

# 2016 SPECIAL REPORT ON FISHING



A partnership  
project of:



RECREATIONAL  
BOATING & FISHING  
FOUNDATION



OUTDOOR  
FOUNDATION™



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# 2016 Special Report on Fishing

## Executive Summary

Recreational fishing is a vibrant part of America's outdoor tradition. This dynamic activity promotes wellness, fosters bonding with family and friends and forges a deep connection with nature, particularly with America's expansive waterways. But whether fishing on lakes, rivers, streams or seas; from shorelines, boats or embankments; nearly 46 million Americans are simply united by a love of fishing.

For the seventh year in a row, the Outdoor Foundation and Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation have partnered to produce the *Special Report on Fishing* to provide a comprehensive look at overall trends in participation as well as detailed information and analysis on specific fishing categories.

Insights include motivations, barriers and preferences of key groups. The report also identifies opportunities for engaging new audiences in fishing and examines less tangible perceptions about the sport. Special sections have been dedicated to youth and Hispanic Americans, two market segments with significant growth potential.

### Overall Fishing Participation Trends

In 2015, 45.7 million Americans, or 15.6 percent of the population ages six and up, participated in fishing. These participants fished a total of 887

million times, averaging 19.4 days each.

Fishing participation lost a moderate 300,000 participants from 2014 to 2015. While the activity welcomed 6.2 million people, who began fishing for the first time or returned after a hiatus, it lost 6.5 million participants. This equates to a churn rate of 14.2 percent, higher than the 13 percent churn rate the year before.

On a positive note, new fishing participants represented a higher percentage of female and youth participants than the general fishing population. The majority of these newcomers tried freshwater fishing for the first time.

### Fishing by Category

Freshwater fishing was, by far, the most popular form of fishing. The activity attracted 37.7 million participants, which is more than three times the amount of saltwater fishing, the second most popular form of fishing. These participants also went on the most outings per person — 16.4 days on average in 2015, for a total of 619 million outings. Freshwater fishing had the highest rate of female and youth participants compared to the other types; however, it was also the least ethnically diverse.

Saltwater fishing was the second most popular with 12 million participants, engaging 4.1 percent



of the nation's population. Saltwater fishing gained 200,000 participants from 2014 to 2015. It tended to attract older, wealthier Americans and was also the most male-dominated. These participants tended to live along the nation's southeastern coast and travel the furthest to find the ideal fishing spot.

Fly fishing, the least popular, engaged 6.1 million Americans, or 2.1 percent of the population. Like saltwater fishing, fly fishing participation made marginal gains, also up 200,000 participants from 2014. It attracted the highest percentage of first time participants, with 14.7 percent trying the activity in 2015. Fly fishing drew a higher percentage of Hispanic Americans and children than the year before.

### **Youth Participation**

From 2014 to 2015, youth participation saw a moderate bump among both males and females. Male youth participated at a higher rate than females the same age. During childhood, there was an almost 11-percentage point gap in participation between the genders, and during adolescence, the gap widened to nearly 13-percentage points. Overall, participation decreased from childhood to adolescence.

### **Hispanic Participation**

Participation among Hispanic Americans increased by 100,000 people, but the participation rate decreased slightly due to population gain. Fly fishing was the only form of fishing to increase in participation. There was also an increase among young Hispanic Americans, ages six to 12, from 12.7 percent in 2014 to 15.5 percent in 2015. As seen in past years, Hispanic Americans tended to be avid participants, spending 6.2 more days fishing per year than the typical participant.

### **Profile of a Fishing Trip**

Fishing trips usually included two to five adults. These outings were likely to have little advance planning or were completely spontaneous. Most participants went out solely to fish, rather than

fishing being part of a bigger activity. Slightly more than half fished from shorelines, although boats and riverbanks were also popular venues. On their most recent trip, a majority – 83 percent – of participants caught fish. That is a good thing since catching fish rated as one of the best things about fishing.

### **Perceptions of Fishing**

First time participants were motivated to try fishing to experience adventure and excitement. They also expected their first trip to be a time to unwind. Although these perceptions of fishing are positive, the activity still battles the perception of being a male sport. Almost 68 percent of males thought that a fishing participant would look like them, while only 52 percent of females thought the same.

### **Future of Fishing**

To inspire more fishing participants and continue the activity's strong legacy, it is critical that Americans are engaged in meaningful fishing opportunities at an early age. Similar to past years, almost 83 percent of current adult participants fished during childhood. And, those participants who fished as children retained positive memories, like spending time in nature and enjoying the company of family and friends.

By understanding the demographics, motivations and barriers of participants, the fishing industry can better reach America's youngest citizens to nurture a new generation of fishing enthusiasts. Connecting youth to fishing will inspire passionate anglers and committed outdoor stewards, ultimately ensuring that our nation's waterways are protected, our communities are healthy and our industry is thriving.



# FISHING

In 2015, 45.7 million Americans, ages six and older, participated in fishing. That equates to 15.6 percent of the US population. Since 2014, the number of participants decreased by a moderate 300,000, while the participation rate dropped slightly from 15.8 percent to 15.6 percent.

Fishing participants made a total of 887 million fishing outings, averaging 19.4 fishing days each.

## Total Participation

2006	49.7 million participants 18.3 percent of Americans ages 6+
2007	51.8 million participants 18.7 percent of Americans ages 6+
2008	48.2 million participants 17.2 percent of Americans ages 6+
2009	48.0 million participants 17.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2010	45.4 million participants 16.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2011	46.2 million participants 16.2 percent of Americans ages 6+
2012	47.0 million participants 16.4 percent of Americans ages 6+
2013	45.9 million participants 15.8 percent of Americans ages 6+
2014	46.0 million participants 15.8 percent of Americans ages 6+
2015	45.7 million participants 15.6 percent of Americans ages 6+



## 45.7M Participants

45.7 million Americans participated in fishing in 2015, down slightly from 46.0 million in 2014.



## Children

38.7% of new fishing participants were ages 6 to 12, and 83% of adult fishing participants fished as children.



## Freshwater

Nearly 79% of participants first fished in freshwater.

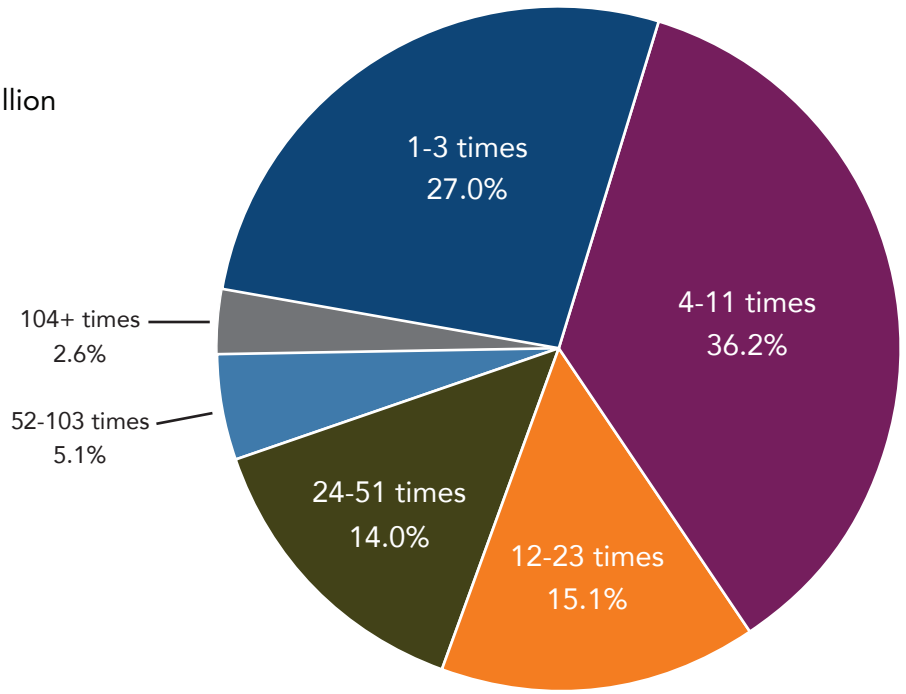


# Annual Outings

In 2015, fishing participants made 887 million annual outings.

# 19.4 days

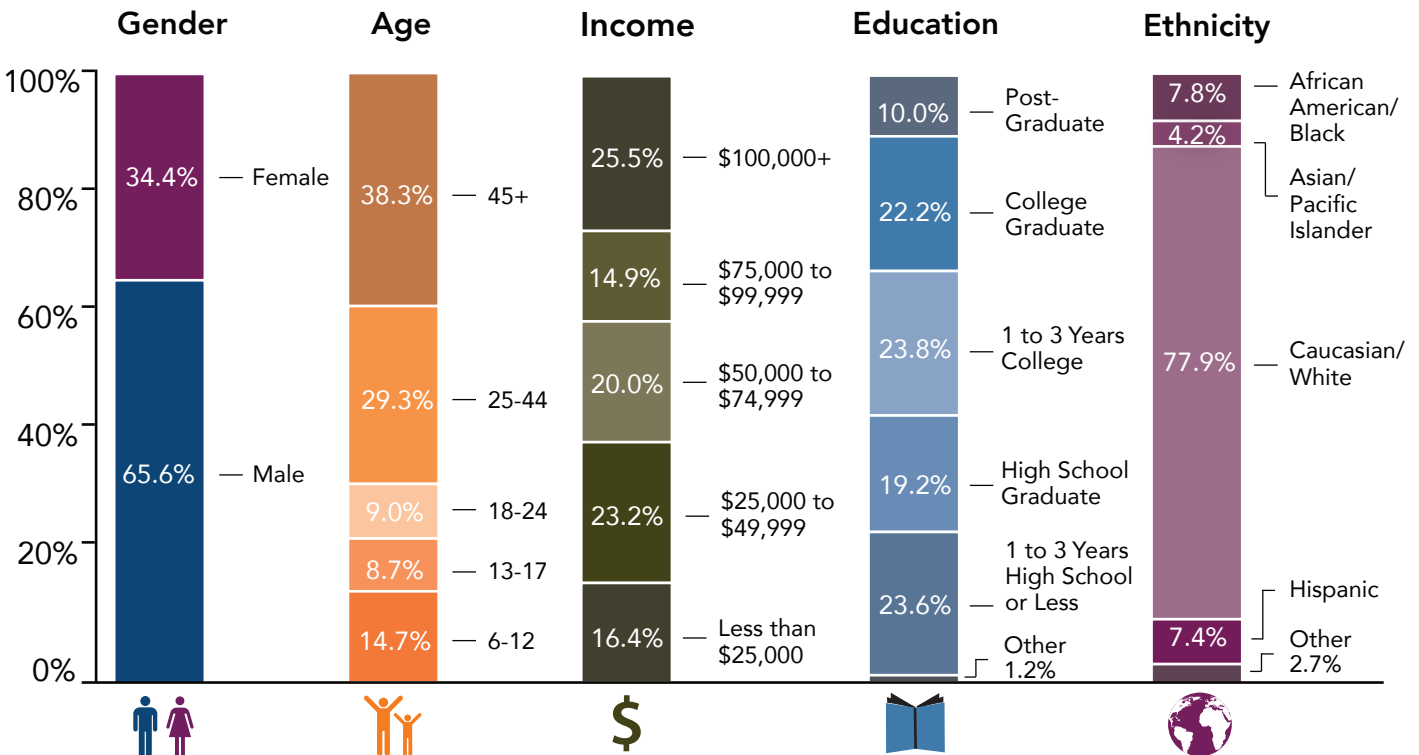
The average number of annual outings per fishing participant in 2015.



Annual Outings  
Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

# Demographics

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

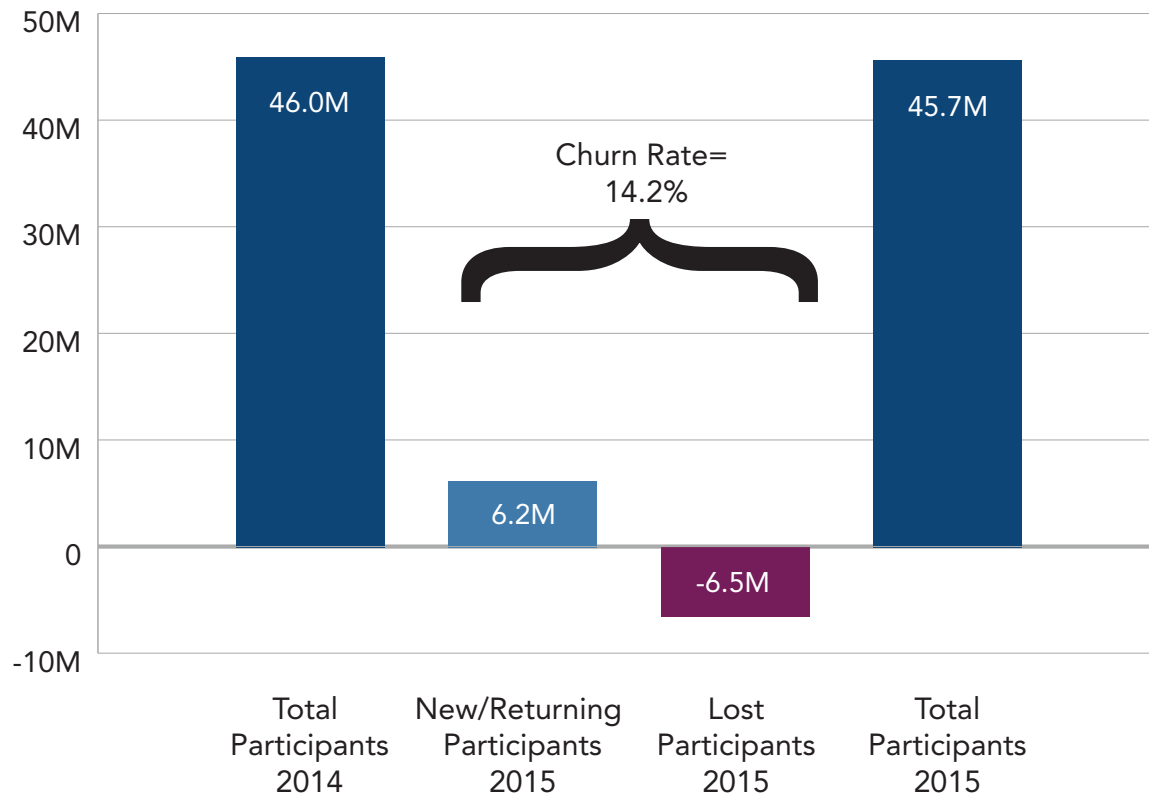




# The Leaky Bucket

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

The “Leaky Bucket” explains the marginal loss in fishing participants from 2014 to 2015. While 6.5 million people left the sport, only 6.2 million joined. This equates to a loss of 300,000 fishing participants and a churn rate of 14.2 percent, higher than last year’s 13 percent.



## Most Popular Adult Outdoor Activities

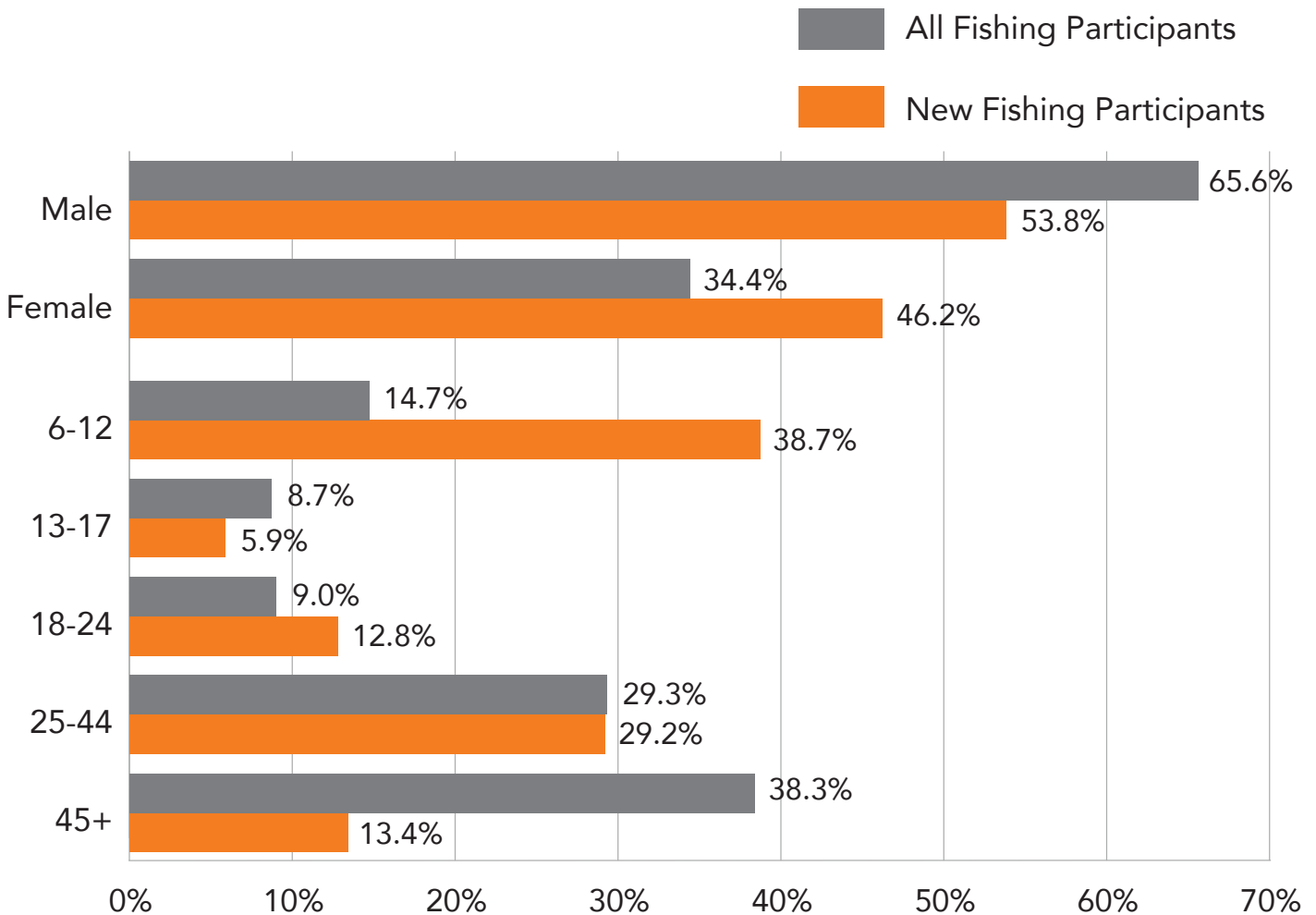
Outdoor Participants, Ages 25+

	% of Adults	# of Participants (in millions)
Running, Jogging and Trail Running	14.9%	31.6
Fishing (Fresh, Salt and Fly)	14.6%	30.9
Hiking	12.5%	26.4
Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX)	12.3%	26.1
Camping (Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV)	11.8%	25.0

# Demographics of New Fishing Participants

Participants Who Began Fishing in 2015, Ages 6+

When compared to the entire population of fishing participants, new fishing participants included a higher percentage of females and children, ages six to 12. The biggest gap, however, was seen among the oldest age cohort. Almost 40 percent of the general fishing population was 45 and up, while a mere 13.4 percent was new to the activity, signaling that the older people get, the less likely they are to try fishing.

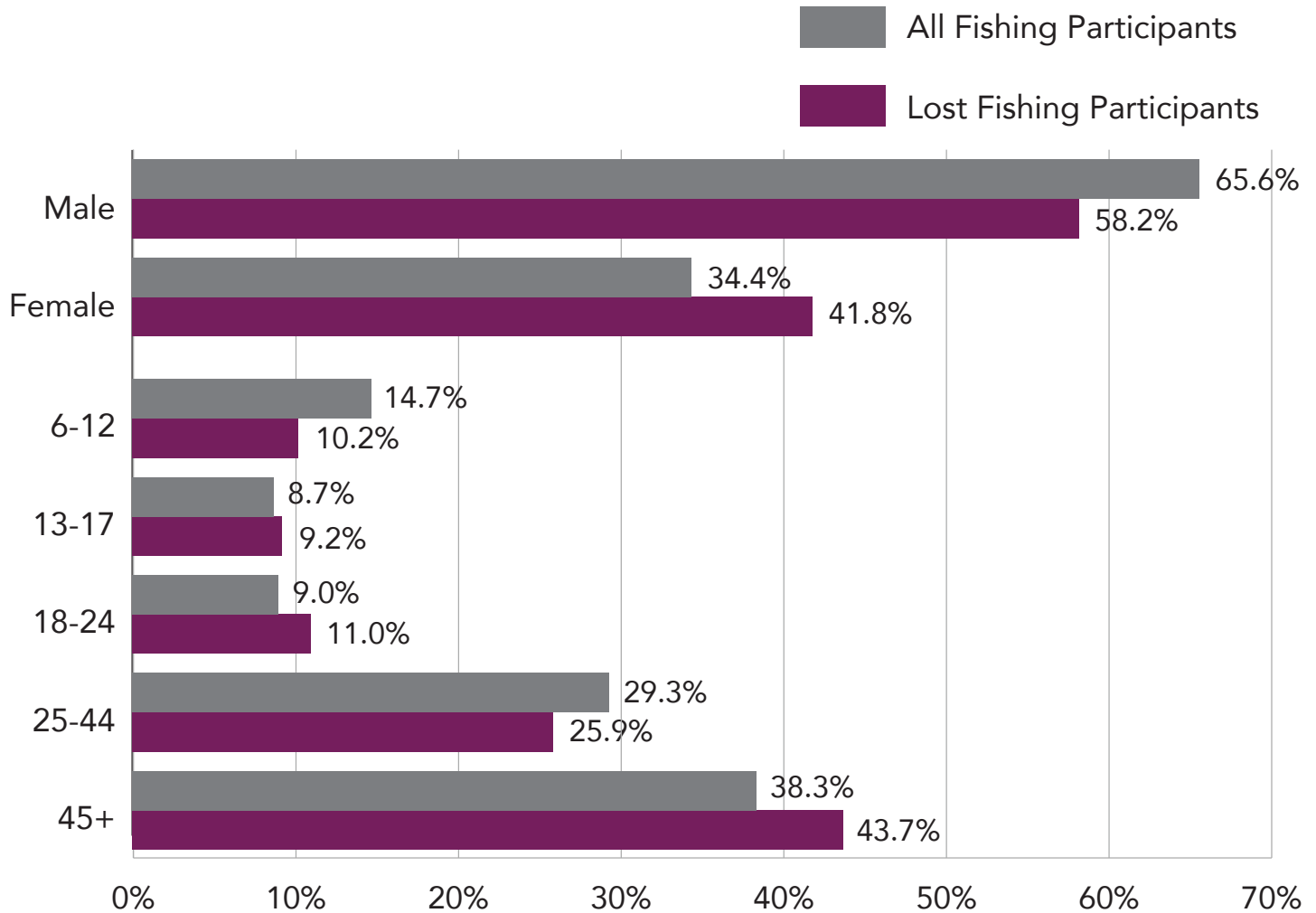




# Demographics of Lost Fishing Participants

Participants Who Stopped Fishing in 2015, Ages 6+

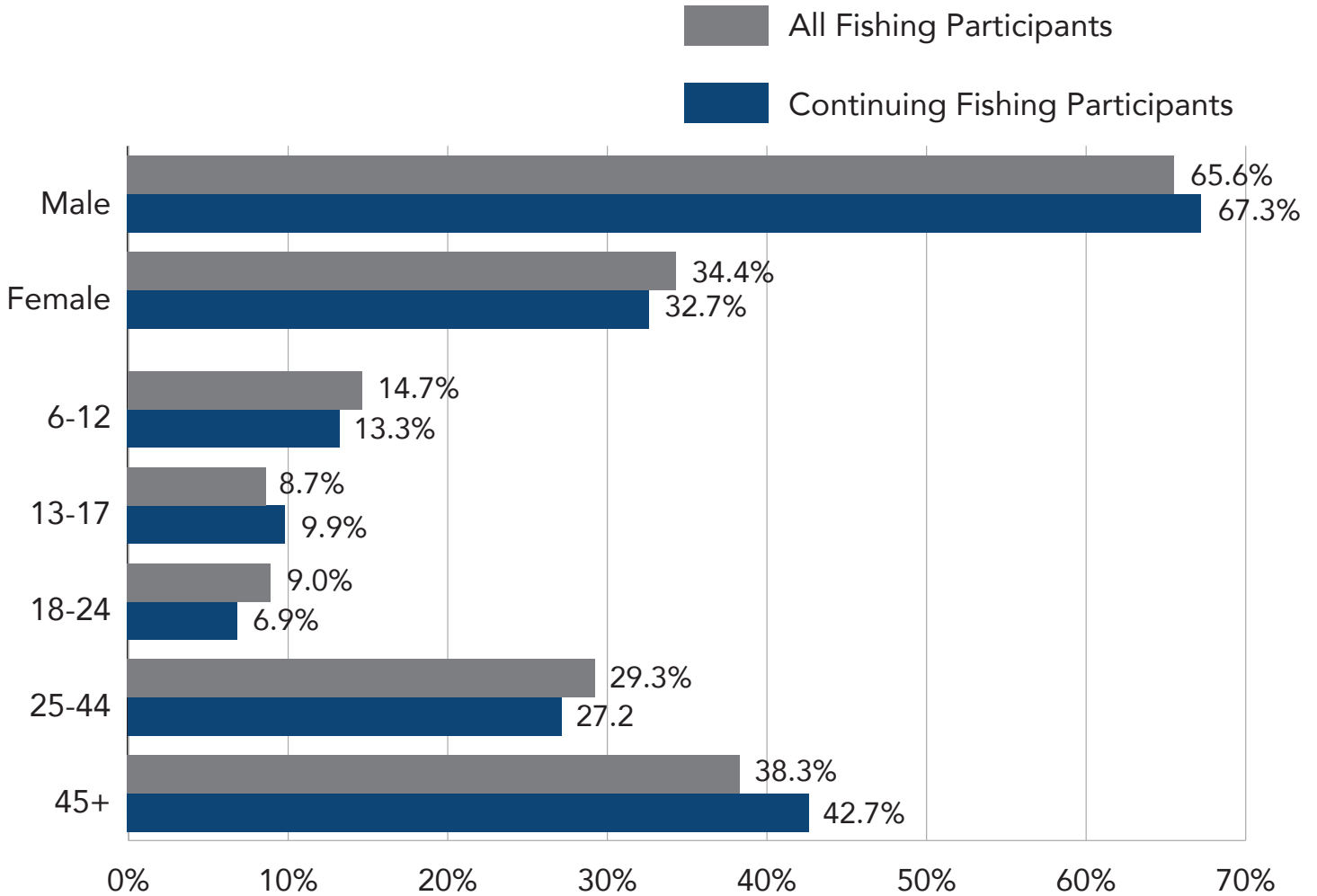
Retention rates were highest among children, ages six to 12, and male participants. Although more females than males tried fishing in 2015, there was also more attrition among female participants.



# Demographics of Continuing Fishing Participants

Participants Who Continued Fishing in 2015, Ages 6+

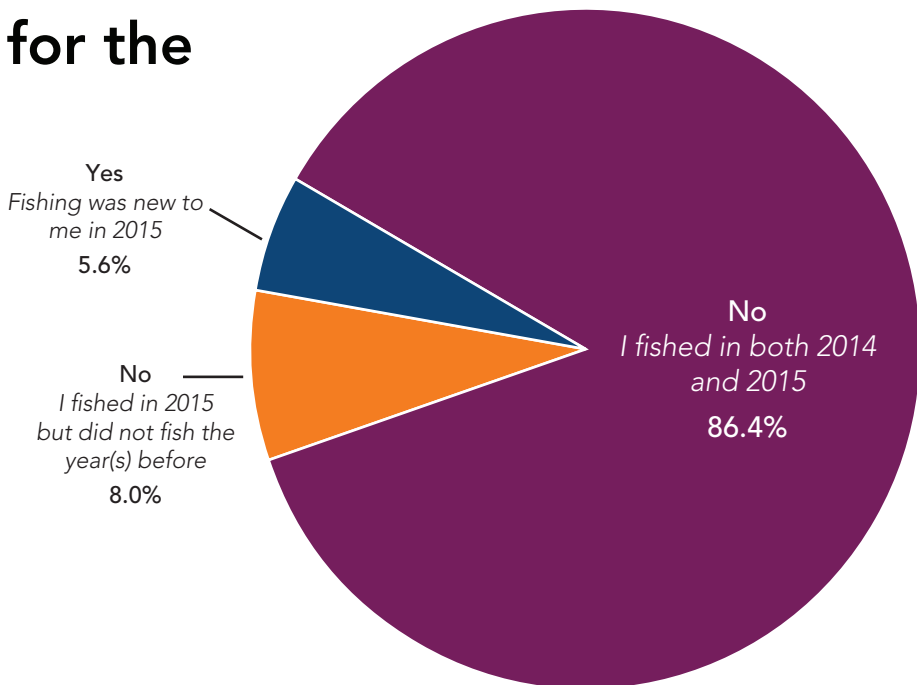
The profile of those participants who had previously participated in fishing and continued to fish in 2015 was similar to the profile of all participants, with only slight variations.





## Did you try fishing for the first time in 2015?

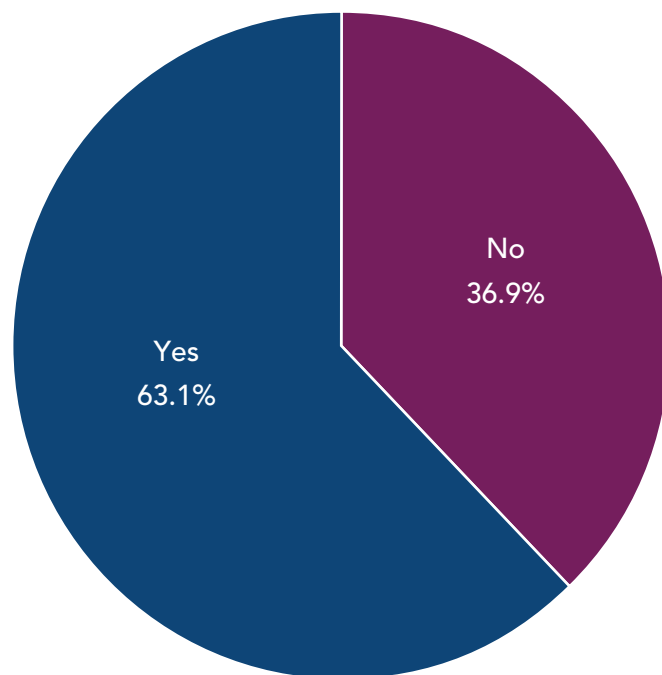
5.6 percent of fishing participants, or 2.5 million people, had their very first fishing experience in 2015. More than 86 percent of participants, or 39.5 million people, were continuing participants who had previously fished, while eight percent, or 3.6 million people, returned to fishing in 2015 after taking a hiatus from the activity.



Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

## If you didn't fish in 2014 or 2015, have you ever been fishing?

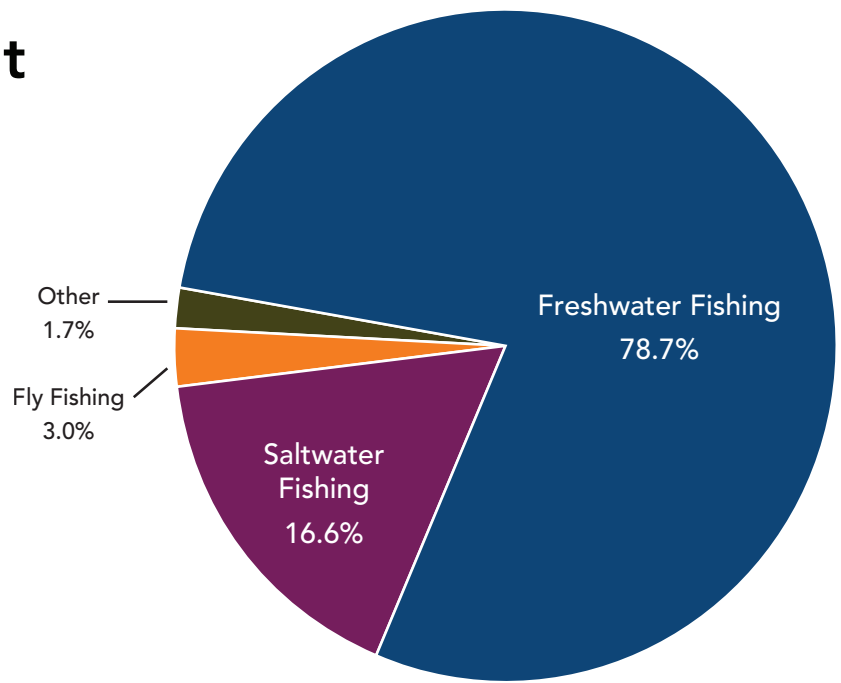
Of those who did not fish in the last two years, more than 63 percent were former participants who had fished before and almost 37 percent had never fished.



Americans, Ages 6+ who did not fish in 2014 or 2015

# First Type of Fishing Experience for Current Participants

A majority of participants, nearly 79 percent, first tried freshwater fishing. Saltwater fishing was a distant second at 16.6 percent.



Fishing Participants, Ages 6+ who fished in 2015 and in previous years

# Level of Fishing Participation

When asked their level of fishing participation, 29 percent of the population described itself as an occasional participant. More than 18 percent of those occasional participants wanted to fish more often. Of the 11.5 percent of avid participants, 6.8 percent hoped to fish more, while 4.7 percent fished as often as they chose.

All Americans, Ages 6+

Don't fish currently, not interested in fishing	39.2%
Don't fish currently, but would like to fish	20.4%
Occasional participant, would like to fish more often	18.2%
Occasional participant, fish as often as I want	10.7%
Avid fishing participant, would like to fish more often	6.8%
Avid fishing participant, fish as often as I want	4.7%

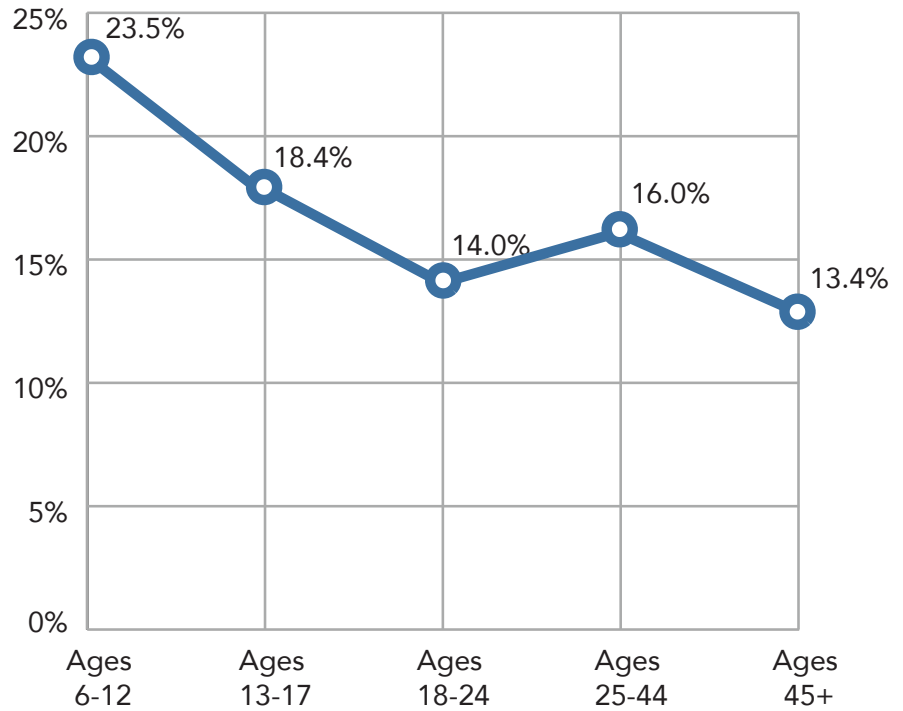


# Fishing Participation Life Cycle

All Americans, Ages 6+

This chart measures the rate of fishing participation in America. The snapshot of participation rates by age helps describe a person's life cycle of fishing participation.

Fishing was most popular during childhood. Participation steadily declined until adulthood, where it bumped up by two percent, before declining among the oldest age cohort.

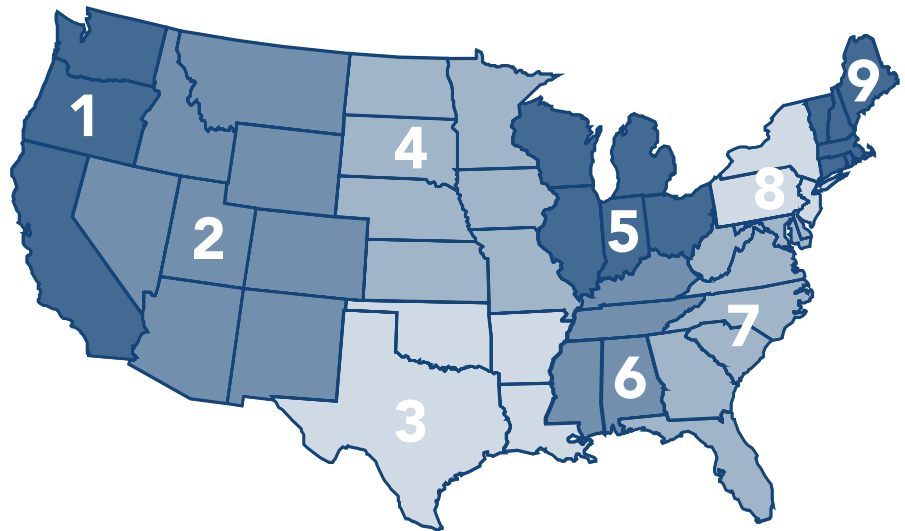


# Geography of Participants

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

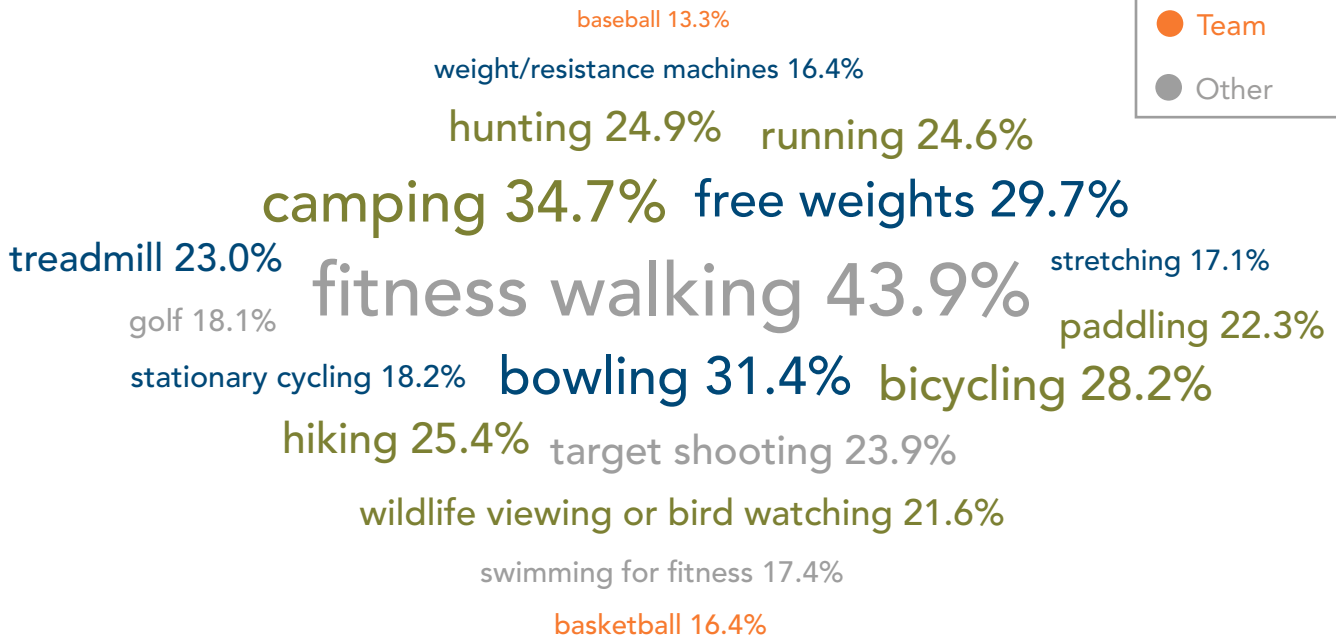
## U.S. Census Regions

- 1. Pacific: 11.4%
- 2. Mountain: 6.3%
- 3. West South Central: 11.6%
- 4. West North Central: 9.3%
- 5. East North Central: 16.7%
- 6. East South Central: 7.1%
- 7. South Atlantic: 20.6%
- 8. Middle Atlantic: 12.5%
- 9. New England: 4.5%



# Crossover Participation

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+



Note: Data includes top 20 most popular crossover activities and measures all types of each activity.

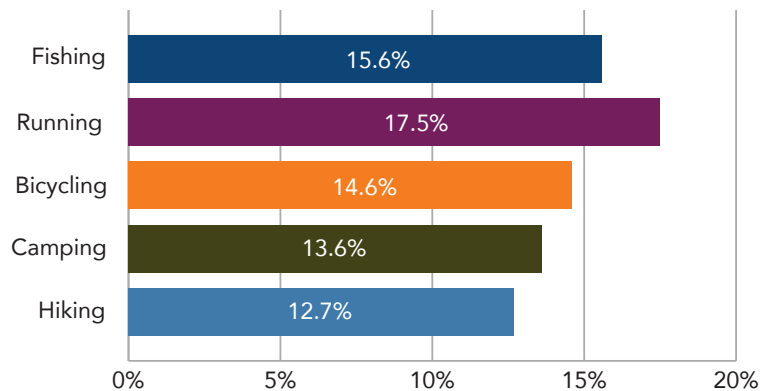
## Fishing: A Gateway to the Outdoors

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

Participation in outdoor recreation often begins with a “gateway” activity. These accessible and popular pastimes often lead to participation in other outdoor endeavors. Fishing was right behind running as the most popular gateway activity.

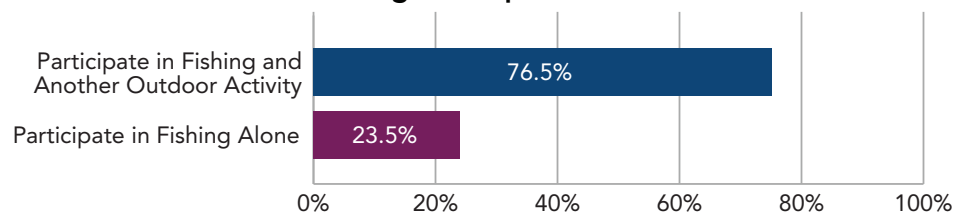
Further proving that fishing is an ideal gateway activity, 76.5 percent of participants enjoyed fishing as well as other forms of outdoor recreation. Only a small percentage — 23.5 percent — participated in fishing alone.

Participation in the Gateway Activities



Note: All forms of the activity are measured.

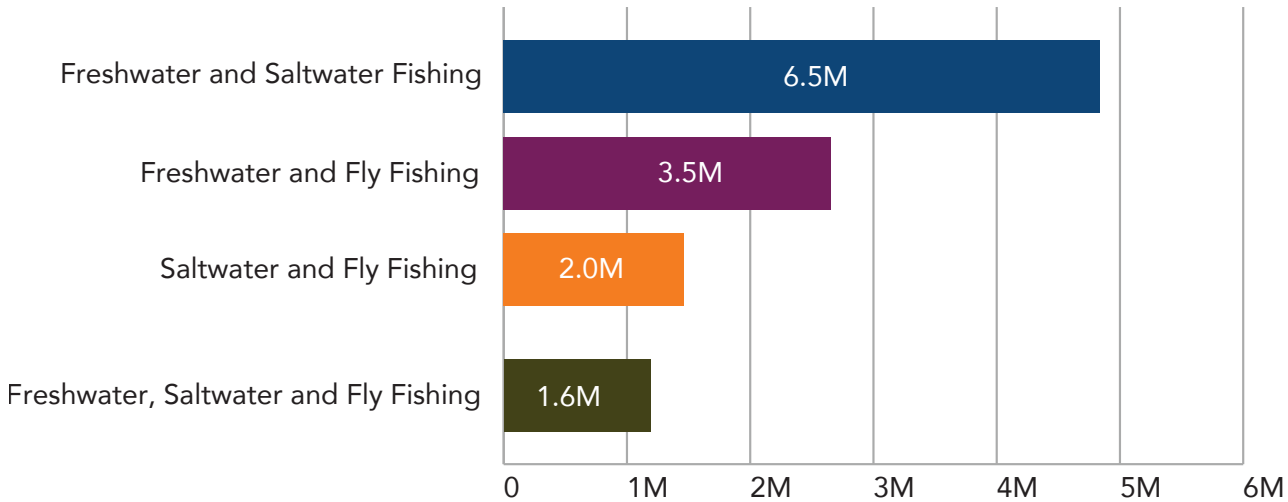
Fishing Participants: Outdoor Enthusiasts



# Overlap in Participation by Fishing Type

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

It was uncommon to participate in multiple types of fishing. The most popular combination was freshwater and saltwater fishing, with 6.5 million participants (compared to 45.7 million total participants). Only 1.6 million participated in all three types.

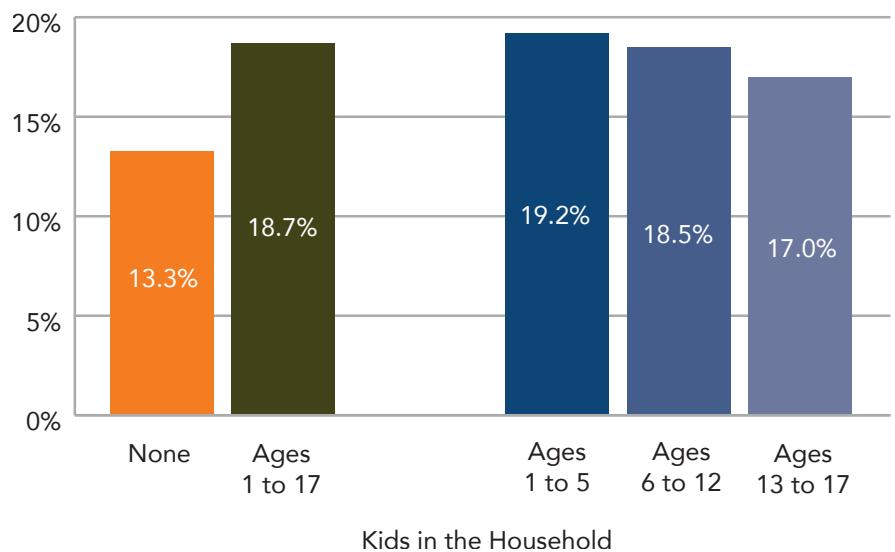


# Participation in Fishing Among Adults with Children

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Adults with children in their households participated in fishing at higher levels than adults without children, which suggests that fishing is a family-friendly activity.

Nearly 19 percent of adults with children, ages one to 17, in their households participated in fishing, while 13.3 percent of adults without children participated. Those with younger children participated at slightly higher levels.



# Reason for Participating in Outdoor Recreation

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

Get exercise	64.4%
Be with family/friends	57.7%
Be close to nature	51.5%
Enjoy the sounds/smells of nature	50.3%
Observe scenic beauty	49.8%
Keep physically fit	47.4%
Get away from the usual demands of life	46.7%
Experience excitement/adventure	41.1%
Be with people who enjoy the same things I do	38.3%
Develop my skills/abilities	31.5%
Experience solitude	30.0%
Gain a sense of accomplishment	24.6%
Be with people who share my values	23.2%
Gain a sense of self-confidence	20.1%
Because it is cool	20.0%
Talk to new/varied people	12.5%
Other reason(s)	5.7%



# POTENTIAL NEW FISHING PARTICIPANTS

More than nine percent of Americans who did not participate in fishing in 2014 or 2015 were interested in taking up the sport. As seen in previous years, those interested individuals generally represented greater diversity than active fishing participants. Although only 34 percent of fishing participants were female, a higher percentage — 46.6 percent — of those interested in fishing were female. The ethnic diversity of those considering participation was also richer than active fishing participants.



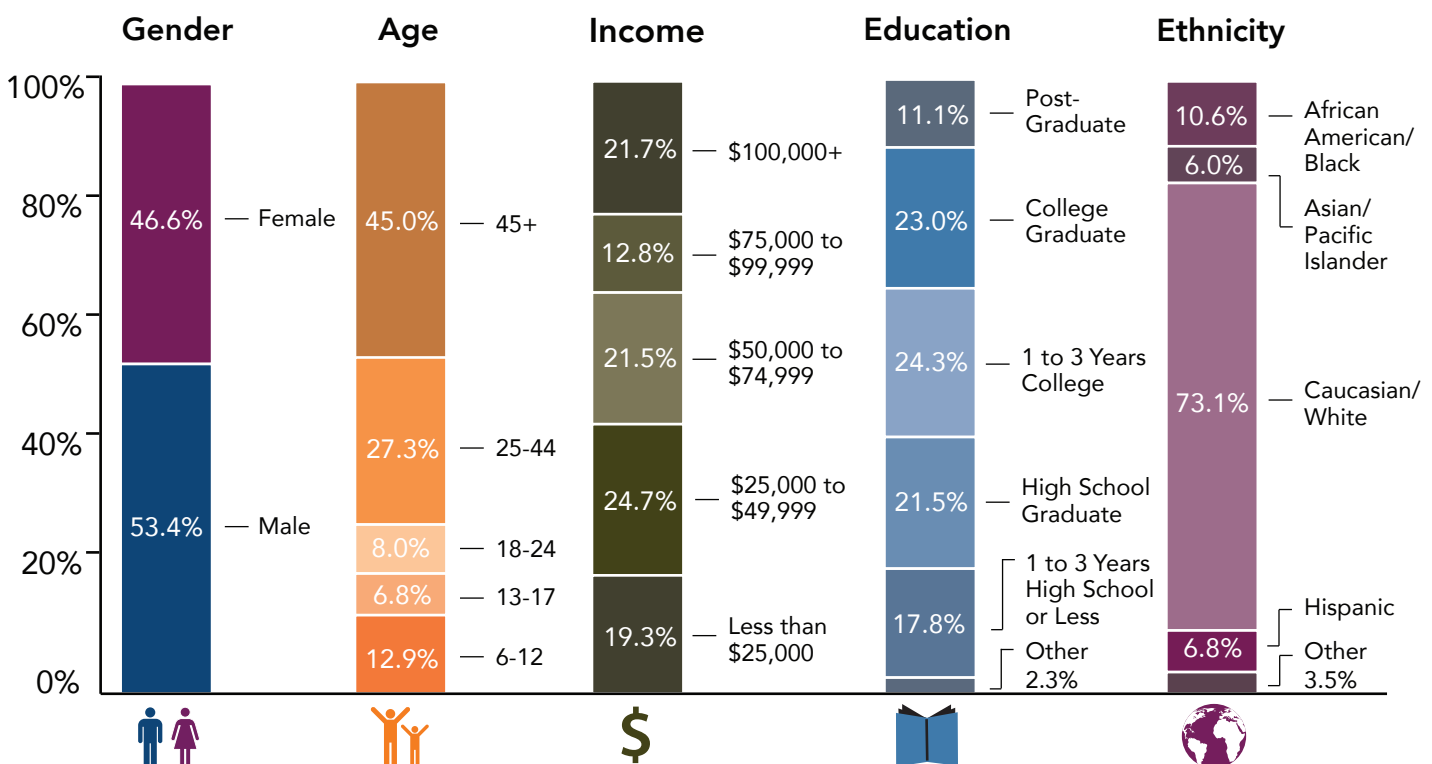
## Females

46.6% of those interested in fishing were female, while only 34% of active participants were female.

The following pages profile Americans, ages six and older, who were interested in fishing in 2015.

## Demographics

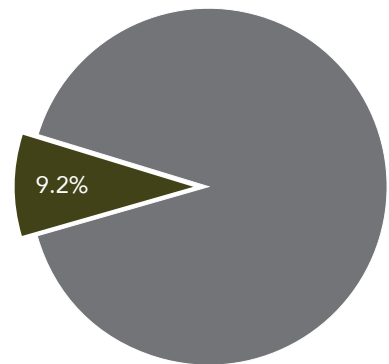
Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+



# Considering Participation in Fishing

Non-Participants, Ages 6+

9.2% of non-fishing participants, or 22.8 million people, considered participating in fishing in 2015.

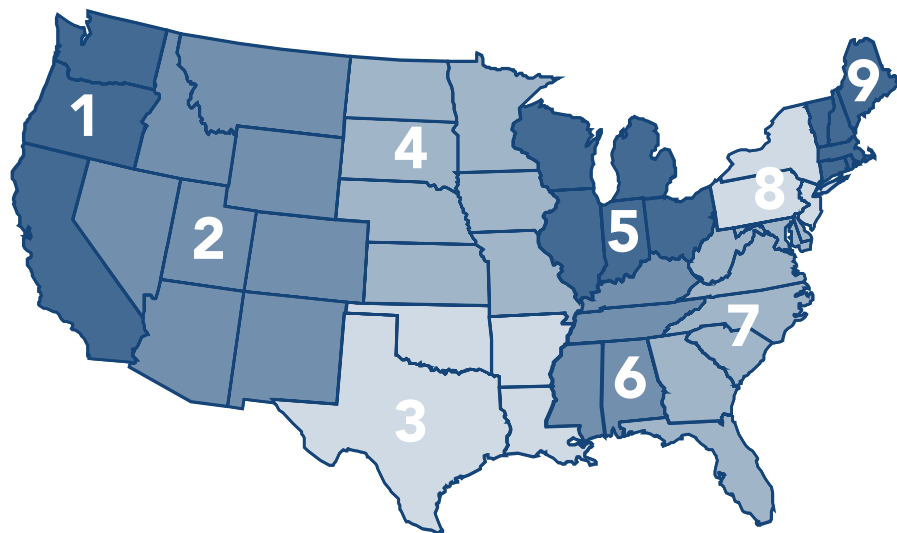


## Geography of Potential Participants

Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+

### U.S. Census Regions

- 1. Pacific: 15.9%
- 2. Mountain: 9.1%
- 3. West South Central: 11.6%
- 4. West North Central: 6.4%
- 5. East North Central: 16.7%
- 6. East South Central: 6.6%
- 7. South Atlantic: 18.5%
- 8. Middle Atlantic: 10.9%
- 9. New England: 4.3%



# FRESHWATER FISHING

Freshwater fishing was the most popular type of fishing, with 12.8 percent of Americans participating. These participants made the most fishing outings — 619 million collective outings, averaging 16.4 days each.

Freshwater fishing had the highest rate of female and youth participants compared to other types of fishing; however, it was also the least ethnically diverse. More than 80 percent of these participants were Caucasian.

## Total Participation

2006	43.1 million participants 16.3 percent of Americans ages 6+
2007	49.3 million participants 15.8 percent of Americans ages 6+
2008	40.3 million participants 14.4 percent of Americans ages 6+
2009	41.0 million participants 14.5 percent of Americans ages 6+
2010	38.9 million participants 13.7 percent of Americans ages 6+
2011	38.9 million participants 13.6 percent of Americans ages 6+
2012	39.1 million participants 13.6 percent of Americans ages 6+
2013	37.8 million participants 13.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2014	37.8 million participants 12.9 percent of Americans ages 6+
2015	37.7 million participants 12.8 percent of Americans ages 6+



## Popular

Freshwater fishing was the most popular type of fishing, with 37.7 million participants.



## Females

Freshwater fishing had the highest rate of female participation, at 34.4%.



## Youth

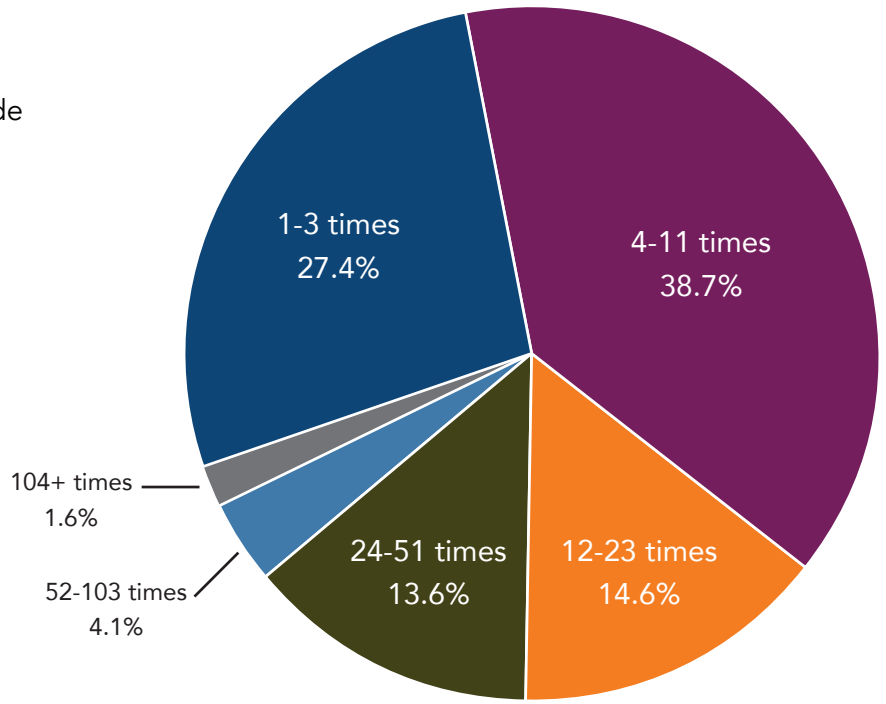
More than 33 percent of freshwater fishing participants were under age 25, the highest rate of youth participation.

# Annual Outings

In 2015, freshwater fishing participants made 619 million annual outings.

# 16.4 days

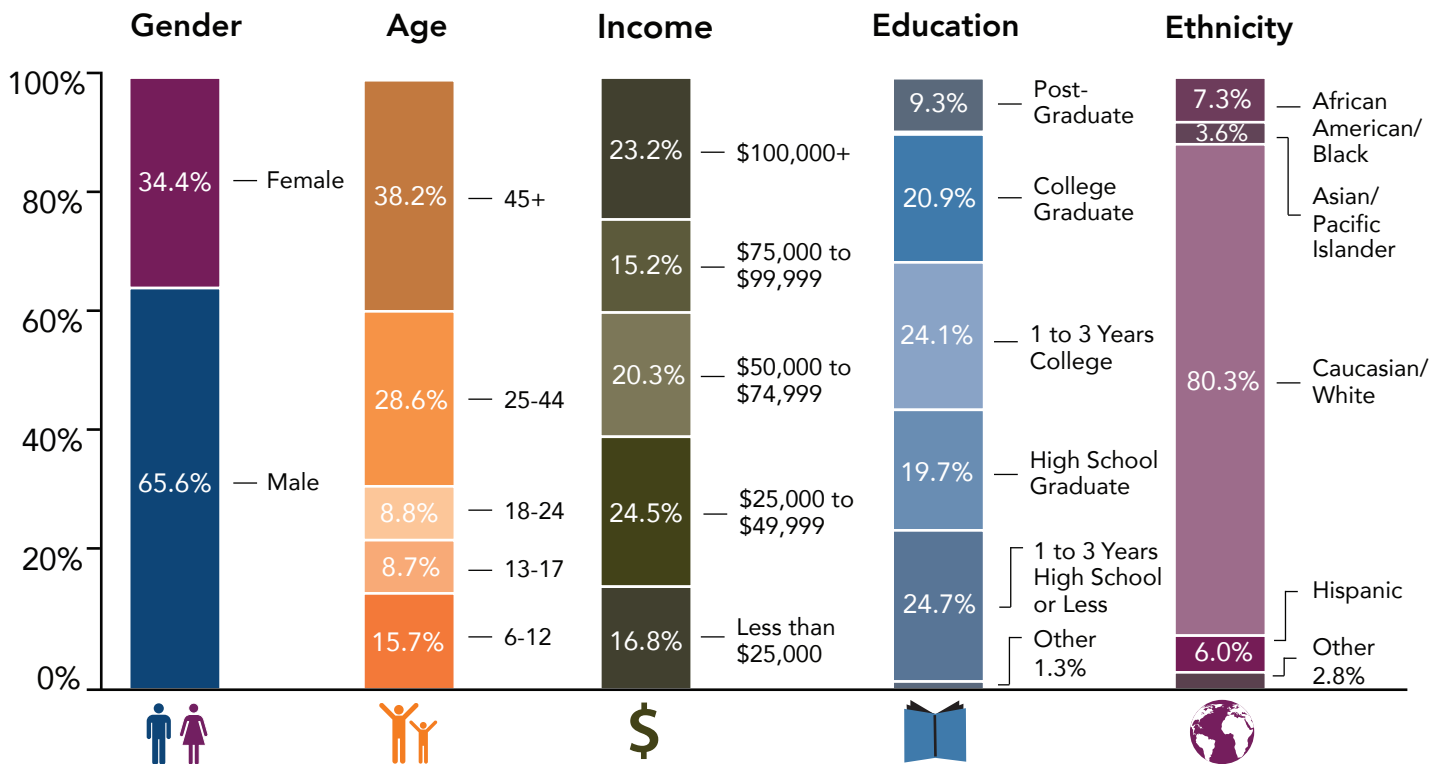
The average number of annual outings per freshwater fishing participant.



Annual Outings  
Freshwater Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Freshwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+



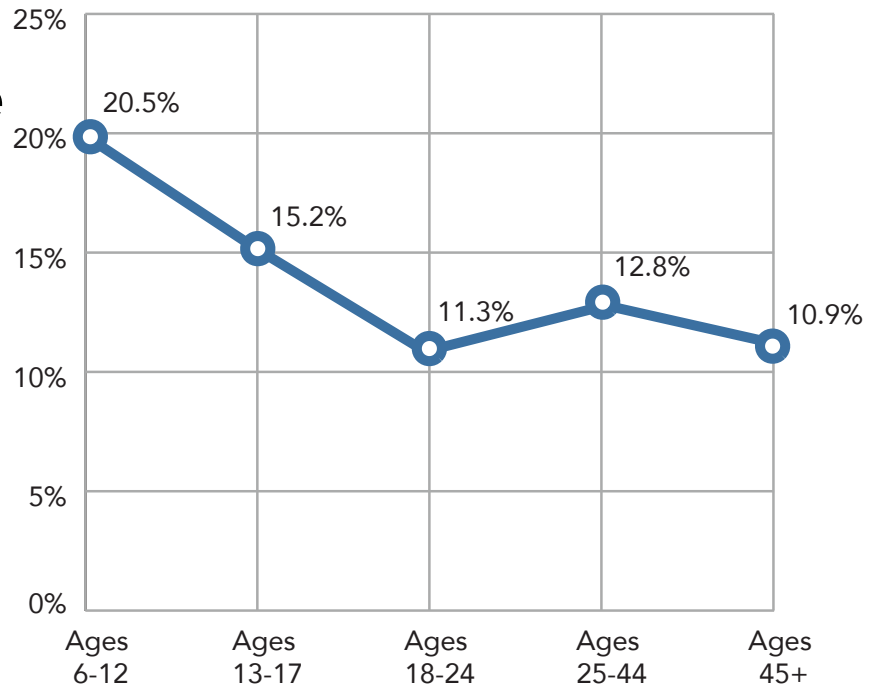


# Freshwater Fishing Participation Life Cycle

All Americans, Ages 6+

This chart measures the rate of freshwater fishing participation in America. The snapshot of participation rates by age helps describe a person's life cycle of freshwater fishing participation.

Freshwater fishing participation was similar to the life cycle of all fishing participation. While participation started high during childhood, it decreased as people aged, with an increase during adulthood.

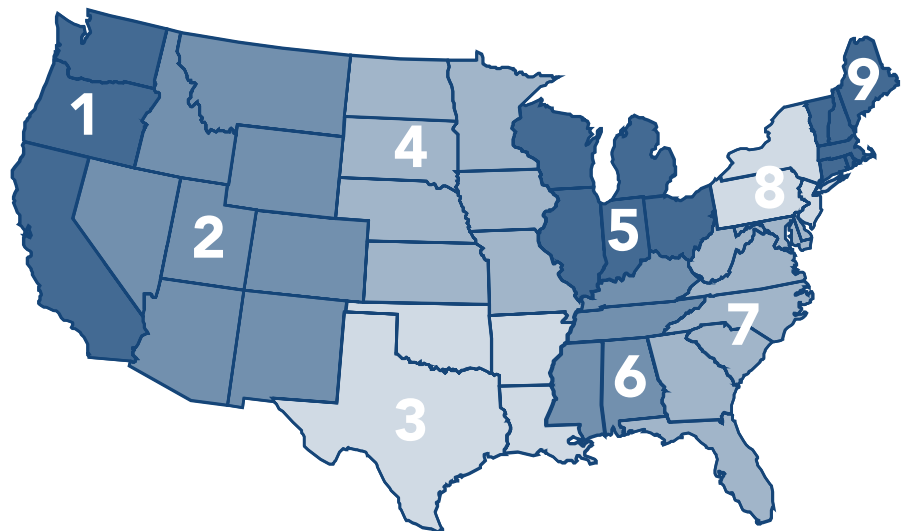


# Geography of Participants

Freshwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

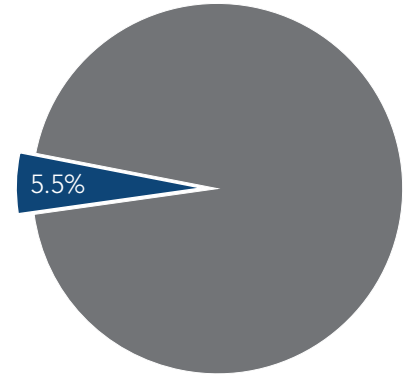
## U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 10.3%
2. Mountain: 6.8%
3. West South Central: 11.3%
4. West North Central: 10.7%
5. East North Central: 19.0%
6. East South Central: 7.8%
7. South Atlantic: 18.5%
8. Middle Atlantic: 11.1%
9. New England: 4.5%



# First-Time Participants

5.5% of freshwater fishing participants, or 2.1 million people, tried the sport for the first time in 2015.



Freshwater Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+



# SALTWATER FISHING

Twelve million people, 4.1 percent of the population, participated in saltwater fishing, making it the second most popular type of fishing. Saltwater fishing participants tended to be older than freshwater and fly fishing participants.

Saltwater participants typically lived along the nation's southeastern coast, and they traveled the furthest to find their ideal fishing spots.

## Total Participation

2006	12.5 million participants 4.6 percent of Americans ages 6+
2007	14.4 million participants 5.2 percent of Americans ages 6+
2008	13.8 million participants 4.9 percent of Americans ages 6+
2009	12.3 million participants 4.4 percent of Americans ages 6+
2010	11.8 million participants 4.2 percent of Americans ages 6+
2011	12.0 million participants 4.2 percent of Americans ages 6+
2012	12.0 million participants 4.2 percent of Americans ages 6+
2013	11.8 million participants 4.1 percent of Americans ages 6+
2014	11.8 million participants 4.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2015	12.0 million participants 4.1 percent of Americans ages 6+



## Wealthiest

Saltwater participants were the wealthiest, with 49.1% earning \$75,000 or more.



## Most Male

69.8% of saltwater fishing participants were male, making it the most male-dominated type of fishing, by a slight margin.



## Oldest

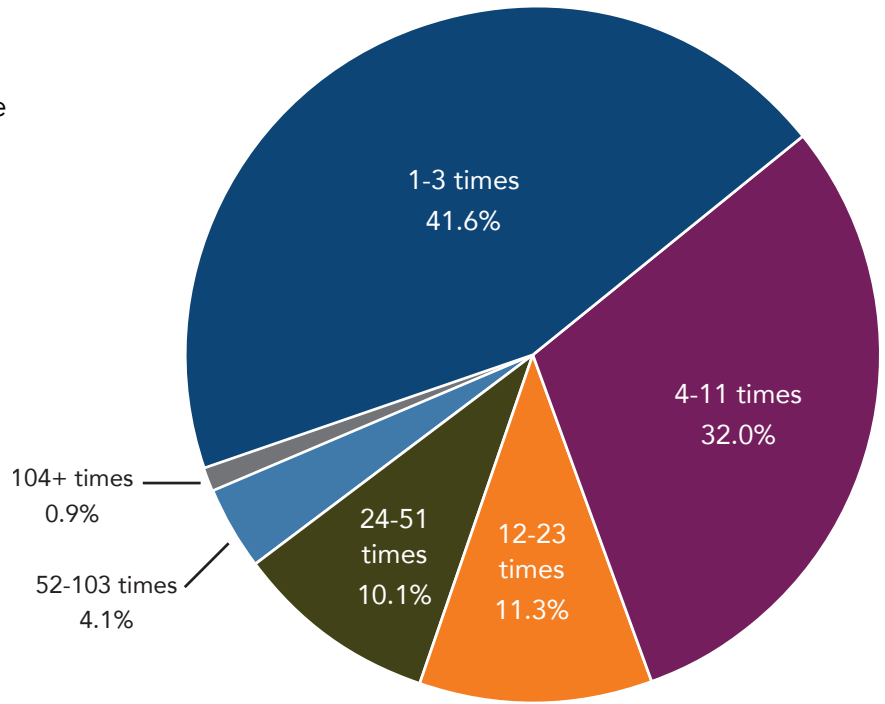
44.8% of saltwater fishing participants were ages 45 or older, making its participants the oldest.

# Annual Outings

In 2015, saltwater fishing participants made 176 million annual outings.

# 14.7 days

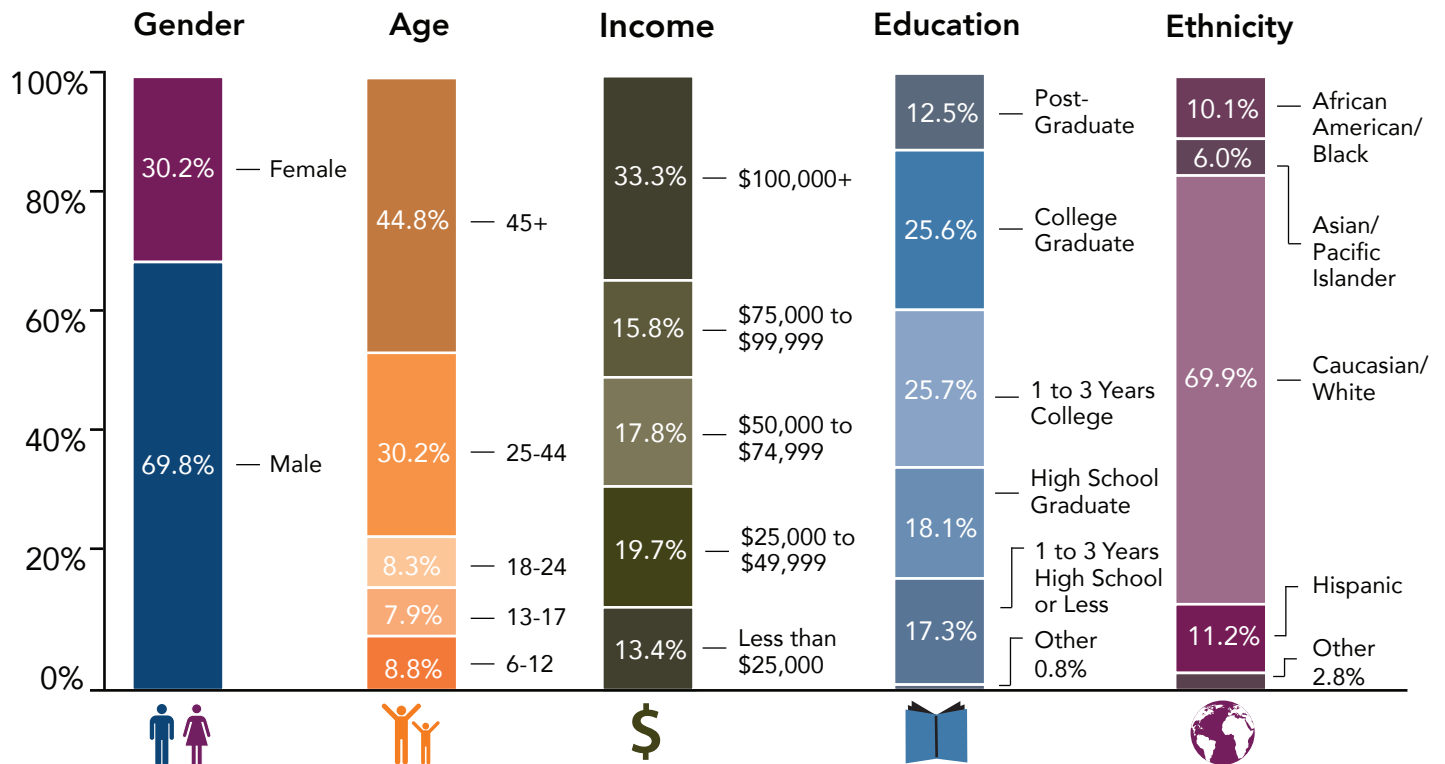
The average number of annual outings per saltwater fishing participant in 2015.



Annual Outings  
Saltwater Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Saltwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+



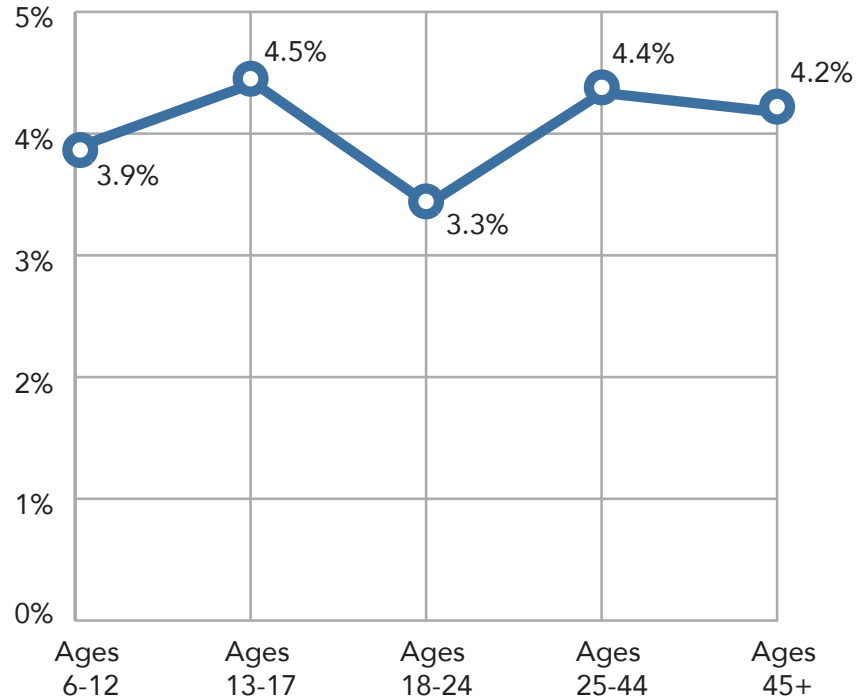


# Saltwater Fishing Participation Life Cycle

All Americans, Ages 6+

This chart measures the rate of saltwater fishing participation in America. The one-year snapshot of participation rates by age helps describe a person's life cycle of saltwater fishing participation.

Saltwater fishing participation varied from patterns seen in freshwater fishing. Participation rates started relatively low and increased during the teenage years. After dipping during young adulthood, rates climbed again during adulthood.

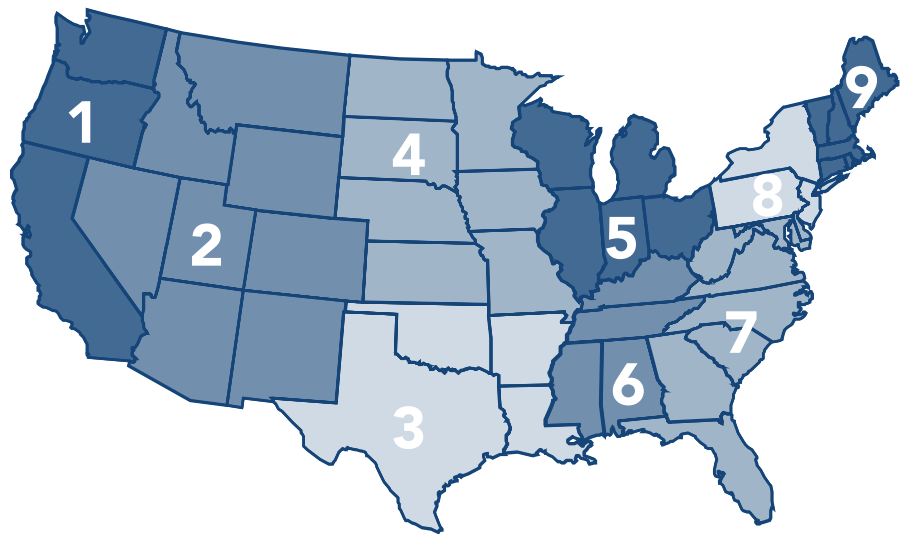


# Geography of Participants

Saltwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

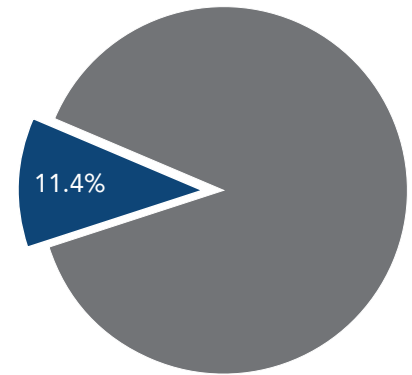
## U.S. Census Regions

- 1. Pacific: 16.7%
- 2. Mountain: 2.3%
- 3. West South Central: 13.7%
- 4. West North Central: 2.3%
- 5. East North Central: 5.3%
- 6. East South Central: 4.6%
- 7. South Atlantic: 34.3%
- 8. Middle Atlantic: 14.8%
- 9. New England: 6.0%



# First-Time Participants

**11.4%** of saltwater fishing participants, or 1.4 million people, tried the sport for the first time in 2015.



Saltwater Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+



# FLY FISHING

Fly fishing engaged 6.1 million Americans, or 2.1 percent of the population. Although fly fishing was the least popular of the three fishing types, it attracted the highest percentage of first-time participants. Almost 15 percent of fly fishing participants tried the activity for the first time in 2015.

Like saltwater fishing, fly fishing was also most popular in the South Atlantic region of the United States.

## Total Participation

2006	6.1 million participants 2.2 percent of Americans ages 6+
2007	5.8 million participants 2.1 percent of Americans ages 6+
2008	5.9 million participants 2.1 percent of Americans ages 6+
2009	5.6 million participants 2.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2010	5.5 million participants 1.9 percent of Americans ages 6+
2011	5.7 million participants 2.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2012	6.0 million participants 2.1 percent of Americans ages 6+
2013	5.9 million participants 2.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2014	5.8 million participants 2.0 percent of Americans ages 6+
2015	6.1 million participants 2.1 percent of Americans ages 6+



## Most Educated

Almost 44% of fly fishing participants had a college or post-graduate degree.



## New Participants

Fly fishing attracted the highest percentage of first-time participants, with 14.7% of participants trying the activity in 2015.



## South Atlantic

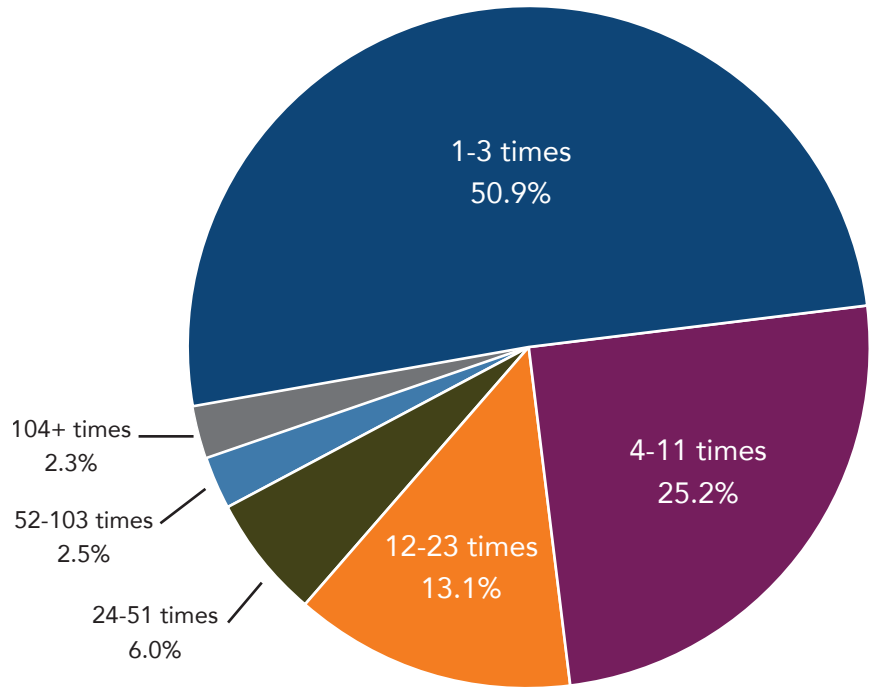
Fly fishing was most popular in the South Atlantic region of the United States.

# Annual Outings

In 2015, fly fishing participants made 74 million annual outings.

# 12.2 days

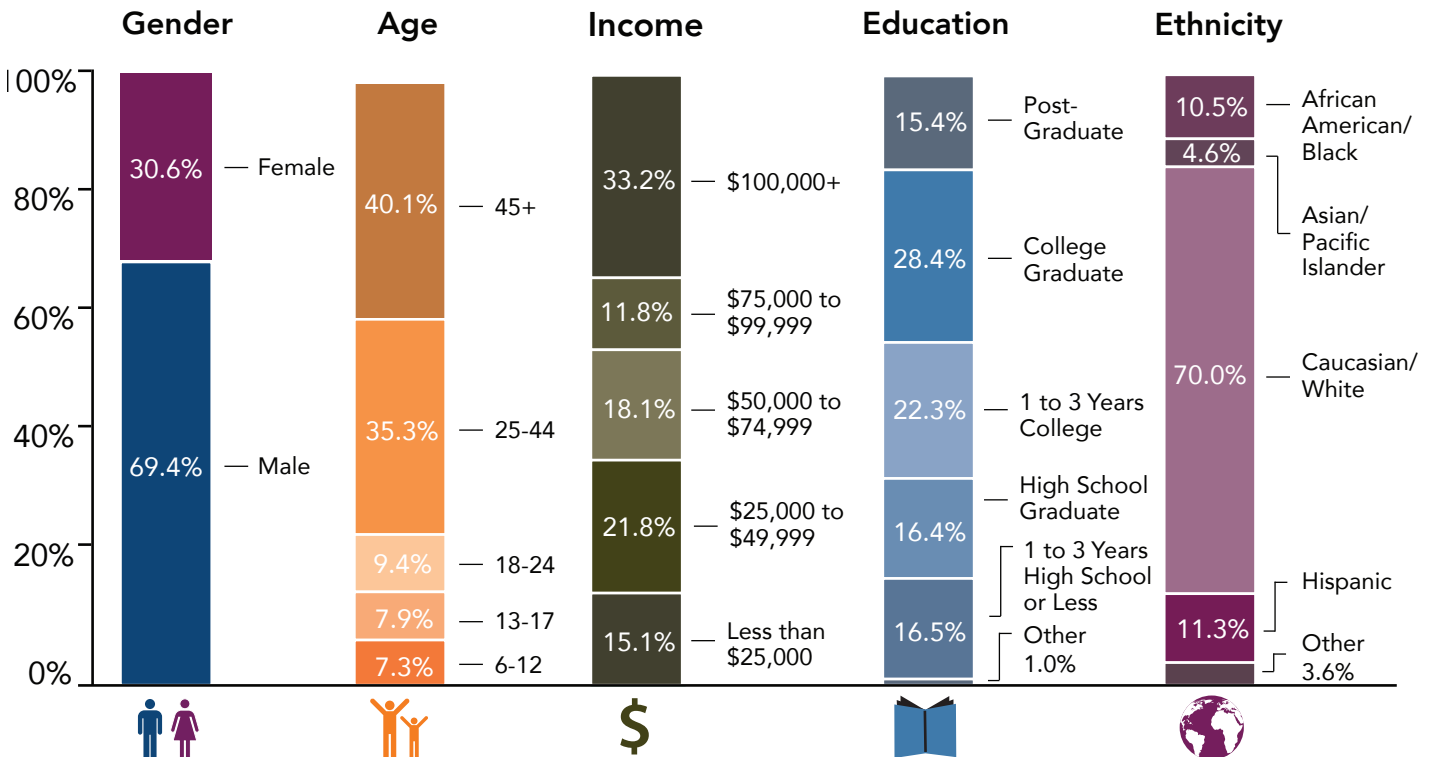
The average number of annual outings per fly fishing participant.



Annual Outings  
Fly Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Fly Fishing Participants, Ages 6+



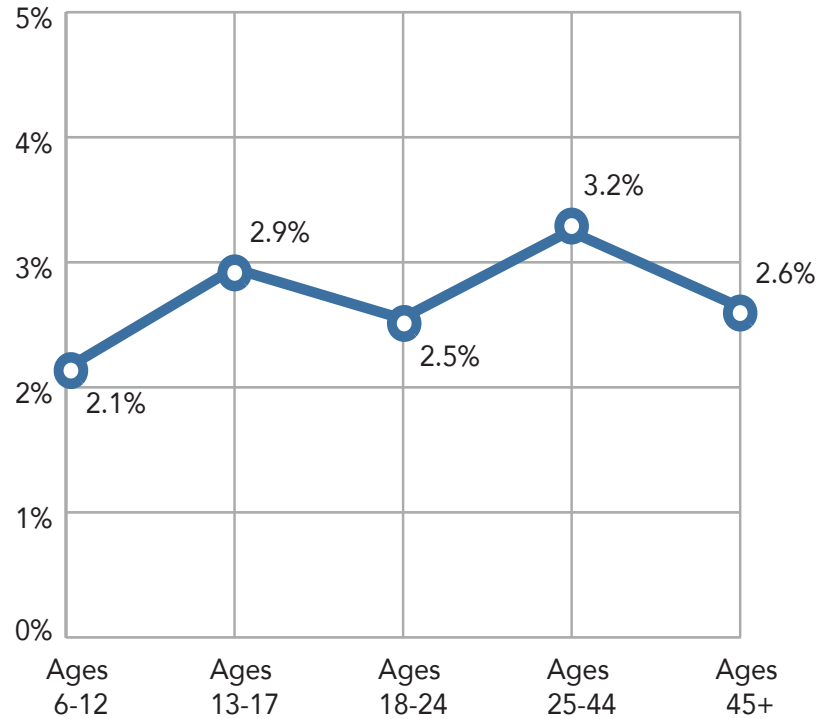


# Fly Fishing Participation Life Cycle

All Americans, Ages 6+

This chart measures the rate of fly fishing participation in America. The snapshot of participation rates by age helps describe a person's life cycle of fly fishing participation.

Like saltwater participation, fly fishing participation started low during childhood and grew, only dipping during young adulthood and among those 45 and older.

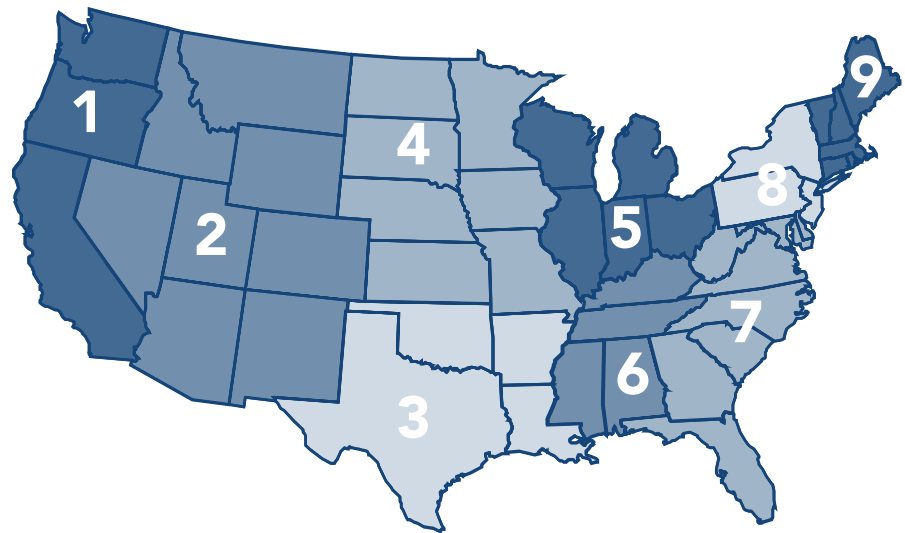


# Geography of Participants

Fly Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

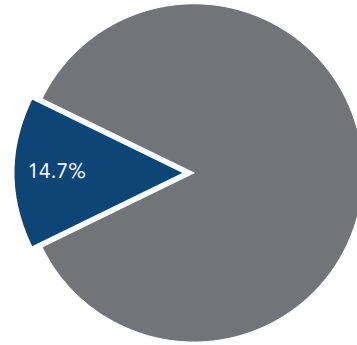
## U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 17.7%
2. Mountain: 6.6%
3. West South Central: 11.6%
4. West North Central: 6.3%
5. East North Central: 12.1%
6. East South Central: 4.6%
7. South Atlantic: 22.2%
8. Middle Atlantic: 15.8%
9. New England: 3.1%



# First-Time Participants

**14.7%** of fly fishing participants, or 900,000 people, tried the sport for the first time in 2015.



Fly Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+



# YOUTH

Youth participation saw a slight increase in 2015, with 6.7 million participants, ages six to 12, and four million participants, ages 13 to 17. There is a significant gap between male and female fishing participation during childhood and adolescence.

## Total Participation

2007	Ages 6-12	7.9 million participants 27.8 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	4.5 million participants 20.5 percent of age group
2008	Ages 6-12	6.7 million participants 24.8 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	4.5 million participants 20.2 percent of age group
2009	Ages 6-12	6.9 million participants 25.4 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	4.3 million participants 19.0 percent of age group
2010	Ages 6-12	6.0 million participants 21.9 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	4.2 million participants 18.6 percent of age group
2011	Ages 6-12	6.3 million participants 22.6 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	4.0 million participants 17.7 percent of age group
2012	Ages 6-12	6.4 million participants 22.0 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	3.8 million participants 17.7 percent of age group
2013	Ages 6-12	6.8 million participants 23.1 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	3.7 million participants 17.3 percent of age group
2014	Ages 6-12	6.6 million participants 22.8 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	3.9 million participants 17.9 percent of age group
2015	Ages 6-12	6.7 million participants 23.5 percent of age group
	Ages 13-17	4.0 million participants 18.4 percent of age group



## Boys

Among youth, boys, ages six to 12, had the highest fishing participation rate at nearly 29%.



## Biking

More than 44% of youth fishing participants also biked, making it the most popular crossover activity.



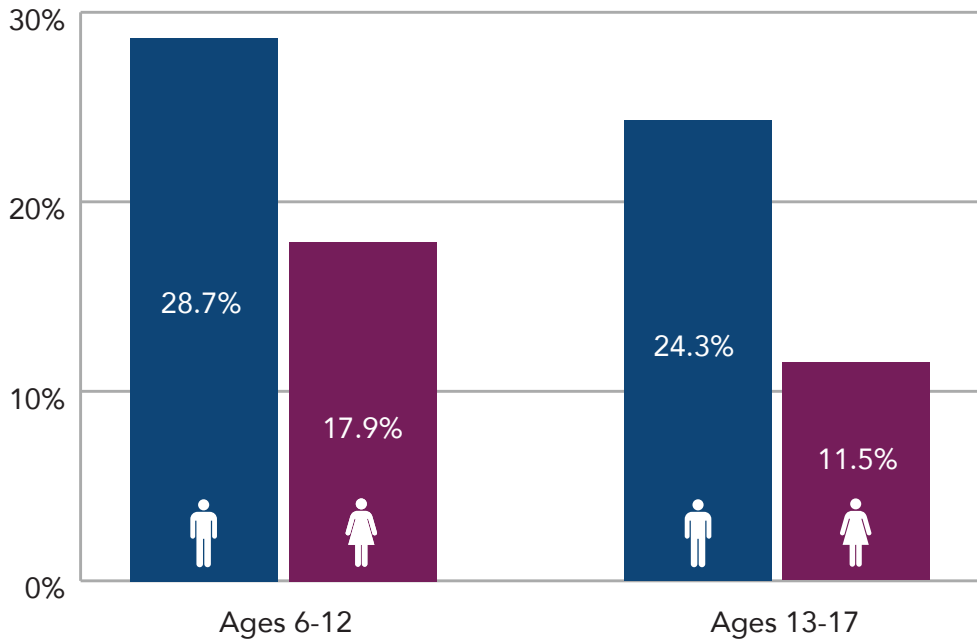
## Family & Friends

The biggest motivator for youth and young adult fishing participants to get outdoors was spending time with friends and family.

# Youth Participation in Fishing by Gender

All Americans, Ages 6-17

Male youth participated in fishing at a significantly higher rate than female youth. During childhood, there was an almost 11-percentage point gap in participation between the genders, and during adolescence, the gap widened to nearly 13-percentage points. Overall, participation decreased from childhood to adolescence.



## Crossover Participation

Fishing Participants, Ages 6-17

### Outdoor Activities

1. Road, Mountain or BMX Bicycling 44.3%
2. Car, Backyard or RV Camping 41.6%
3. Running, Jogging or Trail Running 27.2%
4. Hiking 24.1%
5. Paddling 21.1%

### Indoor Fitness Activities

1. Free Weights 18.1%
2. Treadmill 10.8%
3. Stretching 10.2%
4. Weight/Resistance Machines 8.5%
5. Calisthenics 8.0%

### Team Sports

1. Basketball 27.1%
2. Baseball 26.6%
3. Soccer 25.5%
4. Football 22.4%
5. Softball 10.8%

### Other Activities

1. Bowling 39.2%
2. Fitness Walking 22.2%
3. Swimming for Fitness 17.7%
4. Table Tennis 13.3%
5. Ice Skating 13.3%







# Level of Fishing Participation

When asked their level of fishing participation, 24.2 percent of American children described themselves as occasional participants who would like to fish more often. An even higher percentage, 26.3 percent, of American adolescents described themselves the same way — a potential opportunity for growing fishing participation among youth.

	All Americans, Ages 6-12	All Americans, Ages 13-17
Don't fish currently, but would like to fish	26.5%	16.1%
Occasional participant, would like to fish more often	24.2%	26.3%
Don't fish currently, not interested in fishing	21.9%	27.5%
Occasional participant, fish as often as I want	13.0%	15.1%
Avid fishing participant, would like to fish more often	7.5%	8.8%
Avid fishing participant, fish as often as I want	6.8%	6.2%

# Reason for Participating in Outdoor Recreation

A majority of youth, regardless of age, participated in outdoor recreation as a way to spend time with friends and family, followed by getting exercise. Among children, the third most popular motivator was experiencing adventure, while adolescents wanted to be with people who enjoyed the same things they did.

	All Americans, Ages 6-12	All Americans, Ages 13-17
Be with family/friends	71.0%	64.8%
Get exercise	55.1%	57.5%
Experience excitement/adventure	49.3%	43.9%
Be with people who enjoy the same things I do	41.5%	54.5%
Because it is cool	41.2%	28.4%
Develop my skills/abilities	36.1%	42.3%
Be close to nature	30.4%	41.2%
Enjoy the sounds/smells of nature	30.4%	37.7%
Keep physically fit	28.2%	46.5%
Observe scenic beauty	23.3%	34.7%
Gain a sense of accomplishment	21.4%	30.4%
Gain a sense of self-confidence	20.1%	27.2%
Get away from the usual demands of life	15.1%	33.8%
Be with people who share my values	14.4%	29.7%
Talk to new/varied people	7.5%	11.0%
Experience solitude	6.7%	13.6%
Other reason(s)	7.0%	3.1%

# POTENTIAL NEW YOUTH FISHING PARTICIPANTS

Growing youth participation in fishing ensures that there are fishing enthusiasts today and into the future. The following pages help describe the demographics and motivations of those young people who did not participate in fishing but were interested in the sport.

Among the youth population that did not fish in 2014 or 2015, 10.6 percent considered participating in fishing. That's slightly higher than the general population interested in fishing.

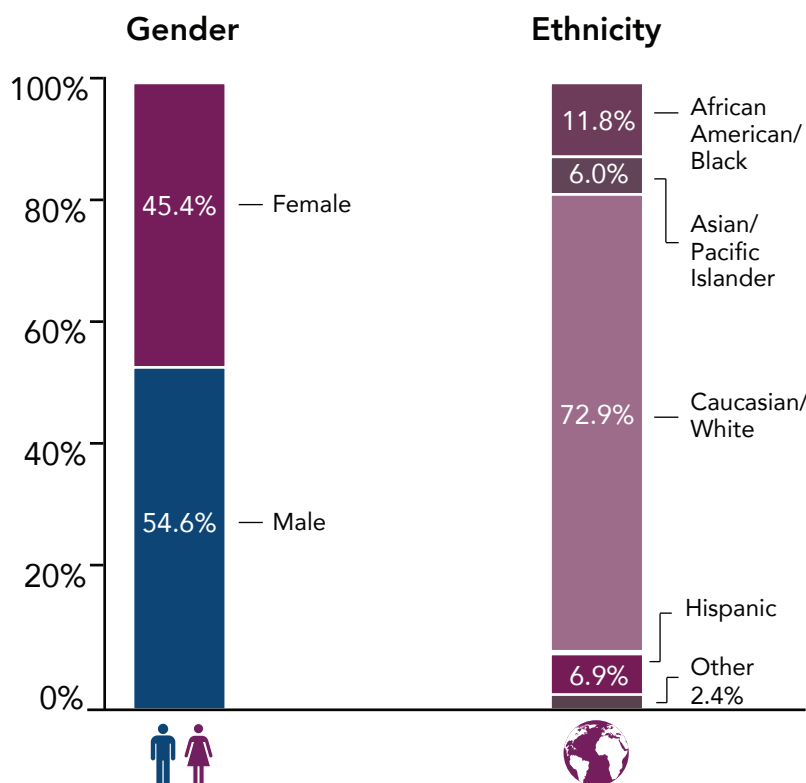


## Future Participants

10.6% of youth considered fishing last year, a growth opportunity for the industry.

## Demographics

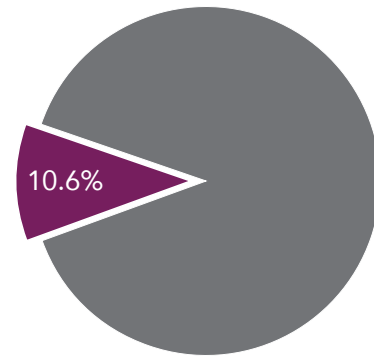
Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6-17



# Youth Considering Participation in Fishing

Non-Participants, Ages 6-17

**10.6%** of the youth population that does not currently fish, 4.3 million people, ages six to 17, considered participation in fishing in 2015.

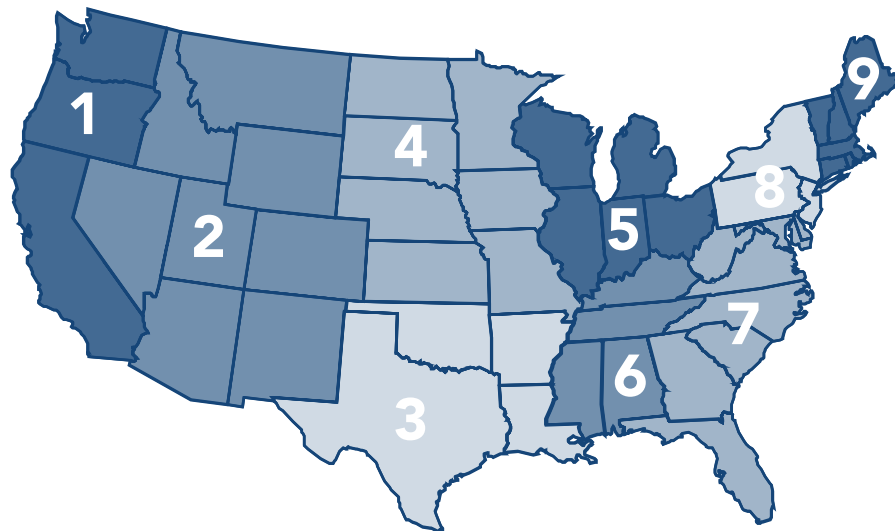


## Geography of Potential Participants

Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6-17

### U.S. Census Regions

- 1. Pacific: 12.0%
- 2. Mountain: 6.2%
- 3. West South Central: 11.1%
- 4. West North Central: 7.4%
- 5. East North Central: 20.2%
- 6. East South Central: 8.9%
- 7. South Atlantic: 21.0%
- 8. Middle Atlantic: 8.9%
- 9. New England: 4.3%



# HISPANICS

Of the 25.3 million Hispanics, ages six and up, in the United States, 13.4 percent of them — or 3.4 million Hispanic individuals — participated in fishing in 2015.

## Total Participation

Hispanics, Ages 6+

2008	Fishing (All): 13.7 percent, 2.4 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 10.4 percent Saltwater Fishing: 6.2 percent Fly Fishing: 1.5 percent
2009	Fishing (All): 13.6 percent, 2.6 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 10.6 percent Saltwater Fishing: 4.8 percent Fly Fishing: 1.7 percent
2010	Fishing (All): 14.5 percent, 3.4 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 11.0 percent Saltwater Fishing: 5.7 percent Fly Fishing: 1.7 percent
2011	Fishing (All): 11.9 percent, 3.1 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 9.0 percent Saltwater Fishing: 4.6 percent Fly Fishing: 1.4 percent
2012	Fishing (All): 13.8 percent, 2.8 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 9.4 percent Saltwater Fishing: 5.6 percent Fly Fishing: 3.0 percent
2013	Fishing (All): 14.4 percent, 3.5 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 9.8 percent Saltwater Fishing: 6.0 percent Fly Fishing: 2.7 percent
2014	Fishing (All): 13.8 percent, 3.3 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 9.2 percent Saltwater Fishing: 5.8 percent Fly Fishing: 2.5 percent
2015	Fishing (All): 13.4 percent, 3.4 million participants Freshwater Fishing: 9.0 percent Saltwater Fishing: 5.3 percent Fly Fishing: 2.7 percent



## Camping

Camping was the most popular crossover activity, with 40.8% of Hispanic fishing participants also enjoying camping.



## 6 Days More

Hispanic fishing participants spent 6.2 more days fishing than the average fishing participant.



## Exercise

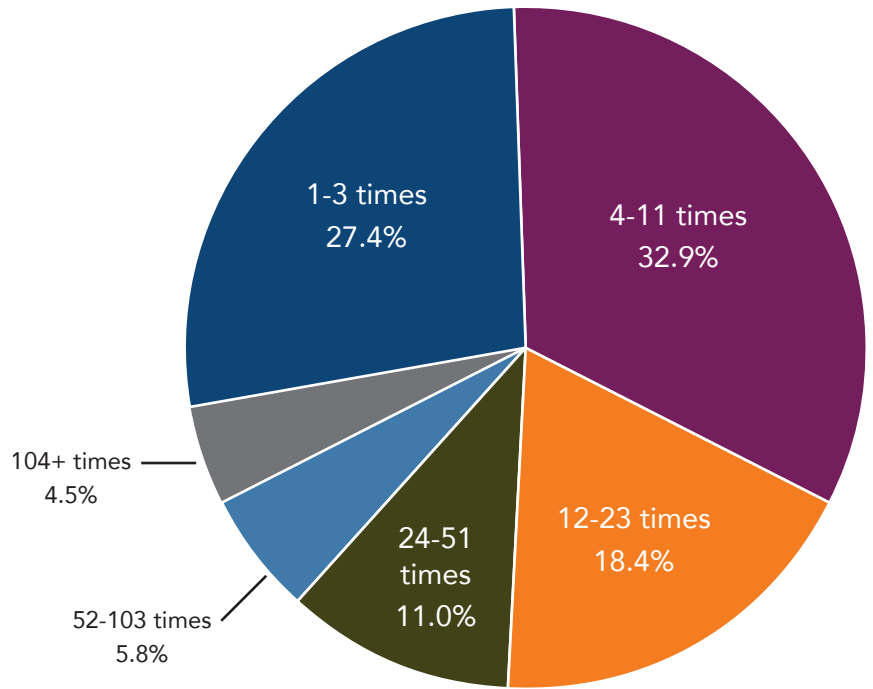
Exercise was the top motivator for Hispanic Americans to get outdoors.

# Annual Outings

In 2015, Hispanic American fishing participants made more than 86.6 million annual outings.

# 25.6 days

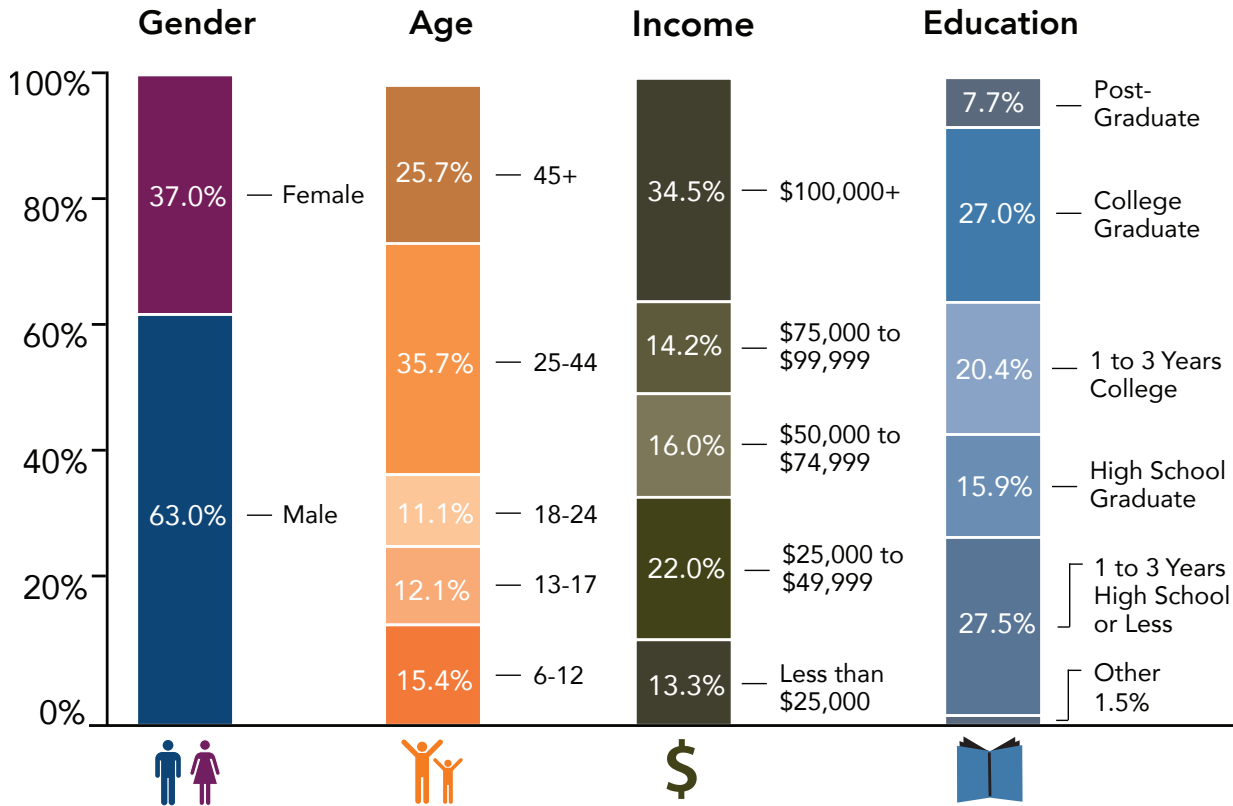
The average number of annual outings per Hispanic fishing participant. Hispanic participants spent 6.2 more days fishing than the typical participant.



Annual Outings  
Hispanic Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Hispanic Fishing Participants, Ages 6+



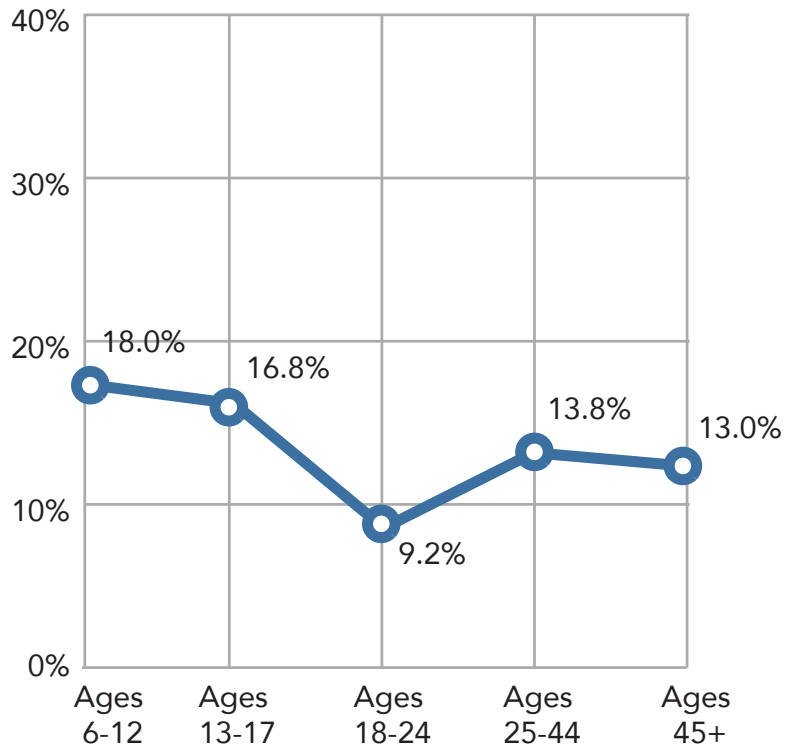


# Fishing Participation Life Cycle Among Hispanics

Hispanic Americans, Ages 6+

This chart measures the rate of Hispanic fishing participation in America. The snapshot of Hispanic American participation rates by age helps describe a person's life cycle of participation.

Participation among Hispanics peaked during childhood, declined slightly during adolescence and then plummeted during young adulthood. Participation climbed again among adults and then decreased again.

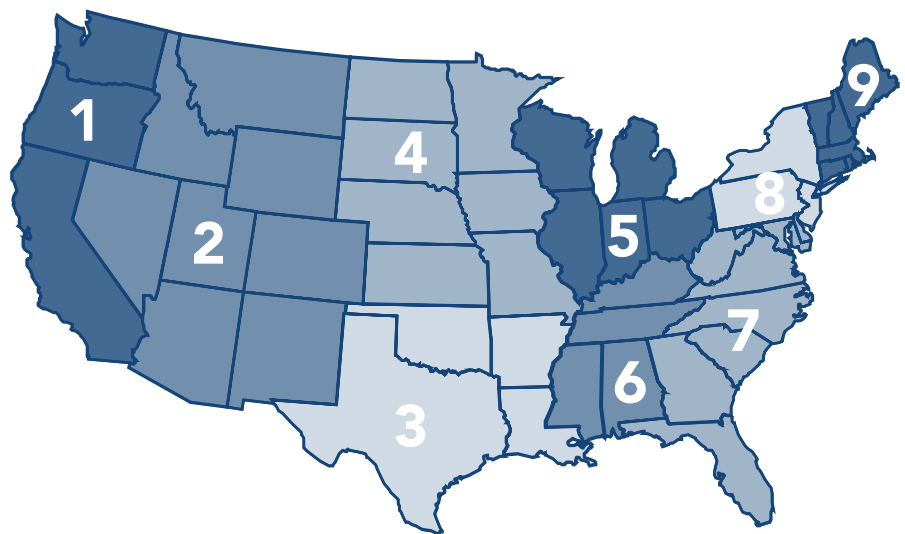


# Geography of Participants

Hispanic Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

## U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 27.3%
2. Mountain: 7.9%
3. West South Central: 20.5%
4. West North Central: 2.6%
5. East North Central: 7.8%
6. East South Central: 2.6%
7. South Atlantic: 18.0%
8. Middle Atlantic: 9.3%
9. New England: 4.0%



# Crossover Participation

Hispanic Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

## Outdoor Activities

1. Car, Backyard or RV Camping 40.8%
2. Running, Jogging or Trail Running 32.3%
3. Road, Mountain or BMX Bicycling 29.1%
4. Hunting 25.2%
5. Paddling 21.7%

## Indoor Fitness Activities

1. Free Weights 39.6%
2. Stationary Cycling 20.2%
3. Stretching 19.8%
4. Treadmill 19.1%
5. Weight/Resistance Machines 16.5%

## Team Sports

1. Basketball 22.2%
2. Baseball 20.8%
3. Soccer 19.3%
4. Football 17.7%
5. Softball 14.9%

## Other Activities

1. Fitness Walking 37.9%
2. Bowling 34.5%
3. Swimming for Fitness 22.6%
4. Golf 19.9%
5. Target Shooting 18.5%

# Level of Fishing Participation

The level of fishing participation among Hispanic Americans is fairly similar to the level of all Americans. While 37.2 percent of all Hispanics describe themselves as occasional participants, 23.6 percent of those participants would like to fish more often.

All Hispanics, Ages 6+

Don't fish currently, not interested in fishing	30.8%
Occasional participant, would like to fish more often	23.6%
Don't fish currently, but would like to fish	17.6%
Occasional participant, fish as often as I want	13.6%
Avid fishing participant, would like to fish more often	7.5%
Avid fishing participant, fish as often as I want	6.9%

# Reason for Participating in Outdoor Recreation

Hispanic Americans were motivated to get outdoors by the opportunity to get exercise. Being close to nature followed as the most popular motivator.

## Hispanics Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

Get exercise	61.6%
Be close to nature	47.7%
Be with family/friends	43.0%
Experience excitement/adventure	42.8%
Observe scenic beauty	40.3%
Keep physically fit	40.1%
Enjoy the sounds/smells of nature	39.0%
Get away from the usual demands of life	33.4%
Be with people who enjoy the same things I do	29.5%
Develop my skills/abilities	28.9%
Experience solitude	26.6%
Because it is cool	23.5%
Be with people who share my values	21.7%
Gain a sense of accomplishment	21.3%
Gain a sense of self-confidence	18.3%
Talk to new/varied people	11.8%
Other reason(s)	4.7%





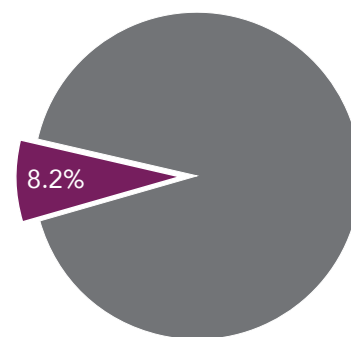


# POTENTIAL NEW HISPANIC FISHING PARTICIPANTS

With a population of 25.3 million, Hispanics are the largest minority group in the United States, but they are underrepresented in the sport of fishing. It is critical to engage new Hispanic participants to enhance the ethnic diversity of fishing and to grow the sport.

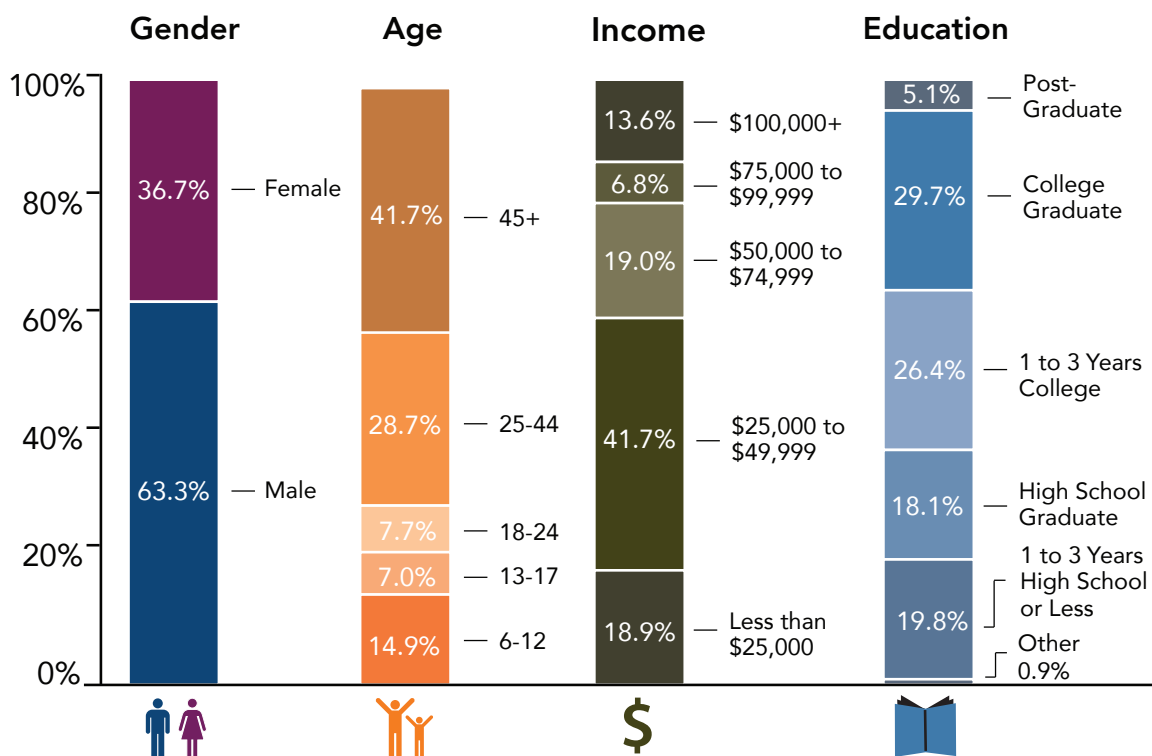
**8.2%** of the Hispanic American population, or 1.8 million people, considered participating in fishing in 2015.

More than eight percent of Hispanic Americans who did not participate in fishing in 2014 or 2015 were interested in trying the activity. Those potential participants were older and less wealthy than active Hispanic participants. The following pages present a profile of Hispanics, ages six and older, who did not participate in fishing but considered becoming active in the activity.



## Demographics

Hispanic Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+



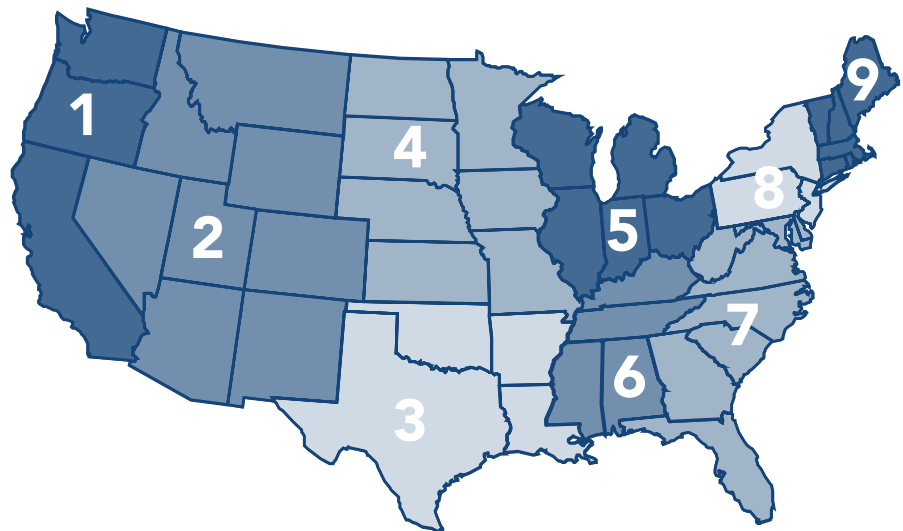


# Geography of Potential Hispanic Americans Participants

Hispanic Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+

## U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 31.6%
2. Mountain: 5.3%
3. West South Central: 11.1%
4. West North Central: 2.1%
5. East North Central: 6.0%
6. East South Central: 0.4%
7. South Atlantic: 26.2%
8. Middle Atlantic: 14.1%
9. New England: 3.2%



# PROFILE OF A FISHING TRIP

A typical fishing party included two to five adults. Youth only participated in 34.1 percent of trips in 2015. There was not a lot of advance planning of fishing trips — 79 percent were unplanned or planned within a week of the outing.

Fishing was usually the participants' primary activity, rather than being part of a larger event, like camping. Slightly more than half of participants fished from the shoreline, but boats and riverbanks were popular fishing venues too.

On their most recent fishing trip, nearly 83 percent of participants caught fish. While 41.3 percent kept the fish to eat, 36.8 percent released their catch and 21.9 percent kept some and released some.

A majority of fishing participants agreed that easier or more affordable access to boats and fishing gear would make it easier to fish.



## Caught Fish

82.7% of participants caught fishing on their last outing.



## Unplanned Trips

38.8% of fishing trips were not planned far in advance.



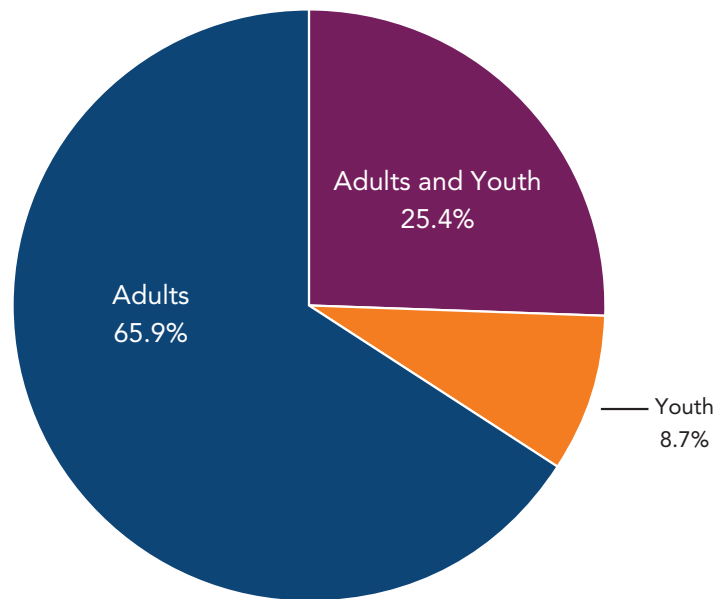
## Conservation

The decision to fish was "somewhat" to "a great deal" motivated by conservation efforts for 65.2% of participants.

# Fishing Companions

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

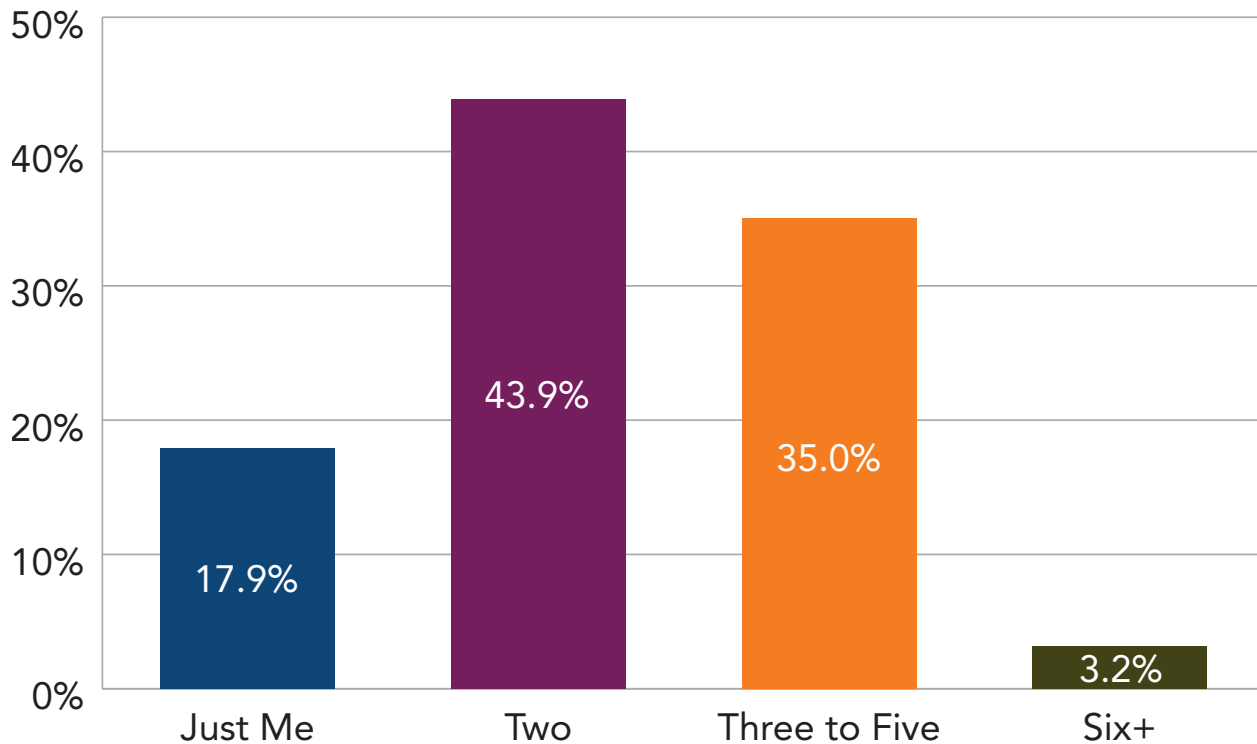
Adult fishing participants typically went fishing with other adults. Nearly 66 percent chose adults as their fishing companions, while only 25.4 percent fished with both adults and youth, and almost nine percent fished with only youth.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

# Number of People in Fishing Group

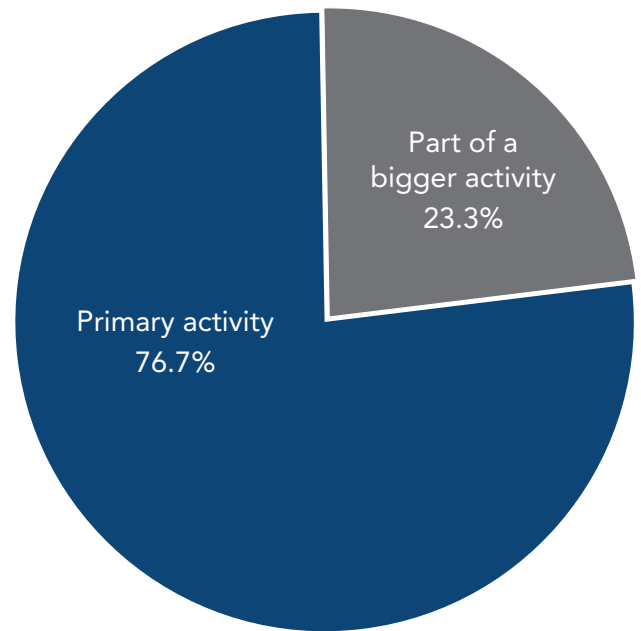
Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# Fishing as an Activity

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

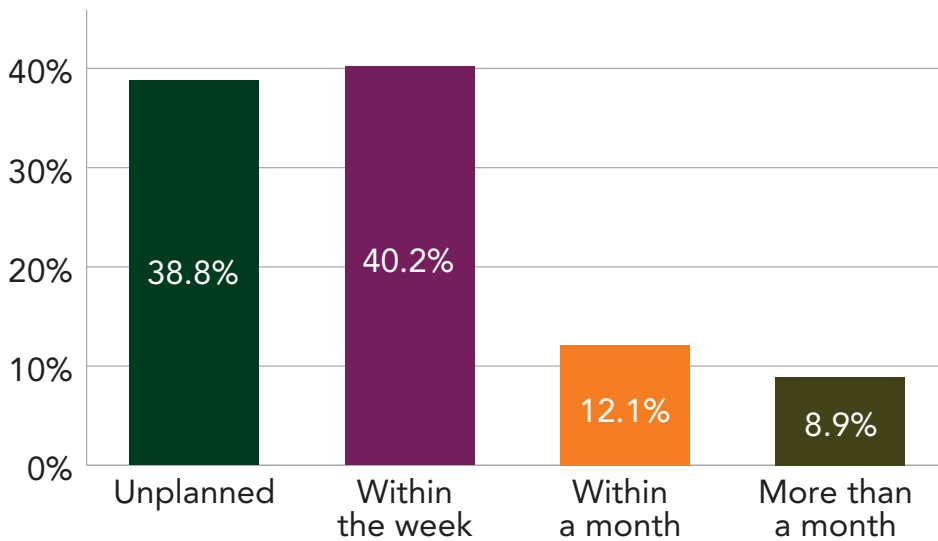
More than three-quarters of participants went fishing as their primary activity. Only 23.3 percent went as part of a larger activity, like a camping excursion.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

# Trip Planning

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# Fishing Venues

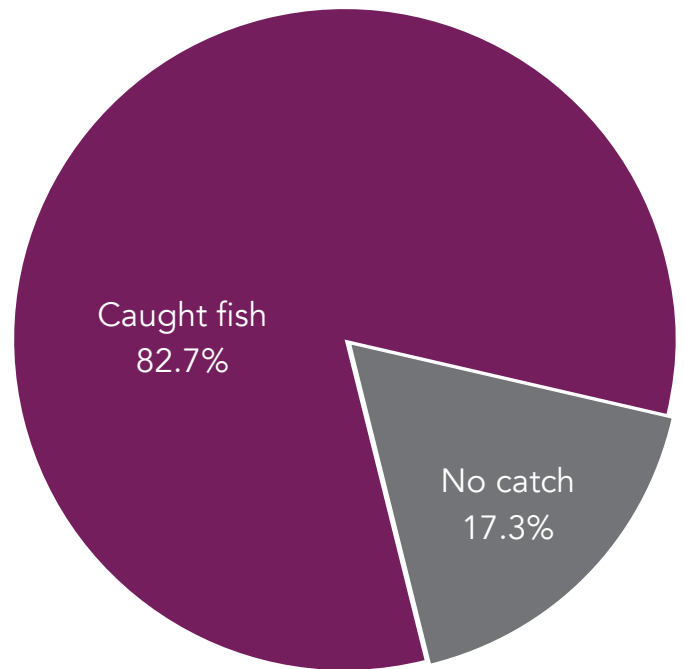
Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

Shoreline	50.5%
Boat	48.3%
Riverbank	43.0%
Pier or jetty	26.6%
Kayak	5.0%
Other	5.5%

# Catch on Most Recent Trip

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

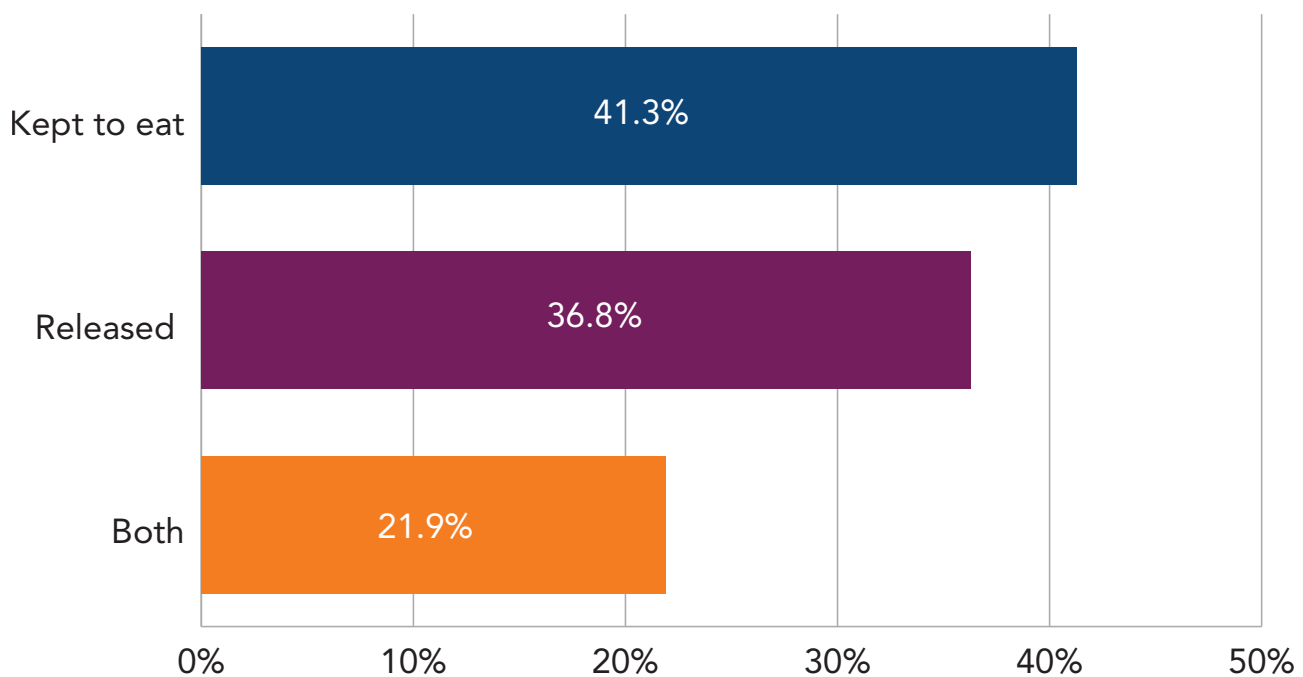
A majority of fishing participants caught fish on their most recent trip. Nearly 83 percent caught a fish, while 17.3 percent did not.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

# What Did You Do With Your Catch?

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

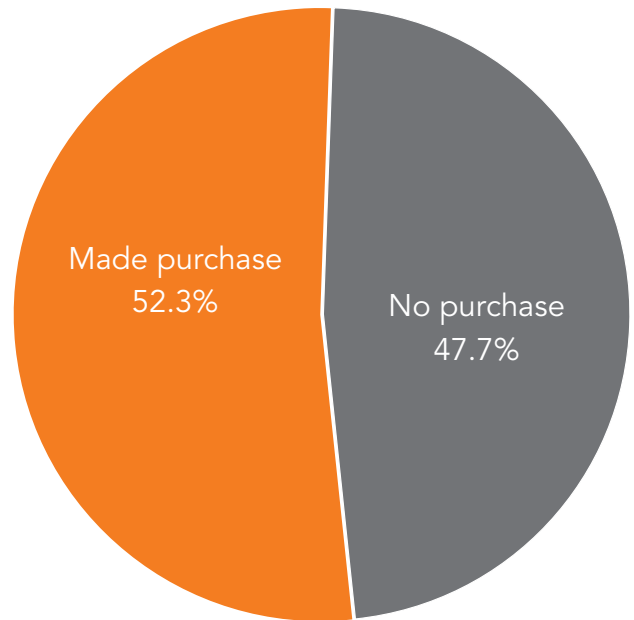




# Fishing Gear and Equipment

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Slightly more than half of fishing participants — 52.3 percent — purchased fishing gear or equipment in 2015. Almost 48 percent did not make a fishing-related purchase.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

# Resources That Would Make It Easier to Fish

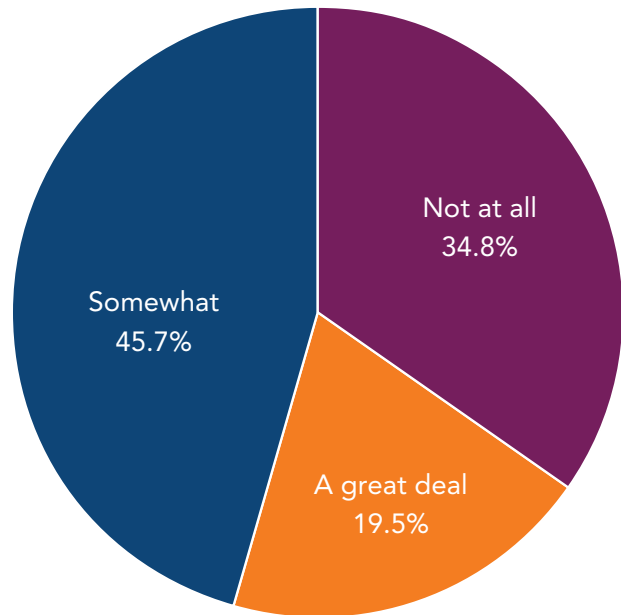
Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Easier/more affordable access to boats	35.2%
Easier/more affordable access to fishing equipment	33.4%
Short lessons/information session from a state agency or guide	17.3%
Mobile guides that you can access on the water	15.9%
More free time	2.0%
More access	1.0%
None	11.3%

# Fishing Participation a Result of Conservation

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

Adult fishing participants were mixed on if they fished because they knew their participation contributed to conservation efforts. Almost 20 percent said they were motivated by conservation, while 45.7 percent said conservation somewhat affected their decision to participate, and 32.1 percent said it did not affect their participation at all.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# PERCEPTIONS OF FISHING

More than 47 percent of adult fishing participants who were new to the activity tried fishing to experience excitement. They also expected their first trip to be a time for relaxing and unwinding.

Fishing participants generally stereotyped other participants as male. Almost 68 percent of males thought that a fishing participants would look like them, while only 52 percent of females thought the same.

For male participants, the best things about fishing was catching fish, followed by enjoying the sights and sounds of nature and getting away from the usual demands of life. Female participants, on the other hand, said that spending time with friends and family was the most enjoyable aspect of fishing.

Both males and females agreed that not catching fish was the worst part of fishing. For females, baiting the hooks or taking fish off of the hook also ranked high.



## Exciting

Before a first experience, more than 47% of people thought that fishing would be exciting.



## Female

38% of female participants thought spending time with family and friends was the best thing about fishing.



## Male

37.7% of male participants thought catching fish was the best thing about fishing.

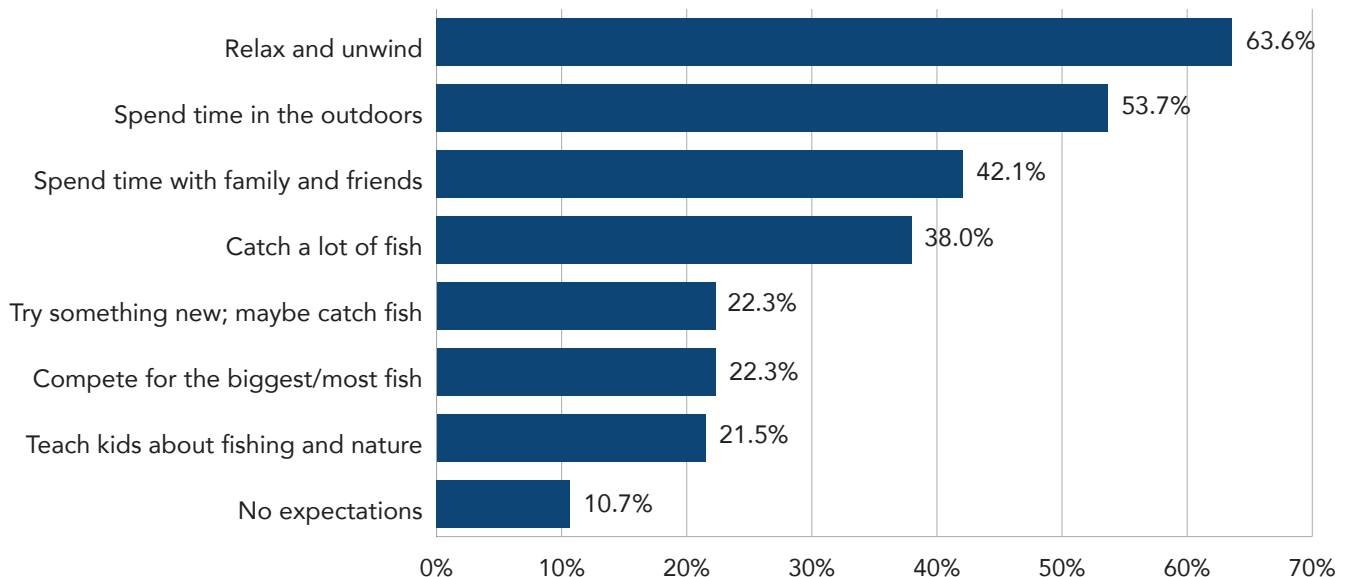
# Motivation for Trying Fishing for the First Time

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Experience excitement	47.1%
Ease of access to fishing	41.3%
Spend time with family	38.0%
Solitude	33.1%
A friend or relative took me	32.2%
Wanted to catch my own food	26.4%
Fished as a kid but not as an adult and wanted to try again	22.3%
Fishing trip as part of a vacation or group outing	22.3%
Disconnect from electronics	21.5%
Low cost of fishing equipment	19.8%
Wanted a new hobby	18.2%
Wanted to take my children fishing	13.2%
Recently moved and wanted to try fishing here	11.6%
My children asked me to take them fishing	9.1%
Learned about fishing on the internet	7.4%
Saw a show about fishing	7.4%
Read a magazine about fishing	5.8%

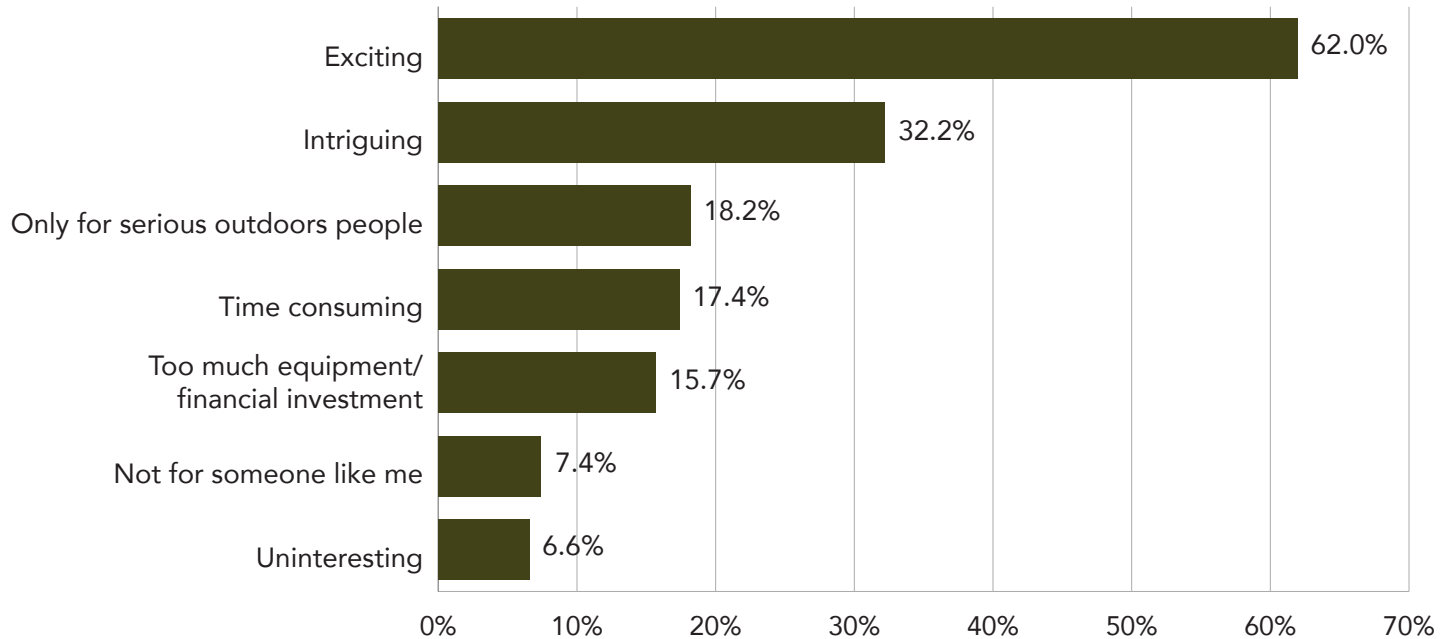
# Expectations for First Fishing Trip

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# Perceptions of Fishing Before Participating in First Trip

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

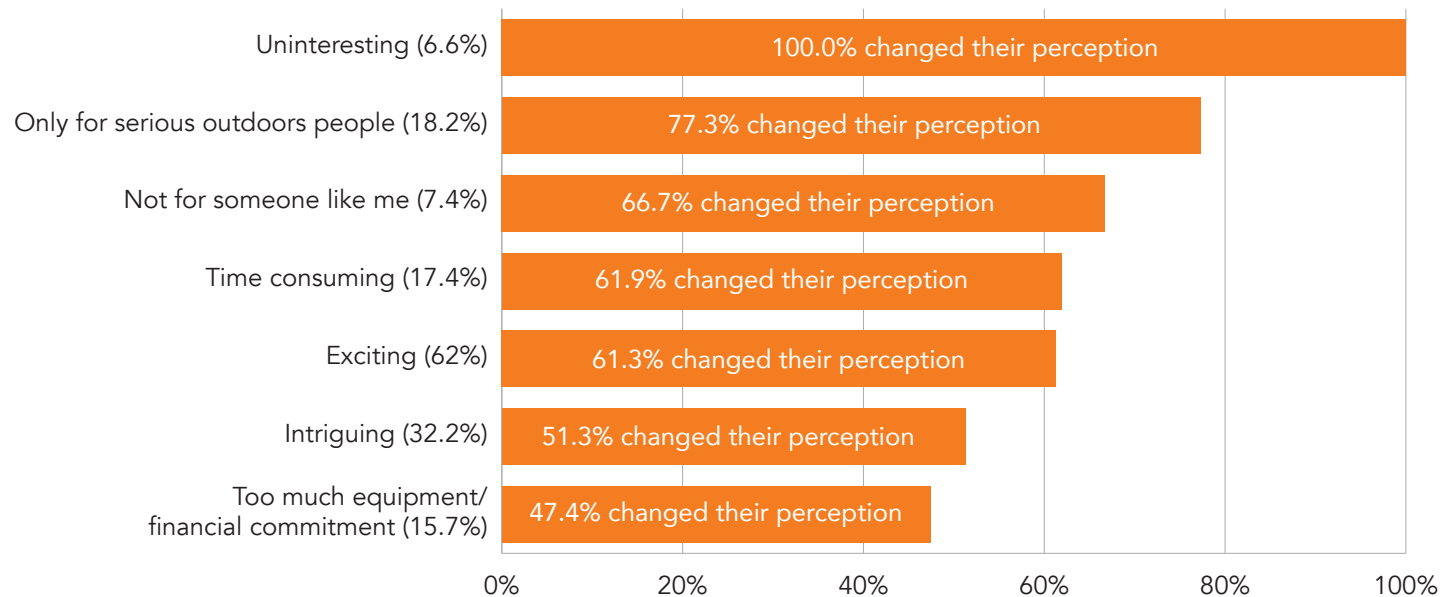


## Changed Perceptions After a First Fishing Trip

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Each of the 6.6 percent of new fishing participants who initially perceived fishing as uninteresting prior to their first fishing trip changed their minds after going fishing for the first time. These participants no longer see fishing as uninteresting.

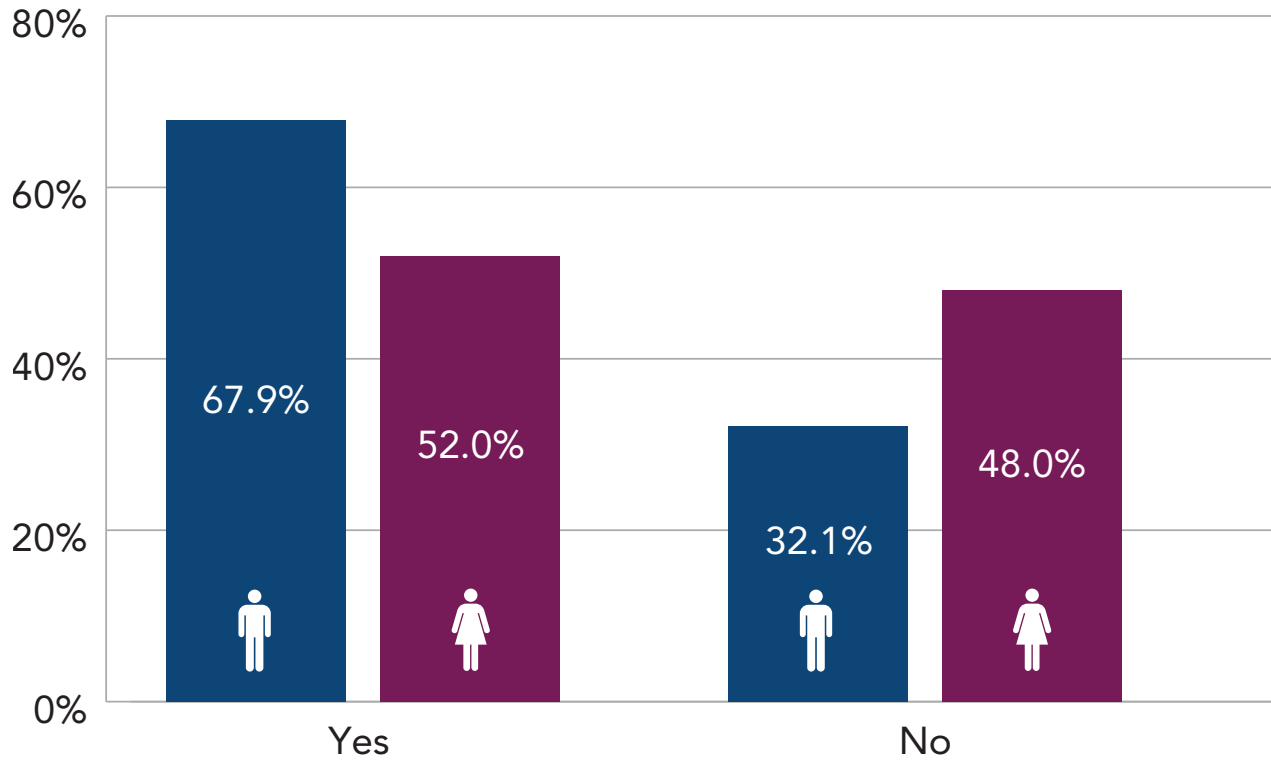
Of those first time fisherman who said:





# When You Think of a Fishing Participant, Do You Envision Someone Who Looks Like You?

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# Best Thing About Fishing

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

	Males	Females
Catching fish	37.7%	31.8%
Enjoying the sounds and smells of nature	30.6%	29.6%
Getting away from the usual demands of life	29.9%	28.5%
Being close to nature	25.0%	19.0%
Spending time with family or friends	22.2%	38.0%
Observing scenic beauty	21.6%	26.3%
Experiencing solitude	21.0%	13.4%
The "chase" - finding the right spot and the right tackle	13.3%	12.8%
Experiencing excitement/adventure	11.7%	9.5%
Being with people who enjoy the same things I do	10.2%	11.2%
Sharing the enjoyment of fishing with a child	9.9%	13.4%
Catching my own food	8.6%	8.4%
Reliving childhood memories of going fishing	8.6%	7.8%
Affordability - fishing is low-cost entertainment	6.8%	6.1%
Being with people who share my values	6.5%	3.9%
Getting exercise	4.0%	3.9%
Developing my skills and abilities	3.7%	5.0%
Gaining a sense of accomplishment	2.8%	4.5%
Talking to new and varied people	2.5%	2.8%
It is cool	2.5%	1.1%
Keeping physically fit	2.2%	2.8%
Gaining a sense of self-confidence	2.2%	0.6%

# Worst Thing About Fishing

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

	Males	Females
Not catching any fish	28.1%	35.8%
Crowded fishing spots	16.4%	11.2%
The expense	12.7%	14.5%
The hassle	11.4%	19.0%
Water isn't clean	10.8%	7.8%
Being outdoors	7.7%	8.4%
Not having the right equipment	6.2%	5.0%
Baiting the hooks or taking the fish off the hook	4.3%	24.6%
It is boring	4.0%	5.0%







# FUTURE OF FISHING

More than half of adult fishing participants planned on taking eight or more fishing trips in 2016, and another 44.7 percent planned to take one to seven trips. These participants said they kept coming back to the sport because it is relaxing. They also enjoyed catching fish and loved the peace and tranquility that fishing offers.

Experiencing fishing during childhood was critical to participation later in life. Nearly 83 percent of current participants fished as children, ages 12 and younger. Current adult participants still hold on to these early childhood memories of fishing, associating the activity with spending time outdoors immersed in nature and enjoying precious time with friends and family.



## Nature

More than 69% of participants associated memories of fishing with spending time in nature.



## Fishing Plans

97% of fishing participants planned on making regular or occasional fishing trips in 2016.

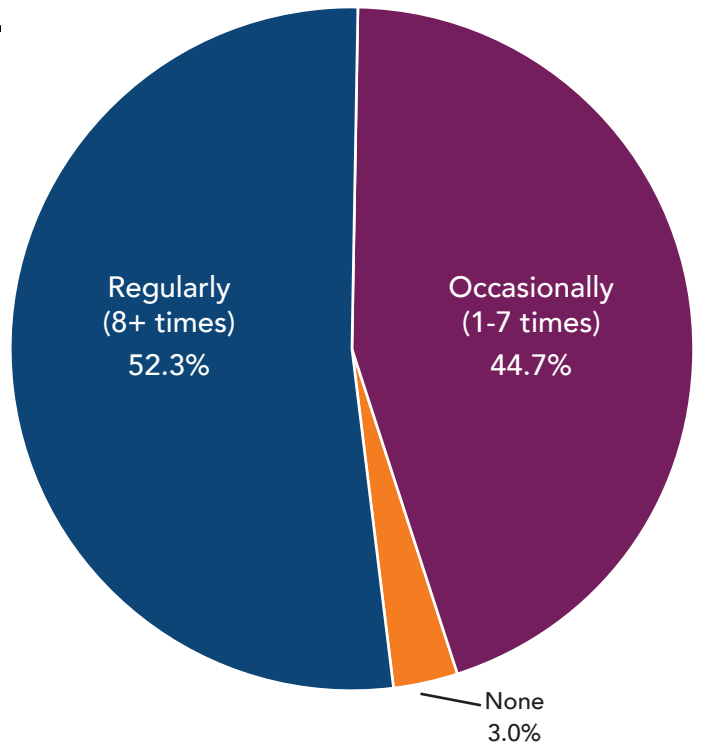


## Fished as Youth

Almost 83% of fishing enthusiasts participated in fishing as children.

# Plans for Fishing Next Year

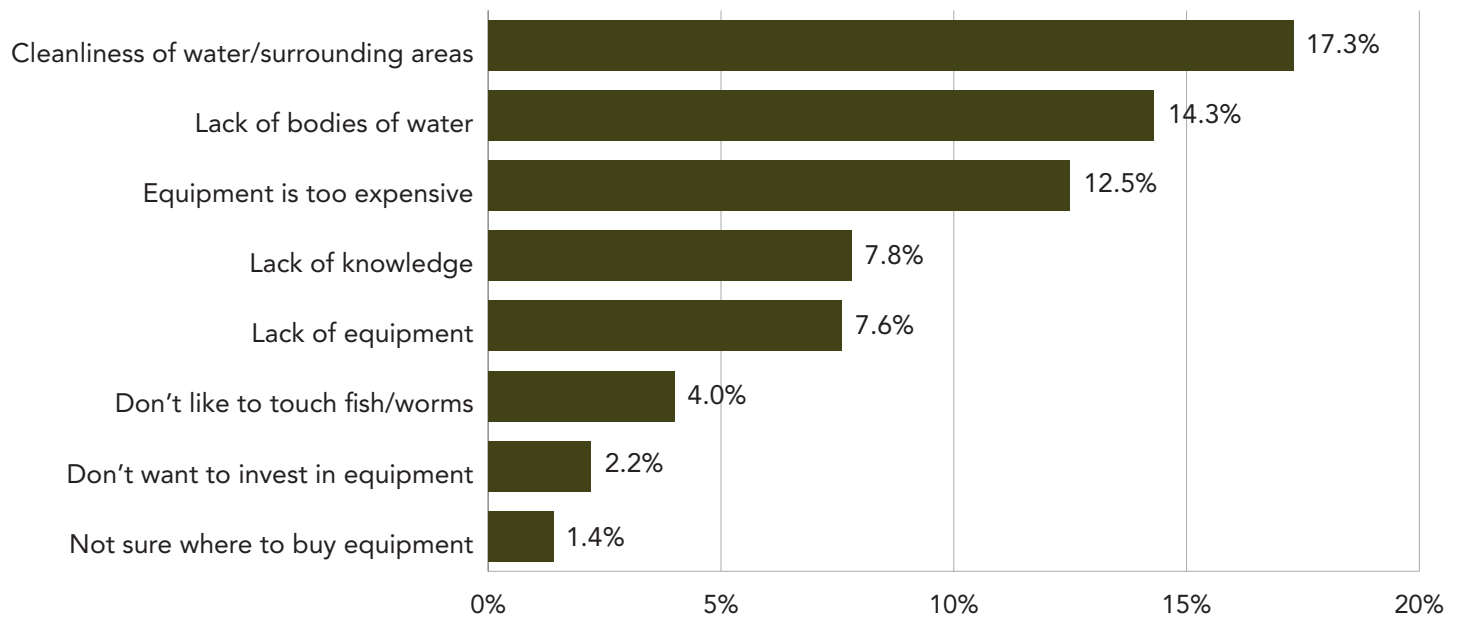
Almost all fishing participants — 97 percent — planned on making regular or occasional fishing trips in 2016. Of those, slightly more than half, 52.3 percent, planned on taking eight or more fishing trips.



Number of Planned Outings  
Fishing Participants,  
Ages 18+

# Barriers to Participation

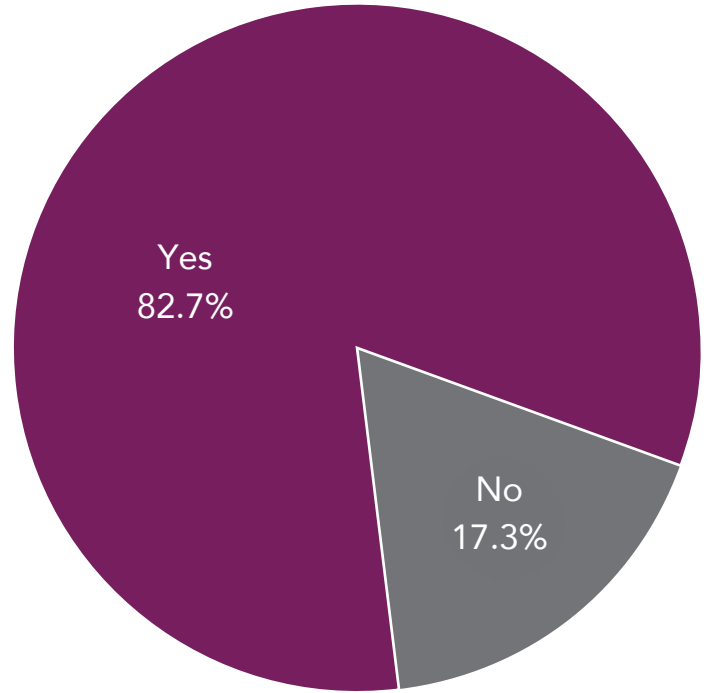
Fishing Participants, Ages 18+





# Participation in Fishing as a Child

Experiencing fishing an early age had a powerful impact on participation later in life. Among current adult fishing participants, nearly 83 percent fished as children, ages 12 or younger. Only 17 percent did not fish during childhood.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

# Positive Memories or Associations with Fishing

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Spending time outdoors immersed in nature	69.2%
Spending time with family or friends	62.2%
Reminds me of my childhood	44.7%
Enjoying the water in a way I don't typically do	42.9%
Helping me connect with a simpler way of life	34.6%
Learning a new skill	24.3%
Other	4.0%

# Why New Participants Will Continue to Fish

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Relaxing	35.6%
Catching fish	22.9%
Peace and tranquility	17.2%
Fun and enjoyment	16.8%
Being outdoors	15.1%
Bonding with family	12.6%
Eating fish	10.7%
Experiencing nature	9.6%
Excitement	8.6%
Being sociable	8.6%
Being on the water	8.6%
Generally love fishing	7.8%
Thrill of the chase	7.5%
Quiet	6.9%
Challenging	6.3%
Lifelong interest	4.0%
Break from the norm	3.4%
Solitude	3.1%
Sunshine and warmth	3.1%
Variety of fish	2.5%
Other	2.9%

# Why New Participants Won't Fish Next Year

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Lack of time	26.7%
Boring	20.0%
Expensive	13.3%
Didn't enjoy it	13.3%
Prefer other sports	13.3%
Didn't catch anything	6.7%
Physical problems	6.7%
Only fish at this holiday destination	6.7%
Other	6.7%

# Methodology

During the 2015 calendar year, a total of 32,658 online interviews were carried out with a nationwide sample of individuals and households from the US Online Panel of over one million people operated by Synovate/IPSOS. A total of 15,167 individual and 17,491 household surveys were completed. The total panel is maintained to be representative of the US population for people ages six and older. Over sampling of ethnic groups took place to boost response from typically under responding groups. Data is based on Nielsen's measure of the Hispanic population in the United States, ages 6 and up, which is 25,294,172 individuals.

The 2016 participation survey sample size of 32,658 completed interviews provides a high degree of statistical accuracy. All surveys are subject to some level of standard error — that is, the degree to which the results might differ from those obtained by a complete census of every person in the US. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.24 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

A weighting technique was used to balance the data to reflect the total US population ages six and above. The following variables were used: gender, age, income, household size, region, population density and panel join date. The total population figure used was 294,141,894 people ages six and older.

## Youth Interviews

All interviews of children under 13 were carried out following the guidelines set out in the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA). No children were contacted directly. The panel is a balanced sample of households with children in

each age group, but contact is always made through designated adult panelists. The adult panelist receives the survey invitation on behalf of a specified child, age six to 12, and they are asked to complete the survey together. Respondents ages 13 to 17 are contacted in a manner similar to respondents age six to 12, but they are asked to complete the survey themselves.

## About the Physical Activity Council (PAC)

The survey that forms the basis of the *2016 Special Report on Fishing* is produced by the Physical Activity Council (PAC), which is a partnership of leading organizations in the US sports, fitness and leisure industries. While the overall aim of the survey is to establish levels of activity and identify key trends in sports, fitness and recreation participation, each partner produces detailed reports on specific areas of interest. Partners include: the Outdoor Foundation (OF); National Golf Foundation (NGF); Snowsports Industries America (SIA); Tennis Industry Association (TIA); USA Football; United States Tennis Association (USTA), International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA); and Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA).

## Notes

Unless otherwise noted, the data in this report was collected during the latest 2016 participation survey, which focused on American participation in the 2015 calendar year. Please note that some information includes data that was collected during previous surveys, as some questions are not asked every year.



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