

# HB26-1197, Continuation of Water Vessel Registration

Rep. Mauro & Sen. Kipp



## Summary

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) manages the state's Water Vessel Registration Program, which is currently **set to sunset effective September 1, 2026**.
- The vessel registration program raises funds to support boating safety, maintain recreational boating facilities such as boat ramps and parking lots, and match federal funds under the Federal Recreational Boating Safety Grant Program.
- The Colorado Office of Policy, Research, and Regulatory Reform (COPRRR) at the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) has conducted a review of the Program and has **recommended that it continue indefinitely**.

## Background

The COPRRR at the DORA completed a review of CPW's water vessel registration program, which is scheduled to sunset effective September 1, 2026. In October 2025, COPRRR published its [Sunset Report](#), which made the determination that CPW's vessel registration program should be continued indefinitely.

## Vessel Registration Program

Recreational boating represents a \$1.8 billion annual economic impact in the state of Colorado, supporting over 5,500 jobs and 200 businesses. There are a variety of types of vessels that are utilized to enjoy recreational waters, many of which are required to obtain a registration in order to operate on Colorado waters. In fiscal year 23-24, there were more than 71,000 vessels registered in Colorado.

To help keep boaters safe on Colorado's waters, CPW manages a water vessel registration program, which establishes requirements and procedures related to the registration and numbering of vessels, the seizure of vessels by officers if they have probable cause to believe that the vessel is stolen, and also surrounding the operation of a vessel livery to ensure that individuals who are renting a vessel in the state are doing so in a safe and lawful manner. The implementation of these requirements ensures that Coloradans and visitors to the state are operating vessels in a safe and lawful manner.

The vessel registration program also provides funds to maintain recreational boating facilities such as boat ramps and parking lots, and match federal funds under the Federal Recreational Boating Safety Grant Program. These critical funds also support boating safety initiatives like educational programs, life jacket loaner programs, and CPW's Marine Evidence Recovery Team.

Continuing CPW's water vessel registration program will ensure safe and responsible recreational boating in the state of Colorado.

*Questions? Please contact Daphne Gervais, Director of Legislative Affairs, Department of Natural Resources  
daphne.gervais@state.co.us*