

California State Parks, Division of Boating and Waterways
Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG)
Letter of Intent Instructions for Fiscal Year 2026/27 Funding

DBW is now accepting letters of intent (LOI) for the FY26 Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program application cycle. Submission of the LOI is the first step for determining if a proposed project meets the funding eligibility requirements. Agencies may submit more than one LOI if planning to request grants for multiple projects. Projects selected to proceed with submitting a full proposal will be notified within two weeks following the submission deadline.

Review the BIG Program Information and Eligibility Criteria section below prior to completing the LOI to ensure your agency can adhere to the special requirements and your project meets the eligibility criteria.

The LOI must be no more than three (3) pages in length. It should be single-spaced, using 11- or 12-point font on an 8.5" x 11" page size, have page margins no smaller than 1" on each edge, and must include all the following information:

1. Applicant Organization

2. Project Title

3. Name, Address, Telephone Number, and Email Address

4. Project Location

5. Project Description – Provide a brief summary of the project.

- a. Need – explain why the project is necessary and why existing infrastructure is insufficient for the transient recreational boating community.
- b. Purpose - state the purpose of the project and link this to the need. Justify why boaters would want to visit your facility.
- c. Objectives - identify each objective that would be completed for this project and describe the methods and/or procedures you will use to achieve each objective.
- d. Expected benefits - describe the results expected from accomplishing the objectives and the benefits to eligible users.
- e. Proposed Project Funding – provide the total project cost, requested BIG grant amount, and local match contributed.
- f. Proposed Budget Narrative - provide a description of the cost estimate and identify how funding is divided.

Letters of intent must be emailed to Ethan Tratner (ethan.tratner@parks.ca.gov) by **5:00pm PDT, Friday June 13, 2025.**

BIG PROGRAM INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Boating Infrastructure Grants (BIG) are federally funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program. The purpose of the grant program is to construct or renovate facilities for transient recreational vessels. Transient vessels are those defined as vessels passing through, staying 15-days or less, that are twenty-six feet or more in length. Grants must meet the eligibility requirements of [50CFR 86](#).

If a BIG funded facility would benefit both eligible (transient vessels) and ineligible users (all other users) then the applicant must allocate costs accordingly. BIG will only be able to fund the portion of the project for eligible vessels known as eligible project costs, and applicants must fund the portion of the project of ineligible vessels known as proration. Award recipients must also contribute a minimum of 25% of the eligible project costs as match.

Facilities constructed, operated, or maintained with BIG funds must be designed to last a minimum of 20 years, be open to the public, and offer access for all eligible transient recreational vessels for the full period of their facility's useful life.

Please Note: All projects must comply with both NEPA, CEQA, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all constructed facilities must be built with materials and in compliance with the Buy America, Build America Act (BABA) (See [2CFR 184](#)).

BIG SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be scored on how well the project meets the criteria listed below:

- Provides a significant link to prominent destination points such as those near metropolitan population centers, cultural or natural areas, or that provide safe harbors from storms.
- Provides access to recreational, historic, cultural, natural, or scenic opportunities of local, regional, or national significance.
- Provides for public/private and public/public partnership efforts to develop, renovate, or maintain tie-up facilities.
- Uses innovative techniques to increase the availability of tie-up facilities for transient vessels 26 feet or more in length (includes education/information).
- Includes private, local, or other state funds in addition to the non-federal match described in 50 CFR 86.42.
- Is cost effective.

Examples of Activities Eligible for Funding

- Project engineering, permitting, environmental compliance.
- Construction or renovation of infrastructure for transient recreational boaters such as tie-up facilities, docks for potable water, pumpouts, and fuel stations, boater showers, laundry, breakwaters, etc. Facilities must be:
 - Built on navigable waters with a minimum depth of six (6) feet;
 - Available to the transient boating public (via physical access, reasonable fees, and open periods).
 - Secure, safe, and provide service for transient recreational vessels.
- Dredging up to \$200,000 per grant, to give transient vessels safe channel depths between the tie-up facility and maintained channels or open water.
- Installation of navigational aids, limited to giving transient vessels safe passage between the tie-up facility and maintained channels or open water.

Examples of Activities **Ineligible** for Funding (see 50 CFR 86 for detailed list)

- Projects that do not provide public benefit.
- Projects that restrict public usage or require club membership.
- Projects for commercial benefit or which benefit a private business or nonprofit.
- Law enforcement activities.
- Significantly degrade or destroy valuable natural resources or alter the cultural or historic nature of the area.
- Provide structures not expected to last at least 20 years.
- Maintenance dredging.
- Operations or routine, custodial, and janitorial maintenance of the facility.
- Design, engineer, permit, or construct, renovate or maintain boating infrastructure tie-up facilities for non-transient vessels (BIG projects may be part of a larger development).
- Activities completed prior to execution of the grant agreement, unless specifically identified as Pre-Award Activities in the grant application and approved as such for reimbursement in the grant agreement.
- Facilities solely connected to the patronage of any business.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the eligibility of your potential project, please contact Ethan Tratner by email at ethan.tratner@parks.ca.gov.