



RECREATIONAL BOATERS OF CALIFORNIA

Overview of Key Issues – September 26, 2007

Vessel Registration Fees

RBOC is urging the Governor to veto AB 118 [Nuñez], a bill crafted late in the session which would unfairly target boaters for a 100% boat registration fee increase. RBOC appreciates the inclusion of provisions sought by RBOC to ensure that the use of boater-generated fees would also involve the development of new vessel technologies, and to provide a recreational boater representative on the proposed advisory committee.

The boating community is ready and willing to contribute to the dialogue and efforts to address the tremendous environmental challenges that are the legitimate objective of AB 118. RBOC only requests that our community, which is also a significant part of the state's economy, not be singled out for financial contributions that are out of proportion as compared to the contributions of other stakeholders.

*Position – Oppose unless amended to address these issues.
Status: Governor's Desk*

Federal Legislation Continuing Boater Discharge Permit Exemption

RBOC is supporting, in concert with national boater advocates BoatU.S., the passage of H.R. 2550 and S. 2067, and amendments to Senate Bill 1578, to allow boat operations without new federal regulations and permit requirements intended for commercial ships with ballast water tanks.

*Position – Support
Status: Introduced*

EPA Proposed Vessel Permit Regulations

RBOC is advocating, in concert with national boater advocates BoatU.S., that the EPA not pursue regulations that would require all recreational boaters to obtain a permit, either from the federal government or the state, to operate their boats. The unprecedented scope of this new permitting program would impose severe practical and financial hardships on millions of recreational boaters.

Experience at the national level and here in California demonstrate that there have been numerous other successful endeavors to address and reduce boater-related environmental discharges and to control invasive species. Many of these are likely to be more effective and efficient than NPDES permits.

*Position – Support alternative to a new permit.
Status: Public Comment Period Closed August 6*

State Budget & Boater Fees and Taxes

RBOC supports the Governor's proposed \$77 million budget for the state boating department [DBW] and urged that the proposed budget for the state parks department [DPR] be revised to return \$27 million in boater fuel tax dollars to DBW to finance critical infrastructure needs, the proposed vessel operator certification program, and local boating law enforcement.

RBOC supports the provisions within the budget stating the intent of the Legislature that DPR prioritize funds appropriated to the department from the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund and the Motor Vehicle Fuel Account, for boating-related activities that include major and minor capital outlay projects, boating trails, boating trail grants, boating trails access facilities, beach erosion grants, and state park boating facilities operations and maintenance costs.

*Position – support proposed budget for DBW and intent language,
Urge revision to proposed budget for DPR to return \$27 million to boaters.
Status: Budget Enacted, SB 78 Enacted*

Vessel Operator Certification

AB 1458 [Duvall] – this RBOC-sponsored legislation would phase-in a requirement that each operator of a motorized recreational vessel pass a state-approved test, obtain a lifetime certificate issued by DBW, and have that certificate upon them while operating.

With the legislation moving forward, issues have arisen with regard to the structure, costs, parameters and impact of the proposed new program that would affect millions of boaters.

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Overview of Key Issues – September 26, 2007 [PAGE TWO]

Recreational Boaters of California [RBOC] is working together with Assembly Member Duvall, the Governor's administration, the State Legislature and boater stakeholder groups in order to move the important issue of vessel operator certification forward towards enactment.

It is anticipated that efforts to address the issues that have arisen will not be completed in time to enable AB 1458 to meet the deadlines for passage this year. From all indications, there will be a bill next year based on the efforts to date.

*Position – Support as Sponsor
Status – Two-year Effort*

Club Property Tax Increases

The County Assessors Association has proposed that the Board of Equalization revise its rule so that the express terms of a club port lease could be more easily ignored, thereby enabling the value of the club's possessory interest and property taxes to increase.

*Position – Oppose
Status – Board denied the petition*

Vessel Owner Responsibility for Engine Emission Law Compliance

AB 695 [Karnette] – would require boat owners to prove that their gas engines and generators meet new air emissions requirements applicable to model year 2008 and newer engines, when they register their boats with the DMV. Engine manufacturers would be required to provide the necessary documentation for boaters to submit.

Position – Ensure that boaters will have the necessary documentation without undue burden or cost, and encourage a DBW education program to inform boaters of the existing and pending requirements.

Status – on Governor's Desk with provisions included

Copper-Based Anti-Fouling Paints

RBOC supports efforts to preserve and enhance water quality with the application of unbiased, sound scientific studies. It is critical that governmental actions reducing or phasing-out the use of copper-based anti-fouling paints be predicated upon objective scientific studies regarding the sources of copper in specific affected water bodies, as well as the impact of that copper on native species of wildlife. It is also essential that alternatives to copper-based anti-fouling paints are available, affordable, and effective.

RBOC is continuing its efforts to have reason and balance incorporated into the processes by which state and local governments are addressing copper-based anti-fouling paints. This includes our participation in studies and activities of the Department of Boating and Waterways and the Department of Pesticide Regulation that could provide the much-needed scientific analysis.

Tahoe Boating Restrictions

RBOC is supporting the efforts of local boaters and clubs who are concerned with a proposed "Blue Boater Program" that would require boaters using the lake to purchase a decal and support alternative mitigations.

The program as currently proposed does not balance the important goals of environmental protection with boater impacts, and goes further than the mitigations connected with the proposed shorezone ordinance.

White's Landing

RBOC is working with the interested clubs. This follows RBOC's testimony at the State Lands Commission requesting that boaters be provided input into the decision to decrease the anchorage area at this popular location at Catalina Island.

✓ *Visit RBOC on-line:* at www.rbo.org for the latest updates, press releases, calls-to-arms, and reports on government relations issues impacting the recreational boating community.

Recreational Boaters of California [RBOC] is the nonprofit governmental advocacy organization that works to protect and enhance the interests of the state's recreational boaters before the legislative and executive branches of state and local government.

RBOC was formed as a statewide organization in 1968 and from that date forward has continued its commitment to promoting the enjoyment, protection, and responsible use of our waterways.