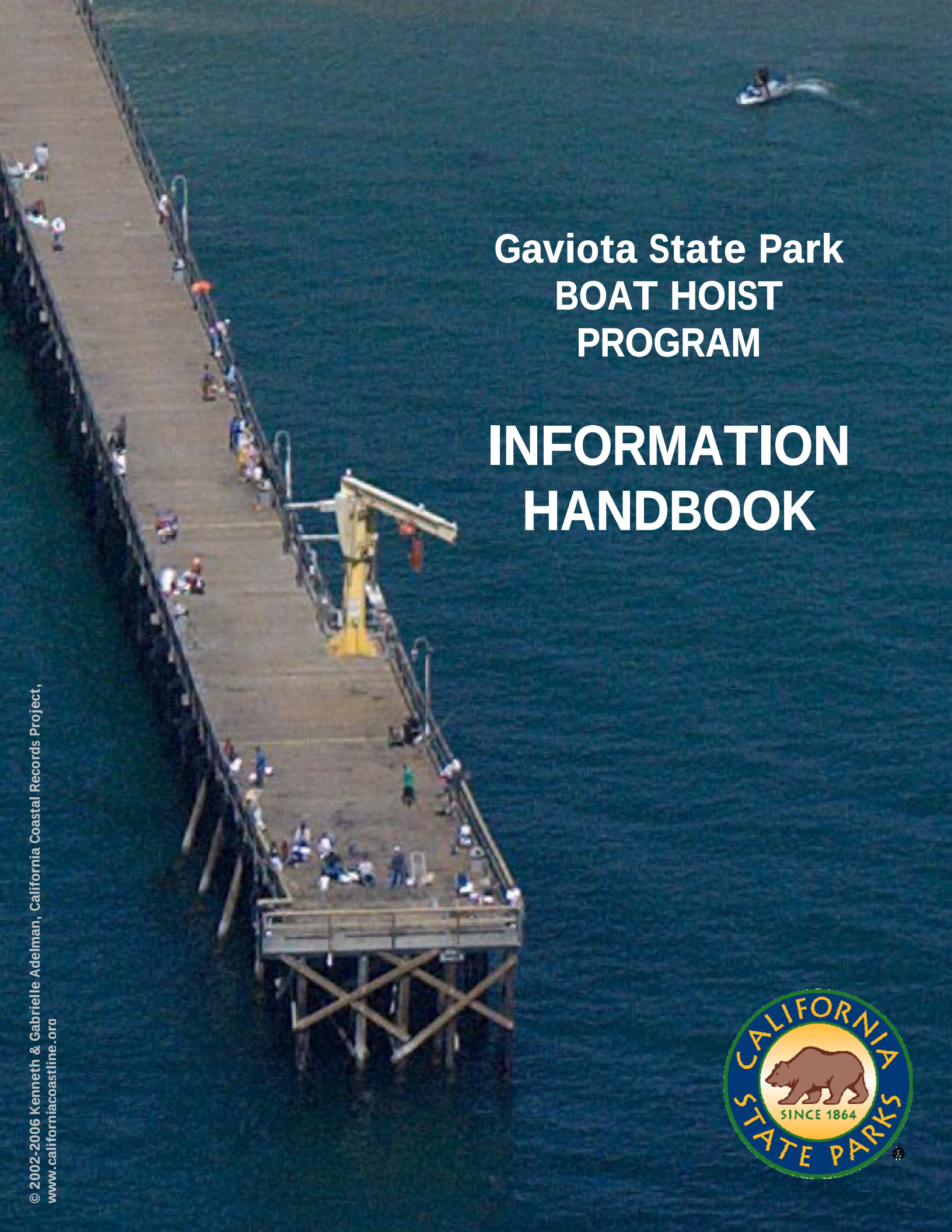


Gaviota State Park BOAT HOIST PROGRAM

INFORMATION HANDBOOK

© 2002-2006 Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, California Coastal Records Project, www.californiacoastline.org

Gaviota State Park
BOAT HOIST PROGRAM

Gaviota State Park

BOAT HOIST PROGRAM

Table of Contents

Overview of the Hoist Program 3

The Gaviota Coast 4

Gaviota State Park 4

Environmental Conditions on the Gaviota Coast 4

The Hoist Operator Program 5

Hoist Operator Qualifications 6

Obtaining Your Hoist Operator I.D. Card 6

Hoist Proximity Card (Vessel Owners Only) 8

Vessel Inspections (Vessel Owners Only) 8

Operating the Hoist 9

Maintaining Your Hoist Privileges 10

Loss of Hoist Privileges 10

Frequently Asked Questions 11

Staying in Touch 12

Overview of the Hoist Program

The boat hoist on the Gaviota pier has been popular with recreational boaters for more than half a century, enabling them to access the waters along the Gaviota Coast for a variety of activities including fishing, diving, surfing and general pleasure boating.

Since Gaviota State Park opened in 1953, California State Parks has maintained the pier and the hoist facility. However, the Gaviota Coast is exposed to extreme weather and ocean conditions. As a result, the hoist has suffered numerous failures over the years, which were frustrating to boaters and park staff alike. Compounding these failures, hoist users were not trained to properly use the hoist. California State Parks spent thousands of dollars and many hours repairing and replacing a number of hoists, but the problems continued.

In 2005, with a grant from the California Department of Boating and Waterways, California State Parks hired a marine engineering company, Northeast Engineers & Consultants, Inc., to make a thorough evaluation of the hoist facility and prepare recommendations for improving it. The company presented its report and recommendations in May 2005. (This report is available for viewing on the web at: www.parks.ca.gov/pages/606/files/report_full_20050617.pdf)

Using the report as a guide, California State Parks undertook a comprehensive overhaul of the hoist facility. It replaced the hoist motor and related equipment, upgraded the electrical system, and installed a state-of-the-art card reader that allows controlled access to the hoist. In addition, it implemented the current Hoist Operator Program to provide a complete training and certification program for all boaters who want to use the hoist. This program involves a thorough inspection of all vessels that will be launched with the hoist.

Between 2006 and mid-2008, California State Parks certified more than 220 vessel owners and 240 deckhands to use the hoist. An indication of the new Hoist Program's success is that no boater or other visitor has suffered injury or property loss from hoist operations since the program began. In addition, no mechanical or electrical failures have occurred to the hoist or its support systems that have forced its closure.

The success of the Hoist Program is a source of pride for Hoist Operators as well as the California State Park staff and volunteers who maintain the hoist and administer the Hoist Program. To continue to ensure that boaters are able to access the outstanding recreational opportunities of the Gaviota Coast will require the continued commitment by all involved in the Hoist Program at Gaviota State Park.

The Gaviota Coast

The Gaviota Coast in Santa Barbara County is considered one of the most spectacular and environmentally important coastal areas in California. It offers outstanding boating, surfing, fishing, diving, and other water-related recreational opportunities.

Gaviota State Park

Gaviota State Park, a unit of the California State Park System, is located on the Gaviota Coast, 15 miles east of Point Conception and 33 miles west of Santa Barbara. Opened to the public in 1953, the park receives over 127,000 visitors annually. In addition to its 2,800 acres of terrestrial habitats, Gaviota State Park protects more than six miles of undeveloped ocean shoreline, oriented in an east-west direction, primarily consisting of rocky bluffs. The boat hoist is located on a 570-foot long public pier that extends from a small sandy beach. With its many natural resources and facilities, the park offers a variety of recreational activities including hiking, camping, boating, fishing, surfing, and swimming. A park store operates on a seasonal basis.

California State Park Rangers, Lifeguards and Maintenance Workers, augmented by seasonal staff and volunteers, provide visitors with a complete range of park services.

Environmental Conditions on the Gaviota Coast

The features that make the Gaviota Coast so popular with boaters also create environmental conditions that can prove dangerous to boaters. Some past failures of the Gaviota boat hoist were caused by these conditions. Educating hoist users about these conditions and the potential impact on their vessels and the hoist is one objective of the Hoist Operator Program.

- **Sundowner Winds** – Because of the topographical characteristics of the Gaviota coast with its steep canyons that cut through the Santa Ynez Mountains, offshore winds periodically arise that blow through the canyons with great force. These winds, known as Sundowners because of the time of day they normally occur, are common along the entire south coast of Santa Barbara County, but are frequently strongest in the Gaviota area. Sundowners can arise in a surprisingly short time.
- **Strong Onshore Winds** – While sundowners blow offshore, the Gaviota coast also experiences strong winds blowing from sea. These onshore winds can reach gale force and higher.
- **Heavy Swells** – As most boaters know, high winds have a direct and dramatic effect on the surface waters of the ocean. Gale force winds can generate swells in excess of 18 to 25 feet, high enough to easily capsize a boat. Because of its exposed position, the pier at Gaviota State Park

Environmental Conditions on the Gaviota Coast (continued)

frequently receives the full impact of these large swells. Attempting to launch or retrieve a vessel when high swells are occurring is not only hazardous to boater and vessel alike, but can also subject the hoist and its various components to extreme stresses that can damage them or cause them to fail.

- **Storms** – Combine gale-force onshore winds with high ocean swells, add driving rain, and you create those weather events called storms. During such events, smart boaters spend their time secure in a warm place on land looking through the latest issue of Surfer or Boater magazine.

To ensure the safety of boaters and to protect the boat hoist and its support facilities, the boat hoist at Gaviota State Park may be closed and/or the ramp raised when any of these conditions exist:

1. Winds in excess of 25 miles per hour.
2. Surf on Gaviota Beach higher than 5 feet.
3. Presence of Small Craft Advisory and/or Gale Warning (depending on local conditions).
4. High tides approaching 6 feet.
5. Strong south winds.

Boaters are encouraged to check a marine weather source for current conditions. NOAA website: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/zone/west/loxmz.htm

The Hoist Operator Program

The Hoist Operator Program at Gaviota State Park has three main objectives:

1. To ensure a safe experience for all park visitors.
2. To train boaters to use the hoist so they can access the recreational resources of the Gaviota coast.
3. To maximize the useful life of the hoist and its related systems while minimizing hoist down time.

VESSEL OWNERS AND DECKHANDS

There are two categories of hoist users: Vessel owners and Deckhands. Both vessel owners and deckhands must complete the Hoist Operator Training.

Vessel owners are the owners of record as shown on California Department of Motor Vehicles vessel registration records. Upon completion of the Hoist Operator Training, vessel owners receive a Hoist Operator I.D. Card and a **Hoist Proximity Card**, which activates the hoist.

Deckhands do not own a vessel, but they assist with launching and retrieving. Deckhands who want to operate the hoist must complete the Hoist Operator Training. They then receive a Hoist Operator I.D. Card. They do not receive a Hoist Proximity Card. They may operate the hoist once the vessel owner has activated it or they may activate the hoist using the vessel owner's Hoist Proximity Card.

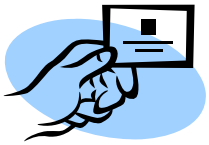
Important: Vessel owners must ensure that Deckhands who use their Proximity Cards are also Certified Hoist Operators. Vessel owners who allow their Proximity Cards to be used by a non-certified person will lose their hoist access privilege.

Hoist Operator Qualifications

To become a Certified Hoist Operator, boaters must meet the following qualifications:

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Be familiar with the **Hoist Program Information Handbook** and the **Hoist Operator Training Handbook.**
3. Complete the Hoist Operator Training and obtain their Hoist Operator I.D. Card.
4. Vessel owners must also obtain a Hoist Proximity Card and pass the Vessel Inspection.

Obtaining Your Hoist Operator I.D. Card



To obtain your Hoist Operator I.D. Card, follow these four steps:

STEP 1. Read the Hoist Program Information Handbook and the Hoist Operator Training Handbook.

- The **Hoist Program Information Handbook** provides an overview of the Hoist Program at Gaviota State Park.
- The **Hoist Operator Training Handbook** provides step-by-step instructions on how to operate the hoist safely and efficiently.
- These free publications are available for viewing and downloading on the Gaviota State Park web page at www.parks.ca.gov.
- Boaters without internet access can request printed copies of these publications by mailing their request to Gaviota Hoist Program, #10 Refugio Beach Road, Goleta, CA 93117.

STEP 2. Join the Hoist E-mail Distribution List

- Join the Hoist Distribution List by sending an e-mail to **gaviotahoist@parks.ca.gov**. Include your e-mail address, first and last name, phone number with area code, and a request to be added to the List. You will receive a reply confirming that you have been added to the Distribution List.
- Only one person may sign up per e-mail address. Multiple sign-ups by one person on behalf of others are not accepted.

Obtaining Your Hoist Operator I.D. Card **(continued)**

STEP 3. Request to attend the Hoist Operator Training

- To be put on the Hoist Operator Training waiting list, boaters should send an e-mail to **gaviotahoist@parks.ca.gov** and include their first and last name, phone number with area code, and e-mail address. Submit only one request per e-mail. Multiple sign-ups by one person on behalf of others are not accepted. **Important: Submitting an e-mail request does NOT guarantee enrollment in upcoming training.**
- Approximately 2 weeks before the next training, the first 20 boaters on the waiting list will receive an e-mail notifying them of the date of the training. They will have 3 business days to respond with their intent to attend the training. If a boater cannot attend on the announced date or does not respond within 3 days, his/her name will be kept on the waiting list and the next boater(s) on the list will receive invitations to attend until the maximum class size of 20 is reached.
- Upon acceptance of the invitation, a confirmation e-mail will announce the place and time of the class and what to bring. Classes are filled only from the waiting list. Drop-ins are not accepted (drop-ins will be asked to leave and will not receive credit for attending).
- Boaters who do not have access to e-mail should mail their request with their first and last name and phone number with area code to Gaviota Hoist Program, #10 Refugio Beach Road, Goleta, CA 93117.

STEP 4. Complete the Hoist Operator Training

- The Hoist Operator Training consists of two parts, a Classroom Session and a Practical Exam. This free training provides boaters with the information they need to know to become certified Hoist Operators.
- The Classroom Session normally lasts about 2 hours. It is presented at a location near Gaviota State Park.
- When you arrive for the Classroom Session, **submit two passport ID photos with a self-addressed stamped envelope**. Be sure your first and last name is written legibly on the back of each photo. The second photo will be used to produce a new Hoist Operator I.D. Card in the event that the first card is lost.
- The second part of the training is the Practical Exam. It is conducted on the pier at Gaviota State Park. A vessel is provided by California State Parks for use during the Exam.
- At the start of the Exam session, California State Park staff and volunteers provide an orientation for all candidates at the hoist. Following the group orientation, each candidate individually demonstrates his/her ability to successfully launch and retrieve a vessel using the hoist and following procedures learned during the Classroom Session.
- Each Practical Exam takes from 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the ability of the candidate.

Obtaining Your Hoist Operator I.D. Card **(continued)**

- Because of the variation in time required for each exam, it is not possible to reserve a specific time for an exam. All candidates must be present at the start of the Exam session.
- After successfully completing the Hoist Operator Training, complete and sign the Hoist User Agreement (See Hoist Training Handbook).

Congratulations! When you complete the Hoist Operator Training and submit your Hoist User Agreement, you will receive your Hoist Operator I.D. Card that entitles you to operate the hoist at Gaviota State Park. It will be mailed to you within 30 business days of completing the Training.

Note: Whenever you operate the hoist, you must display your Hoist Operator I.D. Card prominently and present it to Park staff when requested to do so. Failure to do so may result in loss of hoist privileges.

Hoist Proximity Card (Vessel Owners Only)

The boat hoist at Gaviota State Park is activated by a card reader device located next to the hoist. A Hoist Proximity Card is required to operate the card reader. Hoist Proximity Cards are issued only to vessel owners. To receive a Hoist Proximity Card, vessel owners must:

1. Complete the Hoist Operator Training.
2. Provide proof that their vessel is currently registered.
3. Pass a thorough vessel inspection.

Important: Vessel owners who sell or otherwise transfer ownership of their vessel must return their Hoist Proximity Card to California State Parks, 10 Refugio Beach Road, Goleta, CA 93117. This applies even if the vessel is transferred to another Certified Hoist Operator or User. In addition, the new vessel owner must re-take the vessel inspection.

Vessel Inspections (Vessel Owners Only)

All vessels launched or retrieved using the hoist at Gaviota State Park must undergo a thorough inspection to ensure that they are seaworthy and meet the following requirements:

- Maximum weight, INCLUDING full fuel and water tanks, cannot exceed **two tons** (Vessels are subject to being weighed prior to issuance of the Hoist Proximity Card)
- Vessel must be currently registered and displays current CF tags.
- Vessel must possess the safety equipment listed in the Hoist Operator Training Handbook.
- Vessel lifting points must have backing plates with minimum dimensions of 3" x 3"x 1/8". Stainless steel plates are recommended.
- All sling legs and related hardware must be rated at twice the maximum capacity of the vessel to be lifted and display the ANSI certification label.

Vessel Inspections (continued)

- Lifting hardware, including shackles, must be ANSI rated and meet a minimum 10:1 safety factor. Note: most shackles not made in the U.S. do NOT meet these requirements and are not approved for use at Gaviota State Park. Be sure before you buy.

- Upon transfer of ownership of a vessel that has previously passed this inspection, the vessel must be re-inspected to ensure that it has all Coast Guard safety gear and required sling and sling components.

TO REQUEST A VESSEL INSPECTION:

- Vessel owners should join the Hoist Distribution List and request to be placed on the Vessel Inspection waiting list by sending an e-mail to **gaviotahoist@parks.ca.gov**. They should include their first and last name, phone number with area code, and e-mail address.

- When an inspection date is scheduled, the first 20 boaters on the waiting list will be notified by e-mail and will have 3 business days to respond with their intent to attend. If a boater cannot attend or does not respond within 3 business days, his/her name will be kept on the waiting list and the next boaters on the list will receive an invitation to attend until 20 inspections are scheduled.

- Boaters who e-mail us that they can attend the announced inspection will receive a confirmation e-mail that will include the time of their inspection. Inspection times are determined by the order of names on the waiting list.

- Boaters who do not have access to e-mail should request an inspection by mailing their first and last name and phone number with area code to Gaviota Hoist Program, #10 Refugio Beach Road, Goleta, CA 93117.

- On the day of your inspection, bring your vessel and all related equipment to the day-use parking area at Gaviota State Park. Vessel inspections normally take about 30 minutes to complete.

- Note: During the inspection, ALL vessels are lifted with the hoist to check for correct sling orientation.

Operating the Hoist

To ensure the safety of themselves, the members of their group, and other park visitors, and to maintain their hoist access privileges, Hoist Operators must carefully follow the procedures contained in the ***Hoist Program Information Handbook and the Hoist Operator Training Handbook*** at all times.

Maintaining Your Hoist Privileges

The boat hoist at Gaviota State Park gives boaters access to outstanding recreational opportunities along the Gaviota Coast. Protect your Hoist Operator privileges by following the Hoist Operator Program guidelines, including the following:

- Allow only certified Hoist Operators to use your Hoist Proximity Card.
- Prominently display your Hoist Operator Card at all times when operating the hoist and present it to Park staff when requested to do so.
- Always use a single continuous control line to maintain control of your vessel when launching and retrieving it.
- Maintain a safe distance from your vessel when it is above shoulder height, and ensure that all others do the same.
- Keep all people out of your vessel when it is being raised or lowered.
- Avoid side loading or dragging your vessel at the water line with the hoist.
- Shut off the hoist as soon as launching or retrieval is complete.
- Complete and display a Trip Itinerary Form on the dashboard of your vehicle prior to starting your trip (see Hoist Operator Training Handbook).
- Park only in designated spaces.
- Transfer equipment between vessel and vehicle only in the parking area, NOT at the pier.
- No motor flushing or vessel washing in the park is permitted.
- Pay all required fees. If park entrance station is closed, use the self-registration system.

Loss of Hoist Privileges

California State Parks reserves the right to withdraw Hoist Operator privileges for the following reasons:

- Allowing the hoist to be operated by persons who have not been certified.
- Failing to prominently display the Operator I.D. Card or present it to Park staff when requested to do so.
- Flagrant violation of safety procedures.
- Failure to observe Hoist Operator Program procedures that results in injury or significant property damage.

First offense:

- Deactivation of Hoist Proximity Card.
- Revocation of Hoist Operator I.D. Card and six-month suspension of hoist privileges.
- Mandatory re-take of Hoist Training Class, Practical Exam, and Vessel Inspection for the vessel involved.

Second offense:

- Permanent deactivation of Hoist Proximity Card and revocation of Hoist Operator I.D. Card.

Violation of other hoist program procedures or California State Park regulations may result in citation or suspension of hoist privileges.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I'm not a boat owner. Do I need to complete the Hoist Operator Training?
A. If you plan to operate the hoist, you must complete the Hoist Operator Training.

Q. Why don't you announce when the training sessions are going to be held farther in advance?
A. We would like to provide boaters with as much advance notice as possible. However, operational unknowns such as staffing levels and weather conditions are unpredictable. We make every effort to conduct Hoist Operator Training at least every 3 months. Approximately three weeks prior to the training, we announce the date via the E-mail List and the Recorded Information Line (Boaters without access to e-mail receive a separate notification).

Q. I live a long way from Gaviota State Park. Can I complete the Hoist Operator Training and Vessel Inspection in one day?
A. Unfortunately, no. Even limiting attendance to 20 people, the Hoist Operator Training, which includes both the classroom session and the practical hoist exam, takes 8-9 hours to complete and vessel inspections require up to 10 hours to complete.

During the off-season (Nov-Apr) we try to schedule the Hoist Operator Training and the Vessel Inspections on a single weekend to minimize the need for you to travel. Overnight accommodations are available at motels in the area as well as campgrounds at Gaviota State Park and Refugio and El Capitan State Beaches (fees are required for camping).

During the busy season (May-Oct), Hoist Operator Training is held on one weekend day, but Vessel Inspections have to be held on a different weekend.

Q. I started the Hoist Operator Training in 2006 but I didn't complete it. Do I have to take all of the training now?
A. Yes. If you did not complete the Hoist Operator Training (classroom session AND practical hoist exam) before July 1, 2007, you must take both. If you had your vessel inspected before 7/1/2007 but did not complete the Hoist Operator Training, you must have your vessel re-inspected. The training and inspections have changed significantly since 2007, so it is important that you receive the latest training and that your vessel meets the current standards.

Staying in Touch

Good communication is the key to the success of any program, including the Hoist Operator Program at Gaviota State Park. There are four ways for you to stay up-to-date on what's happening with the Hoist Program:

E-mail

The most efficient way to stay in touch with the Hoist Program is through e-mail.

- Send an e-mail to **gaviotahoist@parks.ca.gov**.
- Include your first and last name and your phone number with area code.
- Only one person may enroll per e-mail address.
- Be sure to notify us if your contact information changes so that you will continue to receive the latest hoist information.

Mail

Boaters who do not have access to e-mail can contact us by mail. Correspondence should be sent to Hoist Program, #10 Refugio Beach Road, Gaviota, CA 93117.

Recorded Information Line

California State Parks maintains a recorded information phone line at (805) 968-1033. We update the information on this line as often as needed to provide the latest condition of the hoist as well as other park-related information. This line does not accept message.

Web site

www.parks.ca.gov is the main web address for California State Parks. Through this portal you can access the web page for Gaviota State Park. The Gaviota web page has links the following Hoist Program elements:

- The **Hoist Program Information Handbook**
- The **Hoist Operator Training Handbook**
- The Hoist E-mail address
- The 2005 Northeast Engineers Report

Notes