

# 2015 SPECIAL REPORT ON FISHING



A partnership  
project of:



RECREATIONAL  
BOATING & FISHING  
FOUNDATION



OUTDOOR  
FOUNDATION™

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# 2015 Special Report on Fishing

## Executive Summary

Recreational fishing — on lakes, rivers, streams and seas — is an essential piece of America's outdoor tradition. As one of the most popular nature-based outdoor activities, fishing is often an integral part of childhood and leads many Americans to a love of the outdoors and a healthy, active lifestyle.

For the sixth year in a row, the Outdoor Foundation and Recreational Boating and 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. Additionally, special sections have been dedicated to youth and Hispanic Americans, two important market segments that have significant growth potential.

### **Fishing Participation Trends and Opportunities**

Forty-six million Americans, or 15.8 percent of the U.S. population ages six and older, participated in fishing in 2014. These participants fished America's waterways a total of 893 million times, or an average of 19.4 annual outings each.

Compared to the year before, the fishing participation rate remained steady, while the number of participants added a modest 100,000 people. This leveling out is good news after a dip in participation in 2013.

Also positive news, the influx of new or returning participants in 2014 brings greater diversity to the sport. This traditionally male-dominated activity welcomed a disproportionately high percentage of female participants. New participants also included high percentages of children.

Like overall participation, fishing among youth remained steady, with slight variations. Children participated in fishing at a significantly higher rate than adolescents.

There is a notable discrepancy between genders during childhood and adolescence. Participation among young boys is 11-percentage points higher than young girls. An even larger 13.2-percentage point gap exists for adolescents. On a positive note, 43.9 percent of youth who are interested in taking up fishing are female, which represents a prime engagement opportunity for the fishing community.

Hispanic Americans, the nation's largest minority group, represent another opportunity for the

fishing industry to engage new audiences. According to the *U.S. Census*, Hispanics represent 17 percent of the nation's population, but they make up only 10.7 percent of the fishing population. Interestingly, those Hispanics who do fish are avid participants. Current participants average 25.8 annual outings — that is six days more than the average annual outings for all fishing participants.

### **Fishing by Category**

Freshwater is fairly accessible in the United States, which is seen in the overwhelming popularity of freshwater fishing. This type of fishing has more than three times the amount of participants as saltwater fishing, the second most popular fishing type. Freshwater fishing also tends to be the first type of fishing experience for many participants. In addition, freshwater participants make the most outings and have the highest population of youth and female participants. On the flip side, freshwater fishing is the least ethnically diverse when compared to other fishing categories.

Saltwater fishing is the second most popular type of fishing, but with only 11.8 million participants versus freshwater fishing's 37.8 million participants. Saltwater participants skew more male and older than other fishing types. They tend to be concentrated along the southeastern coast of the United States, but since saltwater is less accessible than fresh water, these participants travel the furthest to fish.

Fly fishing is the least popular type of fishing of the three categories, but its participants are the wealthiest and most educated. Fly fishing also has the highest rate of new participants. Almost 13 percent of participants were new to fly fishing in 2014.

### **Fishing Trips**

A majority of fishing trips are spur of the moment ventures — either completely unplanned or mapped out within just a week of the trip.

Fishing is usually the main event, instead of being associated with a larger activity. The fishing party, typically made up of two to five participants, usually fishes from a shoreline, although boats and riverbanks are also popular venues.

### **Future of Fishing**

The future of fishing looks bright. More than 98 percent of current participants look forward to fishing this year, leaving a mere 1.5 percent who do not plan to continue fishing. Additionally, more than half of fishing participants report no barriers standing in the way of their fishing participation.

The fishing industry has numerous outreach opportunities to ensure that its sport remains embedded in America's strong outdoor tradition. In addition to growing participation in underrepresented groups — females and minority groups — engaging America's youth is critical.

The *2015 Special Report on Fishing* confirms the importance of introducing children to fishing and the outdoors. More than 85 percent of current participants fished as young people. These participants hold on to happy childhood memories of fishing, like enjoying their natural environment and spending quality time with friends and family.

By understanding the demographics, motivations and barriers of participants, the industry can better reach America's youngest citizens to help nurture a new generation of fishing enthusiasts. Connecting youth to fishing will ultimately lead to a healthy fishing industry and communities of active, outdoor enthusiasts.



# FISHING

Forty-six million Americans, or 15.8 percent of those ages six and older, participated in fishing in 2014. Since 2013, the number of participants saw a modest bump — increasing by 100,000 people — while the participation rate remained the same.

Fishing participants made a total of 893 million fishing outings and each averaged 19.4 days enjoying the sport. More than five percent of participants had their first fishing experience in 2014.



## 46M Participants

46 million Americans participated in fishing in 2014, up slightly from 45.9 million in 2013.



## Intro to Fishing

Freshwater fishing was the first type of fishing experience for almost 82 percent of participants.

### 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+



## Popularity

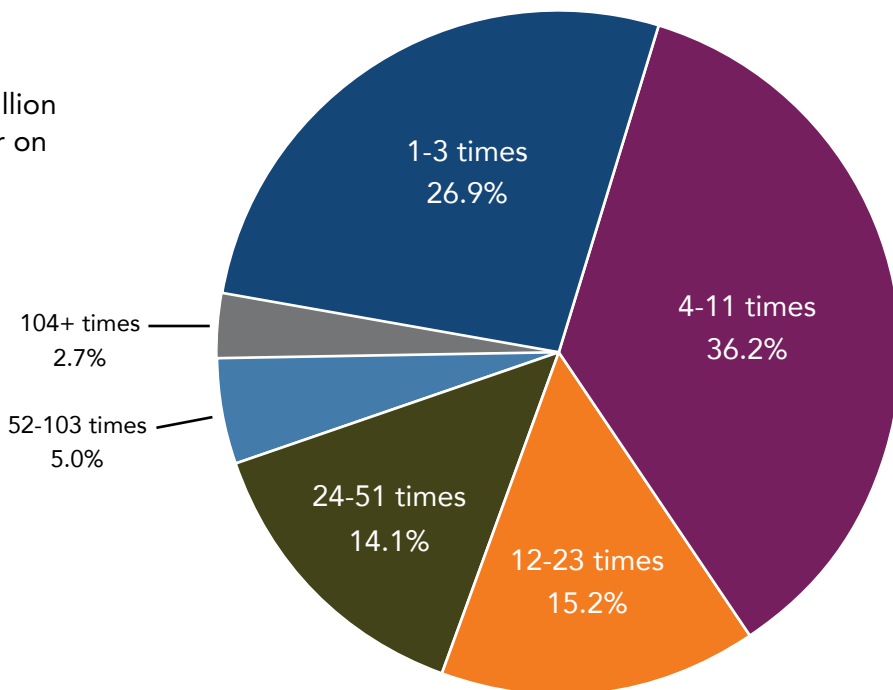
Among adult outdoor participants, fishing is the second most popular outdoor activity.

# Annual Outings

In 2014, fishing participants made 893 million annual outings — either close to home or on an overnight trip.

## 19.4 days

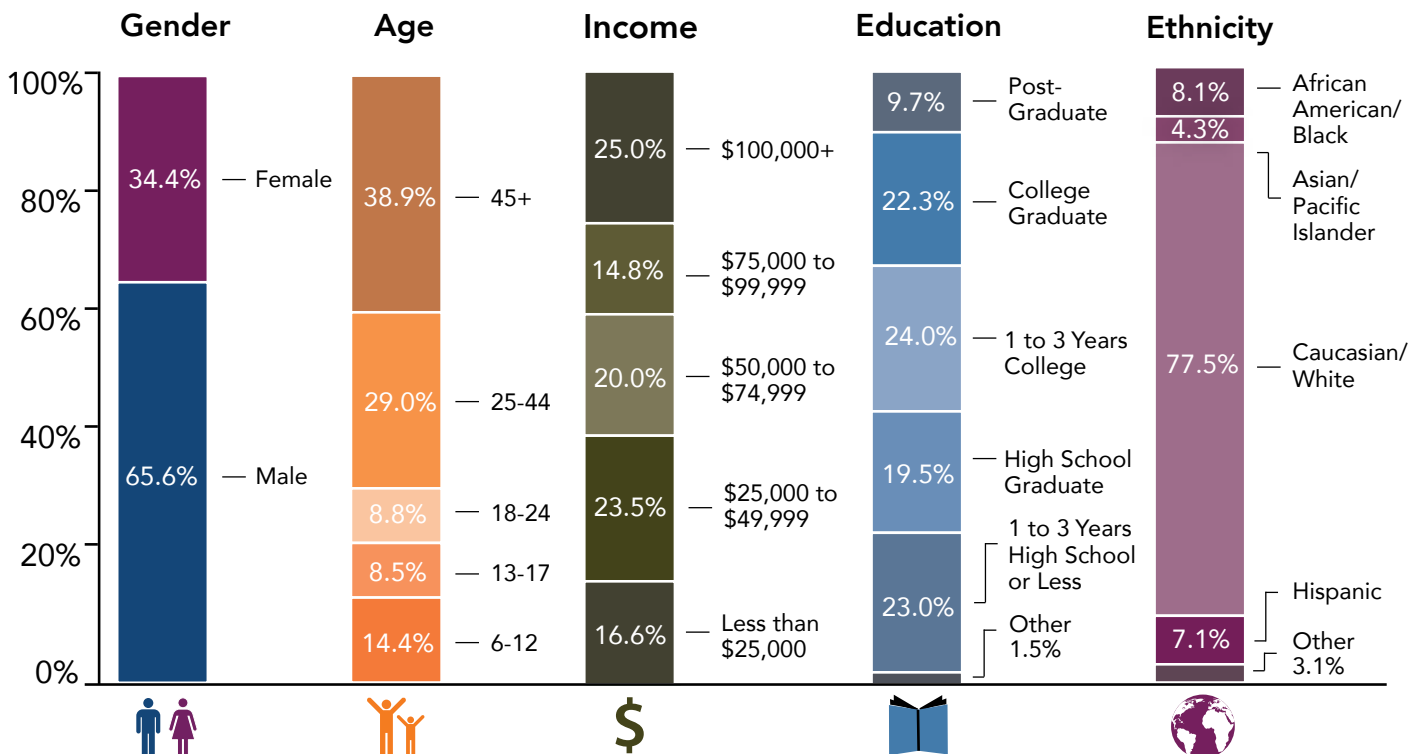
The average number of annual outings per fishing participant in 2014.



Annual Outings  
Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

# Demographics

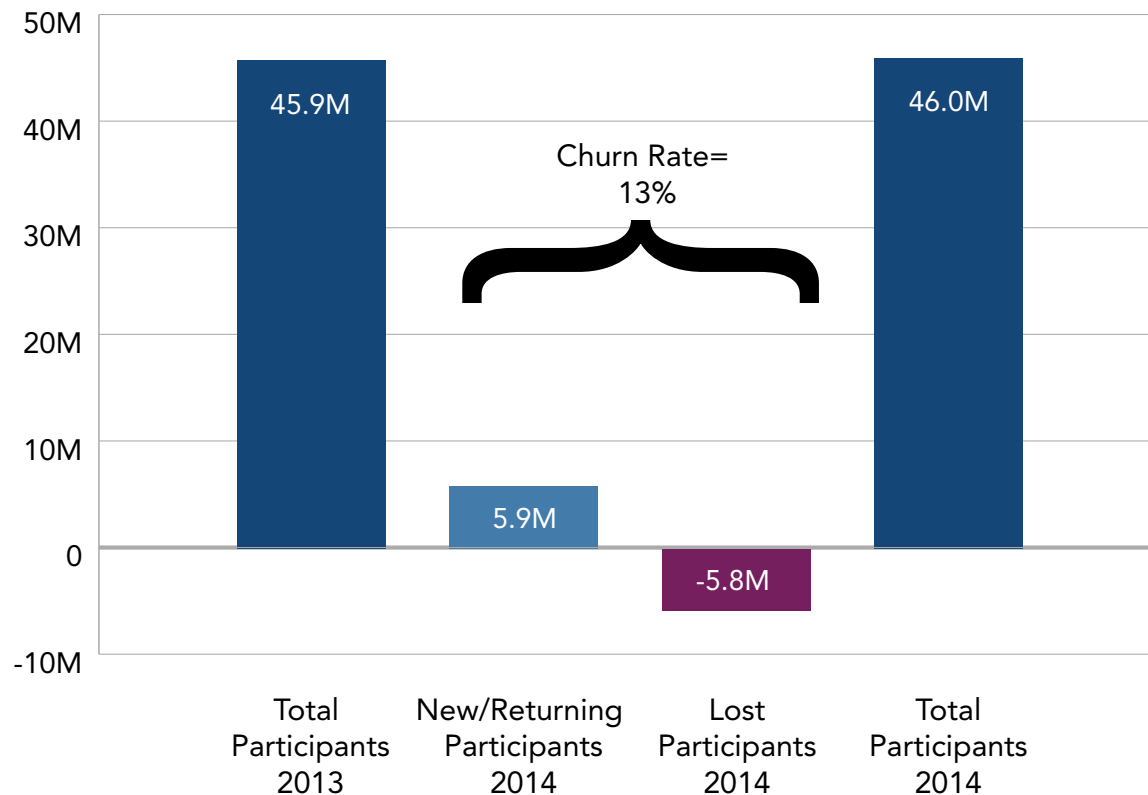
Fishing Participants, Ages 6+



# The Leaky Bucket\*

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

The “Leaky Bucket” explains the gains in fishing participation from 2013 to 2014. While 5.8 million participants left the sport, 5.9 million joined. This equates to a gain of 100,000 fishing participants and a churn rate of 13 percent.



\* Note that the question determining first-time fishing participants changed in 2015. In past years, “new participants” were new, returning to any type of fishing after an absence, or trying a new type of fishing. In 2015, “new participants” had never fished in any fishing type. This change makes the Leaky Bucket data uncomparable to past years.

## Most Popular Adult Outdoor Activities

Outdoor Participants, Ages 25+

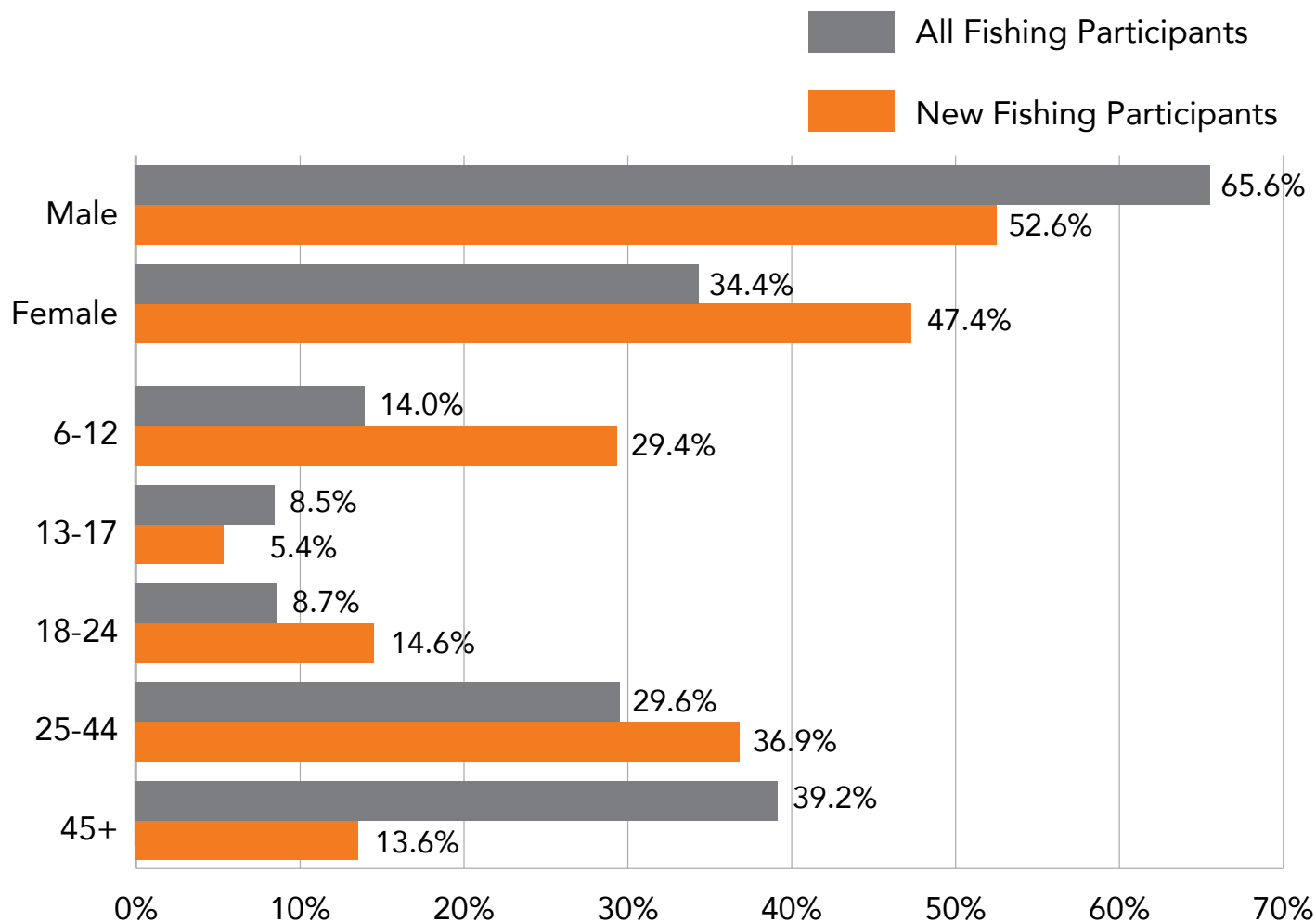
	% of Adults	# of Participants (in millions)
Running, Jogging and Trail Running	15.8%	33.0
Fishing (Fresh, Salt and Fly)	15.0%	31.4
Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX)	12.8%	26.8
Hiking	12.4%	25.9
Camping (Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV)	12.2%	25.5



# Demographics of New Fishing Participants

Participants Who Began Fishing in 2013, Ages 6+

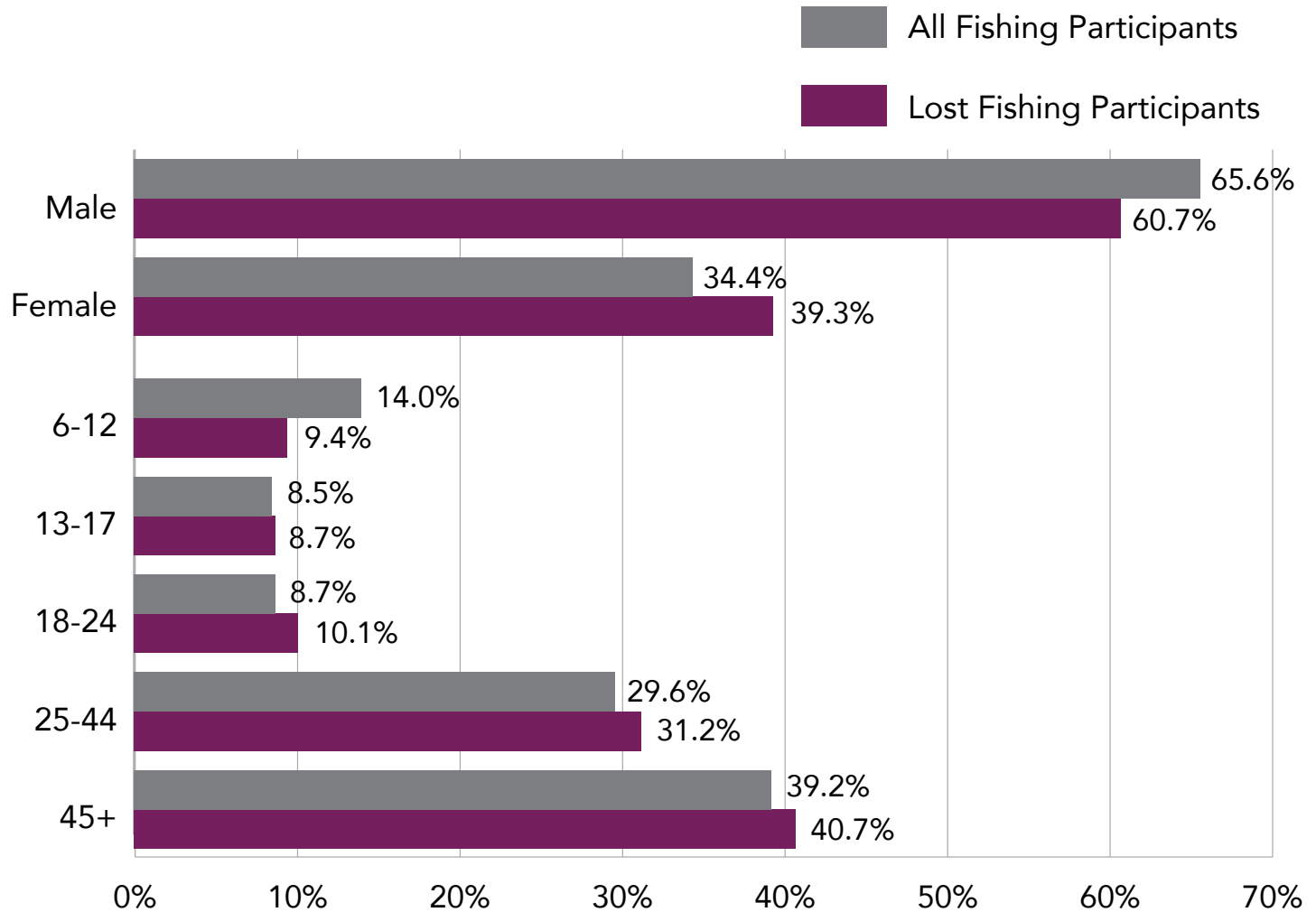
When compared to all fishing participants, new fishing participants include higher percentages of females. The comparison also shows a high percentage of new participants ages six to 12. On the other hand, Americans ages 45 and up are significantly less likely to try fishing than any other age group. Participants ages 45 and up have a fairly high participation rate at 39.2 percent, but the rate for new participants is only 13.6 percent.



# Demographics of Lost Fishing Participants

Participants Who Stopped Fishing in 2013, Ages 6+

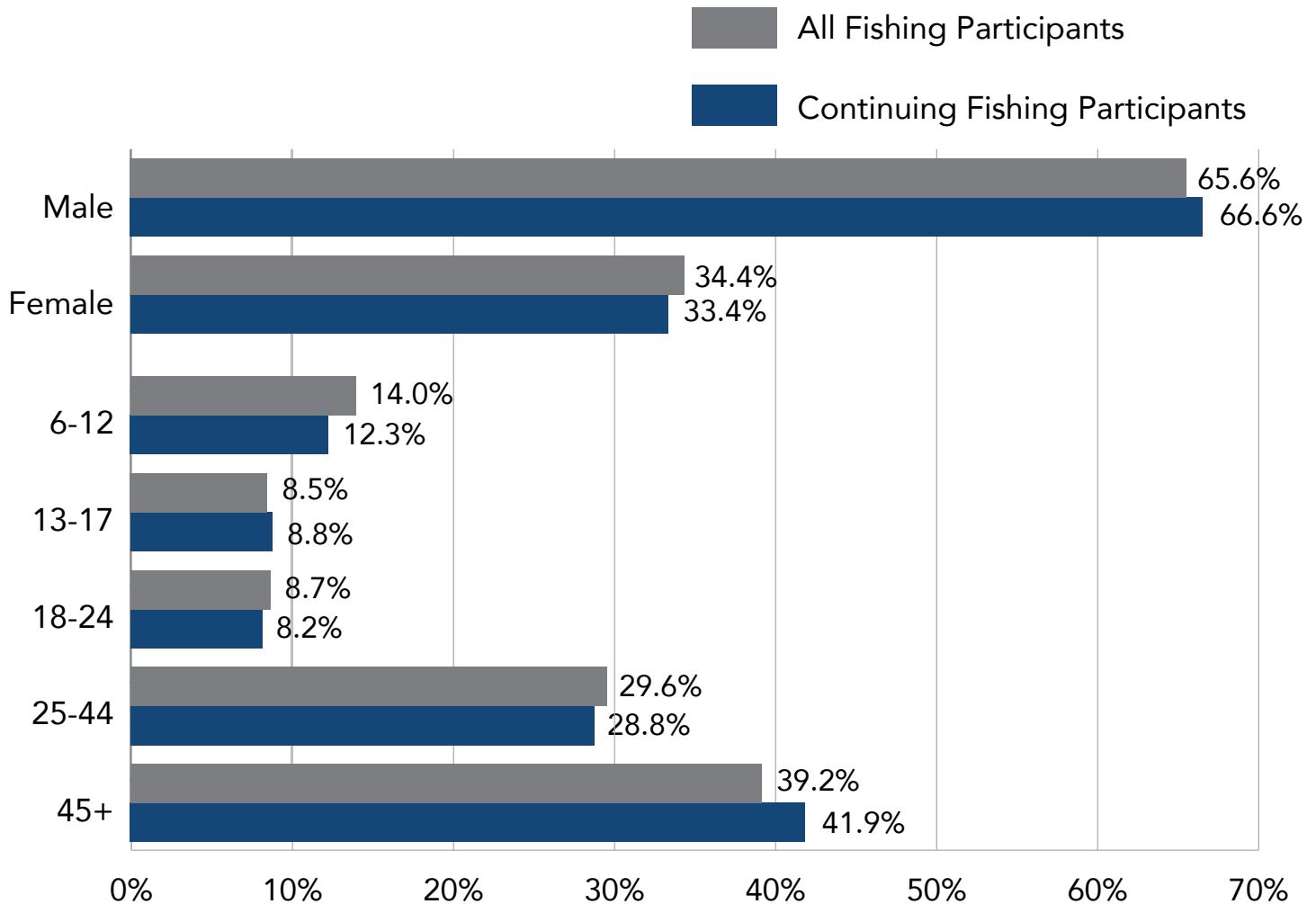
Retention rates are highest among children ages six to 12 and male participants. Although more females than males were new to fishing in 2014, there was more attrition among female participants.



# Demographics of Continuing Fishing Participants

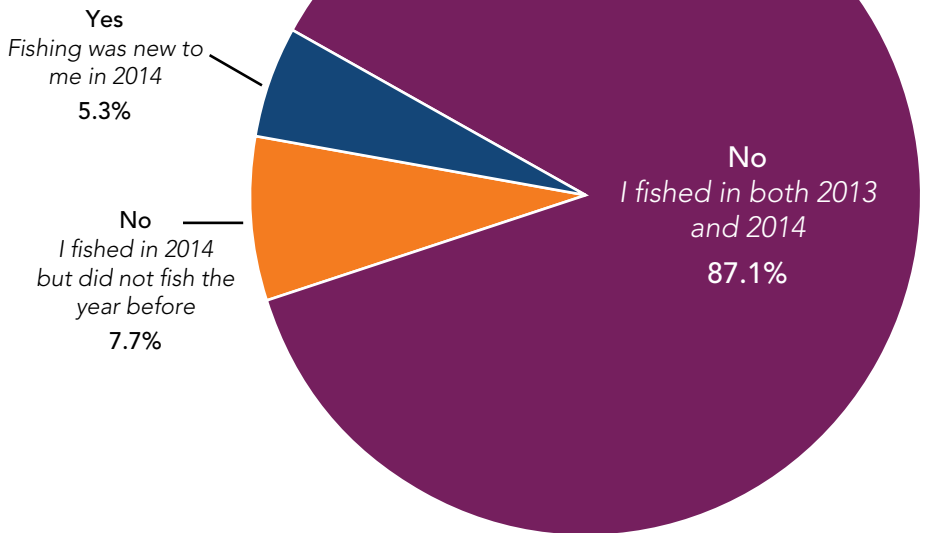
Participants Who Continued Fishing in 2013, Ages 6+

The profile of continuing fishing participants is similar to the profile of all fishing participants, with only slight variations.



## Did you try fishing for the first time in 2014?

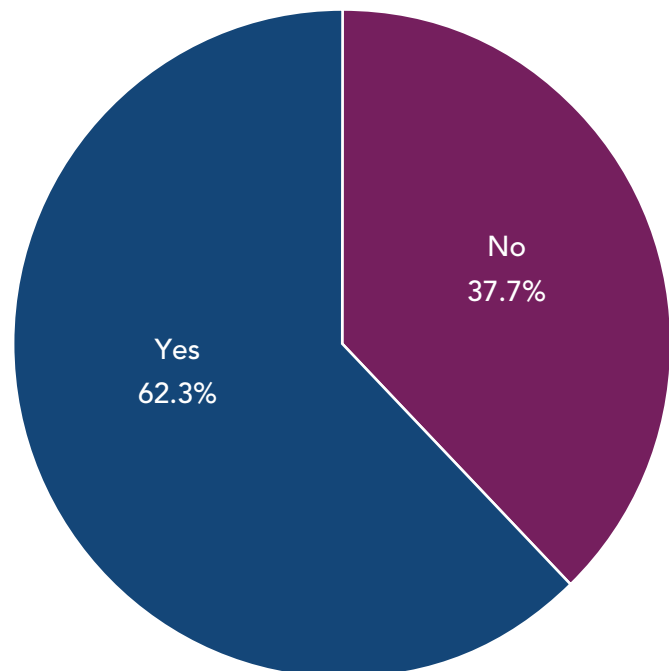
More than five percent of fishing participants, or 2.4 million people, had their very first fishing experience in 2014. Over 87 percent of participants, or 40.1 million people, were already participants and had previously fished, while almost eight percent, or 3.5 million people, had fishing experience but did not participate in 2013.



Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

## If you didn't fish in 2013 or 2014, have you ever been fishing?

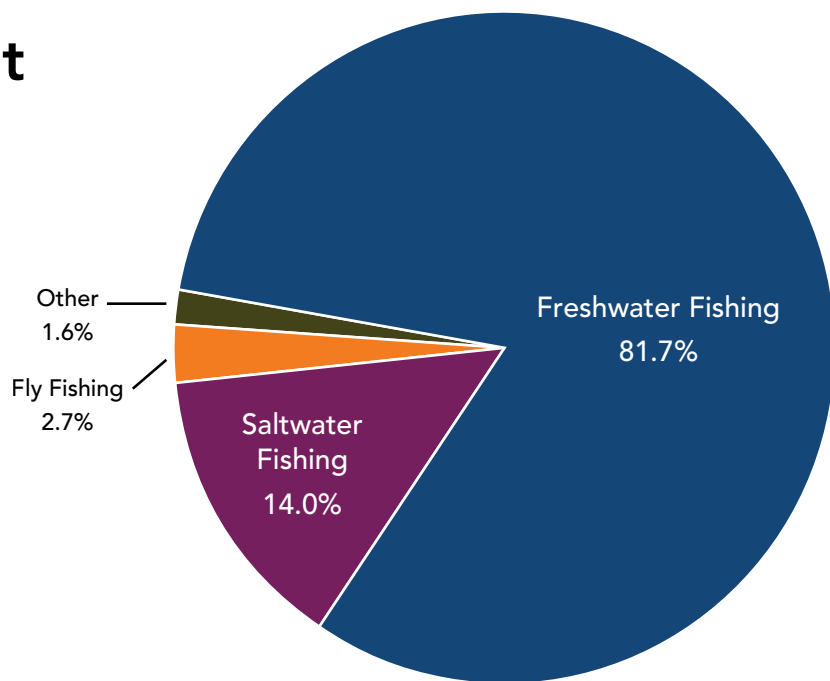
Of those that did not fish in the last two years, more than 62 percent had fished before and almost 38 percent had never fished.



Americans, Ages 6+  
who did not fish in 2013 or 2014

# First Type of Fishing Experience for Current Participants

A majority of participants first fished in freshwater.



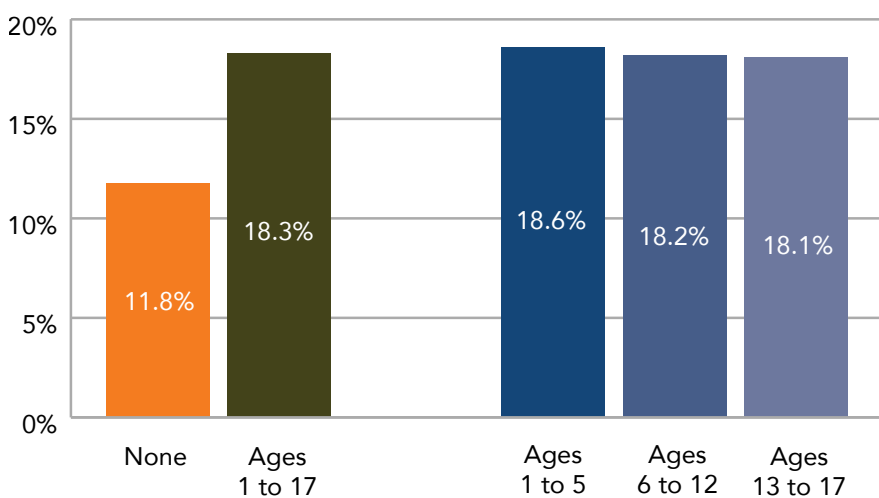
Fishing Participants, Ages 6+ who fished in 2014 and in previous years

# Participation in Fishing Among Adults with Children

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+ With Children in Their Household

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

More than 18 percent of adults with children ages one to 17 in their households participate in fishing, while only 11.8 percent of adults without children participate. Those with younger children participate at slightly higher levels.



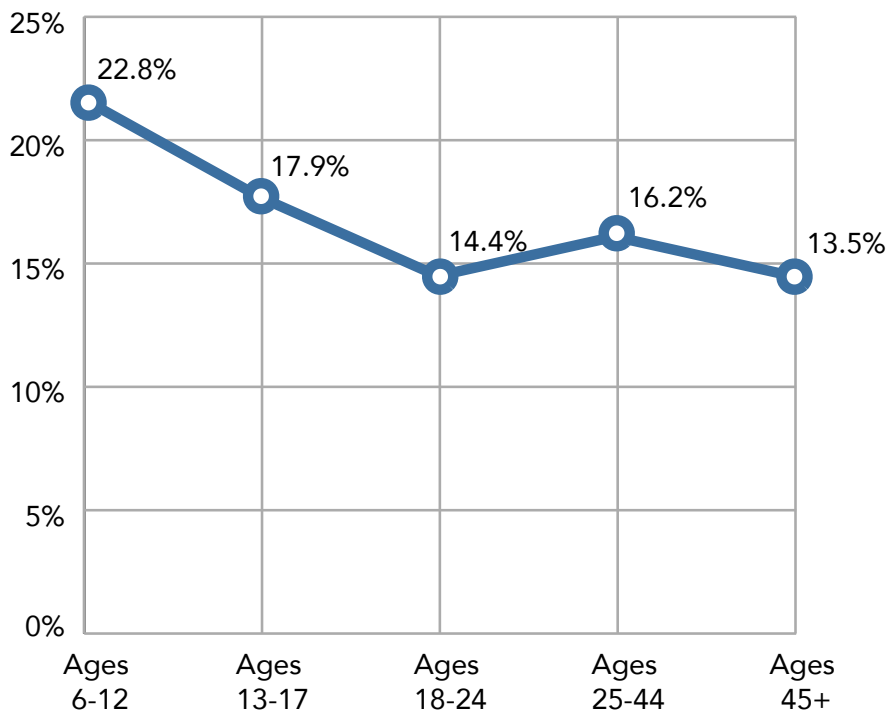
Kids in the Household

# 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 participation is high during childhood, but its popularity declines until adulthood. Participation increases slightly among Americans ages 25 to 44 before declining again.

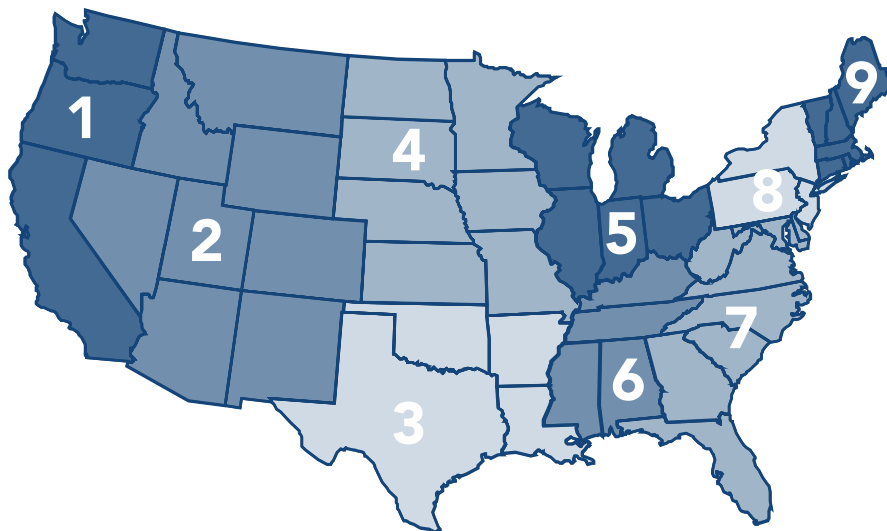


# Geography of Participants

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

## U.S. Census Regions

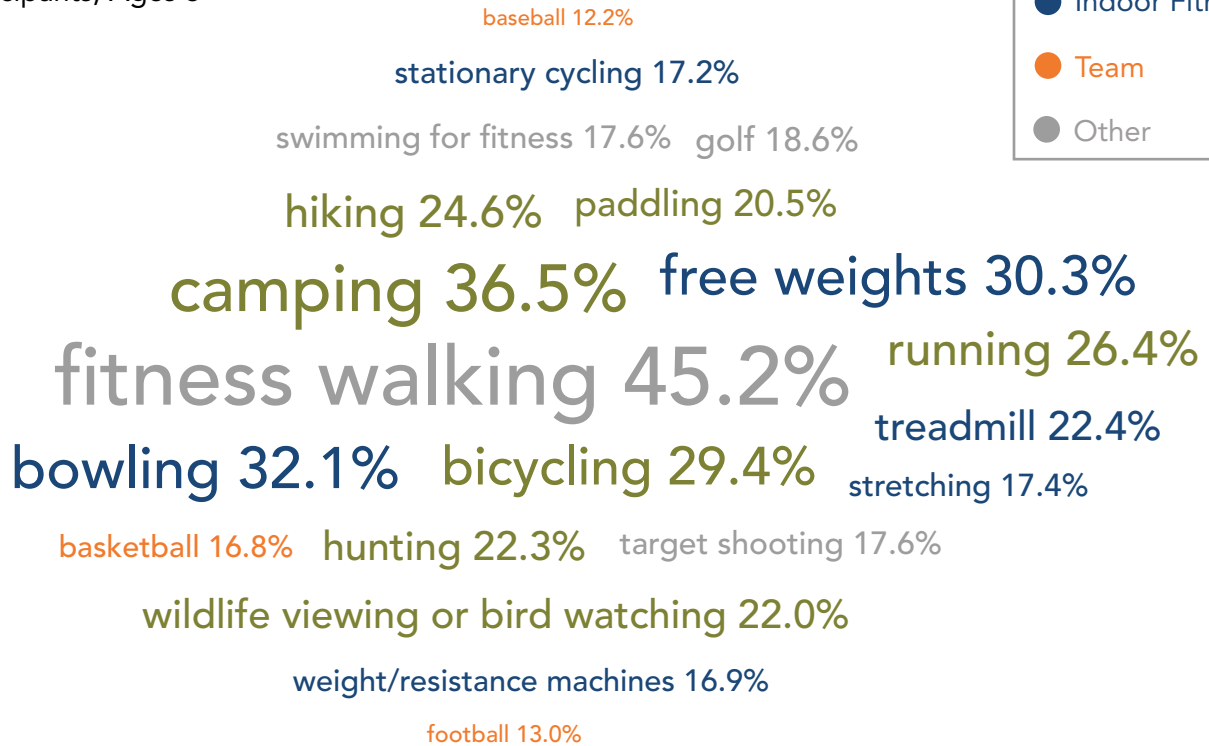
1. Pacific: 11.4%
2. Mountain: 6.4%
3. West South Central: 11.5%
4. West North Central: 9.4%
5. East North Central: 16.8%
6. East South Central: 6.9%
7. South Atlantic: 20.8%
8. Middle Atlantic: 12.6%
9. New England: 4.3%





# Crossover Participation

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+



Note: Data includes top 20 most popular crossover activities.

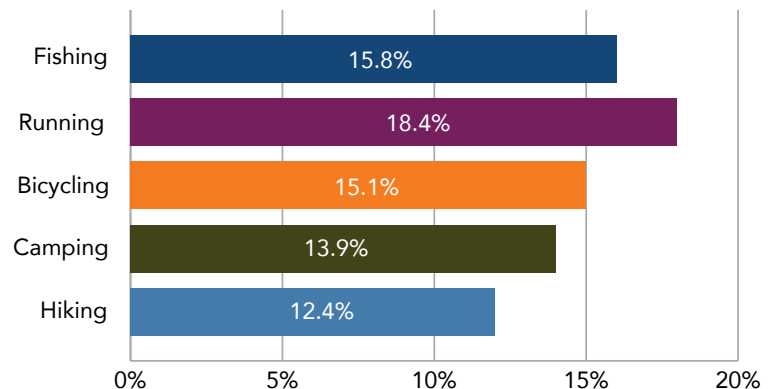
## Fishing: A Gateway to the Outdoors

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 is right behind running as the most popular gateway activity.

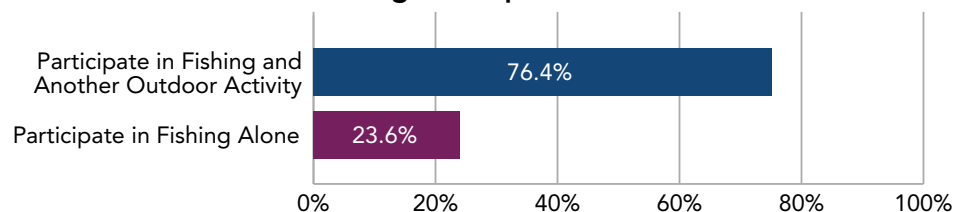
Cementing fishing as one of America’s most beloved gateway activities, more than 76 percent of fishing participants also enjoy other outdoor recreation. A small percentage — 23.6 percent — only participate in fishing.

Participation in the Gateway Activities



Note: All forms of the activity are measured.

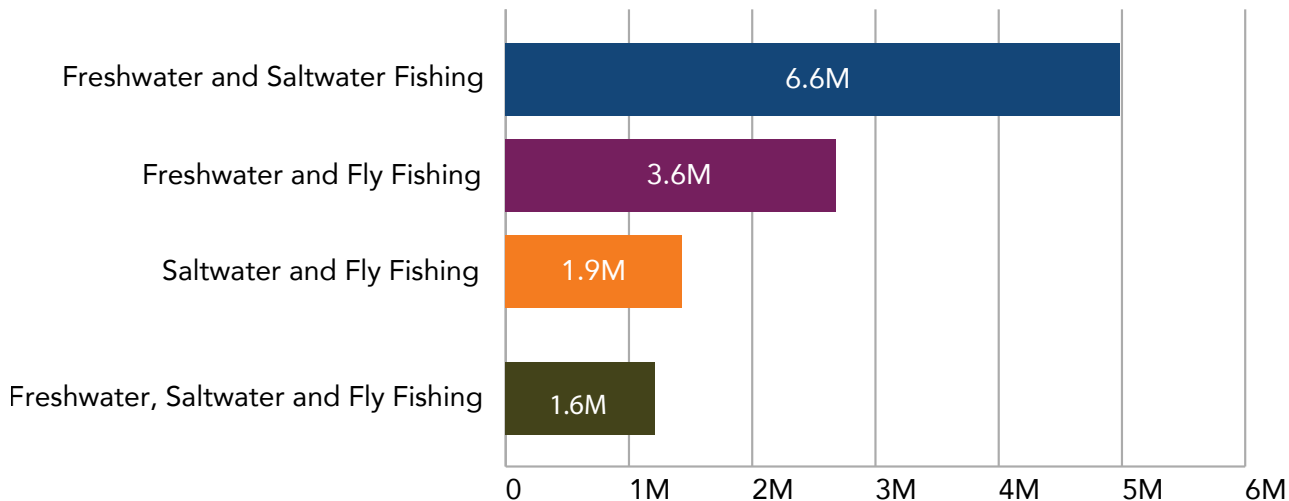
Fishing Participants: Outdoor Enthusiasts



# Overlap in Participation by Fishing Type

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

It is fairly uncommon to participate in more than one type of fishing. The most common overlap is freshwater and saltwater fishing. Out of 46 million total participants, 6.6 million fish in freshwater and saltwater. Only 1.6 million participate in all three types.



## Reason for Participating in Outdoor Recreation

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

Get exercise	63.4%
Be with family/friends	58.9%
Be close to nature	54.0%
Enjoy the sounds/smells of nature	52.7%
Observe scenic beauty	51.0%
Get away from the usual demands	48.8%
Stay physically fit	46.6%
Experience excitement/adventure	42.2%
Be with people who enjoy the same things I do	38.7%
Experience solitude	34.1%
Develop my skills/abilities	32.1%
Gain a sense of accomplishment	24.5%
Be with people who share my values	23.7%
Gain a sense of self-confidence	19.9%
It is cool	19.6%
Talk to new/varied people	12.9%
Other reason	5.9%



# POTENTIAL NEW FISHING PARTICIPANTS

Almost nine percent of Americans who do not currently participate in fishing are considering taking up the sport. As seen in previous years, those interested individuals represent greater diversity than the current fishing population. Although only 34 percent of current fishing participants are female, a higher percentage — almost 46 percent — of those who are interested in fishing are female. Similarly, the ethnic diversity of those interested in fishing is also richer than active fishing participants.

The following pages profile Americans, ages six and older, who do not currently fish but are interested in participating in the activity.

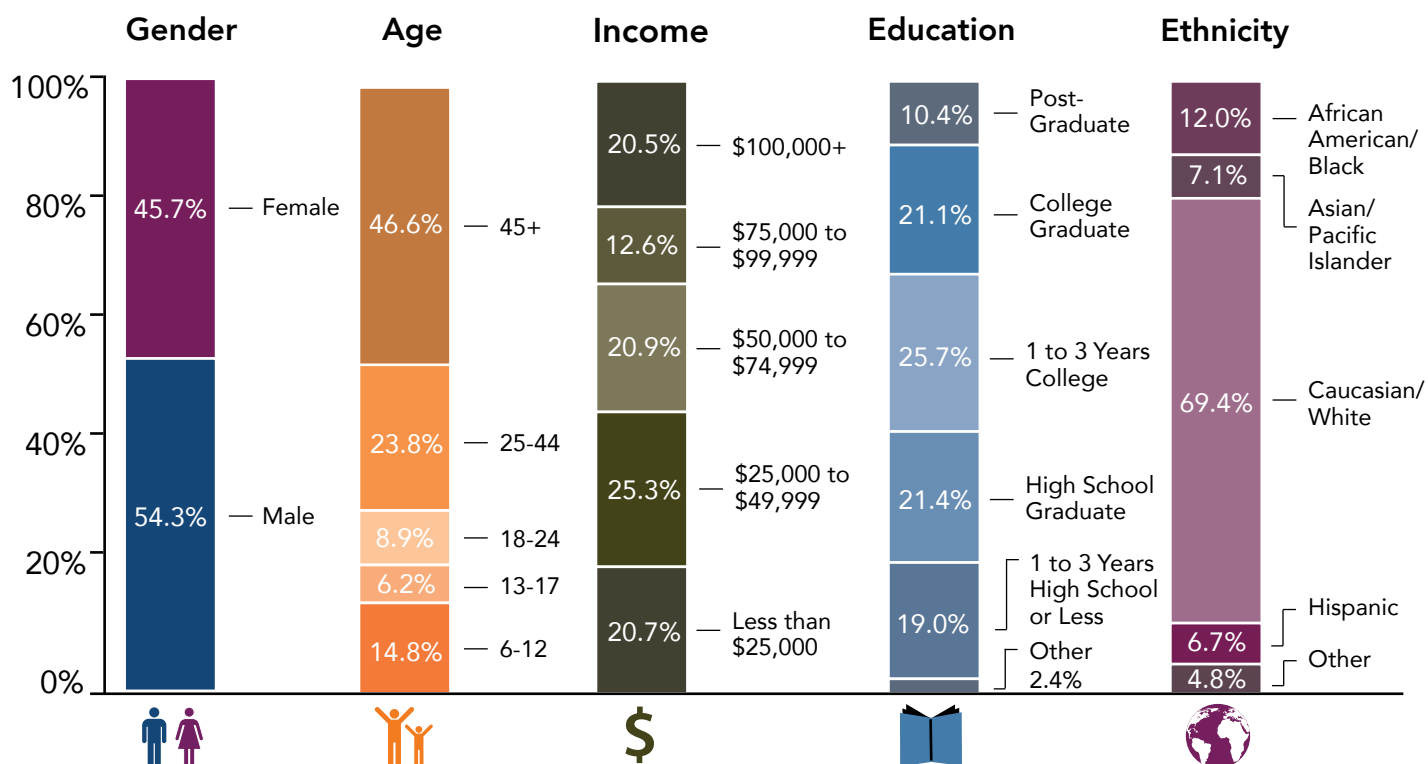


## Older Americans

46.6 percent of those interested in fishing are ages 45 and older.

## Demographics

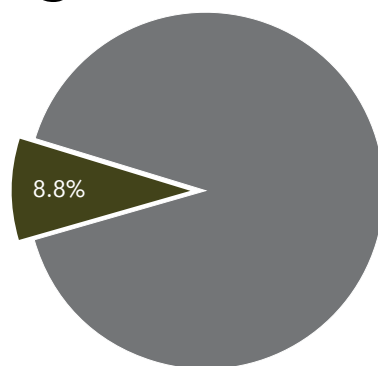
Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+



# Considering Participation in Fishing

Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+

**8.8%** of non-fishing participants, or 21.7 million people, are considering participation in fishing.

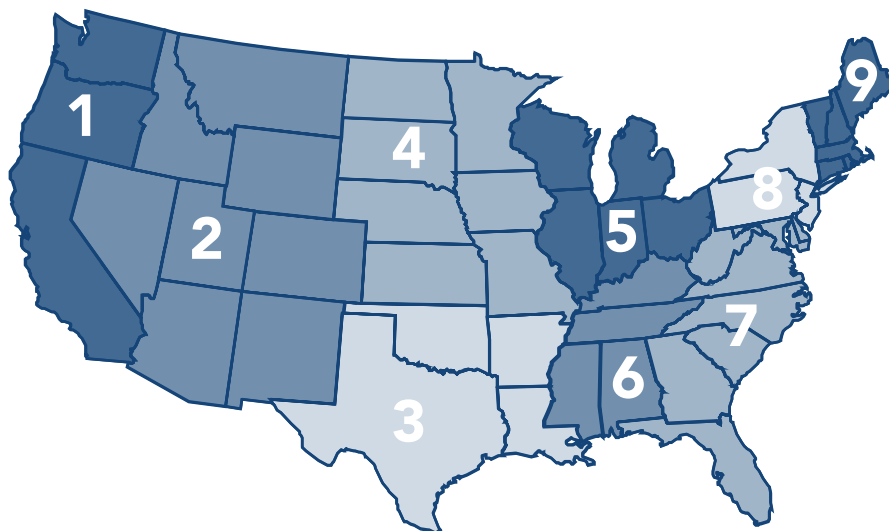


## Geography of Potential Participants

Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+

### U.S. Census Regions

- 1. Pacific: 15.5%
- 2. Mountain: 8.4%
- 3. West South Central: 12.8%
- 4. West North Central: 6.8%
- 5. East North Central: 17.0%
- 6. East South Central: 6.3%
- 7. South Atlantic: 18.7%
- 8. Middle Atlantic: 10.6%
- 9. New England: 4.0%



# FRESHWATER FISHING

At nearly 13 percent participation, freshwater fishing is the most popular form of fishing. These fishing participants also make the most fishing outings with 625 million collective outings, averaging 16.5 days each.

Freshwater fishing has the highest rate of female and youth participation compared to other types of fishing, but it is also the least ethnically diverse. Nearly 80 percent of freshwater fishing participants are Caucasian.

Because freshwater is often easily accessible, participation is fairly spread out across the nation.

## Total Participation

2006	43.1 million participants 16.3 percent of Americans ages 6+
2007	43.9 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+



## Popular

Freshwater fishing is the most popular form of fishing with almost 38 million participants.



## Outings

Freshwater fishing participants made the most outings at 625 million.



## Youth

More than 32 percent of freshwater fishing participants are under age 25, giving it the highest percentage of youth participation.

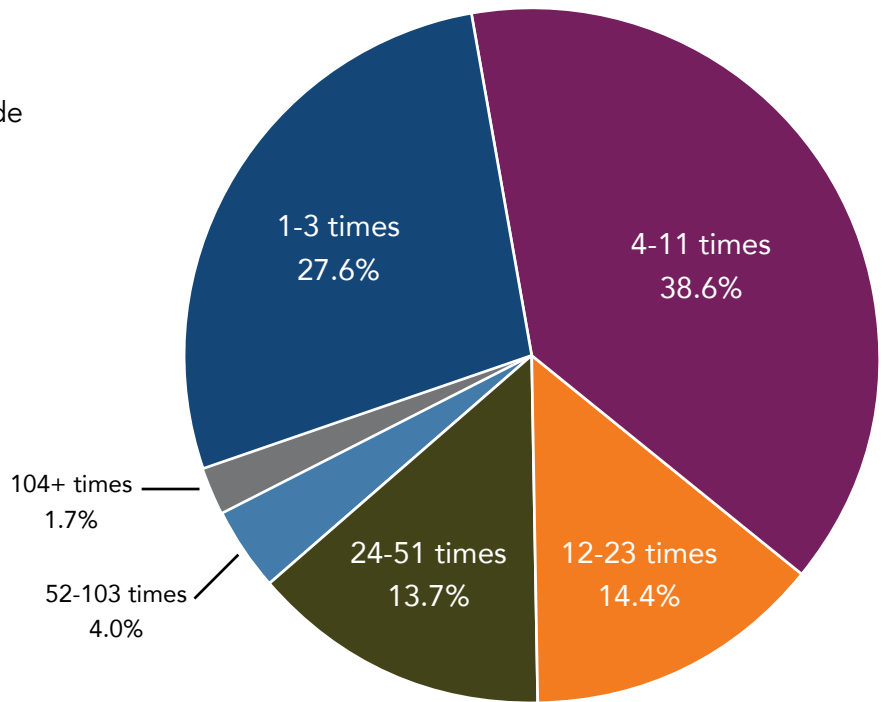


# Annual Outings

In 2014, freshwater fishing participants made 625 million annual outings.

# 16.5 days

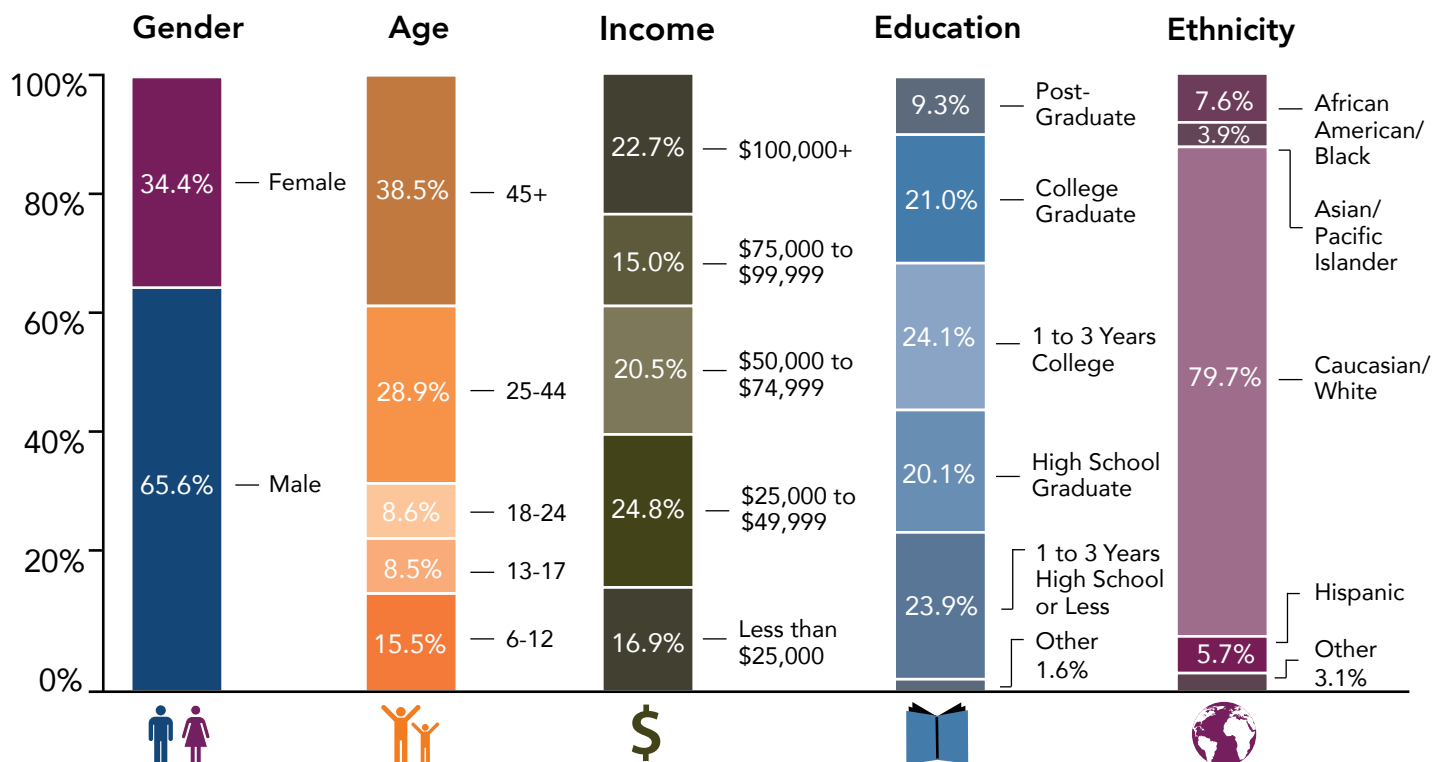
The average number of annual outings per freshwater fishing participant.



Annual Outings  
Freshwater Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Freshwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

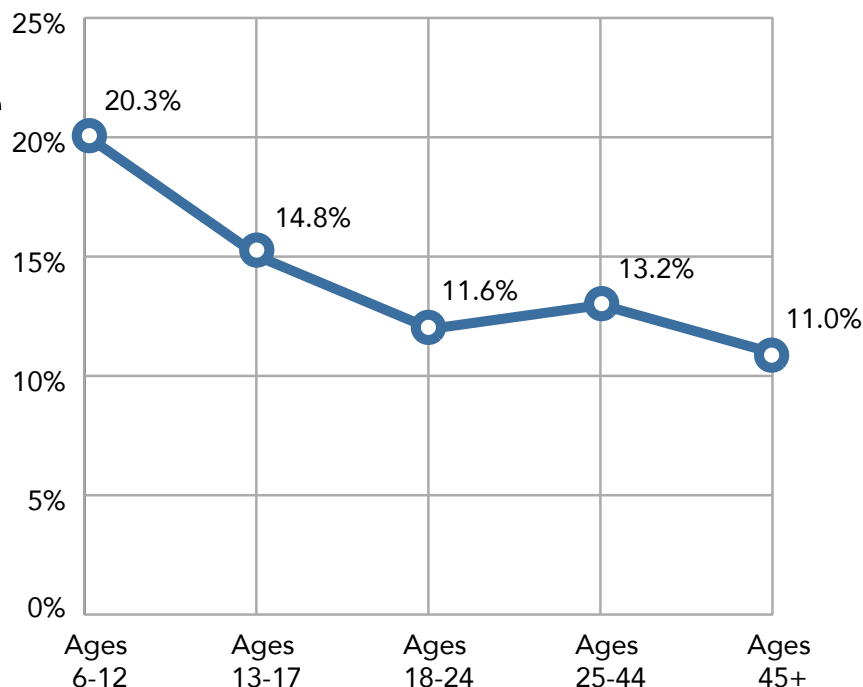


# Freshwater Fishing Participation Life Cycle

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 parallels the life cycle of all fishing. Participation starts high and decreases throughout life, with a small bump during adulthood.

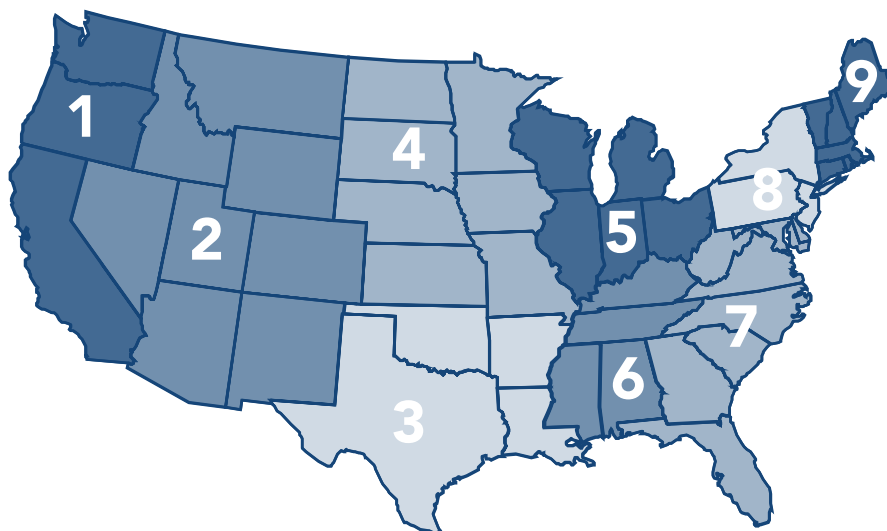


## Geography of Participants

Freshwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

### U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 10.5%
2. Mountain: 6.8%
3. West South Central: 11.3%
4. West North Central: 10.7%
5. East North Central: 18.8%
6. East South Central: 7.5%
7. South Atlantic: 18.6%
8. Middle Atlantic: 11.5%
9. New England: 4.2%

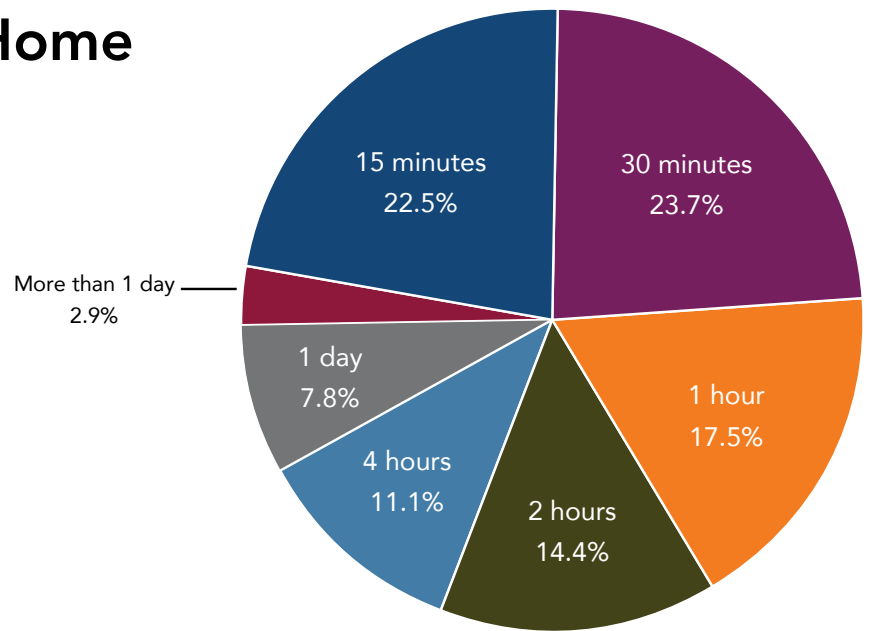


# Time Traveled from Home

Freshwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

Based on 2010 data

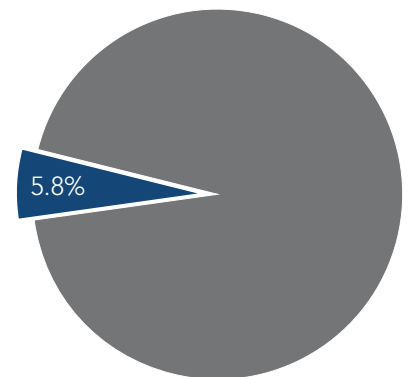
Freshwater fishing participants can travel anywhere from a few minutes to a few days from home to go fishing. Surveying the time freshwater participants traveled on their last in-season freshwater fishing trip reveals how far they usually travel and how often fishing leads them on more distant excursions.



Time Participants Traveled from Home on Their Last In-Season Freshwater Fishing Trip  
Ages 6+

## First-Time Participants

**5.8%** of freshwater fishing participants, or 2.2 million people, tried the sport for the first time in 2014.



Freshwater Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# SALTWATER FISHING

Saltwater fishing is the second most popular type of fishing. The sport engaged 11.8 million participants, or four percent of Americans, in 2014. Saltwater fishing participants skew male and tend to be older than freshwater and fly fishing participants.

Saltwater participants typically live along the southeastern coast of the United States and travel the furthest to find the perfect fishing spot.

## 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+



## Most Male

Nearly 70 percent of saltwater fishing participants are male, making it the most male-dominated type of fishing.



## South Atlantic

More than 35 percent of saltwater fishing participants live along the southeastern coast, a significantly higher percentage than any other region.



## Oldest

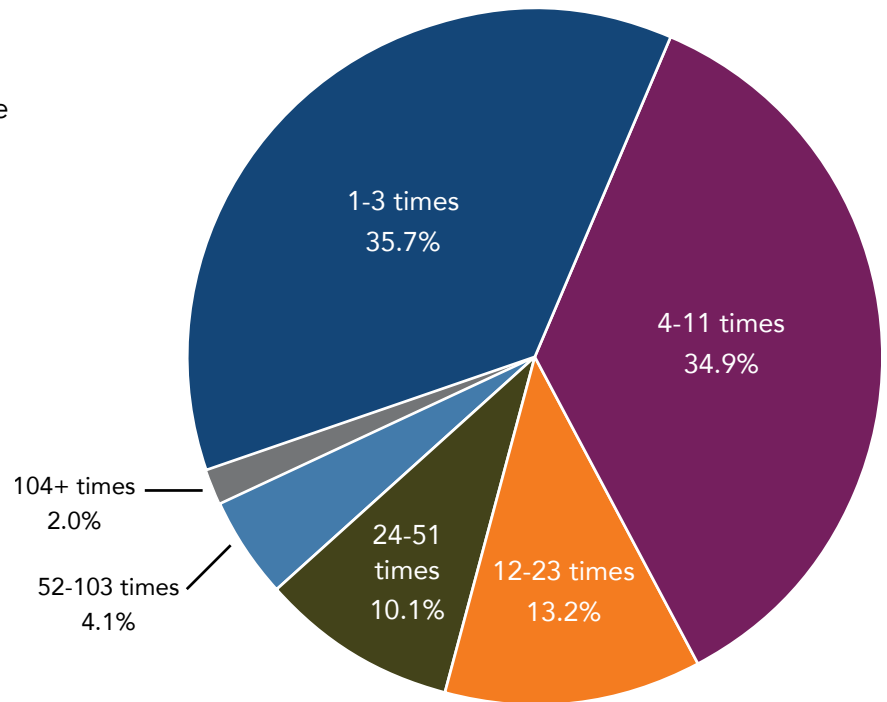
More than 46 percent of saltwater fishing participants are ages 45 or older, making its participants the oldest.

# Annual Outings

In 2014, saltwater fishing participants made 189 million annual outings.

# 16.0 days

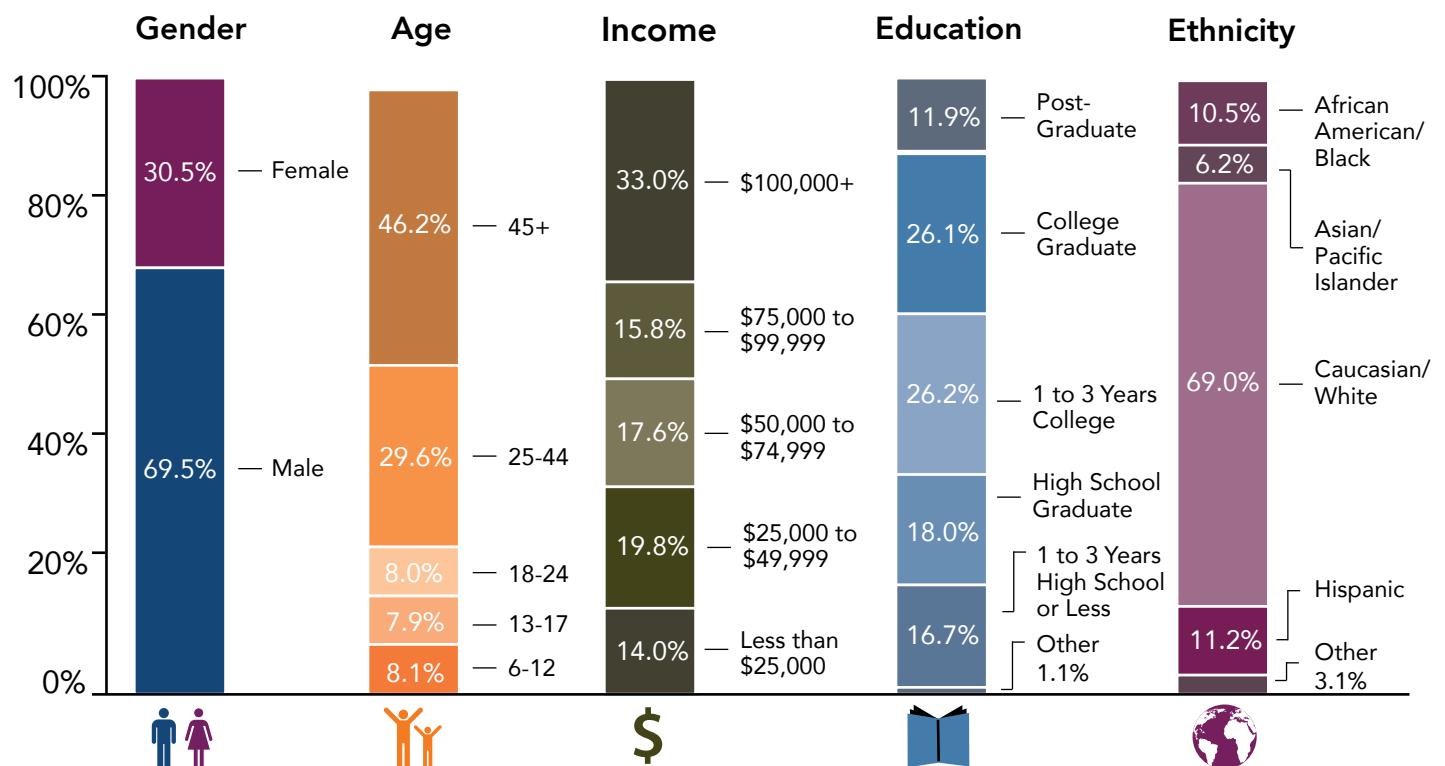
The average number of annual outings per saltwater fishing participant in 2014.



Annual Outings  
Saltwater Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Saltwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

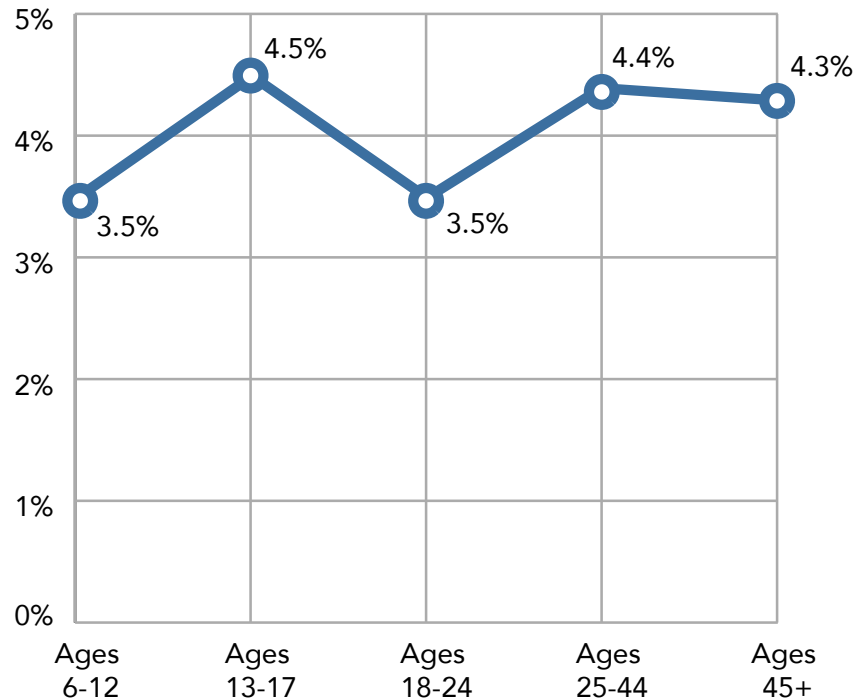


# Saltwater Fishing Participation Life Cycle

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.

Unlike patterns seen in many other outdoor activities, saltwater fishing participation rates start relatively low and grow during adolescence. After dipping during young adulthood, rates climb again during adulthood.

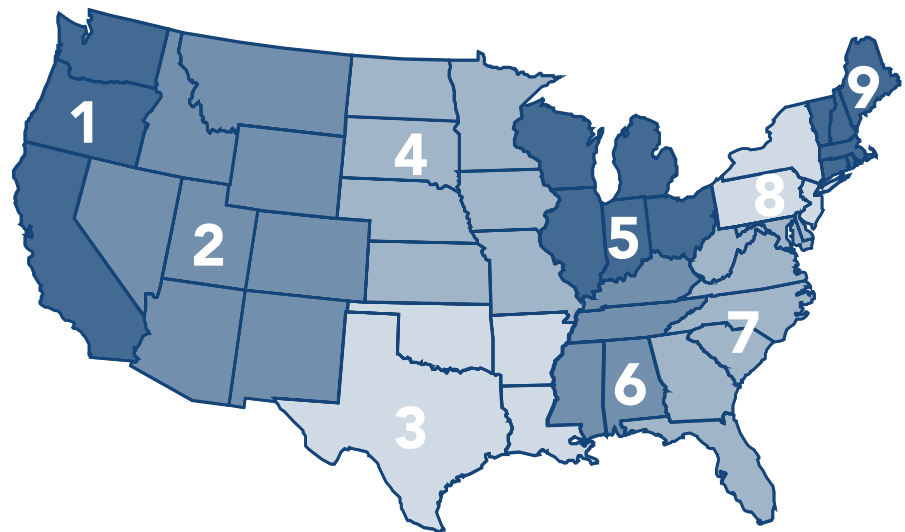


## Geography of Participants

Saltwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

### U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 16.6%
2. Mountain: 2.1%
3. West South Central: 13.5%
4. West North Central: 2.2%
5. East North Central: 5.1%
6. East South Central: 4.4%
7. South Atlantic: 35.6%
8. Middle Atlantic: 14.7%
9. New England: 5.8%

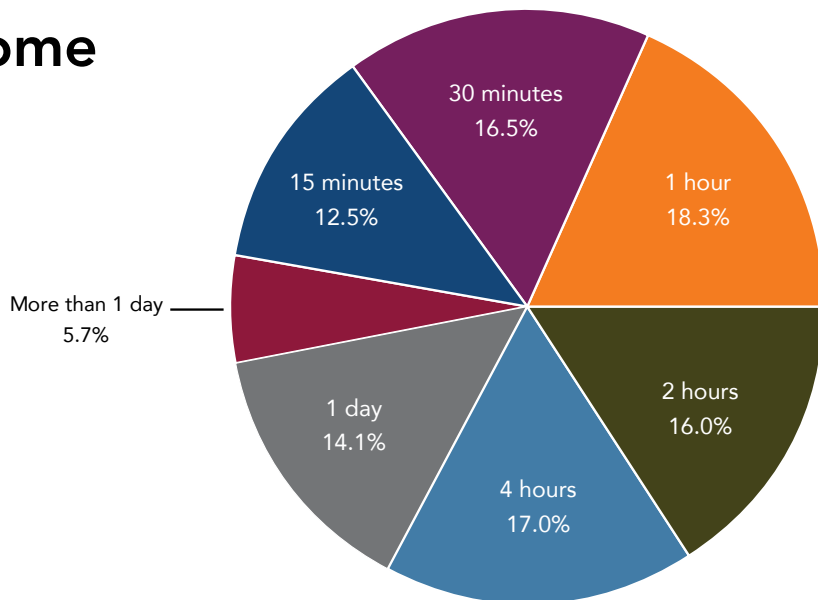




# Time Traveled from Home

Based on 2010 data

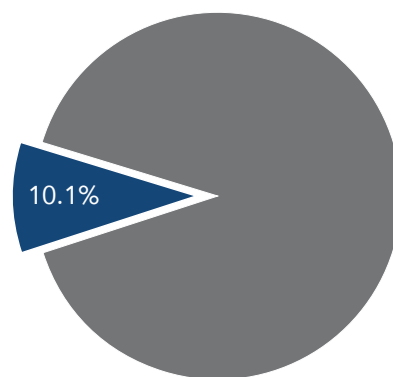
Saltwater fishing participants can travel anywhere from a few minutes to a few days from home to go fishing. Surveying the time saltwater participants traveled on their last in-season saltwater fishing trip reveals how far they usually travel and how often fishing leads them on more distant excursions.



Time Participants Traveled from Home on Their Last In-Season Saltwater Fishing Trip, Ages 6+

# First-Time Participants

**10.1%** of saltwater fishing participants, or 1.2 million people, tried the sport for the first time in 2014.



Saltwater Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

# FLY FISHING

With 5.8 million participants, or two percent of Americans, fly fishing is the least popular of the three fishing types. Fly fishing, however, attracts the wealthiest and most educated participants.

As seen in previous years, fly fishing also has the highest number of first-time participants. Almost 13 percent of participants tried fly fishing for the first time in 2014.

Like saltwater fishing, fly fishing is also most popular in the South Atlantic 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+



## Wealthiest

Fly fishing participants are the wealthiest by a slight margin.



## New Participants

Almost 13 percent of fly fishing participants were new to the sport in 2014.



## Most Educated

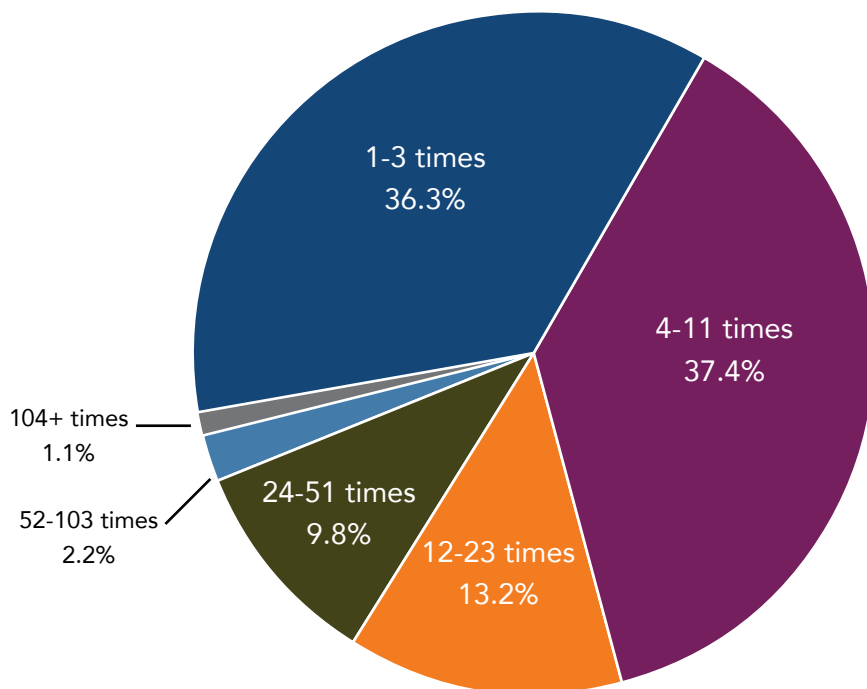
Nearly 44 percent of fly fishing participants have a college or post-graduate degree.

# Annual Outings

In 2014, fly fishing participants made 79 million annual outings.

## 13.6 days

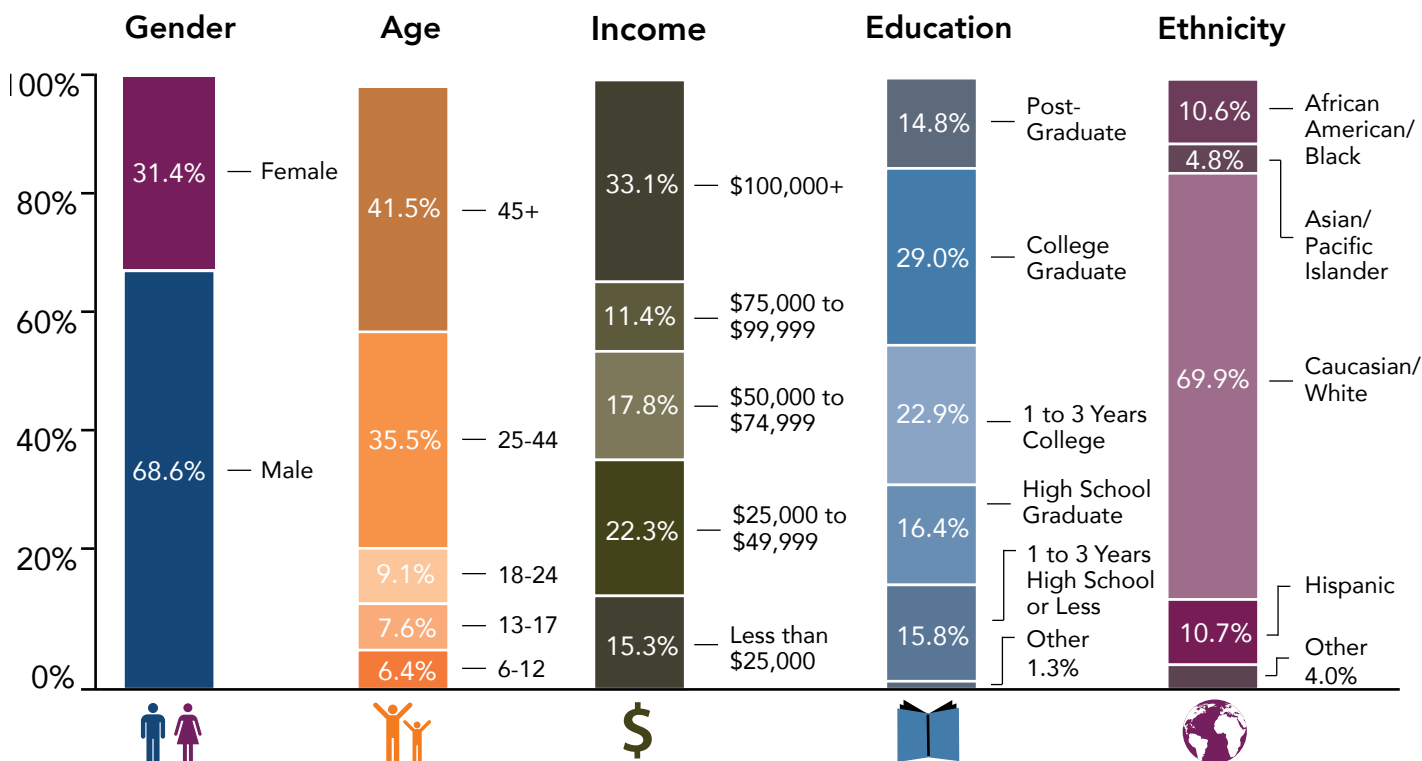
The average number of annual outings per fly fishing participant.



Annual Outings  
Fly Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Fly Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

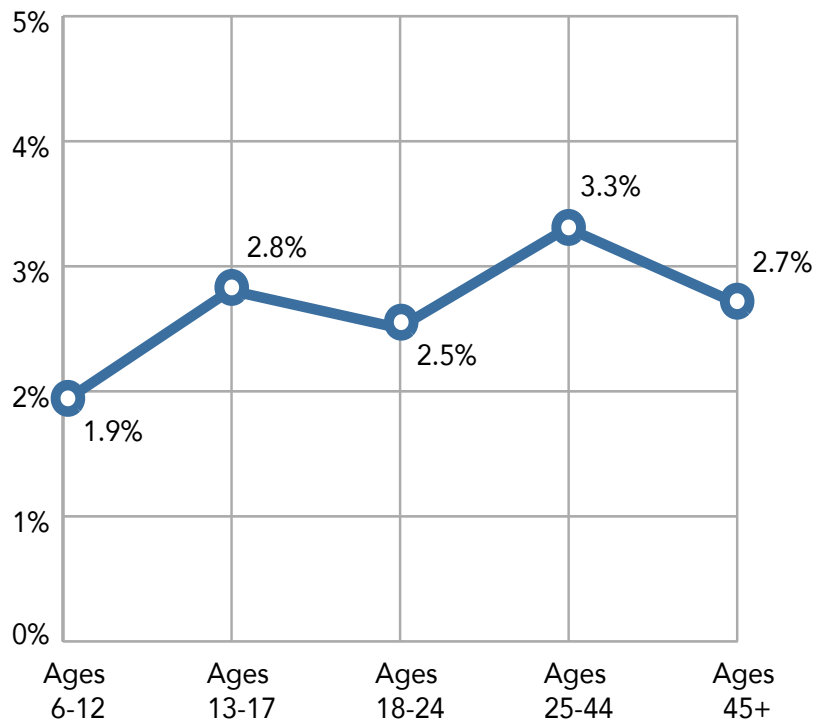


# Fly Fishing Participation Life Cycle

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 starts low during childhood and grows, only dipping during young adulthood and among those 45 and older.

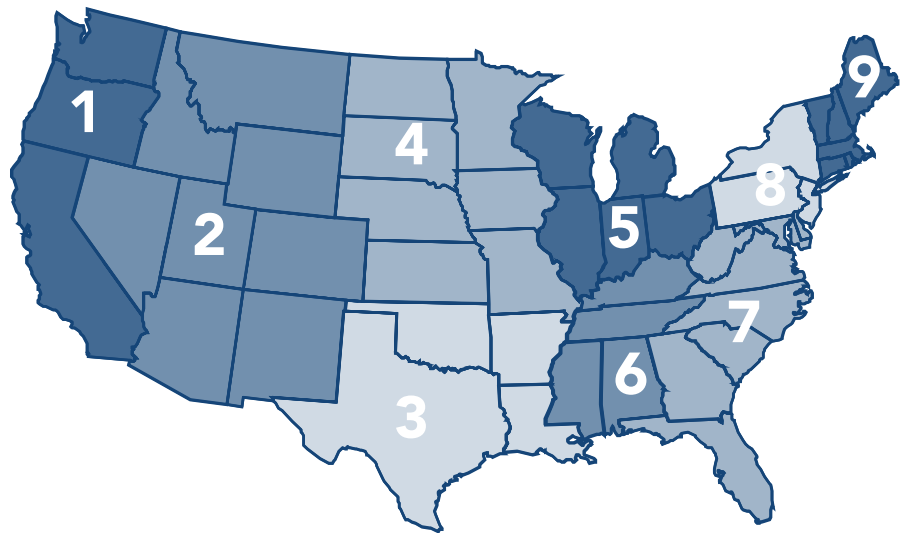


## Geography of Participants

Fly Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

### U.S. Census Regions

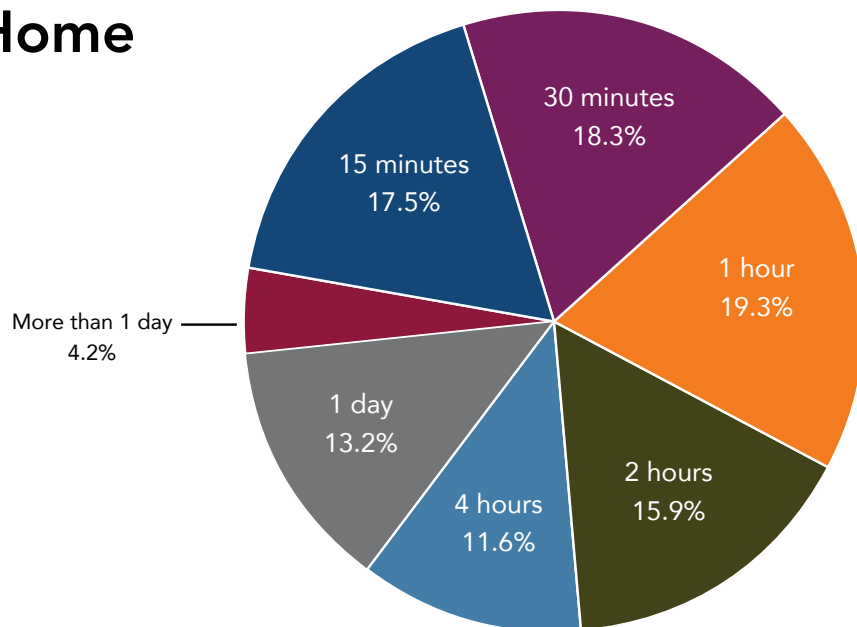
1. Pacific: 18.1%
2. Mountain: 6.2%
3. West South Central: 12.1%
4. West North Central: 6.1%
5. East North Central: 11.9%
6. East South Central: 4.3%
7. South Atlantic: 22.3%
8. Middle Atlantic: 16.0%
9. New England: 3.0%



# Time Traveled from Home

Based on 2010 data

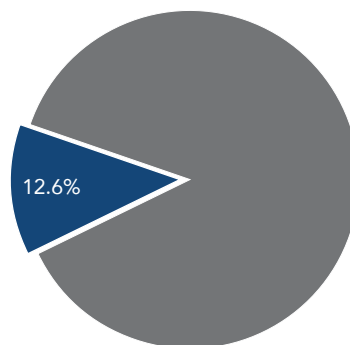
Fly fishing participants can travel anywhere from a few minutes to a few days from home to go fishing. Surveying the time fly fishing participants traveled on their last in-season fly fishing trip reveals how far they usually travel and how often fishing leads them on more distant excursions.



Time Participants Traveled from Home on Their Last In-Season Fly Fishing Trip, Ages 6+

## First-Time Participants

**12.6%** of fly fishing participants, or 700,000 people, tried the sport for the first time in 2014.



Fly Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

# YOUTH

There is a gap between male and female fishing participation during childhood and adolescence. During childhood, boys participate at a rate 11-percentage points higher than girls. During adolescence, there is an even larger 13.2-percentage point gap.



## Boys

Among youth, boys, ages six to 12, have the highest fishing participation rate at more than 28 percent.

## 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



## Family & Friends

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



## Biking

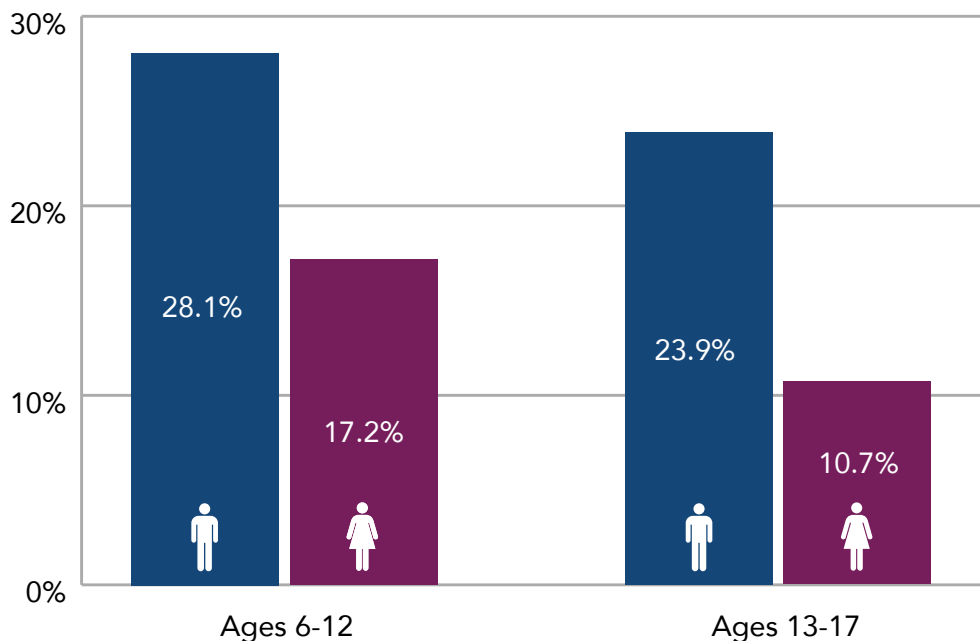
More than 45 percent of youth fishing participants also participate in biking, making it the most popular crossover activity.



# Youth Participation in Fishing by Gender

All Americans, Ages 6-17

There is a significant gap between female and male participation in fishing. During childhood, an almost 11-percentage point gap exists, and during adolescence, the gap widens to more than 13-percentage points. Overall, participation decreases from childhood to adolescence.



## Crossover Participation

Fishing Participants, Ages 6-17

### Outdoor Activities

1. Road, Mountain or BMX Bicycling 45.2%
2. Car, Backyard or RV Camping 41.7%
3. Running, Jogging or Trail Running 28.4%
4. Hiking 22.7%
5. Paddling 20.2%

### Indoor Fitness Activities

1. Free Weights 18.3%
2. Calisthenics 12.5%
3. Treadmill 11.0%
4. Stretching 10.7%
5. Weight/Resistance Machines 9.3%

### Team Sports

1. Basketball 28.7%
2. Baseball 24.8%
3. Soccer 23.6%
4. Football 22.4%
5. Softball 9.4%

### Other Activities

1. Bowling 39.2%
2. Fitness Walking 23.9%
3. Swimming for Fitness 17.8%
4. Table Tennis 13.4%
5. Ice Skating 13.2%



# Reason for Participating in Outdoor Recreation

## Fishing Participants, Ages 6-17

A majority of youth, ages six to 17, are motivated to get outdoors because it is an opportunity to spend time with friends and family. The second most popular motivator among children, ages six to 12, is getting exercise, while the older age cohort, adolescents ages 13 to 17, want to be with people who enjoy the same things that they do.

	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-17
Be with family/friends	72.4%	66.8%
Get exercise	55.5%	57.7%
Experience excitement/adventure	50.4%	47.0%
Be with people who enjoy the same things I do	43.0%	59.9%
Develop my skills/abilities	37.1%	48.3%
It is cool	36.9%	32.3%
Enjoy the sounds/smells of nature	32.0%	46.2%
Be close to nature	27.9%	44.3%
Keep physically fit	26.4%	44.6%
Gain a sense of accomplishment	24.6%	32.4%
Observe scenic beauty	22.0%	38.2%
Gain a sense of self-confidence	21.1%	30.7%
Be with people who share my values	12.9%	32.0%
Get away from the usual demands	11.8%	37.6%
Experience solitude	7.9%	15.5%
Talk to new/varied people	7.1%	14.1%
Other reason	8.0%	3.0%

# 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 do not participate in fishing but are interested in the sport.

Almost 11 percent of youth who do not fish are considering participation. These youth tend to be located in the South Atlantic, East North Central or Pacific regions of the United States.

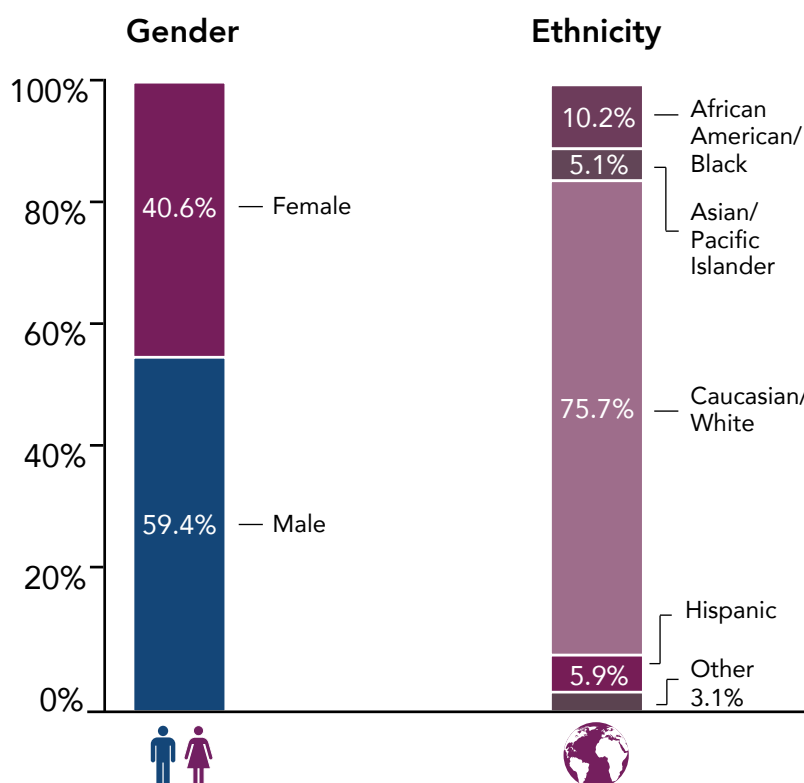


## Future Participants

Almost 11 percent of youth would like to try fishing, a growth opportunity for the industry.

## Demographics

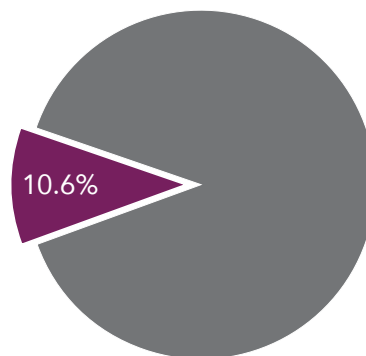
Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6-17



# Youth Considering Participation in Fishing

Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6-17

**10.6%** of the youth population, or 4.3 million people, ages six to 17, are considering participation in fishing.

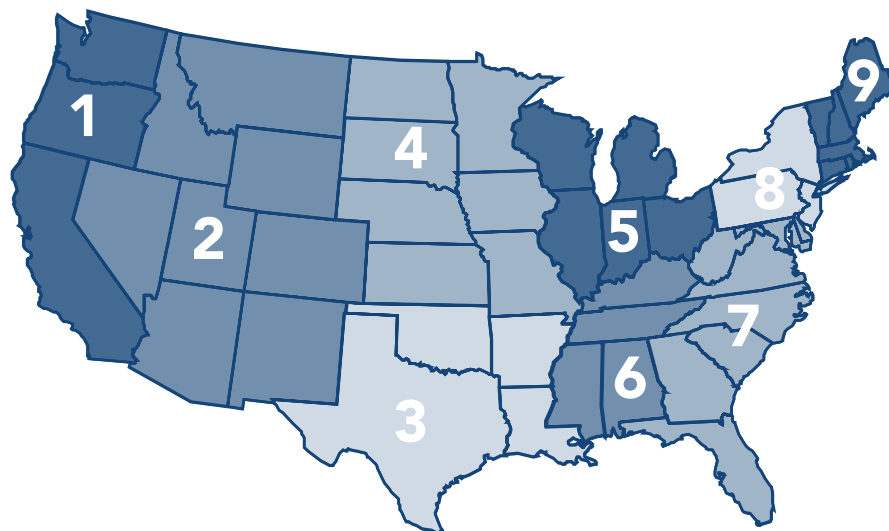


## Geography of Potential Participants

Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6-17

### U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 9.9%
2. Mountain: 6.9%
3. West South Central: 13.3%
4. West North Central: 7.9%
5. East North Central: 21.7%
6. East South Central: 8.0%
7. South Atlantic: 17.9%
8. Middle Atlantic: 9.3%
9. New England: 5.1%



# HISPANICS

Of the 13.8 percent of Hispanic Americans who participate in fishing, 9.2 percent participate in freshwater fishing. Hispanics tend to be avid participants, spending an average of 25.8 days on fishing outings. This is more than six days above the average annual outings for all fishing participants.

## 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



## Ages 25+

Adults, ages 25+, make up more than 64 percent of Hispanic fishing participants.



## Pacific

The highest concentration of Hispanic American fishing participants is in the Pacific region.



## Exercise

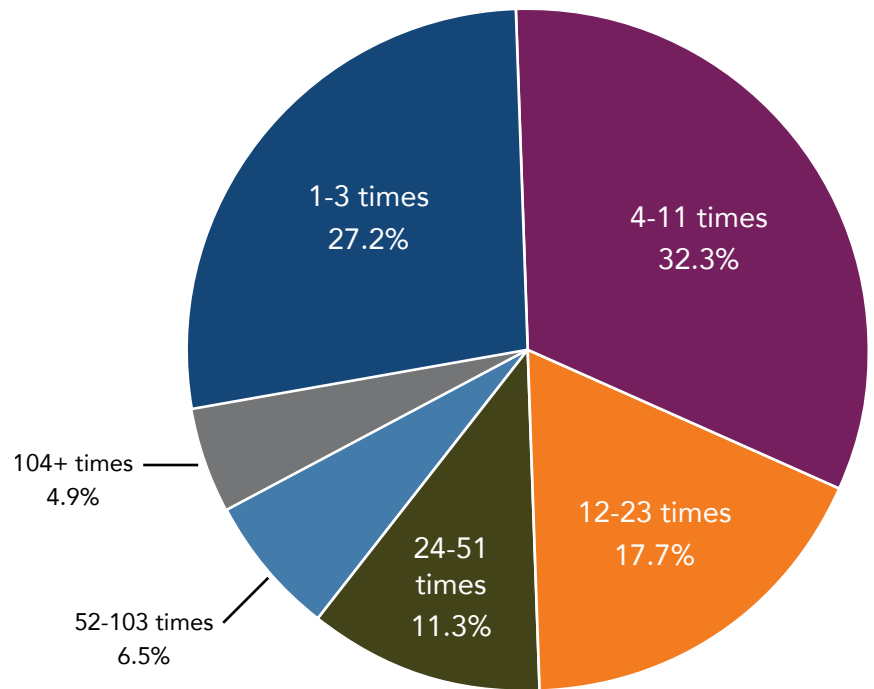
Exercise is the top motivator for Hispanic Americans to get into the outdoors.

# Annual Outings

In 2014, Hispanic American fishing participants made more than 84.7 million annual outings.

## 25.8 days

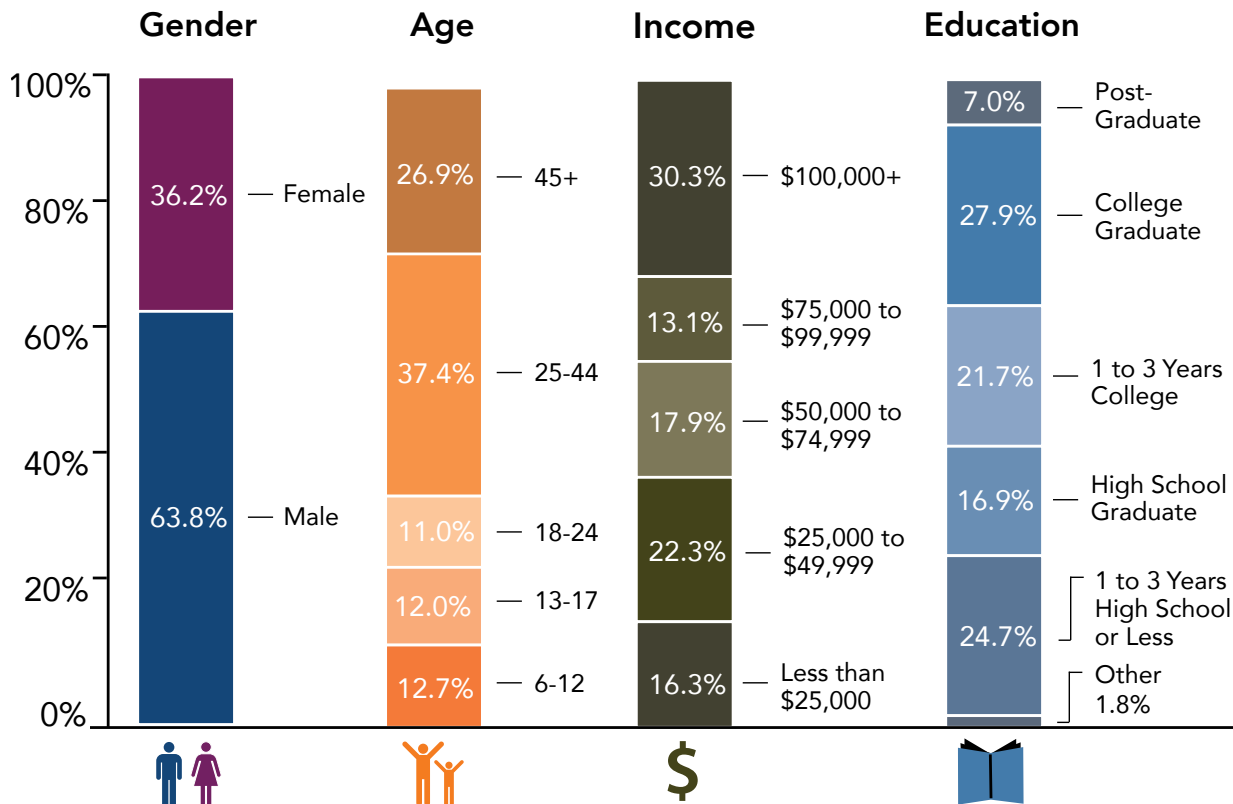
The average number of annual outings per Hispanic fishing participant. This is over six days more than the average annual outings for all fishing participants.



Annual Outings  
Hispanic Fishing Participants,  
Ages 6+

# Demographics

Hispanic Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

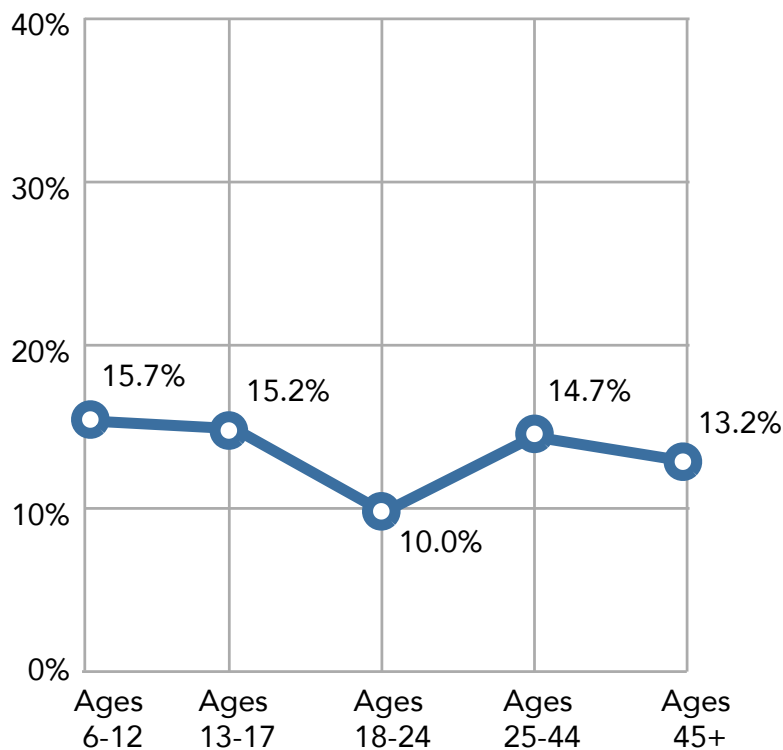


# Fishing Participation Life Cycle Among Hispanics

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.

The Hispanic life cycle of fishing participation peaks during childhood, declines slightly during adolescence and then plummets during young adulthood. Participation climbs again among adults and then decreases again.

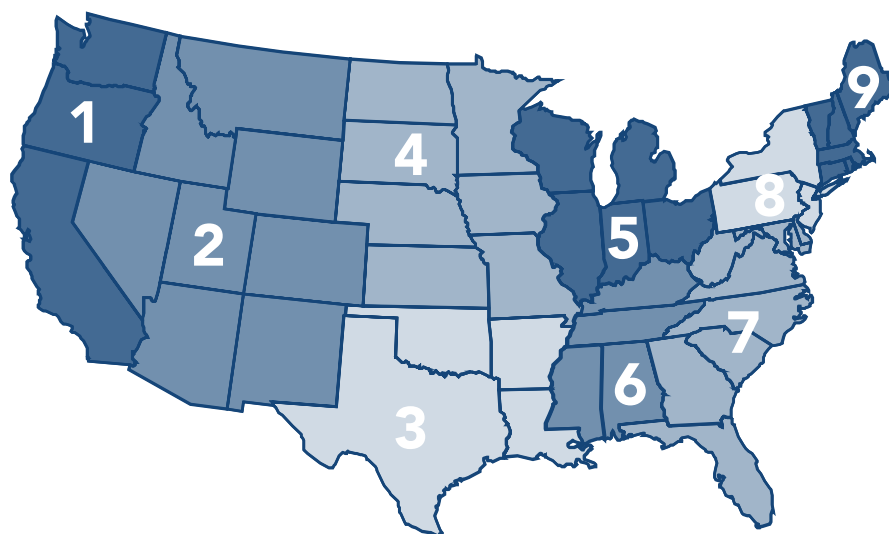


## Geography of Participants

Hispanic Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

### U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 28.7%
2. Mountain: 7.9%
3. West South Central: 21.5%
4. West North Central: 1.3%
5. East North Central: 7.9%
6. East South Central: 2.3%
7. South Atlantic: 17.6%
8. Middle Atlantic: 9.5%
9. New England: 3.3%





# Crossover Participation

Hispanic Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

## Outdoor Activities

1. Car, Backyard or RV Camping 38.8%
2. Running, Jogging or Trail Running 31.6%
3. Road, Mountain or BMX Bicycling 28.3%
4. Hunting 23.7%
5. Paddling 20.8%

## Indoor Fitness Activities

1. Free Weights 38.1%
2. Stretching 20.4%
3. Treadmill 19.4%
4. Stationary Cycling 19.2%
5. Weight/Resistance Machines 18.0%

## Team Sports

1. Basketball 22.5%
2. Soccer 18.6%
3. Baseball 18.2%
4. Football 16.8%
5. Softball 12.7%

## Other Activities

1. Fitness Walking 40.2%
2. Bowling 32.7%
3. Swimming for Fitness 21.3%
4. Golf 17.4%
5. Target Shooting 15.2%

# Reason for Participating in Outdoor Recreation

Exercise is the biggest motivator for Hispanic Americans to get outdoors and active. Being close to nature and experiencing excitement and adventure follow as the most popular responses.

## Hispanics Fishing Participants, Ages 6+

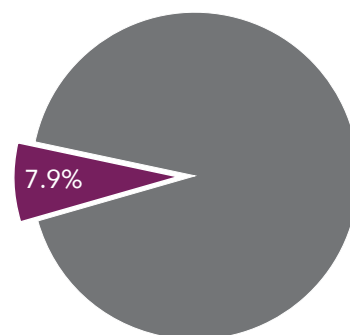
Get exercise	65.3%
Be close to nature	49.4%
Experience excitement/adventure	44.9%
Enjoy the sounds/smells of nature	42.8%
Be with family/friends	42.0%
Observe scenic beauty	39.7%
Keep physically fit	37.1%
Experience solitude	35.8%
Get away from the usual demands	34.8%
Be with people who enjoy the same things I do	33.4%
Develop my skills/abilities	29.5%
Gain a sense of accomplishment	26.3%
It is cool	25.2%
Gain a sense of self-confidence	21.5%
Be with people who share my values	20.8%
Talk to new/varied people	15.3%
Other reason	6.3%

# POTENTIAL NEW HISPANIC FISHING PARTICIPANTS

Hispanics Americans are the largest minority population in the United States, but they are underrepresented in the sport of fishing. As this population continues growing, it is critical to engage new Hispanic participants.

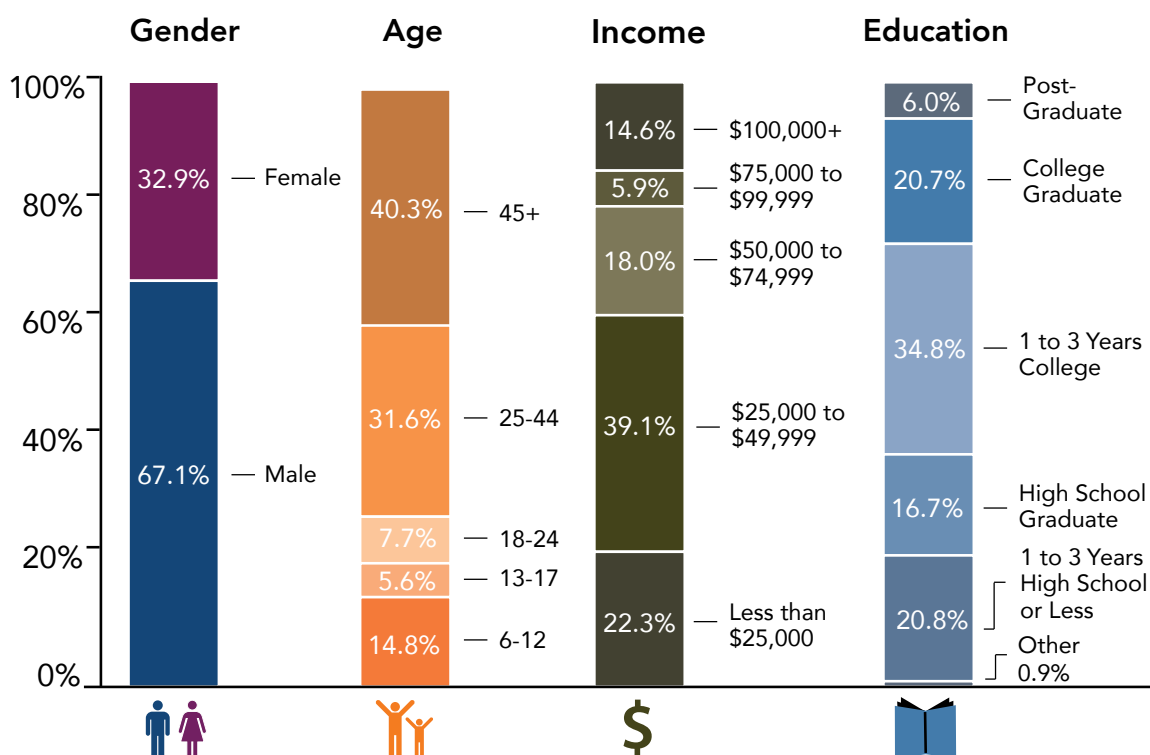
**7.9%** of the Hispanic American population, or 1.7 million people, are considering participation in fishing.

Almost eight percent of Hispanic Americans are considering participation in fishing. Those potential participants tend to skew older and less wealthy than current Hispanic participants. The following pages present a full profile of Hispanics, ages six and older, who do not participate in fishing but are interested in becoming active in the activity.



## Demographics

Hispanic Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+

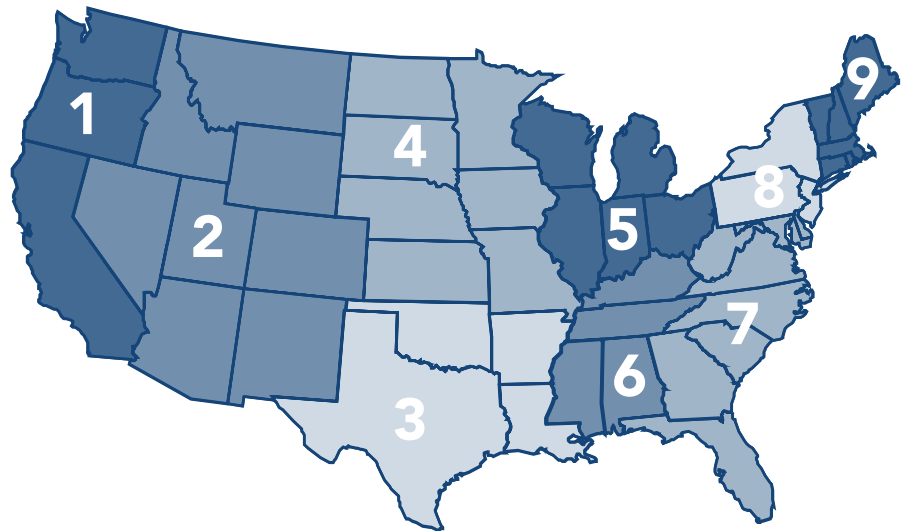


# Geography of Potential Hispanic Americans Participants

Hispanic Non-Participants Considering Fishing, Ages 6+

## U.S. Census Regions

1. Pacific: 24.9%
2. Mountain: 6.6%
3. West South Central: 14.1%
4. West North Central: 1.8%
5. East North Central: 7.3%
6. East South Central: 0.4%
7. South Atlantic: 25.5%
8. Middle Atlantic: 17.1%
9. New England: 2.3%



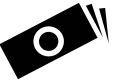
# PROFILE OF A FISHING TRIP

Adult fishing participants typically fish with other adults, rather than bringing youth as their companions. These fishing trips are usually spontaneous with more than 81 percent of trips being unplanned or planned within a week of the outing.

Fishing is generally the primary activity, rather than being part of a larger event, like camping. About half of participants fish from the shoreline, but boats and riverbanks are also popular fishing venues.

On their last outing, 83 percent of participants caught fish. What they did with the fish varied. Slightly more fishing participants kept the fish to eat than those who released their catch.

More than half of participants invested in fishing gear prior to their trips.



## Purchase

More than half of participants made a fishing-related purchase in 2014.



## Unplanned Trips

More than 40 percent of fishing trips are unplanned.



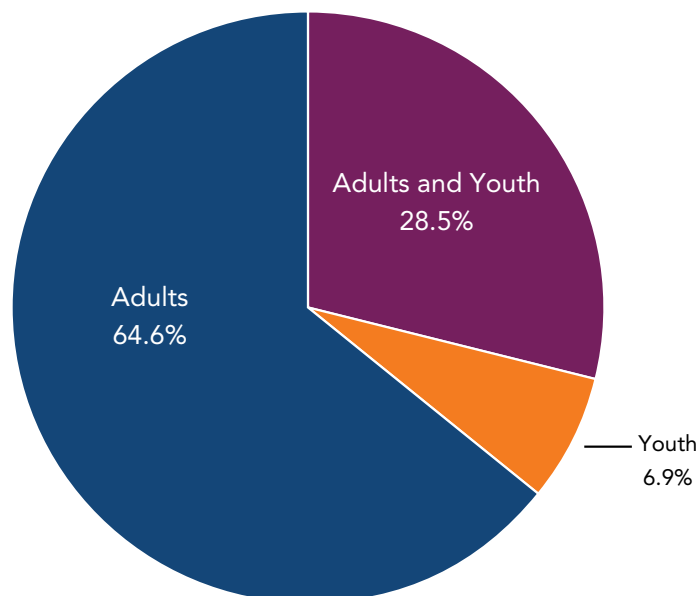
## Caught fish

An overwhelming majority of participants caught a fish on their last outing.

# Fishing Companions

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

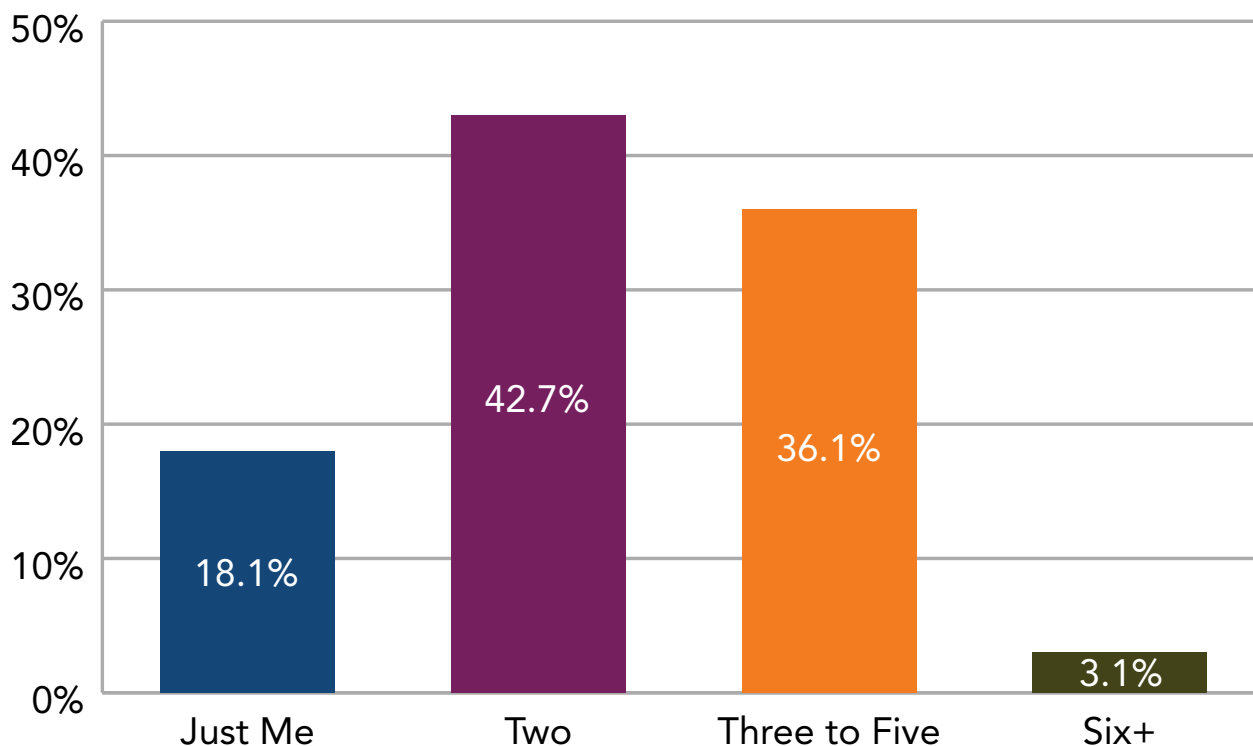
Adult fishing participants typically go fishing with other adults. Almost 65 percent choose adults as their fishing companions, while only 28.5 percent fish with both adults and youth, and about seven percent fish with just youth.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

# Number of People in Fishing Group

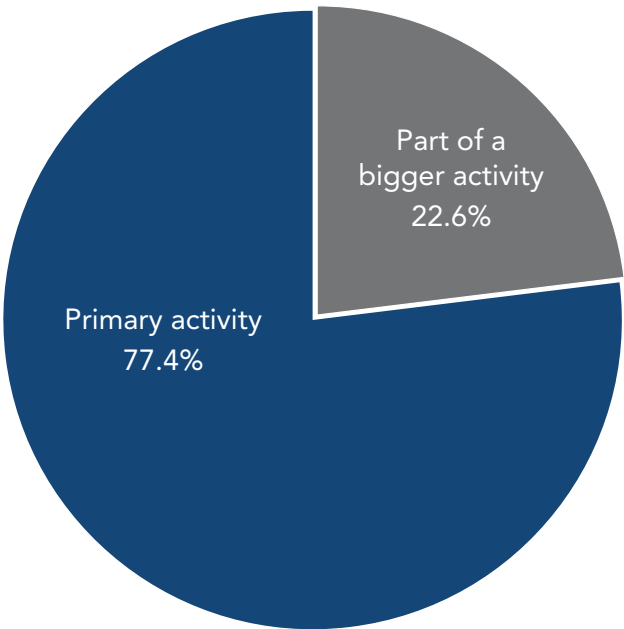
Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# Fishing as an Activity

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

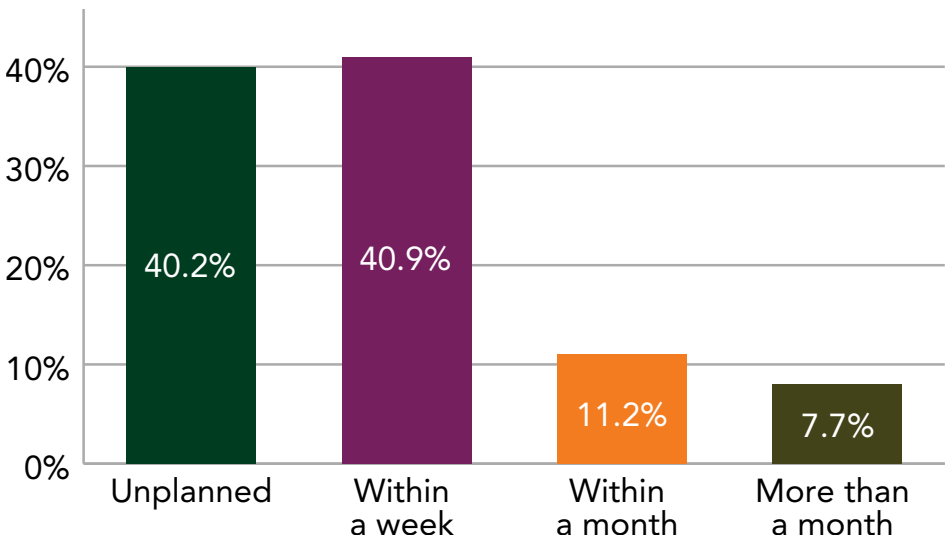
Fishing is the primary activity for more than three-quarters of participants. Fewer than 23 percent go as part of a larger activity, like a camping excursion.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

# Trip Planning

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



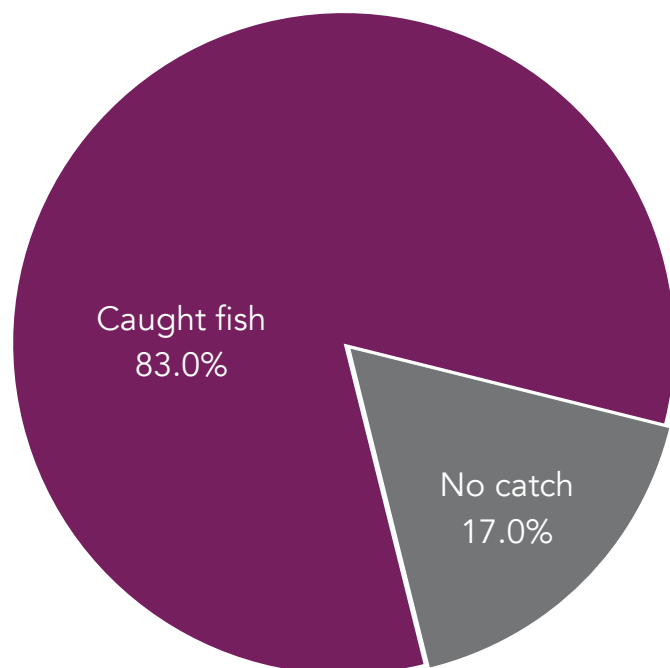
# Fishing Venues

Fishing Participants, Ages 6+	
Shoreline	49.9%
Boat	48.3%
Riverbank	43.0%
Pier or jetty	26.3%
Kayak	3.9%
Other	5.4%

## Catch on Most Recent Trip

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

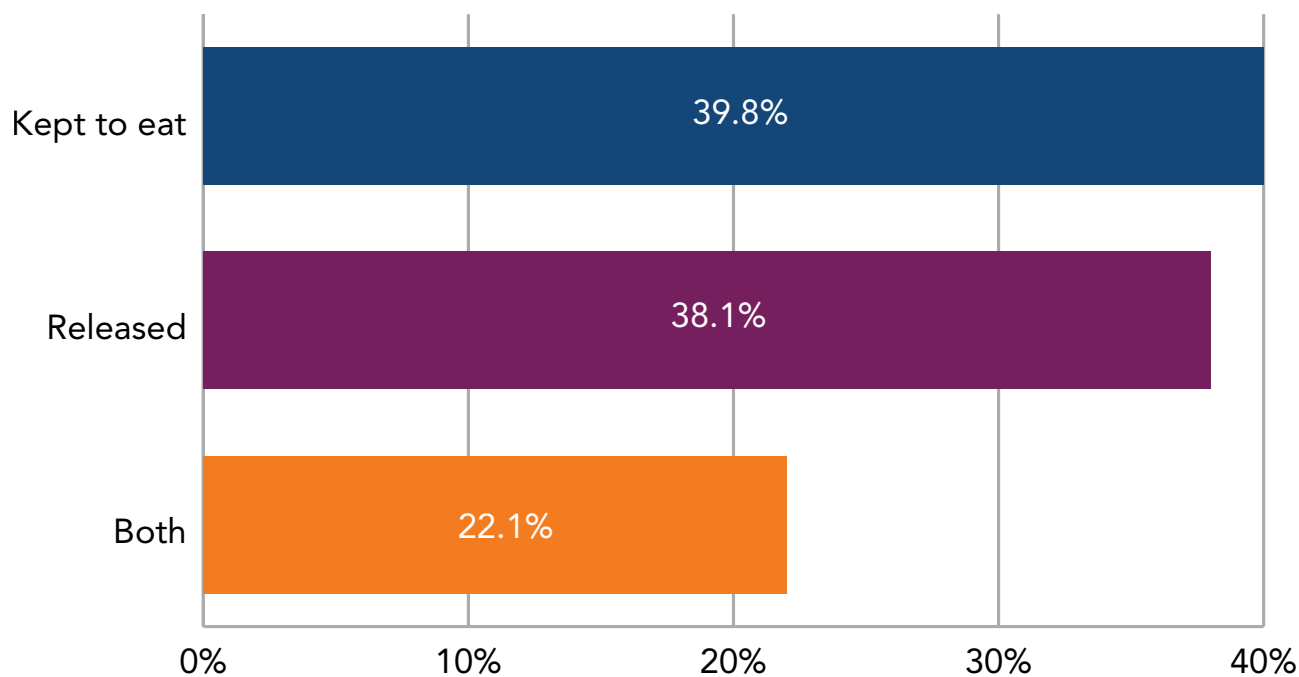
A significant majority of fishing participants caught fish during their last outing. More than 83 percent caught fish, while only 17 percent did not make a catch.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

## What Did You Do With Your Catch?

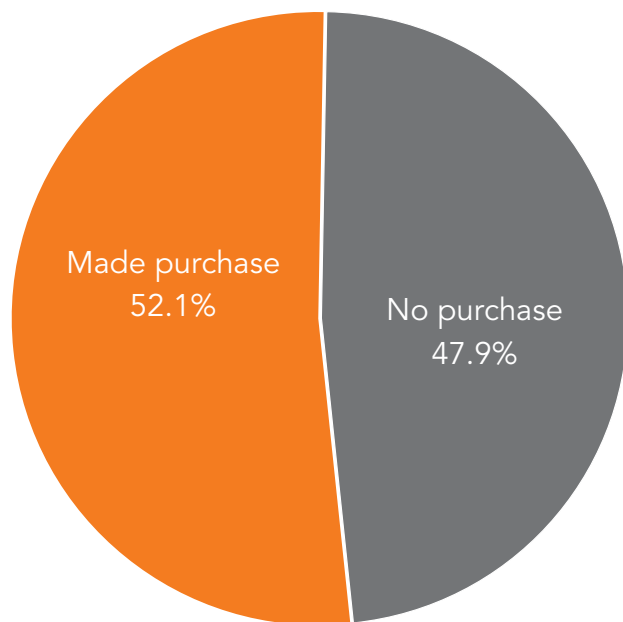
Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# Fishing Gear and Equipment

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

More than half of fishing participants — 52.1 percent — purchased fishing gear or equipment in 2014. Almost 46 percent did not make a purchase.



Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

## Resources That Would Make It Easier to Fish

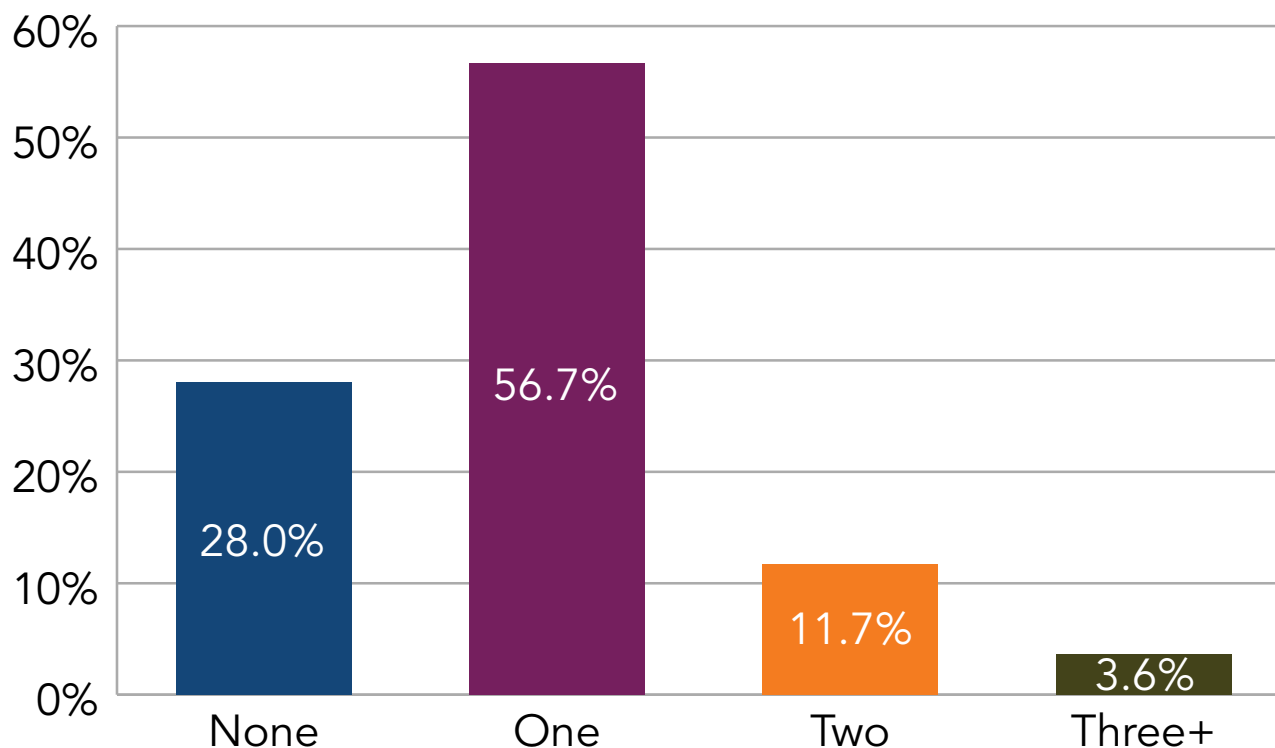
Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Easier/more affordable access to boats	43.6%
Easier/more affordable access to fishing equipment	33.6%
Mobile guides that you can access on the water	17.8%
Lessons/information from a state agency or local guide	14.9%
More time	1.7%
Cheaper license	1.4%
Easier access to streams/rivers	1.0%
Better places to fish	0.8%
More fish/fish stock	0.6%
More free fishing spots	0.6%
Maps of fishing areas	0.6%
None	10.6%



# Number of Fishing License Purchases

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



## Location of Fishing License Purchase

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

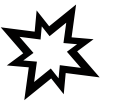
In state	82.0%
Out of state	7.7%
Both in and out of state	10.3%

# PERCEPTIONS OF FISHING

Almost half of new fishing participants tried fishing for the first time to experience excitement and adventure.

Fishing participants stereotype other participants as male. Nearly 64 percent of males agreed that fishing participants looked like them while only 48 percent of females thought the same.

For male participants, the best things about fishing are catching fish, enjoying the sights and sounds of nature and getting away from the usual demands of life. Female participants generally agree, but spending time with family and friends also ranks high.



## Exciting

Before a first fishing experience, more than 53 percent of people thought that fishing would be exciting.



## Female

More than half of females do not think fishing participants look like them.

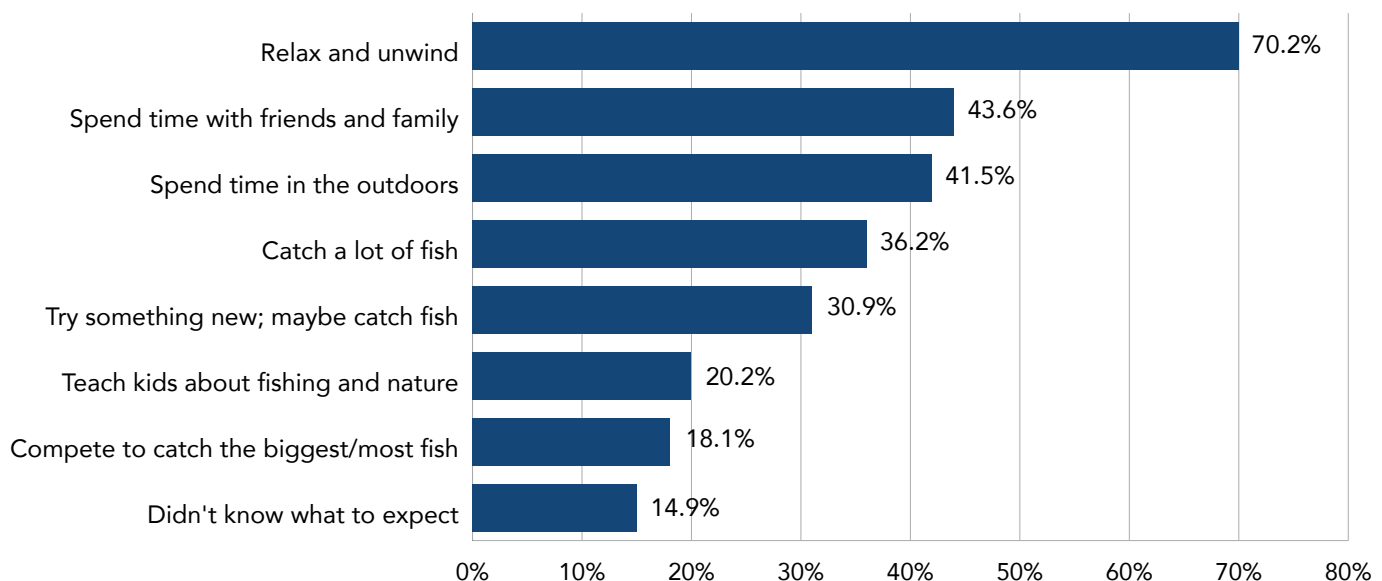
# Motivation for Trying Fishing for the First Time

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

Spend time with family	37.2%
Experience excitement/adventure	36.2%
Ease of access to fishing	33.0%
Solitude	33.0%
Wanted to try catching my own food	27.7%
A friend or relative took me	26.6%
Fished as a kid but not as an adult	24.5%
Low cost of fishing equipment	24.5%
Disconnect from electronics	20.2%
Was part of a vacation or group outing	19.1%
Wanted try a new hobby	19.1%
My children asked me to take them fishing	13.8%
Wanted to take my children fishing	10.6%
Saw a show about fishing	10.6%
Moved and wanted to try fishing here	9.6%
Read a magazine about fishing	8.5%
Learned about fishing on the internet	7.4%

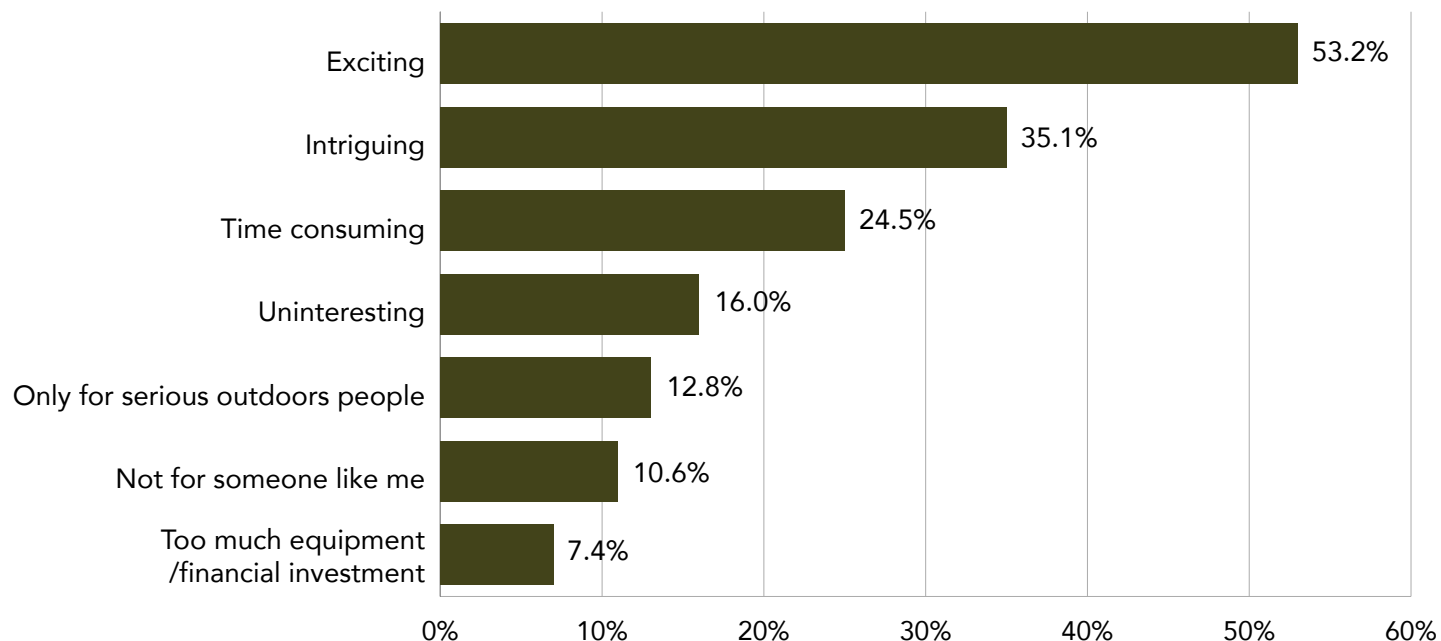
## Expectations for First Fishing Trip

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



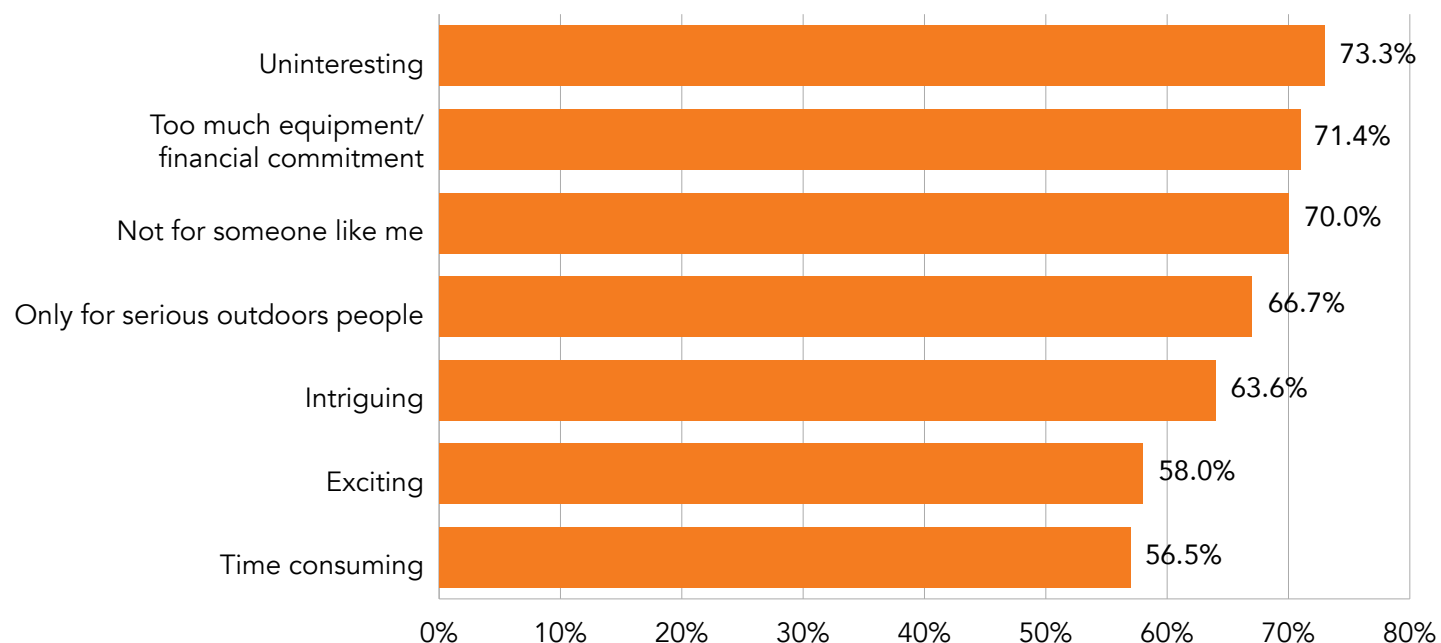
# Perceptions Before Participating in a First Fishing Trip

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



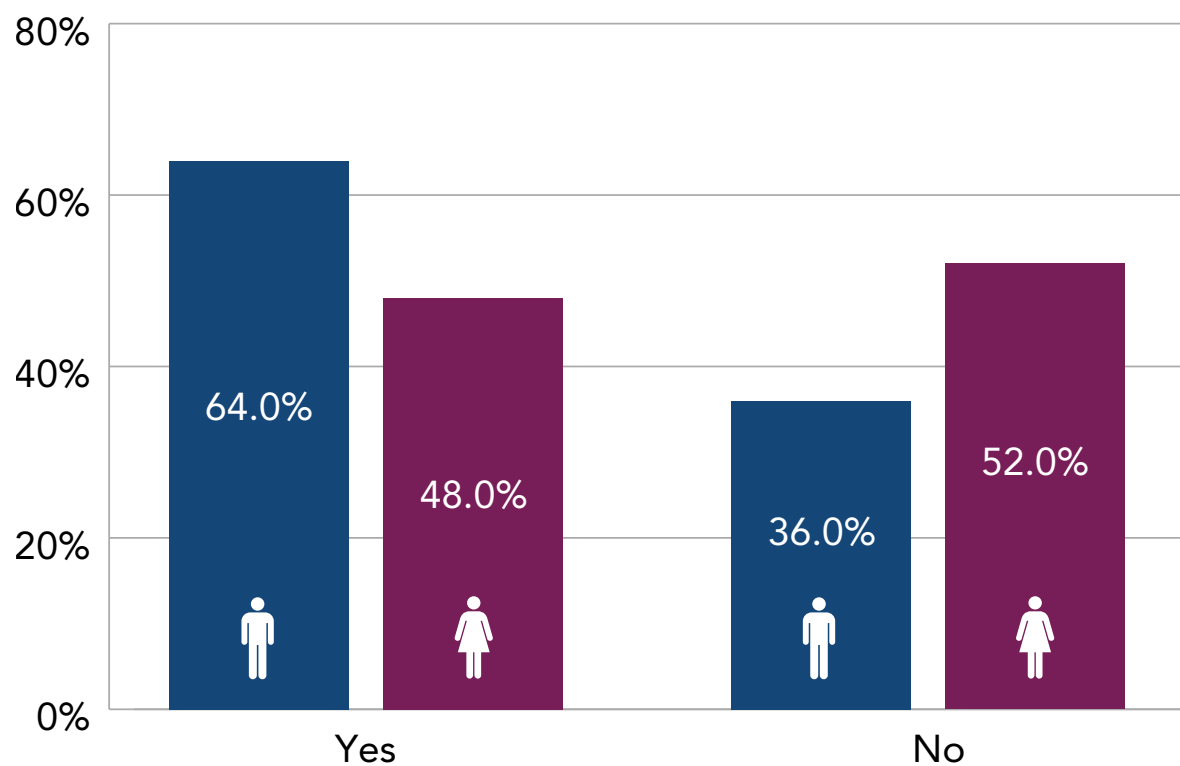
# Perceptions After Participating in First Fishing Trip

New Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# 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	39.2%	28.7%
Getting away from the usual demands of life	30.5%	28.7%
Enjoying the sounds and smells of nature	28.2%	43.9%
Spending time with family and friends	27.7%	39.2%
Being close to nature	24.5%	26.3%
Observing scenic beauty	21.0%	22.2%
Experiencing excitement	13.8%	7.6%
The "chase," the strategy of finding the right spot and right tackle	13.8%	6.4%
Experiencing solitude	13.5%	11.1%
Catching my own food	11.8%	12.3%
Sharing the enjoyment of fishing with a child	11.0%	11.7%
Being with people who enjoy the same things I do	9.8%	5.3%
Fishing is low-cost entertainment	8.4%	10.5%
Reliving my childhood memories of going fishing	6.9%	13.5%
Being with people who share my values	5.2%	3.5%
Developing my skills and abilities	4.9%	3.5%
Getting exercise	4.0%	2.3%
It is cool	2.6%	2.3%
Gaining a sense of accomplishment	2.3%	1.2%
Keeping physically fit	1.7%	1.2%
Talking to new and varied people	1.7%	2.9%
Gaining a sense of self-confidence	1.2%	1.8%

# Worst Thing About Fishing

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+

	Males	Females
Not catching any fish	40.8%	33.9%
I like everything about fishing	36.2%	33.3%
Fishing spots were crowded	17.8%	14.3%
The hassle	14.3%	15.5%
Lakes and rivers weren't clean	9.3%	7.1%
Baiting the hooks or taking the fish off the hook	7.3%	26.8%
Being outdoors	6.7%	10.1%
The expense	6.4%	8.9%
Not having the right equipment	4.4%	3.6%
It was boring	3.5%	6.0%



# FUTURE OF FISHING

More than half of fishing participants plan on taking eight or more fishing trips in 2015, and another 44 percent plan to take one to seven trips. These participants keep coming back to the sport because it is relaxing, fun and simply because they love catching fish.

An early introduction to fishing is critical to participation later in life. More than 85 percent of current participants fished as children ages 12 and younger. Participants associate fishing with positive memories, such as being immersed in nature and spending time with friends and family.



## Fishing Plans

More than 54 percent of participants plan on taking at least eight trips in 2015.



## Nature

Almost 68 percent of participants associate memories of fishing with spending time in nature.



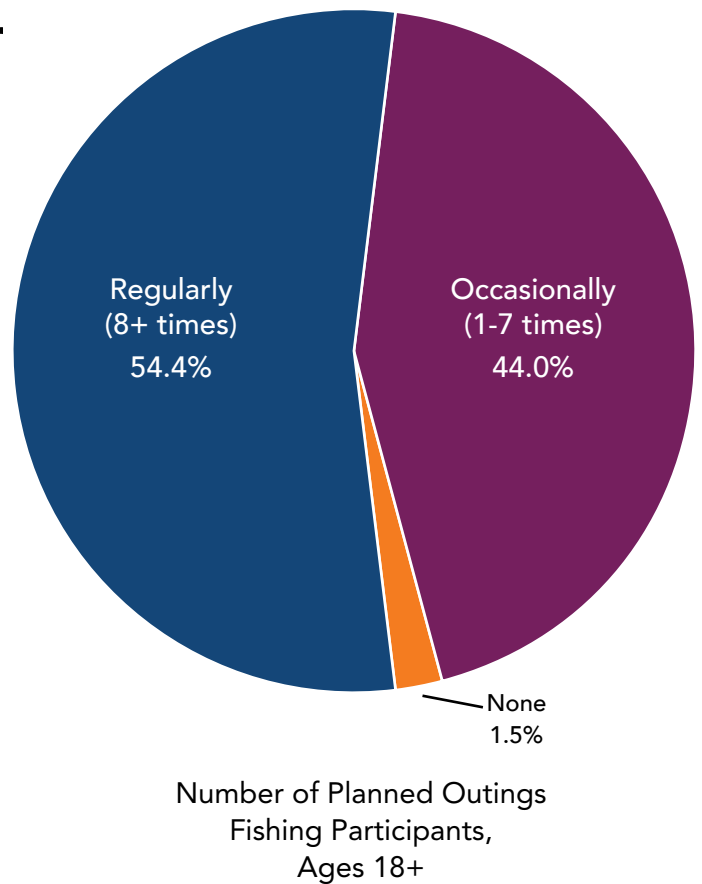
## Fished as Youth

More than 85 percent of fishing enthusiasts participated in fishing as children, before the age of 12.



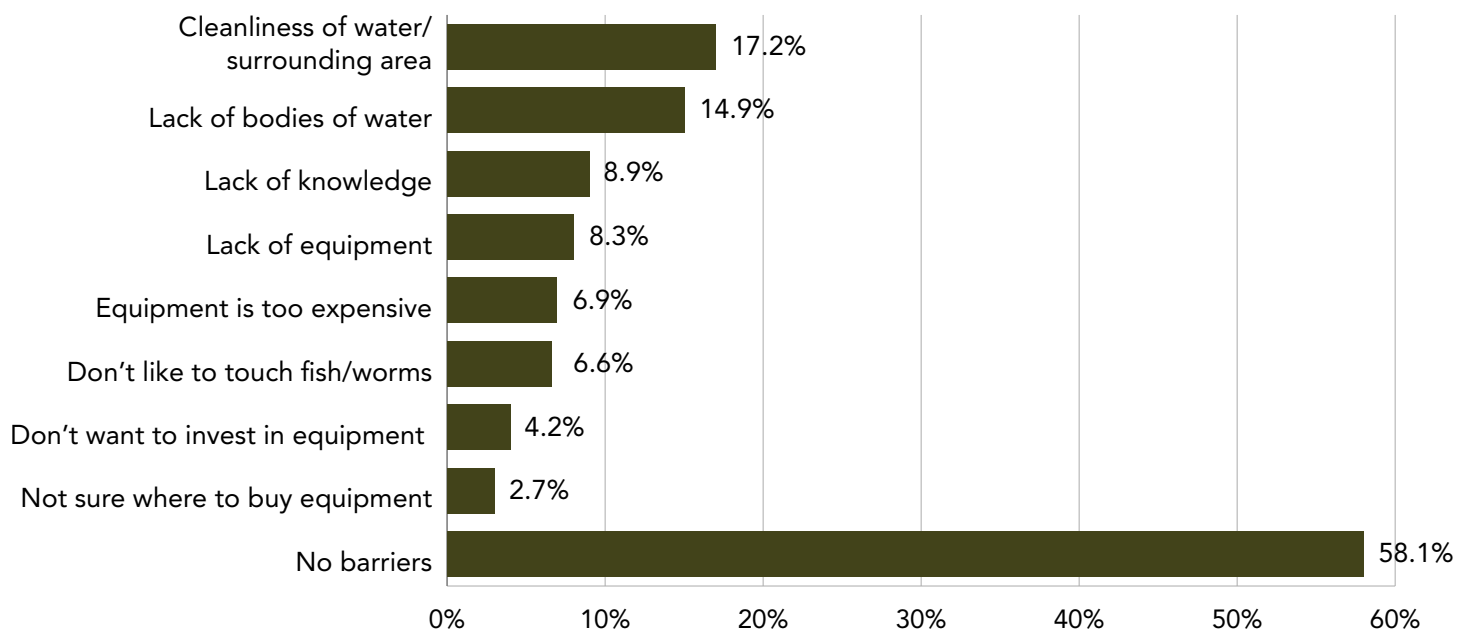
## Plans for Fishing Next Year

Almost all fishing participants — 98.4 percent — plan on making regular or occasional fishing trips in 2015. Of those, more than half, 54.4 percent, plan on taking eight or more fishing trips.



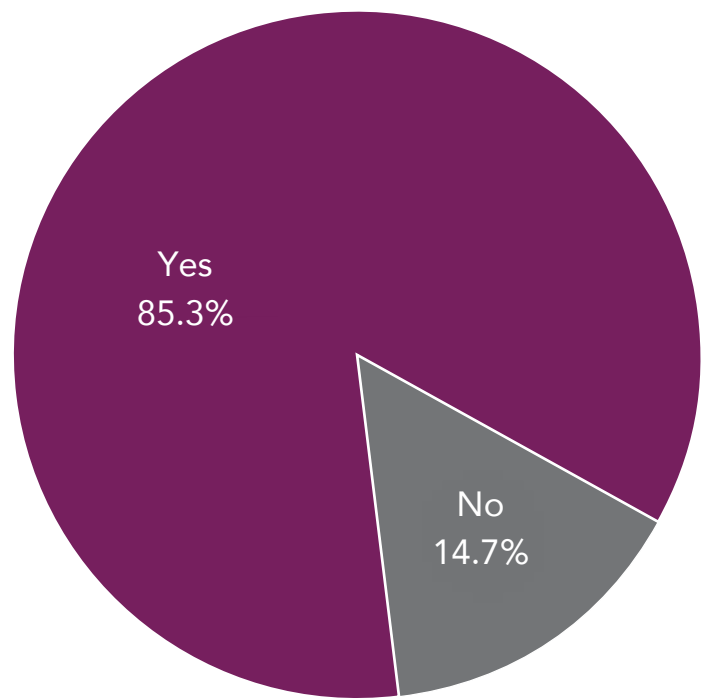
## Barriers to Participation

Fishing Participants, Ages 18+



# Participation in Fishing as a Child

Being exposed to fishing at an early age has a powerful impact. Among current adult fishing participants, more than 85 percent fished as children ages 12 or younger. A mere 14.7 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	67.8%
Spending time with family or friends	66.0%
Reminds me of my childhood	48.3%
Enjoying the water in a way I don't typically do	42.3%
Helping me connect with a simpler way of life	37.6%
Learning a new skill	25.1%
Other	2.7%

# Reasons for Continuing to Fish

Participants New to Fishing in 2014, Ages 18+

Relaxing	29.9%
Fun	22.9%
Catching fish	21.9%
Being outdoors	18.5%
Peace and tranquility	15.5%
Bonding with family	15.1%
Excitement	11.8%
Nature	10.8%
Eating fish	10.8%
Water	10.0%
Socializing with friends	9.6%
Love fishing	7.6%
Quiet	7.2%
Thrill of the chase	7.0%
Challenging	6.8%
Lifelong interest	5.0%
Break from the norm	4.0%
Solitude	2.4%
Inexpensive	0.6%

# Reasons Why New Participants Won't Fish Next Year

Participants New to Fishing in 2014,  
Ages 18+

Didn't enjoy it	25.0%
Smell of fish	12.5%
Lack of time	12.5%
Lack of money	12.5%
Poor health	12.5%
Not interested	12.5%
Different holiday destination	12.5%

# Methodology

During January and February of 2015 a total of 10,778 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 5,067 individual and 5,711 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.

The 2015 participation survey sample size of 10,778 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 0.42 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 292,064,000 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 *2015 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); 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 2015 participation survey, which focused on American participation in the 2014 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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