



Board Agenda Item 24

DATE: May 12, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: John Zaroni, Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator

SUBJECT: Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Program Annual Agreement for FY 2026-27

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Approve and authorize Chairman to execute the Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Program Agreement with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways for FY 2026-27 in the amount of \$320,374;**
- 2. Approve and authorize Chairman to execute Resolution authorizing participation in the program and certifying all funds will be used for boating safety programs and that all personal property taxes on vessels collected by the County shall be expended on boating safety programs;**
- 3. Authorize the Sheriff, or his authorized representative, to sign quarterly claims for reimbursement and annual activity reports; and**
- 4. Authorize the County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector to certify the amount of prior year vessel taxes received by the County.**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. There is no change in the grant award from the current year, which was reduced for FY 2025-26 through a retroactive replacement revenue agreement approved by your Board on September 9, 2025. On December 9, 2025, your Board approved the submission of an application for the continuation of the Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Agreement with the California Department of Parks and Recreation Division of Boating and Waterways. The recommended actions will approve the recommended agreement in the amount of \$320,374. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

There is no viable alternative action. If your Board does not approve the recommended actions, the Sheriff's Office will lose these Boating and Waterways grant funds for FY 2026-27. This will impact the Sheriff's Office Boating Safety Unit's ability to support an adequate and effective boating safety and law enforcement program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The grant award of \$320,374 is at the same level as the current year, and will continue to fund direct costs associated with the Sheriff's Office Boating Safety Unit. This includes two full-time positions (one Sheriff's Sergeant and one Deputy Sheriff), up to ten extra-help seasonal employees, operational costs, and equipment. The grant award of \$320,374 also includes a five percent administrative fee that the Sheriff's Office includes with the quarterly claims.

Due to the reduction in grant funds, full-time positions have been reduced from three to two full-time positions, which now includes one Sheriff's Sergeant and one Deputy Sheriff. The Deputy Sheriff that was removed is vacant and will not be filled. The loss of funding for the Deputy Sheriff position caused the off-season workload to be split up between the extra-help seasonal employees, Deputy Sheriff, and Sheriff's Sergeant. The extra-help seasonal employees for the summer season will ensure coverage amongst the Sheriff's Office Boating Unit without affecting service levels and emergency response capabilities. In previous years, the award amount was \$452,764; however, the Sheriff's Office received notification on July 7, 2025 of a decrease in funds for the Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Agreement with the California Department of Parks and Recreation Division of Boating and Waterways for FY 2025-26 and a subsequent retroactive replacement revenue agreement was executed by your Board. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues in the amount of \$320,374 will be included in the Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator's FY 2026-27 Proposed Budget for Org 3111.

DISCUSSION:

The Fresno County Sheriff's Office Boating Safety Unit has primary responsibility for the enforcement of laws and regulations relating to the operation of watercraft with Fresno County. The Boating Unit investigates boating accidents on all waterways within Fresno County and patrols the areas of Pine Flat Lake, Shaver Lake, Kings River, Huntington Lake, Wishon Reservoir, Courtwright Reservoir, Edison Lake, Florence Lake, Redinger Lake, San Joaquin River, and Mendota Slough.

The Boating Unit enforces the California Harbors and Navigation Code, California Code of Regulations Title 14, Federal Code of Regulations 33 USC, and those provisions of the Ordinance Code of Fresno County regarding water related activities. The Boating Unit also uses and maintains a fleet of eleven vessels, which vary from inflatable rescue boats, jet skis, and jet-powered river boats, to ocean-capable lake patrol boats. The Boating Unit's patrol function is to promote a safe boating experience for all involved. While on patrol, the Deputies conduct inspections of vessels for required equipment and registration. The Boating Unit's goal is to educate the public on water safety. The Boating Unit annually gives presentations to thousands of school-aged children, to teach them about water safety, and the importance of wearing a life jacket. The Boating Unit also gives presentations on boating laws and water safety to all age groups.

The Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Program was established to provide a supplement for the expenses of local government agencies whose waterways have a high transient boating usage and lack a sufficient tax base to support an adequate and effective boating safety and law enforcement program. On January 20, 1982, the Board approved the initial Boating Safety and Enforcement aid application, and an annual agreement has been authorized each fiscal year thereafter.

In order to receive funds, the California Department of Parks and Recreation Division of Boating and Waterways requires a resolution adopted annually by the Board of Supervisors authorizing the County to apply and participate in the program, authorizing the Chairman to execute the recommended agreement, and certifying that the County will expend the funds for boating safety programs during that year not less than an amount equal to 100% of the amount received by the County from personal property taxes on vessels. Additionally, the resolution must certify that program funds allocated to the County can only be used for the boating safety and enforcement programs that are conducted in the County.

The recommended agreement contains Special Provisions, in Section X, including a certification that the obligations created by the agreement do not violate the provisions of Sections 1090 to 1096 of the Government Code, conflicts of interest provisions, that the County will continue with its responsibilities under the agreement during any dispute, and that any allocation reduction for the program will result in a decrease of the County's allotment.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #43, December 9, 2025
BAI #28, September 9, 2025

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Program Agreement
On file with Clerk - Resolution

CAO ANALYST:

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