

Community Active Wildlife Stewards participant types:

Tier 1:

- A) Businesses renting marine recreation equipment to the public in regions where customers are likely to encounter marine wildlife (e.g., kayak, stand-up paddleboard, electric boats, SCUBA) *without an experienced guide*.
- B) Businesses offering guided tours and classes of individually operated small craft (e.g. kayak tours, SUP tours and lessons, surfing lessons)
- C) Businesses for which viewing of marine wildlife is from an operator-controlled craft, and/or is opportunistic and secondary to the primary purpose of the tour operation (e.g., Eco-tours, fishing charter boats, land-based guided tours, SCUBA diving or snorkeling operations).

Tier 2:

- A) Organizations/Clubs that participate in or promote marine recreation activities/events during which members have the potential to encounter marine wildlife
- B) Coastal tourism related businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops
- C) Educational Facilities in regions where visitors are likely to encounter marine wildlife
- D) Individuals that have made an extraordinary contribution consistent with the objectives of the *Community Active Wildlife Stewards*

Checklist for participation:

1. Conduct Educational Briefing

Tier 1, Type A: Before renting customer operated water craft, a staff person conducts an educational briefing about *Community Active Wildlife Stewards'* themes. The briefing should include guidelines for responsible wildlife viewing, and why they are important for wildlife conservation. Participants can request a list of suggested talking points to guide the briefing. Participants will screen educational videos for customers prior to rentals when possible.

Tier 1, Type B: Same as above but guides additionally reinforce, model, and promote *Community Active Wildlife Stewards'* themes throughout tour. It is recommended to reiterate the guidelines¹ when viewing wildlife, to help customers learn and observe responsible behavior. Screen educational videos² for customers prior to tours when possible.

Tier 1, Type C: Conduct onboard educational briefing about *Community Active Wildlife Stewards'* themes. It is recommended to emphasize the *Community Active Wildlife*

¹ Guidelines will be available in Handbook

² Videos will be available from sponsoring organizations. Alternative videos provided by applicant are subject to approval.

Stewards' guidelines³ throughout the tour to help customers learn and observe responsible behavior. Screen educational videos⁴ for customers when possible.

Tier 2, Type A: Conduct educational briefings about *Community Active Wildlife Stewards'* themes for members who might participate in marine recreation activities where marine wildlife encounters are likely. Screen educational videos for customers when possible.

Tier 2, Type B: Educational facilities must include prominent educational displays that share information about *Community Active Wildlife Stewards'* themes. They should screen educational videos for visitors when possible. They should promote/support the *Community Active Wildlife Stewards* group and participants on their web page and/or social media accounts and other outreach media.

Tier 2, Type C: Individuals will be considered for recognition on a case by case basis.



2. Provide Outreach Materials

- a) Provide customers/members/visitors with outreach materials that promote the program objectives. *Community Active Wildlife Stewards* supporting organizations will supply outreach materials at no charge.
- b) Inform customers/members/visitors of the availability of additional information resources (website links, social media, supplementary printed materials) available to them.
- c) If applicable, operators offering unguided kayak rentals *must* apply and maintain *Sea Otter Savvy* stickers on rental kayak fleets. Instructions for best application of stickers will be provided. Cases where stickers cannot be applied due to kayak surface type or other factors, will be taken under consideration.



3. Comply with Applicable Laws and Report Strandings, Injuries, Entanglements of Sea Life, and Potential Violations Towards Protected Species. *Note: Copies of all laws and regulations will be made available to applicants and participants.*

- a) Comply with all applicable resource protection laws and regulations (e.g., Marine Mammal Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, National Marine Sanctuary, US Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California State Parks, and local harbor districts)
- b) Report suspected harassment of marine wildlife to CalTIP: 888-334-CalTIP
- c) Whale Entanglement: Immediately, call (877) SOS-WHALE (877-767-9425), or hail the U.S. Coast Guard on VHF CH-16
- d) Report any marine mammal strandings to the Marine Mammal Center (415) 289-SEAL
- e) Report bird entanglements, injuries, and strandings: SLO county: Pacific Wildlife Care (805) 543-9453 (WILD); Monterey county: SPCA Wildlife Center Rescue

³ Guidelines will be available in Handbook

⁴ Videos will be available from sponsoring organizations. Alternative videos provided by applicant are subject to approval.

and Rehabilitation (831) 646-5534; Santa Cruz county: Native Animal Rescue (831) 462-0726

- f) Report oiled wildlife: Oiled Wildlife Care Center Wildlife Reporting Hotline (877) 823-6926

4. Follow Guidelines, and Additional Recommendations to Prevent Wildlife Disturbance and Promote Stewardship. *Note: Copies of all guidelines and recommendations will be made available to applicants and participants.*

- a) Follow *Community Active Wildlife Stewards* guidelines for responsible viewing.
- b) Follow NMFS policy statement on marine mammal harassment:

“Interacting with wild marine mammals should not be attempted and viewing marine mammals must be conducted in a manner that does not harass the animals. NMFS cannot support, condone, approve or authorize activities that involve closely approaching, interacting or attempting to interact with whales, sea otters, porpoises, seals or sea lions in the wild. This includes attempting to swim with, pet, touch, or elicit a reaction from the animals.”

- c) Follow NMFS responsible marine wildlife viewing guidelines for your area
- d) Avoid vessel operations that separate mothers from offspring or increase threat of boat strike to marine mammals.
- e) Stop your approach and slowly depart the area if sea otters or pinnipeds (seals and sea lions) display signs of disturbance, such as alert observation of vessel, rolling or rocking in place, slow swimming, fast swimming or diving.
- f) Stop your approach and slowly depart the area if seabirds display signs of disturbance, such as alert observation of vessel, wing-fluttering, or head-bobbing.
- g) Keep 100 yards distance from cetaceans, and do not alter their behavior.
- h) Paddle, sail or motor *around* groups of seabirds, sea otters, pinnipeds, or cetaceans, not through them.
- i) Do not feed or attract wildlife by throwing bait or fish scraps overboard.
- j) Never discard fishing line overboard, cover bait, and use barbless hooks or artificial lures to avoid hooking/entangling wildlife
- k) Avoid making loud or sudden noises near resting wildlife.
- l) Avoid bringing guided tours ashore in areas proximate to roosting seabirds or hauled-out sea otters or pinnipeds.
- m) Approach and depart marine wildlife at a slow “no wake” speed.
- n) If approaching a sea otter raft in a boat or with a guided kayak tour, wait your turn if other craft are already observing nearby. Do not crowd or encircle groups or individuals of any wildlife type.
- o) If applicable, use care when landing on, or exploring intertidal areas to avoid damaging habitat or disturbing/harming species. Touch only with extreme care and always replace animals back where you found them. Do not roll rocks.
- p) Be stewards for the marine environment by participating in and promoting environmentally conscious initiatives (e.g., marine debris and beach clean-ups, recycling, vessel wastewater pump-out) when possible.

5. Participate in Training (mandatory for Tier 1 participants; Tier 2 training requirement may vary)

- a) Participate in *Community Active Wildlife Stewards* sponsored training provided by the program partners to attain a program standard of knowledge on wildlife viewing etiquette, behavior, research, and natural history. A general meeting and workshop for group participants will be held annually at locations convenient for each regional chapter. Special programs and events will be scheduled throughout the year.
- b) Ensure that all employees are trained according to program standards, including new employees hired after the initial training date. The program partners will provide necessary materials to participants to assist in training employees, including in-person staff enrichment. To help provide further training, participants are encouraged to suggest their employees attend training workshops, although not required, as well as conduct the refresher course annually.

6. Engage in Responsible Advertising

(Note: "Advertising" includes any print advertisements that mention the business' or organization's name or those linked to the business, search engine listings, and any posted photos. This also includes, but is not limited to, pitch sheets, print, web, visual, radio, and social media.)

- a) Engage in advertising that promotes responsible wildlife viewing.
- b) Promote *Community Active Wildlife Stewards* by including the *Community Active Wildlife Stewards* logo(s) and mission statement about responsible wildlife viewing on business promotions and advertisements, where feasible.
- c) Follow recommendations for marine wildlife watching advertisements:
 - Photos and videos which show people viewing marine wildlife must depict responsible viewing practices and not display actual or implied signs of disturbance including (but not limited to) people approaching any wildlife too closely, people causing wildlife to flee at their approach.
 - Photos and videos featuring marine wildlife should not depict an actual or implied act of disturbance including (but not limited to) attention directed at the viewer/photographer in an alert posture, swimming or diving to avoid viewer/photographer, birds flushing from roosting or nesting areas.
 - Photos and videos should not depict people feeding or attempting to feed marine wildlife. Advertisements should avoid suggesting that these activities will/can occur during the tour.
 - Photos and videos should not depict people touching, pursuing, chasing, attempting to swim with, or closely interacting with wild marine mammals.
 - Refrain from wording or phrases that may raise the public's expectation to closely interact with sea otters or seabirds in the wild. Some examples of words that may suggest close interactions include but are not limited to, "encounter", "get up close and personal"

Questions? Contact Gena Bentall at gena@seaottersavvy.org

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