



ACTION ITEM!

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO STOP ARBITRARY BOAT CLOSURES ON LAKE HAVASU

- WHAT:** Public meeting to provide comments on the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge's recently released draft recreational boating compatibility determination
- WHEN:** TOMORROW Monday, May 2, 2016
6:00-8:00 PM/MST
- WHERE:** Lake Havasu City Community/Aquatics Center
100 Park Avenue
Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86403

Join me **TOMORROW** at the public meeting taking place in Lake Havasu City to speak out against the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's** (Service) controversial draft recreational boating Compatibility Determination for Havasu National Wildlife Refuge.

On April 12, 2016 the Service [announced a draft recreational boating Compatibility Determination \(CD\)](#) for the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge and the agency's intent to pursue significant boating restrictions on Lake Havasu.

The CD aims to close significant portions of Lake Havasu within the Refuge to boating

and prevent water-skiing, tubing, wake boarding, and other recreational towed devices within the 4,000-acre manmade Topock Marsh and on an additional 520 acres on Lake Havasu Reservoir.

Motorized boating is already restricted by the Service on 17 ½ miles within the Refuge. Further, the proposed restrictions for Topock Marsh will likely prohibit bass boats and other large fishing boats from entering these waters.

According to the Service's own estimates, nearly **three million visitors vacation at Lake Havasu each year** and a typical holiday weekend draws nearly 50,000 boaters to the area. According to a 2008 Lake Havasu City Tourism Survey, nearly 75% of tourists are interested in water skiing, wakeboarding or boating while visiting Lake Havasu. The survey also revealed tourists spend **more than \$200 million and support nearly 4,000 full-time equivalent jobs.**



The CD falls on the heels of restrictions made by the Service last May that prohibited motorized boating within the reservoir in an area that had been utilized by recreational enthusiasts for several decades.

Specifically, on May 20, 2015, the Service posted an alert on its website that established new boating restrictions and expanded the “no wake zone.” This order was “effective immediately” and the newly closed areas were quickly marked with regulatory buoys and signs.

The Service enacted these arbitrary restrictions two days before Memorial Day Weekend without engaging local stakeholders or providing any opportunity for public comment. Even more troubling, this closure was not based on science or merit.

Prohibiting tubing, water-skiing and wake boarding in an area utilized by recreational enthusiasts for decades, two days before Memorial Day Weekend, without public comment and without merit is appalling. Pursuing massive new unwarranted boating restrictions not based on science less than a year later is outrageous.



Congressman Gosar's staff meeting with Lake Havasu boaters including Ryder Bliss (pictured right) and Lake Havasu City Mayor Mark Nexsen (pictured center).

I have been fighting these arbitrary closures since June 2015 and recently made three requests during a meeting this past week with **Service Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle**:

1. Stop moving forward with the current CD announced April 12, 2016 that aims to prohibit water-skiing, wakeboarding and tubing in significant areas on Lake Havasu. If the Service is intent on pursuing such large restrictions, the agency should instead go through the normal scoping process, prepare an environmental impact statement and fully comply with National Environmental Policy Act from the outset.
2. If the Service chooses to move forward with the CD, I've asked that Regional Director Tuggle personally make the final decision as to whether or not to implement the CD and remove that decision from the current refuge manager. The current refuge manager has demonstrated a clear conflict of interest and disregard for public involvement in this process.
3. I again requested a 60-day extension of the public comment period.

Regional Director Tuggle has the authority to scrap this proposal and will also be in attendance tomorrow night. **He needs to hear from YOU** and other concerned citizens who oppose these arbitrary restrictions. **Please bring family members, friends and let's pack the Aquatics Center!**

The only way we can fight these arbitrary boating restrictions is if we stand shoulder to shoulder and speak out at the public meeting session TOMORROW NIGHT!

Comments can also be made in writing through May 12 by

emailing: [Havasu Boating Comments@fws.gov](mailto:Havasu_Boating_Comments@fws.gov)

As always, you can follow everything I am working on in Arizona and Washington, D.C. through my website (<http://gosar.house.gov>) on Twitter @RepGosar, through Facebook at Representative Paul Gosar or on Instagram at RepGosar.

Sincerely,



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress



[WEBSITE](#) | [UNSUBSCRIBE](#) | [CONTACT](#)

