



Clean Vessel Act Program

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund



What is CVA?

The Clean Vessel Act (CVA) is intended to provide funding for construction of pumpout and dump station facilities that will help ensure proper disposal of human sewage from recreational boats. The CVA was initially authorized by Congress during 1992 to be administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). The original Act ended in 1997 and was reauthorized in 1998 to continue through 2003, providing \$50 million of additional funds to keep developing alternatives to overboard disposal of recreational boater sewage. The CVA Program was funded \$10 million annually through Continuing Resolutions for FY 2004 and 2005.

In 2005 the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA) was signed into law and provided for the reauthorization of Sport Fish Restoration Act including the CVA Program through 2009. In addition to the excise taxes on sport fishing equipment, the [2005 amendment](#) captured an additional 4.8 cents per gallon of fuel tax attributable to small engines and motorboats beginning in FY 05-06. The amendment eliminated the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund and established the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. It also changed the annual distribution to the CVA Program to 2% of the funds in the [Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund](#) after deducting amounts for WSFR administration, the Multistate Conservation Grant Program, the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council and fisheries commissions.

Where Do Funds Come From?

The Sport Fishing and Boating Safety Act established authorization for this competitive grant program. Funds come from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. Trust fund accumulations result from a Federal excise tax on fishing equipment and motorboat fuels. This is a "user pay-user benefit" program with boaters paying for the facilities they will utilize. This concept guides much of the philosophy of the program.

How Are Funds Awarded?

Available funding is competitively awarded by the Service to an appropriate State Agency, typically a division of the DNR or similar environmental resource department. States are encouraged to partner with local units of government and private facilities by sub-granting to them. Funds are granted on a reimbursement basis.

Federal funds can be used to reimburse up to 75% of the approved project costs. The remaining "matching" funds must come from state or local sources. States typically expect the local facility to pay these costs. States sometimes receive additional ranking points if their overall proposal provides for a higher percentage of matching funds.

Since most costs incurred on a project prior to Federal approval are not eligible for reimbursement, it is imperative that no costs are incurred prior to written approval. This written approval will be in the form of a signed agreement with the State. Certain pre-agreement costs such as design and archeological surveys may be eligible for reimbursement if a project is selected for funding.

All Facilities Constructed Under This Program Must Be:

- open to the public;

- used for their intended purpose;
- maintained throughout their useful life.

Typical Projects Could Include:

- installation of a new pumpout for boat holding tanks or dump stations for portable toilets;
- replacement of an existing pumpout or dump station that no longer functions adequately;
- purchase of a portable pumpout or a pumpout boat.
- installation of associated facilities such as lift stations, holding tanks, or sewer lines connecting to a main line;
- Providing necessary water or electrical connections to pumpout facilities;
- necessary labor;
- floating restrooms in remote boating locations;
- installation of docks to hold pumpouts;
- education efforts to inform both marinas and boaters of the importance of proper waste disposal.

Activities that Are NOT Allowed Under CVA Would Include:

- Law enforcement activities
- Facilities that are not open to the general public (user pay - user benefit);
- Installation of septic systems, sewage treatment plants, and components thereof;
- Construction of upland restrooms;
- Construction of sewer systems beyond the minimum necessary to connect to municipal lines;
- Items that are used for other purposes (these must be pro-rated proportional to use). E.g. cost for a new dock to hold both fuel and a pumpout would have to be prorated.

Can I Charge For the Use of the Facility?

There is a default maximum of \$5.00 per pumpout that is allowed to be charged. Under special circumstances, a facility may apply through the State and receive written permission from the Service to exceed this rate if they can demonstrate that they would lose money at the default rate. The intent is that a facility should "break even" on pumpout charges.

What Restrictions Are Placed Upon Funded Facilities?

- The facility must be open to the general boating public;
- Operators may not charge more than the approved rate;
- Funded facilities must be open during normal hours;
- Facilities and activities proposed under CVA cannot cause damage to the environment nor to historic features;
- All facilities must comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

What should I do if I am interested in participating in CVA?

If you think that you might be interested in participating in the CVA, the first step is to make contact with you State CVA Coordinator. **In Georgia, your CVA Coordinator is Dennis Schmitt (706-557-3305).**

One Final Caution

Each state has the right to place additional restrictions on this program beyond what has been presented here.