

Recreational Fishing Relies on Abundant Access and Healthy Ecosystems

More than 70% of all boat outings involve fishing, making recreational fishing a key asset to the recreational boating industry. To ensure continued industry growth, recreational anglers rely on abundant access and healthy ecosystems.

Increased fishing participation this past year resulted in a 14% increase in state fishing license sales and a 55% increase in revenues from the federal excise tax on fishing equipment. These revenue streams contribute greatly to conservation funding, of which recreational anglers and boaters are among the largest contributors—providing approximately \$1.5 billion annually through licenses sales, excise taxes and donations.

Top Policy Priorities

Lawmakers must prioritize legislation that protects access for recreational anglers and ensures abundant and healthy ecosystems. Areas of focus include:

- Modernize and reauthorize the Magnuson–Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.
- Implement 30x30 protections that maintain reasonable and responsible access to recreation.
- Pass the Forage Fish Conservation Act to require federal marine fisheries managers to better account for the role of forage fish in the ecosystem.
- Establish a recreation advisory committee that advises the U.S. Department of Commerce on restoring marine ecosystems and improving access to national marine fisheries and sanctuaries.
- Enact the Drift Gillnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act to phase in a ban on large mesh drift gillnets, which currently only operate off California.

Over 70%
of boat outings involve fishing.

\$115B
in economic activity can be attributed to recreational anglers.

828,800
American jobs supported by recreational fishing.