. A representative from Life Raft and Survival Equipment Inc. trained officers Healy, Kane, Tavares, Chemacki and Samorajczyk on the proper use and deployment of coldwater immersion suits and life rafts.



**Officers training in cold weather work suits in the Connecticut River**

## **MARINE DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS**

In August of 2006, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requested assistance from Connecticut's EnCon Police in a case involving a Rhode Island commercial fisherman. The commercial fisherman's federal permit was under sanction and the NMFS had information that the subject was fishing lobster gear in federal waters southeast of Block Island. Utilizing the "Guardian", Connecticut's 42-foot Wesmac patrol vessel, officers from Connecticut along with NMFS agents and Environmental Police Officers from Rhode Island conducted two off shore patrols southeast of Block Island. Two hundred and forty lobster pots that were being illegally fished were seized and brought to the Connecticut D.E.P.'s Old Lyme Headquarters. The case is currently under investigation by NMFS.



**Officer Tavares Inspecting a lobster Pot**

On 6/2/2006, EnCon Police Officer responded to a report of a plane crash in Baker's Cove in Groton in the vicinity of Groton/New London airport. A Lear Jet crashed in the water with five persons on board. Officer Mieldzioc and Yacovou were the first EnCon officers to arrive on scene on board a 25' patrol vessel. They assisted securing the scene and transporting emergency personnel from shore to the crash site. The 27' Safeboat also responded from Old Lyme Headquarters with a crew of three on board and assisted with scene security once it arrived. The Division's 25' Sea Arc was used by the State Police Dive team as a dive platform during the operation. Three passengers on board the jet were rescued but the pilot and co-pilot died in the crash. Officer Mieldzioc and Officer Rose returned the next day on the 25' Sea Arc and assisted the State Police Major Crime Squad. They also escorted the barge carrying the plane wreckage to the State Pier in New London where it was secured.



On 10/12/2006, Officer Bruce Gagliardi arrested two subjects on numerous charges relating to the possession and sale of striped bass and bluefish. Assisted by Sgt. Healy and Officer Kane, Officer Gagliardi arrested the two subjects at the Pine Island Marina in Groton as they returned from fishing. The subjects were in possession of twenty-six striped bass, which is twenty-two over the daily limit, eleven of which were less than the legal length. They were also in possession of twenty-three bluefish, three over the daily legal limit. The officers seized a total of forty-nine fish. During questioning, the subjects admitted that they were planning to sell the fish. The subjects did not have commercial licenses necessary to sell bluefish and the sale of striped bass caught from Connecticut waters is illegal. The subjects were released on a promise to appear at New London Superior Court on November 6, 2006. After being photographed, the fish were given to an area food kitchen.

On 11/18/2006, Sgt. Healy and Officer Kane were patrolling for deer hunting activity in the town of Waterford. Officer Kane found a vehicle parked near an abandoned house and began checking the woods in the area. He heard two rifle shots and went to the area where he saw two males dressed in camouflage clothing carrying rifles. Officer Kane approached the subjects and asked them what they were doing. They replied that they were target shooting. Officer Kane saw a dead deer a short distance from their location and one of the subjects admitted to shooting it. The subject that admitted to shooting the deer had no permits or hunting license. The other subject had a hunting license but no deer tags or written consent to deer hunt the property. Sgt. Healy and Officer Kane brought the subjects back to their patrol vehicle and ran a records check on the subjects. The officers determined that the subject who shot the deer was a convicted felon. He was taken into custody and transported by Officer Kane to Troop E for processing. The second subject was issued a summons for the violations at the scene and released. The deer and both rifles were seized as evidence.

## **Marine District's 2006 Officer of the Year Nomination**

The Marine District's nominee for Officer of the Year for 2006 is Conservation Officer Jeff Samorajczyk. Officer Samorajczyk is a seven-year veteran of the Division and has spent his entire career in the Marine District. He is very active in the realm of marine fisheries, shellfish and boating enforcement. He is also very knowledgeable in the areas of waterfowl and deer hunting enforcement. In January of 2006, Officer Samorajczyk transferred to the Central Marine Sector. He quickly became familiar with the area and made arrests for undersized striped bass in Old Saybrook, an arrest for lobster violations in Branford and numerous arrests in Guilford for undersize and over the limit of blackfish. He also made an arrest in Bridgeport in which the subject was on a bicycle and

had the bass hidden in a backpack. The subject had three prior convictions for possession of undersize striped bass. Officer Samorajczyk actively patrolled Hammonasset Beach State Park during the summer. As part of this patrol area, he was always willing to work any shift assigned to him. He was responsible for the arrest of a subject in the park for driving under the influence, reckless driving and public indecency. He participated in a vessel safety training exercise in which he had to put on a survival suit and jump off the 42' Wesmac into the Connecticut River. He is a member of the Division's Chemical Immobilization Team and received a letter of thanks and commendation from a citizen that he assisted with a wildlife problem this year. Officer Samorajczyk is recognized for his positive attitude, attention to duty and willingness to handle any task assigned to him without complaint.

## **EASTERN DISTRICT**

The Eastern District includes the 60 towns in the eastern half of the State north of the Marine District. There are two Sergeants and twelve Environmental Conservation Police Officers assigned to the District. Captain John Smutnick is the District Commanding Officer.

The officers assigned to the Eastern District handled 3703 incidents in 2006 (a 20% increase over 2005), which resulted in 1227 arrests and 567 warnings (a 25% increase over 2005).

Several high profile law enforcement initiatives were continued in 2006, which included the following high profile patrols and their results: Pachaug State Forest and it's campgrounds which resulted in 74 arrests and 67 written warnings, Miller' Pond State Park which resulted in 46 arrests and 22 written warnings, striper fishing enforcement on the Thames River in Norwich which resulted in 22 arrests and 18 written warnings, boating/fishing enforcement at Pachaug Pond, Beach Pond, Billings Lake and Amos Lake which resulted in 72 arrests and 71 written warnings and Coventry Lake boating enforcement which resulted in 19 arrests and 17 written warnings.

Major enforcement categories in 2006 included 39 Drug related incidents which resulted in 36 arrests; 79 Alcohol related incidents which resulted in 64 arrests and 12 written warnings; 322 Boating incidents which resulted in 142 arrests and 111 written warnings; 376 Deer Hunting incidents which resulted in 40 arrests and 41 written warnings; 472 Inland Fishing incidents which resulted in 231 arrests and 128 written warnings; 583 Park and Forest incidents which resulted in 236 arrests and 160 written warnings; and 366 Recreational Vehicle incidents which resulted in 175 arrests and 13 written warnings.



**Eastern District Officers**

## **EASTERN DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS**

On 1/15/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Bill Myers served an arrest warrant on a 21-year old male charging him with *Delivering Alcoholic Beverages to Minors, Illegally on Premises, Illegal Possession of Keg Beer, and Littering*. The arrest warrant was a result of an investigation conducted by EnCon Police Officer Laura Gregonis. On 9/24/05, Officer Gregonis received an anonymous tip that there had been a keg party at Shenipsit State Forest in Stafford on the previous evening. She went to the scene and found that the locked gate had been opened and she observed a partial keg of beer, numerous open and unopened containers of beer and liquor, empty plastic cups, litter, a  $\frac{3}{4}$  full prescription drug bottle, a handheld scale commonly used to weigh narcotics, a pocketbook containing a marijuana pipe and a cell phone. Officer Gregonis was able to interview four of the people who attended the keg party and with their statements was able to obtain the arrest warrant for the supplier of the keg of beer.

On 2/17/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Joe Ruggiero served two arrest warrants charging one person with one incident of *Burlary 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree and Larceny 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree* and a second incident of *Burlary 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree and Larceny 4<sup>th</sup> Degree*. The investigation began in September 2005 when Officer Ruggiero investigated the burglary of two buildings at Cockaponset State Forest in Haddam. In one incident, a maintenance building was burglarized and four chain saws were stolen, and in the other incident a storage building was burglarized and a number of power tools were stolen. Officer Ruggiero worked with the State and local police and was able to develop a suspect in this and a number of other burglaries. The 25-year old male confessed to stealing the items and selling them to support a drug habit.

On 2/26/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Eric Johnson was on patrol at Mansfield Hollow State Park where he observed a vehicle parked at the boat launch area



with two male occupants. As Officer Johnson walked up to the vehicle he observed one of the men attempt to hide a drug pipe under his leg. A subsequent search revealed eleven bags of heroin, a quantity of marijuana along with the drug paraphernalia. The 54 year-old male was arrested and charged with *Possession of Heroin, Possession of Marijuana and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia*.

On 3/24/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officers Joe Ruggiero and LukeYacovou were on patrol in Durham when they responded to Beseck Lake in Middlefield to assist a State Police Trooper investigating a stolen vehicle with two occupants. The officers arrived on scene and learned that the two occupants had abandoned the suspect vehicle. The suspects were believed to be hiding among the nearby lakeside homes. The EnCon officers began searching in the area of the State Boat Launch and immediately spotted one of the suspects who quickly disappeared from sight. The EnCon officers located both suspects nearby and one of them reached into a pants pocket. Both suspects were handcuffed and a spoon used to cook crack cocaine was recovered from one of the suspect's pants pocket. A Trooper and Middlefield Police Officer responded to the scene and took custody of the two subjects. The two suspects were transported to Troop F and charged with several crimes including Larceny of a Motor Vehicle. One of the men was already on probation and the other was scheduled to begin a seven- year prison sentence in two weeks.

On 5/10/06, EnCon Police Officer Eric Johnson received a complaint from a citizen who was driving on Moose Meadow Road in Willington and stated that as he crested a hill on the road he observed a vehicle parked in the road and the driver wearing ear plugs and holding a shotgun pointing out of the driver's window. The driver then shot across the southbound travel lane at a turkey. The complainant had to stop his vehicle to keep from driving into the line of fire. Officer Johnson and EnCon Sgt. Mike Enright went to the residence of the suspected shooter and he admitted to committing the offenses. His shotgun was seized as evidence and he was arrested for *Reckless Endangerment 2<sup>nd</sup> degree, Unlawful Discharge of a Firearm, Hunting from a Highway, Possession of a Loaded Weapon in a Motor Vehicle, and Hunting with 500 ft. of a Building*.

On 7/4/06, Environmental Conservation Police Captain Kyle Overturf, Sgt. Tom Bull, Officers Ed Yescott, Jeff Samorajczyk, and Ralph Concepcion responded to a boating accident on the Connecticut River in Glastonbury. A 16 year-old youth had been wake boarding behind a personal watercraft (PWC). When he finished wake boarding, he was sitting on the back of the PWC facing backwards, winding up the towrope around his hand. The watercraft then accelerated quickly which caused the youth to fall off the back. The force on the rope on his hand resulted in four fingers being pulled off. His four fingers were found entangled in the tow- rope. He was taken to Yale New Haven Hospital for treatment.



**Night Patrol on the Connecticut River**

On 7/16/06, Environmental Conservation Police Captains John Smutnick and Kyle Overturf and Officers Joe Ruggiero and Bill Myers responded to Millers Pond State Park in Durham for a report of a drowning. A 15 year- old teen had been swimming with five friends when he slipped below the surface. The friends were unable to locate him and called 911. The Middletown South District Dive Team located the victim and he was transported to Middlesex Hospital in Middletown where he was pronounced dead.

On 7/22/06 at 1:00 a.m., Environmental Conservation Police Officer Chris Dwyer observed an ATV being operated on Rte. 66 and nearby roads and businesses in Hebron center. The operator stalled the ATV at the intersection of Rte. 66 and 85. Officer Dwyer pulled in front of the ATV and got out of his vehicle. The ATV operator started the ATV and drove in to Officer Dwyer, pinning him against his vehicle. Officer Dwyer was able to free himself and get back in his vehicle. He followed the ATV as it fled without lights to a nearby trail where it struck a fallen tree in the trail. The ATV was disabled and the operator fled on foot. Captain John Smutnick and Officer Hans Danielson and several State Police Troopers with a canine responded to the scene. The canine was unable to locate the subject, but a Trooper recognized the ATV and had noted the name of the owner. The officers located the owner at a nearby residence and were able to determine the name and address of the operator of the ATV. The officers went to the residence in Colchester and arrested the 22-year old operator. He was charged with *Assault on a Police Officer, Interfering with Police, Failure to Stop, Operating an Unregistered ATV, Unreasonable Speed, and Defective Equipment*. He was held on a \$25,000 bond and has a Court Appearance on August 2nd at Superior Court in Rockville. Officer Dwyer received injuries to his back and legs and will be out of work for at least one week.

On 8/12/06 at 10:00 p.m., Environmental Conservation Police Officer Eric Johnson and Ed Pyznar were on patrol at Mansfield Hollow State Park where they observed three people in a vehicle parked in the picnic area after closing. A 24 year-old male, an 18 year-old female and a juvenile male were in the vehicle. Officer Johnson could smell burning marijuana and he recovered a marijuana cigarette from the juvenile. He also observed open containers of beer next to the juvenile and female. A backpack next to the juvenile contained two plastic straws with narcotic residue and nine plastic baggies with white powdery residue. A plastic case containing 2 grams of cocaine was recovered from the 24 year-old. The female was charged with *Possession of Alcohol by a Minor and Simple Trespass*, the juvenile was charged with *Possession of Less Than 4 oz. of Marijuana and Simple Trespass* and the adult male was charged with *Possession of Cocaine, Providing Alcoholic Beverages to a Minor and Simple Trespass*.

On the evening of 10/21/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officers Chris Dwyer and Dean Wojcik accompanied by Seasonal Police Officers John Graves and Dave Blanchette were on patrol at Pachaug State Forest in Voluntown where they observed several all terrain vehicles being operated on Great Meadows Dam in the Forest. Two of the ATVs were stopped after fleeing a short distance and two were stopped after they fled the first officers. Two of the operators were charged with *Operating under the Influence, Operating an Unregistered permission ATV, Failure to stop, and Operating an ATV with the written of the landowner*. The other two ATV operators were charged with *Failure to Stop, Littering, Illegal Fire, and Operating an ATV on State Property*. These operators were part of a larger group that had built a large campfire and had consumed a large amount of alcohol at an Adirondack shelter in the State Forest.

On Sunday, 11/5/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Jason Williams and Sgt. Mike Enright responded to an illegal hunting complaint in Thompson. The landowner had heard several shots and found fresh blood and an All Terrain Vehicle track. Officer Williams followed the track to a residence where he observed the ATV with deer hair and blood and observed a deer in a nearby garage. The homeowner arrived at the residence a short time later with his 18 year-old son. They admitted to the illegal activity and surrendered the deer that they had shot on that Sunday and the untagged deer that they had shot the day before, along with their rifles. They were charged with *Illegal deer hunting, Hunting on Sunday, Illegal Possession of Deer, Hunting without Consent, Failure to Wear Fluorescent Orange and Criminal Trespass 3<sup>rd</sup>*.

On 11/14/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Ed Yescott and Captain John Smutnick received a complaint that a hunter had found a baited tree stand in Meshomasic State Forest in Glastonbury. The officers found the area and located the tree stand and observed several piles of apples and corn. They returned to the area on the next day at 9:15 a.m. and observed a hunter in the tree stand and a dead buck deer nearby. He was charged with *Hunting Deer over Bait and Failure to Tag the Deer*. His two brothers were located nearby. They were also hunting over separate bait piles. They were both charged with *Hunting Deer over Bait*. The guns and deer were seized.

On 12/4/06 at 4:30 p.m., Environmental Conservation Police Capt. John Smutnick and Officers Chris Dwyer and Hans Danielson responded to a complaint of illegal deer hunting in Windham. A resident told the officers that an illegal hunter, dressed in camouflage clothing, had been dropped off by a vehicle and was now on nearby property. The officers entered the property to search for the suspect. Officer Dwyer found the suspect and ordered him to put down his shotgun. The subject ran from the officer and was tackled and arrested after a brief struggle. The 36 year old male was charged with numerous offenses *including Interfering with an Officer, Criminal Trespass 3<sup>rd</sup>, Carrying a Firearm while under the Influence, Possession of a Firearm by a Felon and Illegal Deer Hunting.*

### Eastern District's 2006 Officer of the Year Nomination

Environmental Conservation Police Officer Joe Ruggiero is a 12-year veteran of the Law Enforcement Division. He demonstrates his interest in his position by consistently generating a high volume and variety of incidents. In the last year Officer Ruggiero handled 271 incidents, including 100 arrests and 33 warnings. Some highlights of the past year include:

The investigation of graffiti on the Messerschmitt Pond Dam resulted in the arrest of the vandal.

While checking water company property for illegal hunting activity he tracked an ATV arrested two illegal hunters with an extensive history of hunting violations.

He checked a vehicle parked in a public road shining its headlights in to a field. He found a loaded rifle in the vehicle and arrested the operator.

While checking water company property for illegal hunting he encountered a hunter covered in leaves in an attempt to hide from the officers. He was charged with multiple hunting violations.

While checking deer hunting activity Officer Ruggiero overheard two hunters on his FM radio and was able to locate an archery hunter in a tree stand with weapon ready after sunset.

While checking a wildlife management area after sunset he encountered a man and woman in a parked vehicle. His investigation revealed that there was a Protective Order against the man being in the woman's presence resulting in his arrest.

Investigated the burglary of two department buildings. His investigation resulted in the arrest of a man for two counts each of Burglary 3<sup>rd</sup> and Larceny 3<sup>rd</sup> and the recovery of chain saws and power tools.

Officer Ruggiero and Officer Ramos responded to Beseck Lake Boat Launch to assist the State Police with a stolen vehicle with two occupants. The DEP officers found one of the suspects nearby and arrested him at gunpoint and recovered narcotics and drug paraphernalia.

Investigated the drowning of a 15 year-old boy at Miller's Pond State Park.  
Investigated a boating accident on the Connecticut River in Middletown that resulted in the death of one person as a large vessel sank.

Investigate the drowning of a young victim at Uncas Pond.

Investigated the drowning of a 19 year old man at Miller's Pond State Park.

The highlights listed above illustrate the variety of enforcement events that Officer Ruggiero routinely handles on a yearly basis. He willingly accepts all assignments and has demonstrated his leadership abilities as a Field Training Officer, where he is able to instruct new officers in an effective manner.

## **WESTERN DISTRICT**

The Western District is comprised of 82 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. Captain Raul Camejo is the District commanding officer. 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, now consists of 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 Portland and the Housatonic River from Massachusetts to Shelton.

The Lake Patrol Sergeant is assigned to the Western District and is responsible for supervision of the Candlewood Lake Marine Patrol and the Lake Housatonic Marine Patrol. The officers employed by the two marine patrols have limited authority and are only able to enforce boating infractions and violations. EnCon Police officers are responsible for all serious boating violations and any criminal violations that occur on the

water. During 2006 EnCon Police officers dedicated 1025 hours of patrol time to Candlewood Lake. 960 of the hours were for boating enforcement patrols. EnCon Police Officers responded to 328 incidents, made 162 arrests and issued 64 written warnings on Candlewood Lake for the year, 253 of the incidents, 129 of the arrests and 56 of the written warnings were related for boating violations. Candlewood Lake Marine Patrol officers provided assistance to the EnCon Police by providing 996 hours of boating safety patrols on Candlewood Lake. Candlewood Lake officers issued 48 infractions and 43 written warnings for boating safety violations.

During 2006 Western District EnCon Police officers performed public outreach and education activities at a number of venues. These included the Goshen Fair, various sporting groups, Vo-Ag high schools, scout groups and other youth groups. EnCon Police Officers participated in Commissioner McCarthy's "No Child Left Inside" initiative by assisting at various events with the Public Outreach and Education trailer. EnCon Police Officers also conducted in-service training for members of the Connecticut State Police, Wallingford Police and the Western Regional Police training program relating to fish and game laws.

With the continued growth of complaints regarding all terrain vehicles, EnCon Police purchased additional all terrain vehicles for patrol use. All officers completed a department training program for ATV operation. Western District officers responded to 201 ATV complaints, made 72 arrests and issued 24 written warnings during 2006. EnCon Police officers also conduct snowmobile enforcement and public safety patrols in state forests. In 2006 officers responded to 6 complaints regarding snowmobiles, made 1 arrest and issued 3 written warnings.



**Western District Officers**

## WESTERN DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

On 1/26/06 Environmental Conservation Police Officer Ed Yescott received information that a subject in Suffield was in possession of three rattlesnakes that he was trying to give away. Officer Yescott accompanied the informant and a reptile expert to the home of the subject on 1/28/06. The subject allowed Officer Yescott, who was in plain clothes, the informant and the reptile expert into his home. The subject turned over the three rattlesnakes to the reptile expert, who identified the snakes as Urocoan rattlesnakes, native to South and Central America. The informant and the reptile expert left the residence and Officer Yescott stayed behind to speak to the subject. Once the informant and reptile expert had left, Officer Yescott identified himself to the subject as an EnCon Police Officer and contacted Officer Tim Hill who was in uniform a short distance away. Officer Yescott determined from the subject that at one time he had over 100 snakes, many of which were venomous, and all but the three rattlesnakes had died from disease. Officer Yescott arrested the subject for *Illegal Possession of a Reptile*. The three rattlesnakes were turned over to the reptile expert who has worked with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, Massachusetts Environmental Police and Connecticut EnCon Police in the past securing dangerous and prohibited reptiles. The reptile expert will retain the rattlesnakes pending disposition of the arrest. Upon adjudication of the arrest, it is anticipated that the snakes will be used for educational purposes such as training environmental police officers in snake identification.

On 2/25/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officers Keith Schneider and Erin Crossman were patrolling the Housatonic Wildlife Management area in Kent when they observed several individuals hunting. One of the individuals was not wearing fluorescent orange clothing. As Officers Schneider and Crossman approached the group, they noted that the two of the individuals that had been seen earlier were no longer with the other hunters. One of the hunters checked did not have a license. When questioned by the officers as to the location of the other two hunters, the individual was evasive and gave false information to the officers. Approximately 5 minutes later, the individual that the officers had seen without orange came out of the woods carrying a stick. When questioned by the officers the individual stated he was not hunting. Upon further questioning it was determined that the individual had hidden his shotgun in the woods before coming out. The officers then determined that another individual hunting with the group was also hiding in the woods. This individual, who was also not wearing orange, was eventually located. The hunter who was legal was allowed to continue on his way. The other three hunters were arrested for *Negligent Hunting 4th Degree and Interfering with an Officer* and released on \$500 bonds. It was later determined that one of the individuals arrested has an extensive criminal history including a felony conviction. As a result, the charge of *Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon* was added to the list of charges for the individual by the State's Attorney's Office at GA18 in Bantam.



On 3/11/06, Western District Environmental Conservation Police Officers executed a search warrant at a private residence in the Town of Danbury. The search warrant was based on a trapping investigation into illegal trapping in the Town of Sharon that began in December 2005. During the course of the search, evidence of possible State trapping violations, State and Federal firearms violations and Federal Wildlife violations were located. The investigation is continuing with enforcement action on both the State and Federal level expected. On 9/22/06 Environmental Conservation Police Officer Erin Crossman arrested the subject from Danbury for *Criminal Trespass 3rd degree, Trapping without a license, Trapping on private land without landowners permission, Trapping without displaying the owner's name on traps (5 counts) and Traps illegally set above water level (2 counts), Possession of a sawed off shotgun, Possession of a bird of prey and Possession of an untagged mink pelt*. The arrest was the result of a lengthy investigation that began with a trapping complaint in the town of Salisbury in December 2005. When a search warrant was executed at subject's home a sawed off shotgun, bird of prey parts and untagged mink pelt were discovered. The subject was released on a written promise to appear in court at GA18 in Bantam on 10/2/06 for the trapping charges and a \$500 non surety bond was posted for the charges related to the possession of the shotgun, bird of prey and untagged mink with a court appearance at GA3 in Danbury on 10/3/06.

The Cops On Top program is an effort by law enforcement officers across the country to climb the highest peaks in each of their states on the same day to honor officers who have died in the line of duty. On 5/20/06, EnCon Police Sergeant Mark Shaw and Officers Paul Hilli, Keith Schneider and Ed Pyznar, along with a Connecticut State Trooper from Troop B in Canaan, climbed Mount Frissell in Salisbury, the highest point in Connecticut. The peak of Mount Frissell is actually just over the state line in Massachusetts, but the southern slope of the mountain has the highest point in Connecticut, which is 50 feet higher than Bear Mountain. <http://www.copsontop.org/>



During the evening of 5/22/06, while off duty at his home, Officer Tim Hill observed a vehicle enter Algonquin State Forest after sunset. Officer Hill put on his uniform and went into the forest on foot and observed what appeared to be two males in the vehicle with interior vehicle dome light on. As Officer Hill approached on foot, the vehicle started up and started exiting the forest. Officer Hill, motioned the driver to stop with his flashlight. The vehicle slowed down and Officer Hill could see that the passenger side window was down, yelled "Police, stop and turn off vehicle". When the driver saw Officer Hill he accelerated the vehicle and drove at a high rate of speed to try and exit the State Forest. Officer Hill notified the State Police of the vehicle marker plate and description. A few minutes later Officer Hill observed the vehicle abandoned in another section of the forest. Officer Hill waited for a State Police K-9 officer and requested the assistance of another EnCon Officer. Several minutes later the State Police K-9 officer and Officer Hill located two occupants of the vehicle hiding in the forest. It was determined that the driver was a convicted felon and had two outstanding arrest warrants from Middletown and Portland Police Departments. The driver stated that he was a heroin addict and needles were found inside the vehicle. According to personnel from State Police Troop B, the driver was a suspect in burglaries in the towns of Norfolk and Colebrook. It was determined that the passenger had two outstanding arrest warrants with Troop B. Upon questioning by the State Police the passenger confessed to at least one burglary, which occurred in Norfolk and was a suspect in many more burglaries in the towns of Norfolk and Colebrook. Both subjects stated that they have been camping on and off in the State Forest. Officer Hill arrested both subjects for DEP related charges prior to turning them over to the State Police and Judicial Marshals on the arrest warrants.

On 6/16/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officer Erin Crossman responded to Black Rock State Park in Watertown regarding a complaint of two young toddlers wandering unsupervised in the park. Officer Crossman determined that two 17 month-old children (twin brother and sister) were walking in the park access road and playing in a vehicle unsupervised by any adults. Officer Crossman's investigation determined that the children's parents were living out of their vehicle and a tent at Black Rock State Park. The parents were located sleeping in a tent. Information was gathered from witnesses that the children had been left alone overnight with the father, who appeared intoxicated, while the mother went to work. The father had also been witnessed striking the female child. The children were examined and it was found that they had numerous insect bites, small cuts and bruises and had not been bathed or had their diapers changed in a timely manner resulting in what appeared to be various skin rashes. The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) was contacted and social workers were dispatched to the park. The social workers from DCF took custody of the children and turned them over to their maternal grandmother who had custody of the couples other children. Both parents were arrested for *Risk of Injury to a minor* and scheduled for a court appearance at GA#4 in Waterbury on 6/19/06.

On 6/22/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officers Laura Gregonis and Matt Tomassone received a report of an alligator being kept in an apartment in Danbury. The officers determined that the subject involved had a 4 ½ to 5 foot long American Alligator in a closet in his apartment. The subject had been evicted from the apartment the previous day and had not fed or provided water for the alligator for at least a week. There were also 36 other live snakes consisting of various members of the boa and python species, an anaconda and a number of other non-venomous snakes, turtles, frogs, salamanders and lizards being kept in the apartment. There were two dead lizards found and the subject left the remaining reptiles in extremely dirty and unhealthy conditions. All of the animals were confined in boxes or fish tanks and were lying in their own feces with no food or water. The alligator was seized as contraband as it is illegal to possess an alligator in Connecticut without a permit. All of the other reptiles and amphibians that were still alive were seized for health and safety reasons. The reptiles and amphibians were turned over to a professional rehabilitator in Massachusetts to assess their health and for safekeeping. The case is being reviewed at the State's Attorney's office to determine if the subject who owned the animals will be charged for numerous counts of *cruelty to animals* in addition to the charge of *illegal possession of an alligator*.

On 8/18/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officer John Hey was on routine patrol in Oxford where he pulled up to a one-car accident on Georges Hill Rd. The vehicle had gone off the road and struck a tree. The operator of the vehicle was severely injured and trapped in the vehicle. As Officer Hey approached the vehicle he determined that the vehicle was on fire and the operator could not be extracted. Officer Hey put out the fire before it reached the operator and assisted the operator until the arrival of the fire department and EMS personnel.

On 8/20/06, Environmental Conservation Police Captain Raul Camejo and Officers Matt Tomassone, Paul Hilli and Keith Schneider served an arrest warrant on a Morris resident for *two counts of Risk of Injury to a minor, three counts of Reckless Endangerment 2nd degree, three counts of Reckless Boating 2nd degree* and as a result of his actions at the time of his arrest, *Interfering with a police officer*. The arrest warrant was issued after an investigation into an incident that occurred on Bantam Lake on 8/4/06 when a complaint was received of a boat on Bantam Lake interfering with a floatplane that was attempting to take off from the lake. The floatplane, owned and piloted by a Winsted resident, had landed on Bantam Lake to pick up two campers at Camp Hope. The pilot had been donating airplane rides to inner-city youth from Camp Hope on Tuesday's and Friday's to the two top campers of the week at the camp for a number of years. The pilot picked up two young female campers, age 12 and 13 and taxied back onto the lake to take off. As the floatplane began its takeoff run a boat pulled in front of the plane and stopped, causing the pilot to abort the takeoff. The pilot taxied back to his starting position and again began his takeoff run. The same boat again cut in front of the floatplane and stopped causing the pilot to abort the second takeoff. Fearing for the safety of the two campers, the pilot returned to the dock at Camp Hope and dropped the campers off. The pilot then returned to the lake and attempted to take off a third time. The boat again

attempted to cut off the floatplane, but the pilot was able to get airborne. Witnesses observed that the boat turned under the floatplane as it began to lift off the surface of the lake and came close to striking the floats. The operator of the boat, who admitted to EnCon Officers that he pulled the boat into the flight path of the float plane and stopped in an effort to prevent the plane from taking off. The subject claimed that it was illegal for floatplanes to land or take off on Bantam Lake. There is no prohibition against floatplanes on Bantam Lake. At the time of his arrest the subject resisted arrest and had to be physically subdued by the arresting officers resulting in the additional charge of *Interfering with an officer*. He was held on \$35,000.00 bond and scheduled for arraignment in GA18 in Bantam on Monday 8/21/06.

On 11/16/06, Environmental Conservation Police Officers Keith Schneider and Paul Hilli responded to a report of a hunter in full camouflage with a rifle entering the woods on private property off of Scofield Hill Rd. in the Town of Washington. Officers Schneider and Hilli checked the area and discovered a hunter with a rifle exiting the woods. The hunter was not wearing fluorescent orange clothing and did not have a valid consent form for the property he was hunting and was not carrying his deer tags. When a record check was conducted it was determined that the hunter was a convicted felon. The rifle that the hunter was carrying was seized as evidence. Convicted felons are prohibited from possessing a firearm. The hunter was taken into custody and charged with *Failure to Wear Fluorescent Orange, Hunting Deer without Consent of the Landowner, Hunting Deer without Carrying a Deer Permit and Criminal Possession of a Firearm*. The hunter was released on bond.

On 11/27/06, Environmental Conservation Police Sgt James Warren and Officer Tate Begley were conducting surveillance on a location in New Milford. Officer Begley had developed information that a group of poachers were killing large numbers of deer and selling the meat. On 11/27/06, Sgt Warren and Officer Begley observed suspects enter the driveway at the location with what appeared to be an untagged deer in the back of a pickup truck. Sgt Warren and Officer Begley stopped the suspect in the driveway and verified that the deer in the back of the truck had not been tagged. Sgt Warren and Officer Begley also observed what appeared to be blood flowing out from under a barn door adjacent to the truck. Officers Paul Hilli, Keith Schneider, Stan Kucia, Pete McGinn and Laura Gregonis also responded to the location. Based on evidence gathered the officers obtained search warrants for the barn and for one of the other vehicles in the driveway. Upon executing the search warrants the officers seized three rifles from a vehicle, 5 deer carcasses and numerous deer parts, photos, knives and other meat processing equipment from the barn. Three subjects were arrested for a variety of hunting violations. Additional charges are pending for criminal violations uncovered during the search.



On Saturday 12/2/06 Environmental Conservation Police officers responded to a complaint of illegal deer hunters on RT 118 in Harwinton. EnCon Police officers found a camp set up on private property and eventually located five hunters. None of the hunters had written permission to deer hunt on the property. In addition to the lack of permission, officers determined that one hunter who did not have deer permits also had a loaded rifle in a motor vehicle. Another officer located a second individual who also had a loaded rifle in a motor vehicle. A third hunter was hunting without fluorescent orange clothing. While officers were interviewing the illegal hunters a fourth person came out of the woods. This individual denied that he was hunting and stated that he did not have a weapon. EnCon Police officers requested the assistance of a police dog to search for a weapon and the Torrington Police responded with their patrol dog "Brodie". After a search of the area "Brodie" located a loaded rifle hidden under a log approximately 50 yards from the camp. It was determined that the rifle belonged to fourth individual. EnCon Police officers arrested the five individuals on the following charges: *Loaded Weapon in a Motor Vehicle (2 individuals), Illegal Deer Hunting (2 individuals), Negligent Hunting 4th Degree and Failure to Wear Orange (2 individuals) and Interfering with an Officer (1 individual)*

### **West District's 2006 Officer of the Year Nomination**

Environmental Conservation Police Officer Tim Hill has been an officer for over 12 years and currently patrols in the Northwest Sector in Hartford and Litchfield Counties. He is respected by the public and fellow colleagues for his dedication, enthusiasm, professionalism and willingness to cooperate. As a former National Park Service Ranger Officer Hill has excelled in recreational law enforcement and started his career in

Connecticut in the now defunct Parks Enforcement Unit serving diligently at Black Rock State Park for several years. The staff as well as the public especially noticed his efforts in the campground, as he maintained the “family atmosphere”. He still performs this function today at the Austin Hawes Campground in American Legion State Forest.

As an ATV instructor, Officer Hill has been involved in intensive training sessions with our own officers as well as officers from other agencies. He has taken great efforts to apprehend violators on private and state lands and his ATV patrols are often a cooperative effort with the MDC Police whose properties are intermingled with Connecticut State Parks and Forests in his patrol area. Officer Hill is also a certified mountain bike officer, another skill he employs in his recreational enforcement duties.

Officer Hill’s experience is far more than just recreational enforcement pursuits. As a well-rounded officer he is comfortable enforcing Connecticut’s fishing, hunting and boating laws. He can be regularly seen on the Connecticut River and other waterways patrolling in a conventional vessel as well as a PWC, as he is a member of the Personal Water Craft Unit. Also, while on the Connecticut and Farmington Rivers Officer Hill has been diligently performing cooperative patrols with officers from both Eastern and Western Districts, especially the anadromous species of herring, shad and striped bass.

In addition to his patrol duties Officer Hill regularly gives presentations to requesting organizations including youth groups, scouts, fish and game clubs and hunter education classes.

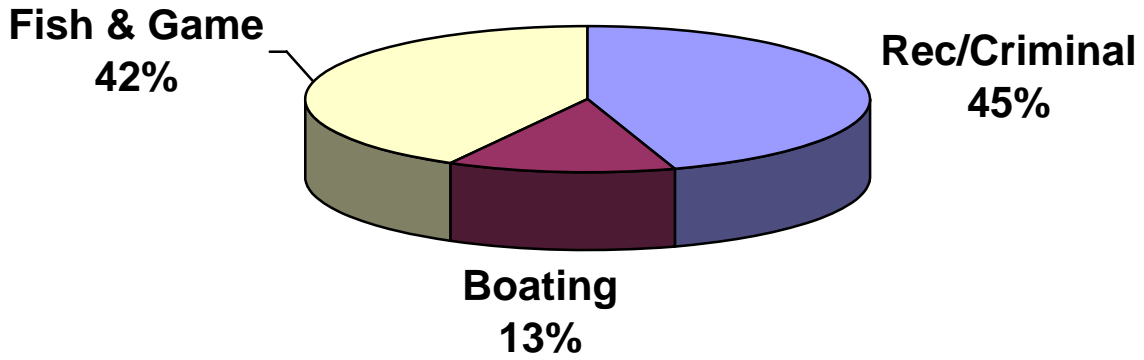
Several incidents in the past year reflect Officer Hill’s dedication to duty. In February, while working closely with Agency Police Officer Crossman and State Park personnel, Officer Hill was able to apprehend an individual that was stealing gasoline from the Peoples State Forest Unit, securing reimbursement for the department. In May, Officer Hill, while off duty, observed a vehicle enter Algonquin State Forest in Colebrook after hours. After confronting the occupants of the vehicle, they fled at a high rate of speed and abandoned the vehicle in another part of the forest, only to be apprehended by Officer Hill and a responding trooper with a K-9. Both individuals were wanted on multiple warrants involving criminal activity related to heroin use. In September, another incident involving a suicide at Talcott Mountain State Park in Simsbury was handled with excellent cooperation, discretion and compassion in a very difficult situation involving multiple agencies.

## 2006 SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY

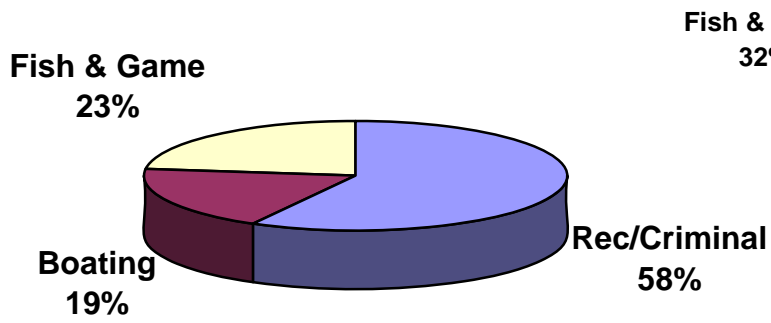
<b>Incident Type</b>	<b>Number of Incidents</b>	<b>Number of Arrests</b>	<b>Number of Warnings</b>
Hunting & Trapping	1,125	102	97
Fishing	1,511	634	437
Boating	1,447	625	385
Motor Vehicle	1178	639	290
Park & Forest	1,717	632	321
Recreational Vehicles	616	273	47
Alcohol & Narcotics	299	242	35
Crimes against persons	160	32	4
Crimes against property	184	73	15
Safety & Medical	894	4	1
Search & Rescue, Missing persons	43	3	
Nuisance Bear	1,298		
Sick, Injured & Nuisance Wildlife	963	2	3
Background Investigations	85		
Other	29	2	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,549</b>	<b>3,263</b>	<b>1,635</b>



# 2006 Incidents



## 2006 Arrests



## 2006 Warnings

