MEMO

TO: Larry D. Voyles, Director

FROM: Leonard L. Ordway, Assistant Director, Field Operations

PRESENTER: Gene Elms, Law Enforcement Branch Chief

TITLE: Request for Commission Approval of the Program Narrative for U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Funds (Federal FY2010 / State FY2011)

DESCRIPTION: The Commission will be asked to vote to approve the Department's partial U.S. Coast Guard funding pursuant to the Federal Boating Safety Act of 1971. Funds will be used in the State FY2011 to supplement the Department's watercraft efforts in areas of law enforcement, administration, information, education, aids to navigation and watercraft registration. The Commission may vote to take action on, or provide the Department direction on, this item.

DATE: March 23, 2010

Summary:

The Program Narrative detailing the full State FY2011 expenditure of U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) boating safety grant funds by the Arizona Game and Fish Department is attached for review, consideration and approval by the Commission. Of particular note and as expansion of the Watercraft Program for State FY2011, the Department is requesting the Commission consider and approve funding to three full time watercraft law enforcement officers (3 FTE's) funded through the USCG Grant. This additional officer capacity will be used to augment our other Law Enforcement Specialist positions and enhance our water presence in primary watercraft areas in the state.

The attached narrative details the Department's watercraft activities and obligations once approval is granted by the USCG. It addresses the grant period of October 1, 2009, to September 30, 2010, and reflects the legislatively mandated watercraft responsibilities of the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Commission **VOTE TO APPROVE THE PORTION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S WATERCRAFT SAFETY PROGRAM FUNDED BY THE U.S. COAST GUARD GRANT MONIES PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL BOATING SAFETY ACT OF 1971 AS WELL AS THE THREE NEW WATERCRAFT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER FTE'S.**

LLO:GE:kb

Attachment

20.01 PROGRAM NARRATIVE
U.S. COAST GUARD BOATING SAFETY

State: Arizona

Period: October 1, 2009, to September 30, 2010 (Fed FY2010)

Project Title: Arizona Watercraft Safety Program

Objective: To enhance existing aspects of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Watercraft Safety Program and to achieve safe uses of recreational watercraft by promoting and coordinating recreational boating safety, regulations and enforcement, and to provide reasonable and safe access for public boating.

JUSTIFICATION AND NEED:

During Federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, a total of 136,463 vessels were registered in Arizona. This total reflects a 14% decline (22,263 drop in registrations) from the all time registration peak of 158,726 registrations in 1998. Despite this, the number of Arizona boat registrations continues to be very significant in comparison to other western states and remains highly reflective of Arizona's high recreational watercraft activity levels. In addition, the diverse boating opportunities along the Colorado River system continue to see the highest activity levels as boaters from Arizona, California, Utah and Nevada continue to take advantage of both extensive river miles and large lake surface areas.

For Federal FY2010, U.S. Coast Guard funding will supplement the Arizona Game and Fish Department's (Department) watercraft efforts in areas of administration, law enforcement, information, boating education, aids to navigation, watercraft registration and the maintenance of a watercraft motor pool.

The Department continues to provide Boating Safety Education Program classes statewide as recreational boater education is considered one of the most effective ways to reduce boating accident rates. U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety grant monies are an integral and vital funding component and will be utilized to supplement and enhance these important education programs. Annual boat accident statistics repeatedly indicate that more than seventy-five percent of all operators involved in recreational boating accidents had received no formal education in boating safety. To mitigate this trend, the Department continues to provide statewide opportunities for recreational boaters to participate in the Watercraft Safety Education Program. During the reporting time frame of the Federal FY2009, state statistics indicate that 76 active volunteer instructors completed 48 classes and certified 645 students in the classroom. This reflected a 158% decrease in the number of classes, but a 180% increase in the number classroom students form the previous year. 437 persons completed the Department's online Internet boating education course during FY 2009. This reflected a 250% increase in Internet students from 2008. Because of the lower than desired student numbers, the agency continues to seek advertising strategies aimed at increasing the number of boaters voluntarily attending a boating safety education. USCG funds will be used to promote boating education classroom attendance wherever possible through a variety of strategies.

The Department's Boating Education Student Manual continues to receive very favorable feedback from boating education course attendees. The Student Manual provides Arizona boaters with additional access to information that will aid in understanding and complying with Arizona watercraft regulations. The Department continues to update and produce an Arizona Boating Laws and Regulations Brochure that is also posted on the Department's website in order to keep boaters informed of the latest Arizona boating information. The county courts continue to refer many subjects who are found guilty of watercraft violations to the Boating Safety Education classes as part of a deferment or diversion program.

Recent budget reductions legislatively mandated to balance the state budget have impacted the Watercraft Licensing appropriations that fund the Department's Watercraft Safety and Education Programs. Consequently, U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety grant money continues to be critical to provide complimentary for critical Department watercraft projects, activities and programs. USCG funding also enables the Department to purchase education materials, obtain support equipment for its Watercraft Law Enforcement Project efforts, provide funding for the Watercraft Registration services, provide materials and equipment for the Navigational Aids Project, and assists in maintaining and upgrading the Department's communications system. With the tracking of vessels from state to state becoming a priority, changes have been completed for the Department's watercraft registration database so that it is compatible with the nationwide Vessel Identification System (VIS). The Department is maintaining a Computer Aided Dispatch and Case Management System program for improved Department communications and record management.

SPECIFIC BUDGET REQUESTS

Field Operations – Law Enforcement Branch

The Watercraft Safety Project, coordinated by the Boating Law Administrator in the Law Enforcement Branch, has four main functions. They are officer training, communications, education, and patrol/investigative support. When performed in conjunction with boating safety education program efforts, these functions are essential in order to have a comprehensive and progressive statewide program. Additionally, budget issues that began in calendar year 2009 relative to the Department's appropriated State Watercraft Budget, have been somewhat relieved for State FY2011, allowing the Department to enhance our program with the Federal FY 2010 USCG budget.

The statewide communications functions are administered out of the Law Enforcement Branch. The dispatch center operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, providing statewide radio and land line communications to all Department employees. Within the dispatch center, two one-half (½) FTE's will continue to be funded by the Federal FY 2010 USCG budget.

USCG budget funds are utilized in part for the upkeep and maintenance of 30 active repeater radio towers that are critical to the Department's operational functionality of our radio communication system. Approximately one-half of these towers provide communications to officers assigned to watercraft patrol activities. These towers are evaluated regularly to assess the need for new and updated equipment and to provide the best communications possible for the safety of watercraft

officers and the boating public. The Communications Center continues to use a Computer Aided Dispatch and Case Management System. This system allows for expanded communications as well as increased law enforcement record tracking, including that for Operating under the Influence (OUI) convictions and stolen watercraft.

The Watercraft Law Enforcement Program component of the Department's Watercraft Safety Project is coordinated out of the Law Enforcement Branch. Key program personnel providing this coordination are the following personnel:

Law Enforcement Branch Chief (Chief of Law Enforcement)
Watercraft and OHV Law Enforcement Programs Coordinator (Boating Law Administrator)
Law Enforcement Training Manager (Training Officer)
Watercraft Law Enforcement Program Manager (OUI Coordinator)
Watercraft Law Enforcement Specialist (Marine Theft Investigator)
Regional Law Enforcement Program Managers
Regional Field Supervisors

These personnel are responsible for coordinating all watercraft law enforcement project efforts on a statewide and regional basis including operational planning, budgeting, staffing, support functions and watercraft enforcement training for Department officers. Within the Law Enforcement Branch, is one full FTE in addition to the two one-half (½) dispatch center FTE's (as mentioned above), that will continue to be funded by the Federal FY 2010 USCG budget. The full time position, the Watercraft Law Enforcement Program Manager (OUI Coordinator), is responsible for statewide OUI training, implementation of the 80-hour AZPOST Watercraft Law Enforcement and Survival Tactics School, law enforcement coordination and management of the Department's OUI Law Enforcement and Boating Safety Grant programs.

Each year the Department funds the travel of Arizona watercraft officers to the U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Patrol Officer School (MPOC) in South Carolina as well as the Boating Law Administrator's participation and attendance in NASBLA and WSBAA. USCG funds are used to cover those costs as well as watercraft officer firearms training and qualifications. Officers are also sent to specific training courses to increase their abilities to facilitate watercraft safety. Courses include accident investigation, stolen watercraft investigation, operating under the influence (OUI) detection/apprehension, HGN and others.

The Department continues to use the Watercraft Law Enforcement Specialist (marine theft investigator) position as a means to reduce the number of stolen and fraudulently registered watercraft in the State, and to provide watercraft registration ownership support and expertise. This position also provides law enforcement support for the watercraft registration program, Regional Offices and other law enforcement agencies. The Law Enforcement Branch utilizes USCG funding to provide watercraft law enforcement information, education, and outreach efforts, as well as boating safety and/or law enforcement equipment and operational purchase support for both statewide use and Regional support.

The Department conducts an annual 80-hour AZPOST Watercraft Law Enforcement and Survival Tactics School for both instate and out-of-state law enforcement officers. The 2009 course was cancelled due to budget constraint issues associated with state budget balancing efforts, but was

reinstated in March 2010 with 21 participants attending. At the school, the Department also provides continuing education training in Close Quarters Boat Handling, Operating under the Influence (OUI) detection and apprehension, including Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN) training, the operation of sound meters, stolen boat detection and investigation, and other watercraft law enforcement related topics. The Department will utilize a portion of the Federal FY10 USCG grant dollars to fund this school. The Department anticipates training fourteen internal officers in HGN during State FY2011. In addition, the Department will continue to conduct internal and external training on new sound enforcement Rules in State FY2011. Previous FY USCG funds have been utilized to purchase new sound level meters and calibrators and the Department intends to continue to support implementing this training with replacement equipment and course materials as needed.

Estimated Cost: $560,472

Field Operations – Regions

Department enforcement officers, working statewide out of six Regional Offices, conduct the majority of the Department's watercraft law enforcement efforts using State Watercraft funds which the Department claims as match. To supplement those law enforcement efforts, Federal FY2010 USCG budget will fund the hiring and deployment of three new full-time (3 FTEs) watercraft law enforcement officers to augment our other law enforcement specialist positions and enhance water presence in primary watercraft areas of the State. In addition to watercraft enforcement efforts, each of the six Regional Offices also provides in-house watercraft registration services. These Regional in-house registration services account for the two whole FTE equivalents and eight one-half (½) FTE's which will continue to be funded by the Federal FY2010 USCG budget. These personnel assist the Regions in processing watercraft registrations and providing watercraft safety information.

The Department will continue its commitment as a statewide and naitonwide leader in inner-agency OUI special patrol operations. The Department plans to participate in at approximately 4 to 6 multi-agency OUI enforcement special projects During State FY2011. The Department intends to deploy the three mobile OUI Command Posts to further build upon historical OUI checkpoint data sets.

To fully support the Regions and their watercraft enforcement and safety efforts, U.S. Coast Guard funds will be used to purchase two replacement patrol boat packages (boat, motor, trailer and equipment) and support equipment. A portion of the operating costs for two Arizona watercraft law enforcement and education lake facilities will again be supported by Federal FY2010 budget funds.

Estimated Cost: $823,230

Information and Education

Educated boaters are statistically safe boaters and the Department strives to annually increase the number of boat operators who receive formalized boating education classes. A portion of the U.S. Coast Guard allocation will be expended in direct support of Department's Boating Safety Education Course. In addition, the Federal FY2010 USCG budget will fund one (1) full FTE in Watercraft Outreach and will also fund one (1) new full FTE within the Boating Education Program (contingent upon lifting of a hiring freeze). The Boating Education Program will use USCG monies to fund statewide watercraft boating safety messaging and outreach efforts.

The Department is dedicated to improving the boating safety activities currently underway and in implementing new programs where possible (contingent upon funding and manpower they require). The volunteer boating education activities will again be a major focus for next year. Plans are to again increase participation with increased awareness and an expanded court mandated program. The Department also expects to expand the state's "Wear-It" campaign and promote the use of watercraft safety messages in the public school systems around the state. Other areas of importance will include a campaign promoting the use of life jacket by children through special a stateside drowning coalition promotion, participating in public events, and ensuring educational class promotion and availability.

Multiple methods to spread the watercraft safety message will be continued such as: public service announcements, appearances at fairs, trade shows, safety shows and school events. USCG funding will help defray some of the costs associated with printing materials, instructor supplies and audiovisual support. The State's court system continues to be more proactive concerning mandatory attendance at Watercraft Safety Education classes as part of a deferment or diversion program associated with watercraft violations. This in itself has significantly contributed to student attendance at the classes. The Department will use USCG Funding to provide OUI Abatement and Prevention messaging as part of an inter-agency cooperative media campaign during the boating season.

Estimated Cost: $303,326

Special Services: Navigational Aids; Finance and Accounting; Information Systems

The wet winter of 2007-2008 followed by the fourth wettest monsoon on record in the summer of 2008, followed by an extremely wet winter of 2009-2010, fully alleviated lake and reservoir recharging to 100% of normal lake levels with projected above average run-off and inflows into these systems. The Department's Aids to Navigation staff of two (2) full-time employees will maintain approximately 360 navigational aids and hazard markings across the State. This staff continues to provide expertise and training to crews that maintain navigational aids for other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as assisting other Department personnel with specialized markers for Department projects.

During State FY2011, USCG funding will be utilized to provide lighting, battery charging and utility support in Department boat parking structures. Various hardware and other supplies were purchased for buoy anchoring systems. In addition, USCG funds will also be used to support the operation of two personal watercraft and a trailer for the purpose of accessing shallow water markers and confined backwaters, primarily on the lower Colorado River. These watercraft also will be used for the annual inventory of buoys and other markers on the lower Colorado River, which is a cooperative effort with the U.S. Coast Guard to identify and map buoys within its jurisdictional waters.

The watercraft registration section, in coordination with the Regions, consistently registers approximately 136,500 watercraft each year. USCG funding will be utilized to purchase equipment and registration support materials for opening, processing, storing and distributing watercraft registrations and records, which are essential for meeting the Department's mandatory 30-day registration requirement.

USCG funds will also be utilized for the purchase of new personal computers (PCs), servers, software applications, software licensing and upgrades, vendor technical support, telecommunications expenses, WC support personnel costs, network hardware upgrades and equipment repair, and other IT related projects for boating safety personnel.

Estimated Cost: $133,000

Special Services: Watercraft Motorpool

These are the costs associated with the development and maintenance of a Department watercraft motorpool. These funds will be used for repair and maintenance of watercraft law enforcement patrol watercraft/vehicles and associated trailers/equipment in the Department's fleet. It is anticipated that this will enhance the Department's ability and availability to provide law enforcement patrol watercraft/vehicles in good working order, to meet the Department's mission for ensuring safe watercraft operation for all the citizens in the State.

Estimated Cost: $115,000

Indirect Cost

These are primarily the costs associated with the man-hours and resources needed to perform and administer watercraft safety activities statewide. Through the cost accounting system, these funds are transferred to the various budget units to reimburse them for time and resources spent performing administrative functions related to watercraft safety activities.

Estimated Cost: $185,365

Supervisor Pick-Off – Cost Transfer

These are primarily the costs associated with the man-hours for non-USCG funded personnel and supervisors to charge respective time expenditures when performing administrative and/or supervisory functions of USCG funded employees.

Estimated Cost: $40,000

Total Estimated Cost: $2,160,393

Expected Results and Benefits

The Department will continue to participate in Watercraft Safety Programs statewide throughout the year. It will accomplish this through:

1. Performing "on the water" watercraft law enforcement
2. Providing OUI/BUI Abatement Media Campaigns
3. Continuance of the statewide Boating Education Program
4. Replacement of watercraft patrol boats
5. Replacement of watercraft safety equipment
6. Maintenance of watercraft safety facilities for both the Department and the public
7. Maintenance of communication equipment within the Department
8. Maintenance of an effective watercraft registration program
9. Maintenance of the Department's watercraft motorpool
10. Maintenance of statewide navigational aids
11. Maintaining training for internal officers in watercraft law enforcement
12. Maintaining training for internal and external officers at CRLEA, MPOC, the AZPOST Watercraft LE and Survival School, and NASBLA Training