



June 27, 2014  
DPS PR# 14-021

### **Alaska Wildlife Troopers To Participate In Operation Dry Water This Weekend**

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) – For the sixth year in a row, Alaska Wildlife Troopers are participating in a national effort called Operation Dry Water this weekend that aims to educate boaters about the dangers of boating under the influence as well as promote safe recreating on the water.

The effort is organized nationally by National Association of Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and is normally conducted before the Fourth of July holiday in order to raise awareness of boating safety issues with the goal of reducing the incidence of collisions, injuries, and fatalities involving boaters. Alcohol is the leading known contributing factor in recreational boating deaths. Alcohol and drug use can impair a boater's judgment, balance, vision, and reaction time. It can also increase fatigue and susceptibility to the effects of cold water immersion. In addition, nationally, 84 percent of drowning victims were not wearing life jackets. Take the pledge to wear a life jacket, at <http://pledgetolive.org/>

Starting today, AWT will be participating statewide in a variety of ways in Alaska. There will be heightened awareness patrols in areas of Alaska where Troopers are already out on a commercial or sport fisheries enforcement mission. Troopers will conduct focused patrols on certain bodies of waters where people are recreating and checking boaters at launch sites and docks. The goal is to contact as many boaters as possible to ensure they are complying with [boating safety laws](#) and not boating under the influence. While the official operation ends Sunday, Troopers will continue to make sure people are safely boating on Alaskan waters by keeping an eye out for boaters under the influence as well as conducting other awareness programs such as [Kids Don't Float](#).

Nationally, 6,219 officers from 513 agencies contacted 144,044 boaters resulting in 290 BUI arrests during Operation Dry Water in 2013. In Alaska, 30 wildlife troopers participated across the state, contacting 436 vessels and 1,002 operators. Two operators were arrested and charged with BUI. Troopers also issued 30 citations and 62 warnings for boating offenses, ranging from operating an unregistered power vessel to failing to have life jackets or other required safety equipment aboard their vessel.

NASBLA has a website with great resources about the program: <http://www.operationdrywater.org/>

###