

# The 2023 California Boater Kit Feedback Survey Report



Presented by  
California State Parks, California Coastal Commission's Boating  
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## Introduction

The California Boating Clean and Green Program (BCGP) is a statewide program whose main objectives are to educate boaters about clean and safe boating practices and to provide technical assistance to marinas and local governments to increase the availability of environmental services for boaters. The program is jointly implemented by the California State Parks and the California Coastal Commission. The program was established in 1997 and it has four components: 1) Research, 2) Networking, 3) Technical Assistance, and 4) Education and Outreach. The program uses a multifaceted outreach approach to fulfill its objectives.

The Bay Foundation (TBF) is a non-profit environmental organization founded in 1990 to improve water quality, conserve and rehabilitate natural resources, and to protect Santa Monica Bay's benefits and values. TBF works with a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, environmental groups, local communities, industry, and scientists to create and put into action innovative policies and projects that conserve natural habitats both on land and underwater. TBF's Boater Education Program was initiated in 1996 and is dedicated to the reduction of ocean pollution generated by boating activities.

The BCGP and TBF (Partners) have been collaborating since 2001 to implement several programs including the California Dockwalker Program. Dockwalkers are partners who inspire and educate boaters and other recreators about safe and environmentally sound boating practices. Dockwalkers distribute California Boater Kits (Kit/Kits), which include educational materials and pollution prevention materials, while visiting marinas, boat launch ramps, boat shows, and events.

The California Boater Kit is the main outreach tool for Dockwalkers and Partners. The Kit targets best management pollution prevention practices related to the following pollutants: oil, sewage, marine debris, household hazardous waste, and toxic wastewater. The Kit highlights local environmental services such as sewage pumpouts, used oil and oil filter recycling facilities, and County household hazardous waste collection centers. Materials found in the Kit include both publications and resources, such as oil absorbents, fuel bib, "ABCs of California Boating," "Environmental Boating Laws Every Recreational Boater Should Know," "A Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water" Binder Card, and region-specific tide books, maps with clean boating resources, and/or additional region-specific educational literature. The Kit and its components are specifically designed to prompt boaters to take action and implement at least one of the Program's recommended best management practices. Boaters receive a Kit after completing a [brief Boater Kit Questionnaire \(Questionnaire\) which also includes a pledge](#). This Questionnaire helps to identify gaps in environmental knowledge and better target future education efforts. Upon completion of the Questionnaire, boaters may opt to provide Partners with their email addresses to receive additional clean boating information in the future.

Every year Dockwalkers and Partners distribute approximately 5,000 Kits throughout the state. Since 2000, Dockwalkers and Partners have distributed over 130,000 Boater Kits.

## Purpose

Since 2020, Partners created the Boater Kit Feedback Survey to gain insight on Kit use and resource preferences and distribute it annually. Survey findings assist Partners in improving the Kit and its future contents by supporting the reduction or elimination of unnecessary educational materials and focusing the allocation of funding to the most needed pollution prevention subject areas.

## Methodology

In 2023, Partners and Dockwalkers distributed Kits and administered the Questionnaire using different outreach strategies. Partners focused on online education through virtual campaigns and webinars. Additionally, Staff attended several boat shows and boating events, and Dockwalkers safely distributed Kits and conducted education in-person using guidelines recommended by Partners. As a result of 2023's outreach throughout the boating season, 7,600 Kits were distributed, and 3,765 Questionnaires were collected.

Boater Kit Feedback Surveys are distributed to Kit recipients who completed the Questionnaire and provided a valid email address. From the 3,765 Boater Kit Questionnaires received in 2023, 800 questionnaire respondents included their email addresses. Approximately 730 emails were valid. Partners followed up with boaters who provided their email addresses to request their participation in the 2023 Boater Kit Feedback Survey (Survey). Partners created and distributed two Boater Kit Feedback Surveys hosted by Google Forms (one for [Northern California](#) and one for [Southern California](#)) to take into account variations in the Kit contents for each region.

The Survey utilized a psychometric response scale. In the questions prompted; respondents specified their level of agreement with a statement by choosing one of five points: (1) Strongly agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly disagree.



**Image 1:** Partner Dockwalker Elizabeth Moses conducting boater education and collecting the Questionnaire at Clear Lake (Lake County). Source: Elizabeth Moses



**Image 2:** Partner Dockwalkers with Civicorps sharing clean boating information and distributing the CA Boater Kit at Pittsburg Marina (Contra Costa County). Source: Civicorps.

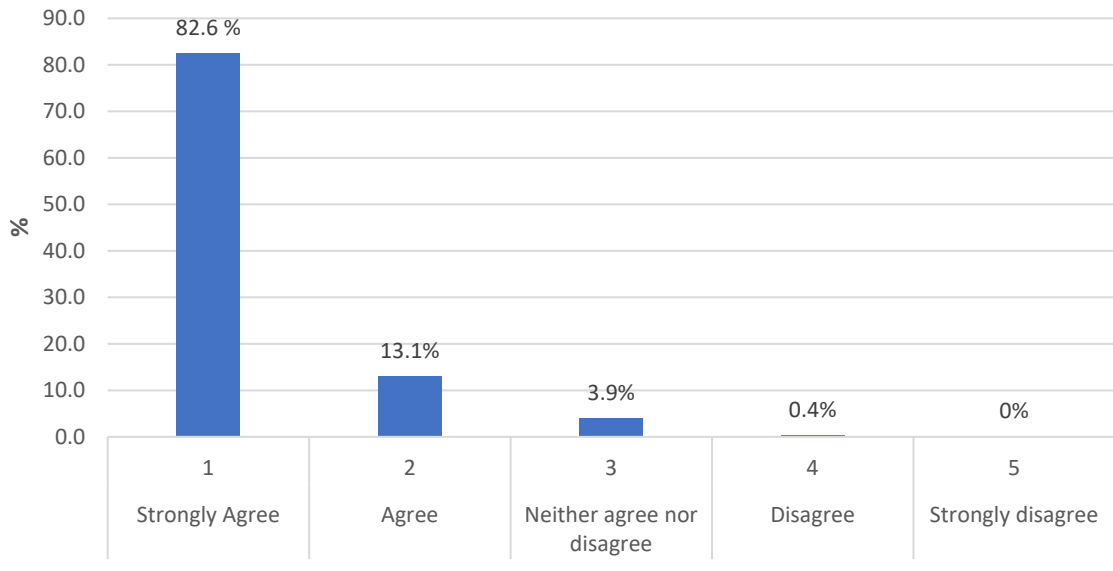
## Results

The 2023 Boater Kit Feedback Survey had a 28.5% response rate: 208 total boaters participated, with 105 Northern CA survey respondents and 103 Southern CA survey respondents. These responses represent a 95% confidence level (5.7% error). In addition to requesting Survey participation, respondents were entered for a chance to receive a life jacket. A total of two life jacket winners were randomly selected and notified in mid-November 2023.

Over 95% of the respondents (95.7%) would recommend the Kit to others. About 3% (3.9%) did not have a specific opinion about recommending the Kit to others, 0.4% of the respondents would not recommend the kit to others.



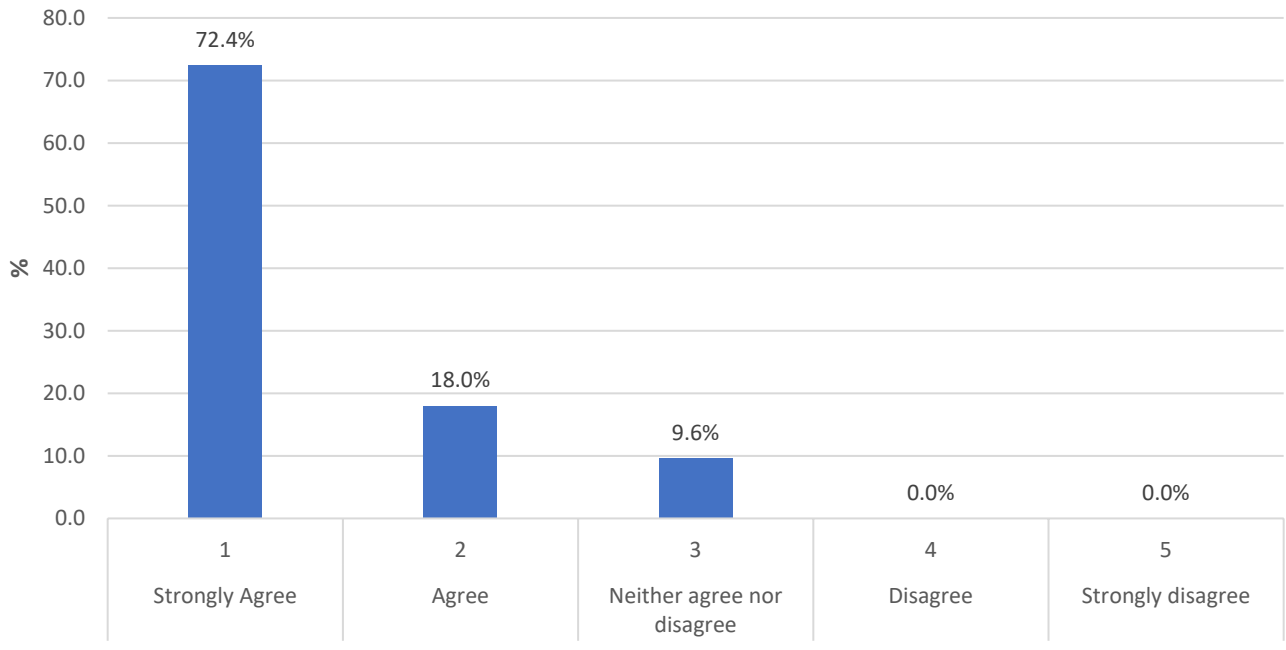
## I would recommend this free boater kit to others



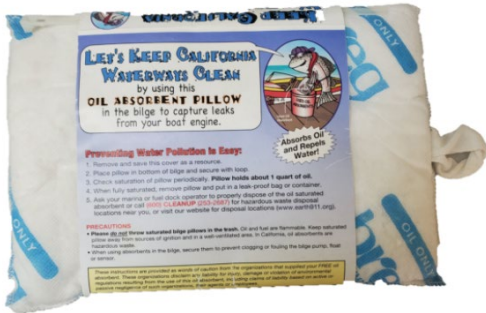
## A Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water

About 90% (90.4%) of the Boater Kit recipients found the “Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water” (Binder Card) to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit. 9.6% of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree.” The new and revised version of the Guide is multi-sided, with one side in English and the other in Spanish.

## I found the 'Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water' to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit

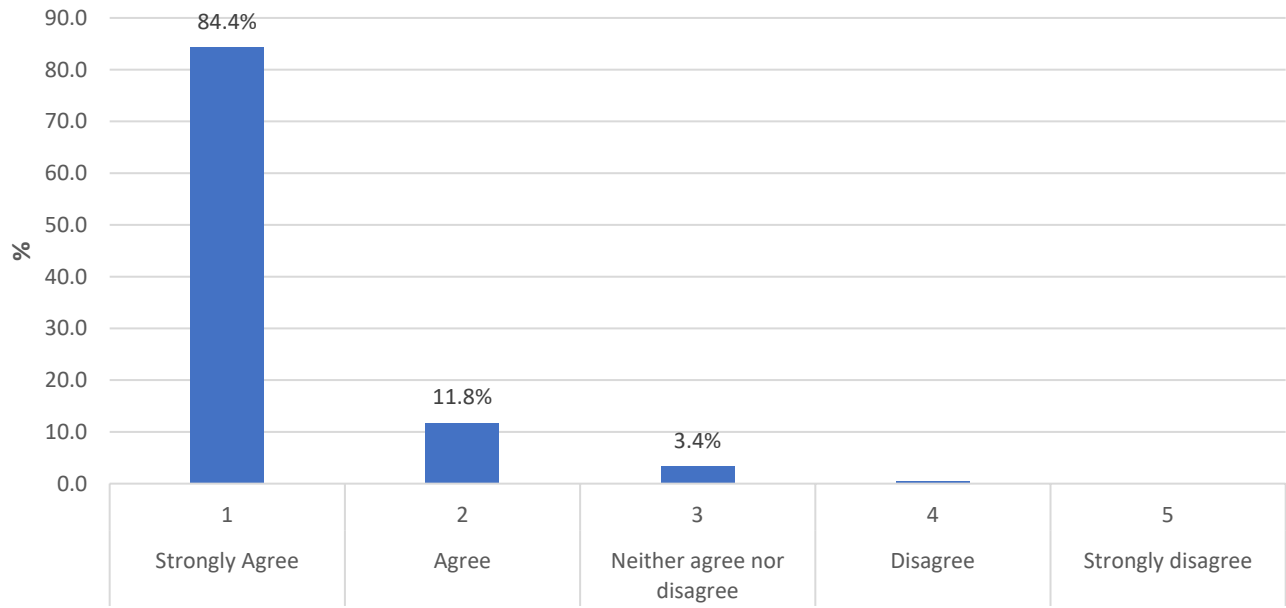


## Oil Absorbent Pillow and Oil Absorbent Sheet



About 96% (96.2%) of respondents found both the oil absorbent pillow and oil absorbent sheet to be valuable pollution prevention tools. 3.4% of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree” and 0.5% of the respondents disagree with this pollution prevention tool being a valuable component of the Kit.

## I found the oil absorbent pillow and sheet to be valuable pollution prevention tools

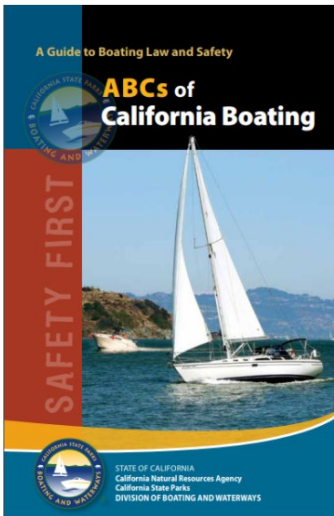
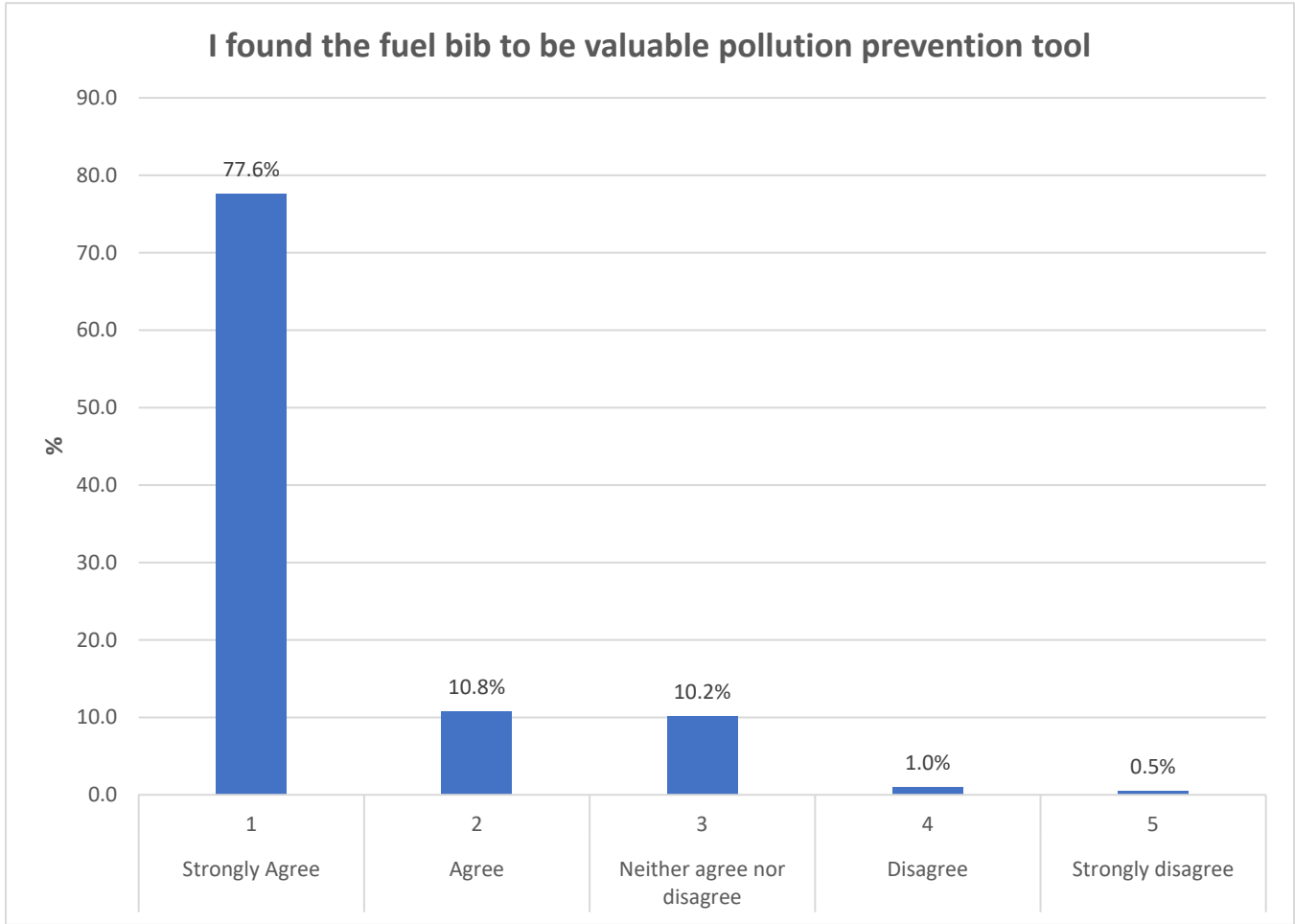


## Fuel Bib



88% (88.4%) of Kit recipients found the fuel bib to be a valuable component of the Kit. 10% (10.2%) of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree” with the fuel bib being a valuable component of the Kit. Around 1% (1.5%) of the Kit recipients did not find the fuel bib to be a valuable component of the Kit.

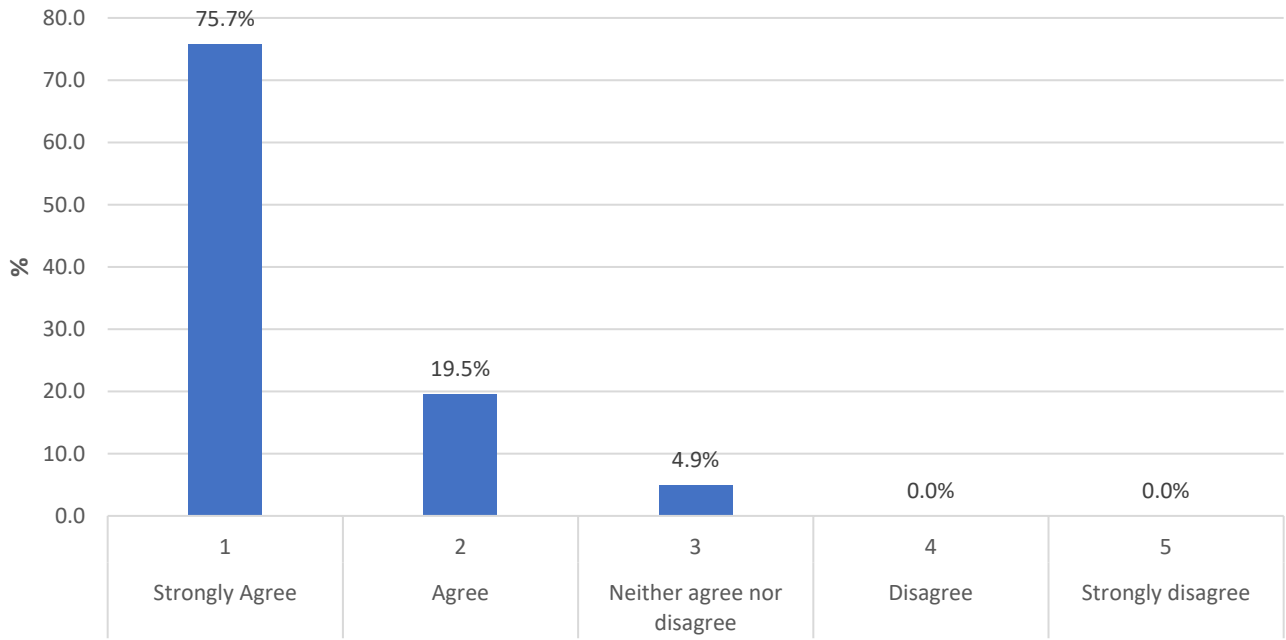




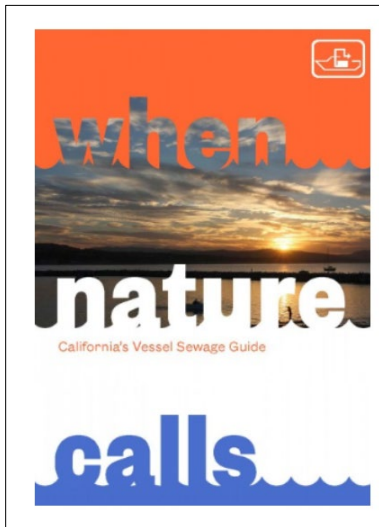
### ABCs of California Boating

95% (95.2%) of the respondents found the *ABCs of California Boating* to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit. Around 5% (4.9%) of the Kit recipients did not find the resource to be a valuable or invaluable component of the Kit.

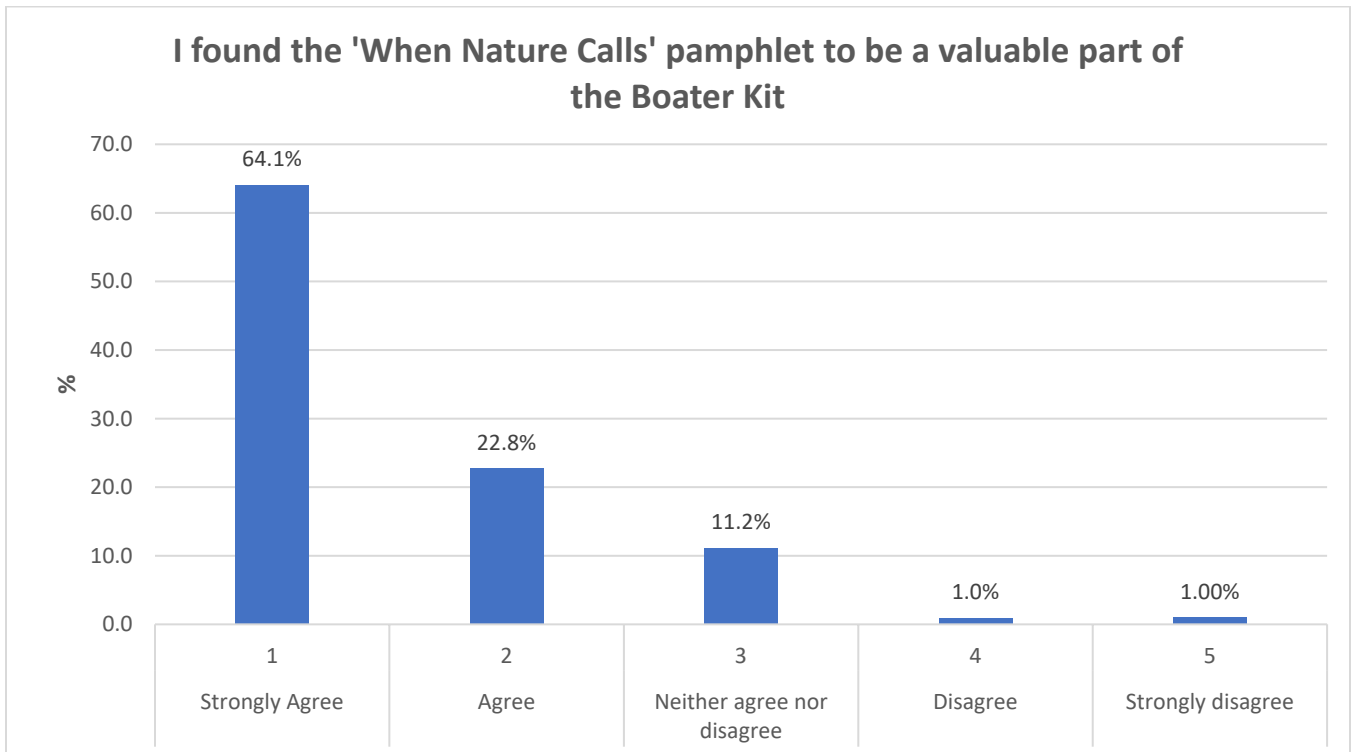
### I found the 'ABC's of California Boating' to be a valuable part of the boater kit



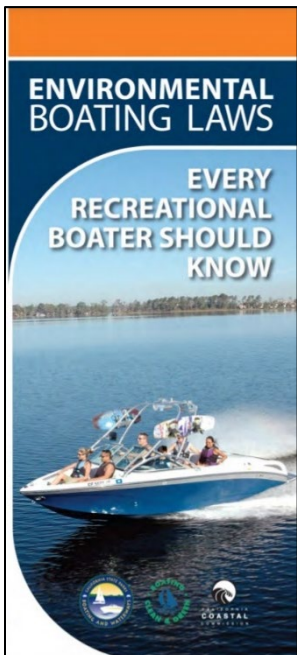
### When Nature Calls



87% (86.9%) of the respondents found the 'When Nature Calls' Pamphlet to be a valuable part of the Kit. Around 11% (11.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this pamphlet being a valuable component of the Boater Kit. 2% did not find this pamphlet to be a valuable component of the Kit.

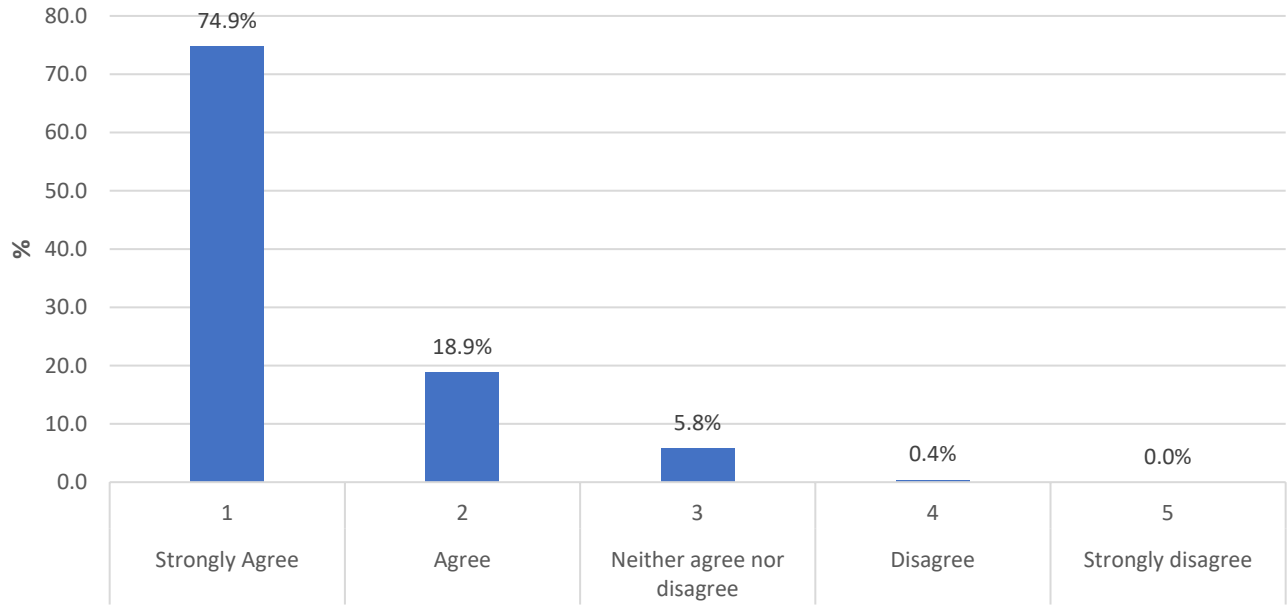


## Environmental Boating Laws



About 94% (93.8%) of the respondents found this pamphlet to be a valuable component of the Kit. 6% of the boaters who received the Boater Kit did not have a specific opinion about the value of this educational pamphlet. 0.4% of the respondents did not find this pamphlet to be valuable.

### I found the "Environmental Boating Laws" brochure to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit



### Electronic Flare Coupon

**SIRIUS SIGNAL** for life

It is estimated that over 170,000 flares expire every year just in California. One handheld flare disposed of improperly can pollute 240,000 gallons of groundwater.

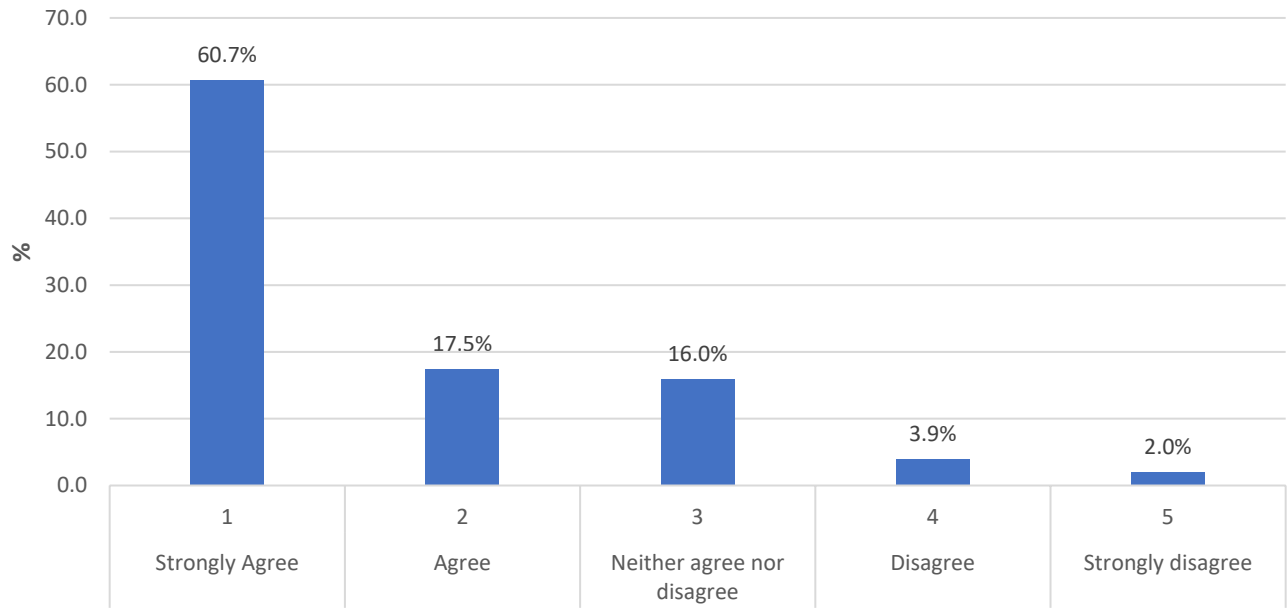
Go to [SiriusSignal.com/2023eflare](https://SiriusSignal.com/2023eflare) for a special discount with the promo code 23DW.

Offer good through December 31, 2023.

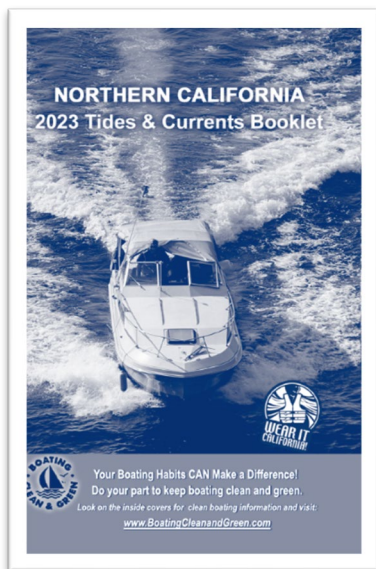
**USCG APPROVED REPLACEMENTS FOR PYROTECHNIC FLARES**

Over 80% of the respondents (80.8%) found the e-flare coupon to be a valuable part of the Kit. 12% (12.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this coupon being a valuable component of the Kit. 7% (7.1%) did not find this coupon to be a valuable component of the Kit.

### I found the '2023 e-Flare Coupon' to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit



### Northern California or Southern California Tidebook

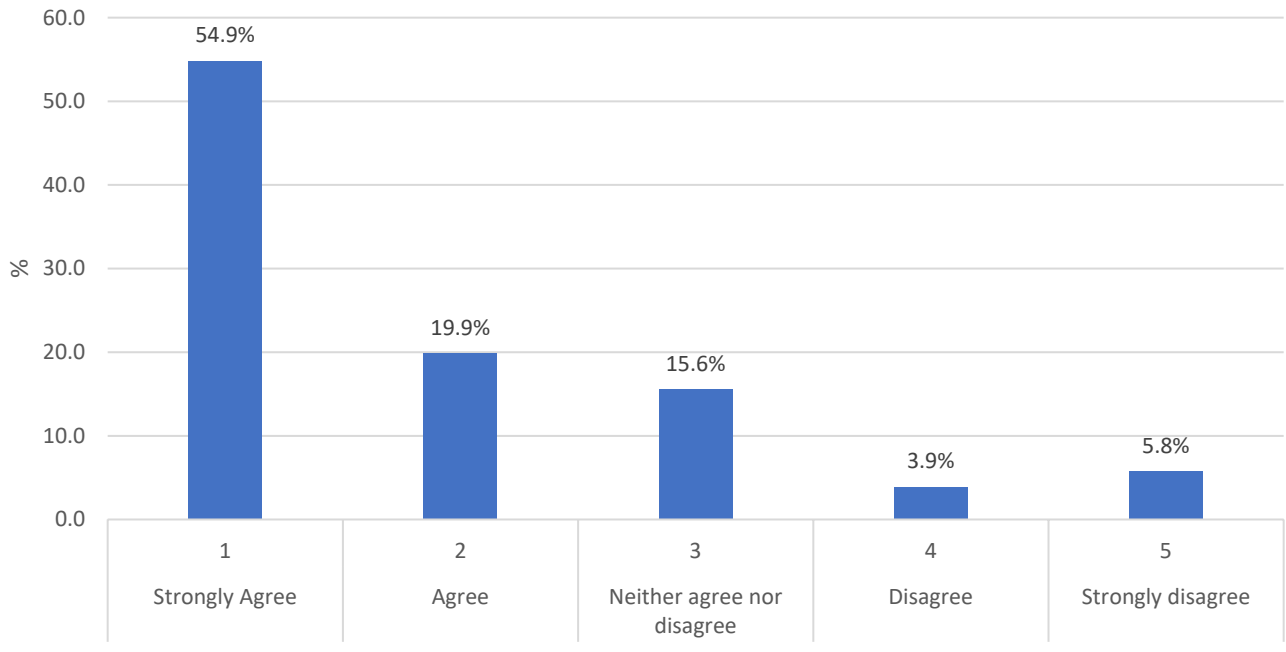


Depending on a boater’s regional location, they received a Southern California or the Northern California Tide booklet.

About 75% (74.8%) of the Survey respondents found the Tidebooks to be valuable publications.

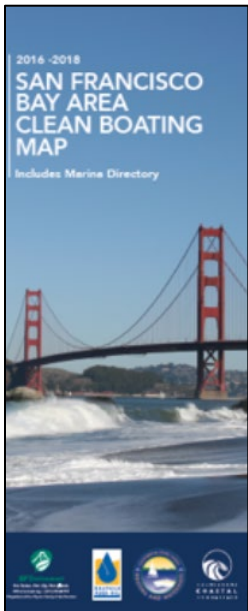
Almost 16% (15.9%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the Tidebooks being a valuable part of the Kit. 9.7% of the respondents did not find this publication to be valuable.

I found the '2023 Northern CA or the Southern CA Tidebook' to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit



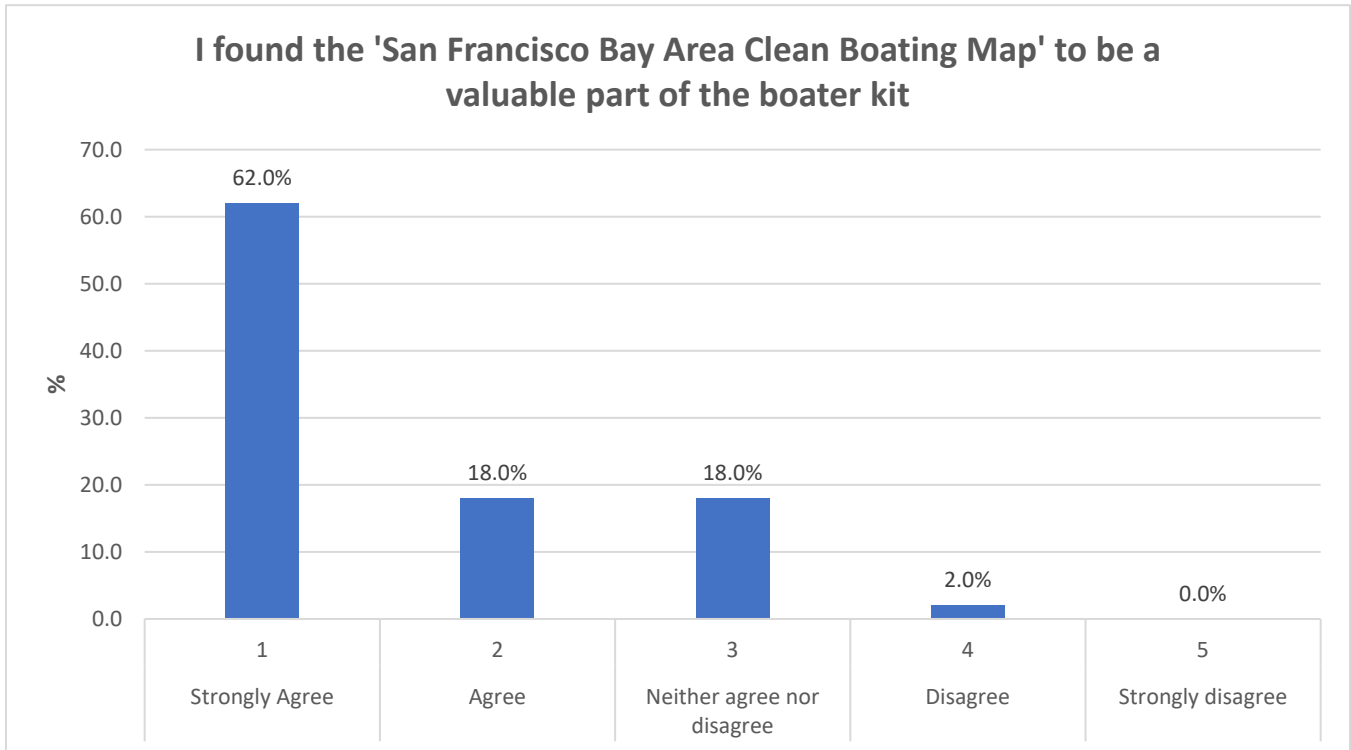
Northern California Boater Kit Specific Items

- San Francisco Bay Area Clean Boating Map



80% of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients found the *San Francisco Bay Area Clean Boating Map* to be a valuable component of the Kit. 18% of the boaters who received the Boater Kit neither agreed nor disagreed with the Bay Area Map being a valuable part of the Kit. 2% of the respondents did not find this publication to be valuable.

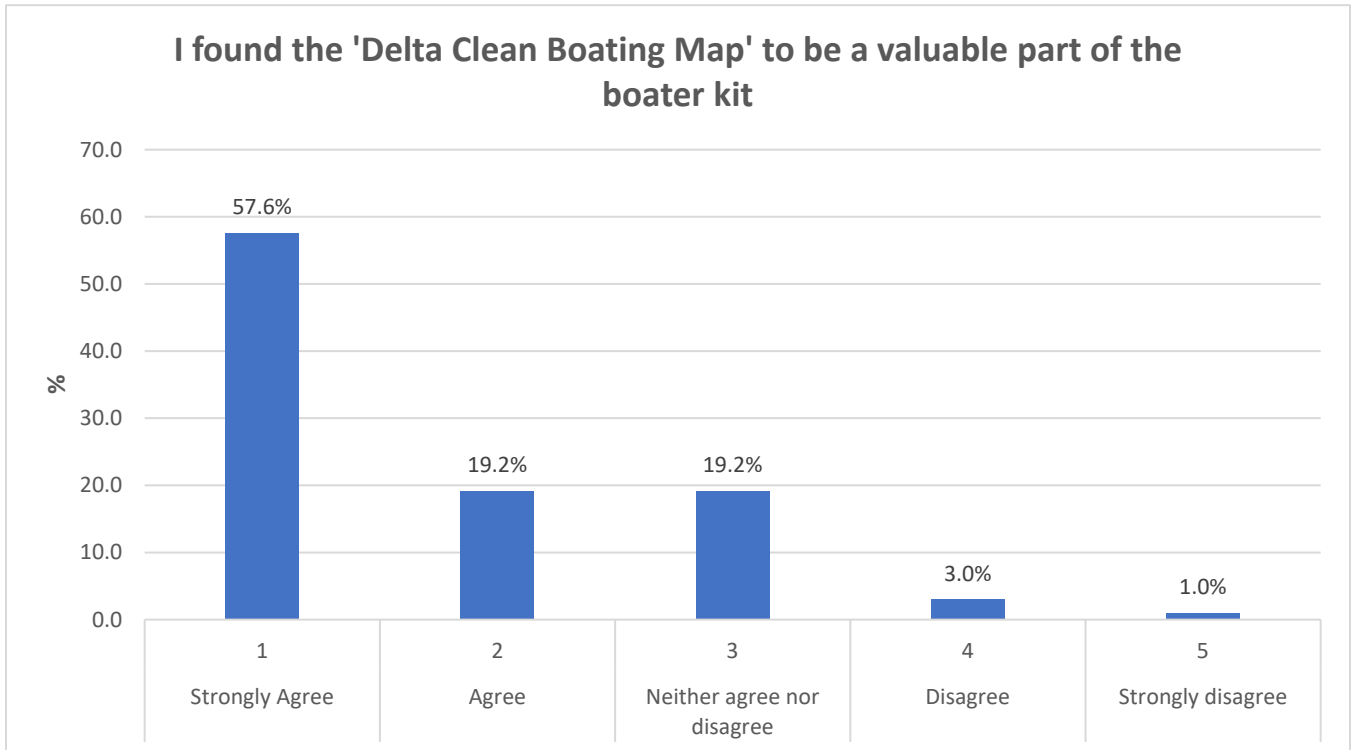




- **Delta Clean Boating Map**



77% (76.7%) of Northern California respondents found the *Delta Clean Boating Map* to be a valuable component of the Kit. Almost 19% (19.2%) of the boaters who received the Boater Kit neither agreed nor disagreed with the Delta Map being a valuable part of the Kit. 4% of the Boater Kit recipients did not find the map to be a valuable component of the Kit.

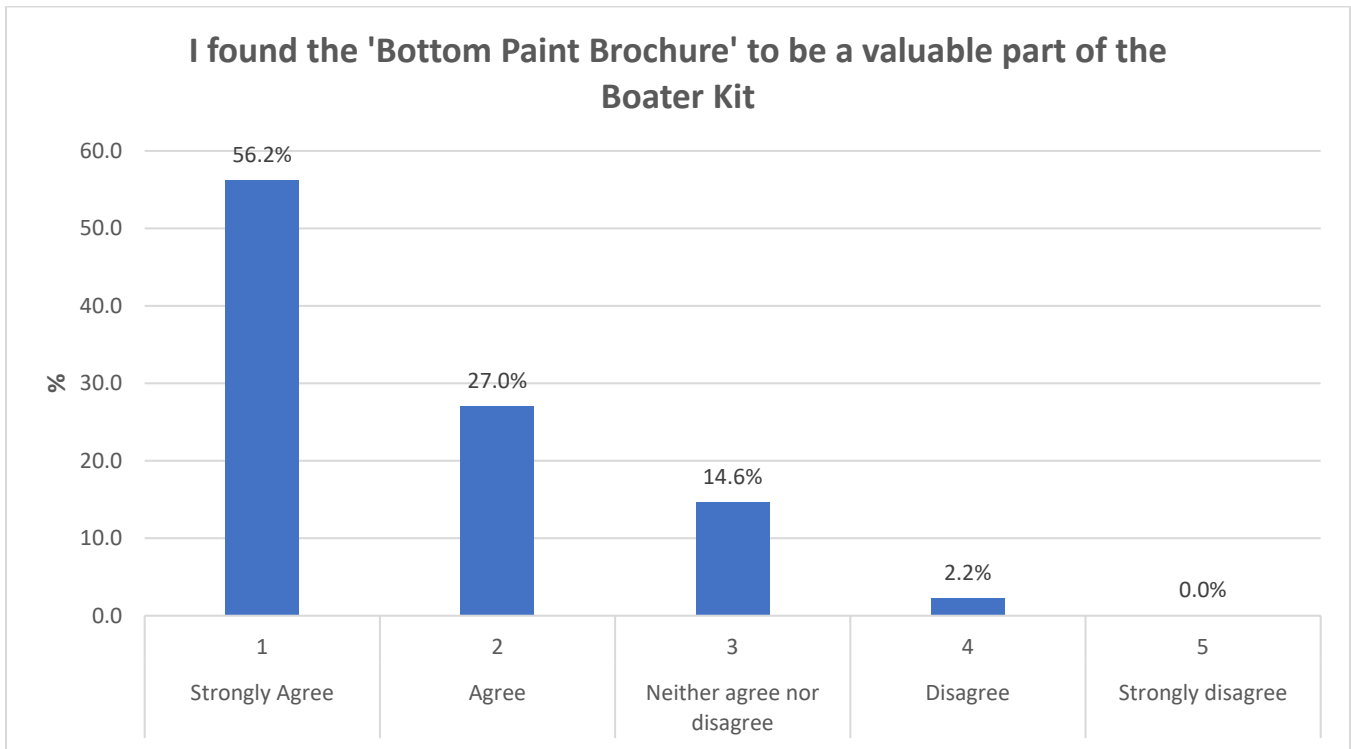


## Southern California Boater Kit Specific Items

- **Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California**



About 83% (83.2%) of the Southern California Boater Kit recipients found the *Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California* brochure to be a useful component of the Kit. About 14.6% of the Kit recipients did not have an opinion about the usefulness of this educational brochure. About 2% (2.2%) did not find this brochure to be a valuable component of the Boater Kit.



The following Table shows a summary of the 2023 Boater Kit Feedback Survey responses, ordered by the items deemed most useful by respondents:

Most Useful item Ranking	Item	Combined Strongly Agree and Agree (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (%)	Combined Disagree and Strongly Disagree (%)
	<b>CA Boater Kit</b>	<b>95.7</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Oil Absorbent Pillow and Sheet</b>	<b>96.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>ABCs</b>	<b>95.2</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Env. B Laws</b>	<b>93.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>'Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water</b>	<b>90.4</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Fuel Bibs</b>	<b>88.4</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>When Nature Calls Brochure</b>	<b>86.9</b>	<b>11.2</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Electronic Flare Coupons</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>6.9</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Tidebooks</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>6.4</b>

The eight common educational materials and pollution prevention tools included in both Northern and Southern California Boater Kits were considered valuable by over 74% of the survey’s participants. The oil absorbent pillow oil absorbent sheet, the ABCs of California Boating, the Environmental Boating Laws, “Boater’s Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water,” the fuel bib, and When Nature Calls brochure were the top six most valuable items (over 86%). The flare coupon and the Tidebooks were considered valuable items in the Kit by over 74% of respondents.

The following Table shows a summary of the responses for the region-specific Boater Kit Items:

Region	Item	Combined Strongly Agree and Agree (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (%)	Combined Disagree and Strongly Disagree (%)
Northern CA	Delta Map	76.8	19.2	4.0
	San Francisco Bay Area Map	80.0	18.0	2.0
Southern CA	Boater’s Guide to Using Hull Paint in California	83.2	14.6	2.2

Over 76% of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients found both the *Delta* and *San Francisco Bay Clean Boating Maps* to be valuable items in the Kit. 19% (19.2%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with both maps being valuable components of the Kit. 4% of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients did not find the maps to be a valuable component of the Kit. 83% (83.2%) of the Southern California Boater Kit recipients found the *Boater’s Guide to Using Hull Paint in California* brochure to be a valuable item in the Kit. 15% (14.6%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this brochure being a valuable component of the Kit. 2% (2.2%) of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients did not find the brochure to be a valuable component of the Kit.

In addition to psychometric cued questions corresponding to each item included in the Kit, respondents were asked to provide Partners with any remaining written-in comments about the California Boater Kit. All comments submitted by survey respondents are as follows:

- Loved the kit It's the best as an avid boater
- Thanks for the kit
- Fuel Bib should be required and any on lake gas station! Provided by the station
- I really liked the fuel bib have two boats 100 miles apart would like another kit
- Thank you for doing this more people need to get out and learn clean boating and safety on the water

- Everything in the kit is good to know (or remind myself of). I put the bib on my jerry can so it's always in the right place
- Thanks for providing this awesome kit
- Thank you and it was a nice surprise to meet in the MDR Starbucks.
- Excellent
- Thank you for being in the public!
- Pretty good kit!
- Thanks for everything you guys are doing. Oregon needs this kind of attention too! That's where we started our boating journey, and I can tell you with assurance that among Oregon boaters you'll find very little oversight, tons of apathy, and so many boats running ancient engines (like ours) that really need a lot of work to get up to speed on an eco-friendly level.
- Thank you for the great products and information
- I just took a seamanship class in Oxnard a few weeks ago so seeing the information about safe boating and waste was a nice reminder. Thank you for the gear, I used the gas mitt this past weekend and it was very helpful. As a newer boater it was very helpful to get all this information.
- Thank you
- My boat has an electric sail drive. Therefore I carry neither gas nor oil and do not need some of the items provided in the kit.
- Continue this good work!
- Thank you for the kit. Very nice.
- Keep up the good work!
- May I recommend a "go to..." for boaters to follow up with how to get Boaters Card.
- Thanks for the kit - great program
- How can we get the 2024 Tides Calendar?
- Thank you. That fuel nozzle bib was really great. Should be at every water borne fueling station.
- Great kit filled with very useful info
- Thank you! This was my best stop at the boat show. Very informational for a new boater
- Great resources and staff distributing the kit was knowledgeable
- Thank you. For keeping our waterways, clean and safe
- Really like the fuel bib and absorbents. Great kit
- I learned a lot from your staff. Thank you!
- Thank you for the kit!
- Thank you. Great packet!
- Because my boat does not have an onboard gas tank or toner much of the kit was not needed.
- Gas bib should be mandatory at all on water filling stations.
- Information for boats as a reminder for license boat drivers. Not to drink & drive.
- The persons whom I have gone through the process were great!
- It is all a good reminder on proper care of our waterways. Thank you
- Maybe a small binder to put the binder cards in would helpful for bigger boats

- Thanks you, as a new boater this packet was extremely helpful. Having been out on the river the last year, I wish there was a way to make boating laws more clear and enforceable.
- I love the maps
- Thought that this kit was ideal for ALL boaters.
- It's a great packet of information. I am just learning to sail and I found the materials very informative! Thank you for making this available - I have shared it with my sailing club!!
- Thank you
- Believe the kits were a great and appropriate resource for boaters
- Thank you for giving away these wonderful, and very useful kits
- What is really needed in San Francisco are expired flare collections. They have not happened in years.
- I found the kit educational, Thank you!
- I really enjoyed the quiz and that it was episodic so you had time to learn and anticipate a future question.
- I scanned the items that were sent and moved them to the boat for emergency/future use.
- Kit has several tools to help boaters
- Keep up the good work!
- Had already bought new flares because the ones that came with boat were expired. No current plans to visit Delta. But you never know, maybe someday!
- My boat does not have inboard gas tank or bathroom so most of the kit did not pertain to my boat.
- Really appreciated the eflare and coupon, the fuel bib, and oil pillow. You also alerted me to the need to study for the boating safety course and apply for boater's license - this was much appreciated. The items above that I gave a 3 rating were simply because I haven't used those items yet, not that they were not helpful, just not helpful YET. Thanks for all your work and shared resources.
- San Francisco has no flare collection events. They are toxic and hazardous waste. Without a place to dispose of these required by law items they end up hazardedly stored in houses, left on the street, thrown in dumpsters or public cans, dumped in the water or somewhere else they should be.
- I must have missed the E flare info looks good. I need to get rid of old ones and opt for the new ones.
- What an excellent and wonderful service and educational value. It's long overdue that all boaters subscribe to a safer and cleaner future. Thanks for your expertise!
- I think the boating kit is well thought out with a lot of useful information.
- Was happy to see your presence at Bethel Island Community Health Fair.
- I really liked the speaker and the way he conducted the program.
- I have a sailboat and fill the tank for my 8 hp outboard at a gas station, so fuel absorbers don't get used. I don't have the electronic "flares" yet, but will replace pyrotechnic ones when they expire. Thank you for the education and the kit!
- Thanks for organizing the flare drop off
- Everything



- Great to see the state offering this kit, I learned a lot and appreciate the tools provided via this kit. Thank you for teaching me about the flares!
- This kit was great. I am a new boat owner and I really appreciate this information.
- Great resource, Thank you!
- Every boater should have this!!!

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, this Survey demonstrated the 2023 California Boater Kit is considered a valuable educational tool by recipients. 96% of 2023 Boater Kit Feedback Survey participants would recommend it to other boaters. This overarching finding and the highlights below affirm the continued use of the Kit and its components as an effective education and outreach tool.

- All the items found in the California Boater Kits were rated as valuable by the survey respondents (between 75% and 96% of respondents, depending on the item).
- Most items found in both regional Boater Kits (7 items: Oil Absorbent Pillow and Sheet, *ABCs of California Boating*, *Environmental Boating Laws*, *Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water*, the fuel bibs, and *When Nature Calls* brochure) were considered valuable by more than 86% of survey respondents. Additionally, the two items (the Electronic Flare coupon and Tidebooks) included in both regional Boater Kits received a valuable rate over 75%.
- The four most valued items were the oil absorbent pillow and sheet, followed by the *ABCs of Boating Law*, *Environmental Boating Laws*, and the "Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water." For the region-specific items included in Northern California Boater Kits, the San Francisco and Delta maps were considered valuable items (80 and 77% rate, respectively) and in Southern California the *Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California* brochure with 83% valued rate.

Partners further recommend continuing to utilize an incentive in exchange for participation. As an attempt to further increase the response rate, the life jacket incentive was mentioned directly in the 2023 Boater Kit Questionnaire and in the emails sent to boaters who provided us with their email addresses. In order to bolster participation and keep the response rate over 25%<sup>1</sup> next year, Partners will continue to promote the life jacket incentive directly in the Boater Kit Questionnaire and emails provided by the Boater Kit recipients.

Since 2023 was the fourth year Partners implemented the Boater Kit Feedback Survey, it is recommended to continue to conduct the Boater Kit Feedback Survey annually to acquire more significant input and increase data collection from Boater Kit recipients. Once more data is received, Partners will have a better understanding of recipients' preferences and will be able to identify which (if any) Kit items need to be removed, re-designed, or replaced with alternative educational materials.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on social sciences research, a good response rate falls between 20% and 30% response rate with a sample size of at least 500. Surveys with a smaller sample size (i.e., less than 500) need 20%–25% response rates to provide fairly confident estimates ([Qualtrix, 2022](#); [SmartSurvey, 2022](#); [Porter, B. 2019](#)).

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