

Upcoming Events You Don't Want to Miss

Dockwalker Trainings

These virtual workshops train partners or collaborators like you to become Dockwalkers. Dockwalkers engage the boating community about environmentally sound boating practices. Click the links below to register for a training.

[Northern California \(click here\)](#)

- Saturday, April 24, 2021 (10 a.m.-12:45 p.m.)
- Saturday, May 8, 2021 (10 a.m.-12:45 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 12, 2021 (10 a.m.-12:45 p.m.)

[Northern California Refresher Trainings \(click here\)](#)

If you have been trained as a Dockwalker in the last three years, you have the option to register for a refresher training.

- Saturday, April 10, 2021 (10 a.m.-11:15 a.m.)
- Saturday, May 15, 2021 (10 a.m.-11:15 a.m.)

[Southern California \(click here\)](#)

- Saturday, May 1, 2021 (10 a.m.-12:45 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 5, 2021 (10 a.m.-12:45 p.m.)

[Southern California Refresher Trainings \(click here\)](#)

If you have been trained as a Dockwalker in the last three years, you have the option to register for a refresher training.

- Saturday, April 17, 2021 (10 a.m.-11:15 a.m.)



Dockwalker Martin Mendoza (U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary) in action
Photo: The Bay Foundation

Coastal Cleanup

The California Coastal Cleanup is an annual event that goes beyond picking up trash. It is a special opportunity to give back and show respect for our oceans and local waterways. Mark your calendar for California's 2021 Coastal Cleanup event happening in September. Check [this webpage](#) for details.



Sewage Best Management Practices for Non-motorized Boaters



Lake Merced, San Francisco

Photo: Vivian Matuk (California State Parks and California Coastal Commission)

Looking out over the water on a warm, sunny California day, it's hard to miss the many non-motorized boaters enjoying themselves. Inflatable boats, kayaks, canoes, rowing boats, sail- and kiteboards, dragon boats, small sailboats, and stand-up paddleboards are all common sights in coastal harbors and bays, on inland lakes, and rivers within the state. The abundance of rental shops and launch facilities, the ease of use and low cost of boats, and the physical benefits of getting out on a human-powered boat make non-motorized boating attractive and accessible enough that many cannot resist the call to get out on the water.

The need for non-motorized boaters to manage their sewage, however, remains a question to many. Minimizing contaminants and disease within waterways are important goals of properly disposing of human waste. So, what to do when you have to go? The answer lies in where you are and what types of facilities are available to you. The bottom line is to plan ahead.

Boaters on short-term trips and in urban areas generally have access to landside facilities and are encouraged to utilize them before and after going out on the water. It's best to be proactive and ask the outfitter where to go and what to expect. Facilities range from flush toilets to porta-potties, so it's best to know what to expect.

Boaters taking longer trips and who are in more rural areas may face challenges, even for those with the best-laid plans. Understanding rules and regulations for overnight trips in sensitive areas or in remote locations is important to keeping waterways clean. Knowing where to find [floating restrooms](#) or vault toilets is part of planning ahead. Multiday trips need everything packed in and out, so options include using a groover or wag bag, with the goal to leave no trace.

Because boaters share the waterways with so many others (The fish! The clams! Other boaters!), it's our responsibility to be the best stewards we can. Learn, plan ahead, and have a great time out on the waterways we all love.

Agency Spotlight:

Meet the California Department of Fish and Wildlife

What CDFW does: The mission of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife and plant resources, and the habitats on which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public. The agency offers a slew of services to recreationists to ensure they are prepared. For those planning on ocean sport, inland sport, or commercial fishing, CDFW provides fishing licenses and report cards, notices on hatcheries and protected lands, and resources for safe and responsible fishing. Hunters can find updated information on a range of animals, including deer, elk, waterfowl and more, along with licenses, tags, operational wildlife areas, and preparatory information for novices and experienced hunters alike. The agency also takes part in tracking species data, promoting climate science, environmental review and permitting, and additional activities in the effort to conserve and manage California's wildlife and habitat.



Where to find CDFW: Regional departments of the CDFW can be found in seven distinct regions of California: Northern, North Central, Bay Delta, Central, South Coast, Inland Deserts, and Marine. Click [here](#) to check out the agency's educational programs and resources, outreach campaigns, and reference materials.



Check out services and recreational opportunities in your Region

How to contact them:

Each of the CDFW regions can be reached by phone or email:

[1 - Northern:](#) (530) 225-2300 | AskRegion1@wildlife.ca.gov

[2 - North Central:](#) (916) 358-2900 | R2Info@wildlife.ca.gov

[3 - Bay Delta:](#) (707) 428-2002 | Askbdr@wildlife.ca.gov

[4 - Central:](#) (559) 243-4005 | reg4sec@wildlife.ca.gov

[5 - South Coast:](#) (858) 467-4201 | AskR5@wildlife.ca.gov

[6 - Inland Deserts:](#) (909) 484-0167 | AskRegion6@wildlife.ca.gov

[7 - Marine:](#) (831) 649-2870 | AskMarine@wildlife.ca.gov

Questions?

Visit the [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) website for more information.

A Better 'Second-best' Day: Surrendered and Abandoned Vessel Exchange Grant Program



Vessel Turn-in Day at Martinez Marina. Feb. 2020.

Photo courtesy of Contra Costa County Sheriff

Authors: Ron Kent, Keren Dill, and Deborah Holmes, California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways

You've heard the saying: "The two best days of a boat owner's life are the day they buy their boat and the day they sell it." But what if you can't sell your boat? Then surrender it. Through California's Surrendered and Abandoned Vessel Exchange (SAVE) grant program, which is administered by State Parks' Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW), boat owners can surrender their recreational vessels for free to public agencies that have been awarded a SAVE grant. Surrendering a vessel not only removes owner liability, but it also ensures the vessel will never become abandoned. Not only is it illegal to abandon vessels, owners also remain legally and financially responsible for all cleanup, damage, and disposal.

Abandoned vessels are a blight in our waterways and are dangerous to other boaters and the environment. To help combat this issue, in 1999 California established the Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Fund to help local public agencies prevent and dispose of abandoned vessels. Millions of dollars have been granted to public agencies to receive surrendered vessels and remove abandoned vessels from our waterways. Since the year 2000, nearly 4,600 vessels have been safely disposed of as a result.

In the last grant cycle alone, 472 vessels were disposed of statewide with \$1.789 million in grant funding. Of these, 264 vessels were surrendered, but unfortunately 208 were still abandoned. Abandoned vessels typically cost about three times more to dispose of than surrendered vessels.

Two years ago, with approval from Senate Bill 1, available funding for this program increased to \$2.75 million annually. Currently, 39 public agencies across California are grant recipients and each works hard to prevent and reduce abandoned vessels in their area. (To learn more, read Richardson's Bay Regional Agency's [newsletter](#).)

If your vessel is at the end of its life or if you are struggling to sell it, choose a better "second-best" day and surrender it to your local or neighboring SAVE grant recipient. Find them [here](#).

For more information on the program, visit DBW's [SAVE webpage](#).

WANTED: Boaters Can be 'Eyes on the Ocean' to Help Save Marine Animals

Author: *Laura Jean Kasa and Dan Pingaro, Saving Ocean Wildlife*

Home to many of the world's magnificent marine animals, California has a rich array of whales, dolphins, and turtles living right here in our waters. This past month, Dana Point in Southern California was even recognized as the first Whale Heritage Site to be designated in the U.S. Unfortunately, however, many of these species are endangered and all face threats, such as entanglement, being hit by ships, or killed from ingesting plastic trash, which they often confuse for food. In an effort to help save these amazing animals, statewide organization [Saving Ocean Wildlife](#) (SOW) helps bridge the gap between the agencies studying and managing these animals and the community who cares about them.



Humpback whales are the type of whale most commonly found entangled off our coast
Photo: Bryce Nichol

SOW has developed a strong collaborative partnership with [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) staff, who are in charge of all marine animal strandings and whale entanglements in California. They work with a network of response partners to execute rescue plans for injured animals.

What can you do if you see an animal in danger? You can complete SOW's "Report an Animal in California" [online form](#). Because boaters are often the ones who spot injured, entangled, or sick wildlife, they can be a huge help by getting more "Eyes on the Ocean" and reporting distressed animals.

An average of 9 whales a year were entangled on the West Coast, until 2014, when that number jumped by 450% to 41 whales a year. Once a whale is reported, it can take three to five hours for the rescue team to arrive. By then, the whale—even though it is most likely carrying thousands of pounds of fishing gear—could swim far from that original location, never to be seen again. Boaters can play a key role in saving these whales by joining our whale rescue standby team.

Volunteers are needed to be on-call to go to the sighting location to track the whale until officials can arrive on the scene and perform a rescue. Please email us at volunteer@savingoceanwildlife.org if you would like more information about joining the team.

By engaging boaters to help keep their "Eyes on the Ocean" and provide information to the agencies working to protect ocean animals, we can make a difference.

To help boaters and other ocean enthusiasts more easily identify ocean animals, SOW is offering a free [Wildlife Field Guide](#) with detailed pictures and information on the animals most likely to be seen in California.

California Fishing Line Recycling Program Update

Fishing line improperly disposed of or abandoned in the environment can lead to numerous problems. The line can not only damage a boat, but also entangle and kill wildlife. Even when the line is disposed of in trash bins, it still goes to a landfill, creating the same hazards for wildlife. Since the line is NOT biodegradable, it then remains in the environment for years. One solution to these many issues is to have fishing line recycling containers available to boaters and anglers to properly discard their used line.

Conducted by California State Parks and the California Coastal Commission, the California Boating Clean and Green Program has installed 290 [fishing line recycling stations](#) located at piers, marinas, and boat launch ramps throughout the state. Click [here](#) to find your nearest recycling station.

As of December 2020, 1,975 pounds of fishing line have been collected and properly recycled as part of this program. Stretched out, this line would reach from San Francisco to Panama!

This year, the program received funding from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Debris Program and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation to install 50 additional stations. After only two hours of advertising the stations, partners across the state have already requested all 50 stations.

Is your boating facility interested in being a California Fishing Line Recycling Program partner? It is easy! Volunteer to build and maintain a recycling location at a fishing spot near you, such as a boat launch ramp, pier, or park. Check the [construction guidelines](#). We can send you the stickers for your station and the postage-paid box, and then you can ship the collected line to the **Berkley Recycling Collection Center (1900 18th Street; Spirit Lake, IA 51360)** for proper recycling.

For more information about this program, contact Vivian Matuk at (415) 904-6905 or vmatuk@coastal.ca.gov.

If you are an angler, you can make your very own portable recycling line container out of tennis ball containers. [Learn how here](#)

Once the portable container is full, bring the collected line to a [fishing line recycling station near you](#). Alternatively, you can mail the line directly to: Berkley Recycling Collection Center (address above)



New Fishing Line Recycling Station

Little Things That Matter: Spring Tips

Spring is here, and the peak of boating season is around the corner. If you stored your boat this past winter, used your boat infrequently, or are seeking some spring cleaning, read these tips before getting out on the water.

- Refamiliarize yourself with your vessel, its safety precautions, and key features, including engine, propeller, cooling system, and battery.
- Inspect all safety equipment, including fire extinguishers, flares, personal flotation devices, oil absorbents, and first-aid kits to make sure they are functional and sound.
- If you stored your boat and used a shrink-wrap cover, recycle it. Visit Earth911.com for recycling locations.
- If you did not do so before winter, change the oil and filter, and perform preventive engine maintenance. If you change your own oil, use a closed system—a portable vacuum oil change pump that drains into a closed container to prevent spills. Always recycle your used oil filter and used oil! Call (800) CLEANUP (253-2687) or visit Earth911.com to find a recycling location near you.
- If you plan on cleaning your boat, do so in the boatyard and be sure to contain and collect any debris using tarps, vacuums, and brooms. Whether you clean your boat on land or in the water, use this as an opportunity to spring clean and swap out old toxic products for water-based, phosphate-free, chlorine-free, biodegradable, and less-toxic cleaning products. Check [here](#) for more information.
- Utilize alternative, non-biocide hull coatings instead of bottom paints that contain metals. For more information, refer to [this guide](#). Properly dispose of unused boat maintenance products at a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center. Call (800) CLEANUP (253-2687) or visit Earth911.com to find a hazardous waste disposal location near you.
- Be sure to conduct hull scraping, sanding, and stripping ashore over a drop cloth to catch all debris. Avoid abrasive scrubbing to reduce the sloughing of paint and debris.
- Reference this handy [“A Boater’s Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water”](#) for more tips!



California State Parks and California Coastal Commission's Boating Clean and Green Program

State Parks reminds the public that California is still in a pandemic. The Division of Boating and Waterways has identified a set of COVID-19 boating safety best practices for the boating community based on state and national guidelines: dbw.parks.ca.gov/COVIDBoatingTips.

In addition, please visit www.parks.ca.gov/FlattenTheCurve for the latest visitor guidelines.