



**ACA Board Meeting
US Olympic Performance Center (USOPC)
Charlotte, North Carolina**

**February 3-4, 2024
[Draft]**

Saturday Meeting

The meeting was opened at 8:30 a.m by Dave Lumian, President. The group provided introductions with a variation where everyone provided a brief history regarding their name. The agenda is included in Appendix A.

Attendance was taken by the Secretary for the Saturday meeting using a sign-up sheet.

BOD Present: Hunter Branstetter, Suzanne Britt, Beverly Cosslett, Robert Kauffman, Anna Levesque, Dave Lumian, Risa Shimoda, Andrea White. **BOD Not Present:** Thom Crockett, Kenny Kasperbauer, Zach Lokken, Jack Wallace. **Staff Present:** Kelsey Bracewell, Michelle Flynn, Jed Hinkley, MacKenzie Holbrook, Steve Kelly, Kaycee Maas, Brett Mayer, Lily Otu, Kristal Pastell, Beth Spilman, Emma Walther. **Other Attendees:** Ann Barry, Jerry Dunne, Robin Pope, Tara Fairty.

President's Report (See Appendix B). Dave presented a table of revenues generated by NGBs. The ACA is listed as under five million dollars revenue. His message was: "How can we get the ACA to grow?"

Approval of Minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The motion passed.

Conflict of Interest. Beth distributed the conflict of interest policy and forms to be completed by all board members. Conflict of interests will be discussed at the next board meeting.

STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports were the focus of the morning activities. The following summaries are taken from the power point prepared and presented by the staff. Limited information is presented in the minutes. Breaks and incidentals are not noted.

ACA Financials. Beth Spilman, Executive Director, presented the financial report. First, she noted four areas of consideration: timing, pass through funds, compensation, and income statements. Second, Beth presented a table on the surplus/deficit generated by the ACA's three properties: Sugar Island, Sebago, and Fredericksburg (4 acres). Of the three, Sugar Island had the largest deficit (\$10,600). Costs included outhouses, a roof, and a dock. Third, Beth provided a table of revenue and expenses for insurance. The ACA had a surplus generated by insurance. Fourth, the ACA has streamlined the E-store and general store. These stores showed a surplus. Fifth, there were two active Coast Guard grants. Although the bulk of the funds went to outside vendors, the grants helped to pay for internal administrative expenses. Sixth, competition was divided into Athlete/Self-Funding, USOPC-HPP, and other categories. Athlete/Self-Funding showed a slight surplus. Seventh, membership was divided into Recreational Members, SEIC, and Competition. The majority of surplus funds were generated by recreational members. Eighth, The ACA is operating profitably.

Insurance Update. Beth provided an insurance update. Insurance is a continuing area of concern. After ten to fifteen years, there was non-renewal of the policy. A new company has been found. There will be roughly a 20% increase and there is a Class-V restriction.

Membership Trends (See Appendix C). Kelsey and Michelle provided the report on membership trends. Membership is primarily US members. In From 2020 to 2023, membership was heavily male oriented. Ethnicity is primarily no answer, followed by Caucasian. The largest membership group is the 61-70 age category. US membership is slightly bimodal. Clearly, the largest group is the 11-20 year-olds. Although considerably fewer US competitors, the 51-60 age group is the second mode. The membership's payment method has changed significantly from 2012 to 2023, from check or cash to credit card. PayPal has increased slightly. Reflecting a social media campaign, donations increased in 2023 back to the 2017 level.

2024 Communications Plan & Calendar (See Appendix D). Kaycee presented the 2024 communications plan and timeline. The communications plan includes email, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, website, Zoom/Streamyard, and direct mail. Indicating the success that their campaign had, she noted that the ACA had access to 235,326 unique non-member email addresses. They had an open rate ranging from 40% to 50% over three years, which is shy of twice the normal rate for non-profits. In addition, they sent an email to 78,451 former members with an average open rate of 42%.

2024 DEI Plan (See Appendix E). Lily presented a power point on the 2024 DEI Plan. The focus was on creating a culture of inclusion and belonging and the importance of getting people to feel as if they belong. She indicated that the LEAD program was successful. The three most repeated words were community, comfortability, and representation.

Proposed Plan for Entry Level Instruction (See Appendix F and G). Robin Pope presented on the proposed plan for ACA Educational Outreach—Growing Membership and Improving Paddling Safety (See Appendix F). A key conclusion from his presentation is that *“The paddling population least likely to seek out instruction is also the largest and most rapidly growing.”* He indicated that 77% of boating fatalities had no operator education. He indicated that there is a need to target educational programs to this group of paddlers. Appendix 7 is a journal article by Robin that echoes the data in his presentation.

There was a brief discussion at the end of Robin’s presentation. The following motion was made and seconded. It passed.

Motion 2412: Motion of general support to SEIC and Robin’s proposals.
(Disposition: motion passed)

LUNCH: Lunch was provided by the national office.

WORK GROUPS

Work Group Sessions. Due to a longer lunch, the afternoon work sessions were readjusted from the original schedule (2:30-3:30 p.m.).

- Group 1: Policy Committee - Brett (See Appendix H)
- Group 2: Membership Growth Committee - Ann B
- Group 3: Competition Club Growth & Support - Jed & Steve

BOARD PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Creating Partnership (See Appendix I). Because of time limits, Robin Pope condensed his presentation titled: ACA Public Policy Outreach – Creating Partnerships, Serving Membership and Improving Boating Safety. Robin indicated that the committee is addressing public policy positions on: 1) mandatory life jacket wear, 2) mandatory boating education, and 3) paddler paying into the recreational boating system. Robin requested the board move on the third action item. It was seconded, and the motion passed.

Motion 2413: Motion that the ACA provide ACA-AUXPAD Division status per Article XIII of the ACA’s bylaws. (Disposition: motion passed)

Staff vs Board Roles & Responsibilities. Beth moderated a session consisting of the board and the staff present. She noted that the board is a working board that has considerable interaction with the staff in carrying out the policies of the organization. The purpose of the session was to improve board/staff relations and to help set boundaries. The session helped to achieve these goals.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m. until Sunday morning.

Sunday Meeting

The meeting opened at 8:45 a.m. with MacKenzie conducting a “barrier breaking” type activity. Dave followed the activity with reflections on yesterday. Most of the comments reflected on the board/staff roles and responsibilities discussion, which was considered as valuable. In addition, there was consensus regarding the value of having in-person meetings.

Attendance was taken by the Secretary for the Sunday meeting using a sign-up sheet.

BOD Present: Hunter Branstetter, Suzanne Britt, Beverly Cosslett, Robert Kauffman, Anna Levesque, Dave Lumian, Risa Shimoda, Andrea White. **BOD Not Present:** Thom Crockett, Kenny Kasperbauer, Zach Lokken, Jack Wallace. **Staff Present:** Kelsey Bracewell, Michelle Flynn, Jed Hinkley, MacKenzie Holbrook, Kaycee Maas, Lily Otu, Kristal Pastell, Beth Spilman, Emma Walther. **Other Attendees:** Ann Barry, Jerry Dunne, Robin Pope.

CONTINUED BOARD BUSINESS

Closed Session. At 9:05 a.m., the board entered into a closed session. Although an hour was scheduled for the session, it lasted until 10:55 a.m.

DEI. Lily continued her discussion from the previous day with an emphasis on “how to say things.”

Sebago Meeting. Jerry discussed the upcoming meeting at Sebago with an emphasis on selecting a date. After a discussion of alternatives, a motion was made to have the meeting on the weekend of September 28th.

Motion 2414: Moved to have the Sebago meeting on the weekend of September 28th.
(Disposition: motion passed)

Governance Committee. Given some uncertainty of what board policies were currently in place and where they were available, Hunter moved to create an special, non-board committee to review the current board policies and then, as advisable, make recommendations to the Board about potential revisions to such policies. The motion was seconded. After discussion about whether this new committee was necessary given that the USOPC reviews the board’s policies every four years in its audit and given that the USOPC and U.S. Center for SafeSport both mandate certain policies, Hunter volunteered to table his motion, pending the staff’s collecting and providing a complete set of policies to the Board; the motion to table was voted down. The motion to table having not carried, the original motion to create a Governance Committee with Hunter serving as chair was then put to a vote. It passed. After some discussion about composition of this newly formed Governance Committee, Dave requested that Hunter propose additional members for determination through presidential appointment; Hunter is a 10-Year Athlete and therefore will satisfy the athlete representation requirement, once he is confirmed by the ACA AAC. (**Secretary’s Note:** *In order to reduce confusion with the Nominating and Governance Committee, the parties agreed to change the name of the committee in the motion. The intent of the motion remains the same.*)

Motion 2415: Moved to create an ad-hoc Policy Review Committee with Hunter Branstetter as chair. (Disposition: motion passed)

Board Training Proposal (See Appendix J). Robert presented the board training proposal. The proposal was divided into three phases. Phase 1 was the passage of a motion requiring existing and new board members to complete the USOPC Board Training modules. Phase 2 addresses

discussing and prioritizing board responsibilities, and Phase 3 focuses on taking appropriate action. Beth indicated that administering the requirement would not be a problem for staff.

Motion 2416: It is moved that the ACA board requires existing and new members to complete the USOPC Foundation Board Training modules. (Disposition: motion passed)

Existing Committee Membership. In accordance with the bylaws, a motion was made to approve existing committee members as committee members for the forthcoming year.

Motion 2417: Moved to approve existing committee members as committee members for the forthcoming year. (Disposition: motion passed)

Next meeting. The next meeting is on March 13th.

Adjournment. A motion was made and second to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert B. Kauffman". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Robert B. Kauffman, Secretary

**American Canoe Association
Board of Directors and Staff Meeting
February 2 - 4, 2024**

Appendix A

Charlotte, North Carolina

Friday, February 2

4:30 - 5:00 Optional Tour of the US Perf Center
6:00 Meet at Whitewater Center for dinner

Saturday, February 3

8:00 - 8:30 Optional Tour of the US Perf Center
8:30 - 8:45 Welcome and Introductions
8:45 - 9:00 Approval of January BOD Meeting Minute
Conflict of Interest forms

Staff Presentations

9:00 - 9:30 ACA Financials
9:30 - 9:45 Insurance Update
10:00 - 10:30 Membership Trends
10:30 - 11:00 2024 Communication Plan & Calendar
11:00 - 11:15 2024 DEI Plan
11:15 - 12:00 Proposed Plan for Entry Level Instruction
12:00 - 1:00 Lunch

Working Group Sessions

1:00 - 2:15 Policy Committee
Membership Growth Committee
Competition Club Growth & Support

2:30 - 3:45 NASBLA-ACA Partnership
Rec Club Growth & Support
SEIC Topic (TBD)

4:00 - 5:15 Staff vs. Board Roles & Resp
Volunteer Resources (handbook)
We have time on Sunday for working grou

Sunday, February 4

8:30 - 9:00 Reflections on Saturday's sessions
Staff and Board will meet separately from

9:00 - 10:00 Board - Closed Session

10:00 - 10:30 Grievance, Finance

10:30 - 10:45 Board Training Proposal

10:45 - 11:00 September Board Meeting at Sebago

9:00 - 10:00	Staff - working session on Teams & Sharepoint organization
10:00 - 11:00	Staff - TBD
11:00 - 12:00	2024 Priority Recap
12:00 - 12:15	Wrap Up
12:15	Box Lunches

Currently being managed within the USOPC or under \$5M in revenue

Internally Managed Sports

- 1. Para Track and Field
- 2. Para Swimming
- 3. Para Cycling
- 4. Para Nordic Skiing
- 5. Para Powerlifting
- 6. Surfing
- 7. Skateboarding
- 8. Breaking
- 9. Ski Mountaineering
- 10. Pelota

NGBs Under \$5M

- 1. USA Badminton
- 2. USA Team Handball
- 3. USA Pentathlon
- 4. National Wheelchair Basketball Association
- 5. US Association of Blind Athletes
- 6. USA Karate
- 7. American Canoe Association
- 8. USA Racquetball
- 9. USA Roller Sports
- 10. USA Artistic Swimming
- 11. USA Water Ski & Wake Sports
- 12. USA Table Tennis
- 13. USA Judo
- 14. USA Curling
- 15. USA Diving
- 16. US Biathlon Association
- 17. USA Luge
- 18. USA Taekwondo
- 19. USA Bobsled & Skeleton

United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee

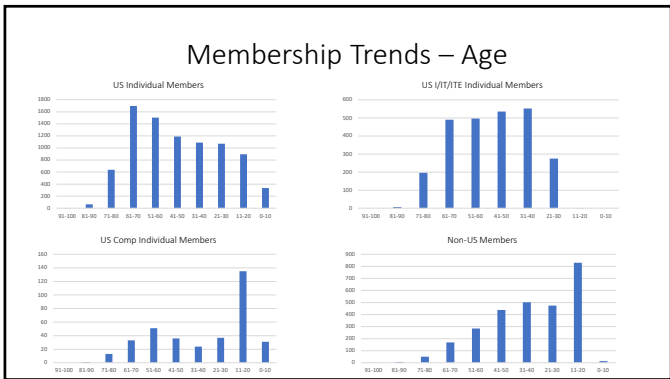
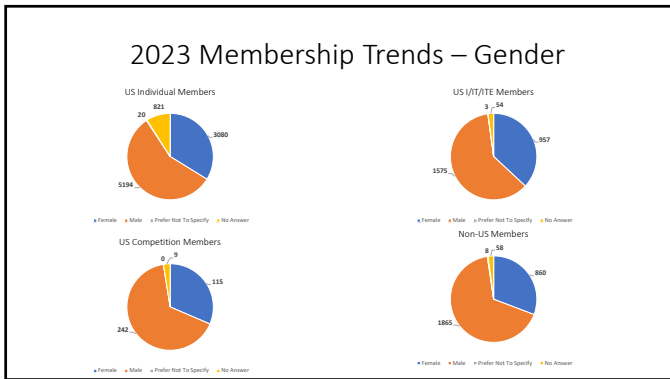
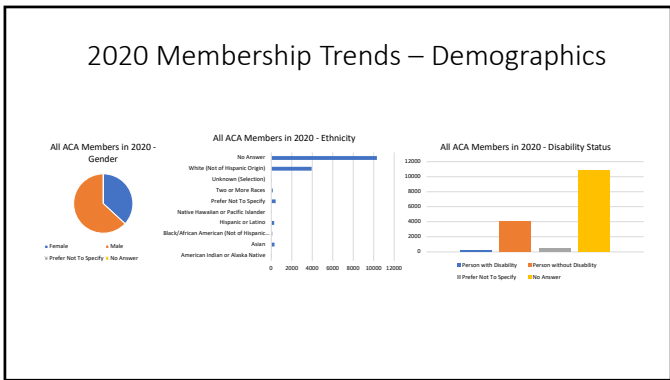
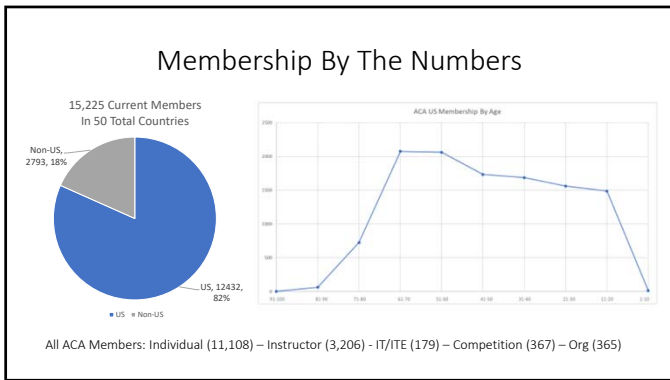
Appendix B

Appendix C

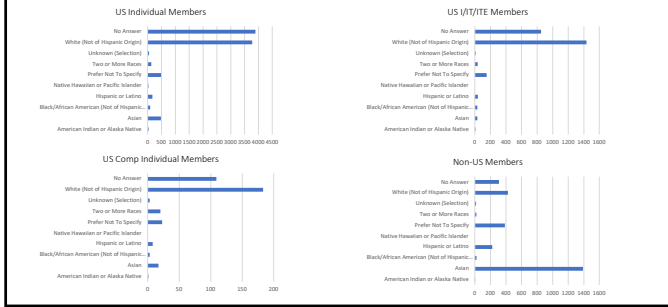
ACA Membership & Income Trends

February 3-4, 2024
Board of Directors Meeting

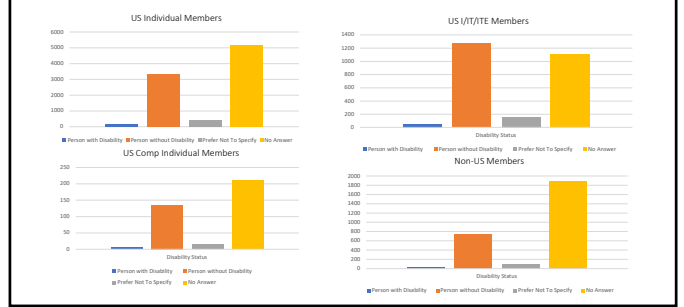
- ### Presentation Outline
- Overall Membership
 - Non-US Countries
 - Demographics: Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Disability Status
 - Membership Income Trends
 - Payment Type Trends
 - SEIC Dues
 - Comp Licenses
 - Other Income Trends
 - Insurance Income Trends
 - Merchandise (eStore) Trends
 - Donation Trends
 - Marketing & Outreach
- Data as of January 31, 2024



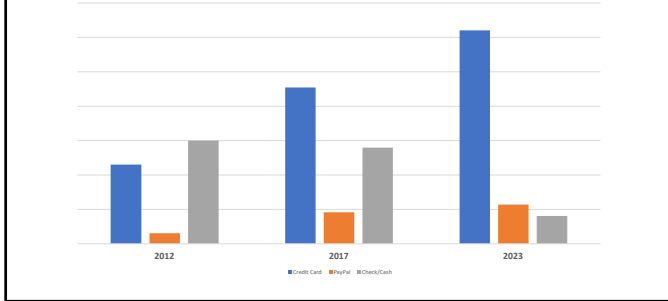
Membership Trends – Ethnicity



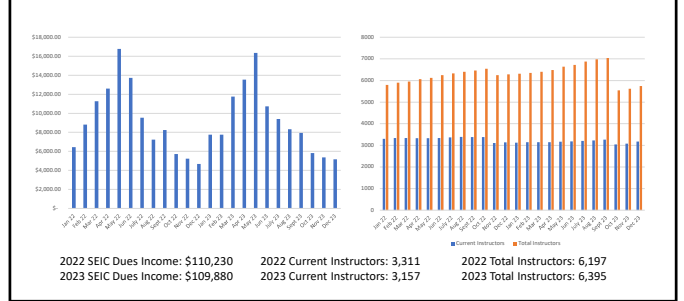
Membership Trends – Disability Status



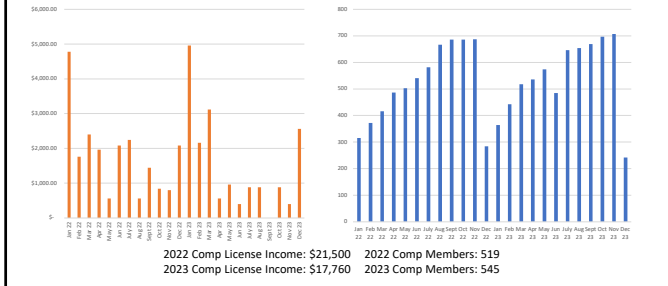
Membership Income Trends – Payment Type



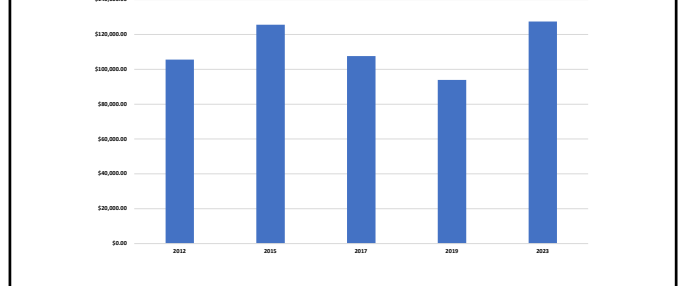
Membership Income Trends – SEIC Dues

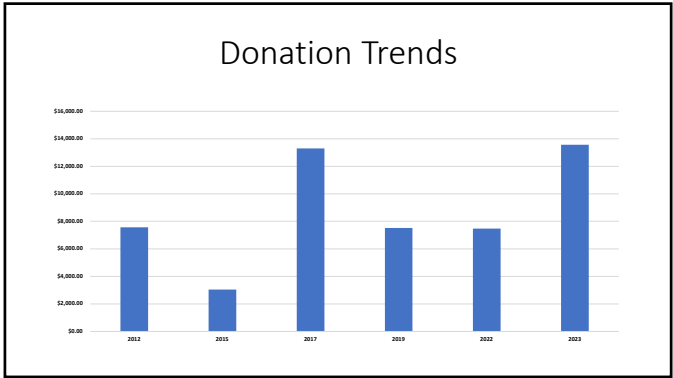
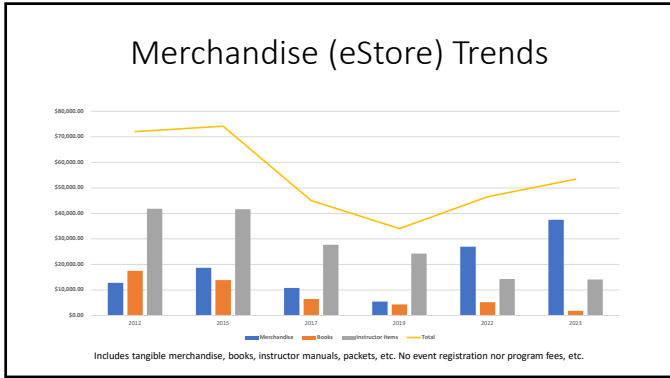


Membership Income Trends – Comp Licenses



Insurance Income Trends





- ### Marketing and Outreach
- Insurance: Post-event reporting reminders
 - Merchandise/eStore: Sales, free items, SEIC dues invoicing
 - Donations: Email campaigns, direct mail campaigns
 - Update letter sent to Lifetime members
 - Membership: Lapsed member campaigns, non-member (event member) campaigns
 - Kaycee will provide details in her upcoming presentation!

Appendix D



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This post's reach (3,538) is **200%** higher than your median post reach (1,180) on Facebook.

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4 (Leap Day) Presidents' Day	5	6 (MLK Day) Martin Luther King Jr. Day	7 (Valentine's Day)	8 (Ash Wednesday)	9	10	
11	12 (Groundhog Day)	13	14 (Presidents' Day)	15 (Ash Wednesday)	16	17	
18	19	20 (Presidents' Day)	21 (Ash Wednesday)	22 (Pope's Day)	23	24	
25	26 (Leap Day)	27 (Leap Day)	28 (Leap Day)	29	30	31	

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Appendix E





LEAD Tampa Nov 10-13, 2024


- Tampa Bay Anglers
- FYCC
- Suncoast Youth Conservation
- Instructors: Trey Rous & Jake FitzRoy
- Mentors: Adrienne Gallup, Chris Manning, Tatiana Cox-Cruz
- Goal: Allow participants to be experts in their experience.
- Result: Belonging and Empowerment.

"The skills I gained from LEAD in 2022 have directly translated into positive changes within our organization, Tampa Bay Kayak Anglers. LEAD has not only shaped me as a leader but has also been instrumental in fostering a sense of community within Tampa Bay Kayak Anglers. The connections I made with fellow paddlers during LEAD have translated into meaningful relationships. I want to express my deepest gratitude to the ACA for allowing me the opportunity to host this year's LEAD in my home state of Florida. I was so excited about the opportunity to contribute to the growth of our future leaders in the paddling community."

-Tatiana Cox-Cruz

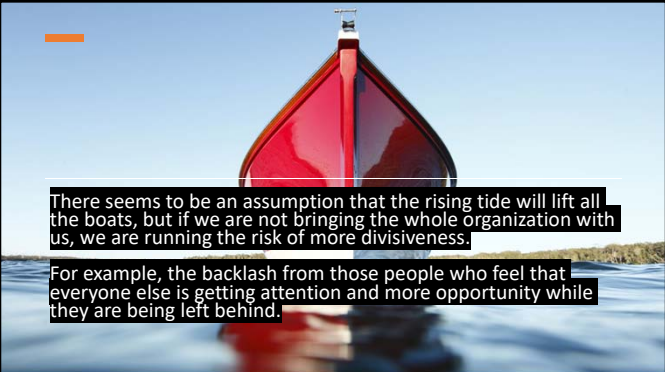



What personally have you done for the ACA to foster a sense of belonging?



Culture of Inclusion and Belonging


- Diversity is the outcome
- Retention of membership from historically and systemically marginalized communities
- Eliminating/minimizing barriers to entry
- Attract new members
 - Gen Z is the generation that wants to bring their full selves and identity to their environments, including values. Will they be valued by doing that?



There seems to be an assumption that the rising tide will lift all the boats, but if we are not bringing the whole organization with us, we are running the risk of more divisiveness.

For example, the backlash from those people who feel that everyone else is getting attention and more opportunity while they are being left behind.

Inclusive Paddle Connection



White Unknown Support Remote Learning Informative Growing evolving dunno Chatty
Certifications Unknown Instructive Education Educational
Inclusive Community Welcoming Elite Safety Boaters
challenging Cliques Educated Friendly I don't know, either Inviting Paddling Scattered
Supportive wet white lol

How Do You Define Success in This Work?

- Community
- Comfortability
- Representation

To Come in 2024



- ITE Inclusive Leadership Series
- LEAD Austin (6 confirmed participants)
- Inclusive Paddle Connection Quarterly & Region-Specific Connections
- Intentionally Equity and Access Fund Campaign
- Seek a consistent LEAD financial partner
- Provide the Board with the Inclusive Leadership Series

Appendix F

ACA Educational Outreach – Growing Membership and Improving Paddling Safety

Robin Pope
Immediate Past Chair, ACA Board of Directors

Overview

- Background and Paddling Safety Data
- Paddling Safety and Education Programs
- Mentorship and Outreach Opportunities to Expand Membership and Improve Paddling Safety

Why Bother?

- Paddling education and safety are core parts of ACA's mission
- ACA's Board, Staff, and Membership need accurate and relevant information to guide decision-making
- ACA should act intentionally and pro-actively, and not simply in response to actions or requests by others
 - Beth and her staff have done a phenomenal job of moving us in this direction
 - Board decisions can support Beth's work, expanding our ability to positively impact the paddling community
 - Member engagement is essential for a membership organization – intentional action creates opportunities for member engagement

2022-2026 Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program

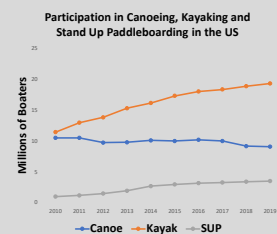
- Initiative 1:** [Positively Influence Recreational Boater Behavior](#)
- Initiative 2:** [Positively Influence Recreational Boat and Accessory Manufacturers](#)
- Initiative 3:** [Leverage Recreational Boating Data](#)

In addition, a recent NBSAC initiative recommends further exploring the role of human factors in boating accidents, tying to Initiatives 1 and 3.

Paddling Safety Data – Participation, Fatalities, Accident Types and Contributing Factors

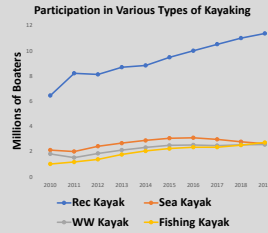
Paddling Participation

- Boating participation in the US grew by about 1.6 million people per year (2011-2018)
- Paddling growth of about 890K people per year
- Kayak growth of about 790K per year
- SUP growth of about 250K per year
- Canoe decline of about 150K per year



Kayak Participation

- Recreational kayaking growth of about 490K per year, exceeding all others combined. **The paddling population least likely to seek out instruction is also the largest and most rapidly growing.**
- Kayak fishing growth of about 170K per year
- Coastal and whitewater growth of about 60K per year

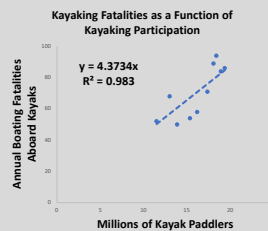


Recreational kayaking participation

- In 2019, recreational kayakers made up:**
- **59% of the kayaking community,**
 - **33% of the total paddling community, and**
 - **13% of the total boating community.**
- And contributed:**
- **62% of the growth in the kayaking community**
 - **55% of the growth in the paddling community**
- Recreational kayak growth is nearly double that of all other measured types combined**

Participation vs. Fatalities

- Kayaking shows a strong linear relationship between participation and fatalities
- Canoe and SUP show similar but less strong relationships
- 4 to 5 paddling fatalities per million paddlers (in contrast to 7 to 8 fatalities per million boaters)



Additional data from USCG Recreational Boating Statistics

Fatal Paddling Accidents

Accident Types

- Unexpected entry into the water – capsizing, falling overboard, flooding/swamping, ejection (85%)
- Collisions (11%)

Cause of Death

- Drowning (87%)

Contributing Factors

- Hazardous waters (24%)
- Inexperience (15%)
- Alcohol and drug use (14%)
- Improper / overloading (9%)
- Weather (7%)

Most paddling deaths are preventable!

Fatal Paddling Accidents

1. Most paddling deaths result from operator action or inaction – “Human Factors”
2. Most paddling deaths are preventable
3. ACA organizational and member activities can save lives by addressing human factors through:
 - Policy (to be discussed at a later time)
 - Educational programs
 - Mentorship, outreach, and example

Paddling Education and Safety Programs

Education matters – where education status was known, 77% of boating fatalities had no operator education

Education is poorly tracked – the education status of vessel operators was known in only 51% of fatal boating accidents

ACA's Educational Program

- Multiple paddling disciplines covering venues from pools to class IV whitewater and small craft advisory conditions
- About 3100 instructors who teach paddling skills
- About 160 instructor trainers (ITs) – instructors who also can certify new instructors
- About 35 instructor trainer educators (ITEs) – instructor trainers who can certify new instructor trainers

ACA's Educational Program

- Instructor certification – 2 to 7 days, depending on the level of certification. Higher levels require significant skills to participate.
- Instructor trainer qualification – typically begins two years after instructor certification. The process takes an additional one to two years.
- Instructor trainer educator qualification – typically begins at least two years after IT certification and four years after instructor certification.
- ***The lack of ITs and ITEs can create a bottleneck***
ACA's strong educational program is an asset whose value must not be ignored. Weakening program standards weakens the ACA; strengthening our instructional program strengthens the ACA.

ACA Educational Program

- ACA's educational program operates as a licensing agency, with little direct control over the frequency, discipline or location of instructor and instructor trainer certification.
- Instructors, ITs and ITEs teach when they want, where they want, if they want. Instructor certification courses occur at the sole discretion of instructor trainers.
- Initial IT and ITE qualification managed in part through the Safety Education and Instruction Council's Standards Committee .
- After certification, the Standards Committee addresses complaints but has limited quality assurance opportunities.

Other programs (e.g., American Red Cross, US Sailing, Scouting USA)

- Instructors teach skills courses independently but in many cases organizations also schedule classes
- Instructor certification is often scheduled regionally or nationally by the organization
- Instructor trainer qualification and updates generally scheduled by the organizations, regionally or nationally, creating QA/QI opportunities
- Standardized written and electronic references
- Can ACA benefit by copying aspects of this model, particularly at the entry-level?

Educational Outreach

- ACA already provides national support for the LEAD program, focused on improving inclusion and diversity within the paddling community, and has a history of offering similar programs
- Similar programs can help retain existing instructors/ITs/ITEs **and** grow their number and expand their scope of practice
- Similar programs can partner with like-missioned organizations to help ACA's instructional program enter new markets
- Similar programs can target areas of instructional need at the entry **and** advanced levels

Applying Research to Education

- Recently written document "Trends in US Recreational Boating Fatalities: Causes, Contributing Factors and Evidence-Based Steps for Prevention" provides an in-depth analysis of boating fatalities.
- The document identifies clear evidence-based educational interventions for boating safety programs.
- The document clearly identifies essential entry-level content that fully supports two of the Recreational Boating Strategic Plan's three major initiatives.

Applying Research to Education

1. **Plan your trip to avoid hazards.** Know where you're going, who you're going with, and how you'll get there and back. Know what the weather will be and know what on-water hazards can be expected. Have plans to deal with anticipated hazards. Be sure your equipment is in good shape before you leave to go to the water. Communicate your plans to someone on shore who wants you to come back. **Practice applying your plan.**
2. **Be flexible.** When conditions change, change your plan.
3. **Paddle in a group.** Paddling with others is safer and more fun. Take time to ensure your group is healthy, their gear is in good shape, and that everyone understands the trip plan.
4. **Learn what hazards look like** so you can avoid them. **Be able to recognize and avoid them on the water.**

Applying Research to Education

5. **Paddle sober.**
6. **Dress to swim.** Wear your life jacket and dress for the water temperature. **Practice swimming in your kit.**
7. **Learn to handle your boat** and **practice** boat handling so you don't swim unintentionally.
8. **Learn to self-rescue** and **practice** the skills.
9. **Learn how to rescue others** and **practice** the skills.
10. **Develop skills and gain experience by obtaining instruction and mentorship**, so you can handle anticipated conditions and unanticipated hazards.

Applying Research to Education

- ACA's existing programs closely match boating safety evidence. Our learner-centered flexibility and focus on hands-on skills makes this challenging to prove.
- With very little effort, ACA can polish our existing entry-level courses to explicitly match evidence-based suggestions – meeting two of three initiatives in the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program. **This is primarily a matter of providing resources for students and instructors.**
- Doing so will help ACA meet many of our Strategic Plan goals, and address initiatives being proposed by NBSAC regarding human factors in boating accidents.

Mentorship and Outreach - How can the ACA build and strengthen relationships between our organization and the larger paddling community?

Mentorship and Outreach

We build relationships by building relationships. There's no shortcut.
Individual programs build relationships around individuals.
ACA-sponsored programs can build relationships that include the ACA.
ACA-sponsored events, seen as ACA-sponsored events, are essential to building relationships with the paddling community we represent.

Mentorship and Outreach

- Internal relationships are being built through our Councils and their Committees
 - Annual conferences
 - Kayak 101
 - Instructional and competitive discipline committee activity

Mentorship and Outreach

External relationships can grow

- Environmental and outing groups
- Municipal and County park and rec programs
- Paddling Schools

The opportunities above often are local, individual relationships. We need a pool of local individuals to create those relationships and they need resources.

Mentorship and Outreach

External relationships can grow

- USCGAUX - AUXPAD
- Scouting
- NASBLA and individual states
- National organizations

These might better succeed as organizational relationships. How do we support them?

ACTION ITEMS

Create best practices for nationally sponsored/organized ACA events

Expanding the number of ACA organizational events will create opportunities for organizational and individual relationships with the ACA while helping retain existing instructors and grow our instructor cadre. However, events also create a burden upon our staff. Before offering more organizational programs, we need to determine best practices for staff and member-organizers. After effective processes are identified, we then can begin offering organizational programs, including instructor and IT development programs, that expand our membership and our outreach.

This addresses Strategic Plan KPIs DEI 1, and EDU 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Support evidence-based entry-level instruction by cataloging existing resources and developing new resources

Evidence-based instruction meets key elements of the Strategic Plans for the ACA and the National Recreational Boating Safety Program. ACA is poised to be the first and only boating education program whose courses are explicitly tied to boating safety data. However, to most effectively do so, we need to catalog existing resources and add additional ones. Where additional resources are needed, ACA can fund graphic design and videography to better support entry-level paddling programs.

This addresses Strategic Plan KPIs CLD 4, DEI 1, and EDU 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Continue to support SEIC's efforts to reimagine our entry-level pathways

SEIC's curriculum committee and Introduction to Paddling Committees are working to create new pathways for entry-level paddlers and membership journeys through the ACA. The goal is to make both paddling and the ACA more accessible. ACA's Board must ensure that conflicting actions, which might waste the funds already spent on this effort, are not implemented.

This addresses Strategic Plan KPIs CLD 4, DEI 1, and EDU 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Offer ACA Paddling Academies to develop level one and two instructors, instructor trainers and IT educators, as well as PSF and CPL presenters

Paddling Academies can create a pool of qualified instructors and leaders who can help serve the rapidly growing entry-level paddling market. These can short-cut the bottleneck in instructor growth created by our current instructor certification model. They can maintain our high standards, create a venue to experiment with new approaches, provide opportunities for pro-active QA/QI, and grow the pool of level one and two instructors, needed to serve the 790,000 new kayakers and 250,000 new SUP paddlers who enter the paddling community each year.

This addresses Strategic Plan KPIs CLD 4, DEI 1, and EDU 1, 2, 3, and 5.

Questions and Discussion

A PUBLICATION OF THE RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY DIRECTORATES

RBS: JOB ONE

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 1

Appendix G



**UNITED STATES RECREATIONAL BOATING FATALITIES:
WHAT'S HAPPENED AND HOW TO PREVENT THEM.**

CONTENTS

Volume 10, Issue 1

TRENDS IN U.S. RECREATIONAL BOATING FATALITIES 4

COVER

NANTAHALA RIVER, NC – Auxiliary Photo by Robin Pope. Advanced swiftwater rescue training held in the snow during April 2021. This advanced training teaches recreational paddlers how to prevent and respond to emergencies....



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Vice National Commodore
COMO Mary Kirkwood
**Deputy National Commodore –
Recreational Boating Safety**
COMO Tiney Singler
**Assistant National Commodore –
Recreational Boating**
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Outreach Directorate (B)**
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Public Education Directorate (E)
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Directorate (V)**
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Communication Services
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Editorial Services

TRENDS IN U.S. RECREATIONAL BOATING FATALITIES: CAUSES, CONTRIBUTING FACTORS, AND EVIDENCE-BASED STEPS FOR PREVENTION

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR, U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY
RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY OUTREACH DIRECTORATE

DAVID A. POPE, M.S., NRP, HARRIS EMS, SYLVA, NC

ABSTRACT

Recreational boating is enjoyed by millions of people each year but each year thousands are involved in boating accidents causing hundreds of fatalities and millions of dollars in property damage. The annual number of boating accidents and fatalities is lower in 2019 than in 1991, but during the decade 2010 to 2019, that decline has essentially stopped. To further reduce recreational boating accidents, the types of accidents and their contributing factors must be understood.

The most common boating accidents are collisions but the most common fatal boating accidents are unexpected entry into the water (capsizing and falling overboard) associated with alcohol consumption, hazardous waters, inattention, and inexperience. Life jacket wear and boating education are not considered by the U.S. Coast Guard as independent contributing factors but the majority of subjects who die while boating are not wearing a lifejacket and have not obtained boating education. Open motorboats account for nearly half of all boating fatalities and open motorboats, kayaks, canoes, and personal watercraft (PWCs) account for nearly three-quarters of all boating fatalities. Core boating instruction appropriate for all craft can be developed with this data. These educational interventions may be most effective if they include core knowledge, vessel-specific information, and opportunities to gain experience while applying the knowledge

INTRODUCTION

Recreational boating is enjoyed by tens of millions of people in the United States. Most boaters have enjoyable and uneventful experiences on the water. However, each year, thousands are involved in boating accidents, leading to millions of dollars of property damage and hundreds of boater fatalities. To prevent these accidents, it is necessary to understand what types of accidents occur and why they happen.

Below, publicly available data, along with additional data obtained by querying the Boating Accident Report Database, is examined to determine trends in boating fatalities and participation. Then, common contributing factors and accident types for boating accidents and fatalities between 2010 and 2019 are evaluated, creating a baseline for future work. Finally, evidence-based recommendations intended to prevent future accidents and fatalities are offered. Evidence-based education, with course content explicitly developed in response to boating fatality data, might further reduce the annual number of boating fatalities, as well as reduce boating-related accidents, injuries, and property damage. Future communication will compare the 2010 - 2019 results with data from 2020 forward and specifically consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHODS AND DATA

Boating participation data was taken from the 2011, 2012, and 2018 National Recreational Boating Safety Surveys, available at [https://uscgboating.org/statistics/national-recreational-boating-survey.php](https://uscgboating.org/statistics/national-recreational-boating-safety-survey.php). Further information was taken from the Outdoor Foundation's 2021 outdoor participation trends report, found at <https://americancanoe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021-Outdoor-Participation-Trends-Report.pdf>.

Recreational boating statistics published by the U.S. Coast Guard's Boating Safety Division (https://uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.php) and additional data from the Boating Accident Reporting Database were examined to evaluate accident types and contributing factors leading to recreational boating fatalities. Data was transcribed to an Excel spreadsheet and Excel tools were used for analysis. Table 1 below shows tables from the Recreational Boating Statistics used for evaluation in this report.

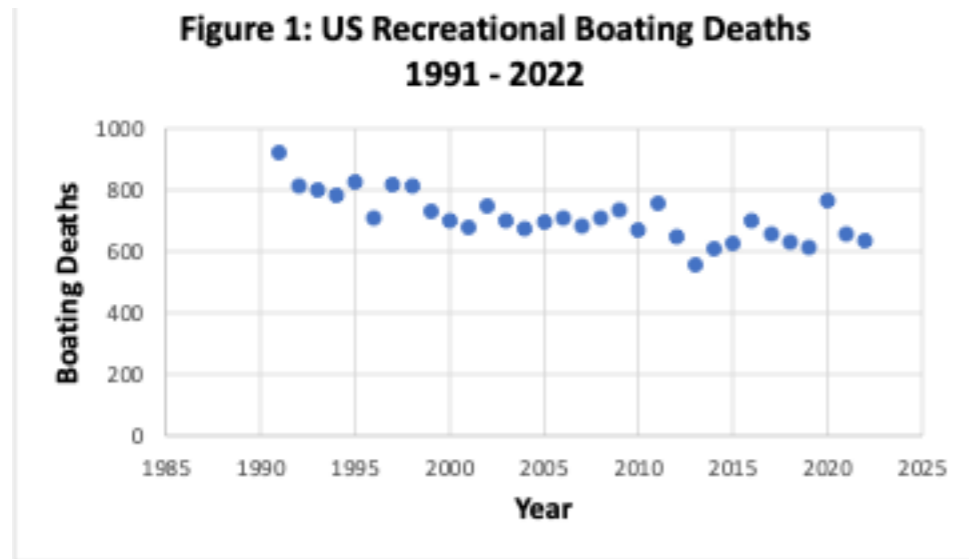
TABLE 1: Information sources from Recreational Boating Statistics
(https://uscgboating.org/statistics/accident_statistics.php)

Source	Information Extracted
Table 5	Contributing factors to accidents, injuries, and deaths for all craft combined
Table 7	Contributing factors to accidents, injuries, and deaths by craft type
Table 16	Accident type and casualty numbers for all craft combined
Table 19	Accident types by craft type
Table 23	Educational status of boaters involved with accidents, injuries, and fatalities
Table 29	Historical numbers of boating accidents, injuries, and fatalities
Table 31	Number of registered vessels
Table 35	Cause and number of deaths by craft type and PFD wear

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

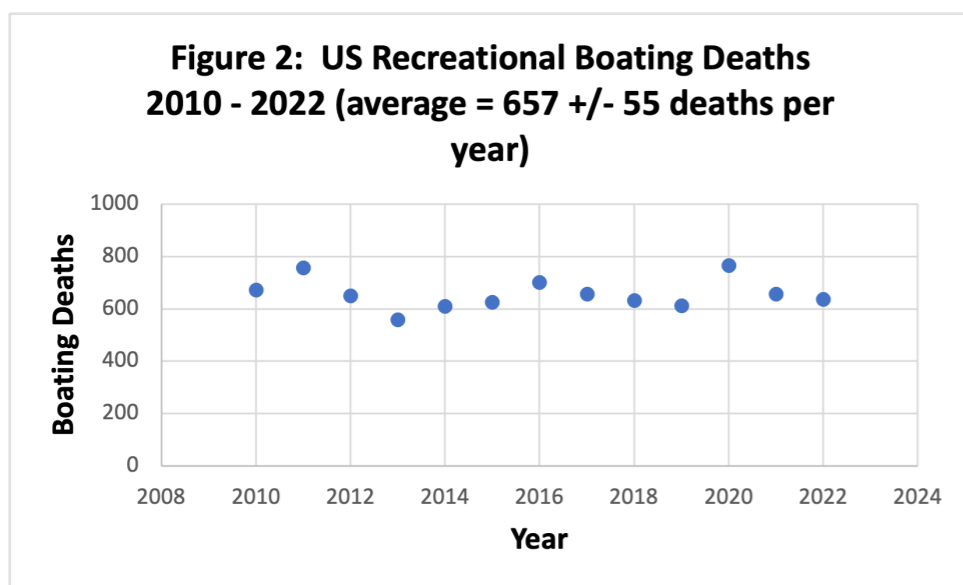
Overall Boating Deaths

924 recreational boating deaths were reported in 1991. The number of annual boating deaths has generally declined ever since (Figure 1), reaching a low point of 560 deaths in 2013.



This steady decline in fatalities is likely due to a wide range of interventions, including mandatory life jacket wear in some venues, mandatory education for some boaters, and increased availability of boating education programs. Manufacturing improvements, along with improved communication, navigation, rescue, and weather alert systems, also likely contributed.

Unfortunately, as shown in Figure 2, the decline in fatalities seen since 1991 appears to have plateaued or even, if measured since the low point in 2013, reversed. This could indicate increases in boating participation (e.g., more people on the water leading to more deaths) or changes in boating habits (e.g., more time on the water). It also might indicate that the effectiveness of current interventions has reached its maximal effectiveness and that new, additional interventions are needed.



Boating Deaths by Type of Vessel

To evaluate the need for specific new interventions, it is important to understand fatality trends for specific vessels. Figures 3, 4, and 5 show trends in boating deaths, from 2010 to 2019, for motorized, sail-powered, and human-propelled craft. Motorized vessels contributed an average of 65.9 +/- 2.0% of all recreational boating fatalities, sailboats contributed an average of 3.3 +/- 0.7%, and human-propelled craft contributed an average of 28.3 +/- 1.7%. There was no clear trend year-to-year for motorized vessels. The contribution of paddlecraft (canoes, kayaks, and SUPs) to boating fatalities dropped from 21.0% in 2010 to 16.1% in 2012. They then increased to 23.8% in 2016 before dropping to 22.4% in 2019. Overall, paddlecraft showed an average annual increase of about 3 fatalities or about 0.4% of all boating deaths. Sailing vessels showed a slight decrease, from 3.4% to 2.9%, in their contribution to overall boating fatalities during the decade.

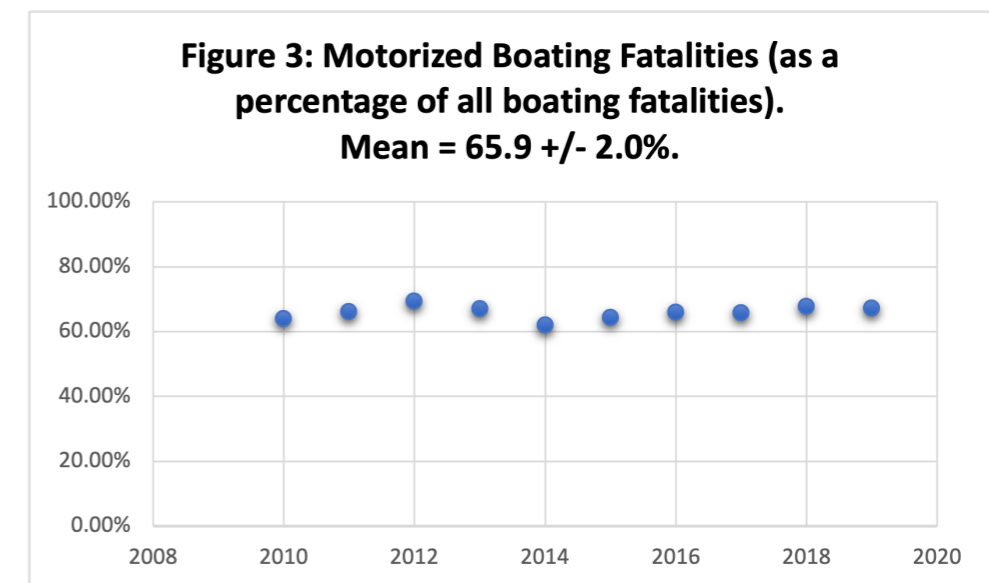


Table 2 shows the contribution of each type of motorized craft to overall boating fatalities between 2010 and 2019. Open motorboats are responsible for nearly half of all boating deaths and more than 70% of all deaths associated with motorized craft

Table 2: Motorized vessel contribution to boating fatalities 2010 - 2019

Vessel Type	Percentage contribution to total recreational boating deaths
Total	65.9%
Airboat	0.4%
Cabin Motorboat	5.8%
Houseboat	0.6%
Open Motorboat	47.1%
Personal Watercraft	6.5%
Pontoon Boat	5.5%

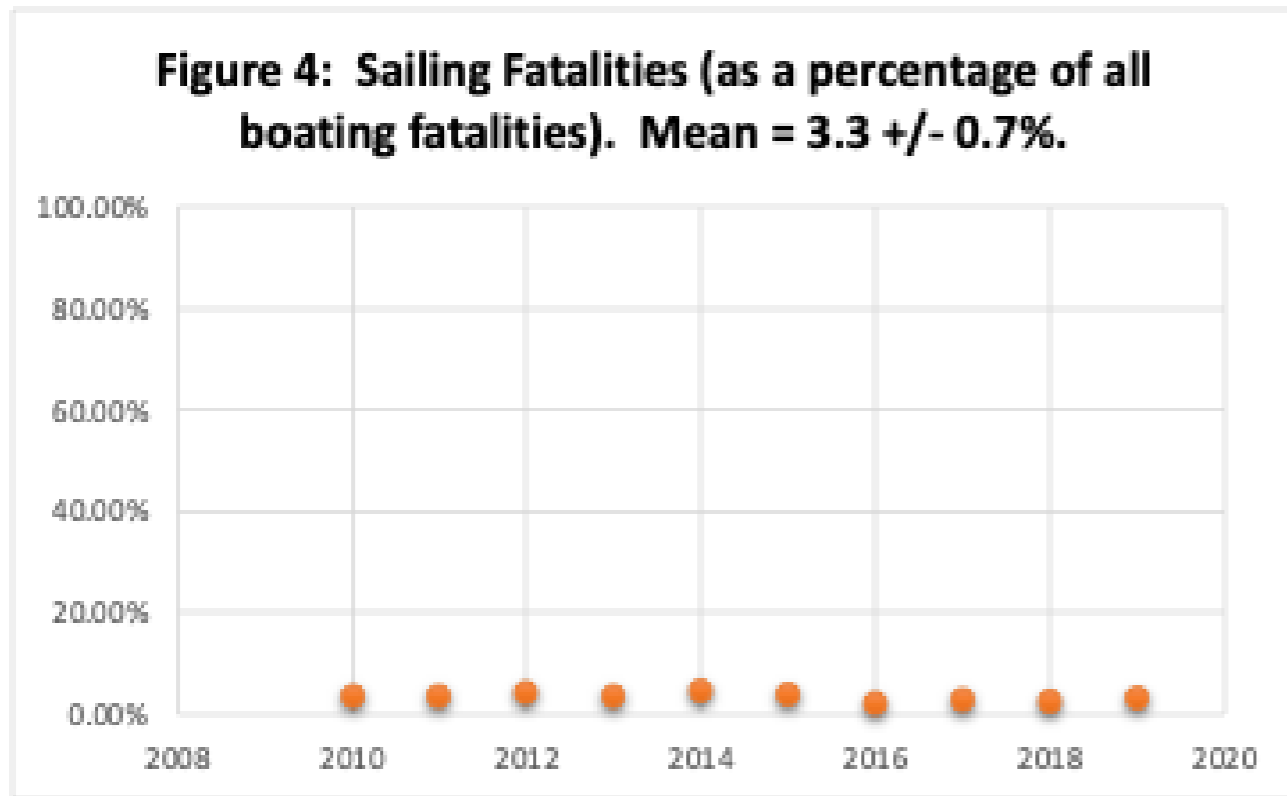


Table 3 shows the contribution of various types of sailboats to overall recreational boating deaths between 2010 and 2019. The total contribution from sailing vessels is consistently small. This likely reflects both the small size of the sailing community relative to other types of craft and the level of training required to operate a sailboat.

Table 3: Sailboat contributions to boating fatalities 2010 - 2019

Vessel Type	Percentage contribution to total recreational boating deaths
Total	3.3%
Auxiliary Sailboat	2.0%
Sailboat (only)	1.0%
Sailboat (unknown propulsion)	0.2%

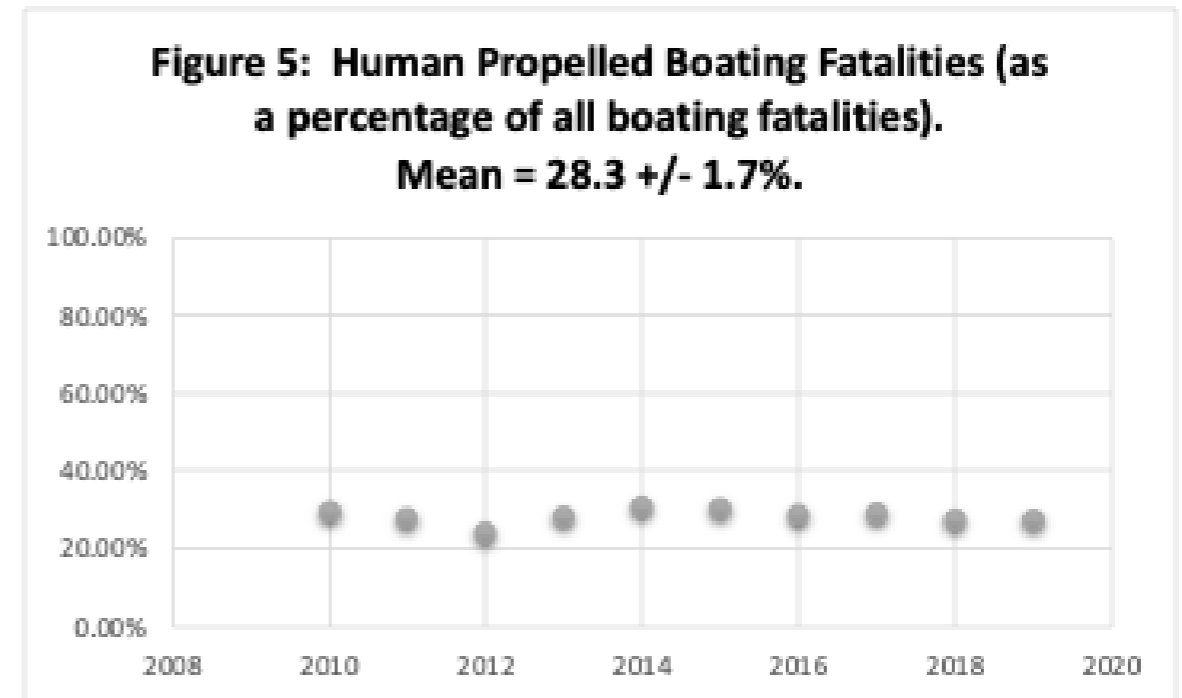


Table 4 shows the contribution of various types of human-propelled craft to overall recreational boating deaths between 2010 and 2019. Human-propelled craft contributed 28.3% of all recreational boating fatalities during the decade whereas paddlecraft (canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards-SUPs) contributed 21.0%. When canoes, kayaks, and SUPs are summed, there appears to be a slight annual increase (about 0.4% per year) in their contribution to total recreational boating fatalities between 2010 and 2019.

Vessel Type	Percentage contribution to total recreational boating deaths
Total	28.3%
Total Paddlecraft (canoe, kayak, SUP)	21.0%
Canoe	9.2%
Inflatable	3.2%
Kayak	10.9%
Rowboat	4.1%
Stand Up Paddleboard	0.9%

When examined on an individual craft basis, all vessels show year-to-year variability but only three – canoes, kayaks, and SUPs – show clear trends across the decade (Figure 6). The contribution of canoeing fatalities decreased steadily from 13% in 2010 to 6% in 2019. In contrast, the contribution of kayaking fatalities increased from 8% to 14% and the contribution of SUP fatalities increased from 0% to 2% over the same time frame. The decrease in canoeing fatalities nearly balances out the increases in kayaking and SUP fatalities.

Figure 6: Canoe, Kayak and SUP Fatalities (as a percentage of all boating fatalities)

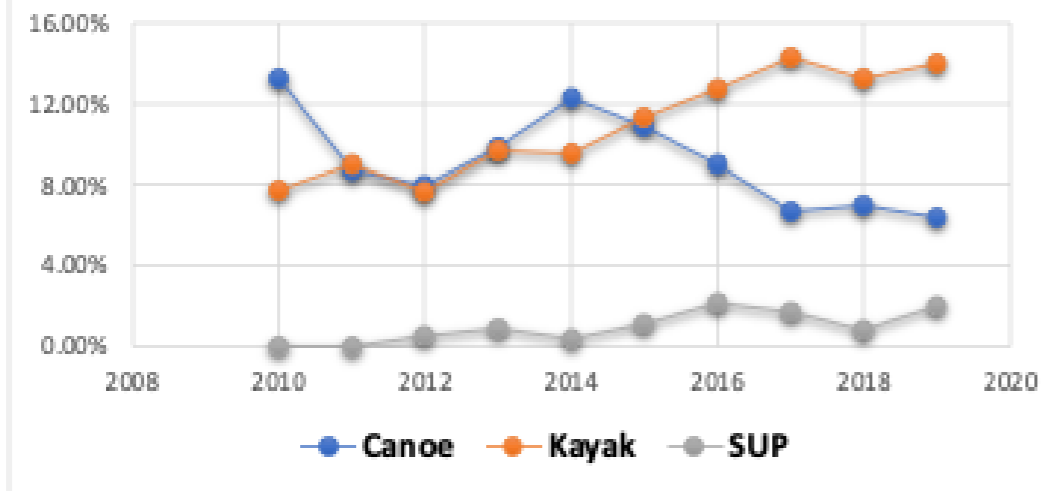
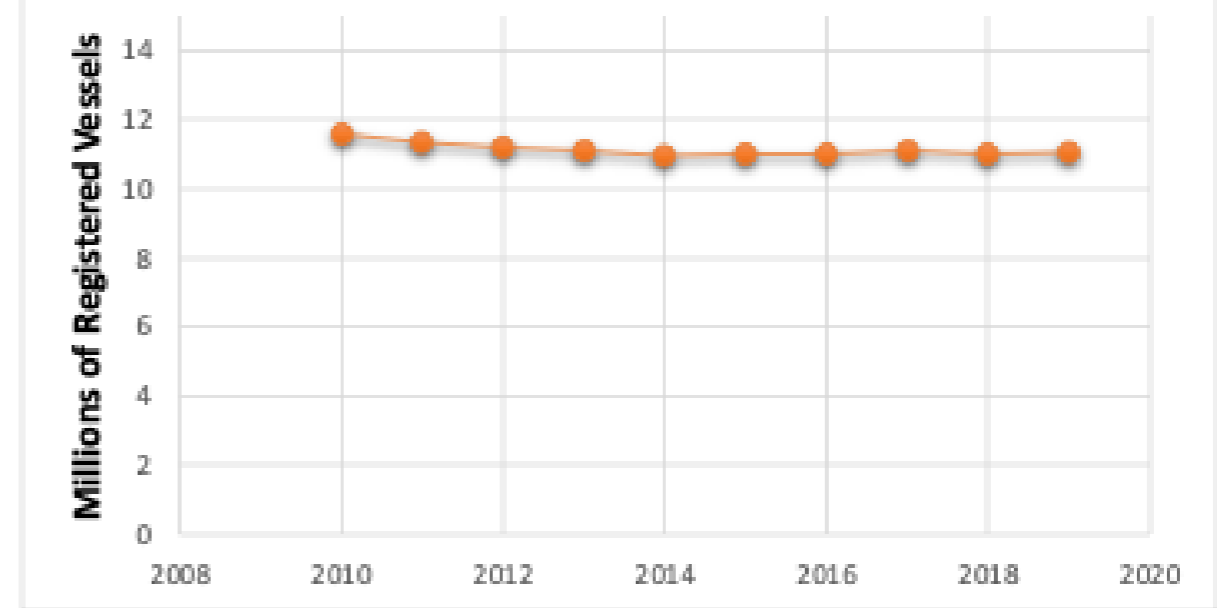


Figure 7: Registered Motorized Vessels in the US



Participation

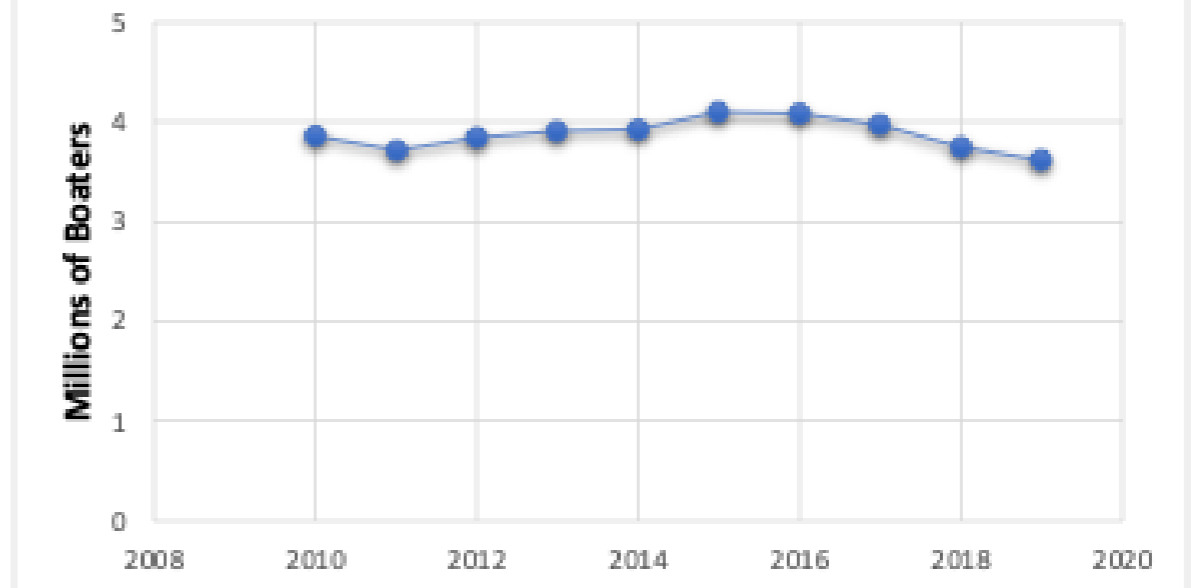
The National Recreational Boating Safety Survey (NRBSS) was conducted in 2011, 2012 and 2018. These surveys show recreational boating participation in the U.S. grew from 73,560,000 participants (23.8% of the U.S. population) in 2011 to 84,544,000 participants (26.5% of the U.S. population) in 2018.

Reports showing year-to-year changes in the use of motorized vessels overall, or in specific types of motorized vessels, are difficult to find. However, NRBSS reports from 2011, 2012, and 2018 do provide valuable snapshots. The 2011 NRBSS report suggests as many as 71.9% of boaters, or about 52,890,000 people, used motorized vessels in 2011. In 2012, 70.4% of boaters, or about 52,474,000 people, are believed to have used motorized vessels. The 2018 NRBSS exposure report does not indicate the percentage of boaters who use motorized craft. However, multiplying the number of outings by the average number of people aboard and then dividing by the average number of outings per craft type yields an estimate of about 54,826,000 people using motorized vessels, or about 65% of the boating population.

To obtain a year-to-year estimate of motorized vessel participation, the number of registered motorized vessels can be used as a proxy. This number is closely tracked for tax purposes, and numbers from each year are published in the Recreational Boating Statistics. Figure 7 shows there has been a slight decrease in annual motorboat registration, from 11.6 million in 2010 to 11.1 million in 2019. NRBSS data suggest that motorized craft are used, on average, by 3 people at a time, suggesting that as few as 35 million people boat each year aboard motorized vessels. In contrast, data from NRBSS reports described above suggests powerboat participation is closer to 55 million people per year. Several factors might be responsible for the two different estimates. For example, although the average powerboat outing involves three people, those might not always be the same people. In particular, the use of rental boats might lead to an increased number of people using a registered vessel, and yield higher overall participation numbers for motorized craft. Changes in the distribution of vessels (e.g., increases in pontoon boat operation, carrying several people, relative to PWC operation, carrying a single person) also might increase the average number of people aboard motorized vessels.

Data from the Outdoor Foundation track sailing, canoeing, kayaking, and SUP participation on an annual basis. Sailing participation rose from 3.9 million boaters in 2010 to 4.1 million in 2015 and 2016, before dropping to 3.6 million in 2019 (Figure 8). The 2018 NRBSS data suggest 3.7 million people participated in sailing in 2018. Outdoor Foundation data suggest about 3.8 million people sailed in 2018, closely agreeing with NRBSS data.

Figure 8: Sailing Participation in the US



Participation in canoeing, kayaking, sailing and stand-up paddleboarding has been directly tracked by the Outdoor Foundation (OF), whereas data describing rowing and inflatable participation are difficult to find. OF's data (shown in Figure 9) suggest kayaking participation (including recreational, sea, whitewater, and fishing kayaks) grew from 11.5 million participants in 2010 to 19.4 million in 2019, an average increase of about 790,000 participants per year. SUP participation also grew, rising from 1.1 million in 2010 to 3.6 million in 2019, an average increase of 250,000 participants per year. Canoeing participation, on the other hand, decreased from 10.6 million in 2010 to 9.1 million in 2019, an average decrease of about 150,000 participants per year. Recreational kayaking, generally done with inexpensive boats that have little internal flotation, is consistently the most popular type of kayaking (Figure 10) and grew by about 490,000 paddlers each year. OF data are consistent with 2018 NRBSS data that suggest 33.1 million people – 39% of the recreational boating community – used paddlecraft in 2018.

Figure 9: Participation in Canoeing, Kayaking and Stand Up Paddleboarding in the US

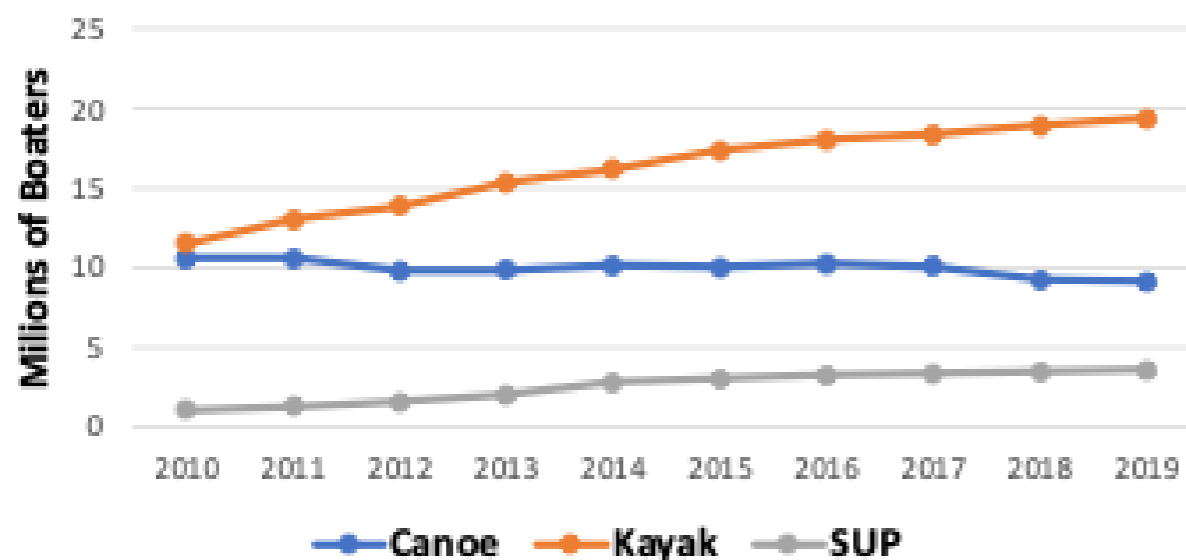
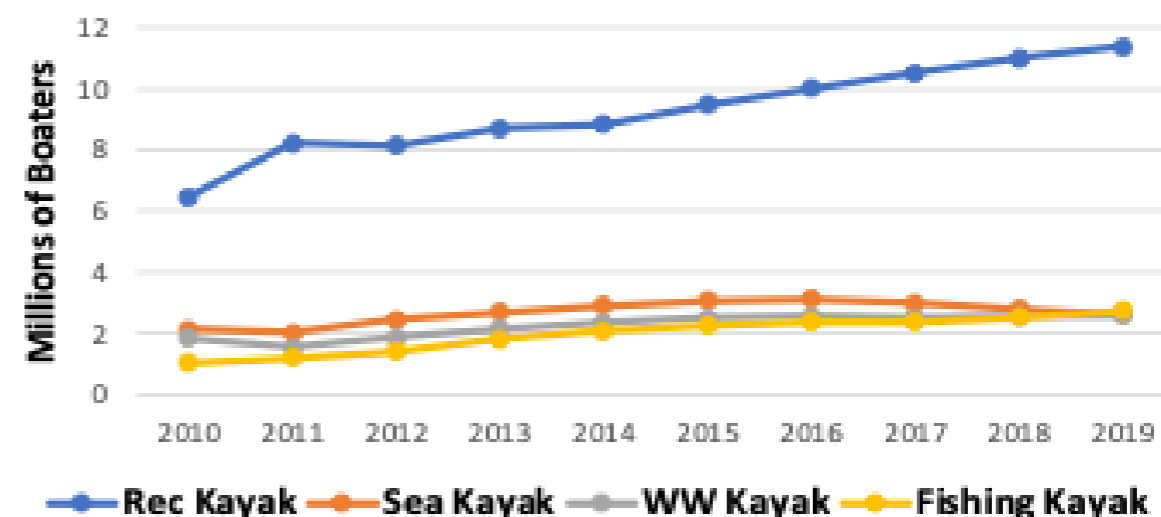


Figure 10: Participation in Various Types of Kayaking



Between 2011 and 2018, NRBSS data show boating participation grew by about 1.57 million people per year. Over that same time frame, paddling participation grew by about 900,000 people per year. It appears that nearly 60% of the increase in boating participation between 2011 and 2018 was due to growth in kayak and SUP paddling.

Participation vs. Fatalities

Figure 11 presents motorized vessel fatalities as a function of registered motorized vessels. There is little variation in the number of registered vessels or deaths aboard motorized vessels. Year-to-year scatter could represent changes in time spent on the water, in life jacket wear, or activities done on the water.

Figure 11: Deaths Aboard Motorized Recreational Vessels as a Function of Registered Motorized Vessels (2010-2019)

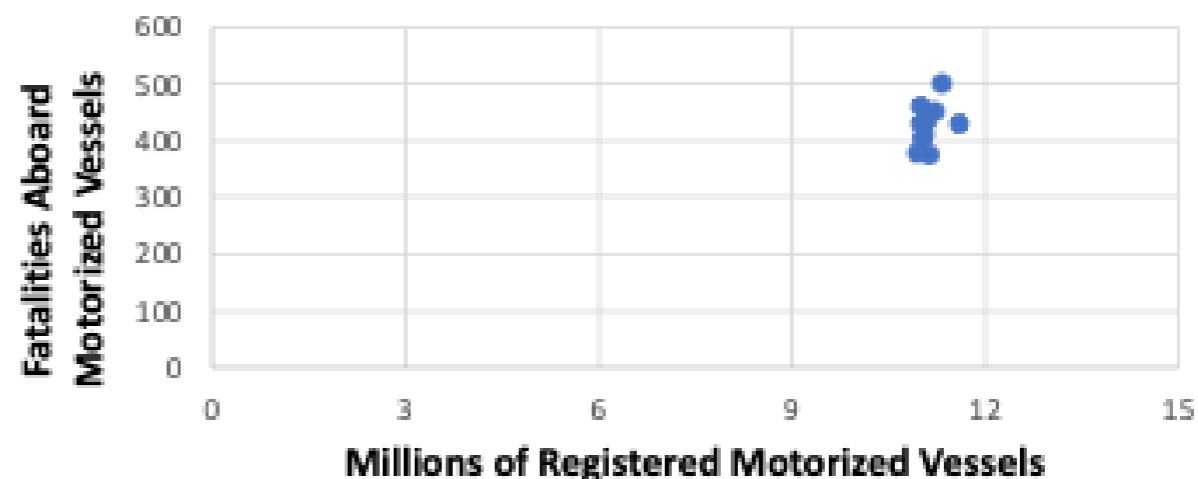
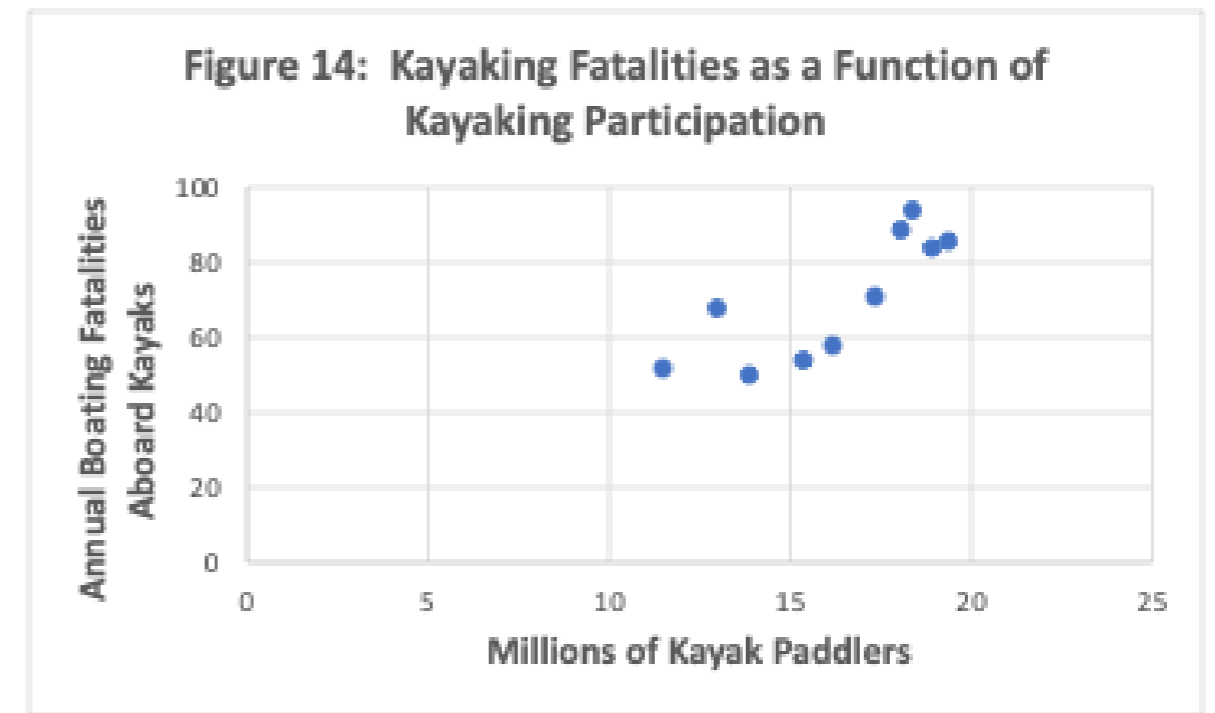
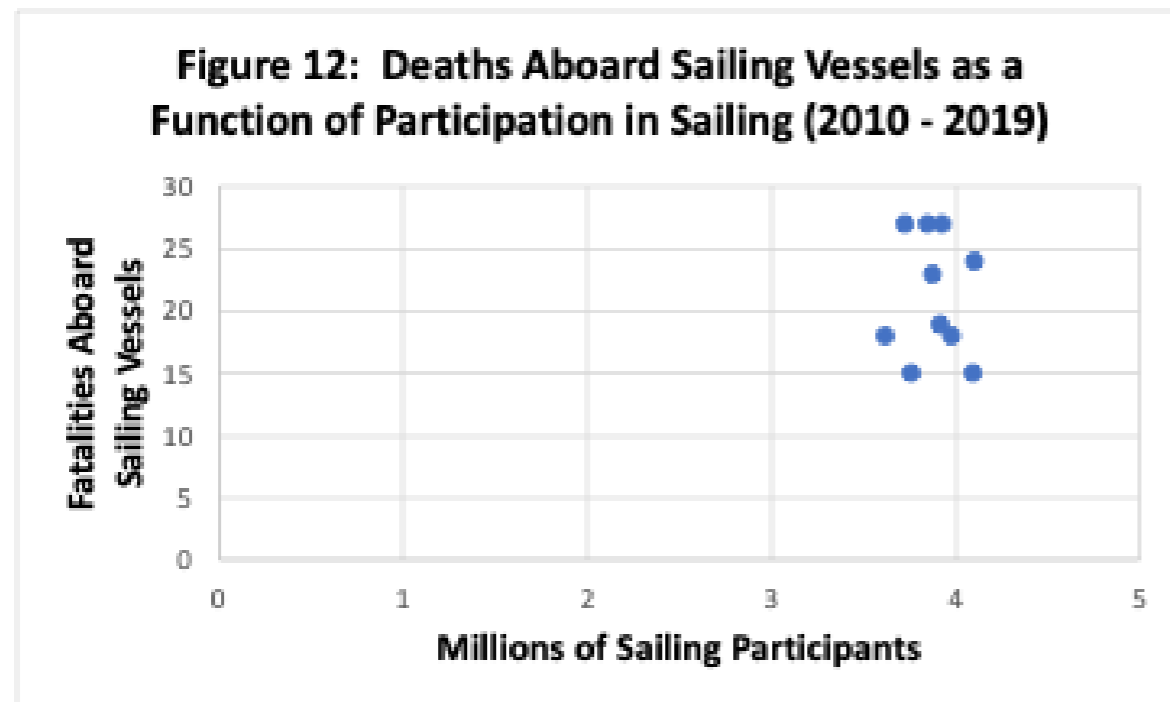
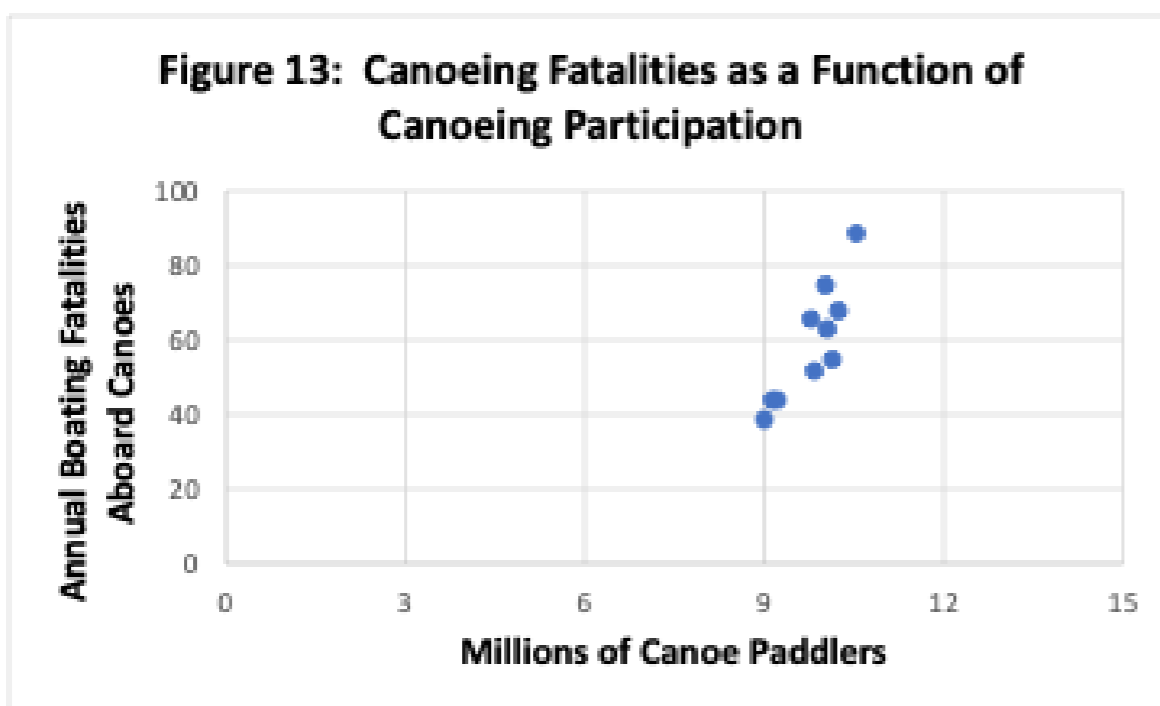
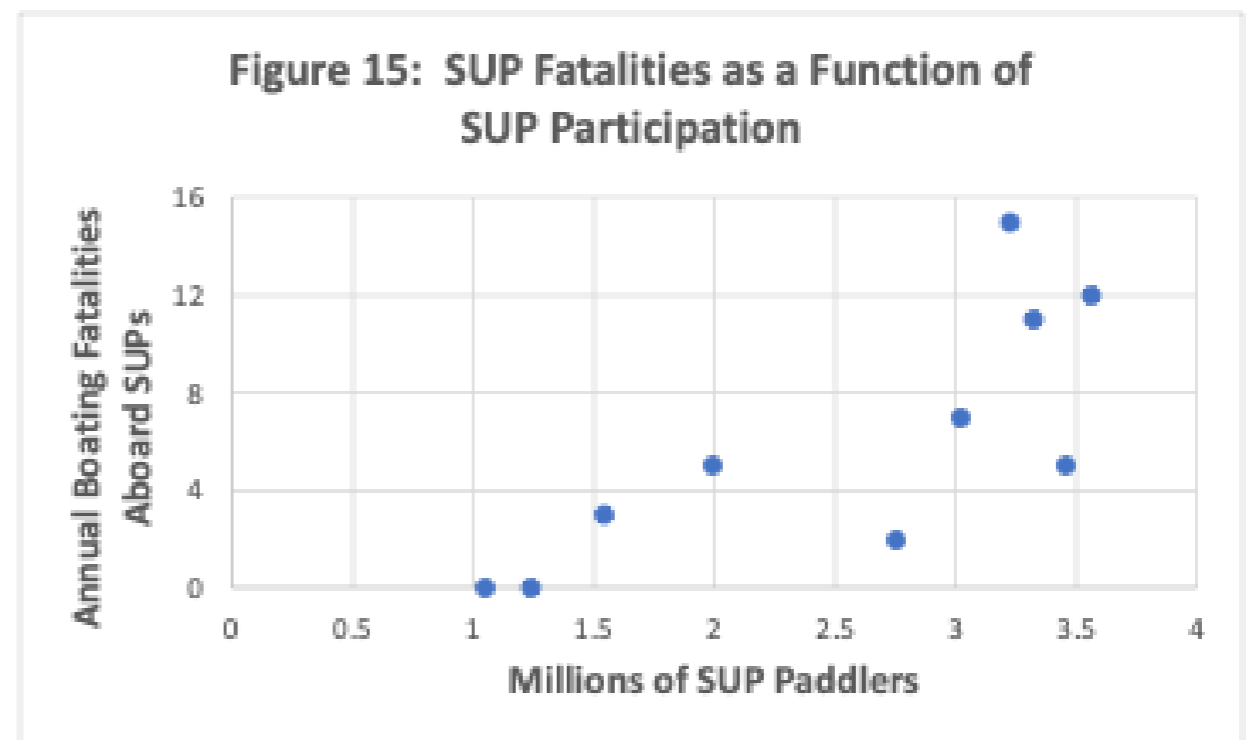


Figure 12 presents fatalities aboard sailing vessels as a function of sailing participation. As with motorized vessels, scatter about a central point is noted, but there is no clear trend in annual fatalities due to changes in participation.



Data showing rowing and inflatable craft participation is not available. However, direct comparisons between participation and fatalities for canoes, kayaks, and SUPs are shown in figures 13, 14, and 15 below. These vessels all show that as participation increased, annual fatalities also increased. The increase in kayak and SUP participation, and the associated increase in boating fatalities, is likely one reason why annual boating fatalities are no longer steadily decreasing.



Fatal Accident Types

Between 2010 and 2019, drowning was the cause of death in 70.4% of recreational boating fatalities (4566 out of 6482). Traumatic injuries were responsible for an additional 15.4% of boating deaths (1018 out of 6482). Cardiac arrest, carbon monoxide poisoning, hypothermia, and other unclassified causes were responsible for the remaining fatalities. The cause of death and percentage of deceased subjects wearing a life jacket does not show clear interannual trends.

Life Jacket Wear

Out of 4,566 drownings between 2010 and 2019, life jacket wear was unknown in 192 cases. Where it was known, 81.0% of subjects (3,698 out of 4,566) who drowned were not wearing a life jacket. In an additional 4% of cases (192 out of 4,566), life jacket wear by drowning subjects was unknown. Over the same time frame, 1,018 deaths (15.7% of all boating deaths) occurred due to traumatic injuries while boating. Out of these, life jacket wear was unknown in 84 cases. Where it was known, 59% (555 out of 934) of subjects who died due to traumatic injury were not wearing a life jacket.

Impact of Education

Boating education is widely believed to reduce the likelihood of boating accidents, injuries, and fatalities. In response, many states have implemented mandatory boating education for operators of motorized vessels. Despite this, in 49% of cases between 2010 and 2019, the educational status of the vessel operator involved with a fatality is unknown. Over the same decade, in the 51% of cases where education status was known, 77% of boating deaths occurred to boaters who had no boating education.

Causes and Contributing Factors to Overall Boating Accidents and Deaths

Tables 5 and 6 below show commonly reported accident types (including those that cause fatalities, injuries, and property damage) and fatal accident types. The most reported type of boating accident is a collision with another recreational vessel, accounting for 24% of all boating accidents but only 6.7% of fatal boating accidents. In contrast, the most frequently reported types of fatal accidents are falling overboard (27.5%) and capsizing (22.9%), but these account respectively for only 6.9% and 6.7% of all boating accidents. Unexpected entry into the water, due to capsizing, falling overboard, sinking, or being ejected from a vessel, accounts for nearly two-thirds of all boating fatalities but less than a third of all boating accidents.

Table 5: Top 10 boating accident types, 2010-2019, for all types of boats aggregated. The cumulative percentage for a given rank is the sum of all percentages from that rank and all lower ranks (e.g., the cumulative percentage for collision with a fixed object is 11% plus 23.9%). “Other” and “Unknown” categories are not included.

Accident Type and Rank	Number of Accidents	Percent of Total Accidents	Cumulative Percentage of Accidents
All types	43058		
1. Collision with recreational vessel	10269	23.9%	23.9%
2. Collision with fixed object	4738	11.0%	34.9%
3. Flooding / swamping	4547	10.6%	45.5%
4. Grounding	3738	8.7%	54.1%
5. Skier mishap	3221	7.5%	61.6%
6. Falling overboard	2965	6.9%	68.5%
7. Capsize	2874	6.7%	75.2%
8. Ejected	1814	4.2%	79.4%
9. Fall in Vessel	1805	3.7%	83.1%
10. Fire / Explosion (fuel)	1508	3.5%	86.5%

Table 6: Top ten accident types leading to recreational boating deaths, across all types of craft. The cumulative percentage for a given rank is the sum of the percentages from that rank and all lower ranks (e.g., the cumulative percentage for capsizing is 22.9% plus 26.5%). “Other” and “Unknown” categories are not included.

Accident type	Number of Deaths	Percentage of Total Deaths	Cumulative Percentage of Deaths	Percentage of Deaths that are Drownings
All types	6482			70.4%
1. Falling overboard	1715	26.5%	26.5%	77.2%
2. Capsizing	1482	22.9%	49.3%	85.1%
3. Flooding / swamping	701	10.8%	60.1%	82.2%
4. Departed vessel	617	9.5%	69.7%	86.7%
5. Collision with fixed object	543	8.4%	78.0%	51.8%
6. Collision with recreational vessel	437	6.7%	84.8%	14.7%
7. Ejected	289	4.5%	89.2%	70.6%
8. Grounding	145	2.2%	91.5%	40.7%
9. Skier Mishap	126	1.9%	93.4%	42.1%
10. Collision with Submerged Object	56	0.9%	94.9%	80.4%

Although most boating fatalities are due to drowning, there is considerable variation depending on accident type. Accident types that lead to a person in the water (e.g., falling overboard, vessel departure) are much more likely to lead to drowning than those likely to cause traumatic injury (e.g., collisions with recreational vessels).

Common contributing factors for boating fatalities involving all types of boats are shown in Table 7. None of the contributing factors show clear interannual variation. In every year examined, alcohol consumption has been the leading contributing factor for total fatal boating accidents. Hazardous waters, bad weather, operator inattention, and operator inexperience also are common contributing factors to fatal accidents.

Table 7: Top ten contributing factors for recreational boating deaths, across all types of craft. The cumulative percentage for a given rank is the sum of the percentages from that rank and all lower ranks (e.g., the cumulative percentage for capsizing is 22.9% plus 26.5%). “Other” and “Unknown” categories are not included; they were assigned as contributing factors in 21.9% of boating deaths.

Primary Contributing factor	Total Number of Deaths	Percentage of Total Deaths	Cumulative Percentage of Deaths
All	6482		
1. Alcohol	1037	16.0%	16.0%
2. Hazardous Waters	686	10.6%	26.6%
3. Operator Inattention	483	7.5%	34.1%
4. Operator Inexperience	446	6.9%	41.0%
5. Weather	415	6.4%	47.4%
6. Excess Speed	234	3.6%	51.0%
7. Overloading	224	3.5%	54.5%
8. Improper Lookout	219	3.4%	57.9%
9. Improper Loading	218	3.4%	61.3%
10. Sudden Medical Issue	182	2.8%	63.1%

When all types of boats are considered, drowning is the most common cause of death while boating, and unexpected entry into the water (capsize, falling overboard, flooding/swamping, and ejection) is the most common type of fatal accident. Voluntary vessel departure – deliberately jumping off a boat into the water – leads to another 9.5% of all boating fatalities. Collisions of all kinds contribute to 16% of all boating fatalities.

Alcohol consumption is the most common contributing factor for boating fatalities, followed by exposure to hazardous waters, operator inattention, and operator inexperience. Failure to wear a life jacket and failure to obtain boating education are not considered distinct contributing factors but are strongly associated with an elevated risk of fatal accidents. Nearly all contributing factors leading to boating deaths are directly under the vessel operator’s direct control (e.g., alcohol consumption, operator inattention) or could reasonably be prevented by a vessel operator (e.g., exposure to hazardous waters or bad weather). Of the ten most often reported contributing factors for fatal boating accidents, only sudden medical issues, accounting for only 2.8% of deaths, might be considered out of the vessel operator’s direct control.

Craft Specific Trends.

General educational programs are likely to reduce boating fatalities but interventions targeted at the risks involved with specific craft might lead to even great reductions. Nearly three-quarters of all boating fatalities between 2010 and 2019 involved only four types of craft - open motorboats, kayaks, canoes, and personal watercraft (Table 8). Open motorboats alone accounted for nearly half of all fatal accidents. Focusing efforts on these four types of vessels is likely to yield interventions that would impact other types of craft, and decrease overall boating deaths.

Table 8: Craft most involved with fatal boating accidents between 2010 and 2019.

Craft	Total Number of Deaths	Percentage of Total Deaths	Cumulative Percentage of Deaths	Percentage of Deaths Due to Drowning
All	6482			70.4%
1. Open Motorboats	3051	47.1%	47.1%	67.8%
2. Kayak	706	10.9%	58.0%	83.4%
3. Canoe	595	9.2%	67.2%	90.4%
4. Personal Watercraft	423	6.5%	73.7%	35.5%
5. Cabin Motorboat	377	5.8%	79.5%	54.4%
6. Pontoon Boat	359	5.5%	85.0%	78.3%
7. Rowboat	265	4.1%	89.1%	88.3%
8. Inflatable	207	3.2%	92.4%	87.9%
9. Auxiliary Sailboat	131	2.0%	94.4%	62.6%
10. Sail (only)	67	1.0%	95.4%	59.7%

Open motorboats

Between 2010 and 2019, open motorboats accounted for 47.1% of all boating fatalities (Table 8). There was no clear trend from year to year. Of those deaths, 67.8% occurred due to drowning and 86.7% of drowning subjects were not wearing a lifejacket. Collisions with other recreational vessels contribute 29% of open motorboat accidents, but only 7.3% of fatal accidents (Table 9). In contrast, falling overboard contributes only 5.1% of open motorboat accidents but is associated with 27.7% of fatal accidents.

Table 9: Five most common types of fatal open motorboat accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for less than 1.0% of accidents.

Accident Type	Number of Fatalities	Percentage of Fatalities	cumulative percentage
Total	3051		
Falls overboard	844	27.7%	27.7%
Flooding/swamping	470	15.4%	43.1%
Capsizing	367	12.0%	55.1%
Collision with fixed object	292	9.6%	64.7%
Person voluntarily departed vessel	273	9.0%	73.6%

Leading contributing factors for fatal open motorboat accidents (Table 10) include alcohol consumption (16.3%) and operator inattention (9.6%). Contributing factors were unknown in 14.1% of cases. In contrast, operator inattention (15.0%) and improper lookout (12.7%) were the most common contributing factors for all open motorboat accidents.

Table 10: Five most common reported contributing factors for fatal open motorboat accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for 21.1% of all contributing factors.

Accident Contributing Factor	Number of Accidents	Percentage of Accidents	Cumulative Percentage
Total	3051		
Alcohol	498	16.3%	16.3%
Operator Inattention	293	9.6%	25.9%
Hazardous Waters	204	6.7%	32.6%
Weather	192	6.3%	38.9%
Excessive Speed	156	5.1%	44.0%

Kayaks

Between 2010 and 2019, kayaks accounted for an average of 10.9% of all boating fatalities (Table 11). However, kayaking-associated deaths showed a steady increase, from 7.7% of all boating deaths in 2010 to 14.0% in 2019. Of those deaths, 83% occurred due to drowning and 63% of drowning subjects were not wearing a lifejacket. Capsizing was the accident type (53.5%) most often reported and the most often reported type of fatal accident (58.8%). Capsizing and falling overboard accounted for 83% of all kayaking deaths. Collisions with fixed objects accounted for more than 5% of kayaking deaths. These collisions likely occurred at low speed and led to entrapment underwater, leading to drowning rather than traumatic injury.

Table 11: Five most common types of fatal kayaking accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for less than 1.0% of all accidents.

Accident Type	Number of Fatalities	Percentage of Fatalities	cumulative percentage
Total	706		
Capsizing	415	58.8%	58.8%
Falls overboard	167	23.7%	82.5%
Collision with fixed object	39	5.5%	88.0%
Flooding/swamping	28	4.0%	92.0%
Person departed vessel	16	2.3%	94.3%

Leading contributing factors for fatal kayaking accidents (Table 12) include hazardous waters (24.4%), operator inexperience (18.0%), and weather (9.2%). Contributing factors were unknown in 20% of cases. Alcohol was an important contributing factor in 9.9% of kayaking deaths, compared to 16.3% of open motorboat deaths. Contributing factors for all kayaking accidents were similar to those for fatal kayaking accidents.

Table 12: Five most common contributing factors for fatal kayaking accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for 20.8% of all contributing factors.

Accident Contributing Factor	Number of Accidents	Percentage of Accidents	Cumulative Percentage
Total	706		
Hazardous Waters	172	24.4%	24.4%
Operator Inexperience	127	18.0%	44.4%
Alcohol	70	9.9%	54.3%
Weather	65	9.2%	63.5%
Dam/lock	27	3.8%	67.3%

Canoes

Between 2010 and 2019, canoes accounted for an average of 9.2% of all boating fatalities (Table 13). However, canoeing-associated deaths showed a steady decline, from 13.2% of all boating deaths in 2010 to 6.4% in 2019. Of those deaths, 90% occurred due to drowning and 85% of drowning subjects were not wearing a lifejacket. Capsizing was the accident type (59.3%) most often reported and the most often reported type of fatal accident (66.9%). Capsizing and falling overboard accounted for 82% of all canoeing deaths. Collisions with fixed objects accounted for 5% of canoeing deaths. These collisions likely occurred at low speed and led to entrapment underwater, leading to drowning rather than traumatic injury.

Table 13: Five most common types of fatal canoeing accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for less than 1.0% of all accidents.

Accident Type	Number of Fatalities	Percentage of Fatalities	cumulative percentage
Total	595		
Capsizing	398	66.9%	66.9%
Falls overboard	89	15.0%	81.9%
Flooding/swamping	46	7.7%	89.6%
Collision with fixed object	30	5.0%	94.6%
Person departed vessel	15	2.5%	97.1%

Leading contributing factors for fatal canoeing accidents (Table 14) include alcohol (17.5%), hazardous waters (14.6%), and operator inexperience (13.8%). Contributing factors were unknown in 16.1% of cases. Improper loading, presumably leading to capsize or swamping, accounted for 11.4% of fatalities. Hazardous waters and operator inexperience were the leading contributing factors for canoeing accidents whereas alcohol consumption and hazardous waters were the leading contributing factors for fatal canoeing accidents.

Table 14: Five most common contributing factors for fatal canoeing accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for 19.2% of all contributing factors.

Accident Contributing Factor	Number of Accidents	Percentage of Accidents	Cumulative Percentage
Total	595		
Alcohol	104	17.5%	17.5%
Hazardous Waters	87	14.6%	32.1%
Operator Inexperience	82	13.8%	45.9%
Improper Loading	68	11.4%	67.3%
Weather	36	6.1%	73.4%

Personal Watercraft (PWC)

Between 2010 and 2019, PWCs accounted for an average of 6.5% of all boating fatalities (Table 15) and showed no clear year-to-year trend. Of those deaths, 52% occurred due to traumatic injury and only 11% of those subjects were not wearing a life jacket. In contrast, 35% of PWC-associated deaths were due to drowning and 65% of those who drowned were not wearing a lifejacket. PWCs are the only craft where drowning was not the most common cause of death in fatal boating accidents and the only craft where most of the subjects who died were wearing a lifejacket.

Collision with a recreational vessel was both the accident type (30.2%) most often reported and the most often reported type of fatal accident (35.9%). Collisions with recreational vessels and fixed objects accounted for nearly half of PWC fatalities. Falling overboard, flooding/swamping, and capsizing accounted for only 25% of PWC fatalities.

Table 15: Five most common types of fatal PWC accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for less than 1.0% of all accidents.

Accident Type	Number of Fatalities	Percentage of Fatalities	cumulative percentage
Total	423		
Collision with recreational vessel	152	35.9%	35.9%
Falls overboard	92	21.8%	57.7%
Collision with fixed object	51	12.1%	69.8%
Person Ejected from Vessel	51	12.1%	81.9%
Skier Mishap	15	3.6%	85.5%

Leading contributing factors for fatal PWC accidents (Table 16) include alcohol (16.6%), operator inexperience (15.4%), and excessive speed (11.6%). Contributing factors were unknown in 6.6% of fatal accidents. Operator inexperience and improper lookout were the leading contributing factors for PWC accidents, whereas alcohol consumption and operator inexperience were the leading contributing factors for fatal PWC accidents.

Table 16: Five most common contributing factors for fatal PWC accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included but account for 9.5% of all contributing factors.

Accident Contributing Factor	Number of Accidents	Percentage of Accidents	Cumulative Percentage
Total	423		
Alcohol	70	16.6%	16.6%
Operator Inexperience	65	15.4%	32.0%
Excessive Speed	49	11.6%	43.6%
Improper Lookout	43	10.2%	53.8%
Navigation Rules Violation	42	9.9%	63.7%

Other Vessels

Open motorboats, kayaks, canoes, and PWCs account for nearly three-quarters of all boating fatalities. Accident types and contributing factors for these vessels represent common types for the remaining quarter of vessel types (Table 17). For example, sailboats, while requiring skill sets that are quite different than other types of vessels, show the same fatal accident types and contributing factors to fatal accidents as seen in Tables 6 and 7. Nearly all the unique factors listed below would be addressed by efforts to avoid falling overboard, capsizing, flooding/swamping, and collision. Only machinery failure, accounting for 0.3% of all fatal boating accidents and 5.6% of fatalities aboard cabin motorboats, appears to be truly unique. Even so, several points from individual craft deserve mention.

Table 17: Fatal accident types and contributing factors to fatal accidents unique to specific vessel types from 2010 to 2019, when compared to all craft, open motorboats, kayaks, canoes, and PWCs. The total number of associated fatal accidents is shown in parentheses.

Vessel type	Unique Accident Types	Unique Contributing Factors
Cabin Motorboat	None	Machinery failure (21)
Pontoon Boat	Skier Mishap (21)	Person on Gunwale, Bow, or Transom (15)
Rowboat	None	Overloading (22)
Inflatable	Collision with Submerged Object (18), Person Ejected from Vessel (13)	None
Sail (all types)	None	None

Although alcohol is an important contributing factor to fatalities for all vessel types, it is particularly important aboard cabin motorboats and pontoon boats. On these vessels, alcohol is a contributing factor in 24% and 29% of boating deaths, respectively.

Voluntary departures from a vessel account for 9.5% of all boating fatalities. However, for pontoon boats, it accounts for 47% of fatalities. Swimming skills, life jacket wear, the ability to re-board a vessel, and situational awareness during recreational swims are all important protective measures when swimming from a boat. These factors are particularly important aboard pontoon boats.

Capsizing is an important type of fatal accident, associated with nearly 23% of all boating deaths. However, capsizing is much more likely in smaller, narrow-beamed boats such as a canoe where two-thirds of deaths are due to capsizing and 15% are due to falling overboard. In contrast, only 3.4% of fatalities aboard pontoon boats are due to capsizing, and 31% are associated with falling overboard.

IMPLICATIONS FOR BOATING EDUCATION

Boating fatalities have decreased since 1991, although over the past decade that decline appears to have slowed or stalled. A review of boating accidents suggests existing approaches that deserve stronger emphasis and further suggests new approaches for consideration. Consistent lifejacket wear appears to be the simplest step that could reduce boating deaths. 70% of boating deaths are due to drowning; as many as 85% of drowning subjects are not wearing a lifejacket. Although current boating safety programs emphasize life jacket wear, more work encouraging and promoting life jacket wear is needed.

Alcohol consumption is the leading contributing factor to boating deaths. Boating safety programs encourage abstinence from alcohol while boating and Boating Under the Influence (BUI) laws provide significant penalties for those who do drink and boat. However, as with lifejacket wear, it appears clear that further efforts are needed.

Although collisions with other vessels are the most common type of boating accident, capsizing, and falling overboard are the most common types of fatal accidents. Preventing these accident types could decrease annual boating fatalities by more than 50%. Vessel operators must know how to prevent and respond to both accident types. Although life jacket wear is an important component, boaters also must understand how to prevent unintentionally entering the water and how to rescue people in the water.

Voluntary departures from a vessel account for nearly 10% of all recreational boating deaths. On some types of vessels (e.g., pontoon boats), voluntary departures are the most common type of fatal accident, accounting for nearly half of all deaths. In addition to life jacket wear, assessment of safe swimming conditions, swimming skills, ability to reboard a vessel from the water, and the ability to help another reboard a vessel all deserve emphasis in boating education programs.

Boater education status is unknown in nearly half of all boating deaths. However, where known, 77% of deaths occurred when the vessel operator had no boating education. Education appears to be an important part of preventing boating fatalities. Boating education must have a strong emphasis on lifejacket wear and alcohol avoidance but must also teach how to prevent capsizing or falling overboard, and how to respond when these events happen.

Three-quarters of all boating fatalities are associated with only 4 types of craft - open motorboats, kayaks, canoes, and PWCs. Nearly half of all boating fatalities are associated with open motorboats. Reducing fatality rates for these vessel types will have a significant impact on overall boating fatalities. Accident types and contributing factors for these four types of craft are common among the remaining quarter of boating fatalities. Therefore, steps taken to reduce fatalities for these four types of craft will also reduce fatalities in other types of craft. Although current boating safety programs emphasize life jacket wear, fatality data shows more work encouraging and promoting life jacket wear is needed.

Table 18 presents the five most common types of fatal boating accidents and contributing factors for all accidents for all vessel types combined and compares them with those for specific vessel types. The selected vessel types are associated with more than 95% of all recreational boating deaths.

Table 18: Common fatal accident types and contributing factors for fatal recreational boating accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included.

Vessel type	Five most often reported types of fatal accident	Five most often reported contributing factors to fatal accidents “Unknown” and “other” are commonly reported but not included below	Unique factors, not seen when all vessel types are aggregated
All	Falling Overboard (27%), Capsizing (23%) and Flooding/Swamping (11%), Person Departed Vessel (10%), Collision with Fixed Object (8%)	Alcohol (16%), Hazardous Waters (11%), Operator Inattention (7%), Operator Inexperience (7%), Weather (6%)	n/a
Open Motorboat (47.1% of fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, no clear year-to-year trend)	Falling Overboard (28%), Flooding/Swamping (15%), Capsizing (12%), Collision with Fixed Object (10%), Person Departed Vessel (9%)	Alcohol (16%), Operator Inattention (10%), Hazardous Waters (10%), Weather (6%), Excessive Speed (5%)	Excessive Speed
Kayak (10.9% of fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, increase from 7.7% in 2010 to 14.0% in 2019)	Capsizing (59%), Falling Overboard (24%), Collision with Fixed Object (6%), Flooding/Swamping (4%), Person Departed Vessel (2%)	Hazardous Waters (24%), Operator Inexperience (18%), Alcohol (10%), Weather (9%), Dam/lock (4%)	Dam/lock
Canoe (9.2% of fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, decrease from 13.2% in 2010 to 6.6% in 2019)	Capsizing (67%), Falling Overboard (15%), Flooding/Swamping (8%), Collision with Fixed Object (5%), Person Departed Vessel (3%)	Alcohol (17%), Hazardous Waters (15%), Operator Inexperience (14%), Improper Loading (11%), Weather (6%)	Improper Loading
Personal Watercraft (6.5% of fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, no clear year-to-year trend)	Collision with Recreational Vessel (36%), Falling Overboard (22%), Collision with Fixed Object (12%), Person Ejected from Vessel (12%), Skier Mishap (4%)	Alcohol (17%), Operator Inexperience (15%), Excessive Speed (12%), Improper Lookout (10%), Navigation Rules Violation (10%)	Collision with Recreational Vessel, Person Ejected from Vessel, Skier Mishap, Excessive Speed, Improper Lookout, Navigation Rules Violation

(Continued) Table 18: Common fatal accident types and contributing factors for fatal recreational boating accidents, 2010-2019. “Other” and “Unknown” are not included.

Cabin Motorboat (5.8% of all fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, no clear year-to-year trend)	Falling Overboard (21%), Person Departed Vessel (15%), Flooding/Swamping (13%), Collision with Fixed Object (12%), Capsizing (8%)	Alcohol (24%), Operator Inattention (8%), Hazardous Waters (6%), Machinery Failure (6%), Excessive Speed (5%)	Machinery Failure, Excessive Speed
Pontoon Boat (5.5% of all fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, no clear year-to-year trend)	Person Departed Vessel (47%), Falls Overboard (31%), Skier Mishap (6%), Collision with Recreational Vessel (5%), Capsizing (3%)	Alcohol (29%), Operator Inattention (10%), Weather (4%), People on Gunwale, Bow or Transom (4%), Hazardous Waters (3%)	Skier Mishap; People on Gunwale, Bow or Transom
Rowboat (4.1% of all fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, decrease from 5.2% in 2010 to 2.9% in 2019)	Capsizing (36%), Falling Overboard (35%), Flooding/Swamping (13%), Collision with Fixed Object (6%), Person Departed Vessel (3%)	Improper Loading (13%), Hazardous Waters (11%), Alcohol (11%), Overloading (8%), Operator Inattention (8%)	Improper Loading, Overloading
Sailboats (all types) (3.3% of all fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, slight decrease in participation over the decade)	Falling Overboard (41%), Capsizing (21%), Flooding / Swamping (13%), Person Departed Vessel (10%), Collision with Fixed Object (2%)	Weather (22%), Hazardous Waters (14%), Alcohol (12%), Operator Inattention (4%), Operator Inexperience (3%)	None
Inflatable (3.2% of all fatal boating accidents 2010-2019, no clear year-to-year trend)	Capsizing (29%), Falling Overboard (25%), Collision with Fixed Object (18%), Collision with Submerged Object (9%), Person Ejected from Vessel (6%)	Hazardous Waters (48%), Operator Inexperience (10%), Alcohol (9%), Operator Inattention (4%), Improper Loading (3%)	Collision with Submerged Object, Person Ejected from Vessel, Improper Loading

When the core instructional content identified above is compared to existing knowledge standards, areas for future emphasis become apparent. First, the importance of preventing unexpected entry into the water is clear. Life jacket wear is important, but avoiding situations where a life jacket is needed is even more important. Second, self-rescue skills deserve strong emphasis, as does the ability to rescue others. A person in the water must know how to re-enter a boat independently and people aboard boats must know how to assist a person in the water. Third, methods for proper lookout must be developed and taught. Inattention and improper lookout are significant contributing factors for fatal boating accidents. Boaters must understand how to provide a proper lookout and must understand the importance of broad situational awareness. Finally, the value of hands-on, in-water practice and learning cannot be overemphasized. It is one thing to teach that it is important to be able to reenter a boat from the water – and an entirely different thing to do after falling overboard. Knowledge learned in a class is important but the ability to apply that knowledge under real-life conditions is the true test of learning.

The information summarized in Table 18 suggests core information that should be included in all boating safety programs, as well as additional information to be included in courses targeting specific craft or types of craft. An outline of potential core and supplemental educational content appears in Table 19.

Table 19: Evidence-based educational content likely to reduce boating fatalities.

Vessel Type	Key Educational Content to Reduce Recreational Boating Fatalities
All vessels (Core Instruction)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trip planning to avoid hazardous conditions. 2. Boat handling to avoid falling overboard, capsizing, and flooding/swamping 3. Mitigation and management steps for falling overboard, capsizing, and flooding/swamping to include lifejacket wear and rescue of persons in the water. 4. Take care when swimming from a vessel 5. Abstain from alcohol while boating 6. Recognize and avoid hazardous waters 7. Pay attention, keep a sharp lookout, and maintain strong situational awareness to avoid collision 8. Pay attention to the weather and modify trips in response to bad weather 9. Gain practical experience through hands-on instruction, skills practice, and mentoring
All Motorized Vessels *** Because of the unique nature of common PWC accidents, courses specifically focused on PWC operation may be needed.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Maintain safe operating speeds to reduce the risk of collision
All Human Propelled Vessels *** Inexperience is an important contributing factor to human-propelled boating deaths.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Recognize the hazards created by dams and locks and takes steps to avoid them. 3. Proper vessel loading to reduce the risk of capsizing, flooding, and swamping
All Sail Powered Vessels	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction
Open Motorboats	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Maintain safe operating speeds to reduce the risk of collision
Kayak	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Recognize the hazards created by dams and locks and takes steps to avoid them.
Canoe	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Proper vessel loading to reduce the risk of capsize
Personal Watercraft *** PWCs are the only vessel where most fatal boating accidents are due to trauma (rather than drowning) and where most deceased subjects are wearing a lifejacket	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Maintain safe operating speeds to reduce the risk of collision 3. Follow Navigation Rules 4. Be aware of water skiers and other vessels
Cabin Motorboats	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Maintain safe operating speeds to reduce the risk of collision 3. Proper machinery maintenance
Pontoon Boats ***Deserves emphasis on safer swimming from the vessel and alcohol abstinence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Be aware of water skiers and other vessels 3. Do not ride on the bow, stern, or transom
Rowboat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Proper vessel loading to reduce the risk of capsizing, flooding, and swamping
Inflatable	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core instruction 2. Boat handling to reduce the risk of ejection 3. Proper vessel loading to reduce the risk of capsizing, flooding, and swamping

TAKE HOME MESSAGES

In the United States, recreational boating is enjoyed by millions of people each year. The vast majority have a safe and enjoyable experience, but some do not. To make boating even safer than it currently is, boating safety specialists, boating education providers, and boaters, in general, should consider the points below.

1. Boating fatalities have declined since 1991. Unfortunately, that decline has stalled and over the past decade, there has been little significant decrease in the number of annual recreational boating fatalities. However, fatalities associated with some craft have seen significant changes, with increases in kayak and SUP fatalities and decreases in canoe and rowboat fatalities.
2. Between 2011 and 2018, boating participation increased by nearly 1.6 million boaters per year. Nearly 60% of that growth was due to growth in kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding. The growth in paddlesports participation has been matched by a growth in paddlesports-associated fatalities.
3. Boating fatality data reveal a core set of boating safety points that should be addressed in all safe boating courses.
4. Boating fatality data further reveal craft-to-craft differences that should be emphasized in craft-specific instruction. This includes both specific content (e.g., high-speed collisions are important for PWCs but not canoes) and application of content (e.g., capsizing a kayak is not the same as capsizing a sailboat; falling off an SUP is not the same as falling off the flying bridge of a cabin motorboat).
5. Motorized vessels contribute about two-thirds of all recreational boating deaths; open motorboats alone contribute nearly half of all recreational boating deaths. Efforts to reduce boating fatalities must focus on these vessels.
6. Human-propelled vessels contribute less than a third of all recreational boating deaths, although they make up 40% or more of the total boating community. Paddling is a rapidly growing segment of the boating community, with annual participation growth of about 900,000 people each year. Kayak and stand-up paddleboard participation in particular show significant year-to-year growth. Unfortunately, the growth in participation has led to an associated growth in kayak- and SUP-associated fatalities. Efforts to reduce boating fatalities should include increased focus on kayaks and SUPs.
7. Collisions with recreational vessels are the most common type of accident reported, but contribute only a small portion of fatal boating accidents. In contrast, falling overboard, flooding/swamping, and capsizing are the most common types of fatal accidents but contribute only a small fraction of total boating accidents.
8. Unexpected entry into the water due to falling overboard, capsizing, flooding/swamping, and ejection from a vessel account for roughly two-thirds of all fatal boating accidents. To prevent boating fatalities, the prevention and management of unexpected entry into the water must be addressed in boating safety classes. All boaters should know how to avoid and respond to these accidents. Boating instruction should include a discussion of trip planning and boat handling to avoid these problems, as well as self-rescue and rescue of persons in the water. Avoiding situations that lead to a person in the water and knowing how to respond to these situations should receive greater emphasis in boating education courses.
9. Life jacket wear and abstinence from alcohol while boating are critical parts of preventing and mitigating unexpected person in the water situations. Existing efforts emphasizing these points should be continued and strengthened.
10. Operator inattention is a leading contributing factor to fatal boating accidents. Safe boating programs should emphasize the value of situational awareness and proper lookout, along with the value of early and obvious efforts to avoid problems. Specific strategies for effective lookout should be developed and taught.
11. Hazardous waters are a leading contributing factor to fatal boating accidents. Safe boating programs should emphasize recognizing and avoiding hazardous waters.

12. Voluntary departures from a vessel are responsible for nearly 10% of all recreational boating deaths. The importance of swimming skills, life jacket wear, the ability to re-board a vessel, and situational awareness during recreational swims are all important protective measures that deserve strong instructional emphasis.

13. Open motorboats, kayaks, canoes, and personal watercraft are responsible for about 75% of all boating fatalities. Boating educators should focus on these vessel types to have the greatest impact on boating fatalities. Open motorboats contribute nearly half of all boating fatalities and deserve the greatest emphasis.

14. Inexperience is a common contributing factor in boating accidents. Boating safety education should stress the value of gaining experience through mentorship, hands-on on-water instruction, and practice.

15. Most boating fatalities are due to drowning. However, aboard personal watercraft traumatic injury, rather than drowning, is the leading cause of death. PWC educational programs should provide additional focus on collision avoidance and speed control. PWC operators may benefit from boating safety courses designed specifically to address the unique elements of PWC accidents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**OUR MISSION IS TO PREVENT THE LOSS OF LIFE,
PERSONAL INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE, AND
ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSOCIATED
WITH RECREATIONAL BOATING, THROUGH
OUTREACH TO THE RECREATIONAL BOATING
COMMUNITY.**

**THIS IS WHAT WE STRIVE FOR. RECREATIONAL
BOATING SAFETY IS OUR JOB ONE. THIS IS
A CORNERSTONE OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD
AUXILIARY.**



Publication of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Recreational Boating Safety Directorates comprised of the Public Education Directorate, Vessel Examination and Partner Visitation Directorate, and Recreational Boating Safety Outreach Directorate.



Appendix H

Ad Hoc Committee on Implementing the NASBLA Memorandum

Report to the ACA Board of Directors

February 3-4, 2024

The following report is a summary of the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on Implementing the NASBLA Memorandum. As a board member of a board committee, I am writing this on behalf of committee, since other than the co-chairs the members have not yet been formally selected.

Co-Chair Selection. Determination of the chair and committee members was discussed at the Policy Committee meeting. After considerable discussion, it was decided that there would be two co-chairs, one from the ACA and one from NASBLA. The committee selected Brett Mayer as our co-chair. He was agreeable with this arrangement. There was considerable discussion on having a staff member serve as the co-chair of a board committee. Without going through all the pros and cons, it was concluded that since the NASBLA representative was going to be a staff person, it would work best if our representative was also a staff person. NASBLA has chosen Mark Chanski, Educational Director for NASBLA.

Committee Members. Committee members were left undetermined at the time of the meeting because it was suggested that the number of our members should reflect NASBLA membership to the committee. The committee thinking was three to four additional members from each organization. The size of committee will be determined in discussions with NASBLA and selection of ACA membership will be forthcoming.

Committee Focus. The MOU with NASBLA is wide ranging. At the meeting, the committee discussed the initial focus of its activities. Consensus was that the initial focus of the committee would be on the development of educational materials that could be used by state boating educators. These materials have been described as “Community Education” or “Pre-Level 1” materials.

NASBLA Charge. A charge to the Executive Committee of NASBLA was passed by their executive committee. The group voted to accept the NASBLA Charge. Subsequently, the charge has been modified, but remains essentially the same.

Needs Assessment. The first step in the developmental process was to determine the needs of the state boating educators. The committee is thinking in terms of a marketing plan where the final products generated will satisfy the educational needs of the state boating educators based, in part, on the survey results. Virgil Chambers has been working on a survey instrument to be

distributed to the state boating educators. Making it collaborative, the survey instrument has been reviewed by Robert Kauffman. Results will be forthcoming.

Future Tasks. “Time is of the essence.” Co-chairs have been selected. The number of committee members needs to be determined and the members need to be selection. The needs assessment survey needs to be completed and the committee needs to get on with its business.

Submitted on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert B. Kauffman". The signature is stylized, with the first letters of the first and last names being prominent.

Robert B. Kauffman

Appendix I

ACA Public Policy Outreach – Creating Partnerships, Serving Membership and Improving Boating Safety

Overview

- Background
- ACA Public Policy Positions
 - Life jacket wear
 - Boating education
 - Access and fees
- Action Items - Opportunities to Serve the Paddling Community

Why Bother?

- Public policy issues impact all paddlers
- ACA broadly represents paddling and paddling interests
- ACA should act intentionally and proactively. Waiting for issues to arise is counterproductive.

Core Nonprofit Board Member Duties

- **Duty of Care**
 - Care for the organization and its assets, protecting and growing them while furthering the organization's missions
 - Long term vision
- **Duty of Loyalty**
 - Loyalty to the organization and its interests, over personal interests
 - Requires an understanding of what the organization does
- **Duty of Obedience**
 - Obey organizational rules
 - Obey outside rules, regulations, policies, and laws that impact the organization

ACA Public Policy

Public Policy

ACA expects policies that impact paddlers to:

- Have input from paddlers – paddlers must have a seat at the table
- Provide benefits to paddlers and the waterways we use
- Be evidence-based if possible and otherwise based upon expert consensus
- Not unduly burden paddlers or create barriers to paddling
- Not restrict rights of access and navigation without good cause

Public Policy

- General national policies provide a framework.
- All politics are local – and policy work is political. Local, personal involvement is essential.
- Paddlers should assume that policy initiatives are driven by events – not malice.
- We must assume policymakers have good intent. Working with them, we may be able to identify methods to channel that good intent to what paddlers see as productive action.

Public Policy

ACA's Public Policy Committee has focused on three issues

- Mandatory Life Jacket Wear
- Mandatory Education
- Paddler paying into the recreational boating system

Mandatory Life Jacket Wear

- Failure to wear a life jacket is strongly correlated with boating deaths.
- Wearing a life jacket is simple and effective.
- Improving wearable options may make life jacket wear even simpler. For example, level 50 wearable flotation aids provide 11 pounds of flotation and are being considered for approval. ACA should support their approval and use.

Mandatory Life Jacket Wear

- ACA requires life jacket wear for all sanctioned events and all instructional events, with few case-by-case exceptions based on 33 CFR 175.17.
- ACA's current policy is stricter than current Federal law.
- It would be difficult to oppose rules that require life jacket wear.

Mandatory Education

- More than 20% of ACA members are instructors
- ACA's instructional program is used worldwide. Its use is growing, particularly in Central and South America, and it is widely used in China where we have about 1000 instructors.
- ACA's instructional programs, based on expert consensus, closely align with content suggested by boating safety evidence.

Mandatory Education

- **ACA provides free online education that addresses key safety concepts.**
- ACA supports the creation and dissemination of free high-quality educational resources – as demonstrated by our existing course and pursuit of funding to develop additional free online courses.
- ACA's on-water instructional programs cover the content in online programs and add opportunities to gain on-water experience – directly addressing operator inexperience, the second most common contributing factor for paddling fatalities.

Mandatory Education

Washington State is again proposing a bill mandating education. Last year:

- Paddlers were not involved
- Powerboating education qualified as paddling education
- Educational standards uncertain
- Unclear if on-water education would be permitted before obtaining a license
- Fees proposed to go towards marine enforcement rather than providing a more direct benefit to paddlers and waterways

Mandatory Education

In response, ACA members last year suggested:

- Paddlers should be involved in decision-making, including the determination of acceptable programs
- Education must be based upon evidence or expert consensus
- Fees should include waivers for non-profit and instructional programs, scholarships must be available
- Funds generated must benefit the entire paddling community
- Fees should be as low as possible to avoid creating a barrier to access

Access and Fees

- Sportfish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund is a user-pay, user-benefit fund supported by excise taxes on fishing gear and taxes on powerboat fuel. **Paddlers pay little into the system but benefit from access, rescue, and enforcement paid by Trust Fund revenue.**
- GAO investigation examined paddler use of resources paid from the Sportfish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund
- Virginia reported that paddlers accounted for ~50% of boating rescues

Access and Fees

- Growth in paddling participation – and the accompanying increase in fatalities – puts paddlers in the spotlight.
- Some see paddlers as outside the “normal” boating community.
- Others want to treat paddlers the same as powerboaters.
- Neither approach is correct! We are boaters with unique needs – just as sailors and power boat operators have unique needs.
- **To influence policies, we need to be at the table. By not paying into the system, it is easy to argue we have not earned a seat at the table.**

Access and Fees

How can paddlers contribute?

- Hull registration – power boat solution but perhaps not a paddler solution without modification and consideration of impact
- Excise taxes on equipment – works for fishing gear
- Point of sale taxes – working in Georgia
- Paddler license (potentially tied to mandatory education)
- Paddling tags (analogous to hunting tags)
- Waterway or watershed license
- Voluntary contribution
- ACA membership as an alternative
- Other ideas?

Public Policy

- Paddlers need an organizational seat at the table
- ACA broadly represents paddlers of all disciplines
- Our position as a **worldwide educational leader** and as the **Olympic and Paralympic NGB** establishes us as a potential policy champion
- Impacting policy requires building relationships with policy-making entities. Building relationships takes time
- Simply saying “no” doesn’t build the relationships we need to impact policy – we need to be clear about where we can say yes and why we must say no. *Build relationships by building relationships!*

ACTION ITEMS

Expand ACA's ability to influence public policy

The ACA is a small organization. Our staff are already fully committed. Policy issues are supported by staff but we cannot expect existing staff to take on new responsibilities. Therefore, we must identify a means for our members to determine and influence upcoming legislative and policy issues that impact paddling. This must include:

- Clear policy guidance
- National support to the extent possible
- Creation of member resources
- Identification of upcoming issues
- Identification of local members who will represent paddling and who are willing to undergo training to do so effectively

Develop entry-level educational programs and resources for cooperative use by other organizations

- Other organizations want to work with ACA and look to ACA for course products – but may not have the ability to offer our flexible, learner-centered programs.
- At the entry level, standardized programs make sense – everyone starts with no knowledge.
- Continuing to re-imagine our entry-level programs makes sense for ACA and our organizational partners.

ACA-NASBLA educational workgroup

In October 2023, ACA's Board approved creation of an ACA-NASBLA MOU implementation group. At this time, the policy committee has created an initial workgroup to include Jake Vitak, Jeff Atkins, Anna Leveque, Trey Rouss, Brett Mayer (staff liaison and chair), and Robert Kauffman (Board liaison).

- The group's tasking will include:
 - Facilitate listening sessions among NASBLA representatives and ACA instructors
 - Process feedback derived from surveys to NASBLA representatives and from listening sessions
 - Present feedback to SEIC's Board and Curriculum Committee, ACA's Board and Policy Committee, and other appropriate ACA groups.
- Initial work is anticipated to begin within two weeks, with a final report within 8 weeks

Strengthen ACA's partnership with the USCG Auxiliary's paddling program

The Coast Guard oversees grant funding to ACA. The largest paddling program within the Coast Guard is the Coast Guard Auxiliary's AUXPAD program. AUXPAD currently uses ACA's level two coastal and river kayak curriculum for its qualification process, expanding the pool of ACA instructors. The Auxiliary's outreach program reaches paddlers not typically reached by the ACA. Strengthening our partnership with the Auxiliary will expand our ability to reach all types of paddlers.

Create an ACA-AUXPAD Division to facilitate paddlecraft training for USCG and USCG Auxiliary personnel.

- The ACA-AUXPAD Division will function under rules to be approved by the Board per Article XIII of ACA's bylaws
- The ACA-AUXPAD Division's purposes will include:
 - Facilitate on-water kayak training for USCG personnel
 - Facilitate shore-based training for the paddling community
 - Facilitate communications and shared missions between ACA and the USCG Auxiliary's Paddlecraft Safety Division
- NOTE after meeting – motion tabled. Determined in later discussion with the ED, the intent of the motion can be achieved via the existing ACA-USCG Auxiliary MOU.

Questions and Discussion



Appendix J

Board Training and Board Responsibility Initiative

The board supported the board training initiative at its August 16, 2023 meeting, and it addresses the “Governance and Organizational Leadership” component in the strategic plan (i.e. Key Performance Indicator #3. Leadership Training and Customer Service). This initiative proposes a three-phase process to help achieve the board functions described in the USOPC Board Training Modules and in the literature. Only Phase #1 requires immediate action.

Phase #1: Requiring USOPC Foundation Board Training Modules

The USOPC Foundation Board Training modules familiarize board members with the fundamentals with which non-profit board members should be familiar. The modules include topics such as board culture, oversight functions, and conducting meetings. It is suggested that existing and new board members be required to complete the modules.

Motion: It is moved that the ACA board requires existing and new members to complete the USOPC Foundation Board Training modules.

Phase #2: Discussion and prioritization of board responsibilities and issues.

The USOPC Foundation Board Training modules provide board members with their basic responsibilities and behaviors. These responsibilities are reflected in the proposed Board Training Survey. This phase discusses which responsibilities are most important and prioritizes or determines which should be addressed first. It is not practical to address all responsibilities at once. The issues and responsibilities identified in the literature and USOPC include:

- Board self-evaluation,
- Board member training,
- Conflict of interests,
- Oversight functions (e.g. financial, risk management, strategic initiatives, and councils),
- ESG and DEI,
- CEO evaluation,
- CEO succession plan, and
- Board member succession plans.

Depending on board familiarity with the responsibilities and issue, it may be desirable to begin Phase #2 after most board members have had a chance to complete the USOPC Foundation Board Training modules.

Phase #3: Taking the appropriate action on the issues.

Some items, such as board culture issues, may be handled as discussion items and other responsibilities may need to be tasked to committees. It will be important to address any tasks in a manageable and systematic fashion.

Addressing the issues identified in Phase 2 and 3 go to addressing board responsibilities and addressing those responsibilities.