

Central Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council



2017 Annual Report

Chairman – Lt. Mike Smith, SC Sheriff's Department

Vice Chair – Asst. Director Arthur Pendzick, SC Park Rangers

Vice Chair - Lt. Tom Gadomski, NYSDEC Law Enforcement

Central Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council

Introduction

The Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council (LEC) was created in 1994 when members from several law enforcement agencies met to discuss the multitude of enforcement issues unique to the protection and preservation of the Central Pine Barrens. Realizing that the protection of this vital natural resource from unlawful activity fell under laws and regulations from numerous jurisdictions, including federal, state, county and town agencies, it was obvious that coordination was needed for the officers to be the most effective in pursuing the mission of the Central Pine Barrens Commission and the LEC. Protecting the natural resources and public safety within the Central Pine Barrens was going to take a concerted effort. To this end, the LEC was created, growing to 26 member agencies which include federal, state, county, and town police departments, county park rangers, investigators and prosecutors from the Suffolk County District Attorney's office, code enforcement officers, military personnel, and other law enforcement, regulatory and security agencies that encompass the Central Pine Barrens. The coordinated effort enforcing these many laws and regulations, sharing resources, intelligence, and other pertinent information, and the use of multi-agency enforcement details have helped to make law enforcement within the Central Pine Barrens more efficient and effective as evidenced by the many successful apprehensions and prosecutions of violators. Additionally, the increased presence of uniformed officers of the LEC in the Central Pine Barrens has helped to deter violations and provide the public with the level of protection they expect to see on these protected lands.

Personnel

The position of Chair of the Law Enforcement Council is currently held by Lt. Michael Smith of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office. Co Vice-Chairs are Deputy Director Arthur Pendzick of the Suffolk County Park Rangers, and Lt. Tom Gadomski of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Division of Law Enforcement. The Council is also comprised of members of the Central Pine Barrens Commission, including John Pavacic, the Executive Director of the Central Pine Barrens Commission, Chief Enforcement Coordinator Tim Huss, Enforcement Officers Mike Lewis and Jim Mazzio, and Administrative Specialist, Kathy Delligatti. These Commission members help to coordinate, support and document the efforts of the multi-agency Law Enforcement Council.



Some of the member agencies of the LEC

Public Participation and Communication

Several civilian organizations and interest groups routinely attend the monthly meetings of the LEC. These include local civic associations, mountain biking advocates, hiking groups, and other citizens and user groups that care about the protection and quality of life and the natural resources of the Central Pine Barrens. They are often the eyes and ears for law enforcement providing the LEC with a good perspective of the issues from a public point of view. The LEC would be much less effective without the diligence and support of these civilian counterparts and the general public. In addition to direct contact between the public and the LEC, complaints are frequently received by the various agencies, either independently or through the LEC's main complaint call in number, 1-877-BARRENS, administered by the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office. Complaints through the Suffolk County Police dispatch 911 service as well as through the 24 hour hotlines for NYSDEC are also frequently received and shared with the LEC. Sharing information and resources is vital to the success of the LEC. In addition to sharing information via secure police radio and phone communication, members are kept up to date at the monthly LEC meetings and during enforcement details. Additionally, the PBLEC Handbook is kept up to date with the most current information of representative Agencies' member contact numbers, enforcement sections, and other pertinent updated information.

Environmental Benefit Fund

The Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council's Environmental Benefit Fund (EBF) account for the start of 2017 was \$58,129.64. There was one purchase made this past year, a Polaris 450 ATV for \$6,125 for the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department who are an important member of the LEC. In 2017 the fund benefited from the closure of two environmental cases prosecuted by the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office and the NYS Attorney General. A total of \$84, 713.17 was in the EBF at the close of 2017.

Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council Activities for 2017

Off Road Vehicle Enforcement

Illegal ATV and off road vehicle operation remains the foremost focus for the Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council. In addition to the environmental damage done by these vehicles and the detrimental impact to the quality of life caused by this activity in the Central Pine Barrens, illegal off road use is dangerous to the operators and to the public. In 2017 eighteen Multi-Agency Task Force ATV Details resulted in a total of 72 illegal ATVs being impounded and 155 ATV related summonses issued. Since the inception of these Multi-Agency ATV Details a total of 1,212 Illegal ATVs impounded with 3,004 ATV related summonses issued. Additionally, eight summonses were issued for fishing violations, nine for hunting violations, two for speeding on public roads, one for no drivers license, two for motor vehicle equipment related violations, and one for a littering case, and four misdemeanor charges were issued related to drug possession and a suspended license. One subject was also apprehended on a warrant.

There were 28 illegal off road 4x4 vehicle apprehensions in 2017 with 29 related summonses issued. The total off road vehicles apprehended since 2013 is 127 illegal 4x4 apprehensions with 189 associated summonses issued.

In addition to these larger organized details several smaller ATV and 4x4 details were worked throughout the year by member agencies to address local issues and complaints, adding to the enforcement effort for this issue. These efforts go a long way in deterring unlawful off road vehicle and ATV activity.



Multi-Agency ATV Enforcement Detail - April 10, 2016

Environmental and Wildlife Enforcement

Lt. Michael Smith of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office coordinates an average of 2 commercial vehicle inspection details each month, weather permitting, within the Core Preservation Area of the Central Pine Barrens. A detail organized on May 23, 2017 which is depicted in the photo below is typical of these enforcement efforts. On that day, Law Enforcement Council member, Lt. Smith, conducted a heavy duty truck enforcement detail on CR 51 near Suffolk Community College. During the detail 48 trucks were inspected for safety and environmental issues (emissions, leaking fuel, the transportation of regulated materials, etc.). Of these, 16 trucks were taken out of service for safety violations and 52 summonses were issued. In addition to the Sheriff's Department other agencies participating in the detail included the New York State Department of Transportation, Riverhead and Southampton Town Police, NYSDEC Division of Law Enforcement, and Suffolk County Parks. These details have a direct impact upon the quality of life and environment in the Central Pine Barrens Pine Barrens. Documented truck safety issues can affect the safety of the resource users and local residents, and faulty equipment can and does affect groundwater and air quality.



Multi-Agency Commercial Motor Vehicle Detail - May 23, 2017

The aforementioned enforcement details only highlight two of the many other enforcement details undertaken by PBLEC members in 2017. In an investigation referred to NYSDEC an unlawful effluent discharge discovered by Commission staff was found to be polluting a wooded lot in Coram. DEC Law Enforcement issued summonses, abated the discharge, and recovered a \$3,500 penalty.

Other enforcement matters addressed by the LEC members included Fish and Wildlife law enforcement to assure hunting and fishing was conducted lawfully, protecting the resource and public safety. Enforcement details included an organized patrol schedule for state and county hunting lands by the NYSDEC during the hunting season, and the use of decoys to apprehend illegal shooters.

Dumping always will be an issue in the Central Pine Barrens. Despite the many legal ways to dispose of waste, some feel the need to dump their trash or waste in the Pine Barrens. In 2017, as in the past year, an influx of “dirty fill” dumping which is actually



An unlawful discharge discovered by the Commission addressed by the LEC in 2017

construction and demolition debris in dirt form continued. Comprised of processed wood, pieces of ceramic tile, pieces of plastic plumbing pipe, metals, and even asbestos fibers this material can be injurious to environmental quality. The worst of this material can include heavy metals, PCBs, petroleum and other cancer causing agents. Other dumped materials include household garbage, defunct vessels and vehicles, and the more traditional construction and demolition debris. The Officers go to great lengths to apprehend these violators, often sifting through household garbage, tracking down receipts or running hull numbers, many times with positive results. A video surveillance program established by the Compliance Officers of the Central Pine Barrens Commission assisted the LEC in making three apprehensions for dumping in the Central Pine Barrens. Local media coverage, including televised reporting on NBC and News 12 helped to spread the word about the LEC's enforcement effort helping to deter future violations.



Over 100 cases of expired energy drinks were unlawfully disposed of on public property.

In another case an unauthorized motorist in a dual axle military styled flatbed truck was apprehended after video evidence showed him running over and crushing the fence and berm shown in the foreground of the above photo that was constructed by NYSDOT.



Unlawful disposal of construction and demolition debris on NYS land in Manorville

Training, Mitigation, Aviation, Projects, etc

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Office has continued to provide certified ATV training to members of the PBLEC and other volunteers such as the local fire and ambulance department personnel. This training is conducted at the Gabreski Airport.



SC Deputy Sheriff John Noonan instructs LEC member agencies on safe ATV operation

The PBLEC continues to work with the Protected Land Council, implementing various ideas and projects in an attempt to reduce the negative impacts of violators to our Central Pine Barrens.

NYS Environmental Conservation Police again gave fish and wildlife enforcement training to the PBLEC members prior to the 2017 hunting season

PBLEC members continue to support the amendments to Article 57 of the Environmental Conservation Law, which would address enforcement issues directly related to Long Island's Central Pine Barrens.

The New York State Forest Rangers, and Enforcement Officers of the Commission, along with personnel from the State and County levels, continue to be heavily involved in efforts to slow the spread of the Southern Pine Beetle infestation within our Pine Barrens.

PBLEC ENFORCEMENT STATISTICS 2017

Total for all reporting Agencies

310 - Total # ATV complaints received

106 - Total # ATV related summonses

57 - Total # ATVs impounded

8 - Total # ATV related injuries _____#ATV Fatalities

7 - Stolen ATVs recovered 40_#ATVs reported stolen

2 - Stolen vehicles recovered

21 - Illegal off road/4x4summonses/incidents 0____4x4 impounds

43 - Arson/fire incidents

42 - Illegal dumping summonses/arrests/incidents

0 - Fish and Wildlife summonses/arrests

1 - Firearms & other weapons incidents

0 - All other ECL summonses/arrests

0 -Trespass summonses/arrests

2 - Encroachments/ other property incidents

6 - Illegal wood cutting summonses/arrests/incidents

2 - Homeless summonses/arrests/incidents

2 - Illegal drug summonses/arrests/incidents

3 - Penal law misdemeanors

0 - Penal law felonies

2017 12th Annual Officer of the Year Awards

Suffolk County Park Ranger Joseph Augugliaro was the Central Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council's selection as **Officer of the Year** for his significant contribution to environmental enforcement efforts. Ranger Augugliaro has been the most productive Officer in ATV Enforcement in the past two years, accounting for over 50% of all ATV impounds and associated summonses on the Multi-Agency ATV Task Force and within the SC Park Ranger Unit details.

Results of his enforcement efforts have resulted in more than 100 illegal ATV impounds during this time.

New York State Police Trooper Fabio Daino - For Significant Contribution to Environmental Enforcement Efforts

Trooper Daino has been an active participant on the multi-Agency ATV Details, with numerous ATV impounds and associated summonses and is a liaison Officer for the PBLEC coordinating law enforcement and environmental cleanup efforts between the various governmental agencies

Suffolk County Deputy Sheriff Brian Cowan - For Continuous Significant Environmental Enforcement Activity

Deputy Cowan has been an active participant on the multi-Agency ATV Details. He is responsible for numerous ATV impounds and associated summonses. He is also assigned to patrol the Central Pine Barrens in addition to his regular primary duties.

Suffolk County Park Ranger Michael Hanley - For Continuous Significant Environmental Enforcement Activity

Ranger Hanley has been an active participant on the multi-agency ATV details and also on the Park Ranger ATV assignments, contributing to numerous illegal ATV impounds and associated summonses as well as other environmental enforcement.

NYS Forest Ranger Joseph M. Pries - For Continuous Significant Environmental Enforcement Activity

Ranger Pries has participated on several Multi-Agency ATV details and works regularly within the Central Pine Barrens. He has been a field training Officer for the Forest Rangers newly assigned recruits and provided fire- fighting assistance to the western states receiving certification as a defensive tactics instructor.

NYS Environmental Conservation Officer Landon Simmons - For Significant Contribution to Environmental Enforcement Effort

Officer Simmons has been an active participant on the Multi-Agency ATV details, responsible for numerous illegal ATV impounds and associated summonses. He has made numerous arrests for environmental violations within the Central Pine Barrens and is a constant presence therein.

In Closing

The partnership this Council affords its members continues to be extremely effective in combating the person(s) responsible for detrimentally impacting the Central Pine Barrens. An extremely high level of commitment is necessary from the participating members in order to maintain the high level of success that the Council has had in apprehending these violators. This success would not be possible if not for these partnerships; not just the partnership between the law enforcement agencies but also with the LEC's civilian counterparts that provide vital support. The public remains an important asset to the LEC with a significant percentage of the cases documented by the LEC coming from their tips and information.

Then there is the partnership of our support personnel, namely Executive Director of the Central Pine Barrens Commission John Pavacic, Enforcement Coordinator Larry Hynes and administrative staff Kathy Delligatti and Carol Sholl. Without their assistance and direction to the PBLEC, we would enjoy much less success, and our success would go unnoticed.

Special thanks goes to Suffolk County Parks Superintendent Tony Trotta, for his mechanical expertise and impounds of the apprehended ATVs during our enforcement details.

Also, none of this would be possible without the support and direction of the Pine Barrens Commission. Without their support, the PBLEC would not have the necessary equipment or the administrative help that is required to run a successful campaign. Without their political support, the Council would be severely limited in acquiring the tools necessary in apprehending and prosecuting these violators.

Every one of these partnerships are necessary for the success of the Pine Barrens Law Enforcement Council. We have accomplished much, but there is still much work to do. We are up to the challenge.



2017

Suffolk County Park Rangers

Special Details Report

On May 3, 2017, the Ranger Unit initiated a special patrol, consisting of a two person team on Quads and one Scout, going out on random weekdays and times, focusing primarily on illegal ATV and ORV Enforcement. These details along with regular Ranger patrols & assignments, have proved to be highly successful as the following statistics show.

A total of 21 details and special assignments were accomplished with the following results:

34 Illegal ATV's were impounded:

- 23 Dirt Bikes
- 10 Quads
- 1 Go Cart

65 ATV Related Summonses were issued:

- 20- SC Code 822.3a (operate ATV on Public Lands)
- 2-SC Code 822.3b (Operate ATV on private lands w/o written landowners Consent)
- 5-V&T 2410.4 (Parent allows minor to operate ATV illegally)
- 10-V&T 2282.1 (operate unregistered)
- 2-V&T 2283.1 (failure to display plate on ATV)
- 13-V&T 2407.4 (operate ATV w/o liability insurance in effect)
- 5-V&T 2406.2 (failure to wear helmet on ATV)
- 5-V&T 2403.1 (operate ATV on public roadway)
- 1-V&T 2404.1b (operate ATV recklessly)
- 1-V&T 2404.2a (ATV failure to stop for emergency vehicle)
- 1-V&T 2404.2b (failure to comply with lawful order on ATV)

6 ORV's (Off Road Vehicles) were apprehended with 9 associated summonses being issued:

- 6-SC Code 822.11a (Operate ORV off road on public lands)
- 2-V&T 401.1a (unregistered ORV)
- 1-V&T 319.1 (uninsured ORV)

13 Miscellaneous V&T Summonses were also issued:

- 1-1212 (Reckless Driving- Misd.)
- 2-509.1 (unlicensed driver)
- 2-509.2 (operate vehicle not proper for license)
- 1-1111.d (failure to stop for red light)
- 2-1172.a (failure to stop at stop sign)
- 1-401.1 (unregistered vehicle)

1-381.1a (motorcycle with inadequate brakes)
2-1229.c3a (failure to wear seat belt)

1-375.2a (operate vehicle w/o head lights)

There were also 3 Arrests for Unlawful Possession of Marihuana (Penal Law Sec.221.05)

Note worthy; of the 34 ATV Impounds, one was actually a go-cart operating in and out of traffic on the busy William Floyd Parkway. The go-cart was apprehended but the operator ran and was never caught.

In summary, these details produced some fantastic results, but it was the Officers involved that made it happen. The following is a list of all the Rangers who contributed and the amount of times they worked and assisted.

Joe Augugliaro (13)	Mike Hanley (5)
Jeff Campo (5)	Mike Prudenti (3)
Haley Ruymaker (2)	Paul Barbato (2)
Justin Butera (1)	Mike Losee (1)
Dominick Messina (1)	Jason Green (1)
Sgt. Bill Curcie (2)	