



# 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Watercraft



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## **Mission:**

The ODNR Division of Watercraft shall provide the finest boating services, facilities, protection and education for users of Ohio’s waterways through the innovative and wise use of our resources.

**1-877-4BOATER (Ohio only)**

**[watercraft.ohiodnr.gov](http://watercraft.ohiodnr.gov)**

## Message from the Director

The year 2013 was an extremely productive year for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), and the ODNR Division of Watercraft was no exception. The division's employees worked diligently this year serving Ohio's boating community efficiently and effectively by educating Ohioans about boater and watercraft safety.



Ohio has more than 450,000 recreational boats, and ranks ninth in the country for registered boats. Additionally, about 4.3 million boats are registered in the Great Lakes, which means about one-third of all recreational boats in the nation are found right here in the Great Lakes.

Boaters in the Great Lakes historically have enjoyed great boating, but over the past few years, we have seen record low water depths. Dredging in Lake Erie, the Ohio River, and other inland lakes is an important way of getting boaters in the water and staying in our ports. The ODNR Division of Watercraft is a user-pay, user-benefit program, and we reinvest the money we receive from Ohio boaters by providing funds for dredging across the state. In 2013, we focused on dredging projects in locations such as the Vermilion Harbor and the West Harbor of Lake Erie. Partnering with Ohio State Parks gives Ohio boaters access points at marinas statewide, which allows Ohioans to keep boating, paddling, fishing and enjoying Ohio's waterways.

Our watercraft officers patrol Lake Erie, the Ohio River, and other waterways throughout the state. With 2.25 million acres of Lake Erie and 451 miles of the Ohio River as well as inland lakes, the ODNR Division of Watercraft officers stayed busy patrolling and offered emergency response when needed.

A highlight for the division was the passage of House Bill 29, also known as the Boater Freedom Act. Ohio Governor John Kasich signed this bill into law in July during Fish Ohio Day in Port Clinton. Former ODNR Division of Watercraft Chief Rodger Norcross and I were both passionate about this bill. The passage of the Boater Freedom Act establishes conditions for watercraft safety inspections, and the goal of the bill is to reduce the number of times state and local officials stop boaters on the water without probable cause. While this legislation specifically deals with local and state authorities, we believe it is a step in the right direction. We want Ohioans and visitors to feel comfortable boating in our great state.

Rodger Norcross retired at the end of October after spending his entire career with the department. While we will miss Rodger, we are certain that Gary Obermiller, with his 28 years of experience with the department, will do an excellent job as the new chief of watercraft.

On behalf of myself and Governor John Kasich, enjoy spending time safely boating on Ohio's waters during 2014, and thank you for a successful 2013 boating season.

Sincerely,

James Zehringer  
Director

## **Administrative Updates**

The ODNR Division of Watercraft has 142 full-time, 13 part-time, and 17 intermittent employees. Commissioned staff focus on the public safety aspect of boating, while remaining staff provide updated boating facilities, programming, regulatory and administrative services such as registration, titling and grant program oversights. Agency staff oversee all field operations and administrative functions of the division.

Law enforcement staff include 20 supervisors, 64 full-time officers/officer specialists, and seven investigators who enforce Ohio's boating laws, provide education programs and investigate boating-related accidents.

Significant personnel changes within the ODNR Division of Watercraft during 2013:

- Chief Rodger Norcross retired.
- Gary Obermiller was hired as Chief.
- Jeff Baker was promoted to Alum Creek Area Supervisor replacing Andy Hollenback who was promoted.
- Eric Reed was promoted to Boating Education and Enforcement Section Training Coordinator.
- Christina Kuchle was hired as Northwest Ohio Assistant Scenic Rivers Manager.
- Officer Harry Moore was promoted to Law Enforcement Search and Rescue Coordinator.

## **Waterways Safety Council**

The Waterways Safety Council is an important advocate for recreational boating. The council includes five members who are appointed by the Governor to five-year terms to act in an advisory capacity to the ODNR Division of Watercraft Chief, and they represent the industry, educational and recreational aspects of boating. There is currently one vacant position.

Current members are J. Thomas Pascoe (Chairman) of Sandusky, Chad Taylor (Vice Chair) of Wilmington, Doug McLarnan of Gambier and Gary Branstetter of Dayton.

# Waterways Safety Fund

The ODNR Division of Watercraft is funded through the Waterways Safety Fund. The fund represents boating dollars and was created by the 101st General Assembly in 1955. The Waterways Safety Fund is the sole mechanism used to finance division operations, payrolls, grant programs and other state boating programs. The fund is comprised of a share of the state motor vehicle fuel tax (0.875 percent), watercraft registration and titling fees, account interest, fines and federal grants.

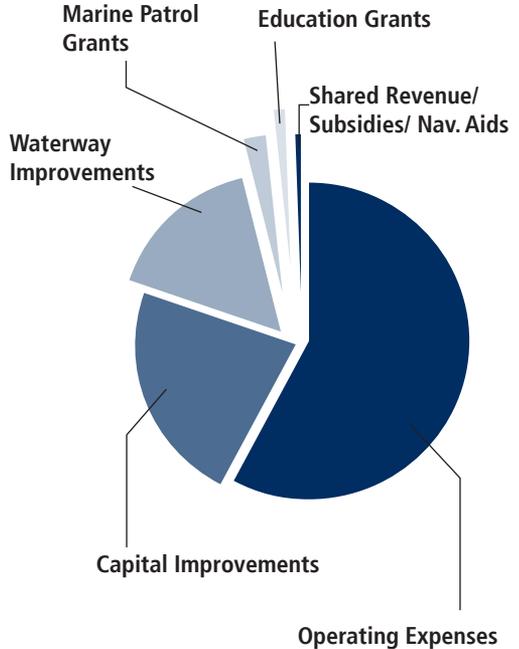
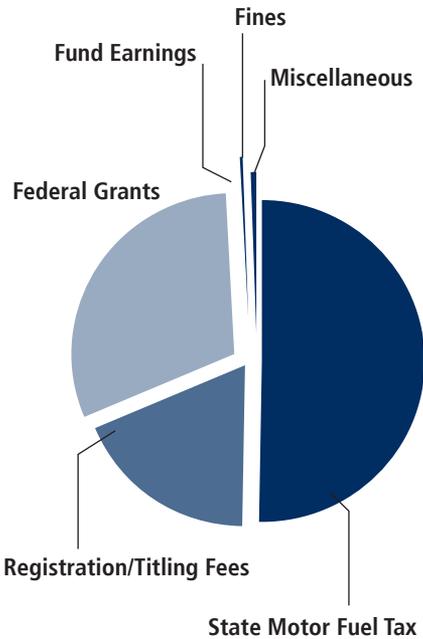
*Revenues:*

State Motor Fuel Tax .....	\$15,217,072
Registration/Titling Fees .....	5,528,157
Federal Grants .....	9,245,457
Fund Earnings .....	54,013
Fines .....	72,800
Miscellaneous .....	117,961
<b>Total Revenue .....</b>	<b>\$30,235,460</b>

*Expenditures:*

Operating Expenses .....	\$16,353,243
Capital Improvements .....	6,401,417
Waterway Improvements* .....	4,481,457
Marine Patrol Grants .....	574,711
Education Grants .....	343,117
Shared Revenue/Subsidies/ Navigational Aids .....	114,773
<b>Total Expenditures .....</b>	<b>\$28,268,718</b>

*\*Dredging support to Ohio State Parks.*



## Surveys

The ODNR Division of Watercraft continues to use data gathered through customer input in order to better serve our boating constituents. Data is currently being collected for the 2013-2014 cycle through the tri-annual "Survey of Recreational Boater Safety and Participation in Ohio." This survey, sent out to 2,500 registered boat owners in the state, will continue to be used by division staff to guide efforts to improve programs and services statewide.

## Registration and Titling

The Registration and Titling section serves as Ohio's repository and historic reference for all boat registrations issued since 1960. It provides boat information to the general public, registration agents, boat owners, boat dealers and law enforcement agencies throughout Ohio and the United States, including private businesses, U.S. Coast Guard, Ohio Clerk of Courts title offices and other states.

Registration/Accounts Receivable functions include overseeing the registration sales; monetary data entering, auditing, and posting of all watercraft registrations statewide (i.e. mail renewals, online renewals, as well as traditional, historical, documented, temporary and alternative registrations for hand-powered vessels). This section is also responsible for the issuance of temporary registrations, veteran registrations, dealer and livery licenses; collection of revenue from registration sales; and coordination and training of registration agents who sell watercraft registrations.

Registration/Titling functions include downloading a program called Watercraft Information System (WIS) Remote. This program allows Web-based sales of boat registrations. Currently, most of the contracted independent watercraft agents throughout Ohio are using this new program. The WIS Remote program allows ODNR Division of Watercraft staff the ability to search vessels more rapidly and more efficiently. In addition, WIS Remote provides improved customer service, quicker capability in correcting and updating watercraft vessels and outboard motor titles issued by County Clerk of Court title offices. It also assists with the scheduling of vessel inspections and Hull Identification Number (HIN) issuances.

*Boaters paid \$5.5 million in boat registration and titling fees in 2013.*

The Recreational Boating Fishing Foundation’s (RBFF) Boat Registration Marketing Program was a success for the third year. The division registered 1,119 lapsed vessels by using this program. The division will again work together for the fourth year with the RBFF to market a boat renewal registration program for motorized boat registrations that have not been renewed and will expire March 1, 2014.

*Accomplishments*

- Renewed 19,431 registrations online.
- Renewed 36,514 registrations via mail renewal.
- Maintained a two- to four-day turnaround for processing online and mail renewals.
- Issued 2,138 Hull Identification Numbers.
- Three new watercraft registration agents added statewide including:

<i>County</i>	<i>Registration Agent</i>
Hamilton County	Colerain License Agency, Cincinnati
Montgomery County	Eagle Creek Marine, Dayton
Tuscarawas County	Tuscarawas County Clerk of Courts, New Philadelphia

*2013 Registration and Titling Statistics*

Total Registered Boats .....	450,018
Total Registered Livery Boats .....	7,549
Total Alternative Registrations .....	39,065
Dealer Registrations .....	634
Telephone Calls Handled .....	42,648
Hull Identification Numbers Issued .....	2,138
Registrations Entered .....	85,879
Mail Renewals Processed .....	36,514
Online Renewals Processed .....	19,431
New Titles Entered .....	37,523
Titles Audited .....	82,763
Titles Corrected .....	14,364

*Canoe/Kayak Registrations*

Paddlesports remain among the fastest growing of all outdoor recreation activities. The number of registered canoes and kayaks in Ohio increased tremendously from 2003 to 2012. Statistics show 60,065 canoes and kayaks were Ohio-registered in 2003 compared to 126,504 registered in 2013, or an increase of 110 percent.

## Resource Planning

### *Water Trails*

In 2013, the Water Trails Program provided \$6,600 for updating and printing maps and brochures as well as the purchase of signage for the Great Miami River, Mad River and Stillwater River Water Trails. This was a coordinated effort between ODNR, the Miami Conservancy District and other local partners. The Water Trails Program partners with local sponsors to establish a network of waterway trails to improve access as well as increase safety, awareness and participation in paddlesports.

### *Clean Vessel Act Grant (CVA)*

Eligible CVA grant activities encompass the construction and renovation of pump-out and sanitary dump stations, including floating restrooms or other structures that are not connected to land. Eligible grant activities also include processes necessary to hold and transport sewage to treatment plants, such as holding tanks, plumbing and bleed-ion facilities.

<i>Current CVA Projects</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Anchor's Point Marina .....	\$10,742.00
Cleveland North Coast Harbor .....	45,000.00
East 55th Street Marina .....	22,236.00
Four Seasons Marina .....	12,615.00
Ironton Riverfront .....	55,637.50
Mosquito Lake .....	96,714.00
Tibbel's Marina .....	9,033.01
Venetian Marina .....	21,210.00
West Harbor Marina .....	10,086.60
Wildwood Marina .....	10,236.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$293,510.11</b>

*The ODNR Division of Watercraft has returned more than \$55 million in funding support through the Waterways Safety Fund for community boating safety education programs, marine law enforcement programs and boating access facility projects from 1998 - 2013.*

## Recreational Harbor Evaluation Program

The Recreational Harbor Evaluation Program Grant provides up to 100 percent reimbursement assistance to eligible political subdivisions and state/federal agencies for dredging on the Ohio River, Lake Erie and their tributaries.

### 2013 Awarded Projects

Ashtabula River Dredging, Ashtabula .....	\$40,000.00
Conneaut Harbor Dredging, Conneaut .....	51,999.97
Fairport Harbor Launch Ramp Project, Fairport Harbor .....	40,875.00
Lucas County Cooley Canal Dredge Project .....	332,839.00
Vermilion River Dredging .....	506,000.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$971,713.97</b>

### Cooperative Boating Facility Grants

The ODNR Division of Watercraft works with local, state and federal agencies and conservancy districts to provide funding assistance through the Waterways Safety Fund for recreational boating public access projects statewide. Ohio boaters enjoy free parking and boat launching access at hundreds of public sites statewide, including most of Ohio's 74 state parks. From 1998 through 2013, the ODNR Division of Watercraft awarded to local communities a total of nearly \$50 million in funding assistance through the Cooperative Boating Facilities Grant Program to renovate, repair and construct public boating access facilities statewide.

### 2013 Completed Projects

County	Project Name	Amount
Ashtabula	Ohio State Parks - Geneva Transient Facility .....	\$800,000
Champaign	Ohio State Parks - Kiser Lake Dock Facility .....	80,000
Cuyahoga	Ohio State Parks - Edgewater Marina Demolition .....	1,700,000
Franklin	Ohio State Parks - Red Bank Recreation Area .....	150,000
Scioto	Ohio State Parks - Shawnee Courtesy Docks .....	66,300
Trumbull	Ohio State Parks - Mosquito Lake Rt. 88 Ramp Rehab .....	400,000
Warren	Ohio State Parks - Caesar Creek Marina Design .....	997,847
<b>Total .....</b>		<b>\$4,194,147</b>

## *Navigational Aids Grants*

Buoys and signs to mark Ohio's waterways are provided to political subdivisions at no charge through the ODNR Division of Watercraft Navigational Aids Grants Program.

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Amount</i>
City of Ashtabula .....	\$903
Cleveland Metroparks Lake Erie .....	1,548
Columbus Recreation and Parks .....	2,322
Eastlake Ohio Port Authority .....	2,322
City of Maumee .....	387
Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District .....	13,287
City of Newton Falls .....	516
Ohio State Parks .....	24,517
ODNR Division of Wildlife .....	2,322
City of Rossford .....	774
City of Sandusky .....	1,290
Toledo Area Metroparks .....	1,806
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$51,994</b>

## *Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG)*

The BIG program is offered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and administered by the ODNR Division of Watercraft to construct, renovate and maintain transient docking facilities for use by recreational boats 26 feet and longer, and to produce and distribute information about the program.

In 2013, the division continued to work on projects across Ohio, including these projects currently in the engineering design or construction phases:

Geneva State Park .....	\$100,000.00
Shrock's Marina .....	96,411.90
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$196,411.90</b>

## Scenic Rivers

The Scenic Rivers Program facilitates the protection of 14 designated wild, scenic and recreational river systems across the State of Ohio. This includes 24 different stream segments totaling 800 river miles. The most recent river system designated was the Ashtabula River in October 2008. The Scenic Rivers Program is also responsible for the management of 2,314 acres of ODNR owned and protected "Scenic River Lands" as well as 3,650 acres of private land protected under conservation easements.

### *Program Highlights for 2013:*

The division completed a strategic plan specific to aquatic invasive species (AIS). The overarching goal of the plan is to implement a coordinated approach to minimizing the ecological and socio-economic impacts of AIS in the State of Ohio with an emphasis on recreational boating. The goal will be achieved by focusing on four main objectives, including: (1) collaboration and coordination with other agencies, (2) education of the public and division staff, (3) introduction of legislation and regulation adaptation and (4) addressing recreational facility needs.

Division staff worked with Ohio Sea Grant and The Ohio State University to post 100 "Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers" signs at state owned, unlimited horsepower ramps across the state.

In accordance with Ohio Revised Code Sections 1547.81 and 1547.82, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources has approval authority over publicly funded projects within 1,000 feet of a state designated wild, scenic and recreational river system. Scenic Rivers Program staff review and facilitate the approval of such projects. Major projects reviewed in 2013 that continue to be reviewed into 2014 include the following:

- Harpersfield Dam Repair, Grand River, Lake County – While the Scenic Rivers Program typically advocates for dam removal for ecological benefits and to increase safety for recreational paddlers, the Harpersfield Dam is proposed to be replaced or repaired at or very near to its present location. Maintaining this structure will prevent the upstream migration and spawning of sea lampreys above the dam and eliminate the future need to treat these upstream sections of the river with lampricide. Scenic Rivers staff will continue to work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ashtabula Metro Parks, ODNR Division of Wildlife and other local partners on this project. The USACE is currently working on its internal process of approving the Detailed Project Report.

- The Ohio Department of Transportation is proposing to replace the Damascus Bridge on State Route 109, over the Maumee River in Henry County. This project raised concern among Scenic Rivers staff due to the high volume boat traffic in this section of the Maumee River. Scenic Rivers staff have had field meetings and conference calls with Ohio Department of Transportation staff, consultants and watercraft officers to mitigate potential impacts to the Maumee State Recreational River and ensure the safety of boaters. As part of the project, the realignment of the bridge may also result in the creation of a new boating access near one of the old abandoned bridge approaches and abutments.
- Northwest Scenic Rivers staff have been coordinating activity with ODNR Division of Soil and Water engineers, the Seneca County Soil and Water District and the Sandusky River Watershed Coalition to help a private property owner stabilize a section of stream bank behind their home on the Sandusky State Scenic River. Coordination from these groups has provided both financial assistance and technical support to slow the erosion of the stream bank.
- Riverwood Restoration Project, East Branch Chagrin River, Geauga County – The Holden Arboretum owns a great deal of land along the East Branch of the Chagrin State Scenic River. Many years ago, on a portion of the property, a levee was constructed along the stream channel, preventing the stream from accessing its floodplain during large rains. A grant was applied for to facilitate the removal of the levee, conduct native planting and restore an intermittent stream flowing into the East Branch. Scenic Rivers worked with the Holden Arboretum on this successful project because of the importance of restoring the natural stream channel and floodplain.
- The Central Ohio Scenic Rivers region coordinated on 10 large public projects in 2013. The biggest project of the year was the expansion of State Route 315 along the Olentangy State Scenic River in Delaware County. Other major projects included the installation of a roundabout along Interstate 70 in Madison County near the Little Darby Creek State Scenic River and the restoration of a failing bank along the Kokosing State Scenic River in Knox County.

## Scenic Rivers Stream Quality Monitoring (SQM)

The Scenic Rivers SQM volunteers helped teach workshops and collect scenic river data. Data provides baseline river health information and is tracked long-term in a database shared with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. Ohio was the first state to use volunteer data in state 305(b) water quality reports.

	<i>Workshops</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Monitored Sites</i>	<i>SQM Samples</i>	<i>Reference Sites</i>
Central	9	2,040	45	215	39
Northeast	7	1,328	59	175	31
Northwest	6	37	8	19	14
Southwest	9	1,200	25	82	23

## Public Information and Education

### *Boating Education and Events*

The ODNR Division of Watercraft enjoyed participation in various community events including safety fairs, marine industry trade shows, education programs, dedications, community forums and much more.

### *Courses Taught by Watercraft Officers*

	<i>Courses</i>	<i>Audience</i>
Boating Safety Presentations .....	142	9,295
Ohio Boating Education Course (OBEC) .....	109	983
Assisted U.S. Power Squadrons and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary .	66	630
Canoeing .....	36	923
Kayaking .....	26	4,120
Sailing .....	1	24
Other Certified Courses .....	33	949
Power Boating .....	19	139
Personal Watercraft .....	4	155
Water Rescue/Survival .....	9	141

### *Number of Boater Safety Education Certificates Issued*

#### *Classroom*

ODNR Division of Watercraft .....	1,193
OBEC Taught by Others (non-ODNR) .....	867
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary .....	393
U.S. Power Squadrons .....	261

#### *Online*

BoatED .....	5,395
BoaterExam .....	1,469
BoatUS Foundation .....	1,197

Home Study .....

948
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**Total .....** **11,723**

**Replacement Cards .....** **1,000**

## 2013 Boating Safety Education Grants

The Waterways Safety Fund provides financial assistance to support community boating safety education and boating skills programs. In 2013, a total of \$343,116.75 in grants was awarded to 29 program recipients statewide. The ODNR Division of Watercraft has provided more than \$3.9 million over the past decade to support diverse boating education programs in dozens of Ohio communities.

<i>County</i>	<i>Grantee</i>	<i>Award</i>
Allen	Lima Power Squadron .....	\$6,318.00
Ashtabula	Ashtabula County Educational Services .....	5,208.00
Athens	Raccoon Creek Partnership .....	3,740.55
Belmont	Eastern Ohio Extension Camps Inc. ....	13,700.00
Butler	Great Miami Rowing Center .....	11,280.00
Cuyahoga	Bay Village Schools .....	2,329.44
Cuyahoga	Berea Power Squadron .....	21,297.84
Cuyahoga	Cleveland Metroparks .....	29,999.00
Cuyahoga	Cleveland State University .....	25,116.94
Cuyahoga	Cleveland Treatment Center .....	4,782.00
Cuyahoga	Rocky River Power Squadron .....	23,747.75
Delaware	Columbus Sail and Power Squadron .....	10,192.92
Franklin	Disability Resource Network Inc. ....	13,052.20
Hamilton	Cincinnati Recreation Commission .....	7,532.00
Hamilton	Regional Greenspace Initiative .....	7,100.00
Hamilton	Xavier University .....	14,031.00
Lake	City of Mentor .....	10,980.00
Lake	Lake Metroparks .....	15,786.85
Lake	Spirit of America Foundation .....	10,950.00
Lawrence	Lawrence County Sheriff's Office .....	8,237.50
Logan	U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 82-06-08 .....	4,055.00
Lorain	Educational Service Center of Lorain County .....	25,319.00
Lucas	Maritime Academy of Toledo .....	12,100.84
Mercer	U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 6-12 .....	3,991.00
Richland	Mohican School in the Out-of-Doors Inc. ....	2,953.43
Richland	North Central Ohio Safe Boating Council .....	7,032.10
Richland	Ohio Conference of the United Church of Christ Temple Hills ....	9,405.59
Summit	Akron Power Squadron .....	19,635.00
Summit	Barberton Parks and Recreation Commission .....	13,242.80
	<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$343,116.75</b>

## *Courses Taught by Education Grant Recipients*

	<i>Courses</i>	<i>Audience</i>
Adaptive Paddling .....	2	18
Advanced Courses .....	29	243
Canoeing .....	107	1,679
Kayaking .....	314	3,594
Ohio Boater Education Course .....	45	519
NASBLA Approved Courses .....	27	168
Power Boating .....	23	352
Presentations .....	16	3,588
Personal Watercraft .....	21	269
Rowing .....	2	48
Sailing .....	74	664
Stand Up Paddleboard .....	105	624
Canoeing Instructor .....	2	24
Kayaking Instructor .....	2	21
Sailing Instructor .....	0	0

## *Volunteer Program*

Volunteers are an integral part of the ODNR Division of Watercraft and contributed 3,642.7 hours in 2013. They taught sailing, canoeing and river rescue; performed Stream Quality Monitoring on Ohio's State Scenic Rivers; and assisted with various fairs and festivals, including boat shows and the division's Natural Resources Park kayak pond at the Ohio State Fair. There were 137 contractual statewide volunteers.

## *Media Outreach*

The ODNR Division of Watercraft aired a series of public boating safety messages on selected broadcast stations around Ohio. These safety awareness messages focused attention on the importance of properly wearing a life jacket and staying sober while boating. The division produced and distributed more than 50 news releases, feature columns, weekly boating reports and media advisories in addition to conducting more than 100 media interviews statewide about various boating topics.

## *Wear It Ohio!*

Ohio participated in the "Ready, Set, Wear It!" Life Jacket World Record Day and had 897 life jackets worn during the May 18, 2013, event. Ninety people from around the state wore inflatable life jackets while 807 wore inherently buoyant life jackets. Ohio had the highest participation rate in one state, with the nearly 900 participants attending one of 16 events. Ohio also hosted the largest U.S. event at Stillwater Prairie Reserve, sponsored by the Miami County Park District, with 408 participants wearing life jackets. At nearly 200 events around the world, 5,774 people inflated their inflatable life jacket or wore an inherently buoyant life jacket, breaking the world record for life jacket wear.

## *Ohio State Fair*

A total of 3,939 state fair patrons participated July 24 - August 4 at the division's kayak pond for a daily average of 328 participants. With 17 sessions each day, Monday, July 29, saw the largest number of participants, young and old, with 378 paddlers.

The kayak pond measures more than 7,000 square feet with approximately 52,000 gallons of water. The 2014 Ohio State Fair will be held July 23 - August 3 and will again feature the kayak pond for the sixth consecutive year. For many fairgoers, the kayak pond has served as their first on-water paddling experience and is a highlight of the Ohio State Fair.

## **Law Enforcement/Search and Rescue**

The ODNR Division of Watercraft continues to protect our Lake Erie international northern border working with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Additional law enforcement responsibilities include addressing security concerns on Lake Erie, the Ohio River and inland waterways during presidential, vice presidential, and diplomatic visits to Ohio. Officers and their supervisors worked with the Department of Homeland Security and other state and local enforcement agencies to participate in tactical security exercises to enhance public safety.

The ODNR Division of Watercraft was officially accredited under the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program. Established by NASBLA and recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard, the BOAT Program was created to ensure the readiness of law enforcement and emergency response boat crews throughout the country. Agencies who adopt this national standard of training, typing and credentialing assure their ability to conduct missions on our nation's waterways safely and effectively, and operate seamlessly with their federal, state, county, tribal and local maritime partners.

The division continued to aggressively enforce laws to remove alcohol and drug impaired boaters from state waterways and participated in state and national media campaigns such as “Get On Board With A Sober Boater” and “Operation Dry Water.” These programs educate boaters on the dangers of alcohol and drugs while boating and guide enforcement agencies on state waterways to unify patrol efforts. In 2013, state watercraft officers contacted more than 50,000 boaters resulting in 71 arrests for boating while intoxicated. More than 400 citations for other alcohol and drug-related violations were also issued.

*2013 State Watercraft Officer Statistics*

Number of Officers .....	64
Contacts Made .....	50,112
OUI Arrests .....	71
Accidents Investigated .....	160
Written Inspections .....	7,618
Spot Inspections .....	1,770
Visual Inspections .....	1,375
Livery Checks .....	72
Vessel Assists .....	410
Fatalities .....	13

*Operation Dry Water*

The ODNR Division of Watercraft was among a number of enforcement agencies that participated in a nationwide crackdown on drunk boating known as Operation Dry Water, a coordinated marine enforcement effort developed and promoted by NASBLA. Ohio watercraft officers contacted boaters on 456 vessels and made 10 arrests for boating while intoxicated during this special enforcement weekend June 28-30. A total of 121 other alcohol and boating-related citations were issued in addition to 423 warnings.

*The ODNR Division of Watercraft was accredited by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators for adopting the national standards of training, typing and credentialing of the Boat Operations and Training program.*

## 2013 Marine Patrol Assistance Grants

Annually, the ODNR Division of Watercraft provides financial assistance from the Waterways Safety Fund in support of community marine law enforcement programs to help enhance waterways safety. In 2013, a total of \$574,711 was distributed to 24 local law enforcement agencies in support of their marine patrol units. The division has provided more than \$6 million in boating dollars over the past decade to support marine law enforcement activities in dozens of Ohio communities.

<i>County</i>	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Butler	Butler County Sheriff's Office .....	\$22,110.29
Cuyahoga	Rocky River Police Marine Patrol .....	24,423.75
Erie	Huron Police Harbor Patrol .....	26,669.12
Erie	Vermilion Police Marine Patrol .....	26,897.06
Franklin	Columbus Police, Marine Park Unit .....	28,264.71
Hamilton	Hamilton County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol .....	17,095.59
Knox	Knox County Sheriff's Office .....	20,142.01
Lake	Lake County Sheriff Marine Patrol .....	32,000.00
Lawrence	Lawrence County Sheriff's Office .....	16,762.50
Lorain	Lorain Port Authority .....	32,000.00
Lucas	Lucas County Sheriff's Office .....	28,179.78
Mahoning	Berlin Lake Marine Patrol .....	20,146.95
Montgomery	Five Rivers Metro Parks .....	18,147.43
Ottawa	Ottawa County Sheriff's Office .....	32,000.00
Ottawa	Port Clinton Harbor Patrol .....	19,996.73
Ottawa	Put-In-Bay Police Department .....	31,000.00
Pickaway	Pickaway County Sheriff's Office .....	13,518.00
Portage	Portage County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol Unit .....	17,475.00
Richland	City of Mansfield, Clear Fork Reservoir Police .....	24,389.71
Ross	Ross County Sheriff's Marine Patrol .....	18,691.18
Sandusky	Sandusky County Sheriff's Marine Patrol .....	22,110.29
Scioto	Scioto County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol .....	18,691.18
Summit	Summit County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol .....	32,000.00
Tuscarawas	Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District .....	32,000.00
<b>Total</b> .....		<b>\$574,711.28</b>

## Awards

The following recognitions were received in 2013 for exceptional achievement and dedication:

- Mary Hughes received the 2013 Lake Erie Safe Boating Council's Boater of the Year Award. She administers the ODNR Division of Watercraft's boating safety education grant program. The award honored Hughes for her distinguished support and service to the Lake Erie Safe Boating Council.
- The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) awarded the ODNR Division of Watercraft with the Compass Award, which recognizes agencies for significant measures and leadership taken to develop a model of performance in a specific area. Agencies receiving this award show that their programs, efforts or initiatives truly enhanced our nation's safety and security, and these agencies have become a model to follow.
- The division created an Officer Water Survival Course for their officers designed to prepare them for the unexpected. The NASBLA Enforcement and Training Committee worked with Ohio to format and test the course to meet NASBLA's Boat Operations and Training (BOAT) Program standards.
- The ODNR Division of Watercraft Chief Rodger Norcross received the NASBLA President's Award for his inspiring service as chairman of the BOAT Program's Advisory Board; vice chairman of NASBLA's Enforcement and Training Committee; and as a member of the Preparedness and Response Committee. Chief Norcross was also recognized for his leadership in the development of the new officer water survival course.
- Valerie Cox, ODNR Division of Watercraft's boating education coordinator, was honored as the Northern Region Boating Educator of the Year by NASBLA. Cox maintains and inventories all course materials; trains and certifies new instructors each year; provides annual updates to more than 180 instructors; and teaches classroom courses.
- The ODNR Division of Watercraft was presented the 2013 Western Lake Erie Tall Ships Challenge/War of 1812 Battle of Lake Erie Re-Enactment Team Award by the U.S. Coast Guard for exceptional meritorious service during the planning, support and execution of the three month-long event on Lake Erie.

## **Regional Reports**

### **North Region**

ODNR Division of Watercraft staff in the North Region (27 counties) face unique challenges as this is the state's busiest region. About one-third of all Ohio boating activity occurs on Lake Erie, which also has the largest concentration of sport fishing activity. The region shares an international border with Canada and state borders with Indiana, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

The division has five area offices in the region (Ashtabula, Akron, Cleveland, Sandusky, Maumee Bay). Within this region there are six supervisors, three investigators, 25 officers, 12 clerical employees, three scenic rivers employees and five natural resources specialists.

#### *Region Highlights in 2013*

The bicentennial celebration of the Battle of Lake Erie took place August 29 through September 2. In addition to the 18 tall ships uniting to re-enact the historic battle, there were numerous celebrations at ports along the shores of Lake Erie.

### **Central Region**

The Central Region (34 counties) features some of Ohio's busiest inland boating waterways and serves the capital city of Columbus, which includes the Governor's office, the state's Emergency Operations Center and ODNR's administrative headquarters.

The division has three area offices in the region (Alum Creek, Cambridge, Wapakoneta). Within this region there are four supervisors, two investigators, 16 officers, six clerical employees, two scenic rivers employees and one natural resources specialist.

#### *Region Highlights in 2013*

The East Bank Marina Boat Ramp Rehabilitation Project was completed at Grand Lake St. Marys.

Seneca Lake Marina was renovated, including improvements to the pump-out station provided by a Clean Vessel Act grant.

## **South Region**

The South Region (27 counties) includes one of the nation's busiest commercial and recreational river corridors as nearly half of the 981-mile Ohio River serves as a state border between Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky. The region also includes major urban centers that include the Cincinnati, Dayton and Springfield metro areas.

The division has three area offices in the region (East Fork, Scioto County, Springfield). Within this region there are three supervisors, two investigators, 18 officers, five clerical employees, two scenic rivers employees and three natural resources specialists.

### *Region Highlights in 2013*

The remote office located at Caesar Creek Lake was reopened to better serve area boaters.



## Help Protect Scenic Rivers

Scenic Rivers license plates support conservation of endangered species in Ohio's most pristine paddling waterways. For every license purchased, \$15 goes directly toward scenic river protection.



[oplates.com](http://oplates.com)

The Scenic Rivers Program has a long history of river protection and conservation. To learn more, go to **watercraft.ohiodnr.gov**

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