

Basic Facts of Recreational Vessel Population and Recreational Boating Demographics

Recreational boating has a **\$72 billion annual economic impact**. The vast majority of recreational boats sold are small, inexpensive pleasure craft. The overwhelming majority of recreational boaters are middle-class Americans; 77% of boat owners have a **household income of less than \$100,000 a year**. Boats **less than 27 feet make up 96 percent of the 12.4 million registered boats** in the U.S. and are leading the industry out of the recession.

Boater Demographic Facts & Boat Usage Facts

Boating is Popular. In 2011, boating participation increased ten percent to 83 million – the largest proportion of adults (34.8 percent) who went boating since 1997(35.8 percent).

Boaters are Middle Class. More than 3 out of 4—77 percent— current boat owners have an average household income of less than \$100,000. Sixty-three percent of current boat owners earn less than \$75,000 per year.

Recreational Boating is Seasonal. Boat owners spent an average of 31 days on the water in 2011, up 11% from 28 days in 2010.

Most Boats are Small. Of the 12.4 million registered boats in the U.S., 95% are small, trailerable boats. In 2011, nearly 7 out of 10 (68%) boat owners owned a 14' to 29' boat. The share of boats over 30' long reported as being “heavily used” in 2011 dropped from 34% in 2010 to 26% in 2011, while the share of those under 13' reported as being “heavily used” rose from 16%.

Economic Impact Facts

Boating is Important to the Economy. Recreational boating is an important contributor to the U.S. economy, employing 348,000 Americans who earn \$10.4 billion annually. Boating generates \$32.3 billion in sales and services in 2011, a six percent increase percent from 2010.

Recreational Boating – Made in America. 83% of powerboats made in the U.S. are sold in the U.S.; And in 2011, exports increased 10% totaling \$2.2 billion.

Boater Spending is Substantial. The U.S. recreational boating industry is seeing the tide turn; New power boat sales increased an estimated 10 percent in 2012, the first time there's been growth since before the recession.

Boating Means Jobs. In 2007, recreational boating directly and indirectly impacted 337,758 jobs with a labor income of \$10.4 billion. Nearly 19,000 boating businesses employ more than 154,000 U.S. workers.

Boating Means Economic Growth. Early indications are showing the industry will see additional growth in 2013 by as much as 5-10 percent. Growth in 2013 will depend on continued improvements in economic conditions that impact recreational boating—namely consumer confidence and the housing market—and sustained interest in Americans' participation in outdoor recreation.