



Non-Motorized Boating Program 2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Non-Motorized Boating Project was one of seven strategic projects undertaken by the Marine Board as part of the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan. This project had five goals: Actively integrate non-motorized boater needs and participation into agency operations, increase outreach to, and communication with, all boater user groups, explore equitable and appropriate fees for non-motorized boaters, balance the needs of motorized and non-motorized boaters, and address facility issues to accommodate the needs of all boaters.

These goals were addressed with an external Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee, who in turn made recommendations for a Non-Motorized Boating Program that addressed each of these five goals as well as other imperatives identified by the Committee. The Marine Board received feedback on the program via public meetings and an online survey. Feedback from the survey and meetings were brought back to the external advisory committee for review.

The Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Board to move forward with a Non-Motorized Boating Program that includes elements to address access, safety, education and funding.

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INTRODUCTION

The Oregon State Marine Board is Oregon's Recreational Boating Agency. Chapter 830 of Oregon Revised Statutes establishes the authorities and responsibilities of the Oregon State Marine Board and also provides the Boating Safety Policy of the State of Oregon that reads, "It is the policy of this state to promote the safety for persons and property in and connected with the use, operation and equipment of boats and to promote uniformity of the laws relating thereto."(ORS 830.110) To carry out the Boating Safety Policy and other specific responsibilities of this chapter, the Board identified a mission statement for the agency, and a vision statement for recreational boating in Oregon.

Mission: "Serving Oregon's recreational boating public through education, enforcement, access, and environmental stewardship for a safe & enjoyable experience."

Vision: "A collaborative community providing opportunities for all boaters to safely and respectfully experience Oregon's waterways."

To carry out its statutory obligations, the Marine Board must serve all facets of the boating public in the four key areas identified in the mission in order to achieve the identified vision of providing opportunities for all boaters to safely and respectfully experience Oregon's waterways.

As an agency that does not receive general fund, the Marine Board obtains operating revenues from titling and registration of all motorized boats and all sailboats 12 feet and longer, marine fuel tax, and federal funds from the Sport Fish Recreation and Boating Trust Fund. Historically, the agency's focus has been to serve those that fund the agency; "User-Pay/ User-Benefit".

Recognizing a broader constituent base, and the need for all constituents to help fund the Marine Board's programs, the Board has attempted to register non-motorized boating users through legislation on at least two previous occasions, but has been unsuccessful. Many factors may have contributed to the failure of these bills, but while the Marine Board has focused on services to benefit registered boaters, these services have also benefited non-registered (primarily non-motorized) boaters. Non-motorized boaters use boating access facilities, including parking, launch ramps and restroom, and they benefit from boating safety patrols on the waterways. The Marine Board is petitioned and has passed numerous rules that benefit non-motorized boaters. Overall, non-motorized boaters have benefited from services that have been provided by motorized boaters.

The change that has occurred over the years has been the explosive growth of non-motorized boating. Activities that once had negligible impact on waterways and boating services, have now surpassed motorized boating for person-days on the water, and the growth continues to be exponential. Consequently, services to these boaters can no longer be considered ancillary or insignificant. The Marine Board has a responsibility to better understand the needs of this

growing user group, to identify how the Marine Board can better serve these boaters, and to determine how to fund current Marine Board work and future work that supports these activities.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2010, the Marine Board engaged a broad set of stakeholders and staff to develop a five-year strategic plan; the 2011 – 2016 Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) Strategic Plan. The objectives of the plan were to build upon the past accomplishments and success of the agency while responding to current and future changes in recreational boating and emerging environmental issues. It includes recommended goals and strategies for the agency to pursue over the five year period from 2011-2016.

The Non-Motorized Boating Project is one of seven strategic projects that were formed to complete the work identified in the strategic plan. The strategic plan addressed five specific strategies that impact non-motorized boaters:

- Actively integrate non-motorized boater needs and participation into agency operations
- Increase outreach to and communication with all boater user groups
- Explore equitable and appropriate fees for non-motorized boaters
- Balance the needs of motorized and non-motorized boaters
- Address facility issues to accommodate the needs of all boaters

These strategies defined the scope and became the core deliverables of the Non-Motorized Boating Project.

Objectives

The primary objective for the Non-Motorized Boating Project was to engage non-motorized boaters for the purpose of integrating non-motorized boater needs and participation into agency operations. It is important to note that the objective was the *process of engaging the non-motorized boating community*, not the deliverable that resulted.

Methods

Convening the Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee

The external Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee (Committee) was chosen by an application (Appendix A) process to best represent the different types of watercraft users, types of waterways, and broad geographic diversity of the members. The Committee was chartered to discuss the five strategy areas identified in the strategic plan and to provide recommendations to the agency and the Board.

Work Completed by the Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis (alternatively **SWOT matrix**) is a structured planning method used to evaluate the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** involved in a project or in a business venture.

- **Strengths:** characteristics of the business or project that give it an advantage over others
- **Weaknesses:** are characteristics that place the team at a disadvantage relative to others
- **Opportunities:** *external* elements that the project could exploit to its advantage
- **Threats:** *external* elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the business or project

A SWOT analysis can be carried out for a product, place or person. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieving that objective. Identification of SWOTs was important because it allowed the Committee to make informed decisions later in the planning process to identify strategies to achieve the objective.

Committee members were separated into two groups to conduct a SWOT analysis on each of the five identified goals and ideas. Each group identified ideas and then assigned a color coding as a result of their SWOT analysis.

The two groups were brought together to evaluate each group's SWOT analysis (Appendix B) to decide if the Committee should go forward with the idea (highlighted in green), not go forward with the idea (highlighted in red) or the idea needed further information to make a better determination (highlighted in yellow).

OSMB staff organized the ideas and provided additional input on those areas highlighted in yellow. Committee members as a group went back over the updated analysis, focusing on the weakness and threats columns, evaluating if the ideas could be carried forward to an Action Plan (Appendix C). As the Committee discussions continued, some ideas identified as 'red' or 'yellow' were able to be moved to 'green'.

The result of the SWOT analysis was a roadmap of a potential program, based on the five strategies.

National Survey

The Committee requested that the Marine Board provide comparison of state's mandatory education and permitting or registration of non-motorized boats. In response to the request, the

Marine Board conducted a nationwide non-motorized boating survey, regarding titling, permits, taxes, facilities, law enforcement, etc. A synopsis of the results is attached as Appendix D.

Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee Proposal

The external Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee met nine (9) times (see Appendix E for all meeting minutes) and through those discussions developed a proposal that addressed access, safety, education and funding.

Initial proposal:

ACCESS

- Address public vs. private right-of-way and access
- Address road access to water access
- Establish:
 - safe parking & security
 - garbage cans & restrooms
 - staging areas & ramps
- Increase water access in urban area
- Assist in creating whitewater parks
- Promote partnerships with federal & state agencies, municipalities, cities, etc.
- Promote waterway management partnerships
- Provide early involvement in facility development on waterways with fish ladders and dams to advocate for portage or float through opportunities
- Establish relationships with and support to existing clubs/ organizations

SAFETY

- Train marine officers regarding non-motorized boating equipment and boats
- Determine high use areas, trends, issues and target outreach for proactive management and facilities
- Re-evaluate the definition of 'Boat'... means every description of watercraft, including a seaplane on the water and not in flight, used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on the water, but does not include boathouses, floating homes, air mattresses, and beach and water toys or single inner tubes.

EDUCATION & INFORMATION

- Establish voluntary, not mandatory education
- Create education incentive program
- Provide classroom & on-line options
- Education to include, but not limited to:

- Nav. Rules, OR Law, etiquette, environmental stewardship, safety, waterway access (landowner rights), and sharing the water
- Develop and implement outreach programs to reach and inform casual recreationists
- Promote hands-on courses
- Provide grant opportunities for non-profits to provide education
- Encourage education & outreach to Liveries
 - Non-motorized boater checklist for rentals
- Create regulatory, safety and interpretive signage at various locations
- Provide information (maps) on access
- Address safety issues (high use areas, permanent hazards, public vs. private land, facilities, etc.
- Provide information on boating safety and education

NON-MOTORIZED BOATING USER-PAY/USER-BENEFIT PROGRAM

- Permit boats – No boat registration
- Create program similar to, and tied in with, Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Permit Program
- Permit all lengths of boats(as the current definition of a boat describes; does not include pool toys or tubers)
- Permit options: 1 week, one year & two year
- Permits are transferable from boat to boat
- Permits for liveries (similar to AIS permit fee structure-bulk permits)
- Permits for Outfitters & Guides (follow new guidelines)
 - Exemptions:
 - Children under the age of 16 when accompanied by adult
 - Marine events
 - Scenic waterways

The above proposal was unanimously agreed upon by the Committee. Later in the process, it became clear that a broader base of constituents was needed to be brought into the discussion and simply moving forward with the Committee's recommendations would not be sufficient. Understanding the diversity of issues impacting non-motorized boaters and identifying opportunities to meet those needs was essential to designing a program that served a broad spectrum of non-motorized boaters.

Timeline and Milestones

When the process began in November 2012, the initial timeline (Appendix F) for completion of the project was as follows: provide a proposal to the Board by October 2013, and if approved to move forward, drafting a legislative concept by spring of 2014. Director Brewen addressed the

Committee after hearing concerns voiced by some of the members regarding the timeline. Discussion ensued between staff and the Committee. It was agreed that the process needed to slow down and involve more stakeholders in the process to inform, educate, and get opinions on the non-motorized boating project and process. It was agreed upon to have OSMB staff and a Committee member meet with clubs/organizations around the state to receive feedback and input regarding non-motorized boating in Oregon. In areas where there were no formal clubs or organizations, more of an ‘open house’ forum was advised. Committee members also expressed concern about losing momentum in the process, but all agreed that the process needed to slow down. It was agreed to complete all clubs/organizations meetings within six months, beginning July 2013.

Based on the determination and discussions by the Committee, the timeline (Appendix G) was changed to the following: provide a proposal to the Board at the June 2015 meeting, and if approved draft legislative concept by fall of 2015. The project proposal was put on hold until further input had been gathered through the club/organization meetings. Committee members advised OSMB staff on key topics to present at the clubs/organizations or during the ‘open house’.

OSMB staff began to reach out to non-motorized boater clubs and community members in Tillamook, Newport and Corvallis.

Only three meetings were conducted. OSMB and the Committee members realized the importance of needing more boating community involvement to understand non-motorized boating stakeholder needs before proposing any recommendations to the Board. Slowing the process allowed the agency sufficient time to engage the boating public in a meaningful and impactful way. A Timeline and Milestones graphic (see Appendix H) was presented at the meetings to show the participants the process and timeline the agency was using. This included when OSMB staff would provide a recommendation to the Board about whether to move forward with a Non-Motorized Boating Program, and the timeline to propose a bill to the legislature. This timeline helped to address concerns that OSMB was on a fast track to push forward a fee with very little public engagement.

Listening Sessions

Through a series of public listening sessions held in June and again from September through November 2014, and via a parallel on-line survey, (see Appendix I for participation statistics) members of the public were invited and encouraged to bring their voices to the discussion. The Listening Sessions served three purposes: 1) inform the public about OSMB’s Mission and strategic goals; 2) hear from non-motorized boaters about their needs and interests with respect to access/facilities, boating safety and education; and 3) receive feedback regarding the Committee’s proposal on access, safety, education and a user-pay/user- benefit program.

At each session a Participant Input Sheet was included in the materials packet (Appendix H). The input sheet replicated the questions asked during the session. This provided an additional method for participants to contribute to the conversation, either to add to the dialogue or for those who felt more comfortable writing down their thoughts rather than speaking within the group discussions. The input sheet also asked participants to rate their experience during the session. On a scale of 1-5, the participants were able to evaluate how useful the session was in meeting the objectives to inform and engage the participants.

At the request of the Committee, OSMB hired outside consultants to assist with the listening session format. The design of the sessions was meant to engage community members in an interactive discussion about their needs and values as non-motorized boaters, and their thoughts about a user-pay/user-benefit program specifically for non-motorized boaters. The consultants helped OSMB staff kick off the process by facilitating the first two meetings (in Portland and Medford), and assisted in writing and analyzing the first round of inputs.

Information was collected through facilitated small group discussions and a written survey handed out at the end of the meeting. During the second set of meetings, participants were handed a document outlining the common themes identified for each topic from the June public listening sessions and the on-line survey (Appendix J).

Meeting Format

The listening sessions were divided into three sections:

1. Agency background, policy and direction
2. Small group discussions around themes
 - a. Access
 - b. Safety
 - c. Education
3. Group discussion of user-pay/user-benefit fee structure

Meeting Content

1. Agency background, policy and direction

Director Brewen briefed participants of the agency mission, organizational structure and services; its Strategic Plan (2011); Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee efforts (2012-2013); and an overall timeline and process for community engagement (2014-2015). This was followed by a brief question and answer session to clarify the information presented.

OSMB emphasized the agency's desire to engage the community in a new way thus understanding what services and benefits its constituency values, and to hear input on how to pay for possible desired services. Some members of the Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee attended the meetings and shared their thoughts on why it is important for the non-

motorized boating community to be involved in communicating their needs and values related to a Non-Motorized Boating Program.

2. Small group discussions around themes

Dependent on the group size, either the meeting participants broke into small groups, rotating between stations, or stayed in one group to discuss their values and needs around the three components of OSMB's Mission: Access, Safety and Education. Posters of key topic areas and the Committees proposal (Appendix K) were placed for participants to review and make comments. The discussions were led by a facilitator and participant responses were recorded on charts by a supporting scribe.

Open-ended, guiding questions were created to prompt dialogue:

Access: How are you entering the water? What infrastructure/facilities are most needed and/or desired by your user group? Are additional access points needed or desired? What are the impediments to your use at current facilities?

Safety: What are the most important issues of safety concerning non-motorized boaters for access, in-water activity, facilities and infrastructure?

Education and Information: What are the best tools and delivery mechanisms for educating the general public and your user group about boater safety, rules and regulations? Is there any additional information that OSMB should provide to the public?

3. Discussion around User-Pay/User-Benefit Program

Having discussed specifics related to non-motorized boater needs, participants were asked to consider a user-pay/user-benefit program as a means to support non-motorized boater uses and needs (see Appendix L for all comments). This was the beginning of a dialogue to help OSMB understand if non-motorized boaters are interested in a program and what a reasonable fee structure might look like. A poster (Appendix K) listing program criteria developed by the Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee was used to prompt participants.

Web Survey (June 2014 - November 2014)

Running concurrent with the listening sessions, an on-line survey was posted on the Marine Board's website. This allowed the boating public to provide feedback in writing on the same questions asked during the listening sessions – about their values around access, safety and education, and about their opinions with regards to a Non-Motorized Boating User-Pay/User-Benefit Program. The website included background information in the form of presentation materials from the listening sessions and a non-motorized boater outreach video which played at the beginning of the Director's presentation at each meeting. The survey was made available on May 29, 2014 and remained open through the duration of all of the listening sessions. The survey was removed from the webpage on November 25, 2014. The link to the survey was

included on listening session materials, via the OSMB ‘Blog’ and Facebook page, and on pamphlets distributed to several user groups. The raw data can be reviewed in Appendix M.

Conclusion

Many of the participants, regardless of their opinion about whether the OSMB should develop a Non-Motorized Boating Program, acknowledged, via the written evaluations and in passing at the listening sessions, the positive step Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB) took by coming to their communities to understand their interests and to engage with them early on in a discussion about a potential user-pay/user-benefit program. A Summary of Responses can be reviewed in Appendix N.

There are a number of maxims that various authors have posed regarding communication, such as “seek first to understand, and then be understood¹”, and “people don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care²”. In OSMB’s experience, these maxims hold true. Going into the meetings with an open mind and desire to understand the boater’s needs and suggestions was critical, rather than approaching the meeting to “sell” a product.

Many participants suggested that IF the OSMB is to develop a Non-Motorized Boating Program, it needs to develop a clear mechanism for developing, tracking, monitoring and reporting on this program so that the public can clearly see and understand the link from ‘user-pay’ to ‘user-benefit’.

RESULTS

The Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee reviewed all of the public comments received. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Board to move forward with a non-motorized boating program that includes elements to address access, safety, education and funding.

Below is the proposal, created by the Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee based on public comments during the 13 public meetings and online comments. The Program revolves around four main topics; access, education, safety and a fee program:

Complete a 6-year Plan addressing non-motorized boating and the following:

Access:

- Identify Public vs. private right-of-way and access
 - Examples: safe parking, security, access at bridge abutments, and private property access
- Develop access to minimize user conflict

¹ <https://www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits-habit5.php>

² Theodore Roosevelt

- Examples: staging areas and ramps
- Ensure funding for maintenance of facilities
 - Example: garbage cans and restrooms
- Increase water access in urban area
- Assist in creating whitewater parks
- Promote partnerships with federal & state agencies, municipalities, cities, etc.
 - Waterway management partnerships
 - Early involvement in facility development on waterways such as fish ladders and dams to advocate for portage or float through opportunities
 - Establish relationships with and support to existing clubs/organizations (including national non-governmental organizations)

Develop and implement an educational phase-in program and outreach programs to reach and inform casual recreationists, regarding the following:

Education:

- Build a voluntary education program
- Provide an education incentive program (\$ off of permit cost)
- Develop education program based on environment of activity
 - Include, but not limited to:
 - Navigation rules, OR Law, etiquette, environmental stewardship, safety, waterway access (landowner rights), what to know about specific conditions (i.e. river, downtown, experience levels, etc.)
- Offer and promote: classroom, on-line, and local club/stores hands-on courses
- Create a grant program for non-profits to provide education
- Outreach and partner with liveries
 - Create a paddler safety checklist similar to the watercraft safety checklist for liveries
- Create signage at various locations regarding regulatory, safety and interpretive information

Safety:

- Fund and train Marine Patrol for non-motorized boating
- Determine high use areas, trends, issues and target outreach for proactive management and facilities
- Change the 'Boat' definition for safety reasons:
 - Current definition: "means every description of watercraft, including a seaplane on the water and not in flight, used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on the water, but does not include boathouses, floating homes, air mattresses, beach and water toys or single inner tubes."
 - Committee changes: "means every description of watercraft, including a seaplane on the water and not in flight, used or capable of being used as a means of transportation

on the water and not in a designated swim area, but does not include boathouses and floating homes.” DELETE: air mattresses, beach and water toys or single inner tubes.

- Incorporate the following safety issues into the 6-year Plan: high use areas, water hazards, public vs. private land, facilities, etc.

User-Pay/User-Benefit Program:

- Offer a Permit for boats
- Tie in with Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Permit Program
- Permit all lengths of boats
- Transferable from boat to boat
- Create permit options
- Create permits for liveries (similar to AIS permit fee structure-bulk permits)
- Create permits for Outfitters & Guides (following new guidelines)
- Include Exemptions for certain groups and waterways
- By the end of the meeting, the Committee decided on three possible scenario’s and recommended that the Marine Board complete a cost/benefit (scenarios of what revenue would buy) to the following possible fee structures:
 - \$10 - \$12 - \$15 biannually, or
 - \$10 - \$15 - \$20 biannually (without incentives starting out on #1 & #2), or
 - Have the administration come up with another scenario that would allow the Marine Board to successfully implement its 25 year plan; whatever fee structure is decided upon, it would be a biannual fee.
 - The Committee wants to make sure the fee is not too low that it just supports administrative costs and doesn’t want the fee to be too much that people can’t afford. It’s important to the Committee to do it right.

RECOMMENDATION

The Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Board to move forward with a Non-Motorized Boating Program that includes elements to address access, safety, education and funding.

Further details of the Program were discussed by the Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee and will be included into Phase II, if the Board approves to move forward with Legislative concept for the 2017-2019 biennium.

Phase II will begin in 2015-2016 and consist of building a new Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee to create a Program for Legislative Concept Development in 2017. The Program will then be submitted for Legislature approval.

This report is approved by the Non-Motorized Boating Advisory Committee (NMBAC) and submitted by MariAnn McKenzie, the Non-Motorized Boating Project Manager on behalf of the NMBAC.