

South Carolina Game Warden named Governor's State Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

SCDNR's Lance Corporal Mike Norris becomes the Palmetto State's Top Cop for 2024

COLUMBIA, SC, UNITED STATES, May 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Lance Corporal Gene "Mike" Norris III, a law enforcement officer (game warden) with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), received the state's highest law enforcement honor – the Governor's State Law Enforcement Officer of the Year 2024 – during the third annual Governor's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year ceremony, held at Seawell's in Columbia, Wednesday, May 21.



LCpl. Gene "Mike" Norris III (center) named S.C.'s Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

A statement released by the S.C. Department of Public Safety said: "Eleven finalists were selected from the nominations submitted by various state, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies. One winner from each of the three categories was named during the ceremony. Each winner will receive \$10,000 as part of the Governor's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award program."

LCpl Norris received S.C.'s highest LE award in the category of "state" recipient. Chief Deputy Jonathan Chase Iseman with the Lee County Sheriff's Office received the award in the category of "county" recipient. And Corporal Xavier Rodriguez with the Springdale Police Department received the award in the category of "municipal" recipient.

"We had the distinct privilege today to recognize several exceptional men and women of South Carolina's law enforcement community," said S.C. Gov. Henry McMaster. "These officers represent the best of our state, and I am inspired by their courage, professionalism, and sense of duty. The people of South Carolina are truly blessed to have them serving and protecting each and every day."

SCDNR Director Tom Mullikin agrees.

“These young law enforcement leaders represent the best of the best here in S.C.,” Mullikin said. “We here at SCDNR are particularly proud of our own Lance Corporal Norris, the sterling leadership, proven valor, and the professionalism he has demonstrated over the course of his 11-plus-year career so far, but particularly during the year 2024. ”

In a statement released by SCDNR, Norris was recognized for his “exceptional valor, commitment to public service and leadership both in the field and in his community.”

The statement details how in September 2024, Norris was involved in an extremely dangerous incident in Lee County when officers came under “heavy rifle fire” from a suspect wanted for the attempted murder of a McBee Police Department officer. “Under intense fire, LCpl Norris returned fire with precision and composure, helping protect fellow officers during the ambush. His swift and courageous response was instrumental in preventing further tragedy.”

Norris is also an SCDNR law enforcement K-9 handler. Last year, he and his K-9, “River,” responded to 30 calls, assisting with multiple night-hunting cases, waterfowl violations, and searches for missing or wanted individuals across various jurisdictions.

Norris also serves as a field training officer and guest instructor at SCDNR’s Wildlife Basic School, helping prepare new game wardens for real-world situations. Following the Lee County shooting incident, Norris has traveled across S.C., share his experience from that day and reinforcing critical officer safety protocols.

Norris is one of only eight certified instructors in the state for the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). In that, he is responsible for recertifying more than 300 law enforcement officers in boating sobriety testing—a key role in keeping South Carolina’s waterways safe.

Norris also volunteers as a structural firefighter with the Lee County Fire Department.



The S.C. Department of Natural Resources

Finalists for the 2024 State Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award included: Special Agent Joshua Anderson with the S.C. Department of Corrections, Lieutenant Jamie N. Shaw with the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED), and Lance Corporal Chase H. Sprott with the S.C. Highway Patrol.

– For more information about SCDNR, visit <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/>.

W. Thomas Smith Jr.

S.C. Department of Natural Resources

[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/815424652>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.