

**Alaska Boating Safety Program****FY2007 Request: \$1,200,000****Reference No: 32553****AP/AL:** Appropriation**Project Type:** Health and Safety**Category:** Health/Human Services**Location:** Statewide**Contact:** Nico Bus**House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)**Contact Phone:** (907)465-2406**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2006 - 06/30/2008**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

Under AS.05.25.053, the Department is responsible for administering a statewide boating safety program that cooperates with local, state, and federal agencies, private and public organizations, and individuals to provide for a statewide boating safety education program that develops relevant educational materials, supports statewide boating safety education and training programs for children and other high risk groups, trains, certifies, and supports boating safety instructors, supports a boating safety advisory council as described in AS 05.25.057, and provides for a uniform state waterway marking system.

<b>Funding:</b>	<u>FY2007</u>	<u>FY2008</u>	<u>FY2009</u>	<u>FY2010</u>	<u>FY2011</u>	<u>FY2012</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fed Rcpts	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$6,000,000
VehRcpts	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,200,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$7,200,000</b>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Match Required	<input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Phased - underway	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Going
100% = Minimum State Match % Required		<input type="checkbox"/> Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Bill	

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:**

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Additional Information / Prior Funding History:**

FSSLA05/CH3 - \$1,000,000 (\$800,000 Fed and \$200,000 Spec Veh Rcpts)

SLA04/CH159 - \$600,000

SLA03/CH82 - \$600,000

SSSLA02/CH1 - \$600,000

SLA01/CH61 - \$660,000

SLA00/CH135 - \$660,000

**Project Description/Justification:****A. Project Need:**

Drowning is the second only to highway fatalities as the leading cause of non - intentional death in Alaska, and many drowning deaths are attributable to non-commercial boating accidents. Alaska has historically had one of the highest non-commercial boating fatality rates (per 100,000 boats) in the nation. Alaska's accident data reveals:

91% involved boats under 26 feet in length

89% were adult males

73% were a capsize or fall overboard, into Alaska's cold water, and were unable to self rescue

Most were not wearing life jackets

Most had not taken a single boating safety course

Nearly all of these deaths involved operator controllable factors and could have been prevented.

Besides the tragic and needless loss of life, boating accidents cost money. Federal, state, and local agencies expend financial resources for every boating related search, rescue, emergency medical response, and body recovery. The devastation of losing a loved – one, is made even worse by the financial impact to surviving family members in medical expenses, lost income, and property.

#### B. Project Scope:

Alaska became the last state to establish a state boating safety program when, in July 1998, the Office of Boating Safety was designated within the Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation. As a result, Alaska secured conditional program approval from the U.S. Coast Guard, and for the first time received a portion of the federal grant funding that, since 1987, had been made available to every state except Alaska. With the passage of the Alaska Boating Safety Act in May 2000, Alaska qualified to receive the state's full share of federal grant funds for boating safety programs.

The mission of the Alaska Boating Safety Program is to promote safety for persons and property in and connected with the use, operation, and equipment of boats on water of the state, and the uniformity of laws relating to boat safety. The Program's objectives are:

1. Cooperating with other state and federal agencies and organizations, provide a statewide boating program to reduce boating accidents and fatalities in Alaska.
2. Secure the benefits available to the state under 46 U.S.C. 13101 - 13110; and take the actions necessary to continue to qualify for federal grant funding under 46 U.S.C. 13102, and the U.S. Coast Guard / State of Alaska Memorandum of Understanding.
3. Provide a boating safety education program that increases public awareness and the knowledge, skills, and abilities of Alaska's boaters including the production of educational materials relevant to the needs of Alaska's boaters, support for statewide boating safety education programs for children and other high - risk groups, training, certification, and support of boating safety instructors, and evaluation, on an ongoing basis, of the effectiveness of educational programs.
4. Support the Alaska Boating Safety Advisory Council.
5. Provide for a uniform state waterway marking system.
6. Cooperate with other agencies to provide for boating accidents and casualties reporting, boat registration, boating safety patrol, and law enforcement training.
7. Promote the uniformity of laws relating to boating safety.

#### C. Approach:

Because the Alaska Boating Safety Program is small compared to most other states, maintaining dynamic and productive partnerships is critical to the program's continued success. To that end, the program cooperates closely with the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S Coast Guard Auxiliary, other state agencies, and boating organizations to provide programs and avoid duplication of effort. Alaska also maintains close relationships with the other states, and actively participates in regional and national boating organizations, to gain access to current research, identify and adopt the best practices of other state programs, maximize state resources, and to increase program quality, productivity, and effectiveness.

Some of the program's projects are accomplished through contracts with Alaskan non-profits and businesses, or agreements with other state agencies. Contracts for printing written publications, broadcasting boating safety messages, volunteer boating safety instructor training, research, surveys, and purchasing life jackets for the Kid's Don't Float program, all support private sector jobs and contribute to the state economy. Sales of boating safety equipment benefits Alaska businesses.

Project costs were estimated in consideration of prior year expenditures and the estimated maximum amount of funding Alaska could receive, subject to the ability to identify sufficient matching funds.

#### D. Program Evaluation:

The multiple programs provided under this project preclude the use of a single evaluation methodology. Rather, several methods are used to measure progress in meeting objectives.

Drowning, boating fatality, and accident statistics, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary vessel safety check pass rates, observational PFD wear rate studies, statewide boater opinion surveys, law enforcement statistics, and boating course

attendance, are all examples of ways used to capture information on boater attitudes, behaviors and to identify problem areas. For example, a statewide observational life jacket wear - rate study was conducted for the first time in 2001 to measure boater behaviors. In 2002, the first comprehensive statewide boater survey to assess boater awareness and attitudes was conducted. Both helped established important base – lines, and will be repeated every few years to measure effectiveness and to help identify any trends. In other examples, individual course and instructor evaluations and test scores, such as those conducted during boating safety classes, allow us to measure both the retention levels of students and the effectiveness of course curriculum. In addition, evaluations conducted by independent professionals are used to evaluate our instructor courses.

We expect this program will continue to produce positive results. Since the Federal Boat Safety Act of 1971 (and the beginning of federal support of state boating programs), boating fatalities nationwide have decreased by 50% even though boat ownership more than doubled during the same period. The U.S. Coast Guard estimates over 27,000 lives have been saved since 1971. Similar reductions in Alaska's boating fatalities have been realized since 1998 (when state efforts began Alaska's boating fatality rate (per 100,000 boats) dropped from 144 in 1998, to 21 in 2004. In comparing the fatality totals of the two five - year periods within the previous 10 years, fatalities dropped 23% between the two periods. The highly regarded Kid's Don't' Float program alone has been credited with 12 lives saved thus far. These statistics are one indication that Alaska's efforts have had a positive effect.

**Why is this Project Needed Now:**

Alaska's non-commercial boating fatality rate ranks among the nation's highest. Fortunately, Alaska's boating fatalities have dropped since the state initiated efforts in boating safety. Without continued efforts, Alaska will likely regain its former position as the state with the highest boating fatality rate in the nation.

**Specific Spending Detail:**

By legislative intent, 75% of the federal funds received for this project are to be used for boating specific public education programs. These include developing research – based and Alaska-relevant boating safety curriculum, writing text for publications such as the *Alaska Boater's Handbook* and posters, providing statewide boating safety instructor training and support, providing boating safety classes and presentations, purchasing life jackets for the *Kid's Don't Float* life jacket loaner board program, support for the U.S Coast Guard Auxiliary, developing, broadcasting, and publishing boating safety messages, and providing and supporting school programs including the *Kid's Don't Float Peer Educator Program*. While the program's emphasis is on education, some of these funds may also be used for training state law enforcement officers in marine law enforcement topics such as officer safety, boating while intoxicated, boat theft, and boat accident investigation.

Line Item Expenditures:

Personal Services \$300.0  
Travel \$30.0  
Services \$753.0  
Commodities \$112.0  
Capital Outlay \$5.0

**Project Support:**

The Alaska Boating Safety Program has had a long list of public and private supporters, including:

United States Coast Guard  
United States Coast Guard Auxiliary  
Alaska Municipal League  
Alaska Boating Association (ABA)  
Valdez Harbor Users Association  
Seward Boat Owners Association  
Whittier Boat Owners Association  
Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Association  
Fairbanks Paddlers  
Alaska Marine Dealer's Association  
Trails and Recreational Access for Alaskans Board (TRAAK)  
Alaska Safety Advisory Council (ASAC)  
Kenai River Special Management Area Citizen's Advisory Board  
State of Alaska Capital Project Summary  
FY2007 Governor Amended

Department of Natural Resources  
Reference No: 32553  
Released April 27, 2006

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Alaska Boating Safety Advisory Council (ABSAC)  
Mat-Su State Parks Citizen's Advisory Board  
Big Lake Community Council  
Sitka State Parks Citizen's Advisory Board  
Denali Safety Council  
Alaska Department of Public Safety  
Alaska Wildland Adventures  
National Transportation Safety Board  
Alaska Department of Health and Social Services - Community Health and EMS section  
Western States Boating Administrator's Association  
National Association of State Boating Law Administrators  
National Safe Boating Council

### Project Opposition:

None known

### State Match Required:

Yes. A state match, currently in an amount equal to the federal grant funds received, is required. This 50% match requirement has thus far been largely satisfied by researching and capturing other department's expenditures that can be attributable to non-commercial boating, and that are approved as allowable match by the U.S. Coast Guard, such as DMV's costs to register boats, and costs to the state for boating search and rescue. However, our ability to match these funds depends on the expenditures of other state agencies and varies from year to year. In FY03, we were unable to provide our full match.

In addition, the amount that a state spends for boating safety (as compared to the other states) in any given year is also one of two factors that determine the amount of federal funds that a state is eligible to receive in the federal grant allocation two years later.