

The 2022 California Boater Kit Feedback Survey Report



Presented by
California State Parks, California Coastal Commission's Boating
Clean and Green Program, and The Bay Foundation

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Introduction

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

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

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

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

Every year Dockwalkers and Partners distribute approximately 5,000 Kits throughout the state. Since 2000, Dockwalkers and Partners have distributed over 100,000 Boater Kits.

Purpose

Since 2020, Partners created and distributed the Boater Kit Feedback Survey to gain insight on Kit use and resource preferences. In 2022, Partners decided to distribute the Boater Kit Feedback Survey once again. Survey findings will continue to assist Partners in improving the Kit and its future contents by supporting the reduction or elimination of unnecessary educational materials and focusing the allocation of funding to the most needed pollution prevention subject areas.

Methodology

In 2022, Partners and Dockwalkers distributed Kits and administered the Questionnaire using different outreach strategies due to COVID-19. Partners focused on online education through virtual campaigns and webinars. Additionally, as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted in California, Dockwalkers safely distributed Kits and conducted education in-person using safety guidelines recommended by Partners. As a result of 2022's outreach throughout the boating season, 5,900 Kits were distributed, and 3,250 Questionnaires were collected.

Boater Kit Feedback Surveys are distributed to Kit recipients who completed the Questionnaire and provided a valid email address. From the 3,250 Boater Kit Questionnaires received in 2022, 599 questionnaire respondents included their email addresses. Approximately 550 emails were valid. Partners followed up with boaters who provided their email addresses to request their participation in the 2022 Boater Kit Feedback Survey (Survey). Partners created and distributed two Boater Kit Feedback Surveys hosted by Google Forms (one for [Northern California](#) and one for [Southern California](#)) to take into account variations in the Kit contents for each region.

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



Image 1: Dockwalker Partner and US Coast Guard Auxiliary, Robert Johnson conducting boater education and collecting the Questionnaire at a marine supply store. Source: Robert Johnson

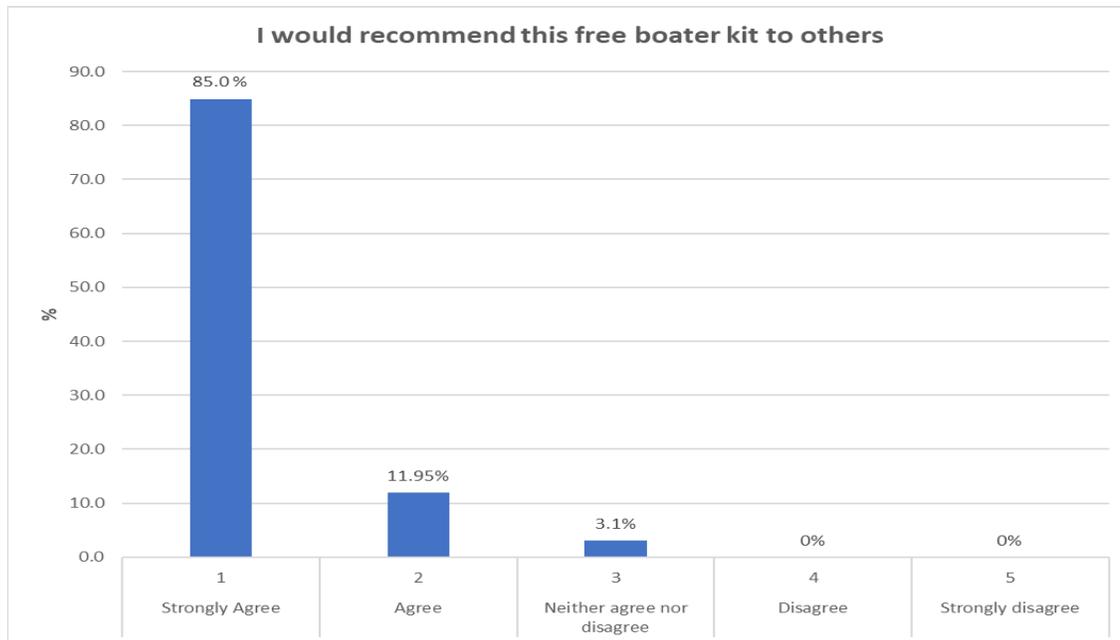


Image 2: Dockwalker Partner and Dockmaster at Waves Marina, Chase Allen sharing clean boating information and distributing the California Boater Kit at marina event. Source: Wave Marina.

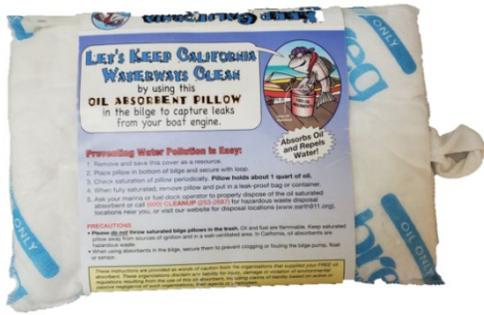
Results

The 2022 Boater Kit Feedback Survey had a 27% response rate: 147 total boaters participated, with 89 Northern CA survey respondents and 58 Southern CA survey respondents. These responses represent a 90% confidence level (6% error). In addition to requesting Survey participation, respondents were entered for a chance to receive a life jacket. A total of two life jacket winners were randomly selected and notified in mid-November 2022.

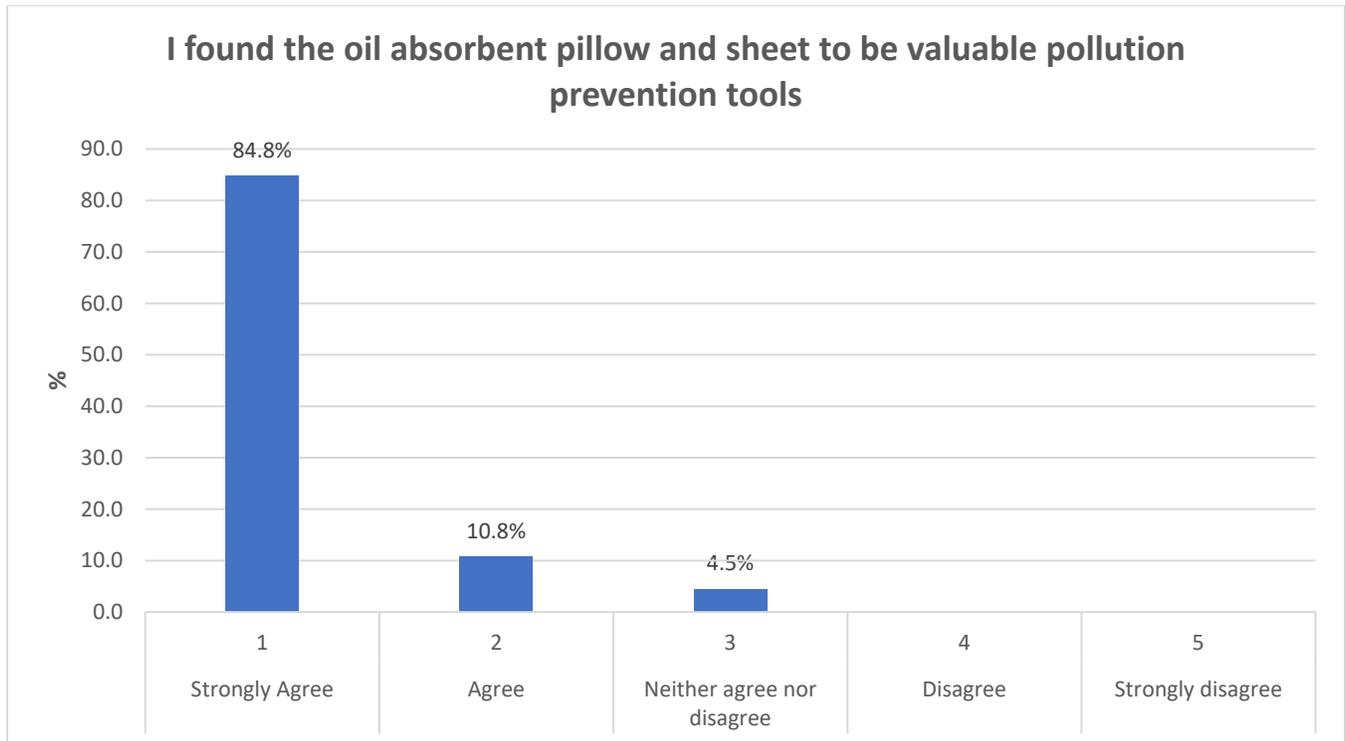
Over 97% of the respondents (96.9%) would recommend the Kit to others. About 3% (3.1%) did not have a specific opinion about recommending the Kit to others.



Oil Absorbent Pillow and Oil Absorbent Sheet



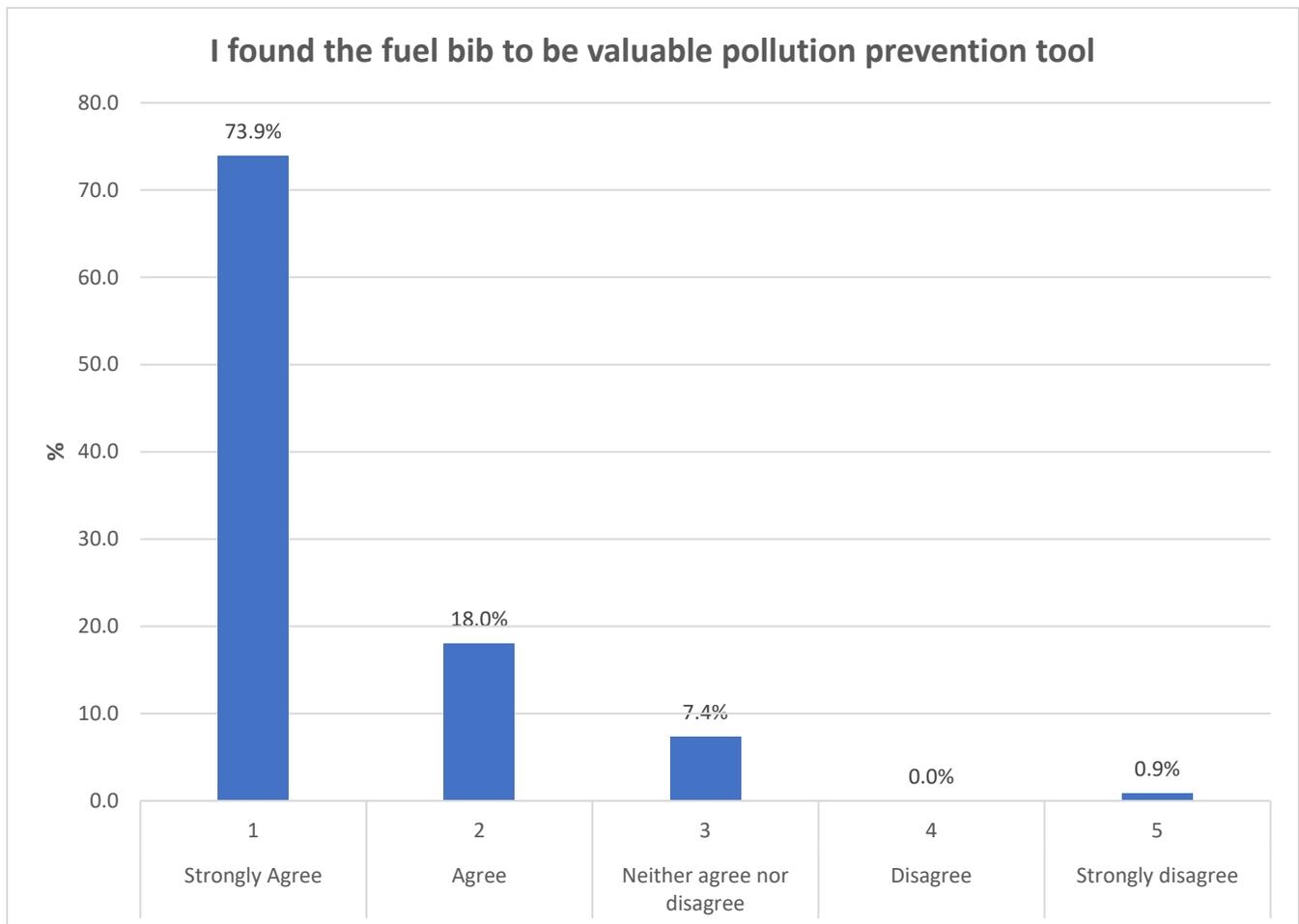
About 96% (95.5%) of respondents found both the oil absorbent pillow and oil absorbent sheet to be valuable pollution prevention tools. 4.5% of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree” and none of the respondents disagree with this pollution prevention tool being a valuable component of the Kit.



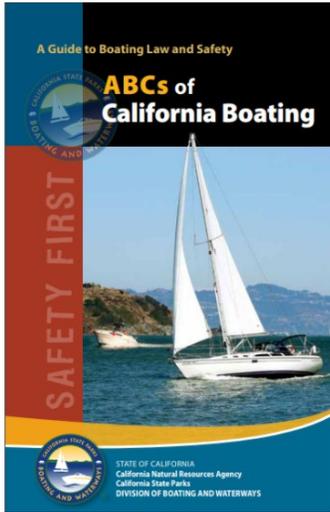
Fuel Bib



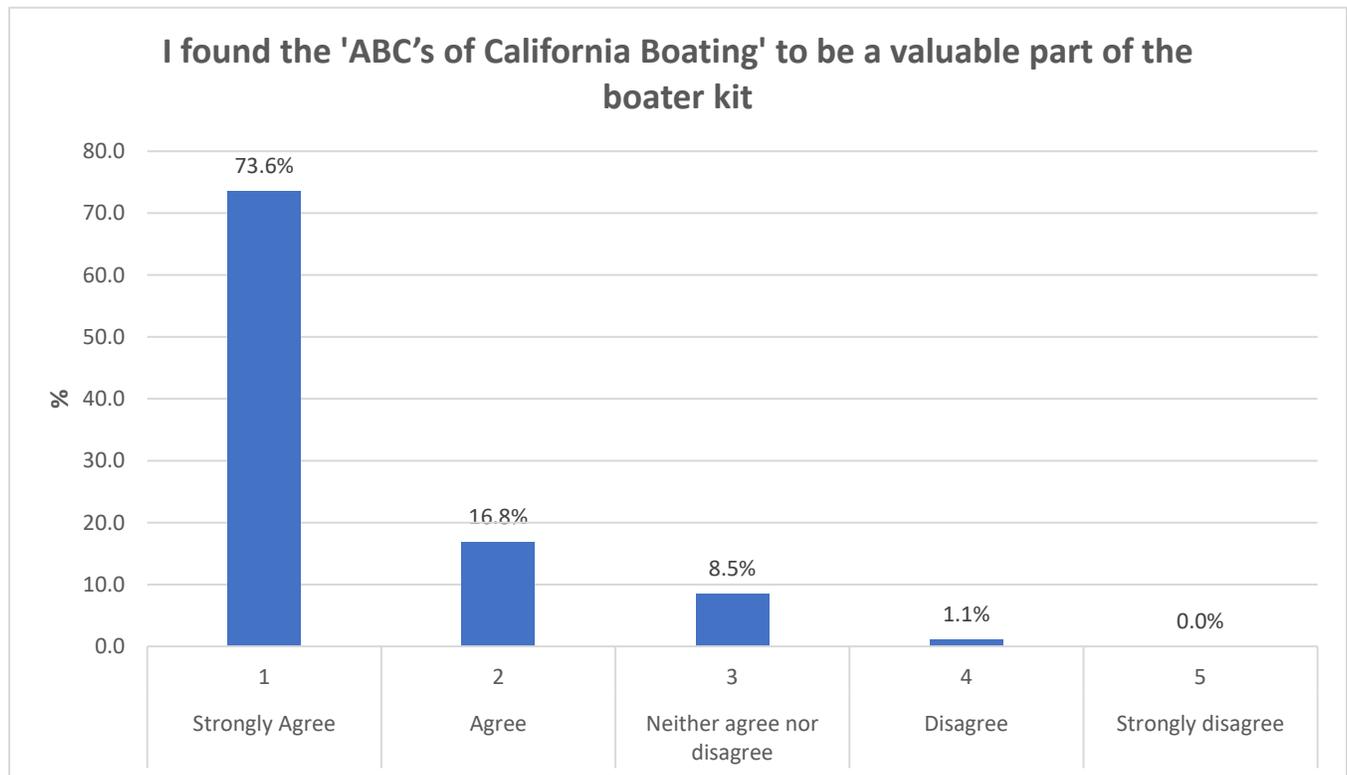
92% (91.8%) of Kit recipients found the fuel bib to be a valuable component of the Kit. 7.4% of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree” with the fuel bib being a valuable component of the Kit. Around 1% (0.9%) of the Kit recipients did not find the fuel bib to be a valuable component of the Kit.



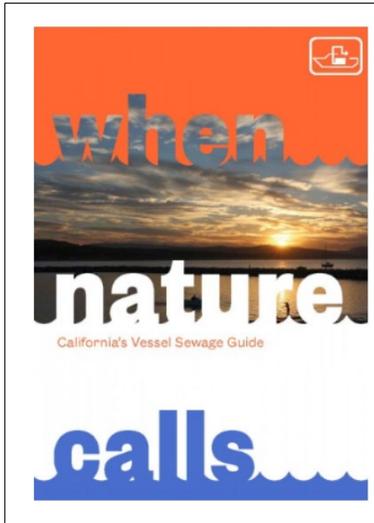
ABCs of California Boating



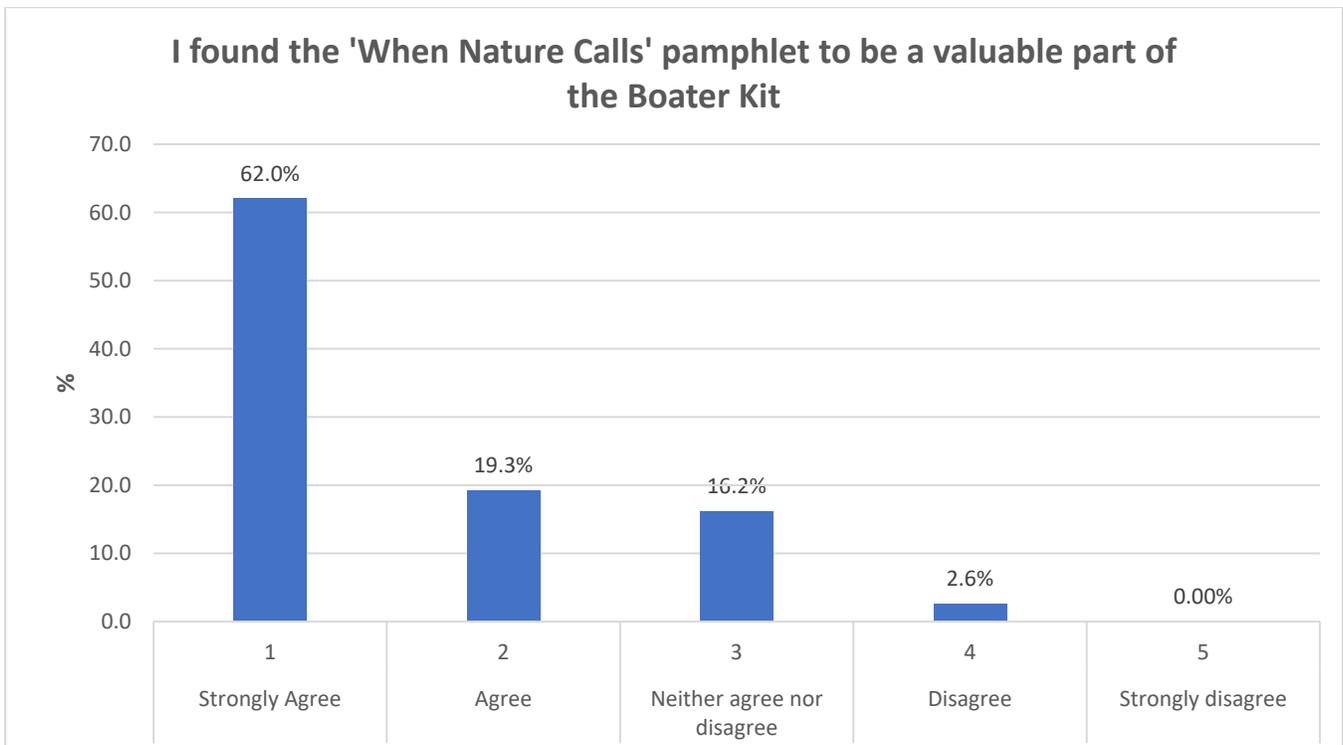
90% (90.4%) of the respondents found the *ABCs of California Boating* to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit. Around 8% (8.5%) of the Kit recipients did not find the resource to be a valuable or invaluable component of the Kit. Approximately 1% (1.1%) of the respondents did not find this publication to be a valuable part of the Kit.



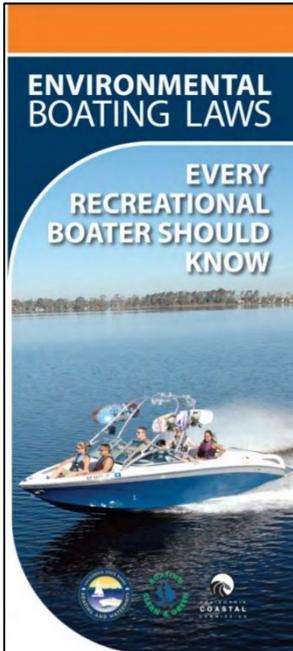
When Nature Calls



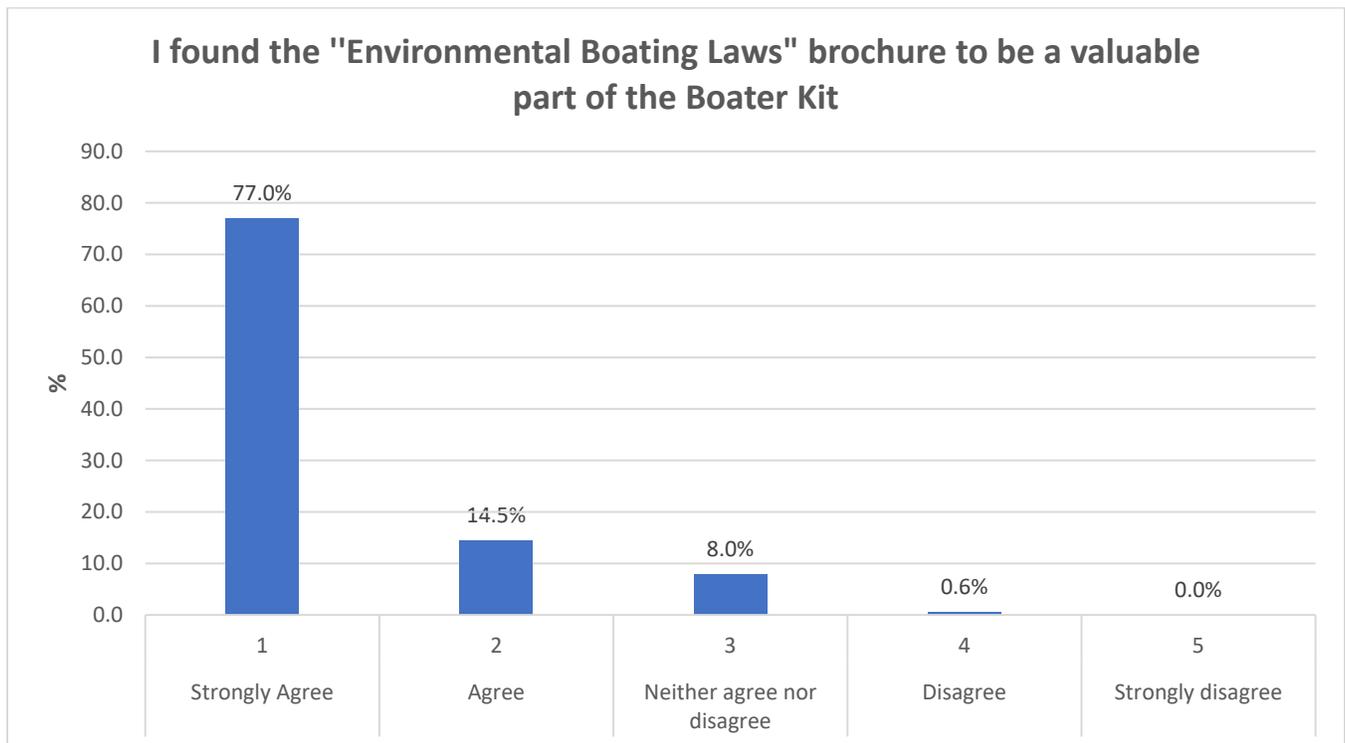
81% (81.3%) of the respondents found the 'When Nature Calls' Pamphlet to be a valuable part of the Kit. Around 16% (16.2%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this pamphlet being a valuable component of the Boater Kit. 2.6% did not find this pamphlet to be a valuable component of the Kit.



Environmental Boating Laws



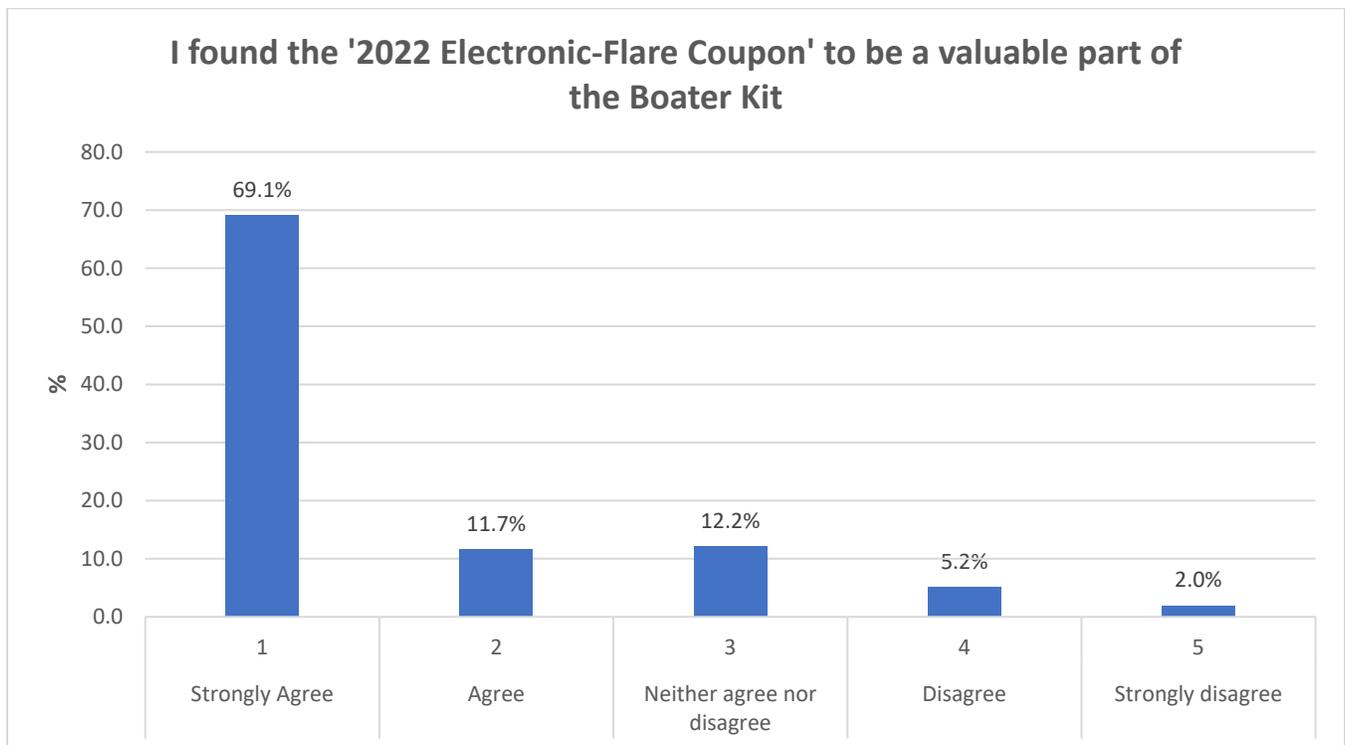
About 91% (91.5%) of the respondents found this pamphlet to be a valuable component of the Kit. 8% of the boaters who received the Boater Kit did not have a specific opinion about the value of this educational pamphlet. 0.6% of the respondents did not find this pamphlet to be valuable.



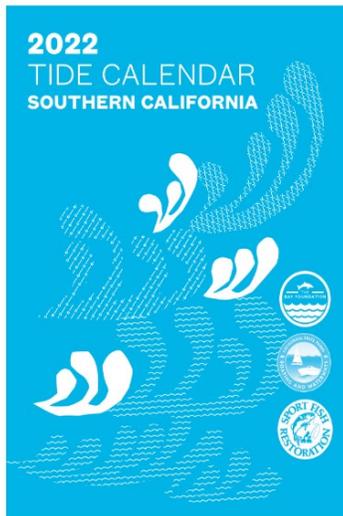
Electronic Flare Coupon



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



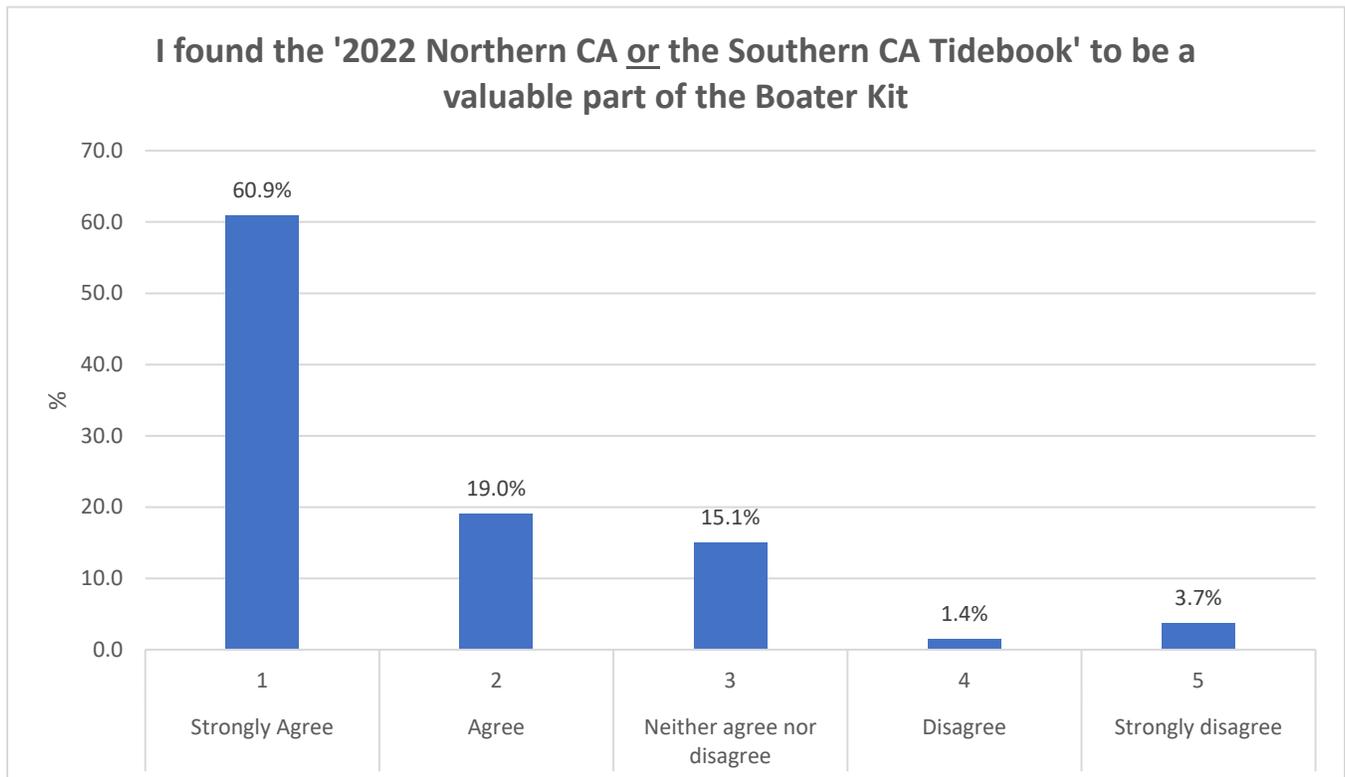
Northern California or Southern California Tidebook



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

About 80% (79.9%) of the Survey respondents found the Tidebooks to be valuable publications.

Almost 15% (15.1%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the Tidebooks being a valuable part of the Kit. 5.1% of the respondents did not find this publication to be valuable.

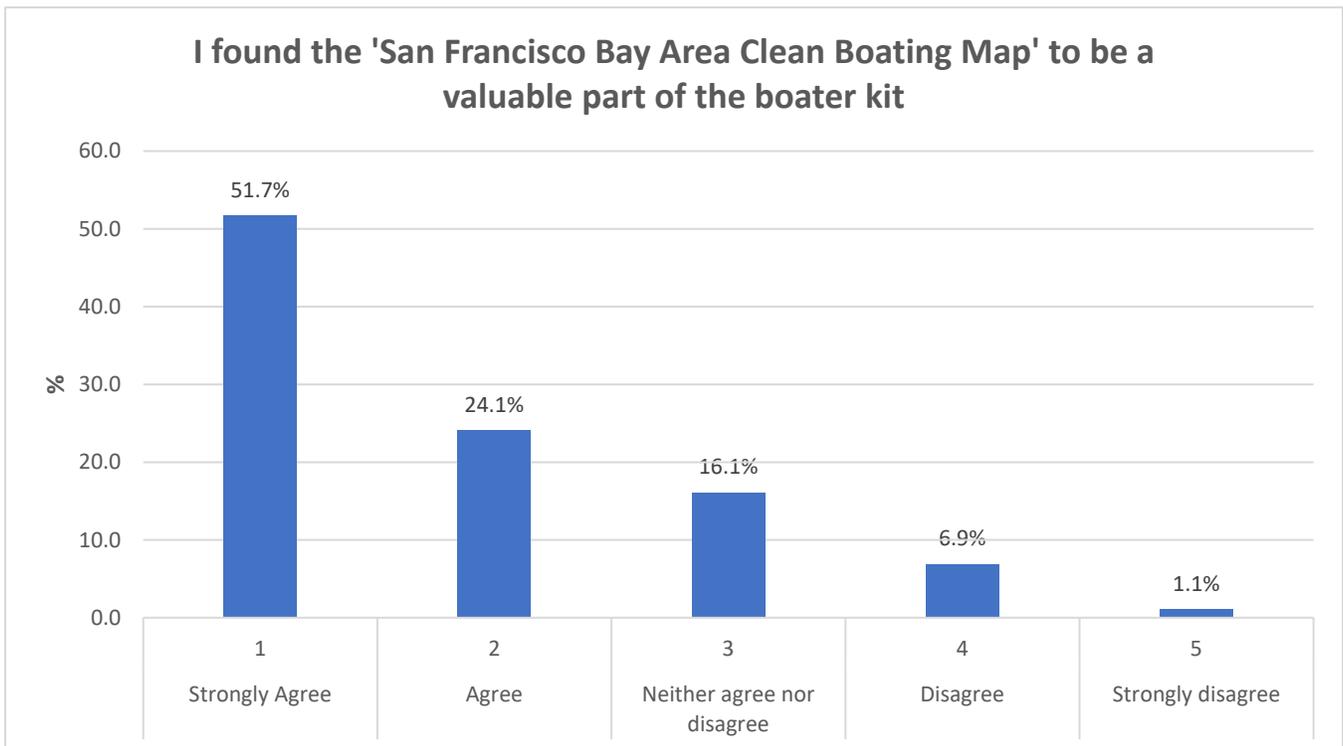


Northern California Boater Kit Specific Items

- **San Francisco Bay Area Clean Boating Map**



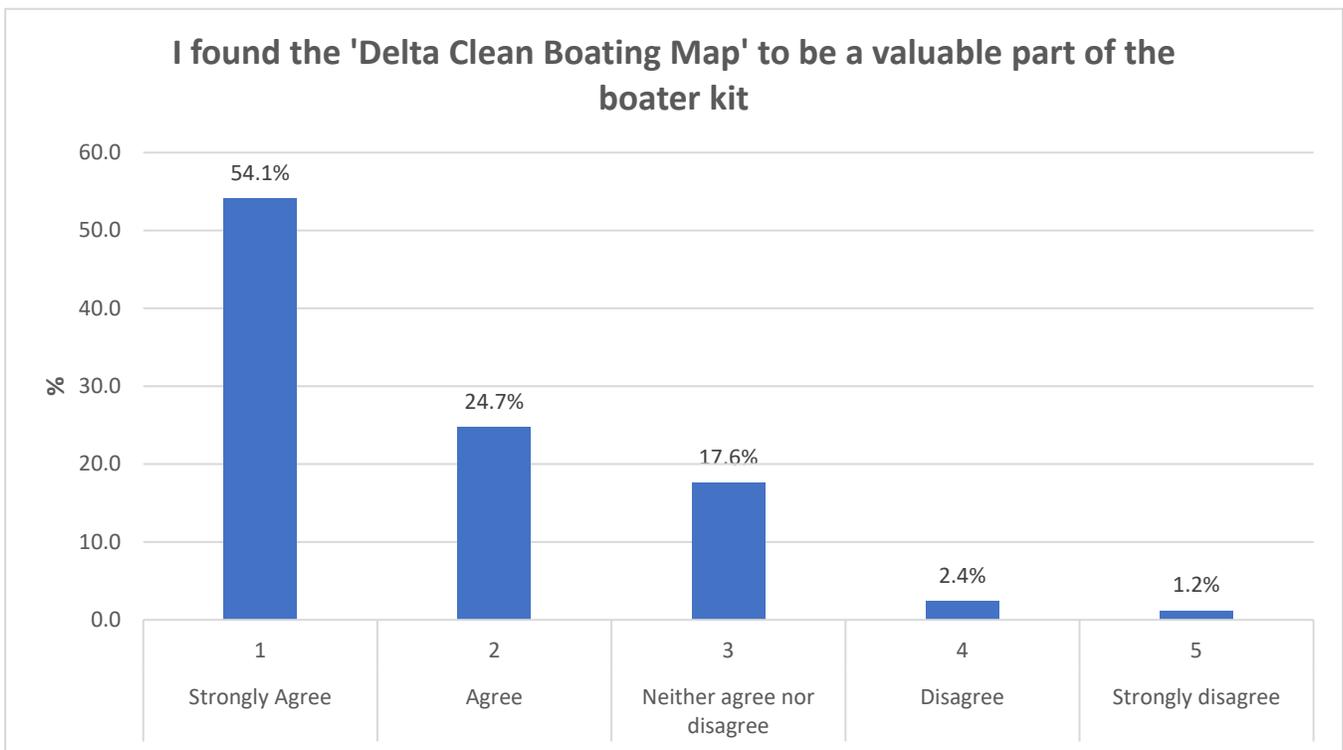
76% (75.8%) of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients found the *San Francisco Bay Area Clean Boating Map* to be a valuable component of the Kit. 16% (16.15) of the boaters who received the Boater Kit neither agreed nor disagreed with the Bay Area Map being a valuable part of the Kit. 8% of the respondents did not find this publication to be valuable.



- Delta Clean Boating Map

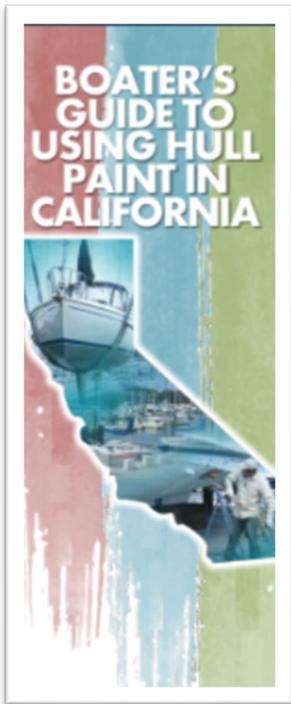


79% (78.8%) of Northern California respondents found the *Delta Clean Boating Map* to be a valuable component of the Kit. Almost 18% (17.6%) of the boaters who received the Boater Kit neither agreed nor disagreed with the Delta Map being a valuable part of the Kit. 4% (3.6%) of the Boater Kit recipients did not find the map to be a valuable component of the Kit.

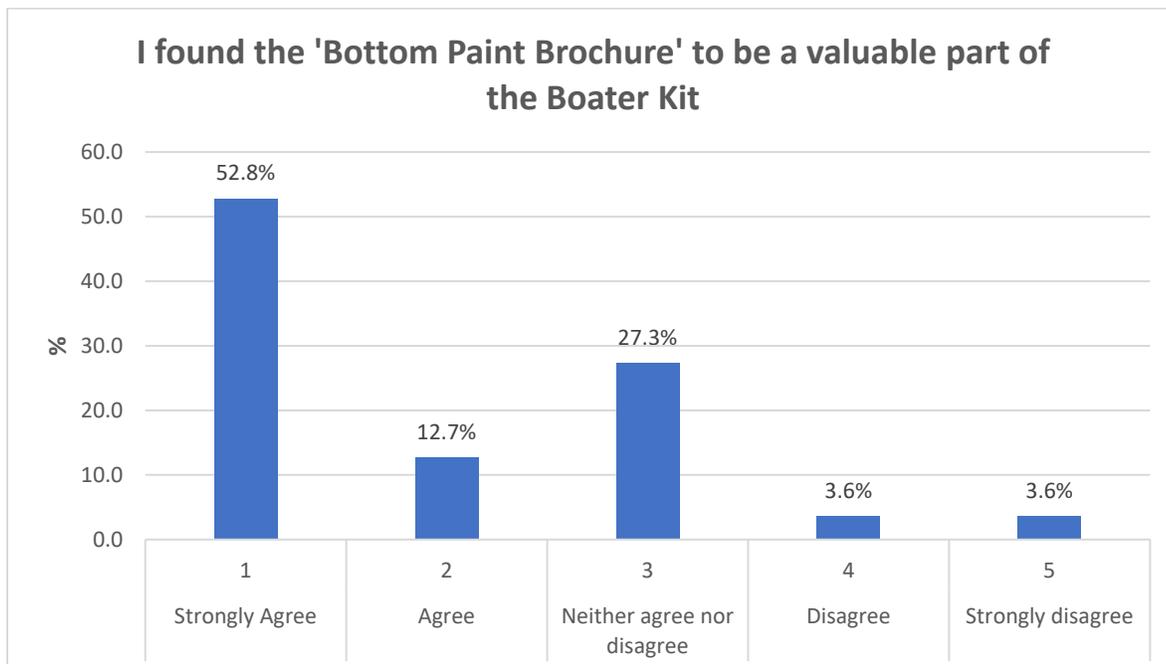


Southern California Boater Kit Specific Items

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



About 65% (65.5%) of the Southern California Boater Kit recipients found the *Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California* brochure to be a useful component of the Kit. About 27.3 of the Kit recipients did not have an opinion about the usefulness of this educational brochure. About 7% (7.2%) did not find this brochure to be a valuable component of the Boater Kit.



The following Table shows a summary of the 2022 Boater Kit Feedback Survey responses, ordered by the items deemed most useful by respondents:

Most Useful Item Ranking	Item	Combined Strongly Agree and Agree (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (%)	Combined Disagree and Strongly Disagree (%)
	CA Boater Kit	96.9	3.1	0
1	Oil Absorbent Pillow and Sheet	95.5	4.5	0.0
2	Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water	92.4	6.0	1.7
3	Fuel Bibs	91.8	7.4	0.0
4	Env. Boating Laws	91.5	8.0	0.6
5	ABCs of CA Boating	90.4	8.5	1.1
6	When Nature Calls	81.3	16.2	1.8
7	Electronic Flare Coupons	80.8	12.2	6.9
8	Tidebooks	79.9	15.1	6.4

The eight common educational materials and pollution prevention tools included in both Northern and Southern California Boater Kits were considered valuable by over 80% of the survey's participants. The oil absorbent pillow oil absorbent sheet, "Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water", and fuel bib were the top four most valuable items. The Environmental Boating Laws, ABCs of Boating Law and When Nature Calls brochures were considered valuable items in the Kit by over 81% of respondents.

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

Region	Item	Combined Strongly Agree and Agree (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (%)	Combined Disagree and Strongly Disagree (%)
Northern CA	Delta Map	78.8	17.6	3.6
	San Francisco Bay Area Map	75.8	16.1	8.0
Southern CA	Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California	65.5	27.3	7.2

Over 76% of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients found both the *Delta* and *San Francisco Bay Clean Boating Maps* to be valuable items in the Kit. 17% (16.85%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with both maps being valuable components of the Kit. 6% (5.8%) of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients did not find the maps to be a valuable component of the Kit. Almost 66% (65.5%) of the Southern California Boater Kit recipients found the *Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California* brochure to be a valuable item in the Kit.

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

- Our instructor did a nice job of explaining everything in the kit
- Great kit. The absorbents and the fuel bib are amazing pieces
- There were some paper quick rule guides that I would apply as decals in areas to quickly read and use when boating, similar to discharge decals. I would even pay for the decals if they were offered. I did purchase the signal flare that was offered with discount. Thank you.
- The tide chart with the marine protected areas was the best part. Thank you
- Keep educating others... thank you
- The absorbing sheets were more useful than the pillow.
- Thank you for making our waters clean and boating safe!
- Love the coupon/ oil pads, all
- More boats and new boater need this type of information because most boater don't even have a clue of this type of valuable information.
- Love the fuel bib. The tide pamphlet (I use apps) and flare coupon (I use regular flares) were items not as critical for me. I am a new boater and I read everything you sent me. Thank you so much!!
- Thanks for all the great items and information!

- I loved our boater's kit! What a treat!
- Thank you
- A nice kit to have, thank you!
- Boaters Guide to Keeping Pollutants out of the Water is packed with useful information, but difficult to read due to so much information packed onto an 8 × 11 card.
- Thank you! The pump out at Two Harbors is very important and should be a priority so boats do not have to go outside the 3-mile limit to pump out.
- Thank you for the kit.
- More flare take back events. Great service.
- Thanks for all you do for boaters and the environment!
- I was impressed with the USCG Auxiliary member who presented the questionnaire and kit to us at the dock. He was quite knowledgeable and professional.
- Love this kit. Thank you
- Thank you for helping us keep our waterways safe and clean.
- We LOVE it! Thank you
- Who do we contact for removal of abandoned/sunken boats and trees?
- Great kit. It will be useful.
- We appreciate these presentations and that they are available.
- It was a very educational seminar. No questions but would like to be on your notification list.
- The instructors were very informative. A great source for first time boaters and seasoned...always a good brush up for all.
- This kit is amazing. THANK YOU
- Yes the Delta Map is a winner! I have electronics that take care of me. However Nothing can replace a map especially with one that points out Marinas and places to safely dispose of hazardous waste.
- Great Kit. Thank you so much. I learned a lot!
- Thanks for the great information
- Great Kit! Thank you
- Brings awareness to the boating community, especially new boaters.
- Strong work providing safe Boating rules and regulations
- This is all new to me and it certainly does good having visuals and actual physical items to see what is available out there, the fuel fill absorbent pad especially! For me anyway
- Develop a smart app in lieu of literature
- Develop a smart app in lieu of physical literature
- This is a great kit every boater should have one on board!
- This is great, the books and items cover a lot of things new boaters don't think about until they encounter a situation.
- Thank you
- Very good kit
- Bought the LED marine flare...great idea and our local fire dept took the excess old flares...also in talking to our inspector we also found out about a boaters shower soap....instead of OTC soap used in homes....great idea...

- Very helpful thank you very much
- Loved it!!!
- The only reason anything was marked with a less than "Strongly Agree' is simply because I haven't had to use them yet. The documentation is great!
- Very informative
- Most of the info supplied, I either knew or had.
- I appreciated the kit.
- Great package.
- Everything
- What an excellent and wonderful service and educational value. It's long overdue that all boaters subscribe to a safer and cleaner future. Thanks for your expertise!
- This kit was great. I am a new boat owner and I really appreciate this information.
- Great resource, Thank you!
- Every boater should have this!!!

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, this Survey demonstrated the 2022 California Boater Kit is considered a valuable educational tool by recipients. 97% of 2022 Boater Kit Feedback Survey participants would recommend it to other boaters. This overarching finding and the highlights below affirm the continued use of the Kit and its components as an effective education and outreach tool.

- All the items found in the California Boater Kits were rated as valuable by the survey respondents (between 65% and 97% of respondents, depending on the item).
- Most items found in both regional Boater Kits (7 items: Oil Absorbent Pillow and Sheet, fuel bibs, *ABCs of Bating Law*, *Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water*, and *Environmental Boating Laws*) were considered valuable by more than 90% of survey respondents. Additionally, the three items (*When Nature Calls* brochure, the Electronic Flare coupon and Tidebooks) included in both regional Boater Kits received a valuable rate over 79%.
- The four most valued items were the oil absorbent pillow and sheet, followed by the “Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water” and the fuel bib. For the region-specific items included in Northern California Boater Kits, the San Francisco and Delta maps were considered valuable items (76 and 79% rate, respectively) and in Southern California the *Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California* brochure with 65% valued rate.

Partners further recommend continuing to utilize promoting an incentive in exchange for participation. As an attempt to further increase the response rate, the life jacket incentive was mentioned directly in the 2022 Boater Kit Questionnaire and in the emails sent to boaters who provided us with their email addresses. This strategy didn't significantly increase the response rate compared to the last two years (20% in 2020, 32% in 2021, and 27% in 2022). In order to

bolster participation and keep the response rate over 25%¹ next year, Partners will continue to promote the life jacket incentive directly in the Boater Kit Questionnaire and emails provided by the Boater Kit recipients.

Since 2022 was the third year Partners implemented the Boater Kit Feedback Survey, and it was a year also impacted by COVID-19, it is recommended to continue to conduct the Boater Kit Feedback Survey in the next two to three years to acquire more significant input and increase data collection from Boater Kit recipients. Once more data is received, Partners will have a better understanding of recipients' preferences and will be able to identify which (if any) Kit items need more confidently to be removed, re-designed, or replaced with alternative educational materials.

References

- Porter, B. (2019). Tips and tricks to improve survey response rate. SurveyMonkey. Retrieved from <https://www.surveymonkey.com/curiosity/improve-surveyresponse-rate/>
- Qualtrix, 2022. Retrieved from [How to Increase Survey Response Rates - Qualtrics](#)
- SmartSurvey, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/blog/what-is-a-good-survey-response-rate>

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