



# The Recreational Boating Industry's Commitment to Protecting Our Environment

## Overview

Rising sea levels, ocean acidification, water pollution, and many additional effects of climate change are impacting the entire recreational boating community—boaters, anglers, dealers, manufacturers, and marinas. Without clean water and healthy and abundant fish populations, our community will be unable to enjoy our cherished pastimes, putting thousands of boating businesses and jobs at risk. Addressing the growing threats from climate change will require a comprehensive international strategy and participation by a wide range of stakeholders.

Over the past 20 years, the boating industry has made significant progress toward reducing our emissions and carbon footprint by implementing more sustainable manufacturing processes and creating cleaner technologies and products. Additionally, the recreational boating and fishing community has worked closely with elected officials at every level of government for decades to develop and advance policies and programs aimed at protecting our natural resources.

As the largest contributor to America's outdoor recreation industry—which accounts for 2.1% of U.S. GDP, generates \$788 billion in economic impact, and supports 5.2 million jobs—the recreational boating industry is committed to building on our progress and ensuring future generations can continue enjoying our public lands and waterways.

The following report captures the recreational boating industry's efforts to protect our environment, areas where the industry is making improvements, and actions for policymakers to take.

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Recreational Boats  
Account For A Fraction  
of a Percent of  
Total U.S. Greenhouse  
Gas Emissions.

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Recreational Boating  
Generates **\$170 Billion**  
In Annual Economic  
Impact, Supporting  
**35,000 Businesses** and  
**700,000 American Jobs.**

BRP received the **Earth Day Sustainability Award** for their manufacturing facility water filtration system, which has saved more than **22 million gallons** of water annually.

Mercury Marine announced in 2019 that its hub for parts and accessories distribution is now a **“Zero Waste to Landfill”** facility.

Since 2000, reduced emissions from marine engines by more than **90%** and increased fuel efficiency by more than **40%**.

## Implementing More Sustainable Manufacturing Processes

Marine manufacturers—including the more than 1,000 businesses represented by the National Marine Manufacturers Associations—are constantly innovating and searching for new approaches to make the manufacturing process more environmentally friendly.

### What have we done?

- Introduced new manufacturing techniques like vacuum infusion to cut down on emissions from the fiberglass boat building process.
- Phased out flotation foams that contain hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).
- Switching to renewable energy sources to power facilities, as several marine manufacturers are now doing.
- Cutting down on waste and recycling materials whenever possible in the manufacturing process.

### What more are we doing?

- Marine manufacturers are working with industry partners to eliminate all HFCs from the fiberglass boat manufacturing process by 2035.
- Boat builders have identified alternatives for “bottom paint” to prevent leaching into waterways.
- Manufacturing facilities are reducing the amount of water—by one million gallons per month in some cases—and natural gas consumed each year.

## Innovating Cleaner Products

Recreational boaters and anglers experience and treasure our nation’s waterways firsthand, and the industry is working diligently to make every aspect of boating cleaner and more efficient.

### What have we done?

- Worked closely with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop Evaporative Emissions Regulations. This proactive collaboration further reduced emissions from boat fuel systems and required automatic fuel pump shutoffs, eliminating spit back and spillage during refueling.
- Pioneered the first device to quantify greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from recreational boats operated on-water and worked with the EPA to establish real-world GHG emissions factors for recreational boats.
- Working with the Department of Energy and Argonne National Laboratory, the industry led research to develop Biobutanol, which is a cleaner and more efficient renewable biofuel than ethanol-blended fuels like E15.
- Partnered with state and regional officials and the American Boat and Yacht Council to develop design and construction standards to help reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species.

## Innovating Cleaner Products

### What more are we doing?

- The marine industry is working with the EPA and other stakeholders to expand the availability of next generation biofuels such as biobutanol to secure a long-term sustainable liquid fuel that will reduce overall GHG emissions while addressing the energy needs of recreational boats.
- Marine manufacturers are researching advancements in solar technology and energy storage to power boats.
- Manufacturers of bowriders and ski boats are testing zero emissions watercraft by utilizing electric propulsion.
- Industry partners have been researching and exploring the use of hydrogen cell technology to power recreational boats.
- Major marine engine manufacturers are working on alternative propulsion systems that would significantly reduce emissions and maximize fuel efficiency.
- Marine manufacturers are developing and implementing technologies to remove marine debris from our waters and tackle the growing problem of ocean waste.
- The recreational boating industry is analyzing the impact of derelict vessels on the environment and researching options and methods for recycling boats.

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Suzuki Motor of America is installing a **microplastics collecting system** in select outboard engines.

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Yamaha U.S. Marine Business Unit is designing a **device to remove plastics and other floating debris** from waterways.

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Rhode Island Marine Trades Association is testing a pilot program to **dismantle and reprocess fiberglass boats into cement** as an alternative to landfill.



## Developing and Advancing Smart and Responsible Policies and Programs

The recreational boating industry works with policymakers at every level of government to advance policies that protect the environment and restore aquatic ecosystems.

### What have we done?

- Worked closely with Congress in the 1950s to establish the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (Trust Fund)—a user-pay, user-benefit system that pays for conservation projects across the country.
- In coordination with our outdoor recreation industry partners, NMMA helped secure passage of the Great American Outdoors Act, providing permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund—the nation’s marquee public lands and waters conservation program.
- Worked with Congress to secure billions of dollars to protect and restore critical ecosystems and water quality in the Great Lakes, Florida Everglades, and the Chesapeake Bay.
- For the past decade, the Clean Boating Act, which the boating industry spearheaded, has implemented measures to mitigate adverse impacts of recreational boat discharges.
- Collaborated with the federal government to expand national marine monuments and sanctuaries.
- Coordinated with the federal government to require the use of descending devices, which helps reduce fish mortality.
- The recreational marine industry frequently partners with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to develop key environmental goals.

The Trust Fund **collects \$650 million** each year, making it the largest source of funding for marine conservation.

Major Trust Fund accomplishments in the last decade include:

- Restored and improved more than **63,300 acres** of coastal habitats
- Stocked **3.8 billion** fish in lakes, rivers, and streams across the country
- Constructed **26,904 waterway access sites**
- Provided marine education on the benefits of conservation, boating, and fishing to **4.7 million students**

The recreational boating community worked to expand the Northwest Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument and establish Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary.

### What more are we doing?

- The recreational marine industry has worked with Congress to establish a task force to identify and address critical working waterfront needs, such as environmental threats and other measures to ensure coastal resiliency.
- The recreational boating industry is supporting the development of a National Coral Reef Resilience Strategy for the conservation, management, and restoration of coral reefs.
- The recreational boating community is collaborating with NOAA to support efforts in the Florida Keys to provide much-needed protections to critical resources, including coral reefs, within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.
- The recreational boating community played a critical role in developing the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s monumental fisheries conservation plan for Biscayne National Park (BNP).
- The recreational marine industry works in coordination with industry partners to warn the public and policymakers about the harmful impacts E-15 has on the environment and emissions.

## Actions for Policymakers to Take

As stewards of the environment and waterways, the recreational boating community is actively advocating for policies to address climate change and coastal resiliency.

### Environmental

- Provide funding to research next generation marine engine propulsion systems.
  - Expand funding through the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy—which awards funds for advanced battery, engine, and fuel technologies—to support next generation marine propulsion research in coordination with a national laboratory. (Note: These technologies cannot be adapted overnight and will require additional analysis to ensure the infrastructure and safety aspects for maritime-based use are considered.)
- Establish a program to install charging stations at docks and marinas as more electric boats enter the marketplace.
  - Develop a grant program to determine where electric recreational vessel charging stations are needed and help guide future investments.
- Expand the use of cleaner biofuels, including biobutanol, through federal funding to offset costs of installing biobutanol dispensing pumps, providing low interest loans to help manufacturers invest in biobutanol production, and classifying biobutanol as an advanced biofuel.
- Rejoin the Paris Agreement to limit global warming.
- Pass legislation to protect 30 percent of our lands and oceans by 2030—commonly referred to as the 30x30 initiative—that maintains reasonable and responsible access to recreation, including recreational fishing.
- Provide tax credits and incentives for manufacturers to expand the use of renewable energy sources to power their facilities.
  - Create a federal program that partners with marine manufacturers to research and utilize existing and next generation technology to reduce emissions and conserve energy and resources in their facilities.
  - Extend and expand the solar investment tax credit—which decreases every year beginning in 2020—to allow more business to invest in renewable technology to power facilities.
  - Improve EPA's Energy Star Program—formerly known as the Green Lights initiative—by incentivizing additional participation in the program and reducing regulatory barriers to switching to cleaner energy options.

### Conservation

- Reauthorize, modernize, and expand the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund.
- On an annual basis, provide \$85 million for the Chesapeake Bay Program, \$725 million for Everglades restoration, and \$335 million for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.
- Stop and reverse the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS).
  - Provide increased and more targeted funding for federal programs that address AIS.
  - Example: Fast-track the Brandon Road Lock & Dam project to prevent Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes.
- Research and create a federally funded program to support the disposal and recycling of abandoned derelict vessels, as well as the dismantling and disposal of consumer owned vessels.
  - Determine the number of derelict vessels in the U.S., identify potential boat recycling solutions—including funding options—and develop a federal program that addresses derelict vessels and incentivizes boat recycling, serving as a model for states to implement their own and the international community to adopt.
- Address water quality needs and the impacts of harmful algae blooms on marine ecosystems and surrounding communities.