



# Recreational Boating in New Jersey: An Economic Impact Analysis

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HDR

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Survey results indicate that New Jersey's recreational boaters spent approximately \$2.1 billion on their pastime in 2006. Of the money spent, \$1.1 billion were trip-related expenditures and \$938 million were in annual boating purchases (such as registration fees, maintenance, etc.). After accounting for leakages to other states' economies (e.g. through the purchase of goods manufactured in another state) in-state recreational boating contributed \$1.8 billion to New Jersey's economy in 2006.
- New Jersey boaters reported an average of 28.1 boat outings per year. Powerboats that are less than 26 feet in length are the most commonly used boat type in New Jersey waters, used for approximately 76% of boat outings. Survey respondents indicated that fishing is the primary purpose for most (56%) recreational boat outings. The coastal counties of Ocean, Monmouth, Cape May, and Atlantic are the most popular boating destinations.
- New Jersey's recreational boating industry provides approximately 18,000 jobs.
- Additional substantial economic contributions not included in the study are out-of-state boaters that spend time and money in New Jersey as well as New Jersey's boat manufacturing industry. New Jersey has 23 boat manufacturers and 22 boat builders that provide economic contributions and employment opportunities.
- Recreational boating is a popular pastime in New Jersey. Approximately 148,707 New Jersey residents had at least one boat registered within the state in 2006. This figure does not include people that participate in boating without a registered boat, such as people who join friends and family on boats, or people who use unregistered canoes and kayaks.
- The majority of survey respondents were married men between the ages of 46 and 65. Survey respondents tended to be on the upper end of the income scale, with about one-half reporting an annual gross household income in excess of \$90,000.
- The number of recreational boats registered in New Jersey has decreased as much as 27% in the past five years, in contrast to a reported increase in boating nationwide during the same timeframe. Results of this analysis suggest that further decreases in the number of registered boats in New Jersey could adversely affect many sectors of both the State and local economies, particularly in the southern coastal region.
- The most commonly reported concerns about recreational boating in New Jersey were generally related to safety, water quality and the need for infrastructure improvements.

- Decisions about increased funding to address the concerns of the recreational boating population should be weighed against the economic contribution of recreational boating to New Jersey.
- This study was sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Transportation Office of Maritime Resources I BOAT NJ Program. The I BOAT NJ Program's mission is to benefit the boating public by promoting, improving and enhancing the marine industry in New Jersey through grant funding financed by the FY 2003 vessel registration fee increase.

