

October 25, 2022

To: California State Parks, Division of Boating and Waterways

From: Kenneth Ehrman, Chair, California Boating and Waterways Commission
Chair, Revenue Generating Subcommittee

Re: Recommendations to the Division of State Parks, Division of Boating and Waterways

The Revenue Generating subcommittee met on five occasions over the past year, with participants representing many of the stakeholders in the boating community, such as California Yacht Brokers Association, Recreational Boaters of California, California Harbormasters and Port Captains Association, Marine Recreation Association, National Marine Manufacturers Association, California State Sheriffs' Association Boating and Watercraft Safety Committee, and Pacific Inter-Club Yacht Association. The committee reviewed current registration fees, as well as what vessels and non-motorized vessels were exempt. We compared California registration policies and fees with neighboring states such as Oregon, Washington, Texas, and Arizona. The subcommittee participants discussed the various programs and provided recommendations and input on the potential impact on their constituents.

The following are the two proposals the subcommittee makes to the Boating and Waterways Commission:

1. The implementation of registration fees and issuance of a waterway access permit for all non-motorized vessels, including vessels such as; paddlecrafts, rowboats, inflatable boats, and sail only vessels. The permit can be purchased for one week, annually, or bi-annually. The fees generated would offset funding that the Division continuously allocates to support non-motorized vessel users. In addition, the increased levels of services and assistance provided to non-motorized vessels by law enforcement and other public safety entities.
2. A reasonable vessel registration fee adjustment in conjunction with an overall assessment of all the revenue generation sources and a detailed description of where the revenues are being directed to. The subcommittee stressed the need to ensure that an increase in vessel registration fees not be used as an additional tax and that the increase does not result in an increase in expired vessel registrations. Discussion was had about reviewing registration transactions to see if multiple years of registration could be done in one year to minimize need for several transaction fees.