

The 2024 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 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 130,000 Boater Kits.

Purpose

Partners created the Boater Kit Feedback Survey in 2020 to gain insight on Kit use and resource preferences. The survey is distributed annually. Survey findings 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 2024, Partners and Dockwalkers distributed Kits and administered the Questionnaire using different outreach strategies. Partners focused on online education through virtual campaigns and webinars. Additionally, staff attended several boat shows and boating events. Dockwalkers safely distributed Kits and conducted education in-person using guidelines recommended by Partners. As a result of 2024's outreach throughout the boating season, 6,500 Kits were distributed, and 4,006 Questionnaires were collected.

Boater Kit Feedback Surveys are distributed to Kit recipients who completed the Questionnaire and provided a valid email address. From the 4,006 Boater Kit Questionnaires received in 2024, 751 questionnaire respondents included their email addresses. Approximately 700 emails were valid. Partners followed up with boaters who provided their email addresses to request their participation in the 2024 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: Solano County Partner Dockwalker conducting boater education and collecting the Questionnaire at a Solano County marina. Source: Solano County

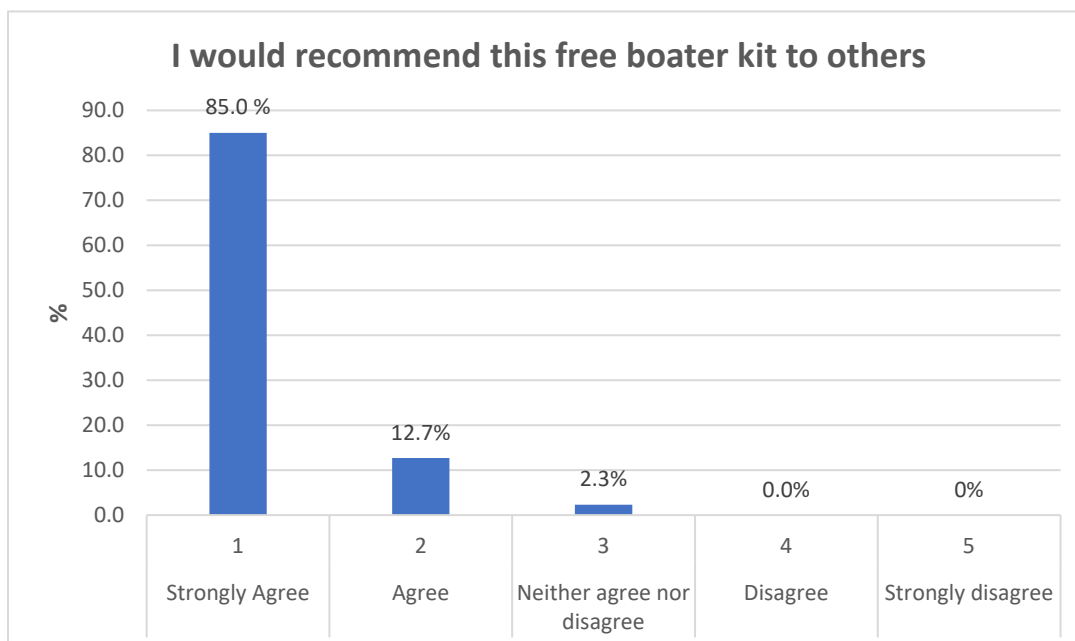


Image 2: Partner Dockwalker and US Coast Guard Auxiliary member Peter Rosen sharing clean boating information and distributing the CA Boater Kit in Los Angeles. Source: US Coast Guard Auxiliary

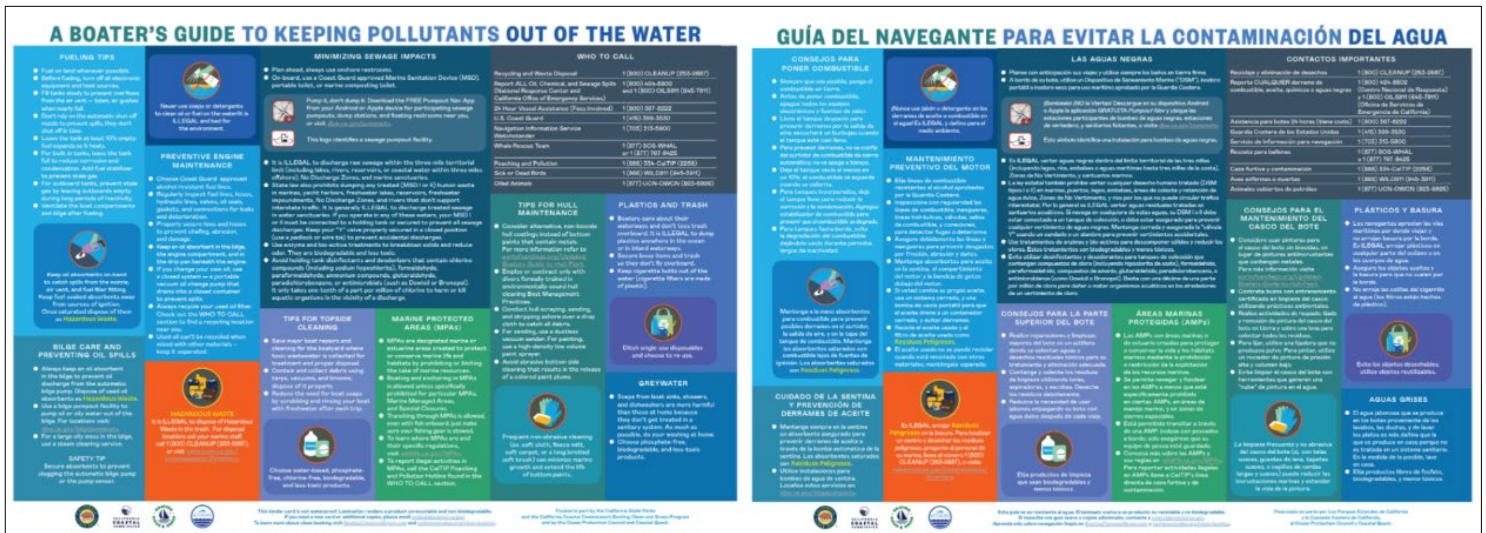
Results

The 2024 Boater Kit Feedback Survey had a 32.6% response rate: 228 total boaters participated, with 164 Northern CA survey respondents and 64 Southern CA survey respondents. These responses represent a 95% confidence level (5.3% 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 2024.

Over 97% of the respondents (97.7%) would recommend the Kit to others. About 2% (2.3%) did not have a specific opinion about recommending the Kit to others.

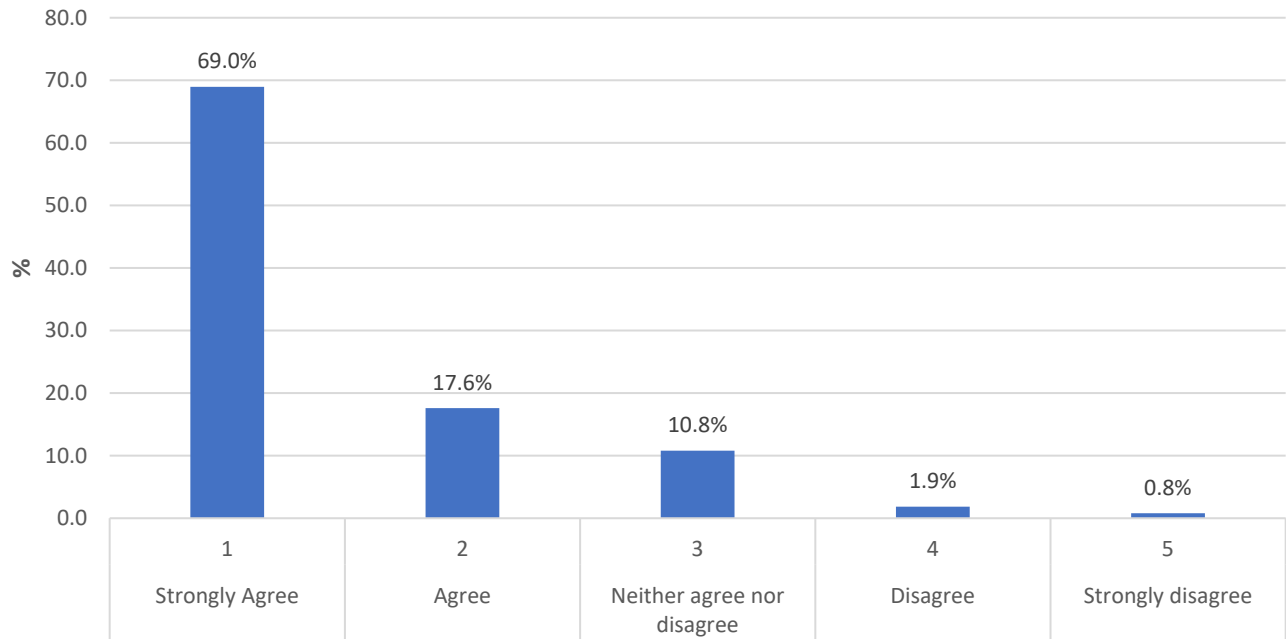


A Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water



About 87% (86.6%) of the Boater Kit recipients found the “Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water” (Binder Card) to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit. 10.8% of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree.” 2.7% did not find this Guide to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit. This Guide is multi-sided, with one side in English and the other in Spanish.

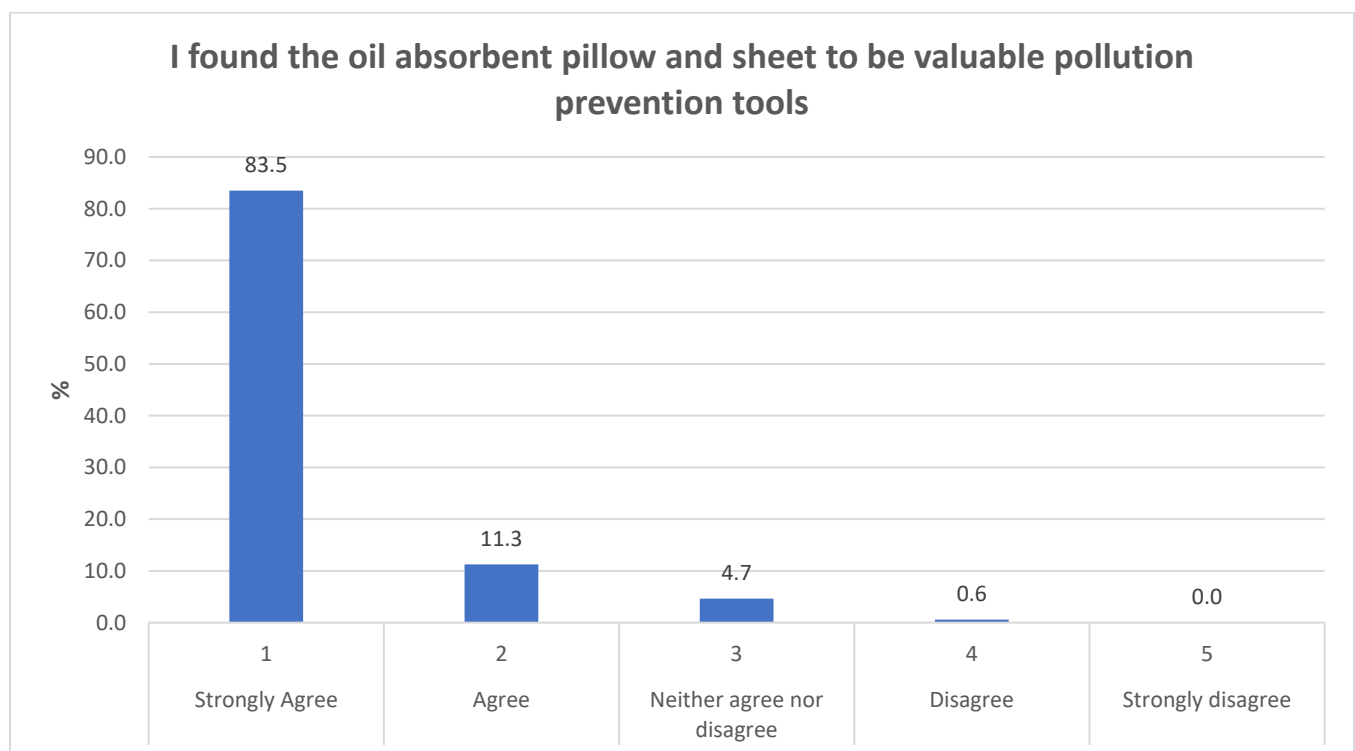
I found the 'Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water' to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit



Oil Absorbent Pillow and Oil Absorbent Sheet



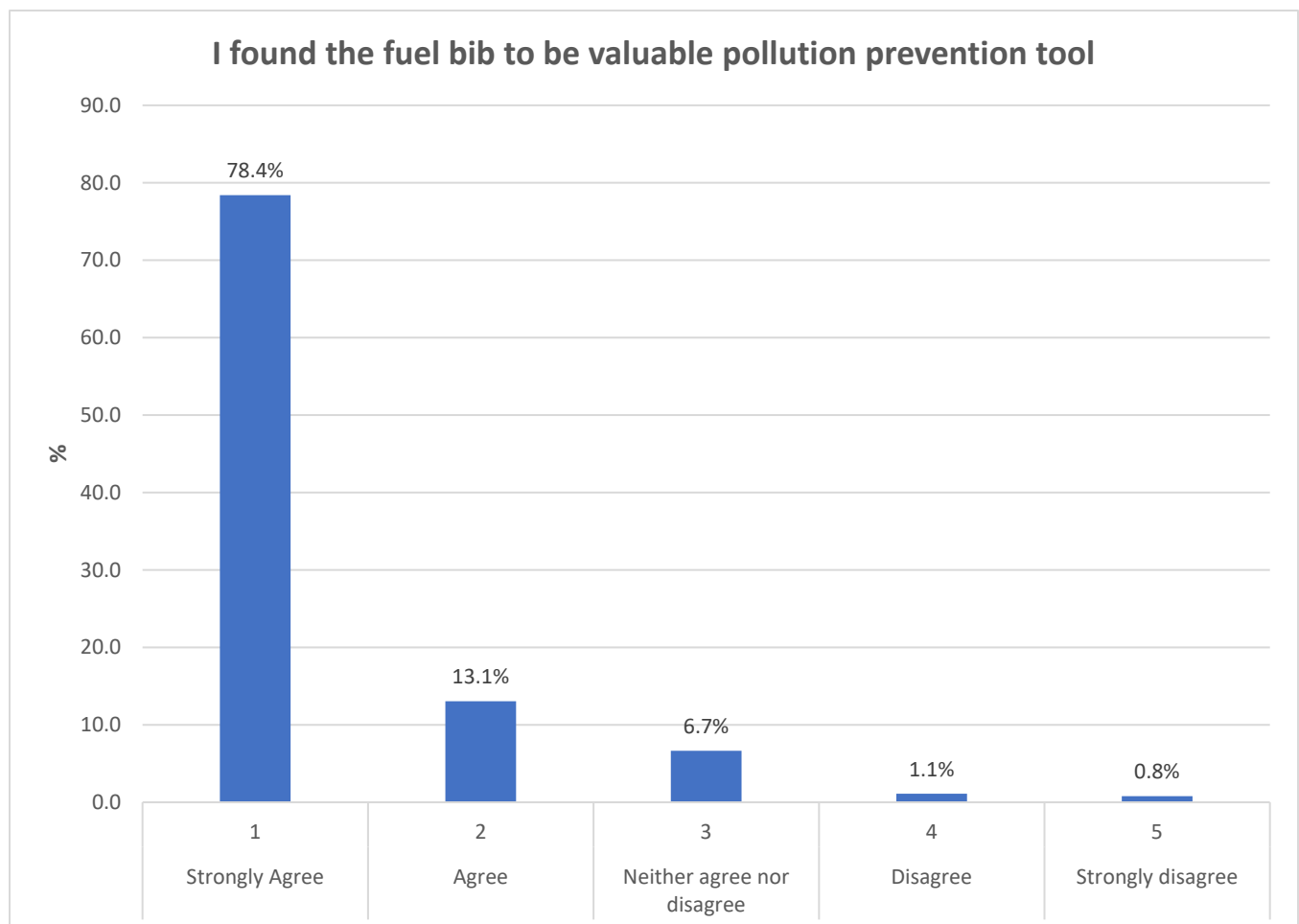
About 95% (94.8%) of respondents found both the oil absorbent pillow and oil absorbent sheet to be valuable pollution prevention tools. 4.7% of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree” and 0.6% of the respondents disagree with this pollution prevention tool being a valuable component of the Kit.

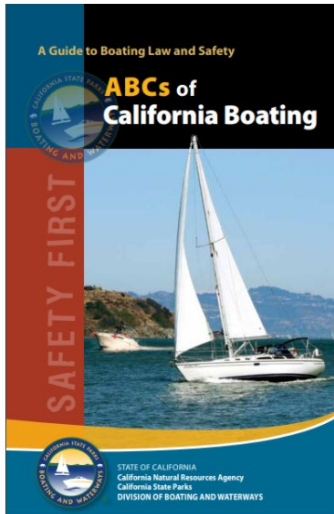


Fuel Bib



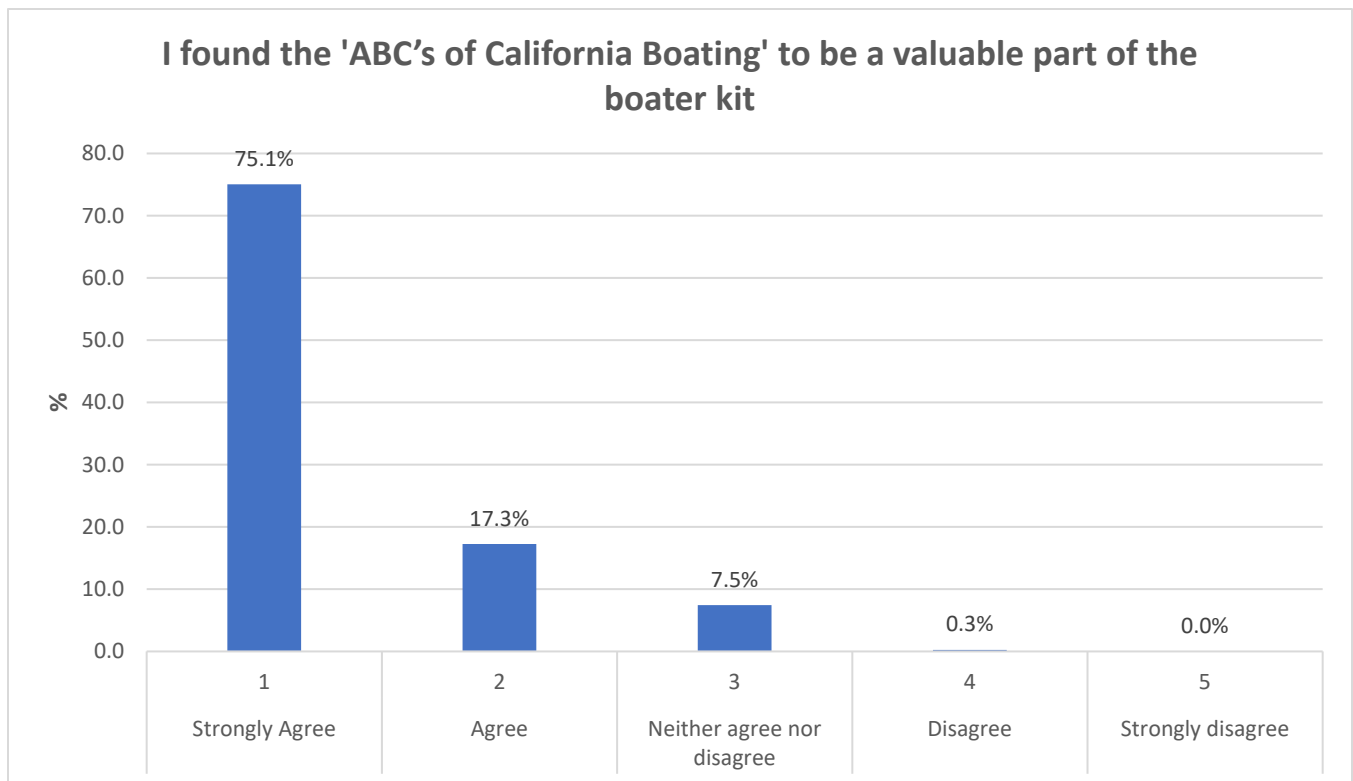
91% (91.5%) of Kit recipients found the fuel bib to be a valuable component of the Kit. 7% (6.7%) of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree” with the fuel bib being a valuable component of the Kit. Around 2% (1.9%) of the Kit recipients did not find the fuel bib to be a valuable component of the Kit.



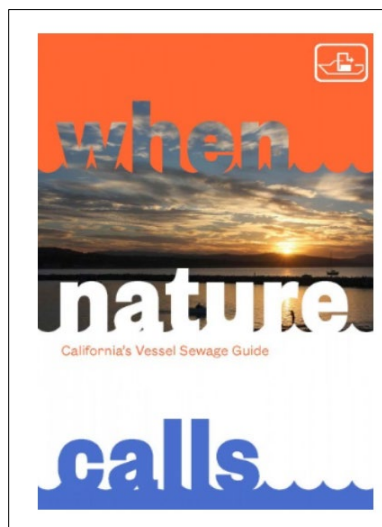


ABCs of California Boating

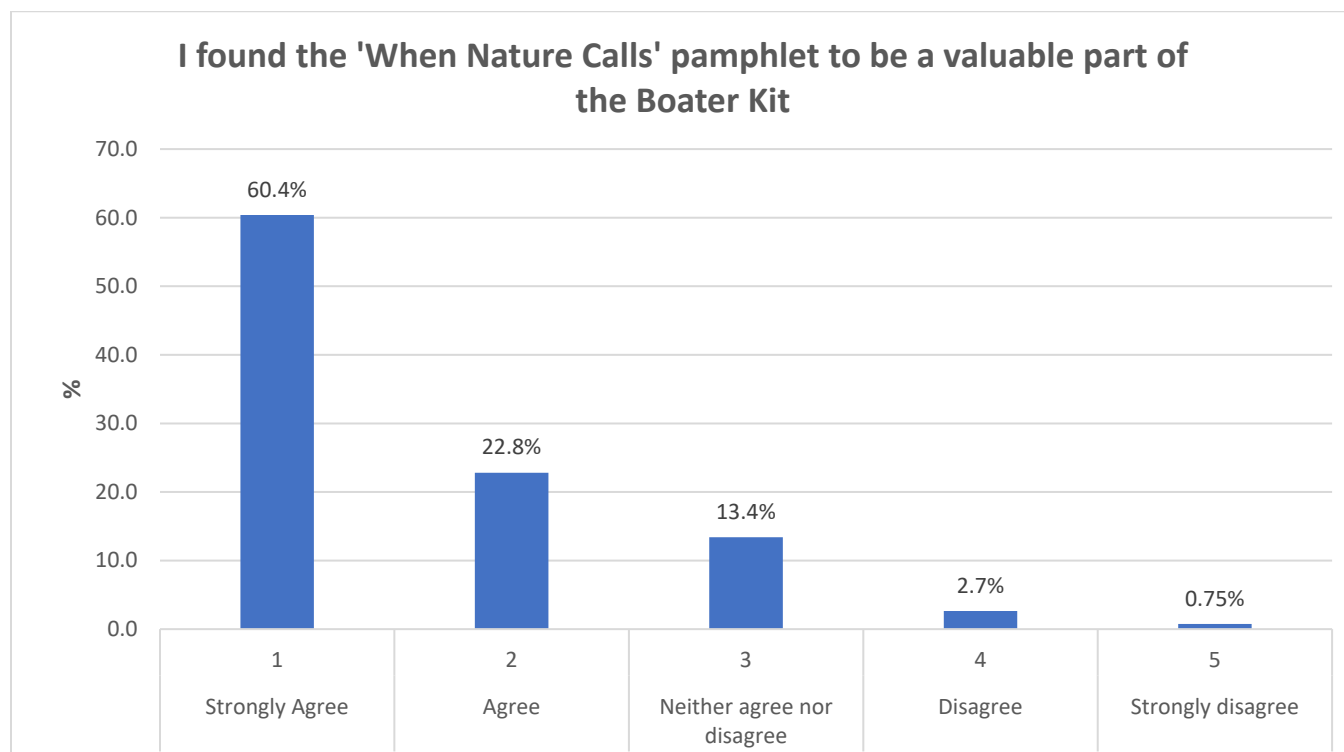
92% (92.3%) of the respondents found the *ABCs of California Boating* to be a valuable part of the Boater Kit. 7.5% of the respondents “neither agree nor disagree” with this publication being a valuable component of the Kit. 0.3% of the Kit recipients did not find the resource to be a valuable or invaluable component of the Kit.



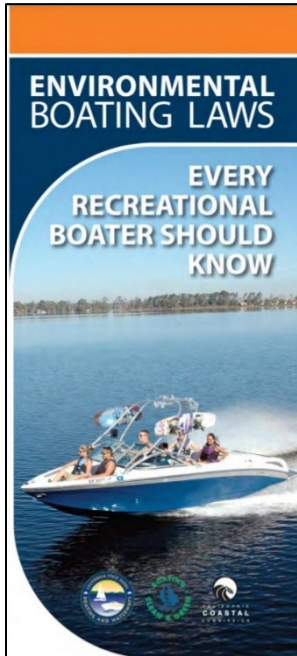
When Nature Calls



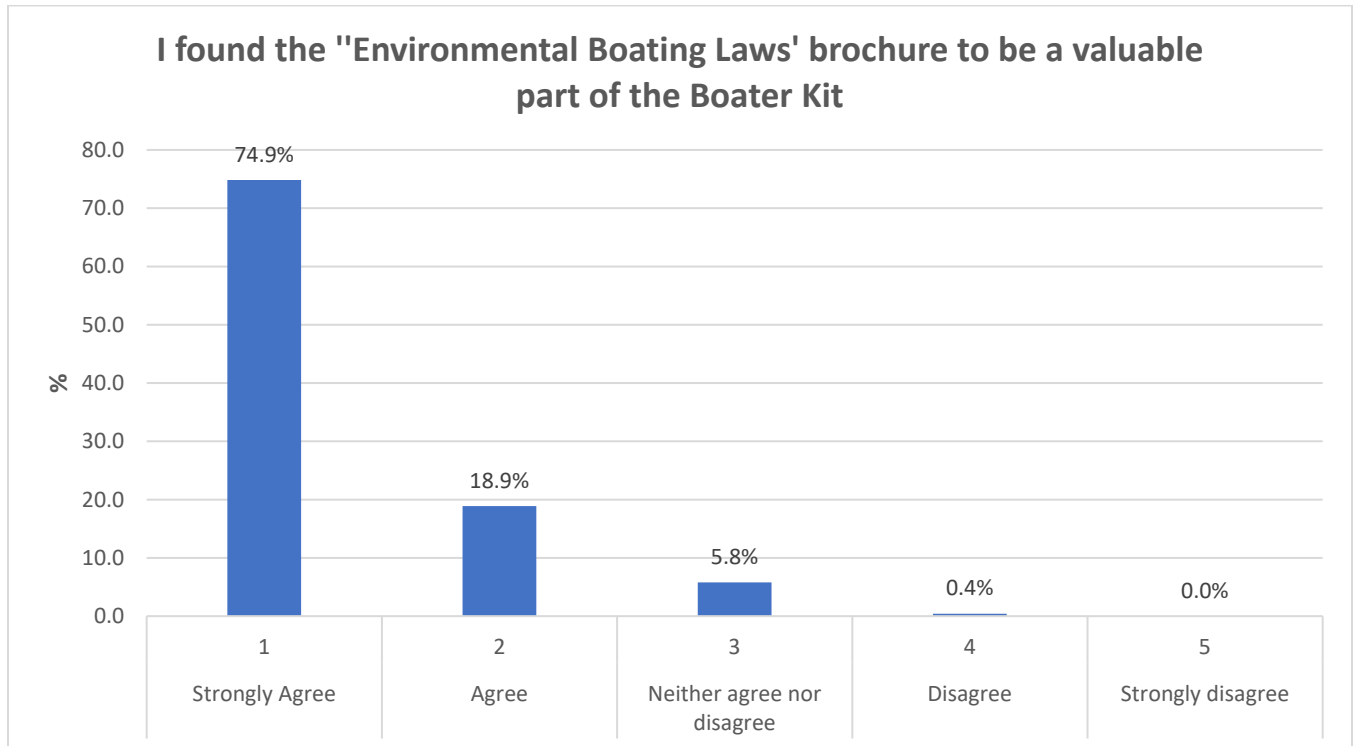
83% (83.2%) of the respondents found the 'When Nature Calls' Pamphlet to be a valuable part of the Kit. Around 13% (13.4%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this pamphlet being a valuable component of the Boater Kit. 3.4% did not find this pamphlet to be a valuable component of the Kit.



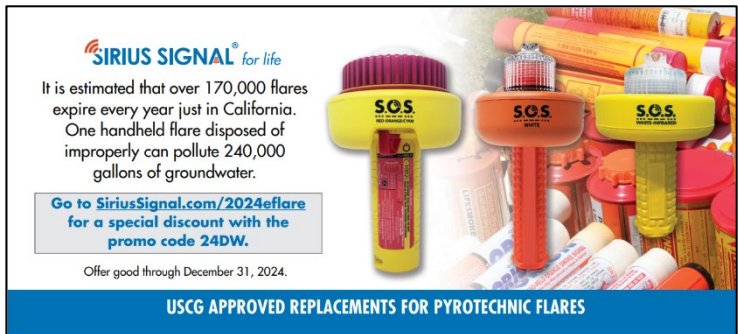
Environmental Boating Laws



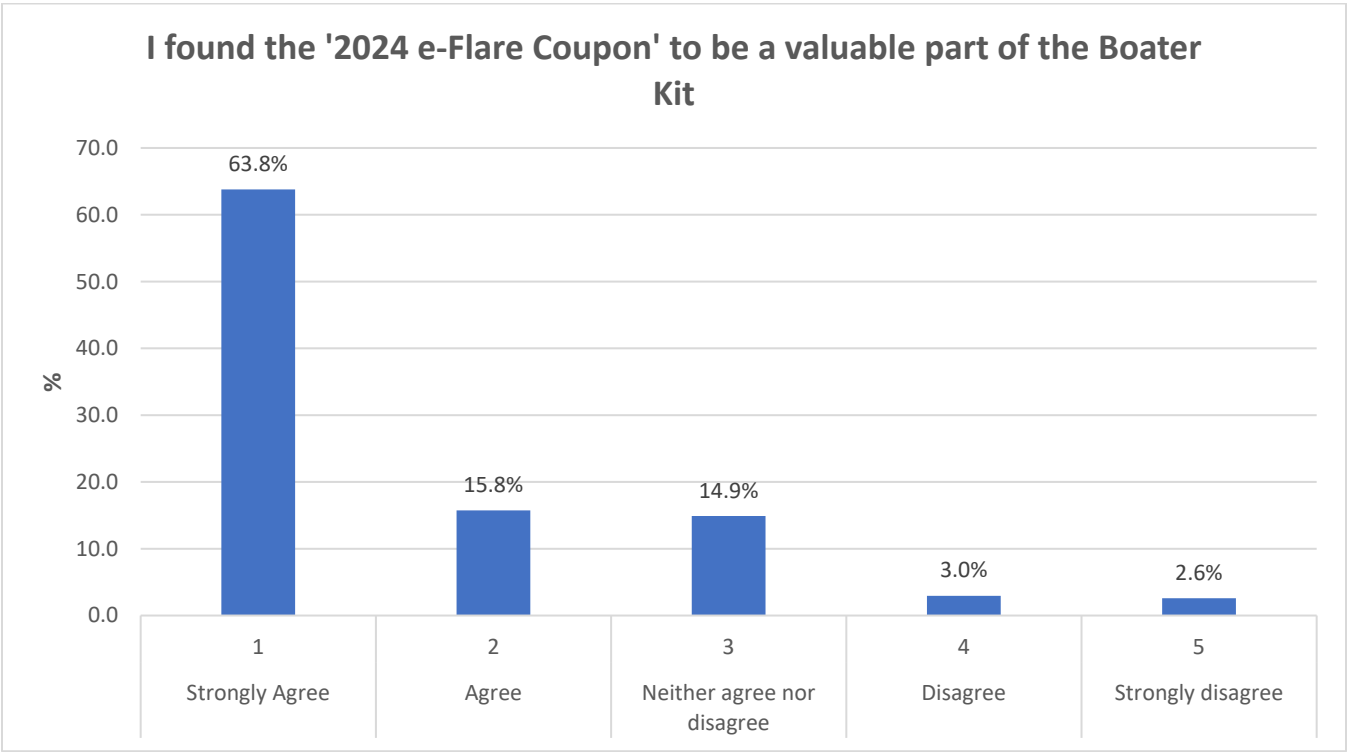
About 90% (90.4%) of the respondents found this pamphlet to be a valuable component of the Kit. 9% (8.8%) of the boaters who received the Boater Kit did not have a specific opinion about the value of this educational pamphlet. 0.8% of the respondents did not find this pamphlet to be valuable.



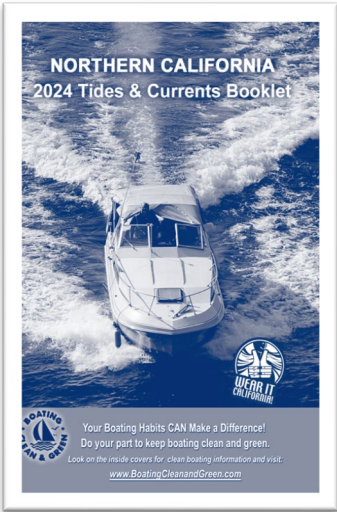
Electronic Flare Coupon



Around 80% (79.6%) of the respondents found the e-flare coupon to be a valuable part of the Kit. 14.9% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this coupon being a valuable component of the Kit. 6% (5.6 %) did not find this coupon to be a valuable component of the Kit.



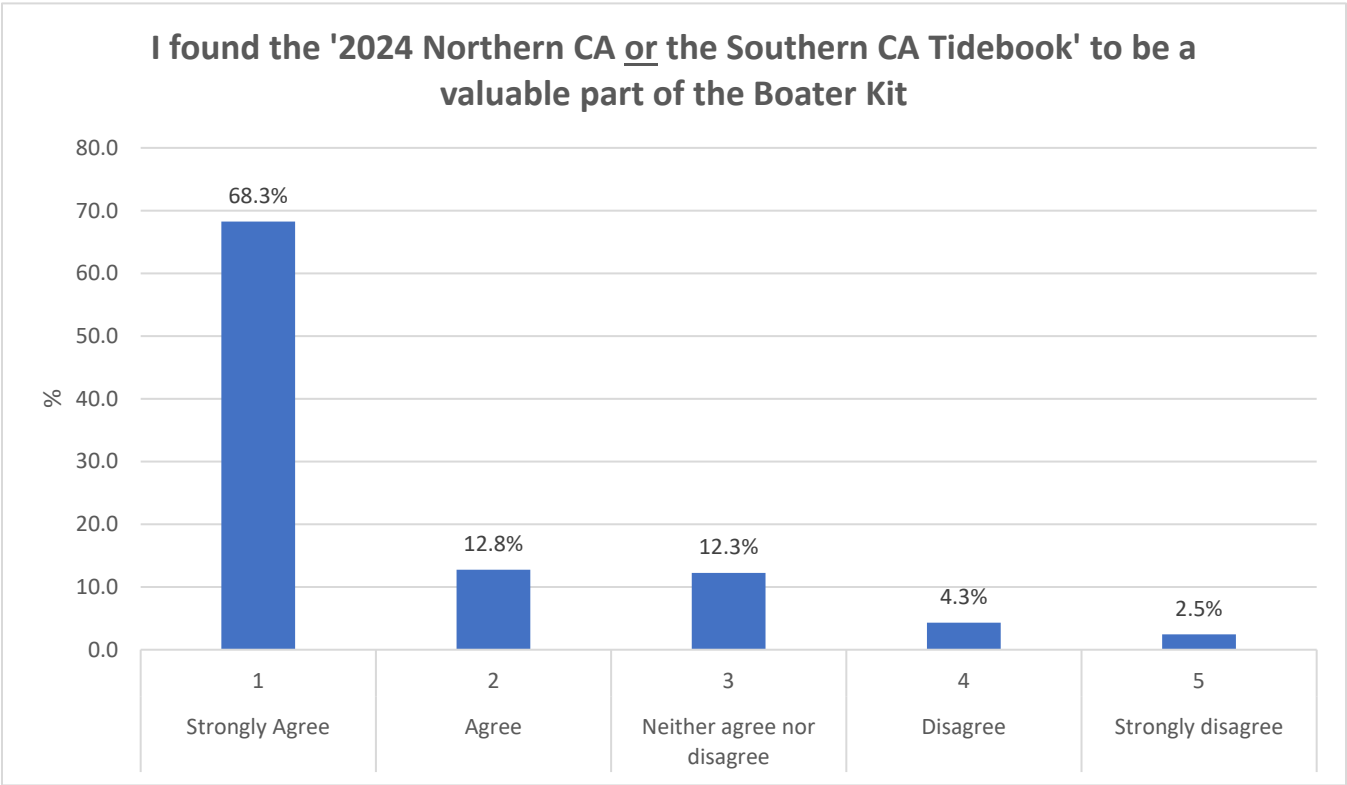
Northern California or Southern California Tidebook



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

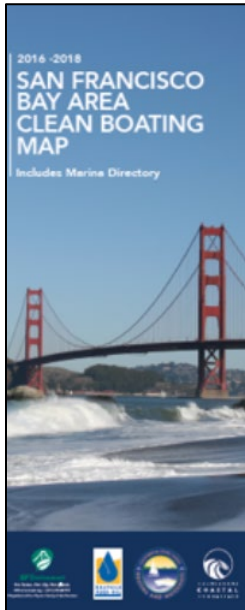
81% of the Survey respondents found the Tidebooks to be valuable publications.

12% (12.3%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the Tidebooks being a valuable part of the Kit. 7% (6.8%) of the respondents did not find this publication to be valuable.

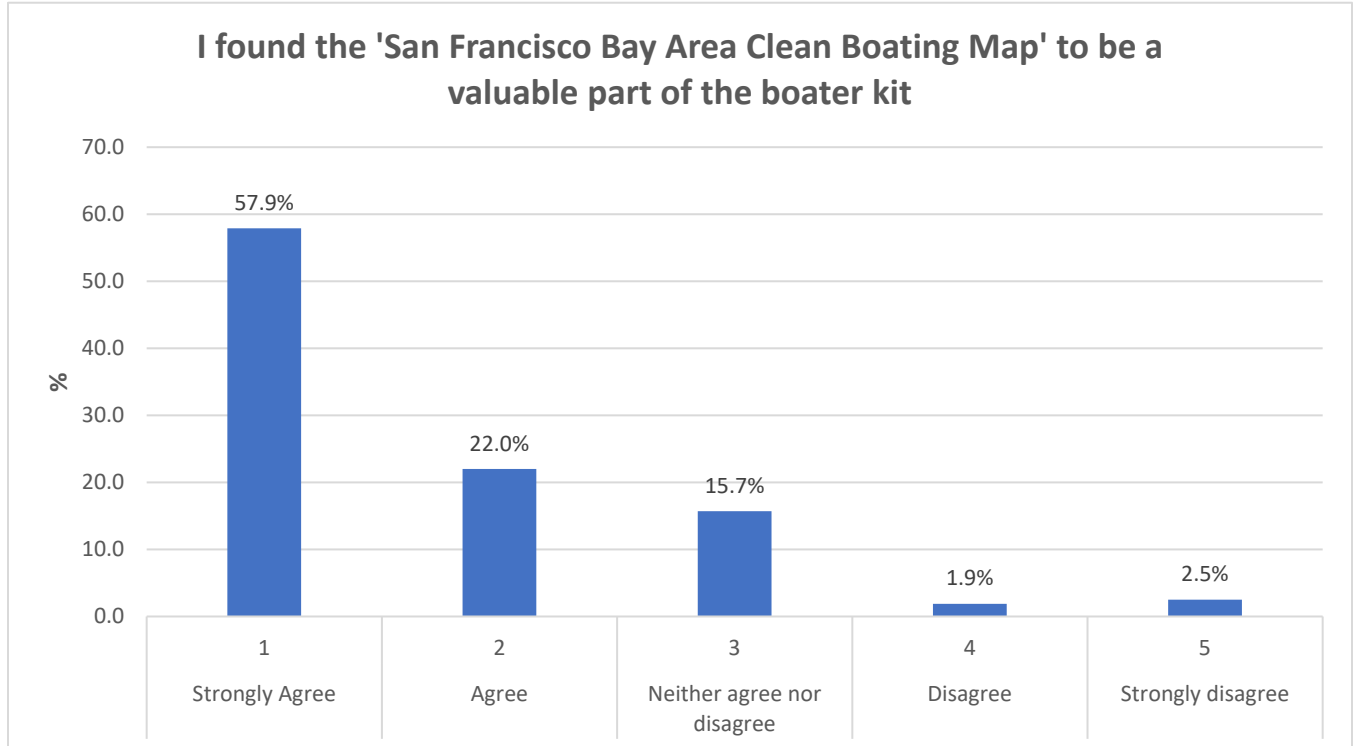


Northern California Boater Kit Specific Items

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



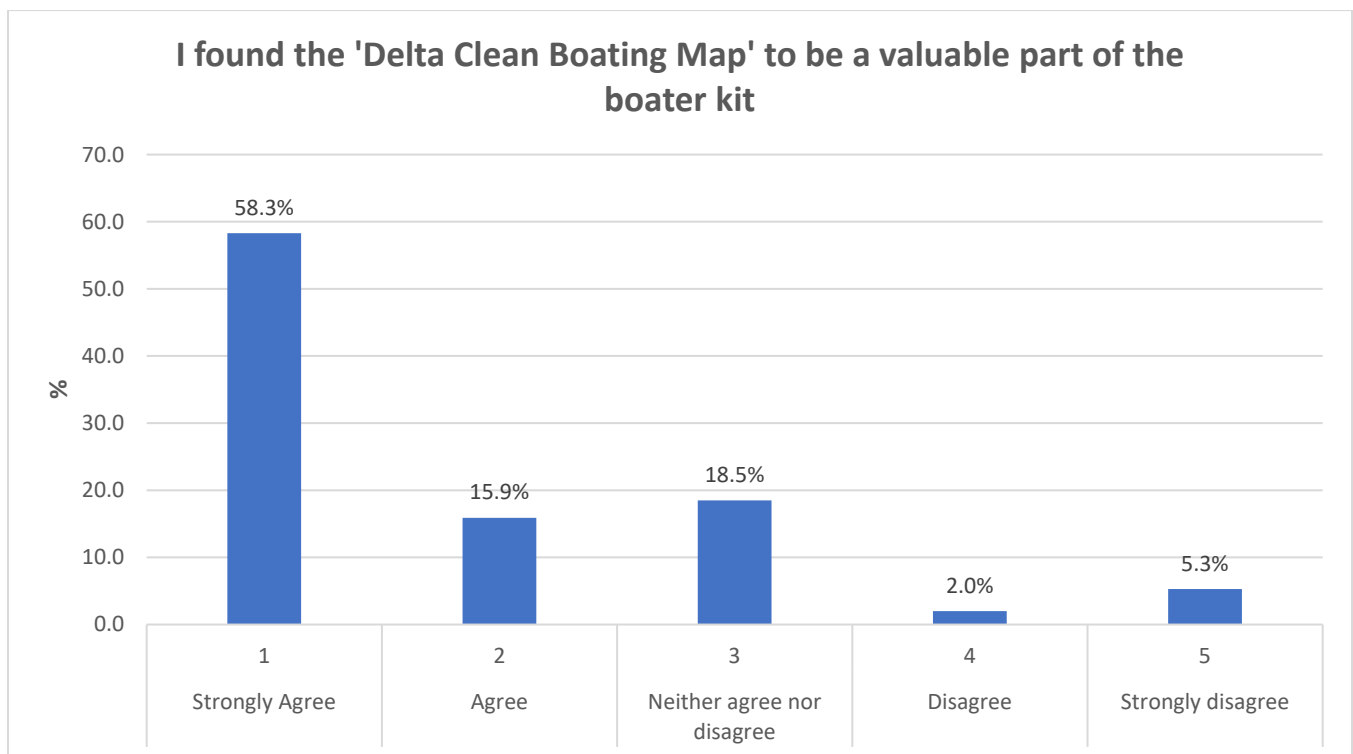
80% of the Northern California Boater Kit recipients found the *San Francisco Bay Area Clean Boating Map* to be a valuable component of the Kit. 16% of the boaters who received the Boater Kit neither agreed nor disagreed with the Bay Area Map being a valuable part of the Kit. 4.4% of the respondents did not find this publication to be valuable.



- **Delta Clean Boating Map**



74% (74.2%) of Northern California respondents found the *Delta Clean Boating Map* to be a valuable component of the Kit. 18% (18.5%) of the boaters who received the Boater Kit neither agreed nor disagreed with the Delta Map being a valuable part of the Kit. 7.3% of the Boater Kit recipients did not find the map to be a valuable component of the Kit.



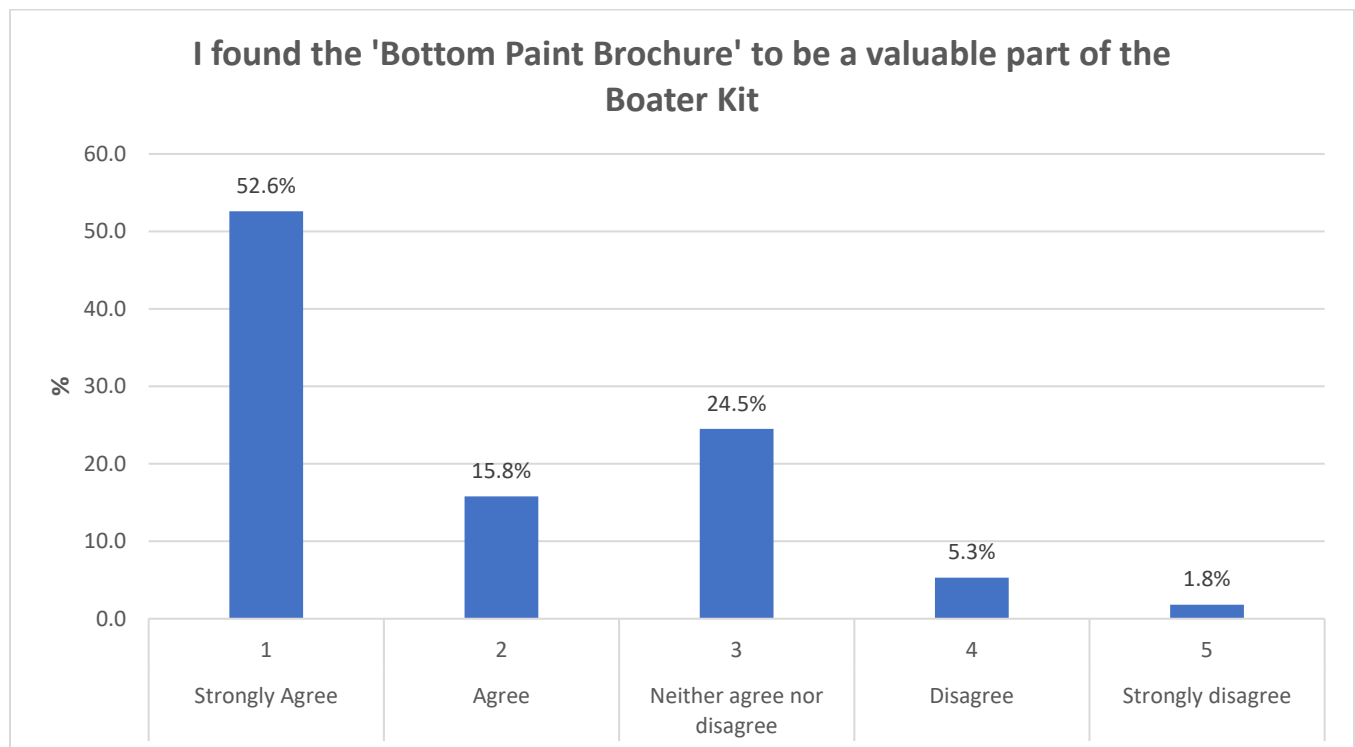
Southern California Boater Kit Specific Items

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



68% (68.4%) 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 24.5% of the Kit recipients did not have an opinion about the usefulness of this educational brochure. About 7% (7.1%) did not find this brochure to be a valuable component of the Boater Kit.

This publication is only included in the Southern California boater kits due to the dissolved copper Total Maximum Load impacting some waterbodies in that region.



The following Table shows a summary of the 2024 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	97.7	2.3	0
1	Oil Absorbent Pillow and Sheet	94.8	4.7	0.6
2	ABCs	92.3	7.5	0.3
3	Fuel Bibs	91.5	6.7	1.1
4	Environmental Boating Laws brochure	90.4	8.8	0.8
5	'Boater's Guide To Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water	86.6	10.8	2.7
6	When Nature Calls Brochure	83.2	13.4	1.8
7	Tidebooks	81.0	12.3	6.4
8	Electronic Flare Coupons	79.6	14.9	6.9

The eight common educational materials and pollution prevention tools included in both Northern and Southern California Boater Kits were considered valuable by 80% (79.6%) of the survey's participants. The oil absorbent pillow oil absorbent sheet, the ABCs of California Boating, the fuel Bib, the Environmental Boating Laws, and the "Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water," the fuel bib, and When Nature Calls brochure were the top five most valuable items (over 86%). The flare coupon and the Tidebooks were considered valuable items in the Kit by over 79% 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	San Francisco Bay Area Map	79.9	15.7	4.4
	Delta Map	74.2	18.5	7.3
Southern CA	Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California	68.4	24.5	7.1

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

- Thanks for the boater kit I think it goes a long way in educating boater's.
- Thank you for preparing and distributing the Boater Kit.
- Thanks for making this kit available to us. Thanks
- Great kit, thank you
- Thank you, great kit!
- The information in this kit is a life-saver, literally. And I learned a lot from the materials included.
- The tide book informs us and we let the boaters know about low tide at launch ramp. Absorbent fuel fill pads were a hit at fuel dock ! Everyone loves the boater kits.
- It's not only a great idea to give out the Boater Kit I show it to all my friends many of whom are boaters and not only do think you are doing a good job promoting this but many don't understand its importance. For instance I won't allow plastic single use bottles on the boat at all and I never now even go into the engine/ bilge without taking diapers and absorbing cloths. I use the placards as part of my Captains brief It's just a bunch of great disciplines which always promotes a good discussion. Same with my Vessel safety Check sticker and how I had to get it. Keep up the good work!
- While I think the info in the flyers is critical, I believe it may be too much for your average boater to pour over and may just be left unread/trashed. A more condensed version with pointers on where to find more info on specific topics could be more impactful
- Thank you for this Kit.

- When we pull up to fuel we have our fuel fill absorbent ready to be used, attendants are always surprised and pleased we take care. The boat kit is well received by us boaters
- Most of the items in the kit are very useful. Being in Southern California and only fishing freshwater with my boat the fuel absorbent bib will not be used as I've never seen any fuel pumps in lake marinas but next year I will go to the coast. But it's a great idea.
- Loved the booklet on ABCs of boating, I had my 4 grandsons read also. We all enjoy our wave runners.
- Love it thank you!
- This is upto date information and cutting edge products. I strongly recommend these products and information belong on board every size vessel.
- We have jet skis so we love the fueling sleeve.
- To give one I believe is a mistake, it should be a law to carry on a boat and have a pack of 5-10 absorbents and 5 bibs. Don't teach people how much trash you can dump out there. Pack it in pack it out. Stickers of horn blast, navigation, radio, msd rules/ instructions to put near those items I had used and very helpful on the boat I had. Thank you. Take care.
- I learned a lot from the individual who gave me the boater kit - as I had no idea about oil absorbent pillows or preventing oil from getting into the ocean. These topics like environmental laws in boating are things I like to be educated on - being a responsible boater is very important.
- Very thoughtful and useful kit with valuable information.
- Thank You
- All information was appreciated whether it was a review or new.
- I love the kits! They are very helpful ! I work at the East Ramp in Big Bear and the kits came in handy often.
- I like the bib for fueling
- Included in my stash of safety equipment for / on my Sea-Doo
- Great kit and full of useful information for boating.
- As a new boat owner, I appreciated all the resources provided in the kit.
- These kits are outstanding; not only are they informative and educational, but practical and handy, as well. Thank you.
- absorbent kit is very nice - hopefully I don't have to use it
- Thank you. I love my Boater Kit. Thank you for all you do
- For me the absorbents, fuel bib, SF map and the Delta map were the most valuable pieces of information
- It's a nice kit of supplies. I won't fully realize it's value unless I need to use some of the items.
- Very good information - as a new boater I learned a lot
- I find the Fuel Bib and oil pillow the most important part of the Kit. I use my fuel bib every time I put gas in my boat. I wish the kit came with two as after 6-months it gets worn out. I have 1 outboard on my boat and the pillow comes in handy when changing the oil.
- We as an organization are implementing the fuel bibs on our fuel docks as standard practice. Thank you, we love the kits!

- I believe every Boater should have this kit. Adding more coupons for other safety products would be appreciated too. Also, include a list of how to restock the items once used and how to properly dispose of them too once used.
- Great Information
- Thanks to your kit I was able to report an accidental oil spill and use my absorbent
- I have not used the items in the kit yet. But have them ready in my boat.
- I really appreciate the discount on my new led marine flare, a great addition to my boat, thanks
- The kit is a great way to protect ca water
- I didn't know about the fuel bub until i received one. Thx. Boaters should be strongly encouraged to have this kit on board.
- I have recommended the kit to others!
- We love it! Reminds us to buy more pads when and if we need them.
- Fuel bib was very appreciated and very useful. Everyone puts gas in a boat.
- The package was a GREAT idea and very helpful.
- I have found the fuel hose bib the most valuable part of the kit. Every time I fuel the boat I use it as y tanks tend to burp when there close to being filled up. The other critical part of the kit is the big oil Pillow, I was having Fuel Problems on the water and the first thing I grabbed was the oil pillow to contain any fuel that might drain from the Hoses, while trouble shooting my Fuel Problems.
- I used the pad and found a leak on the oil pan drain plug. little but it helped me find it
- I found the kit to be a great tool to create boating awareness in terms of safety and environmental stewardship.
- The oil absorbers were very handy
- Thank you. I was able to share the absorbents with a fellow boater at my marina when he had a spill
- Helps me understand laws for waste and fuel handling on or near our waterways
- I have a 2 stroke so the oil absorbents come n really handy when needed
- The kit brought me more awareness to the environmental requirements and recommendations of boating. Also brought safety to the forefront of my mind.
- Great initiative!
- i have added to my dinghy fuel can, thanks!
- NA
- I have used the pads in the past and it will work to clean up oil
- You are doing good work to remind boaters about good boating
- The fuel bib is great I use it every time I fill up my boat.
- I found your "kit" to be absolutely amazing!! I must say that I had never seen a fuel hose "bib" before. I think it's a fabulous item that should be sold and it's usage should be "pushed" at all fueling points. I knew about the oil absorbing "pillow" but, I had never heard of nor seen, the oil absorbing "blanket". I think this is another fabulous item. With the blanket you can get into tighter and cramped spaces easier than you can with the pillow. The only thing that I would add to these "kits" is one of those floating "styrofoam" keychains. You would be shocked at the number of people that have dropped their boat

ignition keys into the water, when they are fueling up their boat at the marina of which I reside at.

- The Boater kit is great to have and really serves as a reminder that we are in constant contact with nature and we must be clean about it.
- Very interesting and helpful. Thanks!
- I thought there was a lot of good information in the kit for all boaters new and experienced
- The kit engages the boater to use the oil pillow and the fuel bib do.
- The map and the Tides & Current booklets are fantastic. Thank you for that!
- Thank you. I love my boater kit, what a great way to educate the boating public about clean boating. Thank you!
- I use the absorbent bib with each fill up and placed the pillow near where oil might gather in bilge should a leak develop. At 71 with 50plus years of boating I am happy to learn and refocus my life to the water. I just received my cal boaters card and pray this makes a difference to new boaters and risk takers. We are in a self contained 40' motor yacht and generally cruise 8-10 knots.
- I appreciate the effort to have clean boating waterways, thank you.
- Thank you. The kit taught me a lot.
- It is a nice addition to have on the boat.
- more information on ecological environment YES, YES!
- Advise boaters to carry extra oil absorbent pads.
- Great kit, Thank you
- I LOVE the kit
- Every boater should have oil diapers and pillows to prevent pollution. Thank you
- I learned new information (ex reporting spills) and refresh my memory about other stuff
- Great kit and resources to keep oil, fuel, and sewage out of the water
- A orange flag in the kitchen would be nice
- I have known about the oil absorbent pillow but, I never knew that there was such a thing as the oil absorbent sheet... I think it's a fabulous idea because, you can really push the sheet into tight, hard to reach places, if you needed to... I also think that the fuel hose bib is another fabulous idea... I live within a marina and I witness fuel "dribbles" all the time from boaters fueling up at the marina gas pump... I think this is a great product to help in alleviating the fuel "dribbles" from running down the side of a boat and then into the Sacramento San Joaquin River Delta System water. Your kit is amazing!
- The 'Fuel Bib' is a great idea, and so are the absorbent sheets. The card is also great with tons of great information and important phone numbers.
- Thank you very much for this Boater Kit! I really appreciated the time your volunteers spent with me, going over the information and answering my questions. I am especially grateful because my husband and I are seniors. He is now disabled and I am his caregiver. I am undertaking to learn everything I can about our boat, the rules of good boating, safety and more. My husband is a master mariner and he taught me some things while he still could. Now it is up to me to learn as much as possible if we are to

continue any time on our beautiful California Delta waters. Thank you again! You are doing a wonderful service for us and everyone you speak to!

- Used the gas bib worked perfect
- Having the kit on hand means it will be used when needed.
- excellent information. for new and "old" boaters
- Have helped me understand how to make our waterways clear and clean
- I have a sailboat with a modern outboard engine and the fuel absorbent pillow is not very useful, Now that I have collected several over the years, I give it to my fellow boaters which have inboard engines.
- I shared the information with others too Thanks to your kit and your volunteers.
- This program deserves more money. How can funds for boat fuel tax be diverted into this program.... Also, I have yet to see oil absorbent pillows being handed out at busy lakes like Folsom Lake.
- The LED signal flare was still too expensive even with the discount coupon.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, this Survey demonstrated the 2024 California Boater Kit is considered a valuable educational tool by recipients. 97% of 2024 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 79.6% and 97.7% of respondents, depending on the item).
- Most items found in both regional Boater Kits (7 items: Oil Absorbent Pillow and Sheet, *ABCs of California Boating*, *Environmental Boating Laws*, *Boater's Guide to Keeping Pollutants Out of the Water*, the fuel bibs, and *When Nature Calls* brochure) were considered valuable by more than 83% of survey respondents. Additionally, the two items (the Electronic Flare coupon and Tidebooks) included in both regional Boater Kits received a valuable rating over 80%.
- The four most valued items were the oil absorbent pillow and sheet, followed by the *ABCs of Bating Law*, fuel bib, and *Environmental Boating Laws*. For the region-specific items included in Northern California Boater Kits, the San Francisco and Delta maps were considered valuable items (80% and 74.2% rate, respectively) and in Southern California the *Boater's Guide to Using Hull Paint in California* brochure with 68.4% valued rate.

Partners further recommend continuing to utilize an incentive in exchange for participation. As an attempt to further increase the response rate, the life jacket incentive has been mentioned directly in the Boater Kit Questionnaire since 2023 and in the emails sent to boaters who provided us with their email addresses. 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.

It is recommended to continue to conduct the Boater Kit Feedback Survey annually to acquire more significant input and increase data collection from Boater Kit recipients. This information assists Partners to have a better understanding of recipients' preferences and to identify which (if any) Kit items need to be removed, re-designed, or replaced with alternative educational materials.

References

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- 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](#)).