2023 Marine Economy Report

Great Lakes Region

The marine economy is defined as those businesses whose existence depends on the oceans or Great Lakes. The economic data found here helps leaders better understand trends and consider the needs of these businesses when making decisions about the future of the coast. Six sectors make up the marine economy: marine construction, offshore mineral extraction, tourism and recreation, living resources, ship and boat building, and marine transportation.

The Big Picture

Great Lakes Region's Marine Economy in 2020

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>Wages</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15,821</td>
<td>286,909</td>
<td>$9.7 billion</td>
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</tbody>
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The Details

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Largest Employment Sector:</strong></td>
<td>Tourism and recreation employs 65% of the region’s marine economy</td>
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<td><strong>Largest GDP Sector:</strong></td>
<td>Tourism and recreation produces 49% of the total gross domestic product (GDP) derived from the region’s marine economy</td>
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<td><strong>High Earners:</strong></td>
<td>The average wage of marine economy employees in the Great Lakes region is $33,669, which is lower than the region average ($58,998). Offshore mineral resources has the highest average wage per employee at $90,094.</td>
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<td><strong>National Ranking:</strong></td>
<td>The Great Lakes region is ranked 5 out of 8 coastal regions for marine employment, and 6 out of 8 coastal regions for GDP</td>
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<td><strong>Top County: Employment</strong></td>
<td>Cook County, Illinois, is home to 18% of marine jobs in the Great Lakes region</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Top County: GDP</strong></td>
<td>Cook County, Illinois, produces 26% of the marine economy’s gross domestic product in the Great Lakes region</td>
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Great Lakes Region's Marine Economy

15,821 Businesses
286,909 Employees
$9.7 billion Wages
$17.8 billion GDP

LEGEND (1 CELL = 1%)
- Living Resources
- Marine Transportation
- Ship and Boat Building
- Marine Construction
- Offshore Mineral Resources
- Tourism and Recreation

A Decade of Change (2010-2020)

15% Businesses
The Great Lakes region had an increase of 2,115 marine businesses, which was an increase of 15% over the past decade.

7% Employees
The Great Lakes region had an increase of 19,469 marine jobs, an increase of 7% over the past decade.

32% Average Wages
On average, an employee working in the Great Lakes region's marine economy made $33,669 in 2020, compared to an average wage of $25,436 in 2010. The marine economy average wage in the Great Lakes region had an increase of 32%.

7% Gross Domestic Product
The value of the Great Lakes region’s marine economy had an increase of 7% over the past decade. Changes in GDP can be driven by volatility of the price of resources.

The numbers on the first and second page may vary slightly, as some data is suppressed when presented at the sector level. Rounding may also contribute to some differences. On the regional level, differences in numbers may arise from the way that the total economy is calculated.