

2025 Boat Dock Survey: Data Collection and Findings

Introduction

The Monterey County Water Resources Agency (“Agency”) administers a boat dock licensing and inspection program at Nacimiento Reservoir, which oversees the operation of recreational boat docks in accordance with Ordinance Nos. 5033 and 4065.¹ This program has been active since 1972 and now includes a total of 386 recreational docks.

Annual Dock License Certification Inspection

As part of this longstanding program, we conducted the Agency’s annual dock inspection on Monday, May 12, 2025, and Monday, May 19, 2025. To qualify for a dock license, all applicants must meet the specified requirements. The Operations team will oversee the docks as we approach the licensing period which spans from April 1, 2025, through March 31, 2026. Each licensee is assigned an identification number by the Agency. The completed license is authorized for use, and all dock owners are required to have their docks inspected annually at its mooring site. Licenses issued under the authority of the Agency are non-transferrable. If a dock is sold or the responsibility for the dock is transferred, a new license must be applied for and issued. This program oversees the inspection and licensing of all dock structures that float on or are designed to float on the surface of Nacimiento Reservoir.² Unpermitted docks are deemed nuisances, and the Agency reserves the right to take immediate action to remove any unattended structures.

Summary of Activates – Dates and Locations

The Operations Division scheduled the Boat Dock Survey across two days May 12 and May 19 due to weather-related concerns that were identified during the initial inspection period on May 12 and 13. Staff surveyed 22 different geographic locations including: Doumani, Hughes, Nacimiento Shores Road, the Northshore Ski and Boat Club, Happy Landing, Laguna Vista Boat Club, Lakefront at LandsEnd, Oak Shores, Cantinas Creek, Christmas Cove, South Shore Village, Rancho Del Lago, Cal Shasta Club, South side near Allen Road,

¹ <https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/government-links/water-resources-agency/programs/boat-docks>, Ordinance No. 5344 and 4065 found here.

² <https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/government-links/water-resources-agency/about/agency-act>, MCWRA. ACT – 4/11/95, Sec. 9. Powers of Agency, (q).

and Tri-Counties Club on Monday May 13, and surveyed Town Creek Association, Las Tablas Bay near Running Deer, Running Deer Ranch (RDR) SLO Inc, Angus Ranch – Dip Creek, Snake Creek, Oak Bay Condominiums, and Heritage Ranch HOA on Monday June 19. The number of docks at each location can range from a minimum of one or to a maximum of eighty-eight (see Figure 1).

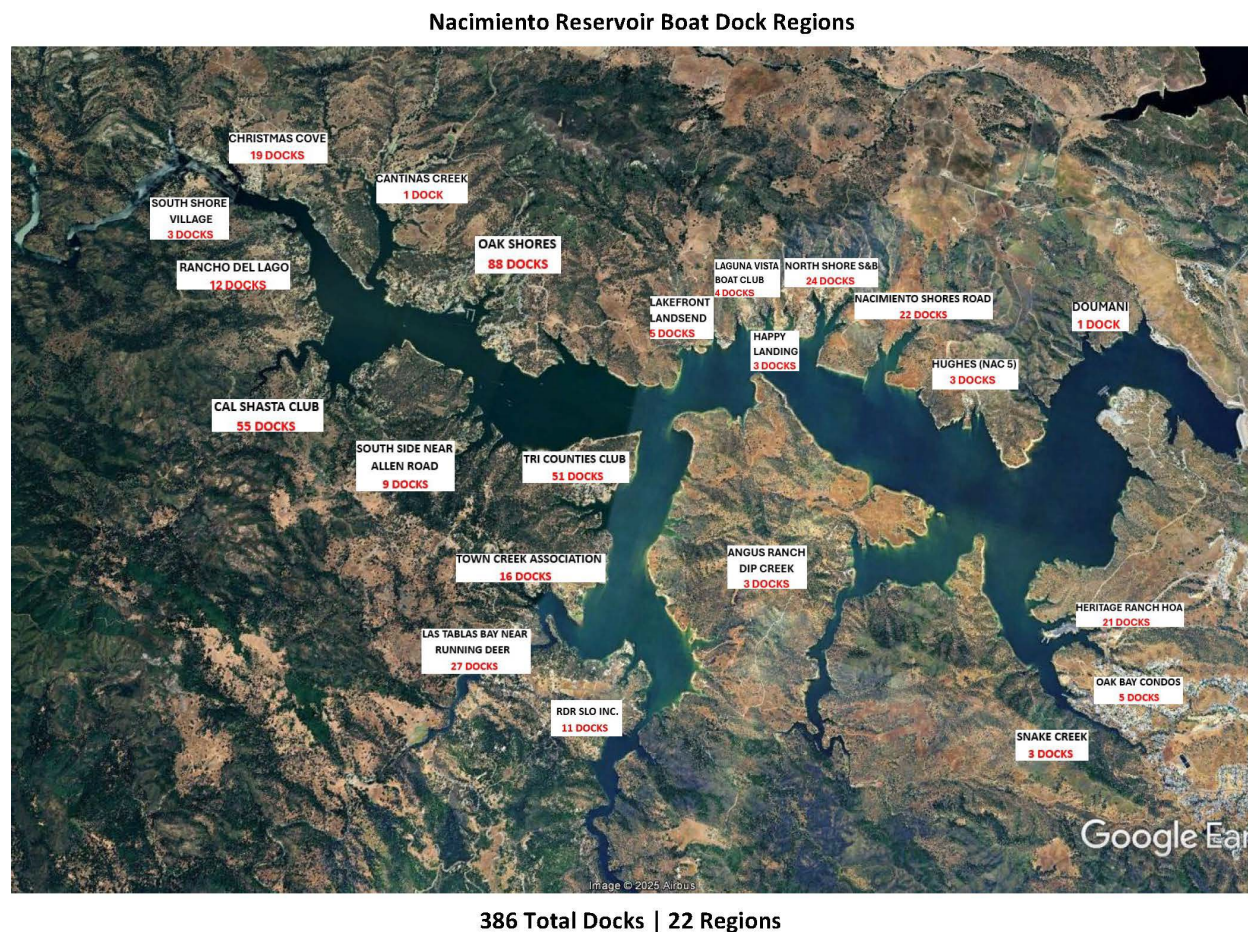


Figure 1 - Map of Boat Dock Locations and Quantities

Employees Who Completed the Inspection and Audit: Employees with appropriate training were utilized, ensuring accurate vessel operation, recognition of identification numbers, and hazards awareness.

- Jennifer Bodensteiner, Associate Water Resources Hydrologist, supervised and coordinated activities to ensure compliance with organizational objectives for the dock program. Emphasized the protection of water resources and directed staff in implementing procedures, monitoring dock-related workflows, and identified

opportunities for program improvement. Collaborated with other divisions and dock owners to improve overall efficiency and productivity for dock operations.

- Mallory Roberts, Water Resources Hydrologist, identified various types and ownership indicators of docks, and documented each dock on the reservoir by taking multiple photographs. She cataloged all photos taken and named them in accordance with license number, year, owner, and potential issue, as well as took the time to research ownership information for docks without legible license numbers posted. She utilized geographic information system (GIS) and Garmin applications to accurately geolocate docks lacking identification numbers or deemed abandoned along the shoreline, as well as pontoon boats that have been repurposed as docks. Once the notes, photos, and location information were well cataloged via MS Excel inventory, she then analyzed data trends
- Riley Clark, Water Resources Technician, appropriately reported hazards and conducted a comprehensive survey of nearly all the docks on the reservoir to assess their condition. She documented issues including unencapsulated foam, deteriorating wood and carpet, pontoon flotation concerns, failing flotation units, unreadable license numbers, sinking docks, and other maintenance-related observations.
- Tom Shepherd, Management Specialist, operated the MCWRA vessel to navigate the reservoir, providing valuable insights into abandoned docks along the shoreline, including those that have broken free of their moorings and others that do not meet compliance standards.
- The pontoon boat utilized by staff for the inspection was a 1982 Kayot vessel, serial number KAY43034M82Y, measuring approximately 19 to 20 feet in length.

Our Findings

The Operations team conducted an inspection and inventory audit of the dock structures, verifying their physical locations and addressing any identified condition issues. This audit verifies discrepancies in ownership records, condition assessments (including flotation type and license identification), and adherence to regulatory compliance.

Staff organized and documented all relevant records pertaining to the dock structures, including:

- Dock Registration: A comprehensive list of authorized docks structures was compared with photographed documentation. All inspection photographs were to

be properly filed and labeled with the dock license number, year, and licensee name.

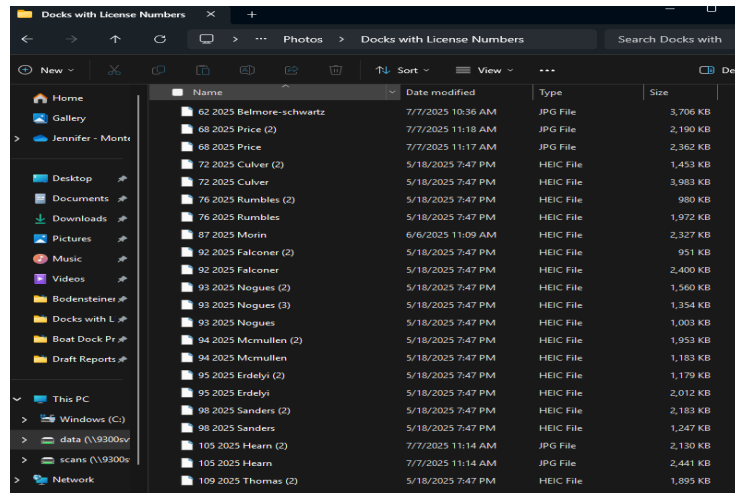


Figure 2 - Inspection photographs have been organized and appropriately labeled, totaling 801 total images.

- Records: Approval procedures and verification methods for the construction process and all significant flotation defects have been documented.
- Flotation Logs: The current records of flotation types and maintenance activities have been completed.
- MS Excel Inventory: A comprehensive record of each dock license and log information has been maintained in an MS Excel file for easy identification and management.

The information was compiled by the dock audit inspection team a specialized group with appropriate expertise, including operations personnel for record reconciliation, flotation assessment, and regulatory compliance verification. During this scheduled inspection audit, the verification team contacted licensees and landowners via email and phone. The physical verification involved counting and conducting a detailed inspection of each dock. The team conducted physical or electronic verification of each dock listed in the inventory, confirming their existence and condition. This process included: a) conducting counts and inspections, b) assessing structural integrity and equipment, and c) verifying safety standards and compliance:

- Physical presence: Verify that each dock structure and owner listed are authorized with the appropriate license and that the dock is physically present on site.
- Identification: Utilize geolocation tags to cross-reference the physical docks with the master list. Frequently, there are instances where dock structures have changed ownership or new structures have been constructed, and the updated

licensee information has not been provided. In such cases, staff employ regular daily or weekly communications to ensure all docks are accurately registered.

- **Condition:** Conduct a thorough assessment of the physical condition of all dock structures. Record any docks missing proper identification numbers, lacking identification numbers altogether, or displaying incorrect or mismatched numbers.
- **Dock Flotation:** Verify that the structure is equipped with appropriate flotation support, ensuring there are no unencapsulated Styrofoam, or metal pontoons, or barrel-shaped floats present.
- **Shorelines and Reservoir Surfaces:** Inspect for any debris originating from former docks or structures. Ensure that the reservoir is free of debris to prevent environmental contamination and safety hazards.
- **Dock Owners:** Verify the proper functioning of all docks and promptly contact the owners if any docks are submerged or present hazards. Conduct inspections with photographic documentation to confirm that any nuisances are appropriately addressed and cleaned. Ensure that all docks are operational and readily accessible.
- We verify that all dock structures and equipment comply with the requirements of the ordinance. Additionally, ensure that license identification signage can be upgraded with Agency-issued plates to improve visibility and standardization.

Reconciliation of dock structure analysis records.

Most docks are compliant with the ordinance regulations, and data indicates that they are in good condition, which facilitated the surveying process. Compared to prior inspection years, agency staff observed fewer docks lacking visible license numbers, whereas in the past, it was common to find 20-30 docks without posted licenses. The staff thoroughly examined all discrepancies to identify any mismatches or missing docks during the inspection. For each mismatch, the underlying cause was investigated. Common issues included missing docks, unrecorded docks, and location inaccuracies. All data collected during the inspection has been reconciled with the records and documented in detailed MS Excel spreadsheets, which are provided in Appendix C.

The Agency classified the inspected docks during the survey based on their geographic locations and documented any dock-related issues or “violations”. As previously mentioned, there are a total of 386 boat docks distributed across 22 geographic locations along the reservoir. When categorizing dock-related issues, agency staff identified and reviewed the four most common issues observed on the reservoir as follows:

- Unencapsulated foam flotation (UNEPS)
- Docks with license number issues (FIXNO) or no license number posted (UNNO)
- Docks with pontoon or barrel flotation (PONTOON)
- Docks that are unmaintained (UNMAIN)

The chart below displays the total number of these specific issues identified during the inspection. More detailed charts for each specific issue will be provided subsequently.

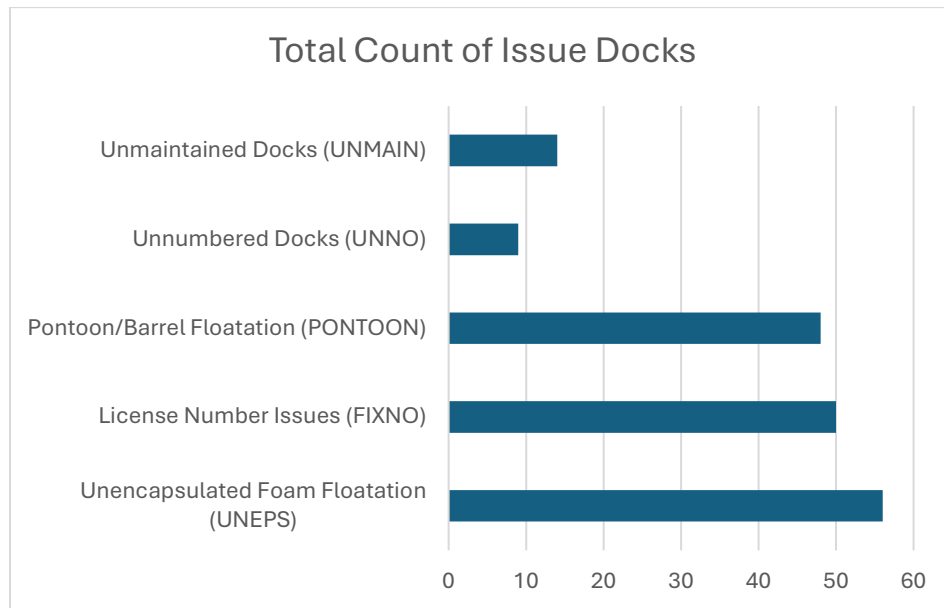


Figure 3 – Number of docks with licensing violations in the year 2025.

Documentation and reporting procedures:

UNEPS

The inspection results have been compiled to summarize all findings, including the observation that 56 docks (14.5%) on the reservoir are equipped with unencapsulated foam floats. These floats disintegrate over time, releasing microplastics into the reservoir. The detailed totals are presented below:

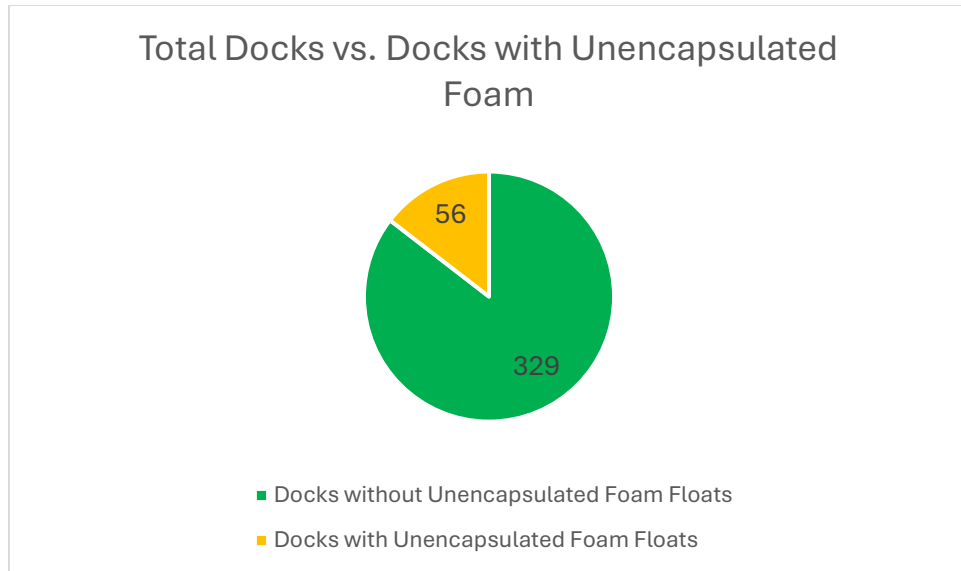


Figure 4 - Total number of docks containing encapsulated Styrofoam, which is prohibited by ordinance 4065 enacted in 2000.

These docks were observed in multiple regions along the reservoir, with the highest concentrations in Cal Shasta Club, Tri Counties Club, and Nacimiento Shores Road.

The detailed totals per each region are provided below, and these locations will be required to undertake appropriate corrective actions.

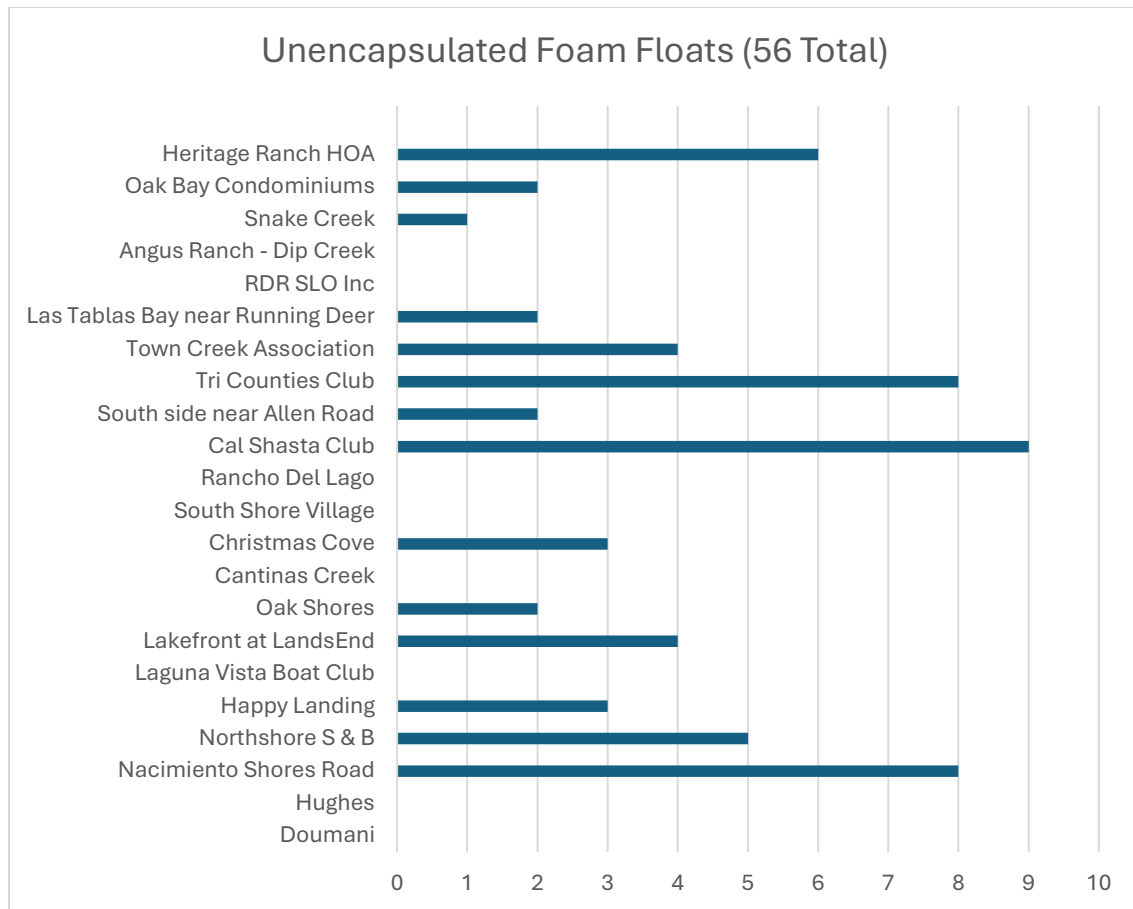


Figure 5 – Identify locations on Nacimiento Reservoir to efficiently address all instances of exposed Styrofoam.

FIXNO/UNNO

The second most common issue observed at the reservoir involved license number compliance. A total of 50 docks (13%) exhibited license number issues, including missing numbers (entirely or partially), multiple license numbers posted at a single dock, numbers that are too small, or numbers that are difficult to read due numbers to placement, color, sinking, shadowing, or other factors. Docks are required to display numerals at least 3 inches in height, clearly visible from the water. The following summary provides an overview of these docks, with inspection audit results indicating specific management concerns related to identification numbering.

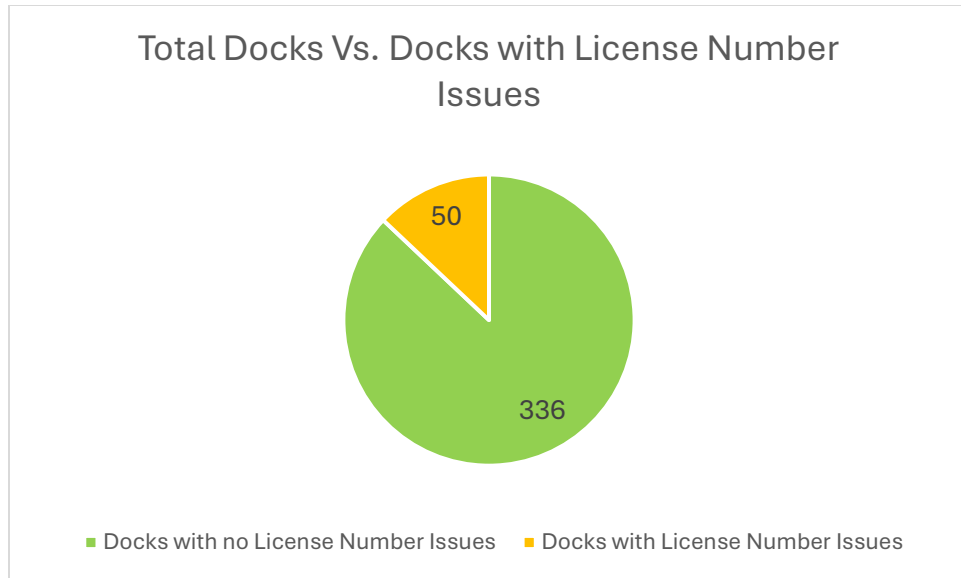


Figure 6 – There are discrepancies with dock numbering. Please utilize the findings to enhance the management of docks by ensuring that all docks display the correct license identification numbers, including the use of agency-issued plates or signs with proper ID numbers.

This issue was identified across nearly all the 22 geographic regions, with the highest totals being in Oak Shores, Cal Shasta Club, and RDR SLO Inc. It is important to note that these clubs also have the largest total number of docks. Detailed totals are provided below. Moving forward, the objective is to achieve 100 % accuracy in future inspection audits.

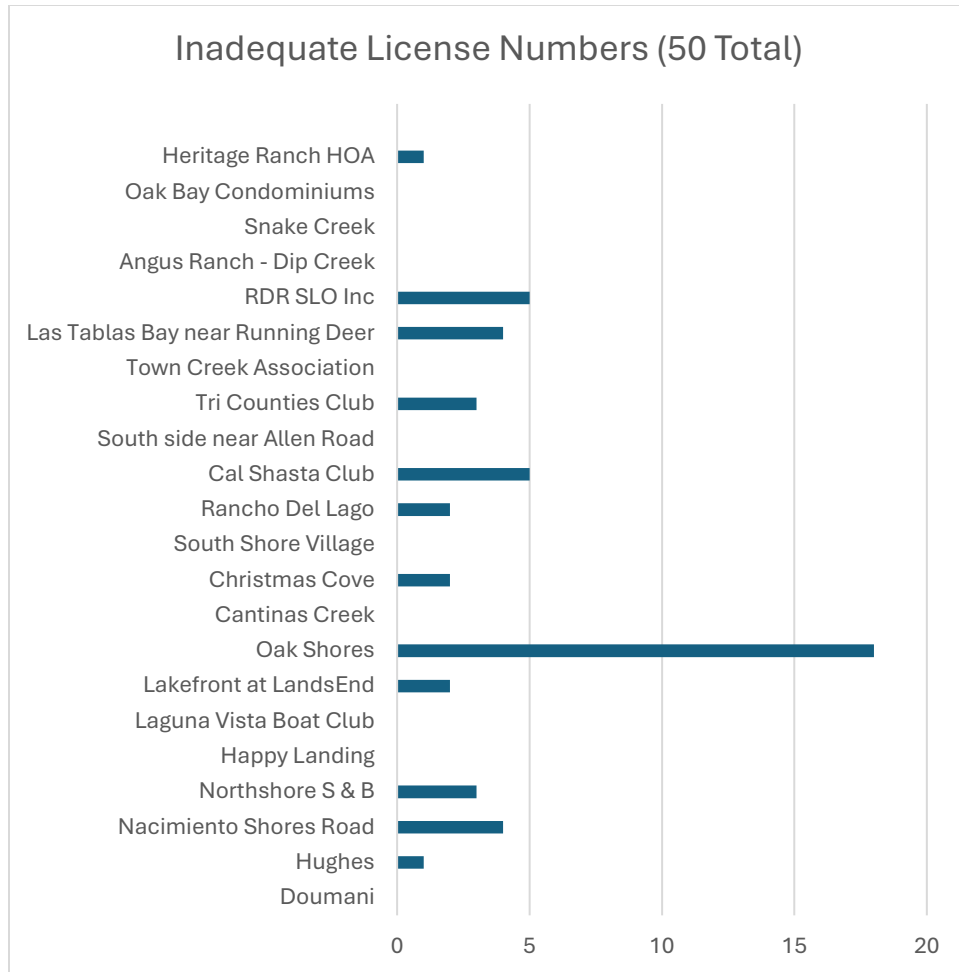


Figure 7 - Results of license identification numbering issues for each location.

The absence of properly posted boat dock license numbers significantly hampers our ability to accurately identify docks during on-site inspections. This often results in extensive efforts to review historical, cataloged photographs to establish a match, which can be time-consuming. Following the 2025 inspection, considerable time was dedicated to identifying docks with insufficient license number postings. It is essential to implement corrective measures to resolve the issue.

PONTOON

Approximately 12% (48) docks utilize pontoon or barrel-style floatation, which the Agency aims to phase out due to potential safety concerns related to dock and reservoir integrity. The following table compares these figures to the total docks on the reservoir:

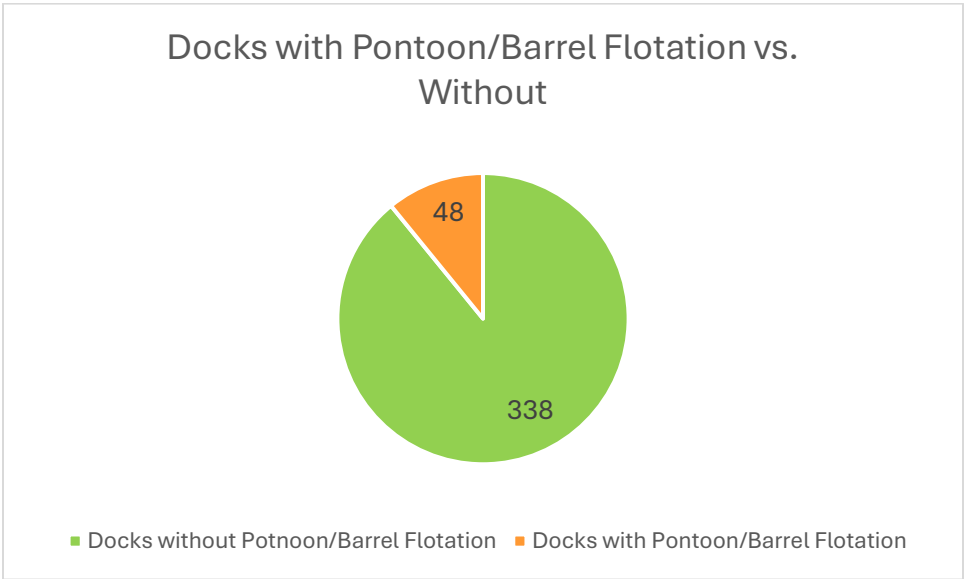


Figure 8 - Results of pontoon and barrel flotation at each location.

The following table displays the totals of pontoon and barrel flotation-style docks based on their locations within the reservoir:

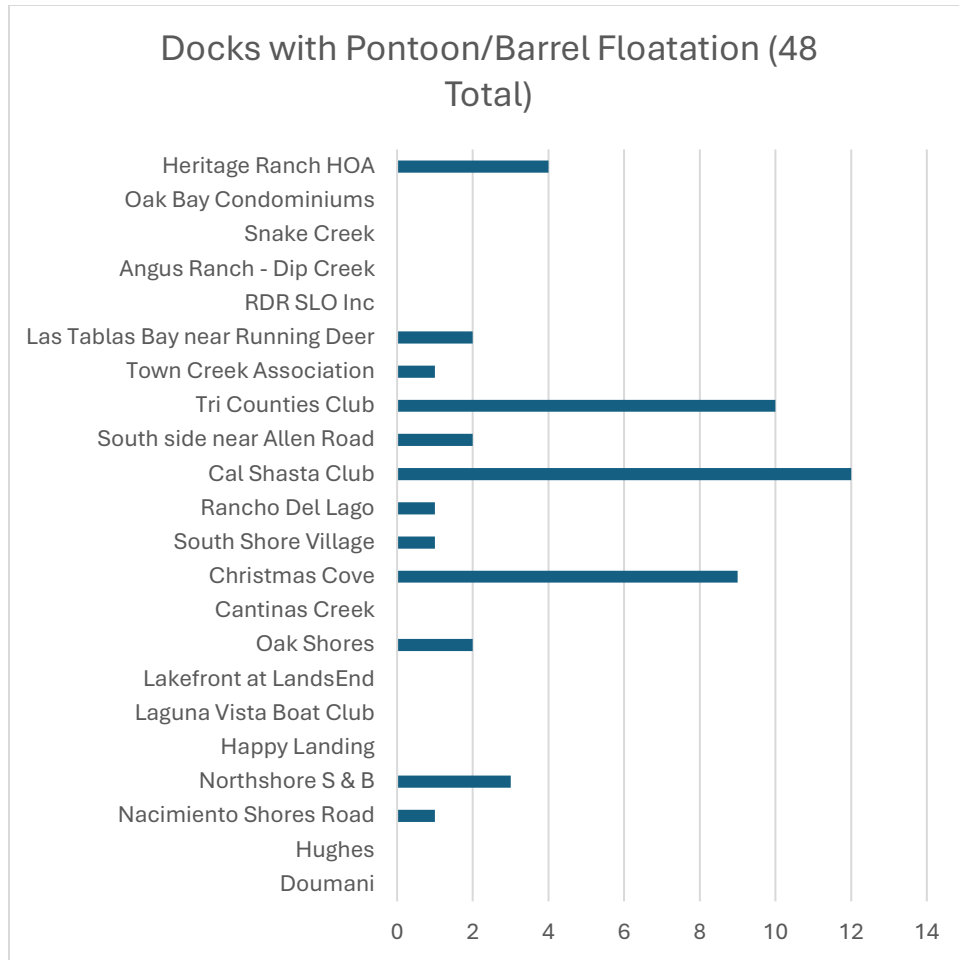


Figure 9 - Results of pontoon and barrel flotation for each location.

The highest concentrations of this type of flotation were observed at Cal Shasta Club, Tri Counties Club, and Christmas Cove. Although these locations feature some of the larger number of total docks, many of their docks are among the oldest and are in relatively poor condition, with some utilizing pontoon or barrel flotation. For example, Christmas Cove, has a total of 19 docks, of which 9 (47%) of them have pontoon or barrel floatation. In areas most affected by low reservoir levels, the docks generally tend to be of an older design, as they experience less frequent movement and therefore are not prioritized for upgrades by owners.

UNMAIN

The “unmaintained” category includes docks exhibiting significant structural deficiencies, such as rotted decking, compromised flotation leading to sinking, deteriorated carpeting, severe mooring issues, or other structural problems that pose safety concerns.

Additionally, this category encompasses docks that are deemed abandoned. At total of 14 docks, representing 3.5% of those that were surveyed, were classified within this category. The detailed totals are provided below.

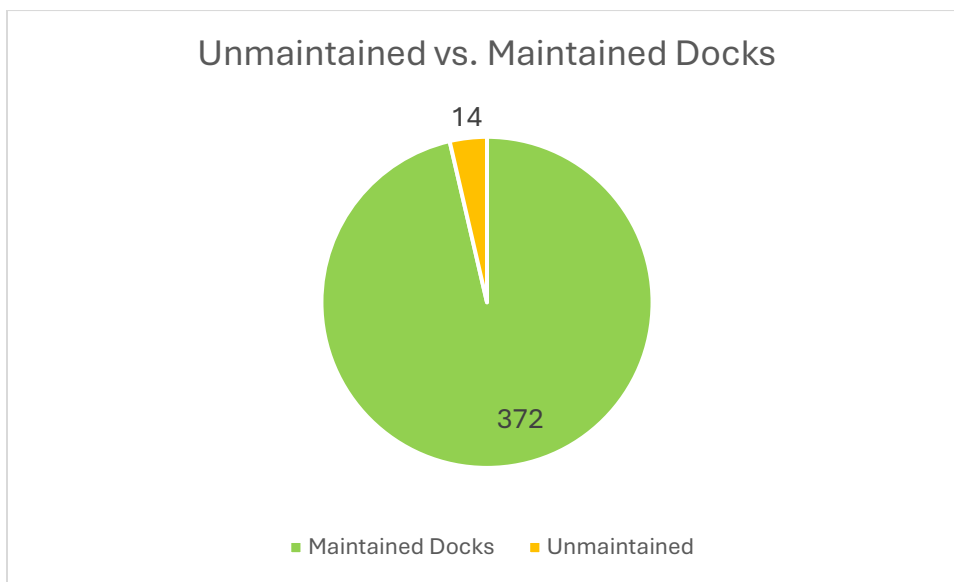


Figure 10 – Comparison of maintained and unmaintained docks.

Below are the totals of the unmaintained docks categorized by their respective locations on the reservoir.

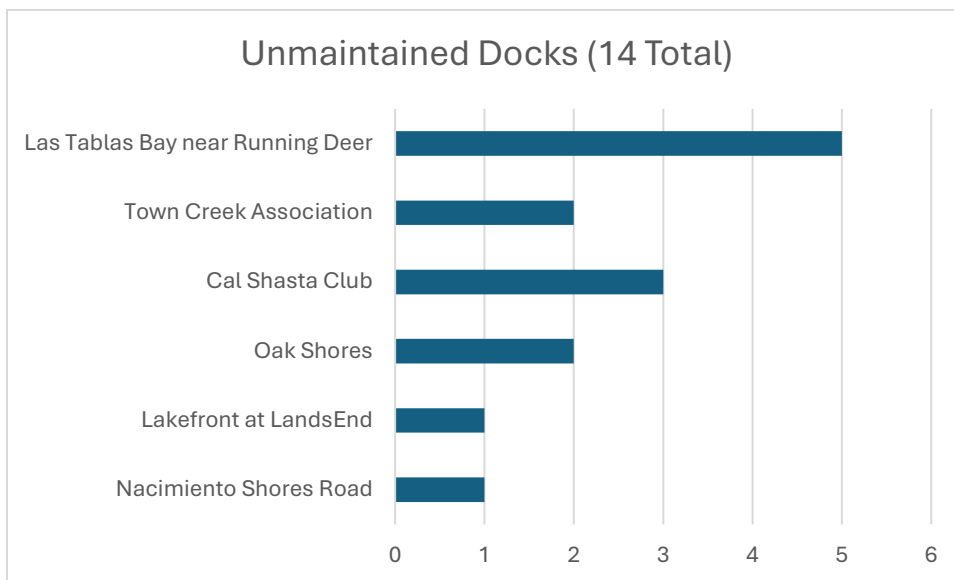


Figure 11 - Results of pontoon and barrel flotation for each location.

The highest concentration of unmaintained docks was identified in Las Tablas Bay near Running Deer, where 18.5% of the total 27 docks are unmaintained. Although this issue area has the lowest number of docks compared to locations with unencapsulated foam, insufficient licensing, or pontoon and barrel floats, these unmaintained docks still present potential risks to reservoir resources and users. Implementing corrective measures is recommended to address these concerns.

Summary of Examined Dock Concerns

Approximately 28% of the docks on the reservoir exhibit some level of structural concern, ranging from minor to more significant issues. These include unencapsulated foam floats, flotation failures leading to sinking, wood deterioration, carpet degradation, decking defects, deterioration of wood awnings and canopies, barrel or pontoon flotation, vessel conversions to docks, improper mooring, insecure attachments to other docks, and other related concerns. Although some of the structural concerns identified do not explicitly violate the governing ordinance due to specific language limitations, they were nonetheless documented as part of the most comprehensive survey conducted.

Approximately 15% of docks on the reservoir are experiencing inconsistencies in displaying their license numbers. These discrepancies include incomplete license numbers, entirely missing license numbers, multiple license numbers posted on a single dock, or license numbers that are difficult to read factors such as size, placement, or color.

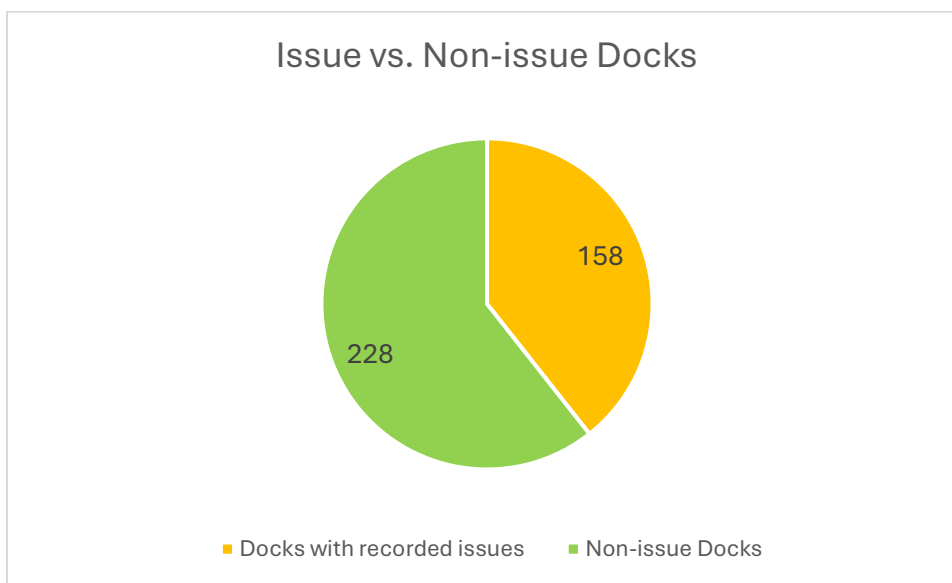


Figure 12 - Results of docks with reported issues compared to those without.

A total of 158 docks (41%) were identified as having at least one notable issue during inspection or subsequent photo review. These concerns placed the docks into one or more of the four identified issue categories. As anticipated, several docks with structural deficiencies also exhibited difficulties with, or absence of, proper license number posting, resulting in multiple category classifications. As shown in the table below, 41% of docks were identified having issues in one or more of the four categories discussed. Specifically, 28% exhibited structural concerns, while 15% had inadequate license number postings. Some docks were affected by both structural issues and license posting deficiencies, which accounts for the combined percentage 41%.

Boat Dock Concern	Notation recorded	Structural concern	License Number Issue
Percentage of Docks	41%	28%	15%

Table 1 - The overall percentage of docks with one or more issues, the percentage of docks with reported structural concerns, and the percentage of docks reported license number discrepancies.

The following table provides several examples identified by the inspection staff and Operations Committee as indicative of a structural issue.

Examples of Structural Concerns	Unencapsulated foam flotation systems	Unsuccessful flotation/Sinking	Decayed wood / Deteriorated carpet	Decking failures and structural concerns
Barrel and Pontoon flotation systems	Vessels repurposed as docks	Improper mooring detected	Potential unsafe attachment	Damaged wood awnings

Table 2 – Examples of structural issues identified by both inspection personnel in the field and the Reservoir Operations Advisory Committee during photo reviews.

The table below provides several examples of issues related to license numbers as identified by the inspection staff and Operations Committee.

Examples of License Number Concerns	Some license numbers are incomplete or missing entirely
Number is challenging to read because of its size, placement, color, or other formatting factors.	Multiple numbers displayed on the dock

Table 3 – Examples of license number issues identified by both inspection personnel in the field and the Reservoir Operations Advisory Committee during photo reviews.

Payment Status as of Now

As of early October, when this report was compiled, 348 boat docks have fulfilled their license fee obligations for the 2025 licensing year. However, 23 have yet completed their license fee payments.

Please find below a comprehensive overview of payment and portal details:

Number of Active Docks in the Portal	Unpaid Docks	Paid (No Insurance)	Accepted	Out of Water
386	25	49	302	10

Table 4 - Total dock licenses and status including unpaid with action to revoke pending.

License renewals have not been completed for 25 docks due to missing fees and insurance, and these docks are scheduled for revocation.

License renewals have not been completed for 50 docks classified as “paid – no insurance” due to missing documentation.

License renewals and Planned Out of Water events have been approved for 312 docks, representing 81% of the total docks.

Why It Matters

This inspection provides a comprehensive overview of the dock conditions and associated metrics. Proper maintenance of the docks is essential to prevent materials dispersion that could compromise infrastructure and contaminate reservoir waters.

The requirement for continuous monitoring remains. Future inspection activities may be conducted as necessary.

The Operations Team has also prepared updated web content to enhance the current Boat Dock webpage on the Agency’s website.

This item is scheduled to be presented as a formal update to the Agency’s Reservoir Advisory Operations Committee to support the progress of our seasonal preparation efforts.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. UNEPS: Unencapsulated foam floating dock structures should be retrieved and disposed of in accordance with appropriate environmental and safety protocols.

Pending approval from the Operations Division Manager, the Agency staff intends to proceed with a phased decommissioning of unencapsulated foam dock floats over an estimated period of 12 to 18 months, with a completion target of no later than April 1, 2027. Dock owners will be provided with appropriate advance notice to facilitate planning and ensure compliance within the specified timeframe.

To ensure a straightforward transition, the Agency will offer two to four pre-approved dock design plans and associated construction standards. Docks built in accordance with these approved designs will be subject to minimal review, facilitating quicker approval and deployment in comparison to more complex, custom designs.

Based on a thorough review of the photographs, all docks featuring unencapsulated foam are observed to be in poor condition and are not suitable for straightforward retrofitting. Consequently, the full removal of these docks from the reservoir will be necessary.

264 (Andre), 2132 (Ingalls), 2221 (Holm), 3224 (Winikoff), 4119 (Derby), 25010 (Vaughn), 26549 (Winikoff), 26618 (Derby), 214 (Wehner), 217 (Brooks), 2144 (Defeyter), 2259 (Hunt), 26573 (Chavez), 238 (Happy Landing Inc.), 2176 (Stinnette), 26539 (Stinnette), 85 (Pantuso), 270 (Pantuso), 26408 (Pantuso) 26519 (Pantuso), 26610 (Herne), 451 (Tucker), 26339 (Simoulis), 88 (Hunter), 116 (Wagner), 120 (Wighton), 5136 (Davis) 5205 (Spindler), 25004 (Steil), 26308 (Kusko), 26414 (Gill), 119 (Koke), 26411 (McCarty), 101 (Radford), 5180 (Quaglino), 7142 (Kleinsasser), 7201 (Sibbach), 26331 (Hart), 26340 (Davidson), 26421 (Gamble), 26476 (Johansen), 7177 (Keenan), 26334 (Samuelian), 26389 (Boe), 26428 (Perry), 8160 (Colsen), 26351 (Muscio), 63 (Brennan), 103 (Jefferson), 4222 (Agius), 26316 (Simons), 26337 (McCloud), 26381 (Wilde), 64 [Legrange (Lewis)], 11242 [(1-33) Oak Bay Condominiums], and, 26391 (Stephens).

2. FIXNO/UNNO. Docks owners whose docks do not clearly display their license number should be informed of this issue and advised to take the necessary corrective action.

Additionally, the Agency staff plans to address docks lacking proper or complete license number displays by offering a one-time courtesy fine of \$100 to affected dock owners. Simultaneously, the Agency will provide standardized dock license plates to all authorized dock licensees, which will be produced by professional sign manufacturer³. These plates will be distributed through the various boat clubs and associations surrounding the reservoir, while private dock owners not affiliated with a club or association will receive their plates by mail.

Since this fine is granted as a one-time courtesy, dock owners are required to attach their new license plates within the timeframe specified by the Agency, expected to be approximately 1–2 months. Failure to do so within this period will lead to increased fine amounts, with penalties accruing daily thereafter.

26616 (Hughes), 22010 (Cota), 25013 (Winikoff), 26398 (Loguzzo), 26479 (Gates), 214 (Wehner), 2259 (Hunt), 25008 (Myers), 85 (Pantuso), 26408 (Pantuso), 74 (Cole), 234 (Albano), 3212 (Marshall), 25021 (Bruno), 22014 (Jefferies), 23009 (Ford), 23010 (Julian/McDonald), 23019 (Keefer), 23023 (Ramirez), 25002 (Engle), 25011 (Mundy), 26364 (Hagle), 26383 (Dear), 26464 (Mueller), Divine (26507), 26597 (Warren), 26622 (Ross), 4216 (Taff), 26586 (Mutter), 26343 (Wickersham), 26368 (Lansford), 09 (Pritchard), 5205 (Maas), 23015 (Ross), 26423 (Matousek), 26441 (Fitz-Gerald), 7294 (Ball), 26465 (Iodes), 26490 (Kasarjian), 8156 (Ashamalla), 23020 (Boeddecker), 26437 (Morrison), 26514 (Brannon), 6274 (Brownell), 23000 (Martinez), 24012 (Ito), 26492 (Dragon Dock LLC), 103 (Jefferson),

3. PONTOON. Dock owners utilizing pontoon or barrel flotation are advised that the Agency will be gradually discontinuing this flotation method in the future., Please proactively plan and arrange for the replacement of such flotation systems accordingly.

219 (Sgheiza), 26452 (Kuch), 26433 (Brow), 26302 (Bertelli), 26615 (Karamitsos), 425 (Byrant), 428 (Gomes), 4199 (Raypholtz), 4235 (Graves), 26330 (Boggs), 26385 (Schreiber), 26505 (Tringali), 26628 (Della Mora), 26360 (Tonani), 113 (Tuttle), 518 (Jones), 26319 (Swack), 26342 (Lorencz), 26348 (Eyraud), 26403 (Cuthbert), 26407 (Davis), 26418 (Wells), 26453 (Mcgee), 26547 (Dodge), 2650 (Sullivan), 22005 (Wolff),

³ All floating dock structures are to be fitted with a new sign or plate issued by the Agency. This sign will feature a high-visibility license identification number along with the Agency watermark. The issuance is scheduled for spring 2026, with the installation to be completed by the licensee and licensed contractor no later than July 1, 2026, following a survey to confirm proper installation. Dock structures utilizing Styrofoam flotation will not be eligible for plate issuance. Approximately 325 structures will be issued new license plates.

26309 (Matta), 22009 (Andreasen), 26346 (Anderson) 26335 (Willis, 26379 (Johnson), 26386 (Spatafora), 26490 (Kasarian), 26591 (Grow), 26613 (Van Klooster), 22015 (Ramseyer), 26351 (Muscio), 86 (Difatta), 2631 (Lopez), 26388 (Schioppi), 26496 (Bush), 26501 (Ouellette), 26494 (Cullen), 16564 (Cockrill), 26587 (Cooper), and 82 (Belmore).

4. UNMAIN. Dock structures exhibiting compromised structural integrity should be retrieved and securely dismantled. Identified issues include inadequate mooring, deteriorated decking conditions, and decayed or disintegrated materials.

258 (Gerblick), 26408 (Pantuso (Boyle), 26595 (Mueller), 26615 (Karamitsos), 26312 (Corea), 26377 (Morehouse), 26568 (Dodge), 26456 (Souza), 26614 (Shetler), 65 (Compton), 261 (Beck), 7218 (Hart), 8248 (Carpenter), 26315 (Bishop).

5. There are currently two unidentified docks located on Nacimiento Reservoir that have been photographed and geolocated. To ensure proper licensing correspondence should be sent to the parcel owners where these docks are moored, informing them of the licensing requirements.

UNID #13 (Platform white wood and barrels – Christmas Cove), and UNID #14 (Platform junky wood abandoned – Cal Shasta Club)

Please consult the appendix of this report to for a comprehensive list of each dock inspected, along with their respective categories:

- Unencapsulated Foam Floats (UNEPS)
- License Number Issues (FIXNO)
- Unnumbered Docks (UNNO)
- Pontoon or Barrel Floatation (PONTOON or BARREL)
- Unmaintained Docks (UNMAIN)
- Unlicensed Docks (UNLIC!)