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Impact of Women in Recreational Fishing

New Data on women and fishing: Women now account for 36 percent of anglers in the U.S.

Following a record increase in participation in 2020, women anglers continue to find enjoyment, companionship, and peace of mind on the water, according to data from the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's (RBFF) 2023 Special Report on Fishing. In 2022, 54.5 million Americans ages six and over went fishing, an increase of 4 percent over 2021 and just under 2020's high of 54.7 million.

More women than ever picked up a rod and reel in 2021, according to the RBFF report, stating women now make up 36 percent of all anglers in the United States. This is the highest number on record for female participation in fishing, up from 33 percent in prior years.

Here are the latest statistics and information shared at ICAST 2023.

- 19.8 million women went fishing in 2022, a 40% increase over the past decade and an 8% increase since 2019.
- 3.8M more women went fishing than a decade prior, in 2011.
- The total number of times women fished in 2022 was 293M.

- Out of 4.1M first-time participants, 40% in 2022 were women as were 46% of those considering fishing in 2022. This total is up from 3.7M new participants the prior year.
- 2.7 million more female anglers fished than five years prior, and 4.2 million more than in 2011.
- 1.8 million female participants were first-timers.

Economic Impact

Female anglers pose a significant revenue opportunity for the fishing industry, according to the report.

A 10% increase in female participation provides an additional \$1 billion in revenue for the sportfishing industry. This means each additional female participant is worth nearly \$1,000 in annual revenue for the industry.

Women in the South and Midwest regions both spent around \$3.5 billion (over \$7 billion total) on fishing, while in the Midwest, female anglers each spent an average of \$1,106 annually. In the South, female anglers spent an annual average of \$796 per person.

54% of households say women plan the family recreational activities, and 70-80% of



consumer spending decisions are made by women.

Florida ranks as the highest for economic activity and job growth from recreational boating, totaling \$31.3B, up 53% and 109,000 jobs, up 19% from 2018.

Saltwater fishing has emerged as a driving force behind the financial stimulus female anglers bring to the industry.

Women spent relatively more on special equipment including vehicles, boats, real estate, and more for saltwater fishing (35 percent compared to 22 percent, respectively).

Fishing in General

18% of the American population went fishing, with 14.3 million fishing in saltwater.

54.5 million total U.S. anglers, a 4% increase in 2022 participation numbers.

The RBFF report concluded that 99 percent of participants surveyed say they plan to continue fishing. This is in part due to organizations such as Ladies, Let's Go Fishing, which focuses on attracting women to fishing through educational, hands-on programs and online events. In the 27 years it has

been active, LLGF has introduced thousands of new female anglers to fishing.

As concerns around loneliness and mental health continue to grow, fishing and boating provide an excellent opportunity for connection, as the report indicates. Last year, only 19% of anglers typically fished alone, with 8 in 10 participants choosing to fish in groups of 2 to 5.

Fishing participants ranked spending time in nature, escaping everyday stresses, and spending time with family or friends among the top benefits.

"Recruiting and retaining female anglers is critical to growing fishing and boating participation overall," said RBFF President and CEO Dave Chanda. "The bottom line is, increasing female fishing participation is also good for business, and the industry stands to benefit greatly from focusing more on this growing audience."

"People are still choosing to fish and boat. With a renewed focus on wellness, fishing and boating offer an accessible outlet for those looking to unplug, escape the stresses of everyday life, and spend more time with friends and family."



This data was based on the Special Report on Fishing, in partnership with the Outdoor Foundation and conducted by Southwick Associates, available at [TakeMeFishing.org/SpecialReport](https://www.takeMEFishing.org/SpecialReport) and NMMA www.nmma.org/press/article/24334.

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