

## *Annual Awareness Survey*

National Safe Boating Council  
September 28, 2017

Commissioned by National Safe Boating Council  
Conducted by Paul Werth Associates in conjunction with WHP Research, Inc.

### Background

The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) exists to promote recreational boating safety and reduce boating accidents by providing safe boating educational materials, resources, tools, creative messages, and instructor training. NSBC also leads the annual North American Safe Boating Campaign. This annual campaign promotes safe and responsible boating and the value of voluntary life jacket wear by recreational boaters. After 10 years with the “Wear It!” tagline and logo, the NSBC is freshening its campaign and has developed a new tagline, “It’s On You,” and draft logos for consideration.

### Research Objectives

This year NSBC targeted campaign partners, including current and prior grassroots funding recipients to determine the campaign’s effectiveness, specifically to (1) determine the impact of the campaign on life jacket wear, attitudes and behaviors on boating safety measures, and (2) gain insights that might be helpful in improving the campaign in the future.

**To assist in the process, Paul Werth Associates conducted research to meet the following objectives:**

- Gain an understanding of observed behavior of life jacket wear
- Seek to understand partner attitudes toward boating safety
- Seek to understand which national campaign resources have been used
- Seek to understand which grassroots efforts have been most effective
- Gain a better understanding of what additional resources are needed
- Seek feedback on draft campaign tagline and logos

### Methodology

**A three-phase approach was undertaken:** (1) qualitative phone interviews with four grassroots recipients, (2) quantitative online survey among grassroots funding recipients, and (3) additional qualitative phone interviews with four grassroots recipients for further insights.

**The phone interviews** reveal how the grassroots funding was used, observations of what’s working/not working with the campaign, and ways to better communicate with boaters (i.e. feedback on campaign materials, tagline, draft logos). The interviews lasted 30-70 minutes each.

**The online survey** includes 24 questions on observed life jacket wear, attitudes about boating safety, motivators to wear life jackets, and desired resources to better support local efforts. A total of 197 participants started the survey, with 158 completing most of it. On average, the survey took 11 minutes to complete.



At the end of each interview or online survey, participants were asked if they would consider helping with survey collection among boaters next year. Paul Werth Associates will retain this list in preparation for next year's survey.

See Appendix for a copy of discussion guide, online survey, and open-ended responses from the online survey as noted in the detailed findings.

## Executive Summary

### **Providing campaign funding has had a positive impact on boaters' behavior regarding safety.**

- Three-fourths of the organizations that received funding said observed life jacket wear increased in the year they received funding.

### **The campaign positively impacts the attitudes regarding safety among those receiving funding and other survey participants.**

- Almost all of them (99 percent) believe that drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets.
- Almost all of them (98 percent) encourage boaters to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing.
- They worry about boaters and their possible unsafe practices (98 percent).
- They have heard of a situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed (90 percent).

### **Motivators to increase life jacket wear might include:**

- Educating boaters on boat safety and use of life jackets across venues (e.g., rental liveries, schools, campgrounds).
- Seeing more messaging, articles, posts, tweets, contests, etc. in both mainstream and social media.
- Having live demonstrations, presence at events and shows, and talking one-on-one with people.
- Having adult role models for children and others, especially when in classes or group activities.

### **Based on the findings, the following suggestions are offered:**

- Continue the North American Safe Boating Campaign to raise awareness and increase life jacket wear.
- Continue to designate on-site advocates to share boating stories, emphasize the benefits of using life jackets, and to remind boaters to wear them.
- Devote more resources to social media efforts (e.g., tweets, YouTube videos, Facebook photo contest).
- Continue to provide brochures, stickers, press releases, coloring books, decals and other materials.
- Provide materials that can be customized by geography and/or cobranding, especially banners, signs and media kit.
- Provide some bilingual materials, such as children's books, brochures, posters, banners, signage, PSAs and swag.
- Consider new items for children and teenagers, such as games, floating key rings, and wrist bands.
- Continue surveys, increasing overall awareness and promoting safety.
- Collaborate with manufacturers to educate consumers about distinct style of jackets for different watercrafts.
- Collaborate with TV/movie producers and advertisers to show celebrities and people wearing life jackets whenever they are boating.
- Reinforce life jacket messaging for personal watercraft and paddlecraft on all bodies of water at all times, including races, competitions, and group outings.
- Offer more life jacket loaner stands, when feasible, and ensure the jackets are in good condition.



**For next year's survey among boaters, the following ought to be considered:**

- Reach out to those agreeing to help collect surveys.
- Consider having boaters complete the survey on iPads, to eliminate paper/pen expenses and to reduce data processing costs.
- Include "clean locations," i.e. no previous campaign activity nor survey collection activity.
- Define moderate versus high campaign activity, considering current and prior efforts.
- Tweak the 2016 survey to include other "life jacket wearing motivators."

**Key Findings**

Almost all online survey participants promote life jacket wear (96%).

- Three-fourths of the organizations that received funding from the NSBC said life jacket wear increased in the year they received funding. The remaining one-fourth said life jacket wear stayed the same.
  - *"I think [the efforts/campaign] makes somewhat of an impact: not a complete 180, but at the end of the day if you could get one person or five people to change their thoughts, you might have saved a life."* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)
- Although awareness of inflatables has increased, inherently buoyant life jackets prevail among boaters wearing life jackets (72 percent inherently buoyant versus 28 percent inflatable life jackets).

Most online survey participants agree that:

- Drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets (99 percent).
- They encourage boaters to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing (98 percent).
- They worry about boaters and their possible unsafe practices (98 percent).
- They have heard of a situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed (90 percent).

Educating boaters on boat safety and use of life jackets are the ways most likely to encourage boaters to wear life jackets. Other ideas, i.e. not listed on the online survey, to motivate life jacket wear are:

- Increasing public outreach, such as messaging, media placements and social media, that are geared towards children, women, or target audiences
- Having positive messaging or conversely, very impactful shock-value messaging
- Having live demonstrations and talking with people, including life jacket try-on stations
- Holding contests
- Seeing others wearing life jackets
- Mandating life jacket wear for classes or group outings
- Mandating boating classes

Most online survey participants find the brochures and stickers to be the most useful free resources.

Other free resources that are helpful are press releases, PSAs, social media posts, coloring books, and decals.

Life jackets and whistles are the most used and most helpful paid resources. Being able to customize the materials (e.g., banners, signs, media) or cobrand them is also beneficial.

Grassroot efforts have included everything from person-to-person conversations about safety to public events, shows, contests and media outreach. Some other activities are:

- Unique campaigns to reach their geographic area or demographics
- Life jacket distributions, including trade-in events and verbal pledges



- Social media contests, such as photos and YouTube videos
- Educational water safety programs at public schools and at campgrounds
- Partnering with other companies and retailers (e.g., Progressive Insurance commercials, Bass Pro Shops, Cabela's, L.L. Bean, Mustang)

More than one-half of states provide life jacket loaner stands. Most of them find them to be effective, but the jackets need to be kept in good condition, without broken straps or holes.

About one-fourth of the online participants want Hispanic or bilingual materials. The items of most interest are:

- Children's books
- Brochures, pamphlets, training manuals
- Decals, stickers, tattoos or other swag
- Posters, banners, signage
- PSAs

Other resources that are desired (free or paid) include:

- More activities or games for children
- Floating key rings with campaign logo
- Paddle board wrist bands
- T-Shirts, baseball caps
- Media/social media and PSAs that could be edited and customized so applicable to their geography
- Expanded library of photos showing families and minorities boating
- Printed materials and videos for kayaks, canoes and boarders
- Safety information in .jpg for social media

The **new Hunter Bland PSA would resonate with most boaters** in the online survey participants' states.

- *"Having an actual young, male boater in the video is very helpful to reach the audience that never wears life jackets."*
- *"The actual footage I believe will hold a longer image in someone's mind, rather than a reenactment."*

A couple of the phone participants mention that the PSA might not resonate with their demographic, given the age of the boater and the speed he is traveling.

- *"I think it's a great video, but I think it would resonate more with recreational fishermen than with pleasure boaters. It would resonate for shock value, but then they would come back and say he's a fisherman and is going a lot faster than we do. They'll do 60 mph just to get to a fishing hole."*

Five of the eight phone participants like **the new tagline, "IT'S ON YOU."**

- *"I like the tagline. It's multi-purpose in terms of it's on us as individuals to take responsibility to wear a life jacket. And, literally it's on us."*
- *"If you show me the logo, it's on me. It makes me say it's your choice, wear it or not. If it's up to me, I'm not wearing it."*

For the logo, the phone participants like a mix of the two logos. Many of them, but not all, prefer the triangular shape, the orange life jacket, the slimmer life jacket, the "ON" in the same orange color, and the water background, perhaps with pine trees instead of mountains. One participant believes that NSBC ought to be gaining feedback from the boaters.

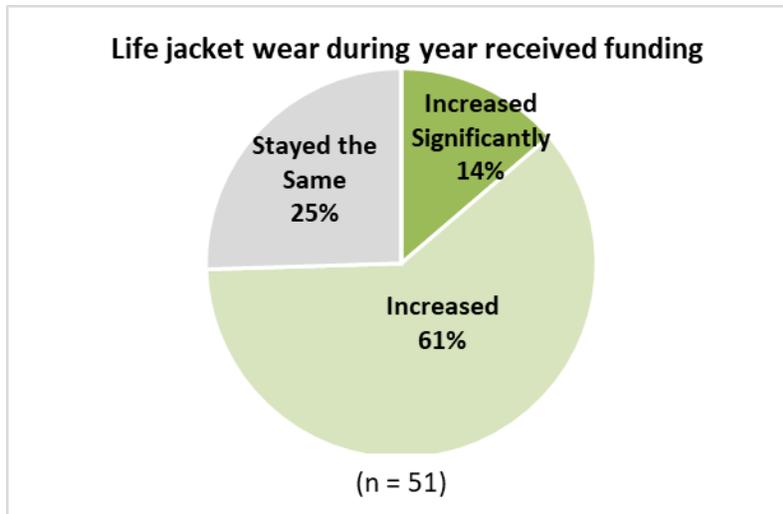


## Detailed Findings

### Life Jacket Wear

#### Online Survey

Three-fourths of the organizations that received funding (75 percent) indicate that life jacket wear increased during the most recent year that they received funding, as shown below.



Among those promoting life jacket wear (96 percent of all survey participants, n=149), they estimate on average that the percentage of boaters currently wearing life jackets at the bodies of water with campaign activity are:

- 77 percent among children 12 years or younger
- 41 percent among boaters using manually propelled vessels (e.g., kayaks, canoes, row boats and paddle boards)
- 30 percent among boaters using other types of boats (e.g., sail boats, motor boats, non-commercial fishing boats)

Participants estimate that on average 72 percent of boaters who wear life jackets are wearing inherently buoyant life jackets and 28 percent are wearing inflatable life jackets.

#### Qualitative Interviews

Some phone participants said that life jacket wear increased during the year(s) when they received funding; others do not know.

- Melissa Miranda explained that California's observed wear rate study showed that voluntary wear rate increased from 6 percent to 12.4 percent in the year they received funding [excludes children and PWCs].
- "I think [the efforts/campaign] makes somewhat of an impact: not a complete 180, but at the end of the day if you could get one person or five people to change their thoughts, you might have saved a life." (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)
- "It increased slightly, not a dramatic thing. You do become aware. You see parents stop and put life jackets on the kids before they get out, since it was in their face." (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)



When asked about current observations, some of the phone participants share their thoughts:

- *"I think it's decreased because paddle boards have increased [and] they are certainly not wearing them. When the paddle boards first came out, they were wearing them. Now they just have them on their paddle boards."* (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)
- *"About the same."* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)
- *"Can't say it [life jacket wear] has improved any. Kids wear them; adults don't."* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)
- *"We haven't been able to move the needle at all on life jacket wear. There's still work to be done to try to show at least some improvement in that area."* (Rob Lucas, Ohio)
- *"When I'm out, I'm seeing more of them wearing them. However, the ones buying \$100 boats aren't wearing them."* (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder of Seabirds International)
- *"Wear rate for PWC for the JSI Study is 99.9%, because it's a state law... but, we'll see them take it off once they are in the water. We don't see [other] adults [boaters] wearing life jackets at all. We had a recent boating class and not a single person raised their hand when asking if they wear a life jacket."* (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)

Awareness of inflatables has increased and boaters are now familiar with them. Some participants think the number of people who are using inflatables, has increased while others do not.

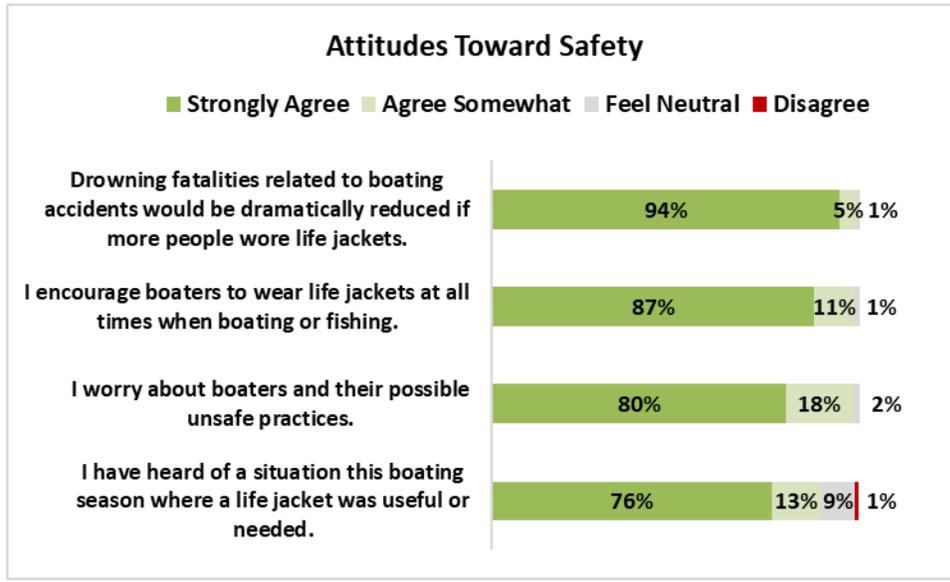
- *"I would say more people know about inflatables over the past five years than previous five years. Money is still a limiting factor. That or they have them but are not sure how to care for them, check the cartridge. Most people have them because we have given them to them. Teaching them how [inflatables] work is a big part of it. We had several fatalities [among those] wearing a belt pack and not wearing it correctly and were non-swimmers. We are looking at messaging towards that as well."* (Melissa Miranda, California)
- *"We're seeing more fishermen wearing inflatables. Inflatables are more comfortable and cooler."* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky) Danielle also said that about 50 percent of fishermen are wearing inflatables, partly attributed to their being required to wear them for tournaments. Educating boaters about inflatables is happening at shows and fairs. Boaters also want to know how to get refill cartridges and how to fill it back up after it's been deployed.
- *"Typically, they will wear the belt inflatables, but they are not permissible for youth to wear. It appears that they are going more towards the inflatable."* (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)
- At the Ohio State Fair, Rob Lucas educated people on the inflatables. *"People were surprised with how comfortable they were and how lightweight and how they could see themselves forgetting that they were even wearing them."* Rob explained that with costs coming down, inflatables will become more prevalent, but currently only about 10 percent of boaters are wearing them.
- *"All are wearing inherently buoyant,"* said Larry Gioia of Dynamic Paddlers in Pennsylvania. But, he went on to explain that in their Boy Scout kayaking program he shows them a range of several styles of life jackets.
- *"I don't see any inflatables, maybe some of paddleboarders."* (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder of Seabirds International) Andrea said that that all her demonstrations are with inherently buoyant jackets, because *"if you are paddle boarding and unconscious, you can't pull the cord."*
- *"[Among] the majority of powerboaters that are 16 years and under, I'm seeing a lot of inherently buoyant. I'm seeing more inflatables on fishermen in the last two to three years. Before they weren't wearing anything. I don't know if it's because they are seeing the pros doing it on fishing channels or if inflatables are near fishing reels in sporting goods stores and they are more likely to purchase it and wear it."* (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey) Mike also shared that they have added a discussion of inflatables to their course and are making more people aware of them.



## Attitudes Toward Safety

### Online Survey

- Almost all participants (99 percent) agree that *drowning fatalities related to boating accidents would be dramatically reduced if more people wore life jackets.*
- Almost all of them (98 percent) *encourage boaters to wear life jackets at all times when boating or fishing and worry about boaters and their possible unsafe practices.*
- Nine out of ten participants *have heard of a situation this boating season where a life jacket was useful or needed.*

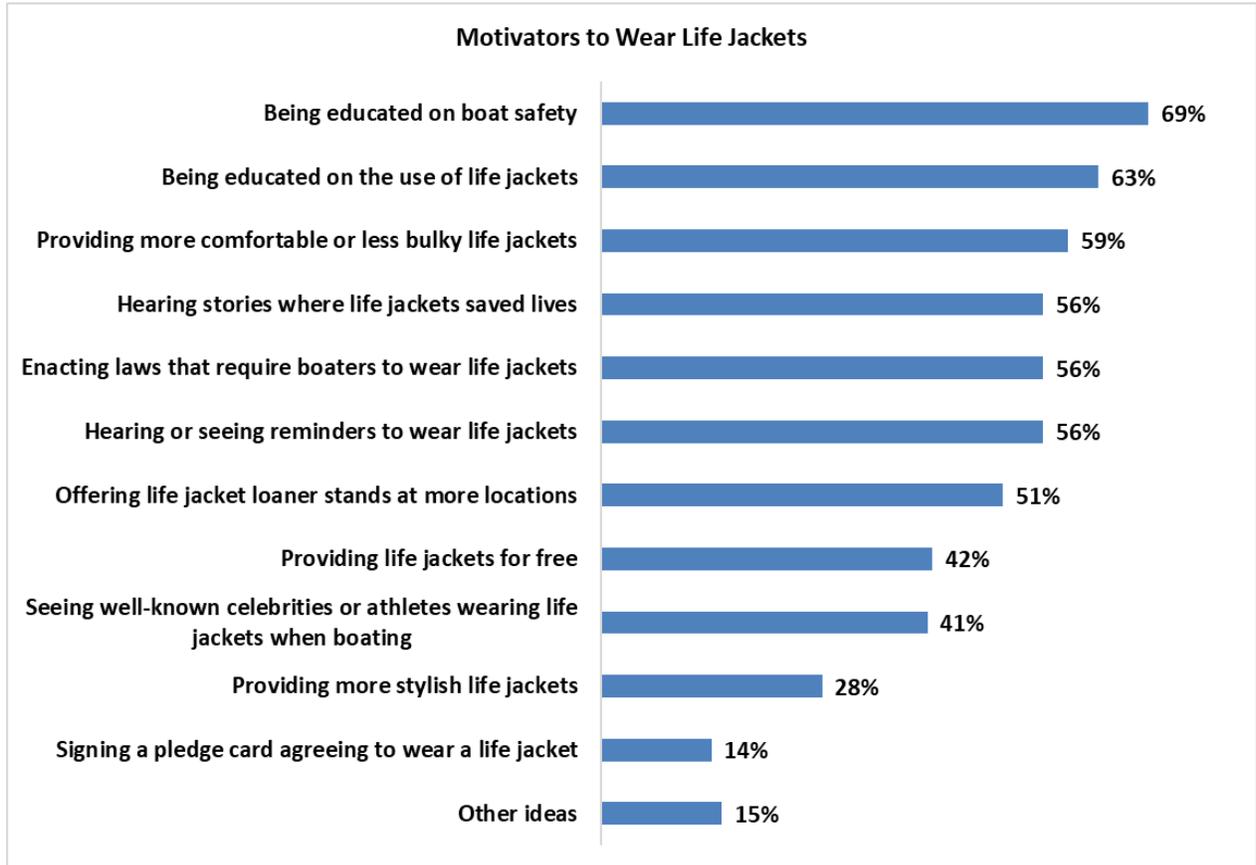




**Motivators to Wear Life Jackets**

**Online Survey**

- Being educated on boat safety (69 percent) and being educated on the use of life jackets (63 percent) are most likely to encourage boaters to wear life jackets more often.



- Some other ideas that were suggested to encourage life jacket wear are:
  - *“Continue public outreach efforts”*
  - *“Try to get to the kids (movie theater ads, school visits, etc.)”*
  - *“Reduce the prices on life jackets”*
  - *“Require life jackets to be readily available when on the water; not tucked away in a locker or bag”*
  - *“Set a good example, always wear a life jacket”*
  - *“Show people actually wearing life jackets, especially SUPs in TV ads”*
  - *“Show video of pros and cons”*

See verbatim comment file (Q18) for full list of comments from online survey.



### Qualitative Interviews

During the phone interviews, other thoughts and ideas to encourage life jacket wear were offered.

- Kelli Toth from Alaska explains that women are the key to increasing life jacket wear. *“The men are our target market, but we identify women as [our] target audience. The women are influencers of men.”* Kelli also said that they are *“in the business of educating to choose the life jacket that is right for them”* based on what type of boating activity the person is doing.
- Melissa Miranda from California said that *“having messaging that is relatable and having life jackets that are functional for [boaters] for activity type”* motivates boaters to wear life jackets. For example, paddle boarders appreciate having paddle jackets. *“They are more likely to wear that.”*
- Danielle Robertson of Kentucky describes how boaters want *mandatory boating classes* that would be like having to earn a driver’s license to drive a car.
- *“Telling them it’s mandatory,”* said Richard Gash of Bay Sea Scouts in Ohio. *“We also request the instructors, adults and any that participate that they need to set the example and wear life jackets. We don’t get any kick-back on that. They all wear their life jackets and don’t give me any grief.”*
- *“We have to learn from the people before us who had an accident or died. People live in reality.”* Larry Gioia of Dynamic Paddlers in Pennsylvania continued to explain that *“we’re always talking about life jackets after the fact. That tends to be a great outlet to raise awareness but it’s always too late. We have to find a way [before it’s too late]. We have to build communities around it; individuals can only do so much.”*
- Rob Lucas of Ohio would like to see more impactful PSAs at a national level, since *“a lot of times our hands are tied in what we can get away with in terms of PSAs. The national organization can push the envelope some more. The shock-value type of ads that make people think about the risk involved if you don’t wear a life jacket, those are pretty powerful.”*
- Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder of Seabirds International explains what she thinks are the most effective ways to encourage people to wear life jackets: *“Having positive messaging. I say, ‘thank you for wearing your seat belt,’ instead of ‘why aren’t you wearing your life jacket?’ They get it. Having the banners, live demonstrations and having them try it out and see value of all this stuff. Not just talking at, but talking with people.”*
- Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey has a lot of suggestions and ideas to grab people’s attention. He explains that focusing efforts on kids (e.g., projects for the kids to do, iron-on decals for T-Shirts), showing celebrities wearing life jackets (e.g., Deadliest Catch, NCIS), using visual images as opposed to written ones (i.e. short, sweet, colorful) all encourage or motivate others to wear a life jacket.
  - *“You are not going to change adult habits. If we could get to the kids and get them wearing life jackets, they are more likely to get their parents to wear them than we would be, i.e. ‘mommy why aren’t you wearing a life jacket?’”*
  - *“One of the ideas I had is you’ll have a picture of a family by a marina or by a boat – mom/dad/kids/dog. The sun is hitting them and casting a shadow behind them. All of the shadows are fine, but the dad’s shadow has an image of grim reaper. Everyone else is wearing life jackets. How do you want your summer to end? He probably didn’t survive – he wasn’t wearing his life jacket. How do you want your summer to end? It’s on you!”*
  - *“NSBC had a contest and chose the top ones [kids coloring contest and why they wear a life jacket] and sent them a life jacket. They haven’t done that in three or four years now. [Or.] do your own YouTube video of why you should wear a life jacket. It gets the people involved.”*
  - *“Other than going after the states and working on them, no one likes to be told what to do. I can’t tell you that you have to wear it, but if you fall asleep or are knocked unconscious in the water, you’ll drown. The state of Connecticut has mandated it [life jacket wear] in certain months when the water is colder. It’s a start, a baby step.”*



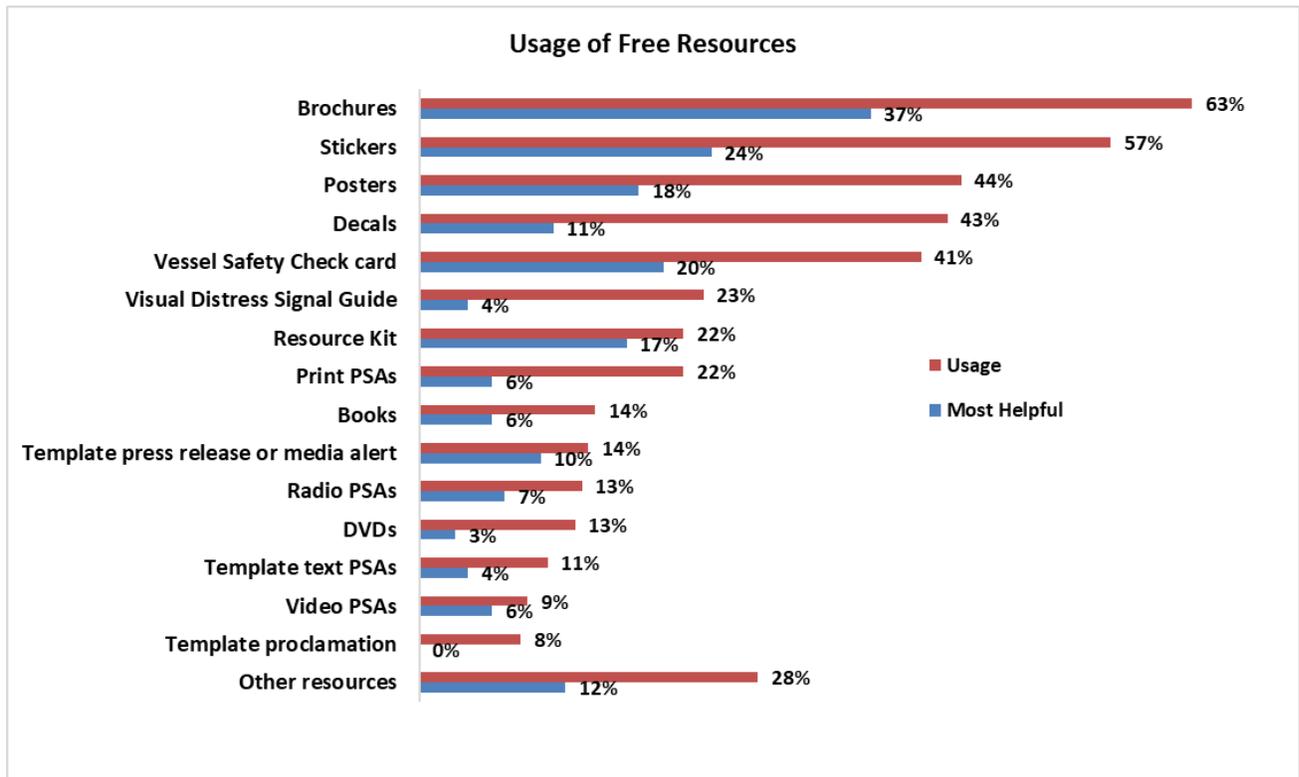
**Usage of Free Resources**

**Online Survey**

Based on the results from the online survey:

- Brochures (63 percent) and stickers (57 percent) are used most often to promote life jacket wear.
- Brochures (37 percent), stickers (24 percent) and vessel safety check card (20 percent) are most helpful or would be most helpful, as shown below.
- Other free resources used that are helpful include:
  - Coloring books and children activity books
  - Replacement cartridges for inflatable life jackets
  - Life jackets
  - Non-template proclamation

See verbatim comment file (Q7 and Q8) for full list of comments from online survey.



**Qualitative Interviews**

During the phone interviews, participants tell about the NSBC’s free resources they have used:

- *“We’ve used press releases. And, NSBC provided dry bags as incentives for participating in the printed survey. [However,] we have a no swag order. We can’t give away swag. [The resources] encouraged more engaging conversations with boaters.”* (Melissa Miranda, California)
- *“We’ve distributed some of the stickers to youth. They do take them and put them on notebooks and other children identify them. It was a good way to advertise that you should be wearing your life jacket and it introduces new members for us too. The books are geared more for younger children so we have not used them [because we’re working with] teenagers.”* (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)



- *“I took advantage of Wear It! 2x2 stickers.”* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania) The PSA where the two rangers hit a log and the boat tipped over was his favorite. *“I shared it. I do a lot of social media. I’m all for digital resources.”*
- *“Stickers. We worked with New York State parks to put stickers on their rental boats.”* (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder, Seabirds International)
- *“We used the stickers, coloring books, and decals. We did the design your own life jacket, color your own life jacket.”* (Mike Klacik, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)
- *“We ordered the max we were allowed.”* (Rob Lucas, Ohio) Items included Wear It! decals, Rules of Road decal, stickers, press releases, brochures, photos, and PSAs.
- *“We’ve gotten things off website to do Facebook posts. It’s so easy to share and it’s already there and created.”* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky) They have also used posters, stickers, and decals. They tend to stay away from brochures because *“nobody picks them up.”* Danielle also noted that she likes that the NSBC changes the messages from year-to-year and consistency in the message is good.

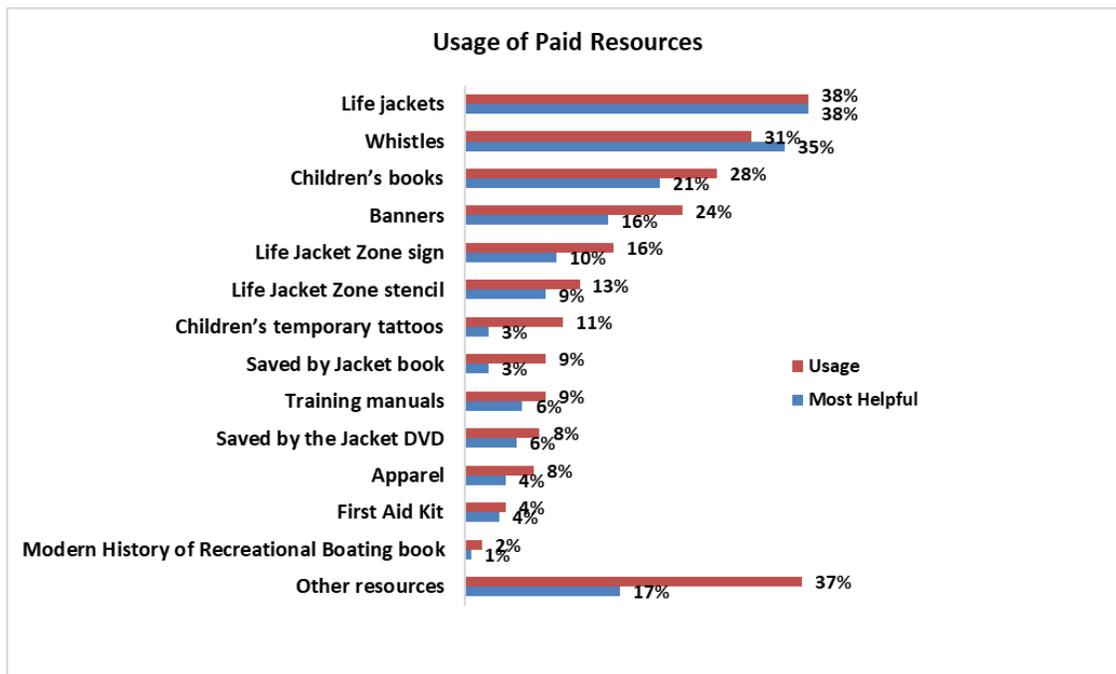
**Usage of Paid Resources**

**Online Survey**

In the online survey, participants were asked which paid national campaign resources their state has ever used to promote life jacket wear and which ones are most helpful.

- Life jackets (38 percent) and whistles (31 percent) are being used most often to promote life jacket wear.
- These items are also most helpful or would be most helpful, as shown below.
- Other resources used that are helpful include brochures, pens and other materials that the participants or auxiliary might have created.

See verbatim comment file (Q9 and Q10) for full list of comments from online survey.





### Qualitative Interviews

In the phone interviews, participants share what paid resources they have used to promote life jacket wear and what has worked well.

- Melissa Miranda of California used the funding to purchase life jackets, Wear It! signage, billboards, and radio spots.
- Richard Gash of Bay Sea Scouts in Ohio purchased trailer hitch logos. He explained that they worked well and they distributed about 90-95 of the 100 obtained.
- Larry Gioia of Dynamic Paddlers in Pennsylvania bought signage, banners, and safety whistles. He explained that everyone likes the whistles and they *“gave them away like candy.”* He also said they are bright, tangible, and something that people will keep.
- Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder of Seabirds International said they used NSBC funding to have three rescue road shows and to buy banners, signs, and whistles. *“People could read the banner and it answered a lot of their questions right on the banner.”* She explains that the whistles were her favorite because they are *“bright, nice looking and they make such an instant impact. People straightway put them on their life jackets.”* She also paid for other resources herself, such as tow ropes, night lights for kayaks, safe kayak leaflets, and safety clothing.
- Mike Klacik from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey said the NSBC provided them with the life jacket zone template.
- Danielle Robertson of Kentucky purchased some backdrop displays about five or six years ago. The banners are their favorite because of their size (smaller size) and ease of tying them onto boats.
- Rob Lucas of Ohio used their own funds or formed partnerships to purchase inflatable life jackets with the Wear It! logo sewn on during production. *“We passed them out at lakes with high fatalities and accidents. We passed them out where the life jacket wear rates were low. We loaned them out to interested parties and allowed them to keep them after the program ended.”* He explains that as a result more people were wearing life jackets. In addition, Rob purchased Wear It! logo T-shirts, footballs and frisbees.

When asked which resources did not work so well, most participants could not mention anything.

- *“All efforts in some way matter.”* (Melissa Miranda, California) But she went on to say, *“We explored TV and don’t purchase a lot of TV anymore. We will do cable shows to reach angler demographic.”*
- *“All seem to be well put together and quality materials.”* (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)
- *“Any loose-leaf paper was the thing that got thrown away. I selectively chose what I purchased. I don’t know why someone would want a trailer hitch.”* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)

### Additional Grassroots Efforts

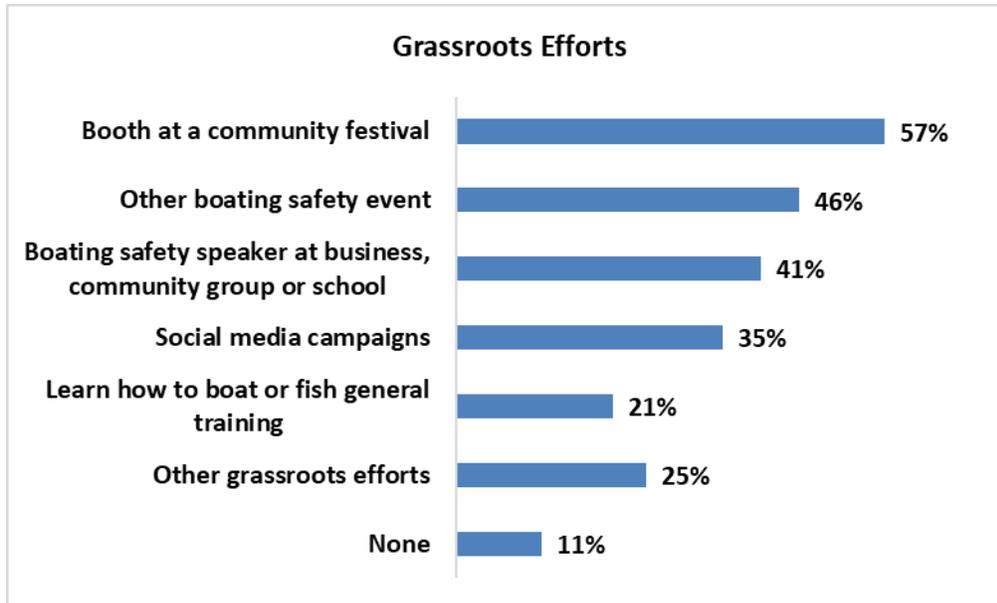
#### Online Survey

- About one-half of the online survey participants indicate that their state has either had a booth at a community festival (57 percent) and/or has made efforts to promote safe boating at a boating safety event (46 percent) in the past two years.
- Examples of other efforts that have worked well are:
  - Boat shows
  - Billboards, radio advertisements; press media
  - Contests with prizes
  - Festivals; other events on waterfront
  - Life jacket fashion show
  - Life jacket trade-in events
  - Life jacket promotion efforts during coast guard auxiliary safety inspections
  - Person-to-person talking about boating
  - Public affairs events, hospitals and schools



- “Splash the Water Dog” stuffed animals with campaign emblem
- Video testimony
- Working with the kids and putting something in their hands: *“My daughter attended some water safety program today and now she is refusing to go out on our boat unless my husband and I are wearing our life jackets!”* (Anonymous comment from online survey participant)

See verbatim comment file (Q13 and Q14) for full list of comments from online survey.



### Qualitative Interviews

In the phone interviews, participants share some of their unique efforts:

- Kelli Toth of Alaska explained that their efforts focus primarily on education and outreach to promote behavioral changes. Alaska did not use any of NSBC’s resources. They created their own campaign: “A Pledge to Live,” which was based on their own research and evaluations, specific to their market.
- Melissa Miranda of California explained that they have a website dedicated towards the campaign, have a robust campaign, and work with an ad agency to make sure California’s tight standards are met. She explained how they started with Wear It!, then added California: “Wear It California,” and the transition to “I ‘Heart’ CA.” She also shared a logo they created:
  -  **CA** - *“We think it’s positive and eye-catching. It’s trendy. Life jackets save lives. [This logo] is more geared towards women and they would encourage the males to wear it.”*
- Melissa also said that they distribute life jackets and try to encourage distinct styles specific to the boating activity. *“We work really hard to have those different styles: 8,000 jackets a year distributed, loaner stations, trade-in events; as part of general outreach, we go to different events and distribute them so [boaters] can get educated on them. We also do a verbal pledge. If they are willing to wear it at all times and be an ambassador and encourage others to wear life jackets, then we will give them a life jacket.”*
- Richard Gash of Bay Sea Scouts in Ohio said their group participated in “Ready, Set, Wear It!” sharing photos of their group wearing their life jackets for several years. They also had an article in local paper, showing their group wearing them in conjunction with Spirit of America, a youth boating program. *“The kids enjoyed it and it got some notice.”*



- Richard further explained that his group tries to “*make a statement*” by making sure that everyone in his group is wearing a life jacket when they go out and come back into the marina.
- Larry Gioia of Dynamic Paddlers in Pennsylvania put together packages to give-away at public events and vendor fairs, such as life jacket awareness brochure, river navigation, sticker, and whistle. For kids, he did an education session on life jackets and gave away a swag bag afterwards.
- Larry also said he did a lot of cobranding and was active on social media. His company also created mini-PSAs using statistics, standard images, images of their clients and people in Pittsburgh. They also have done various contests. For example, they took pictures of people wearing life jackets and sent them the picture and a photo frame to use on social media. Those with the most shares/likes won a prize package.
- Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder of Seabirds International did a lot of instruction courses and rescue demonstrations. She explains, “*We had a Wear It! event with the state parks and had rescue demonstrations. Afterwards, a number of people came to me to see where they could get lessons and buy life jackets. Having real jackets there to purchase with banners was helpful.*” Her business also has a Facebook page and safe boating is promoted that way too. Andrea was interviewed by a local newspaper, and will try to put more in the press next year. “*I’ll also use [NSBC] PSAs and press releases [now that I know about them].*”
- Mike Klacik, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey, said they have increased inspections on paddle crafts and increased efforts to provide more education, e.g., proper clothing attire when water is 42 degrees. He shared some other efforts they have made in respect to boating safety:
  - “*Progressive Insurance provided us a storage with their logo and big orange life jacket on it, but then when they did commercials, they weren’t wearing life jackets. We were working with them so they would wear life jackets in the commercials.*”
  - “*We worked with Bass on safety checks.*”
  - “*Issue with bow riding...*”
  - “*We had teamed up [with a local ice cream place] to do a kids’ program. If children wearing life jacket, then they would receive a ticket for a free ice cream. The Coast Guard stopped it because they said it looked like we were promoting the ice cream company.*”
- Danielle Robertson of Kentucky does a lot of educating about water safety at the Kentucky State Fair, the Kentucky State Boat Show, county fairs, schools, and campgrounds. At their booths, they have all types of life jackets available to try on, including inflatables. They are scheduled for water safety programs once a week for the next two months at public schools. She feels the two shows work well: “*We have a lot of good conversations. We teach them something new or show them a new life jacket that they could go home and buy. It’s the exact crowd that we want to be there and we talk to them.*”
- Rob Lucas of Ohio is also active at their respective State Fair. “[*People*] could take selfies with different boating situations: canoe, power boat, sailboat or dock, and for participating we gave them sunglasses or lens glass cleaner which had the Wear It! Ohio logo on them.” This past year they also had a life jacket try-on station, which he’s likely to repeat again next year. In addition to the fair, Rob said they also have customized ads and print media with the Wear It! Ohio logo and launched the #wearitliveitohio via social media.

### **Life Jacket Loaner Stands**

#### **Online Survey**

- More than one-half of the survey participants (56 percent) indicate that their state provides life jacket loaner stands.
  - “*I would like to get the other lakes involved in programs like this.*”
  - “*We have a few life jacket poles where boaters who forgot or don’t have the right size jackets can borrow one and return it upon their return to the ramps. This program has been in place*



- for a few years now and is doing very well. I asked if the jackets tend to not come back and have been told it has not been an issue.”*
- *“Mostly at state parks that are on lakes; some stands are at federal sites and privately-owned marinas.”*
  - *“Some are in excellent shape; however, the stands in remote locations need updating.”*
  - *“We provide resources throughout the state. Locations include fire stations, marinas, park kiosks and we are currently working on stand-alone life jacket loaner boards to provide as a kit that can be installed.”*
  - *“I’m not with a state. We provide PFDs to all our participants.”*

See verbatim comment file (Q17) for full list of comments from online survey.

### Qualitative Interviews

- In the phone interviews, most participants said the life jacket loaner boards work well. However, one participant could not do it:
  - *“When we contacted the auxiliary to work on it, they said there was too much liability. They feel that if we put up a loaner board and if a boater leaves out a life jacket that has a hole, straps broken and [someone else] takes it and uses it and drowns, they would come after us.”* (Mike Klacik, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)

### Additional Resources Needed and Suggestions for Other Resources

#### Online Survey

- About one-fourth of online participants (28 percent) would like to receive bilingual materials for their state. An additional 56 percent are unsure and 17 percent do not see a need for these materials. Some of the items that participants feel would be most helpful to have available in Spanish are:
  - Children’s books
  - Brochures, pamphlets, training manuals
  - Give-away items (e.g., decals, stickers, tattoos)
  - Posters, banners, signage

See verbatim comment file (Q11) for full list of items provided in the online survey.

- Other resources (free or paid) that online participants would like to see offered by the North American Safe Boating Campaign to better communicate life jacket wear and safety with boaters are:
  - Activities and games for kids. *“The coloring books and info are helpful, but having a game template, where kids can really get hands-on and involved in what they are learning is extremely helpful.”*
  - Floating key rings with life jacket logo
  - Copy-read materials for media that could be edited to allow addition of locally relevant information and contacts
  - Pre-printed materials for paddle craft (kayak, canoes, boarders)
  - T-Shirts, baseball caps
  - Safety information in .jpg form for social media
  - PSAs in Spanish and English for social media

See verbatim comment file (Q12) for full list of suggestions specified in the online survey.

### Qualitative Interviews

During the phone interviews, participants explain what materials they would like to have available to them to better communicate with boaters:

- *“I would like PSAs, radio, materials that are applicable to Alaska and resonate with our audience. Most are not. I do not need bilingual materials.”* (Kelli Toth, Alaska) She explained that most national efforts are not applicable to Alaska (e.g., shorts, flip flops). *“It’s not relevant and doesn’t work with our target audience.”*



- *“We’d like an exemption [from no swag order] for whistles and key flags. We aren’t allowed to purchase them unless they are printed on life jackets or paper.”* (Melissa Miranda, California) She also explained that she would like to have the ability to personalize materials or items specifically for California. *“We would utilize those resources if customizable for California. [For example, providing materials that are] generic where we couldn’t tell the location or [if we had the] ability to substitute a California picture [for a Florida one].”*
- *“A wrist band might be a good item, where you attach it to the [paddle] board and your ankle. A lot of these people who are using the paddle boards are not using the life jackets.”* (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)
- *“To be helpful to get the word out, I’d like to know who else in my region also received grant [funding] and so I can immediately connect with them to promote safe boating together.”* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania) Larry also said he would like to have pre-written social media copy or PSAs or 10 tweets that could be re-shared and re-posted. *“Those things go pretty far. I could copy and paste the tweets.”* Larry also explained that he has had success in cobranding and would like to use part of the funding for cobranded materials. *“Maybe NSBC could put our logo next to theirs...if they could help me with that. I would pay for it or would use the funding for that.”* Finally, Larry also suggested NSBC providing free resources that he could print in color himself.
- *“It would be nice to have a different banner for kayaks and what they are used for. Some boating videos with kayaks, showing interactions with all types of crafts. A kayak poster.”* (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder of Seabirds International) Andrea also asked: *“Is there a way for NSBC to work with manufacturers or kayaks or big box stores, making sure they sell the right jackets with the right boats? Some training or workshop with them?”*
- *“The stuff for kids is always a benefit whether it’s stickers, patches, balloons, school erasers, pens with logo and message on it; stuff that will stay with people.”* (Mike Klacik, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey) Mike also said they use the Spanish brochures and the U.S. Coast Guard has decals in Spanish/English instruction how to call Channel 16 for assistance.
- *“Maybe more photo resources, [such as] families boating, minorities boating, African American photos of folks boating, not site-specific photos.”* (Susie Vance, Ohio) In the same interview, Rob Lucas explained that any information that they could get in Spanish would be helpful, such as *“I speak cards, i.e. I speak this language,”* signage, life jacket zones, PSAs targeted for Hispanic community, and basic boating safety information in a brochure.

### **Feedback on Hunter Bland PSA Video**

All participants were asked to view a public service announcement (PSA) video and then were asked for their feedback on it.

### **Online Survey**

- Eight out of ten online survey participants agree that *this new PSA will resonate with the boaters in their state.*
- Some of their more positive reactions to the video are:
  - *“A sobering reminder of safe boating.”*
  - *“Dramatic and something that could happen to a regular boater.”*
  - *“Easy to understand and makes the point in a positive manner.”*
  - *“Excellent. I have shared this on my Facebook page.”*
  - *“Great! I will use this in our boating safety class.”*
  - *“Some feel they can swim so they don’t need jackets and videos like this allows them to see things can happen.”*
  - *“Having an actual young, male boater in the video is very helpful to reach the audience that never wears life jackets.”*



- *"The actual footage I believe will hold a longer image in someone's mind, rather than a reenactment."*
- *"It shows how the use of safety equipment (engine shut off and safety vest) saved a life."*
- *"Very good; let's share it everywhere."*
- *"Good example and would be nice to have that available to embed into our ABS class."*
- *"Very graphic and educational"*
- *"Wow!!"*
- Some suggestions or less favorable comments are:
  - *"A regular powerboat instead of a high-speed performance boat would get more people's attention as well as to feature paddle craft."*
  - *"Needs to be on TV public service spot."*
  - *"Excessive speed for normal boating. Video needs to be location neutral so viewers can't tell geographically where taken. Accent tells origins."*
  - *"Good video. Still won't convince most boaters around here."*
  - *"I believe people need to interact and not told. PSAs lack interactive value; they are like TV commercials."*
  - *"It appears he is wearing his inflatable tightly though. There needs to be room for it to inflate, or it could break ribs."*
  - *"I don't think mentioning the 55-mph speed is prudent. It just encourages other boaters to travel too fast for conditions."*
  - *"Note for the speed it is not a high impact PFD."*

See verbatim comment file (Q21) for other online comments about the PSA.

### Qualitative Interviews

Phone participants also share their thoughts on the video, with many feeling that it resonates with boaters on their bodies of water:

- *"It's really good, really powerful, authentic – actually having actual footage, not reenactment. It resonates strongly with younger males and [would be] impactful in angling world. He is relatable. He seems like he might stereotypically be too cool for life jacket, but he wasn't and it saved his life."* (Melissa Miranda, California) Melissa then went on to say that she would push to use this video.
- *"I thought it was great: well put together. One thing: the young fellow was wearing an inflatable. You have to be 16+ years to wear an inflatable in Ohio and it may be a national requirement. It doesn't speak to the youth. It would resonate, but it wouldn't work with my demographic."* (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)
- *"It's really powerful. I think it will resonate with people in Pittsburgh somewhat."* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania) Larry explains that there's a lack of knowledge in general, people are complacent and there's a continued need for education. *"It's mind-boggling how many people are out there boating without life jackets."*
- Rob Lucas of Ohio also thought the PSA resonates with boaters on Nolan Lake. *"We posted that video on our Facebook page and got phenomenal shares and likes. I think it's because it wasn't a celebrity, but a group of college guys going out. It could happen to anyone."*
- *"I think it was really good. It definitely showed a story. It's hitting the exact target audience you want: adult males, as opposed to being kiddie-oriented,"* explains Danielle Robertson from Kentucky. However, she did say that when shown at a bass tournament, the fishermen said: *"those two guys just don't know how to drive their boat."*
- Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder of Seabirds International also thought the message was very powerful. *"I liked when they flew out of the boat. It was very realistic, seeing ignition switch off and that life jackets save lives."* She was not aware of PSAs and said she would use them going forward.
- *"I think it's a great video, but I think it would resonate more with recreational fishermen than with pleasure boaters. It would resonate for shock value, but then they would come back and say he's a*



*fisherman and is going a lot faster than we do. They'll do 60 mph just to get to a fishing hole.” (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)*

- Kelli Toth of Alaska explains that her opinion should not matter. *“What matters is what the market [target audience/customers] thinks. That’s where I think some time should be spent. What is it that resonates with them?”*

## **Reactions to Tagline and Logos**

### **Qualitative Interviews**

Evaluations of the tagline and logos were obtained from only the phone participants.

- Five of the eight participants like the new tagline, “IT’S ON YOU.”
  - **Likes:**
    - *“It’s a call to action, and it’s on you to put it on. It’s on you too - literally.” (Melissa Miranda, California)*
    - *“I like the tagline. It’s multi-purpose in terms of it’s on us as individuals to take responsibility to wear a life jacket. And, literally it’s on us.” (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)*
    - *“I like it. It is on you and people have to take some responsibility for themselves. It’s positive and encouraging.” (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder, Seabirds International)*
    - *“It’s your responsibility also and you are wearing it. I like it.” (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)*
    - *“I like it. I think it kind of a double entendre. It has two meanings. It’s on you, i.e. the lifejacket is on you and will save your life. The responsibility of wearing the life jacket is on you. The only thing I think was lacking is that there’s no call for action like Wear it! Maybe this is a different way of encouraging people to wear it. [There are] less government and safety agencies telling them to wear it, so [it] puts more onus on boaters to take responsibility.” (Rob Lucas, Ohio)*
  - **Dislikes:**
    - *“It’s on you – what are they trying to tell me? When I see it, is that a question for me to answer. It didn’t quite resonate with me. I’m tending to dislike it, [but] not completely.” (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)*
    - *“I don’t like ‘It’s On You.’ If you show me the logo, it’s on me. It makes me say it’s your choice, wear it or not. If it’s up to me, I’m not wearing it.” (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)*
- When asked their reactions to the two working draft versions of the logo, participants like and dislike aspects of each of them.

**First logo:**



**Second logo:**



**First logo**

- **Likes:**
  - *“I like that they emphasize the ‘on’ by using a different color.” (Melissa Miranda, California)*
  - *“I like the bright colors in it. I like that the emphasis is on the ‘ON.’ There are many subliminal messages in that one.” (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)*



- *"I like the red one better. It's more of a safety one."* (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder, Seabirds International)
- *"I like the bright in your face one to get a message out. Neon colors! Here I am, you can't miss me. I like the orange. If orange is embedded in your head as safety, stick with it! I [also] like the same size straight black letters, not the curved letters, with the 'ON' in a different color."* (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)
- *"I like the forestry look. The 'ON' stands out more with dark background. I like the shape of the orange one better."* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)
- *"I like that the 'ON' is in color. [Putting] emphasis on the 'ON' is important."* (Rob Lucas, Ohio)

**Dislikes or suggestions:**

- *"Orange reminds [boaters] of buoyant life jackets and we're trying to get away from the orange horseshoe life jacket. The first logo also looks like it's levitating over a campground – don't know it's over water."* (Melissa Miranda, California)
- *"My suggestion is to go with yellow instead of a red jacket, on a navy blue background. The 'ON' would be red too. I would go with this one [then] over the other logo."* (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts, Ohio)
- *"The trees don't do it in the first one. Add a kayak or motor boat in the first one."* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)
- *"The one with the trees, I felt like we were in the woods and at a campfire."* (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)
- *"I'd put a creek through the picture somehow."* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)

**Second logo**

○ **Likes:**

- *"I like this one better. I appreciate that it looks more like water. I like the outdoorsy colors, white typeface, and blue for the water."* (Melissa Miranda, California)
- *"I like the emphasis on the water in the second one. I like the aspects of light blue water and how it fades into the background."* (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers, Pennsylvania)
- *"I prefer triangle."* (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder, Seabirds International)
- *"I like the triangle more than the other shape. I like the slimmer life jacket. I like the blue water with mountains."* (Mike Klacik of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in New Jersey)
- *"I kind of like the triangular one with the aqua life jacket. It's not the orange color that we relate to cheap life jackets and uncomfortable life jackets. The color is different so it's more appealing to the eye."* (Rob Lucas, Ohio)

○ **Dislikes or suggestions:**

- *"The green one doesn't look like a life jacket, because it only has two buckles."* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)
- *"[The shape of this one] is more like a hazard triangle."* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)
- *"It has mountains in the background and we don't have mountains. Maybe [show] with pine trees so it could be anywhere, instead of out West."* (Rob Lucas, Ohio)

**Applicable to both logos**

○ **Suggestions or comments:**

- *"I don't know if I like the website inside the actual logo. The buckle doesn't look like it's buckled. Make it so it's buckled so the white goes through it so it's closed."* (Melissa Miranda, California)
- *"The straps don't look like they are connected. It seems like there's a gap. You need to close that gap."* (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)
- *"The life jacket is for jet skis and motorboats. Maybe there's an opportunity to do a different jacket or have different ones or a silhouette of others so applicable to kayaks and other crafts."* (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder, Seabirds International)

- One participant was unwilling to provide feedback on the tagline or logos, believing that NSBC ought to be asking feedback from boaters, not the state or those in law enforcement.

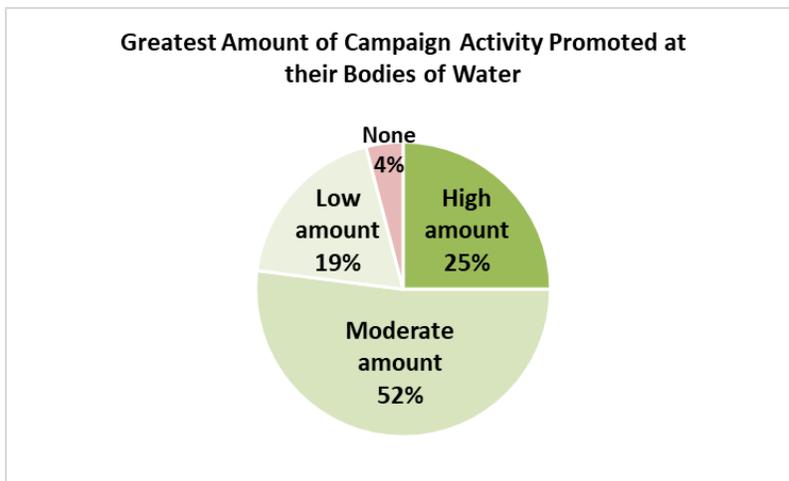


- *“It’s testing and evaluating that campaign with the target audience. If it resonates well for them and will increase life jacket wear based on logo and campaign and issues a compelling reason to wear life jackets, that’s what we [need].” (Kelli Toth, Alaska)*

**Participant Profile**

**Online Survey**

- Survey participants represent 41 different states, Washington, D.C., Ontario, Canada and Japan – all locations where they have promoted safe boating. See verbatim comment file for the bodies of water, docks, cities, and states where they have promoted the North American Safe Boating Campaign (Q1) and the body of water with the greatest campaign activity (Q3).
- Survey participants also represent a mix of levels for promoting campaign activity.



- About three-fourths of the participants (73 percent) have never received any grassroots funding.
- Among those receiving funding from the NSBC and participating in the survey (n=53), 36 participants received funding this year, 4 participants received funding last year, and 13 participants received funding in 2015 or a prior year.
- On median, participants’ organizations have been involved in the North American Safe Boating Safety Campaign for three years. As shown below, about one-fourth of them have been involved in the campaign for 10 years or more.

Number of Years	%	#
1	30%	14
2	9%	4
3	11%	5
4	2%	1
5	11%	5
7	4%	2
8	4%	2
9	4%	2
10+	24%	11

- A total of 105 participants (74 percent answering the question) said they would consider helping collect surveys among boaters in their state next year.



### Qualitative Phone Interviews

- The level of NSBC funding for each of the eight participants is shown below:
  - No NSBC funding received to her knowledge (Kelli Toth, Alaska)
  - No NSBC funding received (Robert Lucas, Ohio)
  - Received funding in 2007 for a five-year pilot program for the Sacramento Delta region (Melissa Miranda, California)
  - Received a grant in 2011 (estimated) for Nolan Lake (Danielle Robertson, Kentucky)
  - Received funding in 2016 for Lake Erie, Ohio (Richard Gash, Bay Sea Scouts)
  - Received funding in 2015 for multiple bodies of water in Pennsylvania, with a focus on North Park Lake in Allison Park, in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (Larry Gioia, Dynamic Paddlers)
  - Received funding in 2016 for a variety of locations including New York, Tennessee and Florida (Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder, Seabirds International)
  - Received a grant in 2015 for 10 different marinas on Greenwood Lake, located in New Jersey and in New York and for Bruce Run Reservoir and Round Valley in New Jersey (Mike Klacik, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary)
  
- Seven of the eight phone participants said they would consider helping collect surveys among boaters next year. One person (Kelli Toth, Alaska) ended the interview before the question could be asked.