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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT: RON CHRISTOFFERSON

SOBA Members and Boating Industry Partners:

As you can see in this newsletter, there is a lot going on around the country this spring. The same is true for the SOBA Executive Board members, who recently wrapped up a very productive meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This meeting was intentionally scheduled to...
coincide with the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, which allowed the Board to meet and interact with several other important organizations. Among these were the leadership of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (the folks behind TakeMeFishing.org), the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration headquarters staff from Washington, D.C., and the Executive Board of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). Such interactions are crucial to maintain SOBA’s voice at the national level, and to insure boating access issues are kept at the forefront. Representatives from several national organizations also typically attend our annual conference, and I look forward to further coordination this October in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Speaking of Chattanooga, you will see below that online registration for the conference is now open. I want to give an early “Congratulations” to coordinator Ed Poolos of Tennessee (and Alabama) for all his accomplishments so far. During our monthly Board teleconference calls, Ed’s updates show that his team is ahead of the curve in their planning efforts, and well on their way to presenting an outstanding conference. If you have not already done so, I highly recommend getting your travel approvals and registration in place. This is going to be an innovative, educational and informative gathering of your peers that you won’t want to miss.

I hope these wonderful spring months treat you well and afford you the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, hopefully including a boating trip or two.

Regards,
Ron Christofferson
President

SEE YOU IN CHATTANOOGA FOR SOBA'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL BOATING ACCESS CONFERENCE

Better Access * Better Boating

Our theme “Better Access, Better Boating” will focus on why maintenance and growth of our state waterways is so important, and in the spirit of this theme, our event will feature a variety of breakout program tracks, including Engineering, Boating Access, Clean Vessel and Boating Infrastructure, in addition to our Federal Fund Training Day, and plenary session program. These breakouts will delve into specific subject matter issues that affect all of us.

Chattanooga—the River City—is calling you to come to Tennessee! Think beautiful scenery, think perfect weather, and think one of the best SOBA conferences ever! That’s what the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency is preparing for you. As the state host for SOBA’s 30th Anniversary National Boating Access Conference, Chattanooga invites you to arrive early, stay beyond the conference dates, or both.

Important Facts:

**WHEN:** October 10 to October 13, 2016
WHERE: The Chattanoogan, downtown Chattanooga. Book your hotel rooms HERE ($94 per night)

REGISTRATION: Register for the conference HERE

THE PROGRAM: Federal Fund Training Day, General Sessions, Breakout tracks with Engineering, Clean Vessel, and Boating Infrastructure; a full Exhibit Hall with Vendors; Awards program; and the traditional boating access site visits. See the latest agenda HERE—but be sure to check SOBA’s website often for the most up-to-date information

NOTES TO REMEMBER:

USE OF USFWS FUNDS TO HELP YOU ATTEND THE CONFERENCE
SOBA reminds conference attendees that certain costs are eligible under USFWS grants (Boating Access, CVA), in particular, memberships and certain conference costs. See the applicable OMB Circular for more details.

LACY NICHOLS EDUCATION FUND:
Did you know that you can use the Lacy Nichols Education Fund to help you attend the conference?
Here’s HOW

2016 SOBA CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS
It's Time to Reward Outstanding Work!

The States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) would like to announce a call for its 2016 awards nominations. Nominations are being accepted for the following awards:

- The William H. Ivers Award
- Outstanding Service Award
- Professional Service Award
- Special Recognition Award
- State Boating Access Program Excellence Award
- State Clean Vessel (CVA) Program Excellence Award
- Outstanding Project Awards in Four (4) categories: 1) Small, 2) Medium, 3) Large, and 4) Marina and Harbors

SOBA will present the awards during its upcoming 30th Anniversary National Boating Access Conference at the Chattanoogan Hotel, Chattanooga, Tennessee October 10–13, 2016.

Recognize Your Peers and Nominate their Outstanding Work!

Your nominations are really worth the effort! SOBA’s Awards Program allows you recognize outstanding achievement of your staff, your peers, and the many cooperators and partners you have worked with.

Don't let another year go by without honoring a venture you’ve been involved in. So often great projects and people are never rewarded, or brought to light. A nomination in itself is a statement of recognition and definitely worth the time that it takes to submit the nomination.
How to Nominate

It's easy to nominate! A complete description of the awards criteria and nomination forms are available on SOBA’s website: www.sobaus.org.

(NOTE: Outstanding Project Awards submitted in 2015 that were unsuccessful are automatically resubmitted in 2016 for consideration.)

New nominations should be forwarded to Ron Christofferson no later than June 15th, 2016 in one of two ways:

- By email (15 MB or less)
- Copied and mailed on a CD

All project initiatives should be completed when your nomination information is submitted, and if in rare circumstances this is not possible, please contact Ron Christofferson, details below.

Primary Contact:

Ron Christofferson, Boating Facilities Program Manager, Arizona Game and Fish Department
5000 W. Carefree Hwy., Phoenix, AZ 85086

Tel: 623-236-7481
Fax: 623-236-7327
E-mail: RChristofferson@azgfd.gov

Award Descriptions

The William H. Ivers Award is presented to an individual who has contributed significantly over at least 15 years to the design, construction, management or administration of boat access facilities or programs. The nominee’s contributions will exemplify high standards of professionalism and outstanding achievement.

The Outstanding Service Award is presented to an individual or to an agency that have made either a one-time or continuing contribution to improved access on our nation’s public waters for boaters and anglers.

The Professional Service Award is presented to an individual SOBA member or to a group of SOBA members (most often a designated Task Force or Committee) for service on a special project or for ongoing efforts on behalf of SOBA’s mission.

The Special Recognition Award is presented to an individual, group, organization or political subdivision in recognition of activities that are singularly illustrative or supportive of SOBA’s mission.

The State Boating Access Program Excellence Award is presented to a state agency that has primary responsibility for boat access development, and which has excelled over time and provided outstanding service to its residents and visitors to the state.

The State Clean Vessel Act (CVA) Program Excellence Award is presented to a
state agency that has primary responsibility for the state clean vessel act program, and which has excelled over time and provided outstanding service to its residents and visitors to the state.

The **Outstanding Project Awards** are presented to agencies, groups, local government, or corporations involved in boating access projects that are judged to be useful, high quality, unique, economical and/or innovative. There are four (4) project award categories: 1) small, 2) medium, 3) large, and 4) marina and harbors (includes BIG projects).

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**SPORT FISHING AND BOATING PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE**

by Scott Kovarovics, Council Chair

The Council and SOBA leaders remain engaged in a complex effort to improve the permitting processes for boating access projects. Specifically, John Sprague, Janine Belleque (SOBA Board Member), James Adams (SOBA Board Member), Chris Edmonston (BoatU.S.) and others have continued meeting with staff from federal agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and National Marine Fisheries Service, to discuss potential pilot projects aimed at improving the efficiency permit review process. John Sprague has led the Council’s efforts in Florida and Janine Belleque is leading efforts in Oregon and on the West Coast. John is working closely with federal agencies and is supporting their efforts as they collectively address internal agency processes that can unintentionally slow permit reviews. Janine has actively trained federal agency staff on boating access developments and construction processes. Through her experience with this project, Janine identified training an effective way to educate federal agency staff about these issues and improve their knowledge about the many factors that affect boating access projects. Collectively, the Council is making a difference in this arena and encourages SOBA members to consider taking similar actions in their regions and areas. Please feel free to contact Janine Belleque (Janine.belleque@state.or.us) to obtain more information.

John Adey, Council member and president of the American Boat and Yacht Council, continues to commit resources of his organization to assist with the complicated issue of aquatic invasive species. The boating industry fully understands the potential ramifications of aquatic invasive species and the accompanying boating access concerns these can create. There is broad support for greater research, funding and prioritization of resources to reduce the spread of invasive species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Fish and Aquatic Conservation program has provided some funding for a joint FWS/ABYC project to develop technical guidelines that will help prevent the spread of invasive species.

In addition, Thom Dammrich, NMMA President, alerted Council members about some promising research on a mussel contaminant being led by Premier Materials and Keith Boulais, its CEO. Mr. Boulais will give a presentation of his company’s research on the toxicity of their product to mussels at the upcoming May Council meeting.

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**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE: WILDLIFE AND SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROGRAM UPDATE**

by Brad Gunn
Happy spring everyone! Here’s some of what’s going on with the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) Boating Grant Programs.

**Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG):**

The BIG program offers two levels of funding, Tier 1 and Tier 2. Tier 1 may be competitive within the States and, for the first time, provides a maximum Federal award of $200,000 per State annually. The Service’s Christy Vigfusson, Chief, Branch of Programs, made the FY 2016 Awards announcement at the Palm Beach International Boat Show in Florida; one of the biggest shows of its kind.

Thirty-one States and/or territories requested a total of $5,136,042 in BIG Tier 1 funds and offered a total non-Federal cost share of $6,085,445. This was a substantial increase over the FY 2015 Tier 1 numbers of $1,995,439 and $1,896,306, respectively.

Tier 2 funds are nationally competitive and typically for larger-scale projects with a maximum Federal award of $1.5 million per grant. This year we received 22 eligible Tier 2 projects. We fully funded 10 projects, and partially funded one additional project, for a total Federal share of $8,587,429 and non-Federal cost share of $9,172,637. The Tier 2 projects will contribute approximately 538 new slips, plus other amenities—including restrooms, showers, wave attenuators, fuel and pump-out stations, and navigational aids—for the use and enjoyment of the transient recreational boating public. Note that this was the first year under the new BIG rules and we will be requesting input on how well they worked in the coming months.

**BIG Tier 2 Application Tip:** Please pay close attention to instructions in each year’s Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and provide detailed information where requested! Lack of details can greatly impact the ranking of your project!

We received 33 CVA applications from 22 States for FY 2016. The total amount of Federal funds requested was $15,630,731 which exceeded available amount of $13,723,471. We have completed our review of the applications and sent them to the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for their review. Once we receive the review response from the other Federal agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director will make final award selections. We anticipate announcing the FY 2016 awards in May.

**Boating Access Subprogram of the Sport Fish Restoration Program:**

The Boating Access program provides grant funds to the States, the District of Columbia and insular area fish and wildlife agencies for projects that acquire, develop, renovate, maintain, or improve facilities that provide public access to the waters of the United States for recreational boating. States in each Region must collectively spend at least 15% of their Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) apportionment on Boating Access projects over a set 5 year period. The national FY 2016 SFR apportionment was $361,077,093. Work with your regional WSFR office to determine the boating access funding opportunities for your State!

**WSFR Branch of Policy:**

WSFR staff are reviewing the comments we received on the Advanced Notice of
Proposed Rulemaking we posted in 2015. The announcement and the comments can still be viewed at: www.regulations.gov Document # FWS-HQ-WSR-2015-0006. You may want to take a look to get a feel for what issues were brought up during the comment period.

We anticipate some CVA draft rule language, based in part on the comments we received, being available for feedback by this fall. We also hope to have proposed rules out for formal review before the end of 2016 but that part may get pushed into 2017.

The recent passage of the Highway Bill (Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act—Public Law 114-92) also known as the FAST Act, signed by President Obama on December 4, 2015, combined CVA and BIG funds into one pot. Now 4% of the remaining funds in the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (after deducting for WSFR administration, the Multistate Conservation Grant Program, the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council and fisheries commissions) is available for the CVA and BIG Programs. Previously it was 2% for each program.

The FAST Act also allows for no more than 75% of the total funds available to CVA and BIG to be utilized for either program. This means that the amounts available for CVA or BIG are not fixed by law but that the Service has some flexibility to adjust funding, if desired, in order to facilitate more projects in either program. Determining the best path forward should involve stakeholders including input from the States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) and the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC). For FY 2016 funds were split equally between CVA and BIG.

**Headquarters Boating Grant Contacts:**

Tom Busiahn  
Chief, Division of Policy and Programs  
[Tom_Busiahn@fws.gov](mailto:Tom_Busiahn@fws.gov)  
703.358.2231

Lisa E. Van Alstyne  
Chief, Branch of Policy  
[Lisa_Van_Alstyne@fws.gov](mailto:Lisa_Van_Alstyne@fws.gov)  
703.358.1942

Christy Vigfusson  
Chief, Branch of Programs  
[Christy_Vigfusson@fws.gov](mailto:Christy_Vigfusson@fws.gov)  
703.358.1748

Brad Gunn  
Fish and Wildlife Biologist—Grants, Programs Branch  
[Brad_Gunn@fws.gov](mailto:Brad_Gunn@fws.gov)  
703.358.2009

**SOBA PUMP-OUT VESSEL TASK FORCE**

by Kate Hughes-Brown

During SOBA’s annual conference last year in Vermont, a presentation and draft version of the taskforce report was presented during the annual business meeting, with a request for additional review and comment by the SOBA membership. A final version which provides recommendations to state programs that are considering utilization of pump-out boats in their CVA programs incorporates these final comments and suggestions and is ready for publication. The final goal of the taskforce is to produce a document entitled “Pump-out Boat Buying and Operation Recommendations” that will be available as a reference to all interested parties. The SOBA Board has determined that the publication will be available shortly on the [SOBA website](http://www.soba.org) and will be free to members, with a price tag of $25 for non-members.
The first 3 months of 2016 have been BIG at BoatU.S. If you haven’t heard 2016 marks BoatU.S.’s 50th Anniversary and we have a lot to celebrate!

In 1966 Richard Schwartz set out to offer make boaters lives better by offering “service, savings and representation.” His vision has grown and today BoatU.S. has over half a million members. BoatU.S. will be celebrating its golden anniversary in 2016 with a series of special member events around the country and coverage in our flagship publication, *BoatU.S. Magazine*. Here are some highlights of our accomplishments over the last 50 years

http://www.boatus.com/pressroom/release.asp?id=1161#.VwQgQ_kguWg

But our work is not done! BoatU.S. continues to work daily on challenging issues facing boaters. In the last few months we have continued our efforts on ethanol fuel and anchoring restrictions in Florida.

Our non-profit, the BoatU.S. Foundation, announced a change to our grants program in February. We now offer a rolling deadline allowing groups to apply for grant funding throughout the year. These grants, up to $10,000, are available to non-profit organizations looking to educate the boating public about safe and clean boating. More information on our grants program is available: http://www.boatus.org/grants/

The Foundation also recently announced a new effort on marine debris. With funding from the NOAA Marine Debris Program and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, we will be working with two of our towers to remove large debris in Lake Erie and offshore of Maryland as well as studying the interactions between recreational boats and commercial pot fisheries with the aim of reducing derelict fishing gear. Of interest to many in the SOBA community, the Foundation is also continuing our involvement on the topic of Invasive Species as it relates to recreational boats.

### STEVE LEWIS

Steve Lewis, a long-time supporter and Past President of SOBA passed away earlier this year in his home state of Wisconsin. Steve was the recipient of SOBA’s prestigious William Ivers Award in 2011, during SOBA’s 25th anniversary year.

Throughout his 20 plus year career with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, he served the boaters and anglers of the State of Wisconsin well, and greatly contributed to the growth of boating in Wisconsin and the nation. He assisted and eventually became responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of public access projects that now serve an estimated 1.5 million plus boaters and anglers in Wisconsin. In addition, he was involved with the design and implementation of Wisconsin’s web-
based, state-wide boating access program, and developed a shore fishing facility database which was one of the first in the nation. Wisconsin’s public access program provides significant economic benefits to the state and has been recognized by SOBA for various achievements. Steve’s contributions to SOBA over the years helped the organization grow stronger and more influential at both the state and national levels.

Brian Bohnsack, FWS, a good friend of Steve’s shared this personal thought about Steve…

*It was with great sadness that I read the SOBA listserv announcement of Steve Lewis’ passing. Steve was a personal friend and we had remained in contact over the years.*

I wanted to share a personal insight regarding my experiences with Steve and how he represented SOBA at the national level. I first met Steve during the contentious Sport Fish Restoration fund reauthorization process that resulted in the passage of the Sportfishing and Recreational Boating Safety Amendments Act of 2005. This reauthorization process was overseen by the American League of Anglers and Boaters (ALAB). This reauthorization was perhaps one of the most contentious that has occurred for the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund in its history. The process was lengthy and was quite an experience to participate in as a neutral federal agency representative.

*Throughout the many lengthy ALAB meetings and processes that took place to develop a consensus position for what is commonly known as Wallop-Breaux reauthorization, Steve remained the consummate professional in representing SOBA and boating access. I was then, and will continue to be impressed with Steve’s devotion to both SOBA and to boaters. I truly believe that Steve always kept the best interests of SOBA, and more importantly the end user of boaters in mind as he participated in every ALAB meeting. He earned the respect of many ALAB members throughout, and moreover, I believe Steve’s actions elevated or certainly maintained the role of SOBA in national policy making realms for boating. SOBA, in my opinion, has benefitted enormously as a result of Steve’s efforts and involvement long after his retirement from the state of Wisconsin, and from his SOBA responsibilities.*

I was heartened to see SOBA pay tribute to Steve for his lifelong commitment to boating, and to boating access, by awarding him their highest honor of the William Ivers Award, at SOBA’s 25th anniversary conference in La Crosse, Wisconsin in 2011. Ellie, his wife, said this meant the world to him.

Steve was a sailor. I hope his sails are always full of good winds. He earned it.

Here is [Steve’s obituary](#)—please feel free to share this with friends and colleagues who had the pleasure of knowing him.

### FROM PUMPOUT PIRATES TO PLAYFUL FLOATING-POTTY PSA’S

by Eric Scigliano, Washington Sea Grant

Washington’s and Oregon’s Clean Vessel Act programs turn to their local Sea Grants for innovative outreach

Two West Coast states have enlisted unusual allies in their campaigns to induce boaters to “pump, not dump”—to deliver onboard sewage for safe upland treatment
rather than polluting local waters. Washington’s and Oregon’s Clean Vessel Act (CVA)
programs partner with their states’ Sea Grant programs to show boaters and marina
operators why they should divert their sewage and how they can do it with federal CVA
support. Washington’s results are impressive, offering a potential model for other state
clean-vessel agencies.

Sea Grant is a NOAA-sponsored network of 33 research and education programs at
top universities and other marine institutions throughout America’s coastal states and
territories. Each Sea Grant program tailors its offerings to the needs of its state’s
coastal communities, from aquaculture to ocean literacy to basic research to tsunami
and other hazard readiness. In Oregon and Washington, that includes helping boaters
keep the waters they love clean.

The two states’ clean-vessel programs likewise reflect their coastal geographies and
economies. Washington’s program, operated by the Washington State Parks
Department, reaches out to marina operators and boaters with onboard holding tanks.
It has supported the installation or upgrading and operation of 145 self-service
pumpout stations at parks, public and private marinas, including a solar-powered
pumpout on one rural lake. In the past three years Washington State Parks has also
launched a free mobile pumpout service on Seattle’s urban lakes and is working to
provide a similar service in the remote San Juan Islands.

The Oregon State Marine Board, which operates its state’s CVA
program, serves smaller harbors, the Columbia River, and riverside
Portland rather than a vast estuary like Puget Sound. It supports
floating toilets (23 statewide) and dumping stations for boaters
without onboard loos, as well as pumpouts.

In 2009 Washington State Parks enlisted Washington Sea Grant
(WSG) for what’s become the Pumpout Washington campaign.
Oregon’s Marine Board followed suit in 2012, tapping Oregon Sea
Grant (OSG) for its outreach.

Aaron Barnett, WSG’s boating program coordinator, and Jenny East, his new OSG
counterpart, constantly seek new avenues and outlets for the pumpout message; as
East says, “My job is all about finding innovative ways to engage with Oregon’s
recreational boaters.” In just four months she’s already toured and photographed waste
facilities all along Oregon’s coast, soliciting boaters’ and operators’ feedback. She’s
also begun visiting boat shows and speaking to sailing and yacht clubs, just as Barnett
has in his four years at the project.

To get boaters’ attention and encourage them to do the right thing, Barnett uses state
Clean Vessel Program funding to give out screw-in adapter kits he developed from
cheap off-the-shelf materials, which allow secure, hands-free pumping and eliminate
the dreaded “brown shower.” He’s also devised a novel way of getting these kits where
they’re needed, and where boaters are most receptive: by kayak at regattas and
marine festivals. This mediagenic “pumpout paddling” has reached thousands of
boaters and passengers and a much wider TV-news audience.

With help from the local Coast Guard Auxiliary and WSG volunteers, Barnett has
delivered adapters and literature to more than 9,000 of Washington’s 20,000 eligible
boaters. He crisscrosses the state helping Washington Parks Clean Vessel Program
manager Al Wolslegel teach marina operators how to upgrade their pumpouts and
apply for CVA grants.
WSG has relied on traditional print and online media, including brochures and magazine ads, to spread its message. But OSG has also ventured into video with playful, smartly produced public service announcements promoting floating restrooms and dockside dumping stations. East plans new videos about how to use and maintain them.

Does such outreach work? Oregon’s reported pumpout collections, beset by drought conditions and data-retrieval problems, have languished lately at somewhere under 1 million gallons a year. But Pumpout Washington can point to a growth rate that a tech startup would envy. In 2014 the pumpouts it supports diverted 6 million gallons of raw sewage, up from just a few hundred thousand in 1994, when the program launched. Last year it topped 8.3 million, and Wolslegel hopes to hit 10 million in 2016. “Boaters are taking advantage of the increase in the number and reliability of pumpouts,” he says, but they also view pumping out differently: “Our educational outreach has increased awareness of the impact on the environment, and pumping out has become the correct thing to do.”

**TRACS UPDATE: APRIL 2016**

by Val Thompson, Alaska

The TRACS enhancement formally known as TRACS Version 2 is scheduled to be complete by the fall of 2017. The enhancement will utilize standardized objectives (based on SMART objectives) so that project and program achievements can be rolled up on a national level. This will allow the US Fish and Wildlife Service to meet their new performance/accountability requirements. The TRACS leadership team is still working on finalizing the standard objectives. For example, a draft standardized objective for the boating access program for facilities construction/facility O&M is the number of facilities to be constructed and/or maintained within the specified grant period.

The TRACS enhancement interface will be more user friendly including the elimination of hand drawing maps for project areas. A drop down menu will be available for general locations such as state boundaries, political boundaries, and fish/wildlife management areas just to name a few. States will only be required to use these larger, pre-set areas to set up a new project into TRACS. States will then be able to provide more detail of the project area during the reporting component.

There will be flexibility during the transition from the current version of TRACS to the enhancement in regards to the implementation of SMART objectives. It was discussed at length that since the TRACS leadership team is currently working on drafting standardized SMART objectives that it would be acceptable for States who have yet to implement SMART objectives to stay status quo until the standardized objectives are finalized in 2017.

Another key element to the TRACS enhancement is that no project data will be lost or placed into legacy data. The current TRACS project entries will be carried forward into the new enhancement format but there may be slight data gaps.
The copy forward feature will have one slight glitch in the enhanced version of TRACS. We will not be able to copy forward between the current version of TRACS and the enhanced version. States will unfortunately have to re-enter reoccurring projects into the enhanced version from scratch. However, once entered into the enhanced version you will be able to copy forward from then on.

That’s it for now on the TRACS front. Thank you for the opportunity to represent SOBA and the boating access community and I will continue to keep you apprised of any significant changes with TRACS.

Val Thompson, Assistant Statewide Access Program Coordinator, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Sport Fish Division. Tel: (907) 267-2164 or valerie.thompson@alaska.gov

NASBLA AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PADDLESPORTS

Background:
The NASBLA Ad Hoc Committee on Paddlesports is working to address a variety of concerns associated with the growth in the number of fatalities involving paddlesports* observed and documented over the last several years. NASBLA and the Ad Hoc Committee are interested in working collaboratively with all stakeholders to find sustainable solutions and begin to address the concerns surrounding paddlesports.

Mission:
To bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to engage with NASBLA members in productive dialogue and to find actionable opportunities to partner and promote paddlesports while growing a culture of safety across the United States. With continued dialogue we aim to decrease the incidence of accidents and injuries even while participation increases.

Ad Hoc Committee Members:

- Wade Alonzo, Washington BLA—Chair
- Deb Gona, NASBLA Research Consultant
- David Dahms, Idaho BLA—Vice Chair
- Ron Sarver, NASBLA Deputy Director
- Pam Dillion, NASBLA Education Director
- Chris Stec, ACA
- MariAnn McKenzie, Oregon Education Coordinator
- Jim Emmons, Water Sport Industry Foundation

Current Efforts:
With the support of the NASBLA Board, the Ad Hoc Committee is working to research and develop best practices for paddlesport programs and best practices for injury prevention programs. The focus so far has been on best practices for paddlesport programs. Interviews are being conducted with states that have paddlesport programs...
(fees/registration/permits) and states that are developing programs. Additionally, a preliminary survey was given to over 400 attendees of CanoeCopia in Wisconsin. The goal of the survey is to understand paddler’s views on paddlesport programs (see CanoeCopia Report). The Ad Hoc Committee plans to continue surveying paddlers at different venues throughout the US. NASBLA has applied for a grant to help fund the Ad Hoc Committee’s efforts to continue researching best practices.

*For this purpose paddlesports will be defined as all forms of kayaking, canoeing, and stand-up paddling (outside of a surf zone or swim area). Although it may include oar based sports (i.e., drift boats, rafts, and row boats) these types of boats are not a primary focus.

**AFWA POLICY ON THE USE OF THE CLEAN DRAIN DRY® PHRASE**

by Ryan Roberts

In December 2015, Wildlife Forever, who had previously held the trademark for the phrase, “Clean Drain Dry,” donated this mark to AFWA. Our official policy, as discussed with the Invasive Species Committee at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, is as follows:

“The Clean Drain Dry® phrase is trademarked, officially registered to AFWA by the US Patent and Trademark Office. We allow the use of this phrase free of charge and without licensing requirements to any organization or individual engaged in management, outreach or related activities intended to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. The AFWA Invasive Species Committee will serve as an advisory group for any matters related to this trademarked phrase.”

More information on "Clean Drain Dry" may be found here.

**AFWA Releases 2015 Annual Report**

In this year’s annual report we highlight the efforts of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America’s Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, comprised of national business and conservation leaders. We are pleased to announce that the Blue Ribbon Panel will remain solvent and will continue to work towards the implementation their recommendations.

As you'll also see throughout its pages, the report reflects AFWA's four strategic goals to (1) advocate for sound conservation policies
and legislation; (2) secure and sustain funding; (3) strengthen conservation partnerships; and (4) support members' engagement within the Association.

AFWA Comments on the USFWS Interim Final Rule Listing 201 Salamanders as Injurious

In mid-January 2016, the US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) released their interim final rule listing 201 salamander species as injurious under the Lacey Act, including 67 native salamander species. The intent of the interim rule is to protect the United States against the emerging salamander chytrid fungus, *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (or Bsal). Lacey Act injurious wildlife listings, as interpreted by FWS, prohibit both importation and interstate transport. As such, states must now have permits to move the listed species, or their parts, across state lines. The interim rule went into effect on January 28th, and the public comment period ended on March 14th.

With input from state fish and wildlife agency herpetologists and wildlife diversity biologists, the AFWA Amphibian & Reptile Subcommittee, and Invasive Species and Fish & Wildlife Health Committees, AFWA submitted comments, signed by President Dave Chanda. While AFWA supported the proactive and protective nature of the rulemaking, we expressed several concerns surrounding the federal permits now required for movement of the listed native species and tissues. We also proposed solutions to improve implementation for incorporation in the final rule, including scenarios for permit exemption. Our emphasis was to ensure that conservation and management efforts can continue without hindrances. We will continue working with FWS toward these improvements in the final rule.

White House Issues Action Plan for Drought Resilience

On March 21, President Obama issued a Memorandum and Action Plan titled, "Building National Capabilities for Long-Term Drought Resilience." This Memorandum and Action Plan, combines the efforts of federal agencies, in helping communities manage the impact of drought by linking information, such as forecasts and early warnings, with drought preparedness strategies in critical sectors like agriculture, municipal water systems, tourism and transportation. See the links to the Memorandum, Action Plan and Commitments to a Sustainable Water Future below.
The Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies has developed a list of clear Drought needs, stemming from the September Drought Forum in Tucson, AZ and subsequent conference calls following the Drought Forum. AFWA is populating a water subcommittee to address some of the needs highlighted at the Forum.

**AFWA Drought Forum Needs**

MORE THAN JUST A PARTY! NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PARKS, PROGRAMS, AND PARTNERS KICKED OFF THE CENTENNIAL YEAR IN GRAND FASHION!

by Bob Ratcliffe, Chief, NPS Conservation and Recreation Programs

The National Park Service (NPS) will celebrate its 100th birthday on August 25, 2016, but throughout 2016 there are many opportunities for partners, parks, and programs to engage in making the centennial a success. Beginning with the NPS being featured in the Rose Bowl Parade, and thousands of people venturing out on First Day Hikes (some on the water!), the NPS and its many partners are encouraging people to “find their parks”. The Find Your Park campaign is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to not only connect people to national parks, but to promote and provide connections for everyone to all public lands, and of course, waters. It is also a time to help shift the public paradigm and traditional view of parks being far off, iconic places toward discovering and celebrating close to home parks—and rivers—of all kinds and the meaning they have for all of us.

**How can you get involved?**

Use the hashtags #FindYourPark/#EncuentraTuParque on your next river adventure, access, or conservation project.

Find Your Park is a broad public outreach initiative to explain the work of the NPS to all Americans and invite them to join in our second century of stewardship. Funded through the National Park Foundation, the campaign uses all forms of media (print, television, digital, and social media) to share NPS messages with the public. The goal is to build relevance, connection, and support for the work of the National Park Service and our family of partners and to invite Americans to Find Your Park.

**Participate in National Park Week**

For the National Park Service Centennial, we are celebrating National Park Week by giving everyone free admission to national parks all week! You can:

- Share the short and fun National Park Week video available in English and Spanish.
- Invite a doctor to participate in Park Rx Day
- Register and enter events/experiences at www.nextcenturyforparks.org that will
Encourage fourth graders to download their free pass. Every Kid in a Park gives fourth graders, and their families, free access to experience federal lands and waters throughout the 2015–2016 school year. Download a free pass to see America’s natural wonders, including our rivers, for free at http://www.everykidinapark.gov Every Kid in a Park aims to connect children to their cultural and natural heritage.

Share Your Story about why you love rivers and water. Get inspired by Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewell who found her park as a child. In her “share your story” video, Secretary Jewell urges everyone to get up, get out, and #FindYourPark.

Stay connected to the Centennial. Visit Next Century for Parks to add your Centennial events and obtain partner toolkit materials and additional guidance for efforts at the national, regional, program, and park levels for the Centennial.

If you’re interested in getting a monthly eNewsletter from the NPS Centennial Office, email your contact info and request to be added to the list at: nps_centennial@nps.gov

Resources for River Access from the National Park Service and Partners
By Corita Waters, NPS River Partnerships

River access and water trails continue to grow in popularity, and with that growth, comes a desire for new resources and best practices. Over the last two years, the National Park Service and River Management Society (RMS) have been cooperating to offer new tools for river access.

We welcome your comments and additional links, as well as encourage you to share the resources through your channels.

SOBA Input Needed!
This spring and summer, through a grant from the National Park Foundation and REI, we will be developing an update to our Prepare to Launch document that focuses on urban launches. We would love pictures, plans, and ideas from SOBA members. Send your ideas to Corita Waters at corita_waters@nps.gov

National Water Trails System Best Management Practices Toolbox
Visit https://www.nps.gov/WaterTrails/Toolbox to explore the array of tools for water trail managers and suggest your own ideas for additions by contacting us. The goal of this toolbox is to share knowledge and best practices among water trail managers, whether you are working on new or well-established water trails.

The National Water Trails System represents the best water trails from across the country and we believe by sharing the national network of best practices the system provides, everyone can find resources to help improve their own recreation and conservation practices. The seven elements of a successful and sustainable water trail are considered best management practices for the National Water Trails System. The toolbox delves into each of these
topics in more detail to provide examples, images, plans, and other information. The National Water Trails System represents the best water trails from across the country and we believe by sharing the national network of best practices the system provides, everyone can find resources to help improve their own recreation and conservation practices.

2015 National Water Trails Forum
Learn how water trails organizations valued the networking, training and sharing they experienced at this first-ever National Water Trails Forum. View the National Water Trails Forum video, which highlights an accessibility workshop from the Forum.

Prepare to Launch! Guidelines For Assessing, Designing & Building Access Sites For Carry-In Watercraft
Prepare to Launch! is a resource designed to help facility and trail planners and park and recreation project leaders plan and build or update an access site tailored to the needs of canoeists, kayakers, tubers, stand-up paddlers, or small craft sailors. It guides a reader through the development process from conception to design creation, and provides a variety of launch construction options. Here’s a link on this site to various options for seeing, learning and downloading the Prepare to Launch resources.

Public Access Guide for Landowners and Water Trails & River Managers
This is an easy-to-understand guide on a serious topic that often draws questions from water trails directors, managers and volunteers. It is written in plain English and offered in two formats.

Making an Economic Case for Watertrails
In 2015, RMS conducted a review of public studies conducted to measure the economic impact of water trails. Interestingly, there were not many to be found! There are dozens of articles written and presentations presented selling the concept of water trails, river trails, blue trails, blueways and greenways. We’re not sure if these are meant to be as different as they sound: they are all waterways connected and collaboratively managed by cooperating communities, jurisdictions and local business interests.

Review the Making an Economic Argument for Watertrails report.

Thanks to Risa Shimoda, RMS, for developing the report and document descriptions above.
New TakeMeFishing.org Website Well-Received

Hundreds of thousands of anglers and boaters throughout the country have made their way to the redesigned TakeMeFishing.org, and preliminary results are very positive. In the website’s first month, the site achieved around 10,000 daily sessions—a great number made even better knowing there are limited marketing dollars behind the new site as of yet.

One of the key features of the redesigned site is a completely overhauled Places to Fish and Boat Map, which features great fishing and boating locations across the country, as well as fishing license vendors, marinas, bait shops and outfitters. Additionally, the website has been optimized for all screen types and sizes using responsive design, enhanced state information, a streamlined layout, new advertising options and an updated corporate section and Resource Center for stakeholders.

RBFF Boat Registration Program Back for Fifth Year

RBFF’s successful Boat Registration Marketing Program, which was first expanded nationally in 2012, launched on April 1 of this year. In an attempt to lure boaters back to the water, letters encouraging owners of lapsed boats to re-register their boats will be sent in 18 partnering states. In 2015, the program saw a response rate of 8.8%, double the U.S. average of 4.4%, and drew more than 45,000 lapsed boat owners to re-register their boats. Throughout the four-year history of the nationwide program, over 169,900 boats have been re-registered, leading to more than $6 million in additional revenue for partnering states and more boaters enjoying our nation’s waterways.

RBFF and AREA to Develop Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) Guidelines

In an effort to develop national Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) Guidelines and provide a framework for industrywide angler R3 programs, RBFF and the Aquatic Resources Education Association (AREA) entered into a strategic partnership. The guidelines will incorporate the current R3 strategies developed by the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) for hunting and will build upon the foundation provided by RBFF’s Best Practices Workbook for Boating, Fishing and Aquatic Resources Stewardship Education.
As part of Phase I of the project, a comprehensive literature review has been compiled, summarizing relevant research and literature pertaining to angler R3 strategies. The literature review will provide a foundation of defendable knowledge that will allow this project to identify effective approaches to increase angling and boating participation.

**Top Places Sweepstakes Engages Record Number of Consumers**
One of RBFF’s top-performing promotions has just completed its third year and preliminary results point to a record-breaking year. The revamped sweepstakes, which helps generate awareness of our nation’s incredible family-friendly fishing and boating resources, included mobile-friendly formatting, an expanded list of locations for consumers to vote for, including several National Parks and all sweepstakes materials were available in both English and Spanish.

The sweepstakes saw great engagement on social media, thanks in part to RBFF’s state agency and industry partners sharing sweepstakes information and increased media support helped propel the sweepstakes to a 51% increase in entries and 75% increase in registrants opting-in to receive future communications from Take Me Fishing.

Final results, including the Top 100 Places to Fish and Boat list will be released ahead of National Fishing and Boating Week, June 4–12, and will be promoted throughout the summer.

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**TAKE A SNEAK PEEK AT ABC’S 2016 TOP ADVOCACY ISSUES!**

*by Lauren Dunn, NMMA, DC Office*

Still haven't registered for ABC? Don't wait! Here's a glimpse of what we'll be covering:

- Trade
- Recreational Fishing
- Ethanol
- Water Resources Development Act
- Invasive Species
- Deferred Importation
- Workforce Development
- Hot Topics by State
- Protecting Boating Access

**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!**

[Book your hotel now!](#)
Renaissance Washington, D.C.
999 Ninth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

[CLICK HERE](#) to book your room. Space is limited!

ABC is your chance to meet elected officials to discuss your policy concerns; Speak directly with policymakers in your Congressional district; Learn more about the
Congressional process and how you can stay involved year round; Hear from elected officials, policy makers, and distinguished speakers; and join peers from all segments of the industry to help ensure a healthy future for recreational boating.

For more information on ABC, please visit www.nmma.org/abc or contact Laura Crisler at lcrisler@nmma.org or 202-737-974. Don’t forget to follow @therealnmma on Twitter for breaking conference updates! #ABC2016

New York Primary Victories Brighten Nomination Outlook For Clinton, Trump

Coverage of Hillary Clinton’s victory in New York’s Democratic presidential primary almost universally cast it as a “decisive” win that makes her path to the nomination nearly inevitable. Politico says that with the “emphatic win” in the state she represented as a senator from 2001 to 2009, Clinton “could finally put to rest lingering doubts about her struggles” against rival Bernie Sanders “and allow her to finally pivot in earnest to the general election.” The New York Times says New York provided one of Clinton’s “biggest boosts yet toward becoming the first woman to capture the Democratic Party’s nomination for president.” The Washington Post assets that the win “makes it near-mathematically impossible for” Sanders “to overtake her lead in the race for convention delegates,” and Reuters says the win put Clinton in a position to perform well next week when five other Northeastern states conduct primaries.

The Wall Street Journal says the win blocked one of the last remaining avenues for Sanders to change the race’s direction and probably made Clinton’s path to the Democratic nomination inevitable. Bloomberg Politics likewise calls Clinton’s “march to the nomination all but unstoppable,” while the AP says she denied the Vermont senator “a crucial opportunity to narrow the margin,” adding that although Sanders “vowed to compete through all of the voting contests … his odds of overtaking Clinton at this stage in the race are low.”

Win Seen As Providing Needed Boost To GOP Front-Runner

Trump’s victory in his home state’s Republican presidential primary was portrayed in media analyses as a needed boost following recent setbacks. The Los Angeles Times says the result “could reset” Trump’s campaign “and help him regain the upper hand” in the hunt for delegates. The Huffington Post said the victory gives Trump “much-needed breathing room following a turbulent campaign shakeup and a bevy of primary victories” by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX). In an analysis for the Wall Street Journal, Gerald Seib writes that although Trump buttressed his standing as the GOP front-runner, the party still faces tough battles between Trump and Cruz over uncommitted delegates. Bloomberg Politics reports Trump “got a major boost in his quest to secure the Republican nomination with a majority of delegates,” but “could not eliminate the possibility of a contested convention.” The Washington Post says the victory puts Trump “closer to clinching the GOP nomination and should at least temporarily quell speculation that he will fall short of the votes needed before the July convention.” USA Today cites Trump as saying in his victory speech that “it would be ‘impossible’” for rivals Cruz and Gov. John Kasich (R-OH) to catch him in the delegate race and that he would have enough support before the GOP convention opens July 18 in Cleveland. The New York Daily News says Trump “crush[ed] his competition” and “reestablish[ed] himself as the front-runner for the GOP presidential nomination.” The win, the Daily News adds, “is likely to shift the momentum in the race—for now at least—back toward the temperamental tycoon and away from the ubiquitous ‘anti-Trump’ movement.”
For up-to-date information on the 2016 elections and highlights of key Congressional races, visit Election Center 2016.

**Fish and Wildlife Service hands out boating grants**

As reported by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in their editorial update in this newsletter, the FWS announced nearly $14 million in grants to 32 states, commonwealths and territories for projects to support recreational boating through the service’s Boating Infrastructure Grant program.

“Our recreational boats and boat docks share the water with fish and wildlife species critical to our ecology and economy,” service director Dan Ashe said in a statement. “In the same way good hunting practices and land stewardship benefit terrestrial wildlife, boating facilities can benefit aquatic species by keeping waterways clean and driving revenues to state wildlife agencies through fishing that can be placed back into conservation. It’s a cycle of success. Not only do these grants help to create safe and improved recreational boating facilities and provide improved access to boating and fishing opportunities—they put people to work.”

Funding for the BIG program comes from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, which boaters and manufacturers support through excise and other taxes on certain fishing and boating equipment and gasoline. It must be matched by the states at a rate of $1 for every $3 of federal funds.

“State agencies and their partners are the backbone to the successes of the BIG program, bringing matching funds to the table to support these projects,” said Hannibal Bolton, the service’s assistant director for the wildlife and sport fish restoration program. “Through the BIG grants program, we strengthen community ties by enhancing access to historic, cultural and natural resources for millions of boat owners and outdoor enthusiasts.”

For information about the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program visit http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/.

**AMI UPDATE**

by Wendy Larimer

As always, AMI started off its year with the 14th annual *International Marina & Boatyard Conference (IMBC).*

This year’s event saw a 4% increase in numbers making it the most successful show in Fort Lauderdale to date.

IMBC took place January 27–29, 2016, at the Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

New this year was a partnership with Refit International Exhibition and Conference, a show produced by Professional Boatbuilder Magazine. Attendees were able to visit 144 IMBC exhibitor booths featuring everything from Wi-Fi providers to Docking Solutions while Refit International Exhibition and Conference offered 83 exhibitor booths for a grand total of 227 exhibitors at one show.
A highlight of the event was keynote speaker, Connie Podesta who opened the show with her presentation on "Life Would Be Easier if it Weren't for Other People". Podesta's message focused on "Encouraging that the key to success is the ability to get along with other people" reminding the audience that "The key to being a great salesperson in any situation is to learn what type of personality you are communicating to". The morning keynote was followed by a series of technical breakout sessions organized into four tracks: coastal, inland, engineering and boatyard and service.

Announced at IMBC was AMI’s completion of the Marina Economic Impact Calculator. This online free tool is designed to determine the overall economic impact, including direct and indirect effects, jobs created, and taxes generated. Marina operators simply enter their gross revenues and the calculator does the rest.

The value to the marina owner is in being able to show its impact to its community leaders, lenders and grantors. AMI will benefit because the calculator aggregates the impact from all users so an overall snapshot of the value of marinas can be discovered both on a regional and national basis.

While the Marina Economic Impact Calculator is an important tool, AMI is already working on a second generation model that will allow users to break down their impact by profit center to really see what part of each business contributes most to the economy. To learn more about the calculator visit this page.

Moving into spring we just opened our Wage Rate Survey designed to give marina operators a tool in which to gauge their salary structure versus other similar businesses in their region and across the US. The final report from the survey will be available later this spring.

Finally, we are promoting, prompting and pushing marinas to hold events for National Marina Day which will be held Saturday June 11. This annual event is a day for marinas to open their doors to the public to let their communities know what the boating lifestyle is all about. Marinas are encouraged to hold events to highlight the various types of boating, as well as safety and conservation messaging, and ideally, to give the public a chance to get out on the water. More information on the day is available at www.nationalmarinaday.org.

NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION
by Catherine Lloyd

Worldwide Voyage of the Hōkūle‘a
"Currently, our compass—and indeed the world's compass, points toward an unsustainable future. However, as on a canoe, our ability to survive is directly dependent on our ability to help each other. By bringing together and working with scientists, educators, policy makers, business leaders and concerned citizens, we believe Hawai‘i can one day become a model of social and environmental responsibility to the world." — Polynesian Voyaging Society

The ACA is proud to be a partner in this endeavor.
The Hōkūle'a will have scheduled landings this spring in Charleston, SC, Washington DC, and New York City. Learn more at www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea

**ACA State Director Program**

The [ACA’s State Director program](http://www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea) continues to flourish. The program supports the grassroots efforts of paddlers in each state, helping to bridge the gap between the ACA National Office and important statewide initiatives. Each State Director position is filled by a dedicated volunteer working to cultivate community responsibility to protect paddling environments and promote safe and enjoyable paddlesport opportunities. To view a list of recent State Director updates, please see the latest issue of the [ACA’s Paddle eMagazine](http://www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea).

**Safe Boating Videos**

Whether kayaking on a lake, rafting down a river, stand up paddleboarding in the ocean, or canoeing down a stream, millions of Americans participate in paddlesports each year. With the influx of novice paddlers on all types of waterways comes an increased risk of injuries and deaths. The ACA, with funding from the U.S. Coast Guard, partnered with Anzovin Studio to create three creative animated videos with the goal of educating and empowering paddlers to take responsibility for their safety on the water.

Visit [www.americancanoe.org/animatedvideos](http://www.americancanoe.org/animatedvideos) to view the videos.

Please share these videos with everyone you know to help us spread the message of safe boating and reduce the number of paddling-related fatalities.

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**NASBLA SUMMARY**

**by Kimberly Jenkins**

The [National Association of State Boating Law Administrators](http://www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea) has gotten off to a running start in 2016. One of the biggest pieces of news so far has been the signing of a memorandum of agreement with the [U.S. Coast Guard](http://www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea). During NASBLA’s annual Boating Law Administrator Workshop, held Feb. 17–18 in Lexington, Kentucky, RDML Paul F. Thomas, assistant commandant for Prevention Policy with the U.S. Coast Guard, and Darren Rider, NASBLA president, signed an MOU reaffirming the ongoing partnership between the two entities in striving to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for recreational boaters. The MOU also reiterates the organizations’ mutual commitment to ensure their productive relationship continues.

In other partnering news, last year NASBLA became a formal partner in the collaborative management of the [International Boating and Water Safety Summit](http://www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea). For nearly two decades, NASBLA has been an active participant in this annual event. This year, in cooperation with the [National Safe Boating Council](http://www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea) and the [National Water Safety Congress](http://www.americancanoe.org/Hokulea), NASBLA assisted in managing the Summit as it worked to ensure the
event is a premier professional development opportunity for state boating educators and program managers, as well as education program volunteers. NASBLA continues working to enhance training opportunities for law enforcement officers and first responders to broaden the Summit’s reach.

**Boat Operations and Training Program**

NASBLA’s BOAT Program closed out 2015 after directly delivering 56 courses and eight grant courses, accrediting seven additional agencies, and assisting/managing the delivery of another 14 courses through accredited partners and the Coast Guard. This progress is being recognized by others. The BOAT Program added two new Mission Partners—SAFE Boats and FLIR/Raymarine—and it was recognized by the Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center for Innovation in American Government as one of the Nation's top 25 programs.

New this year, the BOAT Program will offer a Tactical Operators Refresher Course. This three-day course is for students who have been through the five-day Tactical Operators Course. Available now, the refresher course is designed to enhance the knowledge and skills that students have already been trained in, acknowledging that the tactics and techniques necessary to react appropriately to threats in the maritime community are perishable if not practiced or executed on an annual basis. Contact BOAT Program Director Mark DuPont at mark.dupont@nasbla.org for more information.

**Spring Aboard**

NASBLA is gearing up for the second Spring Aboard campaign, taking place April 17–23. Through this campaign, which is produced under a grant administered by the U.S. Coast Guard, NASBLA encourages boaters to Spring Aboard by enrolling in a boating education course. Working in partnership with the states, many course providers will offer incentives or course discounts for students who enroll in or complete a course during the Spring Aboard campaign. Learn more and register at http://www.nasbla.org/spring.

**Operation Dry Water**

NASBLA is also ramping up for Operation Dry Water 2016, which takes place June 24–26. During those three days, law enforcement will be out in force across the country keeping the waters safe by simultaneously identifying and removing hundreds of impaired boaters from the waterways and educating recreational boaters.

Last year, 582 local, state and federal agencies joined forces in every U.S. state and territory for the Operation Dry Water campaign. **Over the course of the Operation Dry Water weekend, 6,605 officers:**

- Made 278 BUI arrests for both drugs and alcohol
- Issued 17,942 citations and safety warnings
- Made 57,402 vessel contacts
- Made contact with 125,087 boaters

The Operation Dry Water campaign has developed new marketing and outreach materials for 2016. Customizable materials, including a press kit, media release and talking points, are already available on the campaign website and ready for use. The remaining marketing and outreach resources will be released in April and May.
Registration is open for local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies that would like to participate in the 2016 Operation Dry Water awareness and enforcement campaign. Register online today at www.operationdrywater.org.

Annual Conference

NASBLA has issued a call for proposals for the 57th NASBLA Annual Conference. We are seeking input on topic ideas and presentations for the event. The deadline for session proposals is May 15.

We encourage presentations of all shapes and sizes; there’s no such thing as a crazy idea! We’re looking for content in all areas of recreational boating safety to help our knowledgeable and experienced audience explore new ways to tackle issues.

The conference will be held Sept. 11–14, in Seattle, Washington. For more information or to submit a proposal for a session, visit our call for proposals web page.

Small Craft Advisory

Starting in January, Small Craft Advisory became a monthly publication. This allows us to publish information in a timelier manner. Plus, with new content being added more often, it keeps the SCA blog site fresh.

This year the magazine’s issues focus on topics in the NASBLA Top 10 Most Wanted List of Recreational Boating Safety Improvements.

In an effort to identify the state’s recreational boating safety priorities and draw attention to them, the NASBLA membership developed the Top 10 Most Wanted Recreational Boating Safety Improvements. The list was initiated at the March 2015 Boating Law Administrator Workshop, finalized through two national BLA surveys, and recently unveiled during the 56th NASBLA Annual Conference in September 2015. Top 10 Most Wanted Recreational Boating Safety Improvements:

- Reduced Boating Under the Influence
- Increased Life Jacket Wear
- Reduced Distracted Boating/Improper Lookout
- Paddlesports Safety
- Standardized State/Federal Accident Terminology
- Boater Education for all Powerboat Operators
- Safety of Towed Water Sports
- Implementation of National Boating Education Standards
- Nationwide Education Reciprocity for Out-of-State Boaters
- Measures of Effectiveness for RBS Program Practices

The magazine’s 2016 Editorial Calendar is available on the NASBLA website.