



Paddlesports Committee
Annual Report
2022-2023 Committee Charges, Membership, and Next Cycle
Recommendations
August 15, 2023

Chair: Kim Jackson, Arizona
Vice Chair: Annie Grenier, Alaska

NASBLA Paddlesports Committee Charter

Paddlesports Vision Statement

NASBLA's Paddlesports Committee provides a venue for a diverse group of stakeholders to engage with NASBLA members in productive dialogue to find actionable opportunities to partner and promote paddlesports while growing a culture of safety across the United States so that over time the incidence of accident and injuries declines even while participation increases. The Committee strives to develop recommendations and work products to the NASBLA membership based on the best data available and professional judgment of its diverse members.

Program recommendations will:

- *Advance the strategic plans of the National Recreational Boating Safety Program and NASBLA;*
- *Incorporate best practices and current research;*
- *Seek to mitigate risk factors, to grow a culture of paddling safety;*
- *Assure that the paddlesports community has the tools, information and messaging to reduce incidents, injuries and fatalities; and*
- *Connect the public, member organizations, and stakeholders with the products of the committee and others.*

Paddlesports Committee members are assembled into project teams, taking the lead on specific, assigned charges and monitoring activities.

This report provides a summary of committee deliverables and work products for the 2022-2023 Committee year.

PADDLE_2023-1 Data & Trends

Conduct a in depth study of each reportable, human powered watercraft fatality between 2021-2022 to determine if there are any trends with brands, models, sizes of the vessels, and life jacket use while the accident occurred. Use this study and other data trends for NASBLA to potentially advocate for an amendment in the 2025 reauthorization to the trust fund that includes an excise tax on kayaks, canoes, SUP's, paddles, and life jackets. (Revised, carryover) (NASBLA 2.1, 2.5)

Needs Statement: Paddlecraft activities are growing in popularity across the country, including in the area of sport fishing. We know little about these recreationalists, their decisions, current contributions to the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Safety Trust Fund (Trust Fund), water awareness and education, and their public water access needs. We do know State agencies' safety response requests to these recreationalists are increasing as is the demand for more and differing types of public access sites among different recreationalists, in different locations, and for a variety of uses. The states are managing a growing number of paddlecraft users while demands for various types of public access is increasing, safety issues are growing, and states have insufficient information to inform their actions to best meet the needs of the public.

Measure of Effectiveness: A comprehensive, qualitative, and quantitative, paddlesports in depth study of each reportable, human powered watercraft fatalities (2021). This date can be used as a statistical summary, behavior analysis, and increased awareness of waterway management for State Program use. Use this study and other data trends for NASBLA to potentially advocate for an amendment in the 2025 reauthorization to the trust fund that includes an excise tax on kayaks, canoes, SUP's, paddles, and life jackets.

Deliverable(s): Under the leadership of Craig Watson, during the time period of February to the writing of this report, the charge has completed seven (7) conference calls. The team is seeking more details from several states than what is reported federally, in order to see if the data is consistent with BARD reporting. The following states contributed, Maryland, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Arizona. Issues have arisen on how detailed the reports have been or not been (including some of the following: life jacket wear, type of vessel, environment, etc.). At this time the lack of detail prevents a trend from presenting itself. Next steps for work to continue: requested specific paddlesports information from the BARD report, ask more states to contribute data, compare BARD report to what states are reporting, and much more. Findings of work complete this cycle, a total of 153 human powered vessel reports (fatalities) for 2021 BARD Report are as follows:

1. 63 of 153 (41%) vessel reports did not identify the manufacturer. Manufacturer field-38 boxes left blank, 6 listed as other, 5 listed as type of craft, 14 listed as unknown. This incomplete reporting makes it extremely difficult to correctly identify trends related to manufacturer, model, length of vessel.
2. 114 of 153 (75%) of fatal were reported to have NOT been wearing a personal flotation device. After reading the report synopsis closely Additional victims were found to be not wearing, or incorrectly wearing, PFDs. In these cases, it was contradicting pfd worn field in the BARD report.
3. All fields listed that ZERO operators had formal boating education training or course.
4. 107 Of 153 (70%) of operators has less than ten hours (or unknown listed) of boating operation experience. (88%) of operators had less than 100 hours of experience.
5. Operator using 27 Of 153 alcohol use only, 10 out 153 alcohol and drug use, 4 out of 153 drug use only. This what is entered into the field boxes 45 left blank for alcohol use, 73 left blanks for drug use.

Next cycle recommendation: Continue this charge into the next cycle, but with revisions to address key data gaps in order to better understand the risks of non-motorized boating. Moving forward, it will be useful to better understand how boating accidents reports are prepared and how the NASBLA membership can provide a more complete understanding of non-motorized boating accidents. In addition, it will be useful to explore methodologies for estimating non-motorized boating use that would improve the ability to make relative comparisons to motorized boating and to other settings. Combined, these additional data elements will help inform discussion about the risks of non-motorized boating recreation in the nation and possible regulatory changes intended to improve safety. The committee would also continue to provide recommendations and input on supplemental funding and policy.

For additional information, see *Appendix B: PADDLE_2023-1 Data & Trends Final Report*

PADDLE_2023-1 Data & Trends Charge Leader: Craig Watson (OH)

2023 Charge Members: Adam Spangler (PA), Brian Rehwinkel (FL), Jennifer McGee (FL), Billy Doss (IN), Philip Hager (MD), Wendy Flynn (CT), Kim Jackson (AZ)

PADDLE_2023-2 Outreach to Paddlecraft Liveries & Retailers Best Practices

Create a program for paddlesport manufacturers, retailers, and liveries that will recognize their efforts that help to create and promote a safe paddling culture. This program will be similar to the Seal of Safe Boating. The Committee will identify and develop specific award criteria for paddlesport manufacturers, retailers, and liveries. These criteria will consider the methods and efforts already used to create a culture of paddling safety. It will also determine an appropriate amount of time for which the honor is valid and an effective method to distribute the honor.

(NASBLA 1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5,2.6) (RBS Initiative 1: CoA 1, CoA 2, CoA 3, Initiative 3)

Needs Statement: Paddlecraft rental liveries are one of the prime outlets to engage entry level, non-motorized boaters in safety awareness and risk mitigation for increased safe participation. Developing best practices for state boating safety professionals to use offers an opportunity to engage retailers and livery operators and further boating safety messages for this hard-to-reach population.

Measure of Effectiveness: A program for paddlesports manufacturers, retailers, and liveries that recognize their efforts that help to create and promote a safe paddling culture. Grow the amount of NPCH awarded in the future.

Deliverable(s): Under the leadership of Kosette Isakson, the charge has completed sixteen (16) conference calls. Members of Charge 2 have been working on developing a way to acknowledge and publicly recognize paddlesports companies and organizations (retailers, manufacturers, liveries, etc.) for their efforts in promoting and practicing safety in paddlesports. We have named this the National Paddlesports Committee Honors (NPCH). There is no limit on the number of companies who can receive this in one year. The honors-based program criteria will be based in part on NASBLAs Seal of Safe Boating with adjustments and additions when applicable. The committee is desirous in creating broad, encompassing criteria, so that we can present the first honor(s) at this year's NASBLA Conference in September. The next steps will be to develop categories for the honors with more specific criteria. These honors will be presented with a date which is good for one year. Candidates must meet the criteria the following year in order to be eligible for the new honors. The goal is that this program will encourage those in the paddlesports community to be more aware of the images and messages they use on their website, social media sites, and in printed materials. Our goal is to continue this charge and create more categories in the future, however, we decided that it would be best to complete the process for a few categories to begin honoring qualifying companies as soon as possible. We have created a Guidelines and Procedures document and scoring rubrics/criteria for two categories (website and social media). Our next step is to develop an online application. Three judges (state members of the Paddlesports Committee assigned by the committee chair) will evaluate the applications using the scoring rubric. The application is not yet developed. However, members of this charge want to take advantage of the opportunity to present the NPCH in person at this year's NASBLA conference in Denver, CO. Charge members used the rubrics we created to judge three companies (two manufacturers and one retailer) based on their social media pages and websites. One company scored high enough and will receive the NPCH. In the meantime, we will continue to work on developing the application so more companies have a chance to receive the NPCH.

For additional information, see *Appendix C: PADDLE_2023-2 Outreach to Paddlecraft Liveries and Retailers Final Report*.

Next cycle recommendations: Carry over into the next cycle, in order to complete the online application, market the NPCH and create/develop new categories.

PADDLE_2023-2 Outreach to Paddlecraft Liveries & Retailers Best Practices: Charge Leader: Kosette Isakson (AK)

2023 Charge Members: Jim Emmons (Associate Member), Lili Colby (Associate Member), Adam Spangler (PA), Chelsea Hofmeier (KS), Jennifer McGee (FL) Annie Greiner (AK), Kim Jackson (AZ)

PADDLE_2023-3 Paddlecraft Access Inventory

Define and develop a process to review the existing paddlesports dashboard to ensure accuracy. Determine if any and what new information could be displayed on dashboard that the NASBLA membership would find beneficial. Look into creating methods to promote this dashboard to the public. This will lead to a standing charge which updates and maintains the dashboard. <https://www.nasbla.org/nasblamain/nasbla-resources/paddledashboards> (NASBLA 2.3)

Needs Statement: As paddling becomes increasingly popular, waterways and access points can become more crowded. To help paddlers enjoy their boating experiences and to decrease potential user conflicts there is a need for more awareness of access to waterways for paddling.

Measure of Effectiveness: Improved communication and collaboration between the Paddlesports community and the states via the Paddling Resources Dashboard. Affective strategies to accomplish this goal while creating a coalition of supporters from all sides of the issue and creating, where possible, a consensus proposal. Working in partnership with the American Canoe Association (ACA), the State Directors will be updating information to the dashboard. A request was made to NASBLA staff to update the following dashboards to include BARD information from 2018 through 2022: Paddlecraft Incidents & Fatalities and Paddlecraft vs Open Motorboat Incidents.

Deliverable(s): The primary information gathered for Charge Three was for the state boating staff and others to recommend places for people to appropriately access the waterways with their canoe, kayak, or paddleboard so they could have a safe and enjoyable experience. At this time, the dashboard is complete but need additional/current annual information from our NASBLA state membership. Working in partnership with the American Canoe Association (ACA), the State Directors will be updating information to the dashboard. This partnership will continue to help keep the Paddling Resource Dashboard update for years to come. A request was made to NASBLA staff to update the following dashboards to include BARD information from 2018 through 2022: Paddlecraft Incidents & Fatalities and Paddlecraft vs Open Motorboat Incidents. NASBLA staff as also been requested to make it more convenient for additional information to be added to the Dashboards other than just links.

For additional information, please visit the Paddling Resources Dashboard:

<https://idash.nasbla.net/idashboards/viewer/?guestuser=guest&dashID=152&c=0&NRD=True>

Next cycle recommendation: This charge is completed and is not recommended for further committee work, however the Paddling Resource Dashboard should be continually monitored by NASBLA staff to keep accurate and up-to-date information flowing. It is the recommendation that additional ways to add information to the Dashboard be developed, just adding links will not produce the most up-to-date information.

PADDLE_2023-3 Paddlecraft Access Inventory: Standing Charge, Kim Jackson (AZ)

2023 Charge Members: Lili Colby (Associate Member), Virgil Chambers (Associate Member)

PADDLE_2023-4 Microlearning

Develop microlearning training to help facilitate opportunities for officers, educators and administrators to engage the paddling community.
(NASBLA 2.6) (RBS Initiative 1)

Needs Statement: Officers, educators and administrators need new and innovative strategies to help facilitate opportunities to engage the paddling community. Microlearning components can quickly give these professionals the information and tools they need to effectively engage this growing boating community.

Measure of Effectiveness: Developing several microlearning-training modules for professional development to help facilitate opportunities for officers, educators, and administrators.

Deliverable(s): Creating new and innovative professional development strategies is at the forefront of this charge. Under the leadership of Wendy Flynn, the charge has completed ten (10) conference calls. The goal for the 2023 microlearning video is to show a comparison of entry level kayaks that can be used by a new boater to make an educated decision on their purchase. Our virtual and in-person meetings provided valuable discussions of types of vessels, what safety equipment should be included, and how to cover the vessel name while filming. This year, the focus on the video will be geared toward the paddling public rather than Law Enforcement. The charge members were able to start filming in July (cold water delay). The star of the video is a novice paddler, so her reactions and attempts are targeted to our audience of entry level kayakers. The charge members wanted to ensure the video covered the difference among three (3) kayaks that can be found at big box stores, as well as additional safety equipment to improve the buoyancy of kayaks and make the entry level paddler's experience safe and more enjoyable.

For additional information, see *Appendix E: PADDLE_2023-4 Microlearning Final Report*.

Next cycle recommendation: The recommendation from the Chair is to combine this charge with the Law Enforcement Committee's microlearning charge and keep the charge under the

Law Enforcement Committee purview.

PADDLE_2023-4 Microlearning: Charge Leader: Wendy Flynn (CT)

2023 Charge Members: Chelsea Hofmeier (KS), Josh Hoffman (AZ)

2023 Annual Paddlesports Committee Meeting

The Committee held an in-person meeting on April 15-16, 2023 in Little Rock, AR in conjunction with the International Boating Water Safety Summit. A copy of the full meeting agenda is provided in *Appendix A: 2023 Paddlesports Committee In-Person Meeting Agenda*.

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