



RBOC

Protecting your boating interests.

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SUMMER 2022

BOATER BRIEF

Advocating for the Best Use of Boater Taxes & Fees

With the objective of enhancing the dedication of boater-paid fees and taxes, RBOC is participating along with other members of the boating community in the public stakeholder process that the Division of Boating and Waterways [DBW] and the Boating and Waterways Commission have undertaken.

This RBOC-encouraged process is providing stakeholders with the opportunity to obtain information and provide input into recommendations that are being prepared for submission to the Legislature to address the deficiency in the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund [HWRF] and an appropriate adjustment in vessel registration fees.

For the past several months, we have participated in the subcommittees and have reviewed the boater-derived fees and taxes that boaters contribute to the state, the expenditure of those revenues, the objectives of current programs and services, and opportunities to enhance the value programs and services to recreational boating.

As these activities continue into

the summer, several recommendations are becoming clear and developing traction. They include:

- The preparation and publication of an economic impact report of boating on a regular, ongoing basis..
- A return of a significant amount of the motor vehicle fuel taxes attributable to recreational boaters to programs directly benefiting boaters.



- The enhanced participation and financial contribution of stakeholders and beneficiaries who benefit from current and future programs and services.
- The enhancement of the statutory authority and role of the Commission to provide not only advice, but also consent on the Division's loans and grants from the HWRF.
- The enhancement of the Division's administration of essential programs.
- The identification of efficiencies and improvements to programs that do not attract the desired number of recipients due to statutory requirements that may be out-of-date.

- Encouragement of Californians to take advantage of the unique and diverse on-the-water opportunities that exist throughout the state. The pandemic has confirmed the value of on-the-water experiences that provide physical and mental benefits to all Californians.

■ The identification and commitment of other funds for grants for beach erosion control that is of increasing importance and value to the many coastal Californians as we endeavor to address climate change

- As appropriate, a vessel registration fee adjustment that is reasonable and that reflects the revenues and savings that are recommended above.

We anticipate that a final report and recommendations will be submitted to the Legislature this fall.

PFAS in Vessels

There has been a push by environmental groups to ban certain "forever plastics" that are found in clothing, and other components (some of which are used in the manufacturing process of boats).

RBOC has supported the efforts of the National Marine Manufacturers Association to obtain amendments now incorporated into AB 1817 [Ting] to provide an accommodation on the proposed ban on intentionally

added PFAS in textiles for vessels and their components in acknowledgment of the importance of this chemical to provide waterproofing and water resistance. PFAS are per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances. The bill remains controversial and will be considered in the Legislature in August.

Abandoned and Derelict Commercial Vessels

RBOC has obtained the agreement of Senator Eggman and the proponents of SB 1065 to include in the measure a specific prohibition against the boater-fee-supported DBW program for derelict and abandoned recreational vessels from being tapped to support the proposed commercial vessel program.



This measure would establish the California Abandoned and Derelict Commercial Vessel Program to identify, prioritize, and fund, the removal of abandoned and derelict commercial vessels from waters of the state.

Outdoor Recreation and Preservation of Water

RBOC supports the expansion of sustainable outdoor recreation, the preservation of ocean and inland waterways, and the promotion of the economic development and job growth that can occur in this sector.

RBOC is advocating that, as these initiatives move forward through

legislation and administrative actions including the 30x30 and Outdoors for All efforts, and baselines are established to measure our progress. It is essential to acknowledge the significant progress that California has already achieved, the tremendous value that on-the-water recreation provides in sustaining our mental and physical health, and the importance of measures that consider and incorporate reasoned perspectives.

Vessel Waste Discharges

RBOC has worked with Senator Nielsen to ensure that SB 995 would not have an unintended impact on discharges of waste in navigable waters incidental to the normal operation of a vessel.

The Senator later decided not to move forward with the measure that was intended to better protect clean drinking water, wildlife, and sensitive riparian areas by expanding current law to add hazardous, medical, or human waste to the list of items that cannot be dumped in or upon state waterways with a potential misdemeanor penalty.

Delta

Due to the negative impacts the project would have on the navigation of recreational vessels, RBOC continues to oppose the proposed Delta Conveyance Project that would construct a single 44-mile-long tunnel bypassing the Sacramento – San Joaquin Delta with the stated goal of providing for a sustainable transport of water south through the California Aqueduct. The release of a draft environmental impact review is anticipated to occur this summer.



Floating Home Rent Control

AB 252 would restrict the annual amount by which a marina could increase the rent for a floating home berth to three percent plus inflation up to a maximum of five percent.

RBOC has worked together with the marine industry to obtain the agreement of Assembly Member Bonta to include a provision ensuring that the measure is clearly and appropriately restricted to floating homes, floating home marinas and floating home slips, and not to recreational marinas or recreational vessels with or without liveaboard privileges. The legislation is moving forward as revised and with a limitation on its application to Alameda, Contra Costa and Marin counties.

Please Contribute

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Please note that, due to RBOC's extensive lobbying activities, contributions to our nonprofit advocacy organization are not tax deductible.

