

GAVIOTA BOAT HOIST - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

California State Parks has received several questions regarding the boat hoist at Gaviota State Park. The following information has been prepared in response.

- 1. What's happening with the boat hoist at Gaviota State Park?** California State Parks is changing the hoist's hours of operation and is requiring that only State Park employees and Volunteers operate the hoist. Over the next year and a half, we plan to upgrade the hoist and its associated hardware.
- 2. Why is California State Parks making these changes?** Over the last five years there have been a handful of accidents that caused damage to visitor vessels and several near misses, as well as costly breakdowns. Fortunately, no one has been injured, but it was unacceptable to allow this situation to continue. We are implementing these changes in response to recommendations contained in the NE&C Report. Among other things, this study found that operator error combined with a hoist unsuited to the conditions at Gaviota were major contributors to the accidents and breakdowns.
- 3. What is the NE&C Report and where can I get a copy?** The NE&C Report, "Boat Launch and Retrieval Facility Assessment Report," was a study of the boat hoist at Gaviota State Park conducted by Northeast Engineers and Consultants, Inc. over a 4-month period in early 2005. California State Parks contracted with NE&C to evaluate the mechanical and operational aspects of the hoist to determine the cause(s) of the accidents and breakdowns and provide recommendations to for eliminating them. The NE&C Report is available on the California State Parks website at the following address:
http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=606.
- 4. Who will determine which recommendations will be implemented?** Channel Coast District Superintendent Richard Rojas, in consultation with Department of Boating and Waterways (DBAW) and California State Parks engineers, maintenance personnel and other park staff.
- 5. When will the recommendations/improvements to the hoist mentioned in the NE&C Report be implemented?** We will implement operational changes starting in July 2005. We will seek funding to upgrade the hoist and associated hardware from the Department of Boating and Waterways from its Fiscal Year 2006/07 Budget.
- 6. Why wait so long?** By the time we received the NE&C Report in May, it was too late to obtain funding in the 2005/06 budget year, which began July 1. We will need to submit our request for DBAW funding for the next budget year, 06/07.
- 7. Does California State Parks intend to use only their own volunteers or employees to operate the hoist from now on?** No. One of the recommendations in the NE&C Report was to implement a training program to train vessel owners and operators to operate the hoist themselves. Another recommendation was to install a card-reader system to make sure that only people that had received the training could operate the hoist.
- 8. I've been using the Gaviota hoist for years with no problems. Why am I being penalized for the incompetence of others?** Good question. Obviously, most hoist users have been able to use the hoist as it was designed. But the reality is that accidents and breakdowns have occurred. Continuing to allow unrestricted use of the hoist under these circumstances exposes our visitors to unacceptable risk. This includes users who operate the hoist correctly. For example, if a boater misuses the hoist unknowingly or negligently and causes damage to the hoist, it may not malfunction until later. Any

malfunction has the potential to cause serious damage or injury. Morally, we cannot allow that. Economically, the former operating system exposed the State to an unacceptable level of risk.

9. **When will the training program start?** We have not determined a specific start date for the training. We hope to be able to have the program in place and ready by the end of the year. However, we need to complete improvements to the hoist hardware, e.g., install the card-reader system, before trained boaters will be able to use the hoist.
10. **When the training program is implemented, will the vessel owner and his second person both have to attend training?** The only people allowed to operate the hoist will be those who have successfully completed training and have been issued a key card. If a second person attends training and is issued a card, that person may also operate the hoist. If that person has not been issued a key card that person will not be permitted to operate the hoist.
11. **Do you have to be a boat owner to attend the training?** No. California State Parks can provide a vessel for the practical examination. However, all vessels will be subject to a safety inspection before they will be allowed to launch.
12. **Will California State Parks be able to staff the hoist 7/365? If not, what will the hours of operation be?** The hoist will be open 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Thursday through Sunday.
13. **Why is it only open four days a week?** Before deciding which days to operate the hoist, we analyzed boater usage patterns. We found that from May through September, the majority of boaters used the hoist Friday through Sunday. Limited funding for staff and limited availability of trained volunteers meant we could not operate 7 days per week, so we felt we would serve the majority of boaters by operating the hoist on weekends and include two weekdays as well.
14. **The NE&C Report indicates that the hoist must remain at 2-ton maximum rated capacity. What will be required to raise the limit?** See the NE&C Report, page 10; Section 4.1, under Hoist Load Rating.
15. **Does the NE&C Report cover every aspect of launching a vessel (which meets the current requirements), i.e. entering the park, route of entry, pre-launch staging, launch, parking, retrieval, post-launch staging?** No. We are developing an outline that will be distributed at the training. We are also considering producing a video that could be accessed through the State Park website which will address the entire launching and retrieval procedure.
16. **Will these changes affect beach launching?** No. Small boat operators can still launch from the beach at Gaviota State Park 7 days a week. We will be developing signage regarding beach launching guidelines and requirements and will also conduct spot checks for safety equipment.
17. **Where can I get more information?** You can request to be added to the Gaviota Boat Hoist email list to receive the latest news and developments concerning the hoist. Send your name to gaviotahoistupdate@hotmail.com. You can also call 805-968-1033 for recorded status of the hoist, updated regularly.