Jun 21, 2023 -[News](https://www.axios.com/local/tampa-bay/news)

Florida helping keep nation's boat economy afloat

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Illustration: Natalie Peeples/Axios

Florida is keeping the nation's boat economy afloat, according to a new report.

**Buoy the numbers:**The Sunshine State makes up about 14% of the nation's $230 billion recreational boating economy, according to the [National Marine Manufacturers Association](https://www.nmma.org/advocacy/economic-impact/recreational-boating/).

* Florida's $33.3 billion economic impact included nearly 110,000 jobs across more than 7,000 businesses.

**The big picture:** [Recreational boating](https://www.axios.com/local/miami/2023/03/01/boat-buying-in-the-us-subsiding-back-to-normal), which took off during the COVID-19 pandemic, remains popular despite what industry experts call a "normalization" of boat sales in the wake of the COVID era's extraordinary growth, [*Axios' Joann Muller reports*](https://www.axios.com/2023/06/06/americans-boating-passion-still-afloat-after-pandemic).

**Zoom in:** Florida hit [1 million registered recreational vessels](https://www.axios.com/local/tampa-bay/2022/03/22/florida-over-1-million-boats-registered) (aka boats) last year, with Pinellas and Hillsborough making up two of the state's top five counties for registration with a combined 95,362.

* The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission hasn't updated its registration count for 2023.

**Yes, but:** More boats mean more challenges. Florida also has the highest number of reported accidents and a [derelict boat problem](https://www.axios.com/local/tampa-bay/2022/07/15/florida-derelict-boat-free-removal).