

Avila Beach Whale Watching

For your review is a proposal for a license to continue to offer boat tours of the near coastal waters of San Luis Bay aboard our 28 ft powerboat. We would like to offer these boating excursions utilizing the Harford pier and the public landing for loading and unloading purposes. From 2014 to 2020 we have held two licenses to operate tours, one for a sailboat and one for a powerboat under the name Mark Kocina DBA "Avila Beach Whale Watching and Central Coast Sailing Charters". At this time we would like to let go of the sailboat license and focus on our powerboat tours under the simplified name of Mark Kocina DBA "Avila Beach Whale Watching"

Submitted on September 20, 2020

By

Captain Mark Kocina, Owner and founder of Avila Beach Whale Watching and
Central Coast Sailing Charters

USCG license #USA000423819
Master of Steam, Motor or Auxiliary Sail of vessels to
100 gross tons with commercial towing endorsement

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Business Statement

Avila Beach Whale Watching is a small family owned and operated business, which allows us to maintain a high level of customer service with a personal touch. Our goal for this business the next 3 years is the same as it was 8 years ago when we first opened; to provide our guests with top notch customer service and a wonderful, family friendly and educational experience. I will personally captain most of the tours and look foreword to providing access the near-coastal environment of San Luis bay and all of its amazing wildlife and intricate ecosystems.

Our boating tours are rather unique with only six passengers aboard per trip. We feel that this provides the opportunity for a more interactive experience with our guests and makes our tours one of the best boating adventures offered on the California coast. This more intimate setting allows me to use my extensive naturalist background and my passion for history to bring to life the great story of this wonderful historic port.

Over the years we have continued to maintain a large return customer following. Many of our guests book tours with us several times a year and they consider us to be a highlight of their Central Coast vacation experience. We attribute this success to our dedication to professionalism as boat handlers and to our top-notch interactive tours and customer service.

It is one of our core beliefs that providing access for the general public to the marine environment is a privilege granted to us by the people of the state of California via the Port San Luis Harbor District. We understand that being allowed to use the resources of the State comes with the obligation to provide access to the waters of Port San Luis with dependable, regularly scheduled departures that are reasonably priced. We believe that each guest deserves to be treated in a respectful manner regardless of age, race or gender.

Avila Beach Whale Watching firmly believes that passenger safety is of the upmost importance and over the past eight years of operating tours we have maintained an impeccable safety record. There has not been a single injury of any kind nor has there been the need for any assistance to return our vessels to port. We adhere to all protocols for the safe operation of commercial passenger vessels as detailed by the USCG operation of uninspected passenger vessel guidelines.

We take great pride to uphold the maritime tradition of keeping our vessels clean and well maintained so that our guests have the opportunity to participate in a safe environment aboard boats that reflect well on both our company and Port San Luis. We plan to keep up with our current safety standards and our rigorous maintenance program to ensure that our vessels run as smoothly for the coming years as they have in the past. To further this tradition our captains and crew are always neatly dressed and we have maintained an excellent record for running our tours on time.

We also encourage marine stewardship whenever possible by setting an example of picking up marine debris if we see it on our trips and talking about marine pollution issues when appropriate.

With our long-standing operation here at Port San Luis people see us and know our boat well enough to listen to our advice and this allows us to be stewards of the public landing. We go out of our way to help coordinate the use of the public landing and smooth out some of the misunderstandings about its shared use. We have often times been needed to help move boats that are left unattended or not attended by a qualified operator so that other users can pick up and drop crew without substantial delay. We also wash the public landing everyday to help keep it clean and safe for use, as many mornings it is covered in seaweed and trash from the night-time users or spoiled by sea lion and bird droppings.

We also contribute to the overall safety of the port by assisting vessels and people in distress. We carry jumper cables, which we have used to help stranded mariners and a towline to secure vessels that are adrift. Several times a year when kayakers and paddle boarders get caught by sudden afternoon winds and are getting blown out of control across the bay we find folks that are very scared and panicking so we stop and help calm them down until the harbor patrol can get to them. We have performed rescues ourselves when conditions have warranted the need for an immediate response. We once found a person swimming next to their boat, fully clothed and wearing a back pack after they had fallen in transferring from their boat to their skiff and they were unable to climb back onto either. They told us they thought that they had been in the water for over 15 minutes and that they were about to go under from exhaustion. We are glad to have been there for her and for all the others we have been able to help over the years.

We love living here on the Central Coast and as members of this community we support several local charities. We frequently donate trips for silent auction to various public elementary, middle and high school fundraisers. We also donate trips annually to the Woods Humane Society. It is a great joy for us to be able to provide tours to the "Make A Wish" foundation to help families in dealing with very sick children. This job also allows me the necessary time in the winter when the amount of visitors seeking tours is low, to give back to our community by helping out at two schools in the area. I work afternoons as an assistant wrestling coach at Morro Bay High School and at Los Osos Middle School to help our youngsters grow into better young adults through the lessons of hard work and discipline.

We also support local businesses and buy local whenever possible. We buy all of our fuel and maintenance materials from the Port San Luis Boatyard and we spend \$30,000 or more annually with them. We buy our shirts and hats from JACarroll, a San Luis Obispo company and we bank with SESLOC a locally based credit union. We could save money and shop online but we believe that supporting our local businesses also supports our friends and families. We always recommend our local restaurants and hotels in the Avila Beach area to our guests.

Business Plan: Avila Beach Whale Watching

Avila Beach Whale Watching would like to continue to offer six passenger maximum whale watching and coastal tours aboard our 28 ft power catamaran. My company is very self-sufficient and capable of operating at current passenger levels with very little support from Port San Luis Harbor District. We only need access to the public landing, a small sign on the pier to help our guests locate the public landing and a place for people to park. Our continuing business plan is to stay at our current occupancy levels utilizing the public landing for loading and unloading our guests.

For the foreseeable future we plan to stay at our current operating capacity, as it seems that the Port is at its maximum capacity also. It would seem irresponsible on our part to expand to a larger boat or continue running two boats at this time when we are already having difficulties with folks not being able to find parking and needing to be refunded as they cannot get to the boat to load up for their trips. We would be happy to talk about expanding to a larger boat and generating more income for the Port and for us once the infrastructure at the Port can sustain it. For now we are content stay at our current levels with the powerboat for the foreseeable future.

For more information about our tours please visit my website:

www.avilabeachwhalewatching.com

Hours and Pricing – Avila Beach Whale Watching

For 2021 and on we plan to stay with what is working well for us. We currently offer two-hour whale watching tours twice per day at 9:00 am and at 11:30 am to take advantage of the typically calmer morning sea conditions with the hope of operating after the fog has cleared and before the afternoon winds blow. We will be offering these tours year round whenever whales are in our area, which is every month except December. We will add a third trip at 2:00 pm in the fall and every day that the weather will permit it. The tours will be priced at \$85 per person. This is the same schedule and pricing that we have used for the past 2 years. We feel that it a fair price and offers the best possible outcomes when dealing with our weather here on the central coast.

We also offer 1-hour wildlife spotting, educational adventures for families in the near shore environment between the Port and Shell Beach. This tour departs daily at 2:00pm and at 3:15 pm all year and is made available all day when whales are not in the area. On this tour we explore the bay from the Harford Pier to Smith Island and the historic Port San Luis Lighthouse. Along the way we take in viewings of sea lions, sea otters and harbor seals and a large variety of seabirds. Then we race off for a fun ride down to White Rock the beautiful Fossil Point Sea caves. These adventures are offered as private tours and priced at \$37.50 per person (\$225 for 6 people)

*Three Year Projected Revenues and Expenses
Avila Beach Whale Watching*

Avila Beach Whale Watching	\$ Amount
2021 Projected Revenue	\$130,000
2021 Projected Expenses	\$55,000
2022 Projected Revenue	\$130,000
2022 Projected Expenses	\$55,000
2023 Projected Revenue	\$130,000
2023 Projected Expenses	\$55,000

Resume

Capt. Mark Kocina

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Qualifications

Since 2012 I have personally escorted over 10,000 people safely about San Luis Bay on sailing and powerboat tours without a single injury or incident of any kind. After 8 years of working on the waters of Port San Luis I feel that I have an excellent understanding of the weather and animals in this area.

I have now been working in the maritime adventure travel industry for over 40 years and feel that this gives me a great advantage to problem solving and keeping my equipment running and by extension my tours running which translates to happy visitors to Port San Luis.

My professional qualifications are:

USCG 100 Ton vessel masters license with tow and sail endorsements

US Sailing basic keelboat certified instructor

Over 52,000 miles at sea and over 80,000 miles inland and rivers

Extended offshore experience

Profile

With over 40 years of experience in the marine industry as the vessel master of oar, sail and power boats I can provide expertise in boat handling and an overview of passenger safety at sea that only comes from many years of experience in a wide variety of circumstances. This experience has come from rowing passengers down some of the world's biggest and hardest commercially run rivers and from captaining sailing vessels from 12 to 67 ft both as a single hander and fully crewed. Operating power vessels from 8 to 50 ft with horsepower ratings from 4 to 500 HP, single and twin screw, with and without bow thrusters.

I have owned and operated the sailing charter company "Central Coast Sailing" for the past 8 years and the powerboat company "Avila Beach Whale Watching" for the past 4 years with a concessionaire's license to utilize the public landing at the Harford Pier issued by the Port San Luis Harbor district. I have personally captained most of the tours (90%) and taken every reservation. To date we have taken over 10,000 passengers on tours of San Luis Bay over the past 8 years without incidence or injury of any kind. I have an intimate understanding and respect of the waters and quickly changing sea conditions around Port San Luis.

Added to the 50,000 miles of ocean boating experience I have 40 plus years of leading white water adventure expeditions into some of the most remote parts of

the world. This has uniquely prepared me for a career as a charter captain by giving me thousands of opportunities to work with a wide variety of passengers of varying temperaments in sometimes less than ideal conditions. I greatly enjoy sharing information about wildlife and the ocean with others and just as importantly, feel especially well suited to address a passengers concerns and fears that occasionally arise at sea in a calm and supportive manner.

To round out my captaining skills I do all of my own maintenance and mechanical system repairs as well as electrical, plumbing and fiberglass. I am also very experienced with the installation and maintenance of many ships systems including: engines, standing and running rigging, automatic fire suppression systems, refrigeration, autopilots and navigation electronics. This helps to keep my vessels in operation more often and in excellent condition resulting in fewer closed periods due to mechanical failures.

Commercial Vessel Experience

P/V PACIFIC FLYER

February 2017 to present

28 ft power catamaran

I have used this boat over the past 3 years for whale watching and coastal adventures as the flagship of Avila Beach Whale Watching. We have taken over 3,000 guests out for 2 hour and 1 hour excursions. All trips have returned safely to Port San Luis without incidence of any kind. For more information about these tours please visit my website

www.avilabeachwhalewatching.com

S/V SPIRIT 44 ft. 13 ton sloop

April 2012 to December 2019

As the owner of Central Coast Sailing Charters and the vessel master of "Spirit" I personally have captained most of the trips, which adds up to over 7000 passengers during the past 8 years. All returned from the sea safely and with out incidence. Each tour is 2.5 hours in duration and covers approximately 6 nautical miles.

S/R/V "Derrick M Baylis" 65 ft cat ketch, 50 tons

April 2009 to 2012

As the vessel master of the "Derrick M Baylis" I was responsible for all shipboard operations, maintenance, repairs and crew management for daily charters with our primary customer the Monterrey Bay Aquarium from May through August. The vessel is also available for charter as a research platform the remainder of the year and my duties as master continued there. During my 3-year tenure as the vessels master we preformed several month long charters for Stanford University's TOPP project, Oregon State University's geology dept., NOAA, USGS and Oceana's MPA underwater video survey. <http://www.sealifeconservation.org>
<http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/10sanandreas/welcome.html>

S/V "2041" 67 ft steel cutter, 51 tons
 April 2008 to April 2009

Vessel master aboard "2041" for "The Voyage for Cleaner Energy," a sustainable energy vessel touring the US and Europe: Please see <http://www.2041.com/the-voyage-for-cleaner-energy/> for a description of the Voyage.

My duties for 2041 included the overseeing of all shipboard operations and crew management. Including an engine rebuild, the setting up of all onboard navigation systems, crew training and the coaching of volunteers to help with the longer passages. The on board operations included public showings and demo sails to demonstrate the latest in solar and wind generation techniques, the use of bio fuels in the main engine and speaking with visitors about our program. We sailed over 11,000 miles from San Francisco, California to Seattle, Washington then south visiting a dozen ports in route to the Panama Canal. After transiting the canal we sailed up to Nantucket, Massachusetts via Miami Florida.

S/V "GREAT ESCAPE" 65 foot ketch
 1990- 1991

I worked as a deck hand and watch captain running charters through the Panama Canal. (16 transits) I was responsible for all sailing duties, navigation, passenger care and management

White Water Rafting Guide 1982-2017

I have worked as a river guide on thousands of trips in the USA as a lead guide and area manager for California's premier white water rafting company White Water Voyages. I have also worked internationally in Chile, Costa Rica, Panama, Zambia, Fiji, New Zealand, Alaska and Canada.

A few highlights from my rafting/kayaking career: from 1983 through 1990 I worked on the amazing upper kern section known as "The Forks Of The Kern" considered by Outside Magazine to one of the 10 things you should do before you die. In 1984 I paddle captained the first rafting descent of the Stikine River in British Columbia, which is still considered to be one of the world's most difficult rivers. From 1990 through 1993 I won the west coasts premier down river kayak race on the class V section of the upper Tuolumne River. In 1994 I was the special stunt camera operator for the Meryl Streep Film the "River Wild". 1995 I was a member of the USA National champion rafting team from California. Later that same year we went on to a win a silver medal at the white water world championships on the Zambezi River in Central Africa.

References

Mr. Brent Lintner, owner Port San Luis Boatyard
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Mr. Tom Moylan, Marine Operations Manager, Cal Poly Pier
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**Mailing addresses available upon request*

Signing Certification and Fictitious Business Name Statement;

As the owner and operator of Mark Kocina DBA Avila Beach Whale Watching, I Mark Kocina am hereby entitled to represent this business and empowered to submit this proposal and am authorized to sign an agreement with the Port San Luis Harbor District.

Statement of Acceptance

I hereby accept the standard Monthly Revocable License language.