

2023 Marine Economy Report

North Carolina

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

North Carolina's Marine Economy in 2020

3,342	45,398	\$1.1 billion	\$2.9 billion
Businesses	Employees	Wages	GDP

The Details

Largest Employment Sector: Tourism and recreation employs **85%** of the state's marine economy

Largest GDP Sector: Tourism and recreation produces **54%** of the total gross domestic product (GDP) derived from the state's marine economy

High Earners: The average wage of marine economy employees in North Carolina is **\$23,422**, which is lower than the state average (**\$56,214**). Marine construction has the highest average wage per employee at **\$54,889**.

National Ranking: North Carolina is ranked **17** out of **30** coastal states for marine employment, and **17** out of **30** coastal states for GDP

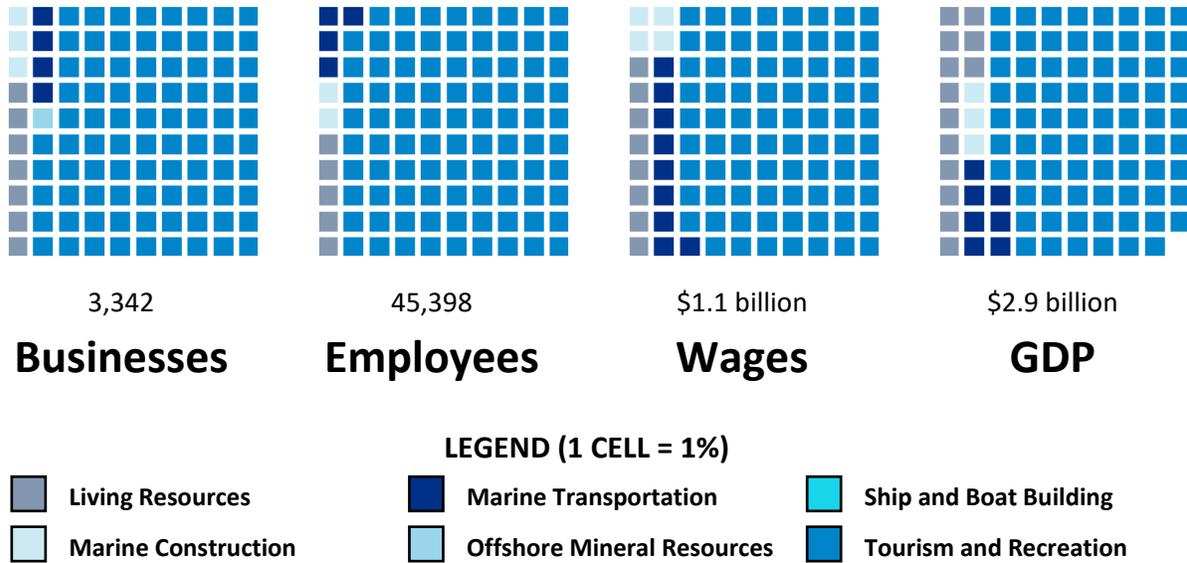
Top County: Employment New Hanover County, North Carolina, is home to **27%** of marine jobs in North Carolina

Top County: GDP New Hanover County, North Carolina, produces **18%** of the marine economy's gross domestic product in North Carolina

This report is based on 2020 Economics: National Ocean Watch (ENOW) data, produced by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management in 2023. The employment and gross domestic product statistics are derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data (accessed in September 2022) and the Bureau of Economic Analysis' gross domestic product by state data (released in July 2022). For more information, visit coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/enow.html.



North Carolina's Marine Economy



A Decade of Change (2010-2020)



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.