

SAFMC LEOY 2011 Georgetown Sgt. Steven C. Pop

Teamwork and Public Outreach: During 2011 Sgt. Steven C. Pop conducted 18 Public Presentations that were given to Offshore Sport fishing clubs such as Coastal Conservation Association, local fishing tournaments, and Murrells Inlet Rotary Club. Sgt. Pop meets with Commercial Fishermen on a regular basis to discuss and inform the fishermen on changes in federal fishery regulations and to maintain professional relationships with commercial fisherman. Sgt. Steve Pop has a good working relationship with other Officers from SCDNR, NMFS Agents, and United States Coast Guard. Sgt. Pop worked Federal Fishery cases with these Agencies to make cases on fish violations, federal license requirements, commercial safety equipment, and state license requirements, and various other conservation issues.

Excellence and Innovation: Sgt. Pop is always willing to accept any Federal Fisheries Patrol assignment given him no matter time or weather conditions. Sgt. Pop continues to study federal fishery laws and stays abreast of changes. He takes pride in the open lines of communication he has established with Federal Fisheries and strives to produce the most thorough investigations with satisfactory outcomes for SCDNR and Federal Fisheries.

Attitude and Leadership: Sgt. Pop demonstrates a most professional attitude with fellow workers and the public at all times. He takes his time to talk with others and maintains a friendly and courteous attitude. Sgt. Pop works extremely hard to help Officers by taking a leadership role and quickly assists other Officers with fishery enforcement expertise. Sgt Pop is the resident fish law expert and he is often sought out by other officers for advice in this area. Sgt Pop conducts himself in a responsible manner when on duty and off and takes the utmost pride in his work for the conservation efforts of fishery enforcement. As an example, this is reflected in his assignment to the Governors Cup Billfish Tournament Team, which is a prestigious group of fishermen. Sgt Pop was hand picked due to his professional attitude, his fishery laws knowledge and his special ability to communicate with the fishermen.

Sgt. Pop reflects honesty and fairness while he works by issuing 4 times more warnings than tickets. Sgt Pop strives to educate offenders of fishery laws by explaining to them what the law is and why the fishing laws are in place to protect the future of our fishery.

Achievements and Accomplishments: Sgt. Pop made 18 Federal Fishery cases that were charged in state court and 3 cases that were charged in Federal court. Sgt. Pop conducted 249 JEA hours which were mostly commercial enforcement's. Pop's most successful investigations that truly reflects his dedication to law enforcement to took four years of hard work to bring the offenders to justice. SCDNR was receiving complaints about dive boats from recreational and commercial fishermen violating fishery laws. Sgt. Pop has monitored the Florida Commercial Snapper/Grouper Dive Boats the past four years and after an extensive investigation consisting of Sgt Pop waiting in his Patrol boat 14 hours on the dive boats to come in from a trip and dock in Georgetown. He and an Officer in Training apprehended the dive boats with 79 pounds over limit of Gag Grouper, 2 undersize Scamp Grouper, and 1 undersize Red Grouper. These Dive Boats were believed to be Offloading illegal catch during late night hours for years. Due to Sgt. Pop's diligent and steadfast commitment to the investigation he apprehended and successfully sought prosecution of the violators in State Court.

Additionally, during a commercial offload in Murrells Inlet Sgt. Pop apprehended two Commercial Snapper/Grouper Boats with violations and called NMFS agents to assist. One Boat was Charged Federal with 71 pounds over the limit of Snowy Grouper, 64 over the limit of Red Porgy, and 8 undersize Red Porgy. The second vessel was charged with 200 pounds over limit of Snowy Grouper. Sgt. Pop caught a local bar selling shrimp without Bills of Laden.

Sgt. Pop holds a Master Captains License and is a Graduate of the Marine Patrol Officers Class at FLETC in Georgia. Sgt. Pop is firstly dedicated to his wife and two children along with his family at SCDNR.