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A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT: RON CHRISTOFFERSON

Dear SOBA Members and Boating Industry Partners:

I hope this edition of our newsletter finds you enjoying the end of summer, and accomplishing good things for boaters and boating facilities. As we move ever closer to our annual conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee in October, please be sure to complete your registration as soon as possible to help with our head count and planning purposes. It is going to be an exciting conference, with many learning opportunities and a great location to highlight boating facilities while enjoying the warmth of Southern hospitality. Click HERE for information about the agenda, registration, and hotel accommodations. We have extended our early bird registration...
Over the past several months, members of SOBA's Executive Board have been busy furthering our mission and coordinating with other national organizations and agencies. As an example, Kate Brown and I attended the American Boating Congress in Washington, D.C. in May, which included giving a presentation about SOBA during a break-out session, as well as two opportunities to speak during the general assembly about SOBA and specifically about the opportunities provided under the Clean Vessel Act. We also presented congressional awards on behalf of SOBA to Senator John Thune (R-SD) and Congresswoman Lois Frankel (D-FL) for their leadership and support of boating access. Fern Gibbons accepted the award on behalf of Sen. Thune, as seen in the photo on the right. Various congressional offices also were visited to increase awareness of Federal boating access funding sources, and their positive effects across the nation. Similarly, several of our members have attended various planning groups, committees, partnerships, etc. on behalf of SOBA throughout the U.S., including our ongoing participation in the TRACS planning process. In July, the Board held one of our few face-to-face meetings in Minnesota to not only conduct regular business, but also to review potential locations for SOBA's 2018 annual conference.

With all this going on, including keeping up with my boating facility projects from my “real” job in Arizona, I recently took a moment to reflect on why we do what we do. During a site review at a local boat ramp, I observed a young couple launching their open-bow, pleasure boat. I later learned they were new to boating, and wanted to try the lake on a weekday, when things were less crowded. Because this site was developed, in part, with Federal Boating Access funds, I remember taking note of the improvements present to help facilitate their recreation. These included a concrete boat ramp which was recently modified to give increased tire traction, a new boat courtesy dock, a restroom, and fully-paved access to boat trailer parking spaces. This one instance caught my attention, but is obviously repeated many thousands of times each day, much to the credit of SOBA members across the nation.

May the remaining summer days treat you well, and afford you the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, hopefully including a boating trip or two. I look forward to seeing many of you in Chattanooga in early October.

Regards, Ron Christofferson
President

SOBA’S 30TH ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL BOATING ACCESS CONFERENCE IS ONE NOT TO MISS!
by Edward Poolos — SOBA 2016 Conference Chairman and Host

Great line up planned for Chattanooga:

As the big anniversary quickly approaches, let’s recap on what we have to look forward
to! The event will be held October 10–13 at the Chattanoogan Hotel in Chattanooga, TN. Chattanooga is nestled on the banks of the Tennessee River and is surrounded by the scenic Lookout and Signal Mountains and Missionary Ridge. This landscape provides hundreds of miles of boating opportunity activities including whitewater rafting, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding in addition to numerous outdoor activities including hiking, mountain biking, climbing, and bouldering.

We have an outstanding agenda planned, which includes a Federal Aid Workshop on Monday October 10th. Monday evening our anniversary event will officially open with a reception at the Tennessee Aquarium. Our opening plenary session on Tuesday, October 11th, will feature a session highlighting SOBA's 30 years. A number of past presidents and early SOBA members will be on hand to share their thoughts and views about how the organization has grown and changed over the years.

Tuesday afternoon will consist of three concurrent technical sessions focusing on the latest in Engineering, Invasive Species, and Boating Infrastructure topics.

Wednesday morning October 12th will find us discussing more Engineering topics, the Clean Vessel Act Program, and our ever growing Non-Motorized Access issues. SOBA's Annual Business Meeting will also take place on Wednesday morning.

Wednesday’s lunch will host the presentation of SOBA's project awards, followed by a closing plenary session and additional breakout sessions on Wednesday afternoon. Our 30th anniversary event concludes on Wednesday evening with our Awards Banquet and Casino Night at the Coker Tire Museum.

Thursday, October 13th we will embark upon our annual educational boating access site visits along the Tennessee River aboard the River Gorge Explorer, and enjoy a good ole southern brunch on the banks of the river.

SOBA's 30th anniversary boating access conference features an exceptional line up of educational programs and sessions, and is one NOT to be missed. Please plan to join us in Chattanooga October 10–13. We have extended our early bird registration rate to September 1, so be sure to register before then to avail of discounted rates.

Have you booked your rooms yet? Click HERE to reserve your rooms at our preferred rate.

Our agenda (subject to change), registration package and hotel information are available HERE.

Door Prizes and Silent Auction donations for the Lacy Nichols
**Education Fund Needed!**

Please consider providing some door prizes and/or a donation to our Silent Auction which benefits our Lacy Nichols Education Fund.

Lacy was a great friend to SOBA, and a leader and promoter of boating access throughout his long career. In 2013 SOBA established an educational fund in his honor to help SOBA members attend their annual National Boating Access conference. The fund provides up to $500 of non-federal matching funds associated with a Boating Access, Clean Vessel Act, or Boating Infrastructure Grant.

**Any/all items welcome.** Please send your door prizes and/or Silent Auction donations directly to:

**U.S. Mail**
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency  
Attn: Boating Division (Poolos)  
P.O. Box 40747  
Nashville, TN 37204

**Fed-ex**
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency  
Attn: Boating Division (Poolos)  
5107 Edmondson Pike  
Nashville, TN 37211

**FINALLY**, don’t forget that certain costs to attend our annual boating access conference are eligible under USFWS grants (Boating Access, CVA)

Click [HERE](#) for more information

See Y’all in Chattanooga

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### STEVE MILLER, PAST SOBA PRESIDENT

It is with a very heavy heart that I wish to inform you of the passing of past SOBA President Steve Miller. We could not have asked for a better friend and comrade, and enormity of his loss cannot be easily explained. SOBA Vice President James Adams hits the mark with his comments:

*Steve and I came onto the Board at the same time in 2007 and we progressed through the offices together. He was President during the SOBA 25th anniversary while hosting the conference in WI. I cannot say enough about Steve as he was a great Man, Conservationist and Friend. I reflect over the years of how people present themselves, and he was such a great Gentleman and brought honor to SOBA and his agency everywhere he went.*

[Steven William Miller](#) died unexpectedly on Monday, August 8, 2016 at the age of 66, due to natural causes, while visiting his daughter in Alaska.

Steve was born September 1, 1949 in Lakewood, OH. His family then moved to Parma, OH where he grew up and excelled in athletics, especially baseball and basketball. His senior year culminated with an epic Cleveland Area High School Championship basketball game. Despite living in a sprawling urban environment, he became very interested in fish and wildlife management through reading sporting magazines about duck hunting and fishing. This sold him at
an early age to pursuing a career in wildlife management.

After graduating high school in 1967, Steve attended Utah State University where he graduated with a B.S. in Fish and Wildlife Management spring of 1971. He then attended Oklahoma State University and earned a Masters in Wildlife Ecology. In 1974 he was hired by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and began field training in Wisconsin Rapids, marking the beginning of what would become a remarkable 42-year career. In August of 1974 he transferred to Shawano to work as a game manager. In 1978 he successfully competed for his first wildlife supervisor position in Cumberland and subsequently won the Wildlife Manager of the Year award in 1982. He served as Area Director in Marinette from 1982 until 1984. He then, was appointed as State Director of the Wildlife Management Program at the DNR headquarters in Madison. In 1992 he was promoted to Deputy Administrator of the Resource Management Division and expanded his oversight to include the forestry, wildlife, fisheries, facilities and lands, and endangered resources programs. After 5 years in that position he was appointed as the Resource Management Division Administrator and served from 1997 to 2003. Beginning in 2003 and until his retirement in 2015 he held the position of Director of the Bureau Facilities and Lands, overseeing the department’s engineering, property management, real estate, capital development and master planning programs.

Steve was also a national leader in conservation. He served as Wisconsin’s representative to the Mississippi Flyway Council from 1985 to 1992. He also represented the Mississippi Flyway Council as a member of the North American Wetlands Conservation Council from 2002 to 2006. Steve served on the Board of Directors of the State Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) from 2007–2014. During his tenure with SOBA he served as Board president (2011–2012) and in 2014 he was awarded the “Outstanding Service Award” in recognition of his commitment to the organization’s mission.

His accomplishments and contributions to Wisconsin’s treasured conservation and land programs are numerous. Highlights include proposing and overseeing the completion of the Land Legacy Report; Establishing partnerships that enabled the formation of the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative; spearheading the restoration of the Whooping Crane; leading the Alternatives Funding Report; promoting “The Future of Hunting” program; championing and guiding the evolution of the Knowles Nelson Stewardship program. In The Gamekeepers: Wisconsin Wildlife Conservation from WCD to CWD by David I. Gjeston describes his influence as “committed to bringing a new, holistic management philosophy to the program as well as making an effort to make wildlife an integral part of peoples lives.” In addition to the critters and programs he affected during his lifelong career he also hired and mentored numerous employees that went on to serve careers at the DNR, shaping outdoor recreation and natural resources management across the state. He was a friend and mentor to everyone he worked with at the DNR and took great satisfaction watching new employees grow into great careers, leading them every step of the way.

In his personal life, Steve was a committed and adored father and grandfather. He enjoyed many activities, especially playing basketball, fishing, duck hunting, hiking, and traveling—often taking one of his daughters or grandchildren with him. He also was a prolific reader and enjoyed writing, always seeking to learn more and share knowledge. His four daughters learned responsibly, tenaciousness and determination from the unfailing example he set for them. Plus, he instilled in their hearts his incredible love for the outdoors. He will be lovingly remembered for his jovial nature, fierce work ethic, and unwavering integrity.

He joined the Mormon faith in his early 20’s, becoming a devout member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Saints for the rest of his life. He served in many positions
including Bishop, High Council member, Young Men’s leader and as a beloved Sunday School teacher. His love for our Savior Jesus Christ sustained him and shone through in every facet of his life.

Steve is survived by his four daughters; Marcela Schultz of Mount Horeb WI; Ginger Miller of Orem, UT; Debbie (Rick) Loerke of Deerfield, WI; and Kamicia Miller of Anchorage, AK; six grandchildren; and sister Linda (George) Dean of Parma, OH. He was preceded in death by parents William and Virginia Miller, and sister Lucy of Parma, OH.

Services were held Monday Aug 15, 2016 at the LDS chapel at 6651 Prairie View Dr, Sun Prairie WI. Visitation was held from 9:30am to 11:00 am and a Memorial service starting at 11:00am. A luncheon followed. Steve was buried with a private ceremony in a special place overlooking the wild landscapes he loved so much and worked so hard to promote and protect for generations to come.

To honor and keep Steve’s legacy alive, a permanent endowment fund has been established with the Natural Resources Foundation to support the conservation of Wisconsin’s lands, waters and wildlife. In lieu of flowers or other gifts, the family respectfully requests that a donation be made to the Steven W Miller Legacy Fund online at http://www.wisconservation.org/donate-now/. Please indicate that the gift is in memory of Steven Miller or send a check made out to the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, Attn: Steven W Miller Legacy Fund, PO Box 2317, Madison, WI 53701.

INTRODUCTION TO SOBA’S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

by Libby Yranski

Greetings SOBA members,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Executive Director for SOBA. Bernice McArdle who has been SOBA’s Executive Director for the past 9 years has retired from full time employment, but will continue to work with Ed Poolos and the SOBA Board of Directors on SOBA’s 30th anniversary conference in Chattanooga, and other future SOBA projects as appropriate, so it’s possible you will continue to see her name pop up now and again! Along with my SOBA responsibilities, I am also the Manager of State Government Relations at the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), and am involved with the Personal Watercraft Industry Association (PWIA).

Prior to coming to NMMA, I was the Policy Fellow and then Government Affairs Coordinator at the American Sportfishing Association. During my time working at ASA I was able to work on both Federal and State fisheries policy, as well as catch the gorgeous striper in my photo (which is my personal best). I have a Master’s of Science in Environmental Science and Policy from Johns Hopkins University, and a Bachelor’s of Science in Biology/Marine Biology from Northeastern University. Prior to my work at ASA I worked in molecular biology labs and also taught high school biology.

I’m originally from Massachusetts, a die-hard Patriots and Bruins fan, and am located
in NMMA’s DC office. I’m a huge animal lover, but unfortunately at the moment only have fish as pets. I’m also a passionate baker and ice cream maker.

I look forward to working with you all and meeting many of you in Chattanooga. Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Libby Yranski
lyranski@nmma.org
202-737-9766

SOBA PRESIDENT JOINS RBFF BOARD OF DIRECTORS
by Stephanie Vatalaro

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) announced on June 29, 2016 Craig Bonds, Ron Christofferson and Joe Lewis have been appointed to its Board of Directors. Bonds, Christofferson and Lewis will work closely with RBFF leadership to meet its mission.

"We are excited to have such diverse and experienced members of the fishing and boating industry and state agencies join our Board of Directors," said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. "Craig, Ron and Joe were introduced at our June Board Meeting and we're looking forward to the contributions they will be making in our efforts to grow fishing and boating participation."

Appointed by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), Craig Bonds currently serves as Inland Fisheries Division Director for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. He is a 17-year veteran of his agency, including prior service as a recreational fisheries management biologist at various levels and locations throughout Texas. He holds a B.S. from Texas A&M (’96) University and a M.S. from Virginia Tech (’00). Craig is a Certified Fisheries Professional with the American Fisheries Society (AFS). He has twice received the Outstanding Fisheries Worker of the Year award from the Texas Chapter of the AFS, an organization in which he has held numerous positions, including President. He was recently elected Vice President of the Southern Division of the AFS, and will progress through successive officer terms, including President.

Ron Christofferson, who was also appointed to the Board by AFWA, is the Boating Facilities Program Manager for the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD), where he has been employed for the past 27 years. Ron is a graduate of the University of Arizona (BS Wildlife and Fisheries Science), and is an avid hunter, angler and boater. He has extensive experience managing statewide programs for AZGFD, including evaluating the impacts of construction projects on wildlife, and implementing habitat improvement projects across the state. For the past 10 years, Ron has managed the Arizona Boating Access Program, including all programmatic aspects of the federal Sport Fish Restoration grants related to boating facilities (Boating Access, Clean Vessel Act, and Boating Infrastructure). In addition, he oversees Arizona’s Clean Marina Program and the Aids to Navigation Program. Ron is currently President of the States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA), comprised primarily of boating facilities professionals from state agencies across the United States and its Territories.

Appointed at Large by the RBFF Board, Joe Lewis came to the marine industry in 1989 with the purchase of Mount Dora Marina after a 20-year career in the outdoor
power equipment distribution business. Since then, he has served as its General Manager overseeing all aspects of operation. Lewis first became involved with industry issues when asked to serve on the board of directors of the Marine Industry Assoc. of Central Florida. He went on to become its President, then became President of the Marine Industry of Florida in 2002. Appointed to the Grow Boating Board of Directors in 2006, he was elected Chairman in 2011 and currently serves in that role. Lewis has also served on the Marine Retailers of the Americas Board of Directors since 2009. He served as its Treasurer from 2012 to 2014 and is currently Vice Chairman. Lewis remains very active in helping to build a stronger marine industry. When not at work chances are you'll find him boating, scuba diving and spear fishing with his family.

A full list of RBFF board members is available online.

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

by Brad Gunn

The Service’s Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) staff hopes everyone is having a great summer and hopes that many of you will be at SOBA ’s 30th anniversary conference in Chattanooga. Below is some of what’s going on with the Service’s boating grant programs.

Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program: The Service is currently accepting applications for BIG Tier 1-National and BIG Tier 2 Competitive projects from the States, territories and the District of Columbia. To obtain application materials and instructions, go to www.grants.gov and click the “Search Grants” tab. For Tier 1 State projects (with a total Federal cost of $200,000 or less) enter Funding Opportunity Number F16AS00269. For Tier 2 National projects (with a total Federal cost of up to $1.5 million) enter Funding Opportunity Number F16AS00264. Note that the Tier 1 Notice of Funding Opportunity has two application packages that you can choose. Package PKG00224099 is only for those that do not plan to conduct any construction activities with their Tier 1 funds (e.g., only do planning, monitoring and coordination). If an applicant plans to conduct any construction activities with Tier 1 funds then they should use package PKG00224098 which includes the construction forms.

The Service recommends you carefully read the application instructions and submit your applications in advance of the deadline in case of technical difficulties. Also, we expect the Tier 2 awards to be very competitive this year so please give a lot of attention to the details in your applications. In particular, a very good explanation on how you plan to prorate costs between transient boaters and other users is critical! The deadline for accepting applications is 11:59 P.M. PDT September 8, 2016. Please contact your Regional BIG Program coordinator for technical assistance.

BIG Tip: Consider accomplishing eligible planning, compliance and permitting activities as BIG Tier 1 grants to get a head start on BIG Tier 2 or other large projects benefitting transient boaters!
Clean Vessel Act grant Program: The Service plans to announce the FY 2017 Clean Vessel Act (CVA) NOFO in mid-August with the deadline for applications sometime in early December 2016. The Notice of Funding Opportunity can be found by searching on Grants.gov for CFDA 15.616. We plan to announce the CVA awards in May 2017. CVA provides funding to States, the District of Columbia, Commonwealths, and territories for the construction, renovation, operation, and maintenance of sewage pumpout stations, waste reception facilities, and pumpout boats for recreational boaters and for educational programs that inform boaters of the importance of proper disposal of their sewage. The Service anticipates having approximately $12 million to award in FY 2017, so please consider applying and participating in helping to keep our waters clean!

Boating Access Subprogram: WSFR headquarters’ staff conducted a webinar/conference call with the SOBA Executive Board in July to discuss reversion of Boating Access funds. In general, reversions account for only a small percentage of the overall Boating Access funds. However, there are always potential problems with construction projects that can lead to reversion of these funds. Please work closely with your regional WSFR Boating Access coordinator well in advance of closing a grant to evaluate what options might be available to manage these funds for a better outcome!

WSFR Policy & Programs: New ListServ! In our efforts to improve communication with our partners, the Service announces the new ListServ for information on WSFR Policy and Programs: WSFR_POP_News@lists.fws.gov. The Service encourages everyone to subscribe at https://www.fws.gov/lists/listinfo/wsfr_pop_news.

Clean Vessel Act Regulations: The Service published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking last year and received comments from over 35 respondents. Those comments are compiled and work has begun on a draft rule and some other tools that can be used for discussion during the SOBA Conference. The Service is looking forward to digging into many of the topics in an open forum prior to rulemaking and hope that States are able to be well represented for CVA at the SOBA Conference in order to gain a larger perspective of the challenges and successes of all States before moving to rulemaking.

The Branch of Policy is considering hosting a webinar prior to the SOBA Conference to better prepare for conference collaboration. Please subscribe to the WSFR_POP_News ListServ to receive information on all upcoming opportunities to engage in CVA rulemaking.

Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Regulation: The Service published the BIG Final rule in May 2015 and there has been one fiscal year of grants awarded using the new rule. We are very interested in how the new rule is working (or not working) to help you to meet your boating infrastructure needs in your State.
SPORT FISHING AND BOATING PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL UPDATE
by Brian Bohnsack

The Council hosted a successful spring meeting in early May at the NOAA Eco-Discovery Center in Key West, Florida. Some of the meeting highlights included an informative panel discussion on the complicated issue of management of the Everglades and completion of an assessment of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation for fiscal years 2012–2015.

Issues associated with management of the Everglades and south Florida water resources have risen to national attention in recent months. Accordingly, the Council meeting featured a panel discussion on this topic with speakers from national, state and local agencies and organizations. Panel members informed the Council about the multi-billion dollar, multi-decade project effort that is underway to help the ecosystem and improve the environment.

The Council also completed its assessment of RBFF for fiscal years 2013–2015. The Council has completed two assessments of RBFF in recent years, including one for fiscal years 2010–2012 which was finalized in 2015. The latter assessment was delayed due to a variety of factors, including the federal government shutdown. Copies of both assessments are available at the Council's web site.

The Council is in the early planning phases of a fall meeting and looks forward to its initial meeting after having been re-chartered by the Secretary of the Interior for an additional two years.

CONNECTICUT CONGRESSMAN JOE COURTNEY VISITS PILOT’S POINT MARINA
by Kate Brown

On June 1, 2016, US Congressman Joe Courtney visited Pilot’s Point Marina in Westbrook Connecticut along with SOBA board member and CT DEEP CVA Program Coordinator Kate Brown and members of the Connecticut Marine Trades Association to see three new solar/electric pumpout vessels in action. Congressman Courtney was able to drive the pumpout boat and learn about the benefits of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Federal Clean Vessel Act Program which assisted the State of Connecticut and the marina with funding for this project. He also learned about the
source of the funds which come from the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program, which is reauthorized every 5 years through the Federal Transportation Act. Revenue for this program is derived from excise taxes on motor boat fuels, fishing tackle and other boating related equipment.

With a CVA grant, the State of Connecticut’s Boating Division who manages the grant program encouraged the staff at Pilot’s Point Marina to design and build these three new solar/electric pumpout vessels, creating a new energy efficient and zero emission method of conducting pumpouts, as well as creating some new jobs at the marina over the winter months, which are usually very slow in the marina business in the northeast states. Pilot’s Point Marina is now quoting out the construction of a similar larger vessel for a nearby municipality which is interested in having their own solar electric vessel to improve pumpout service to recreational boaters.

Marina Manager Jeremy Maxwell pointed out that the three new pumpout vessels help to protect water quality in the harbor, provide excellent and convenient pumpout vessel service to boaters, and provides an opportunity to showcase his staff’s interest in an emerging new technology for pumpout vessel design and maintenance. The boat builders at the marina were incredibly excited to be involved in this project, and it created quite a bit of excitement among the marina customers as well once the boats were launched. The boats are not only innovative in design, but are also incredibly quiet, providing a clean and peaceful environment in the marina.

Connecticut DEEP’s Boating Division awards annual grants to Connecticut marine facilities for the purpose of providing exceptional service to recreational boaters and to keep the waters of Long Island Sound, its tributaries and Candlewood Lake clean and healthy. For more information about the Connecticut CVA program, please go to www.ct.gov/deep/pumpoutdirectory for information about where to get a free pumpout this summer. For more information about the new solar/electric pumpout vessels, please contact Jeremy Maxwell at Pilot’s Point Marina, jmaxwell@byy.com.

ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
by Ryan Roberts

AFWA Hosting Annual Meeting (Sept. 11–14)

PLEASE JOIN US!
Make plans now to join us for the 106th AFWA Annual Meeting, September 11–14, 2016 at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Registration is open; register by September 9th to save. Review the agenda.
Vessel Incidental Discharge Act (VIDA)—Federalism and Preemption of States' Authorities

VIDA (SA 4436, S. 2829, S. 373, HR 980, Title XXXVI Ballast Water in HR 4909) raises significant federalism issues by preempting states' authorities to implement and enforce federal and state aquatic invasive species laws and Clean Water Act provisions related to ballast water discharge and incidental discharges to the normal operation of a vessel. The bills both a) permanently exempt incidental discharge regulation for all recreational vessels and all commercial vessels under 79 feet in all fresh and marine navigable waters, and b) prohibit the enactment or enforcement of any state laws or regulations that would address these types of discharges, including those that are intended to protect state waters from harmful invasive species and water pollution discharged from vessels. As such, VIDA will have adverse consequences on recreational boating and fishing opportunities, water quality, sources of drinking water, sensitive aquatic resources, hydropower and water treatment facilities, and other industries. AFWA joined other state organizations and sent a letter to Congressional leaders expressing our federalism concerns and expressing a desire to work with Committees and members to address our concerns. AFWA is working on alternative language to propose to Hill staff which we will share with you and our colleagues prior to negotiations, and we will be reaching out to individual states for assistance with Members of Congress.

AFWA Staff—Jen Mock Schaeffer, Devin DeMario, Priya Nanjappa

UPDATES FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CONSERVATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION
by Corita Waters

Addendum to Prepare to Launch

We are working on an addendum to the “Prepare to Launch” document to identify key issues around creating urban/built environment launch sites that allow for hand carried boats, along with other users. We also are collecting image and design examples of urban/built environment launch sites. If you have examples of urban hand-carry launches that we should include in our gallery, please submit your pictures and/or launch designs to corita_waters@nps.gov with the subject line: "launch example."
National Water Trails System Continues to Grow

The National Water Trail System has been recognizing trails across the country for 4 years. There are currently 21 designated trails. Water Trails may apply to become part of the system by submitting an application by November 1 and May 1 each year. You can find the application at https://www.nps.gov/WaterTrails/Home/About.

NMMA GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
by Sarah Salvatori

Update on American Boating Congress 2016—Success on the Hill

275 attendees gathered on Capitol Hill in support of the 2016 American Boating Congress hosted earlier in May this year—the largest growth in recent history with attendance up 22% from last year. Recreational boating advocates conducted more than 180 meetings with 30–40 of those meetings taking place directly with the Senator or Representative.


Not only has the event grown in size and helped bring attention to the Congressional Boating Caucus, but there has also been movement surrounding some of the industry's policy priorities, and the BoatPAC reception during ABC raised $42,000 with 32 members of Congress in attendance.

USA Today highlights NMMA, industry's involvement at Republican, Democratic National Conventions

The NMMA and recreational boating industry were highlighted in the July 10th edition of USA Today in a roundup on trade associations and their involvement at the Republican and Democratic National Conventions. The story was a result of NMMA’s efforts to build awareness and interest for its “Day on the Water” events at both conventions and ongoing advocacy efforts. Read the story here.

NMMA’s “Day on the Water” events provided industry leaders a unique opportunity to meet with delegates, elected officials and industry stakeholders to tell the marine industry’s distinctive American story and included a tour of several boats manufactured in the U.S., and ride-alongs and demonstrations.

NMMA Submits Comments on Proposed Ethanol Increase

In July, NMMA submitted its formal comments in response to the EPA’s proposal to increase the ethanol volume requirements for 2017. In the comments, NMMA called on the EPA to reduce its proposal to better account for the market demand of ethanol-free gasoline, while also including better protection against accidental E15 misfueling. Earlier this summer, NMMA presented similar arguments a public hearing in Kansas City.

Additionally, through Boating United more than 2,500 comments were submitted by industry advocates calling on the EPA to lower the proposed mandate. The EPA will now review all submitted comments and is expected to issue a final rule by the end of the year. For more information, please contact Michael Lewan at mlewan@nmma.org.

The eighth section report of NMMA’s 2015 U.S. Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract, titled Total Boat Registrations 2005–2015, is now available for download by NMMA members here. The complete 2015 Abstract will be released this month. If you are not a member of NMMA, but interested in the Abstract, please contact stats@nmma.org

Highlights from NMMA’s Total Boat Registrations 2005–2015 report include:

- Total U.S. boat registrations increased 0.7% in 2015 with the number of recreational boats in use totaling 15.7 million.
- The majority, 94.9%, of boats registered are less than 26’.
- The majority, 74.7%, of boat registrations are concentrated in 20 states.
- More detailed information on rankings, boat type, size, documented vessels and boats retired from fleet are available to members in the Abstract.

Members must be logged in to access the report. NMMA members receive unlimited complimentary access to the digital versions of each section as they are available in addition to the full compilation report, which will be released this month. Print editions of the full report are available for $200 for NMMA members and can be pre-ordered today via stats@nmma.org.

The 2015 U.S. Recreational Boating Statistical Abstract is also available for purchase by non-NMMA members. Please contact stats@nmma.org to order the report(s) and get immediate access to boating industry market research.

**AMI UPDATE**

by Wendy Larimer

While summer is the busy season for boaters, it is traditionally a quiet time for the Association of Marina Industries. Marina managers are run ragged and aren’t thinking about upcoming events, or worrying about future regulations so we aren’t hearing much from them. We take this time to tackle internal strategies, and work plans, but also to plan for upcoming events and a busy fall and winter season.

Coming this fall is the 10th Annual Southeast Florida Marina and Boatyard Study Tour. This is a mobile classroom that takes participants on private, exclusive tours of Southeast Florida marinas and boatyards just a few days ahead of the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show. Each day of the tour closes with a facilitated discussion and SWOT analyses on each property. What better way to learn than first hand from those in the business? This event is scheduled to take place November 1–2, 2016 between Dania Beach and Miami Florida.

New this year is Marina 101-Walk the Docks, First Impressions. This 4-hour marina industry introduction course is geared towards those individuals, with little or no marina experience, looking to get into the industry by way of a career shift or an interest in purchasing or developing a marina. Marina 101 offers two sessions within the course, each approximately 2-hours long. The first session will look at the here and now of marina operations and the second will look into the future and what one needs to know about being a part of a marina for the long-term.

Attend the Marina 101 course prior to the 10th Annual Southeast Florida Marina and Boatyard Study Tour to arm yourself with enough industry knowledge to walk the docks of the Study Tour facilities and see things from a brand new perspective, from the eyes of a marina manager. Attendees will see first-hand how some of the best run facilities in South East Florida. Marina 101 will be held October 31 at the Miami Marriott Biscayne
For more information on our upcoming events visit https://marinaassociation.org/training/conferences-meetings

While we are thinking Marina 101 in terms of career changers and builders, we are also planning to roll out a Marina 101 webinar for state and federal agency people who interact with marinas but really have no idea how they are run or even how they are constructed. Our feeling is that if you review BIG or CVA applications, if you oversee stormwater or construction permits, if you determine Clean Water Act rules and regulations, you should probably get to know who or what you are working with. When this webinar comes out we will be sure to share the news with SOBA and encourage you to attend.

NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION
by Catherine Lloyd

Paddle Smart WebTV Series
The ACA is proud to introduce the new Paddle Smart WebTV Series, which covers the paddlesports disciplines of Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP), Recreational Kayaking, and Kayak Fishing. This series was made possible by generous grant funding provided through the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the United States Coast Guard. The goal of this video series is to reduce paddlesport related accidents by providing immediate knowledge through short and focused instructional videos. Visit www.americancanoe.org/WebTV to watch the videos, and please share them with your friends and family.

Paddle eMagazine

*Paddle* is your go-to source for news in the world of paddlesports, brought to you by the ACA. Take a look at the latest issue today by visiting www.americancanoe.org/Paddle. Do you have something to share? We’re all ears! Please send feedback, story ideas, and photos for future issues of Paddle to ACA Communications Coordinator Catharine Lloyd at clloyd@americancanoe.org.

2016 ACA National Paddlesports Conference
The 2016 ACA National Paddlesports Conference (NPC) will take place November 11–13 in Sausalito, California, just north of the Golden Gate Bridge! NPC online registration will go live on Friday, August 19, 2016. Save the date, and stay tuned for more details coming soon.

ACA State Director Program
Now in its third year, the ACA's State Director program is thriving from coast to coast. The program supports the grassroots efforts of paddlers in each state, helping to bridge the gap between the ACA National Office and important state-wide 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.

DISCOVER BOATING SUMMER CAMPAIGN IN FULL SWING
by Kelly Kaylor

Discover Boating, the North American recreational boating industry’s national marketing campaign, is in full swing this summer. Programming includes digital advertising, public relations outreach and social media efforts. The digital advertising campaign is focused on driving positive perceptions about boating and boat ownership in the next generation of boaters, ages 40 and under and consists of the popular Stories of Discovery video series, social media engagements, search marketing and banner ads.

Highlights aimed at getting new boaters on the water include:

- The Stories of Discovery videos are strategically placed on editorial-quality sites and were viewed 30 million times in 2015. It’s not just the views that matter—the Discover Boating message in those videos positively influenced people’s perception of boating, as 90% of people who saw the videos said it made them think the benefits of boating are worth its costs.
- The Discover Boating referral program via the boat selector tool continues to drive potential shoppers to manufacturer websites, which in many cases represents the #1 source of referral traffic to manufacturer websites.
- To measure how Discover Boating efforts are impacting consumer perception and participation, Discover Boating is working with Nielsen to measure the change in how people think and perceive boating before and after viewing Discover Boating’s online videos.

Check out DiscoverBoating.com and don’t forget to join the boating conversation on social media! Follow Discover Boating on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest.