

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**2005 COLORADO RIVER STATISTICS: 255 ACCIDENTS, 166 INJURIES, 9 FATALITIES
TRI-STATE BOATING SAFETY FAIR SLATED FOR MAY 6 AT LAKE HAVASU STATE PARK**

(Lake Havasu, AZ – April 9, 2006) -- The third annual Tri-State Boating Safety Fair is scheduled for Saturday, May 6, at Lake Havasu State Park from 8 am until noon. The focus of this year's event is passing boating safety tips, such as navigation rules, sober boating and the importance of wearing life a jacket to boaters up and down the Colorado River system.

Boating is a year-round activity on the Colorado River, so Arizona, California and Nevada officials are gearing up for this yearly influx of boaters. Boating and water safety is the most critical concern of law enforcement and safety personnel—and safety starts with wearing a life jacket. More than 80% of boating deaths happen simply because victims were not wearing life jackets, making this the number one safety issue on the Colorado river.

“If we could get each and every boater on the river to wear a lifejacket, I believe that we could cut boating fatalities in half. We just don't see anywhere near that level of wear,” said Raynor Tsuneyoshi, Director of the California Department of Boating and Waterways.

The Boating Safety Fair will include public safety information booths, a demonstration of a water rescue, free vessel safety checks, and a chance to win a houseboating trip getaway for 12 donated by Forever Resorts (www.foreverhouseboats.com). Safety Fair participants can register to win the trip by taking the Tri-State Boating Safety Quiz.

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and state boating safety agencies will be conducting free vessel safety checks to ensure that a boater has all legal requirements and safety gear aboard the boat. In addition, Yamaha is giving 150 families a chance to bring in an outgrown or unsafe life jacket and trade it for a brand new one from 8-10 am, while supplies last.

Visitors at the event and all along the river will also receive a “boating safety bag” full of fun stuff and educational material about boating laws in the three states through which the Colorado River runs. Boating officials and law enforcement officers from each state will hand out boating safety bags and answer questions at 27 different boat launch ramps along the Colorado River. “We want to reach as many people from both sides of the river as possible before this year's boating season”, said Kevin Bergersen, Arizona's Boating Law Administrator. “Again, life jackets, sober boating and safe operation are our key messages to boaters.”

Several different states, local organizations and boating safety organizations will host events and demonstrations throughout the day. The California boating safety team will demonstrate "hooked goggles" that simulate the debilitating effects of alcohol, and California's San Bernardino Sheriffs Department will be performing water rescue demonstrations.

There are many aspects to boating safety, according to Fred Messman, Nevada Boating Law Administrator. “When it comes to boating dangers, negligent operation, including excessive speed and alcohol abuse while boating, is the biggest factor we see. It's critical that we educate boaters to avoid those pitfalls,” Messman said.

Day-use entry fee at the park will be waived for the regular \$9 per car and the public is encouraged to stay the entire day to picnic, swim, fish and watch the events. A boat launching fee of \$9 will still be charged. For more information about this Boating Safety Fair call Lake Havasu State Park at (928) 855-2784 or see the website www.BoatColoradoRiver.com

REPORTERS ATTENTION REPORTERS: *Before this event call for story opportunities and a fact sheet... On the day of the event reporters should check in at the Media tent by 9 AM or call in advance to set up appointments with spokespersons. You will be able to board boats at 10:30 AM for 11AM demonstrations. High resolution photos from prior years are available. Details at: www.BoatColoradoRiver.com*