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## BOAT TRANSPORTATION GUIDE FOR CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK VESSELS

**Welcome aboard!** This information is for passengers traveling on National Park Service (NPS) vessels to the Channel Islands.

Sea conditions can vary tremendously and can make a big difference in your ability to move around the boat and disembark the vessel safely.

Passengers generally transfer from vessel to the island via a vertical ladder on to a dock under “live-boating” conditions. The boat does not tie to the dock and will be moving in relation to a stationary ladder, as the captain works to maneuver against wind and surge. On rare occasion passengers are skiffed through the surf.

Passengers will be briefed on forecast weather and landing conditions prior to departure. When landing, passengers must be agile and ready to move when directed by a designated crew member. Passengers must wait until the boat is positioned against the pier or dock for a crew member to give them the OK to transfer between the boat and dock/pier ladder. Passengers must have their hands free to grab the ladder. Passengers will be required to wear a PFD and will not be allowed to wear or carry any personal gear while transferring between the boat and pier/dock.

Passengers must complete a mandatory self-assessment checklist that is designed to help them assess their ability for a safe voyage and landing. Be honest with yourself and the boat crew when assessing your ability.

Passengers must wear snug fitting, close-toed, slip resistant footwear. Flip-flops are not allowed. Water-type shoes or neoprene booties are recommended during skiffing operations.

### **Boat Captain’s Authority:**

NPS boat captains are licensed mariners who are in ultimate command of the vessel. The captain is responsible for the safety of the vessel, crew, and passengers. All persons on board are under the captain's authority. The captain is responsible for assessing weather and sea conditions and may cancel or modify the trip at any time. Please report all accidents or close calls to the captain or crew.

## **Trip Arrangements:**

All passengers and cargo must be listed on the boat manifest through park dispatch. “Cargo” excluding personal gear (food, clothes, sleeping bag, water, etc.) must also be coordinated through the maintenance foreman (805) 658-5743. Cargo is usually staged the day prior to departure. All passengers should clean their shoes and check their cargo and personal gear for nonnative species such as mice, ants, seeds, etc. prior to arrival.

## **Arrival:**

PLEASE BE ON TIME and arrive at the loading area by 7:00 am if you are riding the NPS boat for the first time, are part of a group, or have a lot of personal gear. Everyone else should arrive no later than 7:30 am. All passengers must load their personal gear, sign the boat manifest, and park their vehicle prior to the captain’s safety briefing at 7:45 am. The safety briefing will include weather and sea conditions, operations, and emergency procedures including the location of lifesaving equipment. Departures are generally at 8:00 am.

## **Biosecurity:**

It is critical to protect the islands from nonnative species. It is your responsibility to remove any mud, dirt, plant material, seeds, insects or other critters from your gear before packing it or bringing it to the loading area. Thoroughly check shoe or boot laces and tread. Clean shoes using the boot brushes located at the far end of the deck when you sign in. Do not bring any plants or plant material, cut flowers, animals, or used cardboard boxes. If you see anything biosecurity threats please notify an NPS staff person immediately.

## **Packing Your Gear:**

Your gear may get wet and heavy items may be placed on top of it so pack with this in mind. Use hard containers or coolers to protect items from being damaged. Secure food from wildlife. Consolidate into containers that weigh no more than 30 pounds. Label containers with your name and destination. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own gear. Upon arrival at the island verify that you have all your possessions before the boat departs.

## **Loading Your Gear:**

Your gear will be inaccessible during the trip so keep any essential items with you. Please use the carts located just inside the maintenance bay entry to transfer your gear from your vehicle to the loading area. Follow the designated walkway indicated by yellow chain and traffic cones to load your gear. Be careful to load your gear into the megabag that is designated by colored tag for your island destination. DO NOT enter the loading area while the crane is in operation. The loading operations can be dangerous. Never walk near or under a crane load. When using gear carts on the gangway wheel them slowly with the handle upslope of the cart.

## **Parking and Permits:**

You can use the 30 minute loading area to offload gear. Move your vehicle as soon as possible to allow others to use this temporary parking area.

For overnight parking you will need a parking permit which in the boating office. Place the permit on the driver’s side dash of your vehicle and park in the overnight area indicated on the map.

**Boarding:**

Do not board the vessel until directed by the boat crew. Use caution on the gangway and dock which may be slippery and contain tripping hazards such as dock lines.

**In Transit:**

You must wear a life jacket any time the boat is underway and you are outside the cabin. Exercise caution while moving about the boat. Use the rails or other stable surfaces to assist you and do not lean on chain railings. Face the stairs or ladders when going up or down on the boat. It is important to report severe seasickness and any other concerns to the crew.

**Island Gear/Passenger Transfer:**

The boat will provide a briefing upon arrival and departure prior to loading operations to ensure safe passenger transfer and cargo handling. Special attention should be paid to first time passengers. A crew member will direct and guide you on when it is safe to transfer between the boat and dock/pier.

**Channel Islands National Park**  
**1901 Spinnaker Drive, Ventura. CA 93001.**  
**(805) 658-5730**  
**[www.nps.gov/chis](http://www.nps.gov/chis).**