

WATER PATROL DIVISION

House Bill 1868 shifted the Missouri State Water Patrol to the Missouri State Highway Patrol effective January 1, 2011. Thus, the Water Patrol Division came into being. Governor Jay Nixon signed the bill on June 30, 2010, at the Lake of the Ozarks' Public Beach #2. There was no reduction in the number of Water Patrol or Highway Patrol officers.

The Water Patrol Division is assigned to the Field Operations Bureau. Major Thomas E. "Tommy" Roam is the division's first director. The Water Patrol Division houses three statutory functions:

- 1. Boater Education** — All boaters born after January 1, 1984, are required to take a boater education course, and possess a boater education card and photo ID while boating on Missouri lakes. Each year, thousands of boaters attend boater education courses provided by the Patrol. Courses are taught by troopers and via an online provider.
- 2. Buoy Permitting** — The Patrol issues all buoy and other navigational aid permits in Missouri. As of December 31, 2011, there were 3,598 approved permits. Permittees are required to maintain their buoys in a serviceable condition, and the division audits buoys and permits to verify accurate ownership, placement, and buoy condition.
- 3. Regattas** — Regattas and organized events, such as parades, races, and fishing tournaments, are required to be permitted by the Patrol. Approximately 2,000 regattas are permitted annually.

The Water Patrol Division is also responsible for the oversight of the **Underwater Recovery Team**. The Patrol's Underwater Recovery Team (dive team) provides professional diving services for federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies throughout Missouri, and upon special approval, to bordering states. Services include: recovery of boat crash and drowning victims, evidence recovery/preservation dives, emergency services dives, and other dives that require special equipment and/or diving techniques. The Patrol dive team also employs specialized equipment, such as side-scan and scanning sonar systems, and underwater metal detectors. The 2011 Patrol dive team consists of nine divers.

Early in 2011, Water Patrol Division officers attended four weeks of transition training to familiarize themselves with DWI laws, traffic laws, Patrol policies and procedures, and traffic crash and DWI investigation.

During the blizzard of February 2011, division members teamed up with road officers to assist the public. This epic snowstorm brought with it ice, freezing rain, sleet, or snow. Much of Missouri was digging out from under 12 to 20 inches of snow. Officers were responsible for highway safety, search and rescue efforts, and traffic control.

On March 16, 2011, the Department of Public Safety presented the March 2011 DPS Employee of the Month award to Corporal Harold E. "Junior" Crafton Jr. and Corporal Michael P. "Mike" McClure. These two officers rescued passengers with health risks from the Branson Belle after it had run aground on rocks. In dangerous weather conditions, they made approximately 12 trips from a nearby dock to the showboat and back in a patrol boat. The remainder of the 600 passengers disembarked the next morning after the creation of a berm and placement of a catwalk. (Cpl. Crafton and Cpl. McClure were officers with the Missouri State Water Patrol at the time of the incident.)

Thunderstorms on April 19 were the first of many in the Troop E area. By May 2, much of the area had received over 20 inches of rain. Levees collapsed—either on their own or they were breached by the Army Corps of Engineers. Troopers assisted with evacuations, search and rescue, damage assessments, security patrols and checkpoints, dignitary escorts, and traffic control. They worked in two-man teams on four boats to assist with water rescues. A mobile field force of 21 troopers from around the state grew to include 42 troopers and 18 boats. In one instance, they rescued six boats of Missouri National Guard personnel when they became stranded. Members assigned to this detail returned to their normal duties on May 11.

On May 22, 2011, an EF5 multiple vortex tornado hit Joplin, MO. This was the deadliest tornado to hit the United States since 1947. Immediately, the Patrol sent 50 troopers to the area, as well as one mobile command and communications vehicle and four communications officers. Members of the Water Patrol Division assisted in Joplin as part of the 362 members and 89 civilians deployed to or living in the area who helped during the recovery. In addition to security patrols and checkpoints, troopers went door-to-door searching for people, they attended memorial services and funerals, and they met with countless families. Troopers also handled death investigations, damage assessment, dignitary escort and protection, and were tasked with locating 268 missing people, all of which were accounted for by June 1. It was reported that 161 people died as a result of this tornado. This special detail ended June 26.

In June 2011, flooding in Holt, Atchison, and Buchanan counties led to road closures lasting three months. Numerous levees were breached creating extensive property damage. Division members were part of the 52 troopers from around the state who were assigned to assist during the flooding. They handled security patrols, security checkpoints, search and rescue efforts, damage assessment, and dignitary escort and protection. This special detail would run from June 10 through August 6.

The Missouri State Fair detail included five officers from the Water Patrol Division for the first time. A boat was among the Patrol equipment displayed near the Highway Gardens and Otto-The Talking Car.

On August 1, 2011, half of the Water Patrol Division's District 1 (Troop A and Troop H) was realigned to geographically match those troop areas. Five members of the Water Patrol Division were temporarily assigned to Troops A and H as a pilot program. One of them, Trooper Frederick F. "Fred" Guthrie Jr., (and his Patrol K-9, Reed) was assigned to Missouri River flood duty. Tpr. Guthrie and K-9 Reed were working in the area of Big Lake on Missouri Highway 118 at Missouri Highway 111 in Holt County, MO. Apparently, they were swept away by swift flood water on August 1, 2011. On Tuesday August 2, 2011, at approximately 6:25 p.m., K-9 Reed was located in swift moving flood water approximately 100 yards from where Tpr. Guthrie's Patrol truck and boat had been located.

On September 28, 2011, Colonel Ronald K. "Ron" Replogle regretfully announced the official death of Tpr. Guthrie. This announcement followed the issuance of Letters of Independent Administration by Platte County Associate Circuit Judge James Van Amburg to Trooper Guthrie's spouse, Mrs. Teresa Guthrie. Judge Van Amburg issued the letters after hearing evidence and declaring that Tpr. Guthrie was killed in the line of duty on August 1, 2011.

The Patrol's search for Tpr. Guthrie included Patrol divers, dragging the flood waters, boat searches of the Missouri River, and ground searches of areas that had previously been flooded. The search included large pumps, heavy equipment, cadaver dogs, and digging by hand. Volunteers and friends joined the Patrol in its desire to locate Tpr. Guthrie.

On December 14, 2011, the Patrol held a memorial service for Tpr. Guthrie. Hundreds came together to mourn and remember a good man.

On Thursday, January 12, 2012, Colonel Replogle, announced that Tpr. Guthrie's body had been recovered under approximately 3 1/2 feet of packed sand and silt, after a brush pile was removed during an excavation process. The recovery site was south of where K-9 Reed was found months earlier, near the original search site.

In September 2011, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) presented the Water Patrol Division with its coveted **Compass Award**. The award recognized the division's leadership, commitment, and sacrifice in assisting NASBLA and the U.S. Coast Guard. These three entities designed, tested, and implemented the first-ever battery of seated, standardized field sobriety tests, thus enhancing boating under the influence enforcement actions across the nation.

The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) presented Captain Gary T. Haupt with its prestigious **NASBLA Award**. This award recognizes the exemplary amount of time and effort Capt. Haupt dedicated to NASBLA in the field of boating accident investigation and reconstruction. Capt. Haupt has helped the organization achieve the highest professional reputation in the country through the development of a nationally recognized boating accident and reconstruction training program. Capt. Haupt

has served the organization on several committees during his tenure. NASBLA works to develop public policy for recreational boating safety. It represents the boating authorities of all 50 states and the U.S. territories.

Effective October 1, 2011, members of the Water Patrol Division were reassigned to the troop in which they reside.

Major Tommy Roam retired February 1, 2014. Captain Mark Richerson then became director of the Water Patrol Division.