



Region 6 Continued

High Water Makes Night Hunting Too Tempting

By Sgt. Mitch Darby

It was cold and dark on the levee that morning. The river stage was higher than normal, and the water was touching the levee on the Atchafalya Basin side. The deer had left the security of the woods, and bedded down all along the levee south of the State Park. As I drove my truck on top of the levee I counted at least twenty deer. A few were racked bucks, but most were does and yearlings. There were

not a lot of vehicles traveling on the levee between Charenton and Lake Fausse Point road. I could see a truck's break lights coming on every few hundred yards. I suspected the truck was night hunting. I started following the white truck on top of the levee as they crept along the levee road. I saw the truck's reverse lights come on for an instant. All of a sudden a q-beam came out of the passenger window, and began shinning the tree line

next to a bar pit. Now I knew there were at least two people inside the vehicle, one to drive and one to shine the light. I shut off my truck to listen for a shot. Boom, I heard a rifle shot come from the truck. I looked at my watch to document the time, 1:50 a.m. I called Agent Bozeman who was near Catahoula, to tell him that I was following a truck that was hunting. He came back on the radio and said, "I'll be there in a few minutes."

The white truck started up and continued driving south. This time the q-beam stayed shining the tree line as they moved. We must have traveled around a half-mile, when the truck stopped again. I turned my truck off. Boom, I heard another shot come from the truck. Again I checked my watch it was 2:03 a.m. I heard the white truck start up and take off, this time traveling faster. I followed

Continued on page 122

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Continued from page 121


them until they turned around at the Sandy Cove landing. Now we were headed back North. Before long we were going about fifty miles per hour. I started to think they had seen me following them. Suddenly the truck stopped and the passenger exited the truck and walked into the woods with a flashlight. I shut my truck off, and got out with my binoculars.

I watched the passenger as he searched inside the woods. The driver got out and started walking towards the wood line. He stopped about sixty feet from the woods then both men took off running back

towards their truck. I looked over my right shoulder and saw headlights in the distance, Sr. Agent Bozeman. I called Sr. Agent Bozeman on the radio, but it was too late. The driver had started the truck and was pulling off. I jumped into my unit and flew down the levee. I pulled up broad side of the white truck with blue lights flashing. I made the driver exit the truck and walk backwards towards me. I put him up against the hood of his truck. Sr. Agent Bozeman arrived shortly and did the same with the passenger. After the men were arrested and placed in handcuffs, I

searched the truck for weapons. I found a loaded rifle on the back seat of the truck and a q-beam on the passenger's floorboard. We were unable to find any deer in the woods where the men had been shooting. Both men were charged with hunting deer illegal hours, hunting deer from a public road, and hunting deer from a moving

vehicle. I contacted the Sheriff's Department and requested a transport to the jail for our two violators. A Sheriff Deputy arrived about an hour later and transported the two violators to the parish jail. Agents participating in the case were myself, Sgt. Mitch Darby and Sr. Agent Donnie Bozeman.

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