

LAKE BERRYESSA BOATER OUTREACH PROGRAM SUMMER 2021



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PROGRAM FUNDING



Program Funding: Solano County Water Agency, Napa County, Solano County and Cities of Vallejo, Benicia, Fairfield, Suisun City, Rio Vista and Vacaville, Napa County Flood Control & Water Conservation District, CalRecycle

Program Supplies: Napa County, Solano County and California State Parks/California Coastal Commission

INTRODUCTION

The Lake Berryessa Boater Outreach Program focuses on boater education and oil absorbent use at Lake Berryessa. This program is overseen by the Solano Resource Conservation District. Lake Berryessa is a drinking water source for 500,000 people in Solano County, an important water resource for agricultural irrigation and the lake's pristine water is used for local businesses such as Jelly Belly and Anheuser-Busch. This report will summarize the achievements of the program for the 2021 season, beginning in April and concluding in early September. Lake Berryessa Boater Outreach interns conducted educational surveys with boaters and engaged the public in one-on-one discussions about clean boating practices. Surveys were completed primarily at the three busiest concessions: Markley Cove, Steele Canyon, and Capell Cove. At the end of the season surveys were distributed at Pleasure Cove and Putah Canyon. The survey data collected was managed and summarized weekly by the interns for the Lake Berryessa Watershed Partnership.

During the 2021 season the program maintained public health guidelines from the previous year: wearing masks, taking individual vehicles, and frequent hand sanitizing. By mid-June, when the team was fully vaccinated, some requirements were lifted. The only season-long impact was the inability to provide recreator surveys at Oak Shores, and Bilgee's conspicuous absence at the lake.

BOATER EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Boater outreach interns conducted surveys with boaters to educate them about proper oil absorbent use and disposal. In addition, boaters learned that Lake Berryessa is a drinking water source that needs to be protected.



Photo 1: Rosalie Julius pointing out oil absorbent exchange canisters at Steele Canyon.

BOATER KITS AND PREMIUMS

Boaters who completed a survey were able to collect their free 2021 boating kit. In addition to containing an oil absorbent pillow and oil absorbent sheet, the 2021 Boater Kit contained a fueling bib, \$15 off coupon for West Marine, 20% off LED Flare coupon, and a 2021 Tide Book. Every piece of packaging in the kit is utilized as a space for educational messaging about oil absorbents and proper disposal.

At the end of the survey, boaters are encouraged to install a bilge pad immediately, and are incentivized by receiving an additional free premium of their choice. The installing boaters can choose between a ski flag, metal canteen water bottle, or a kid's size Lake Berryessa T-shirt. The most popular choice of premium was the orange ski flag.



Photo 2: Family receiving a kid's T-shirt for installing a bilge pad on the Fourth of July.

BOATER SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Each boater was asked for their zip code and city of residence. Figure 1 shows the distribution of boaters surveyed who came from Solano County and Napa County. Of the boaters surveyed, 28% were from Solano County, and 11% were from Napa County. The remaining 61% came from outside of Solano and Napa Counties.

Solano County Boaters

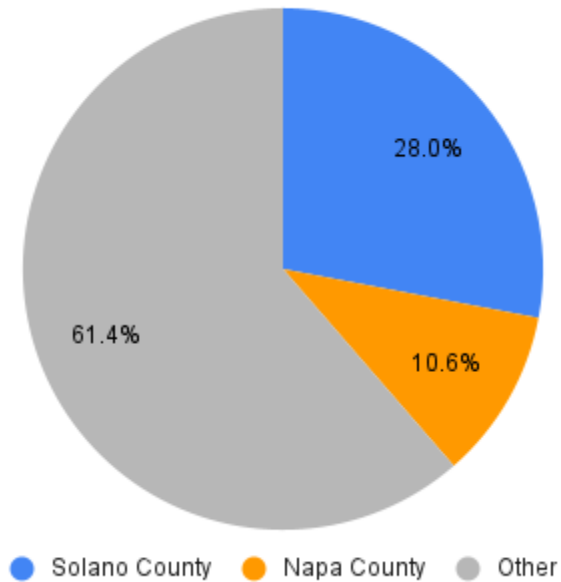


Figure 1: Summer 2021 Lake Berryessa boaters by county of residence

Of the Solano County boaters surveyed, the majority of boaters came from Vacaville (42%), with Fairfield second (22%), and Vallejo third (15%), as shown in Figure 2.

Solano County Boaters

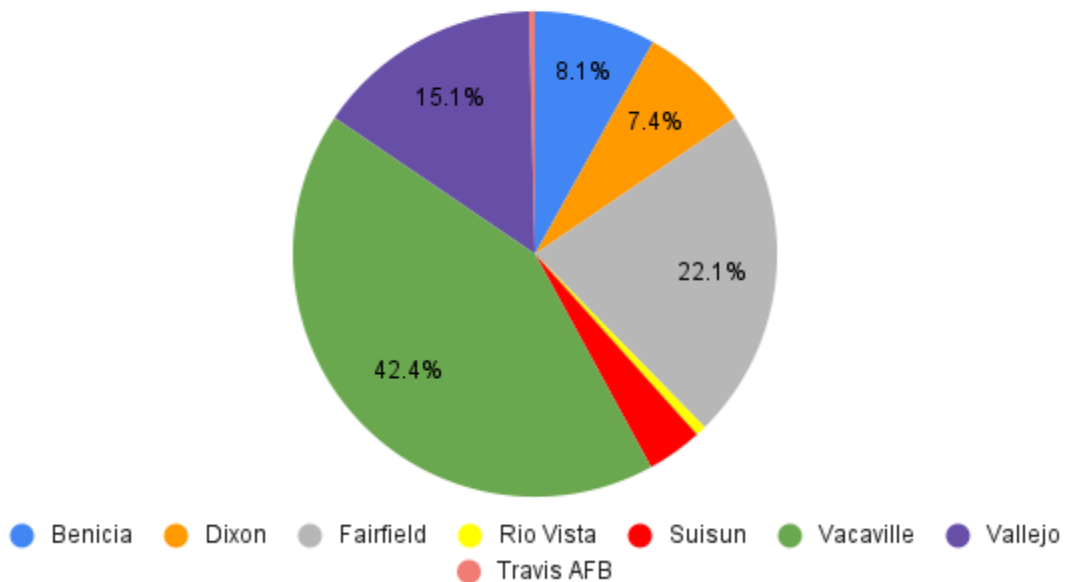


Figure 2: Distribution of boaters surveyed by cities in Solano County

Of the Napa County boaters surveyed, the vast majority of 81% of boaters came from the City of Napa, followed by American Canyon in second (15%).

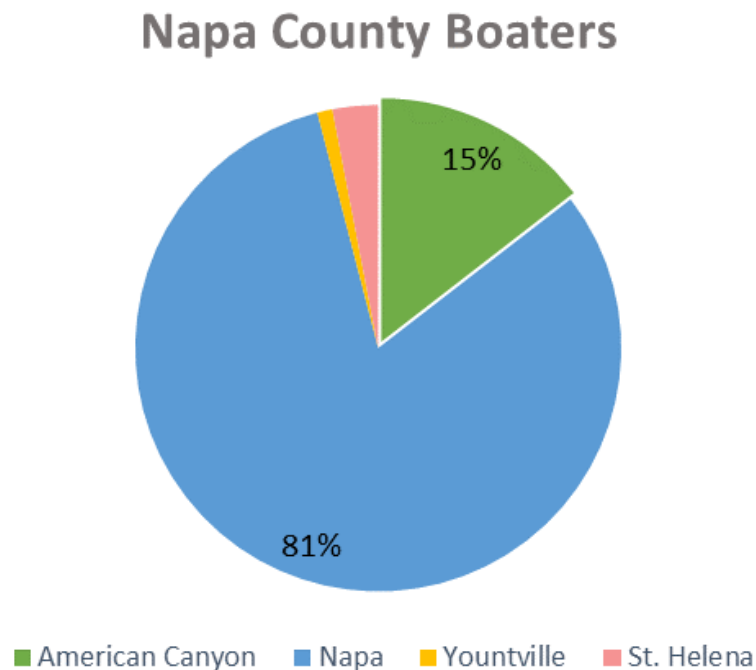


Figure 3: Distribution of boaters surveyed by cities in Napa County

This year, 59% of boaters responded “yes” when asked if they think Lake Berryessa is a drinking water source, compared to 62% from the previous year. This is the lowest percentage of boaters who were aware of Lake Berryessa as a drinking water source since the beginning of our data collection in 2012. The overall trend of decreasing awareness over the past five years could be correlated with the increasing number of non-local boaters.

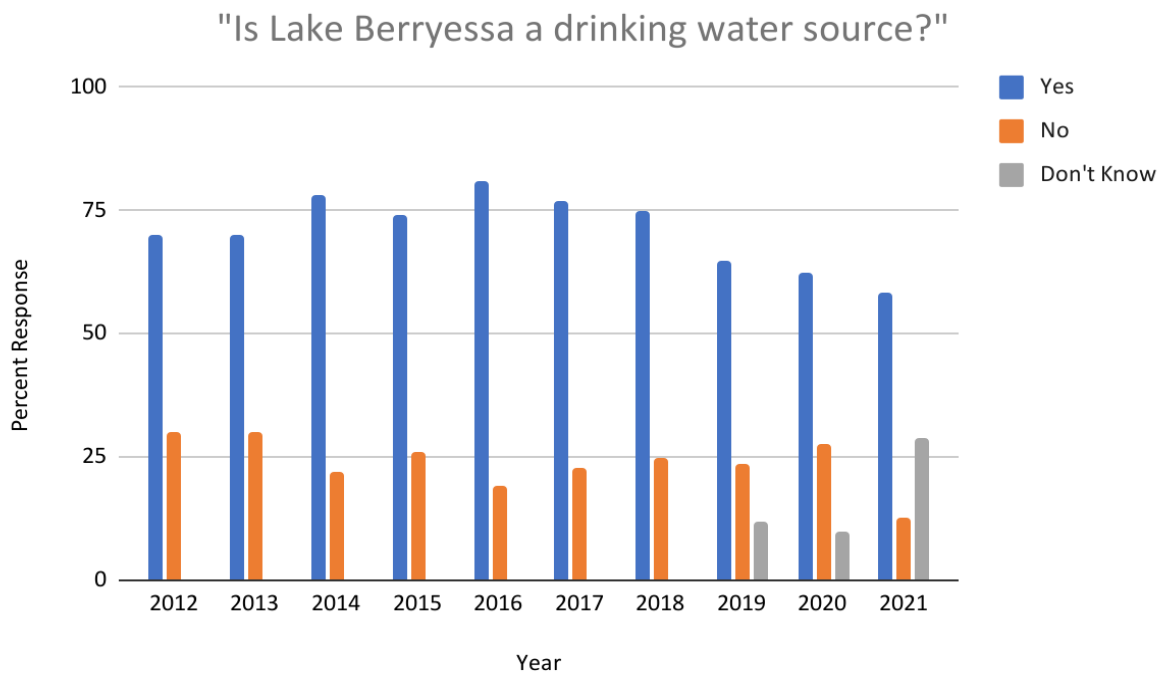


Figure 4: "Do you think Lake Berryessa is a drinking water source" question chart over the last decade

Boaters were asked whether they had ever used oil absorbent pillows in their bilge compartments. Of those surveyed, only 43% of boaters had used an oil absorbent pillow in the past, as shown in Figure 5.

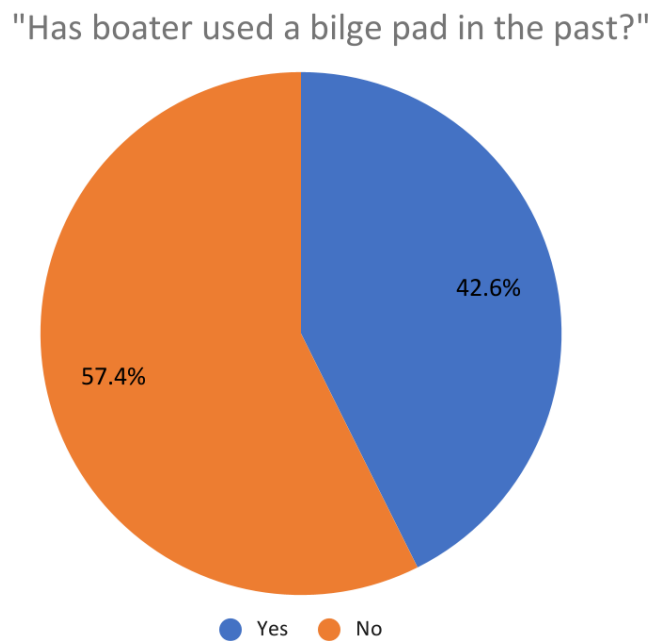


Figure 5: Percentage of boaters who had used an oil absorbent pillow in the past

RECREATOR EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

The ability to conduct recreator surveys continued to be hindered this year by COVID-19 related regulations. Unfortunately, no recreator education data could be collected because of these restrictions in place.

COMMUNITY CLEANUP EVENTS

Solano RCD, along with support from the Bureau of Reclamation, coordinated Coastal Cleanup Day. Coastal Cleanup Day took place on September 18, 2021. Eighty-eight volunteers attended and 2,472 pounds of garbage and 20 pounds of recyclables were collected from the shoreline. Volunteers gathered under Pope Creek Bridge, Steele Canyon and Markley Cove. All three sites provided lunch following the cleanup event. The event did not take place in 2020 due to COVID-19. The 2021 cleanup brought a higher volunteer turnout and larger quantity of trash collected than in the 2019 cleanup event. The next event, World Environment Day, is tentatively scheduled for June 4, 2022.

CONCLUSION

The 2021 Lake Berryessa Boater Outreach program surpassed its goal of completing more than the number of surveys completed in 2019. In total, interns educated 1,811 boaters through 970 surveys this boating season. Informing eligible boaters and jet skiers about the actions they can take to protect water quality, interns motivated 261 boaters to install bilge pads on the spot. In total, interns distributed 1,469 bilge pads this season. Through one-on-one educational surveys, intensive boater education on clean boating practices, and installing oil absorbents the work completed this summer has furthered the mission to keep Lake Berryessa one of the cleanest sources of drinking water in California.

PROGRAM TOTALS

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
# of interns	2	6	6	14	12	16	3	2	3	3
Total boater surveys	722	1568	1670	1195	1210	1115	825	878	391	970
Total recreator surveys	109	325	300	392	265	224	107	86	0	0
Oil absorbents distributed at exchange stations	832	646	521	653	1100	606	822	778	257	499
Install rate*	45%	51%	50%	57%	50%	41%	48%	58%	28%	37%

Table 1: Outreach program achievements by year (install rates based on compatible boats only)

PHOTOS



Intern Rosalie Julius helping a boater exchange a used bilge pad with a new one.



Intern Emily Chang distributes a boater kit after a newly licensed boater completed the survey.



Boater at Steele Canyon utilizing the red canister to properly dispose of a used oil absorbent.



Napa boaters excited to receive their 2021 boater kit.



Intern Yvette Diaz explaining how to install the bilge pad to a Napa boater.



Vallejo boater installing a bilge pad for the first time after completing the survey.