

Boating Policy

SBC LTER has a small boat, *RV Kelpfish*, a 22' Radon that is available for use by certified SBC graduate students and other researchers. We also use the fleet of small boats maintained by UCSB's Marine Operations program on a recharge basis.

The Small Boating Committee consists of the Launchmaster (Clint Nelson), 1 researcher, and 1 graduate student. Presently (Feb 2019-Feb 2022) the committee is:

- Clint Nelson (Launchmaster, Unit Dive Safety Officer)
- Robert Miller (PI)
- Joey Peters (Graduate student)

SBC LTER SMALL BOATING POLICY (last updated Feb 2019)

I. GOVERNANCE

A. Small Boat Committee will:

1. Review small boat procedures at least once a year, and at any other times as required by complaints or operational problems or changes in the operating conditions.
2. Grant permission for boat use to individuals under the provisions of Section II. This group may also pass judgment on requests for waiver of requirements in Section II, and approve such requests if the person has had equivalent experience.
3. Be notified of all new certifications for boat use and any changes made to the boating regulations

B. Clint Nelson will serve as SBC Launchmaster and be in control of day-to-day operations originating at the UCSB Marine Lab. The SBC Launchmaster will:

1. Evaluate prospective boat operators as specified in Section II.
2. Have the authority cancel trips if he deems conditions are unsafe.
3. Have the authority to suspend, until reviewed by the Small Boat Committee, boat use privileges of individuals who disregard these regulations or if the SBC Launchmaster otherwise strongly suspects of unsafe boating practices.
4. Oversee the inspection of safety equipment. (Section V-B).
5. Maintain all itinerary forms on file for one month unless an incident occurs.
6. Have the authority to authorize boat use beyond the geographical constraints with the approval of the Small Boat Committee.

II. OPERATOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR POWER BOATS

A. The operator/captain will have the following minimal qualifications for coastal use (i.e. within 5 miles of the coast):

1. Completion of a small boat handling class from the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Power Squadron, California Boating and Safety Certification, or approved equivalent.
2. Have demonstrated to the SBC Launchmaster that (s)he is proficient in all aspects of safe small boat operations including:
 - a. Preparing the boat for use, which includes going through the boat's check list and making sure that all required safety and operational features of the boat are onboard in proper working condition and shore contacts have been notified.
 - b. Towing the boat and trailer behind a vehicle in both forward and reverse.
 - c. Launching and retrieving the boat from both a launch ramp and a hoist.
 - d. Operating the boat in close quarters, in choppy seas, and in kelp as required.
 - e. Use of the compass, radio, cell phone, GPS, Radar, and other navigational gear.

- f. Emergency response procedures,
 - f. Anchoring techniques, which include properly setting the anchor in an acceptable depth (no greater than 60 ft unless prior approval by the launchmaster), providing a minimum of 5:1 scope, and checking the anchor at the start of every dive.
 - g. Performing minor safety-related maintenance on any type of vessel that is to be used.
 - h. Towing another boat if required.
 - i. Possessing an understanding of basic boat traffic regulations
 - 3. Have current CPR, First Aid and Oxygen Administration training.
 - 4. Must have completed a minimum of 12 trips under the direct supervision of an approved captain, where they have been the primary operator.
- B. The operator of any trips into the open waters (beyond 5 miles of the coast) of the Santa Barbara Channel should have the following additional qualifications.
- 1. At least eighteen (18) round trips into the open waters with a qualified operator, during which (s)he participated in the piloting of the boat.
 - 2. Have demonstrated to the SBC Launchmaster that (s)he:
 - a. Can navigate to and from the Islands.
 - b. Is familiar with Island coastline.
 - c. Can find safe anchorage.
 - d. Knows where the UCSB Field Station is located on Santa Cruz Island.
 - e. Can handle the boat in rough seas.
 - f. Can secure the boat for running in rough seas.
 - g. Has been prudent and skillful in past boat operations.
 - h. Demonstrated knowledge of the weather conditions that warrant canceling or aborting a boat trip.
 - i. Proficient in Navigation with Radar in low visibility situations and knowledge of shipping channel locations
- C. The Small Boat Committee will be notified of all new certifications for boat use and any changes made to the boating regulations.

III. OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND BOATING REGULATIONS FOR POWER BOATS

- A. The operator/captain is responsible for the equipment and the safety of the persons on board and shall comply with all the rules and regulations.
- 1. Before the trip, the operator will complete an itinerary and checklist (Form 1A). Included in this form are: a passenger manifest, destination and time of return, identified shore contact, equipment check, and the latest Coast Guard weather forecast for the area to be visited.
 - 2. The operator will observe the following geographical constraints on boat use:
 - a. All powerboats are limited to local use (launching from Santa Barbara, Goleta, Gaviota, Ventura or Channel Islands harbor).
 - b. The SBC Launchmaster may grant permission for use of boats outside the Santa Barbara Channel. Operators shall demonstrate the need for such use and knowledge of the coastline and problems which may be encountered in that area. Approval may be granted only after completing the Geographical Constraints Waiver (Form 3).
- B. Offshore Marine use (beyond 5 miles of the coast)
- 1. Requires vessel operators be Island certified.
 - 2. Restricted to the Santa Barbara Channel (i.e. waters south of Pt. Conception and the north sides of Santa Cruz and Anacapa Islands).
 - 3. Use of SBC vessels beyond the above geographical limits requires written permission from the SBC Launchmaster. Operators wishing to travel outside of the Santa Barbara Channel must demonstrate the need for such use and knowledge of the coastline and

problems that may be encountered in the area of proposed travel. Approval may be granted only after completing the Geographical Constraints Waiver (Form 3).

- C. The operator shall comply with the following rules regarding weather:
 - 1. Sources of information:
 - a. National Weather Service broadcasts (162.52 MHz).
 - b. U.S. Coast Guard, Harbormaster, local broadcasts, private weather services.
 - 2. When winds greater than 15 knots are predicted for the area of operation, extra caution in the form of frequent re-evaluation of trip conditions shall be exercised. Trips (other than those in protected bays) shall be canceled due to weather if:
 - a. winds greater than 20 knots and wind chop greater than 3' are predicted for the area to be visited. Primary source of information will be Coast Guard broadcasts.
 - b. small craft advisories are posted for the area to be visited.
 - 3. Clearance from the launch master is required before launching a vessel when small craft advisories are posted for the area to be visited.
- D. A minimum of two people will be on board for all trips. The captain shall observe the posted maximum boat load limits set by the SBC Launchmaster and approved by the MAC and Small Boat Committee (Appendix 1).
- E. Life jackets shall be worn by the operator and all persons on board if there are frequent whitecaps and the wind chop is greater than 3' or if the boat is close to the surf-zone.
- F. Vessel use is restricted to daylight hours unless pre-approved by the launch master.
- G. The operator will follow the following communications procedures for all operations:
 - 1. Before departing, the operator will check to see that all electronic communication equipment is fully operational. The trip shall be aborted if the VHF radio or cellular phone is not operational.
 - 2. If the boat is going to be more than 1 hour past the original ETA, the operator/captain must call the shore contact person and advise them of a new ETA. After 1 hour from the original ETA, the designated shore contact person must attempt to contact the vessel. If the designated shore contact does not hear from the boat within hour of the original ETA, the Coast Guard will be notified. The responsibilities of the shore contact person are in the Department Boating Policy Terms and Conditions (Form 1B).
 - 3. If the trip is delayed during transit, or plans are changed, notification should be given to the shore contact person immediately.
- H. For operations not originating at UCSB, it is the operator/captains responsibility to notify the shore contact person of launch plans, return time and any changes.
- I. The operator will comply with the following boating restrictions.
 - 1. Recreational activities (e.g., surfing, water skiing, etc.) from departmental boats are prohibited at all times. Violators will be suspended from all boating activities until a review by the MAC.
 - 2. Use of private boats for UCSB research requires filing a signed Release and Indemnity Agreement (Form 2A).
 - 3. Use of private vehicles to tow an SBC-LTER boat requires prior written permission by the Launchmaster – any such vehicle must meet all towing safety standards.
 - 4. Boats cannot be used for the purpose of taxiing people to and from field sites requiring pickup on an alternate day.
- J. Captains will keep skills current by acting as captain of the Kelpfish or other UCSB vessel at least once a year and by attending the annual EEMB boating refresher seminar otherwise another checkout or a refresher trip with a certified active captain may be required

K. In order to be a certified captain an individual must complete the following forms and return them to the SBC LTER launch master.

1. Form 1B – Boating Policy Terms and Conditions
2. Form 1C – Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement
3. California Small Boating Safety Course Certification proof is also needed

IV. SAFETY GEAR, SPARE PARTS AND TOOLS

A. The following safety gear will be carried aboard all power boats:

1. A marine radio and a cellular phone.
2. Compass.
3. One life jacket for each person aboard.
4. Safety ring and line.
5. Fire extinguisher.
6. A boat hook.
7. First aid kit.
8. Visual display devices per Coast Guard regulations.
9. Oxygen kit if diving.
10. Dive flag if diving.
11. Radar reflector (used during limited visibility and emergencies).
12. 50' Tow Rope
13. Hand bilge pump
14. EPIRB
15. Air Horn or sounding device

B. Each power boat shall carry a tool kit containing the following tools and spare parts.

1. Slip-joint pliers, cutters, hammer.
2. Phillips and standard screwdrivers.
3. WD 40.
4. Spare:
 - a. fuses
 - b. propeller, washer, nut, and cotter pin, propeller wrench.
 - c. electrical tape
 - d. zip-ties
 - e. hose clamps