

Lake Rabun Association Wake Boat Survey

December 2020

Summary of Results

Survey open: November 30 – December 6, 2020

Total responses: 486

Response rate: 57%

Key results:

Q1 Have large waves from wake boats had a negative effect on you while boating on the lake? Select one.

Answered: 485 Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No	12.99% 63
Occasionally	26.80% 130
Frequently	60.21% 292
TOTAL	485

Q2 How have you been negatively affected by wake boat waves while boating? Select all that apply.

Answered: 401 Skipped: 85

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I limit the amount and times of boating	62.09% 249
Difficulty loading and unloading passengers	51.62% 207
Difficulty navigating boat	70.07% 281
Other (please describe below)	33.92% 136
Total Respondents: 401	

Some comments:

We were visiting friends on the lake who were in lockdown due to covid. We were in our boat, approximately 10 feet away from their dock and seawall, chatting with them on their dock. A wakeboat came by and the wake was so large that it crashed our boat into the seawall, even as we were making every effort to move away from it. Ultimately this led to our boat sinking and being declared a total loss. I just don't believe Lake Rabun is large enough to accommodate this size boat.

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Difficult to enjoy the lake safely with small children. Can no longer do normal water skiing. Difficult to swim near our dock. Difficult and unpleasant to drive a pontoon boat.

Two times ballast boat waves have come over the bow of my 22' open bow boat. I felt there was a danger of sinking. Generally it is not pleasant to navigate rough water and big waves. This is ruining our boating experience.

Q3 Do you believe that waves from wake boats create a boating safety issue?

Answered: 476 Skipped: 10

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No	18.49% 88
Yes	75.00% 357
No opinion	6.51% 31
TOTAL	476

Q4 If you believe waves from wake boats create a boating safety issue, please indicate how by answering the following. Select all that apply.

Answered: 357 Skipped: 129

	NEVER	RARELY	OCCASIONALLY	FREQUENTLY	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Waves swamp my boat	13.16% 45	21.05% 72	46.78% 160	19.59% 67	342
Passengers jostled	1.44% 5	4.02% 14	36.49% 127	58.05% 202	348
Passengers hurt	56.44% 184	29.75% 97	13.19% 43	1.23% 4	326
Skiers or rafters inconvenienced or endangered	2.33% 8	7.00% 24	36.73% 126	53.94% 185	343
Kayakers and paddle boarders inconvenienced or endangered	1.78% 6	5.03% 17	29.59% 100	63.91% 216	338
People on docks or swimming inconvenienced or endangered	4.27% 15	12.82% 45	44.44% 156	38.46% 135	351
Other (please explain below)	2.44% 2	1.22% 1	17.07% 14	79.27% 65	82

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Some comments:

We have small children who are often knocked over by such huge waves

With the wake boats so numerous and dominant out on the water now, I can't remember the last time being on the lake where I didn't fear for my family's safety at least once. This is true of time we spend on our boat, as well as time we spend swimming near our dock.

Dropping the boat in the water and taking the boat out of the water, getting in and out of the boat during that time is really dangerous when giant waves come in.

The larger waves directly affect the ability to steer a boat. On many occasions I have been unable to steer one of my boats and worried that I would be pushed into another boat.

While untying boat (with 3 people in it) at dock, the wave was so strong that one of the people on boat was thrown in water!

Q5 Have you experienced shoreline erosion or structural damage as a result of large waves? You may select minor or major shoreline erosion and structural damage as applicable.

Answered: 445 Skipped: 41

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No erosion or structural damage	24.49% 109
Minor shoreline damage	38.88% 173
Major shoreline damage	28.54% 127
Structural damage	32.13% 143
Total Respondents: 445	

Question 5 is a repeat of the same question asked in the 2018 LRA Member Survey. As the table below shows, the percent of respondents reporting shoreline or structural damage has increased over the past two years.

<u>Response</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Change</u>
No erosion or structural damage	24.49%	33.78%	-9.29%
Minor shoreline damage	38.88%	29.39%	9.49%
Major shoreline damage	28.54%	22.30%	6.24%
Structural damage	32.13%	14.53%	17.60%

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Some comments:

The constant pounding of wake boat waves against our dock has caused significant damage. I'm repairing it at least twice as much as before the surge in wake boats on the lake. And the small beach area by our dock has eroded so much it's a fraction of what it once was. My children can barely swim/play on that beach area anymore without being jostled and thrown by huge wake boat waves.

Rock Seawall and patio had no damage for 20 years. Has extensive damage in past 3 years due to gigantic waves reaching shoreline.

We've had our house for two generations and have never seen such erosion to our shoreline.

Q6 Cost to repair damage (materials and labor) if known

Answered: 198 Skipped: 288

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Actual amount spent to date on repairs	67.68%	134
Estimated amount to complete repairs	72.73%	144

The following statistics apply to respondents who reported dollar amounts for Question 6.

	Spent <u>To Date</u>	Estimated <u>to Complete</u>
Sum	\$609,600	\$1,057,450
Average	\$8,467	\$12,441
Median	\$2,800	\$3,500
Count	72	85

Q7 Do you believe policies should be put in place to address wake boat activity on Lake Rabun?

Answered: 462 Skipped: 24

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No need for any policies	12.34%	57
Yes, policies are needed	81.82%	378
No opinion	5.84%	27
TOTAL		462

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Q8 How effective do you believe the following policies would be in mitigating any negative effects of wake boat activity?

Answered: 373 Skipped: 113

	NOT EFFECTIVE	SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE	VERY EFFECTIVE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Restrict times for ballast operations that create larger waves	23.97% 87	36.64% 133	29.75% 108	9.64% 35	363
Limit boat weight	6.94% 25	21.67% 78	54.44% 196	16.94% 61	360
Limit ballast operations to wake boarding and surfing; empty ballast tanks when cruising or waterskiing	14.44% 53	26.43% 97	49.32% 181	9.81% 36	367
Restrict areas of the lake for ballast operations	13.55% 50	24.39% 90	54.20% 200	7.86% 29	369
Require a wider buffer for wake boats (distance to other watercraft or shoreline)	14.52% 53	28.22% 103	52.05% 190	5.21% 19	365
Minimize repetitive wake boat runs in same area	15.30% 56	28.96% 106	46.72% 171	9.02% 33	366
Training and education for wake boat owners and surfers	16.62% 61	31.34% 115	45.23% 166	6.81% 25	367
Other (Please explain below)	6.41% 5	3.85% 3	64.10% 50	25.64% 20	78

Q9 Do you believe policies regarding loud volumes of music from boats on the lake should be adopted?

Answered: 455 Skipped: 31

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	59.34% 270
No	20.66% 94
No opinion	20.00% 91
TOTAL	455

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Some comments:

Not all people like the same music. Respect is lost with increased volume.

Loud radios are extremely disruptive and disturbing.

Blasting music loud enough for everyone on the shore to hear is noise pollution

Q10 What is your primary concern about wake boats on Lake Rabun?

Select one.

Answered: 451 Skipped: 35

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I have no concerns	11.09%	50
Shoreline or structural erosion and damage	39.69%	179
Negative effects on boating (e.g. difficulty navigating or limiting boating activity)	23.50%	106
Boating safety	20.84%	94
Other (please describe below)	4.88%	22
TOTAL		451

Q11 Any other comments you wish to make?

Answered: 221 Skipped: 265

Some comments:

The few who have wake boats significantly interfere with enjoyment of the lake by the many

If families are going to continue to enjoy Rabun together we have to accept wake boats. Kids do not water ski much anymore. I am sure that when ski boats began to replace wood boats on Rabun there were similar responses. We have to be able to allow future generations the ability to enjoy watersports and our beautiful lake together.

Please address this issue. It is affecting our enjoyment of the lake and damaging our property values

I enjoy surfing a lot but unfortunately Lake Rabun is not well suited for modern day surf boats. Or at least not that many and I have no idea how to police them.

As an owner of a wake board boat with ballast I don't believe the problem is with the boat but rather how and where its operated. Owners need to be educated to empty their ballast when not in use and to turn down their speaker volume!!!!