



RECREATIONAL  
BOATING & FISHING  
FOUNDATION

## **STATES' PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOLKIT**

***Additional Press Release Templates  
and Matte/Evergreen Stories***

**MAY 2009**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Month xx, 2009

## FISHING #1 “GATEWAY” THAT GENERATES INTEREST IN OTHER OUTDOOR PURSUITS, REPORT FINDS

*Fishing and Other Activities Can Help Reverse  
Decline in Youth Participation in Outdoor Activities*

**CITY, STATE INITIALS** – As children and teens are spending less time outside, one new study indicates that several activities, including fishing, could be the answer to lagging interest in outdoor recreation.

The Outdoor Foundation’s 2008 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report found that children ages six to 17 spent nearly 12 percent less time in outdoor pursuits in 2007 than they did in 2006, opting instead for sedentary activities like video games and TV.

Among those surveyed, youth who did spend a significant amount of time outdoors said their inspiration for nature came from parents, friends, family and relatives.

“The findings are certainly a cause for concern, but it’s encouraging to see that parents and friends have the power to inspire children to spend more time in the great outdoors,” said **(insert local official name here)**. “This study shows that participation in outdoor recreation declines with age, which is why it’s so important to introduce youth to outside activities at an early age.”

One bright spot in the report was the finding that fishing—the most popular activity among all adults and children surveyed—is one of several “gateway” activities that leads to involvement in other outdoor interests. The sport of fishing had more participants than any other gateway activity, including bicycling and camping, and was favored because of its accessibility.

In **(insert state)**, fishing is increasing in popularity among budget-conscious residents who are attracted to the sport’s affordability and stress-relieving tranquility.

The state offers **(insert any local programs, retailers and/or resources)** to help people get started with fishing, boating and related activities. More information can be found at **(insert local Web site or phone number)** or by visiting [www.TakeMeFishing.org](http://www.TakeMeFishing.org).

### About RBFF

RBFF is a nonprofit organization established in 1998 to increase participation in recreational angling and boating. RBFF helps people discover, share and protect the legacy of boating and fishing through national outreach programs including the Take Me Fishing™ campaign and Anglers’ Legacy™.

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### State Media Contact:

Name/Company  
Phone  
E-mail



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## DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN INTRODUCING THOUSANDS TO FISHING

**CITY, STATE INITIALS** – Residents throughout (**insert state**) are rediscovering the simple, affordable thrills of boating and fishing, thanks to the marketing efforts of [insert agency] to bring lapsed anglers back to the sport.

(**Insert state**) is one of 32 states participating in the [Direct Mail Marketing Program](#) coordinated by the [Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation](#) (RBFF). Now in its second year, the program is designed to increase fishing license sales and generate awareness of the local conservation efforts that the sales help fund.

In 2008, the direct mail program resulted in (**insert number**) fishing licenses and permits in (**insert state**)—a portion of nearly 224,000 sold nationwide. Based on these results, the direct mail program has contributed more than \$(**insert amount**) in funding for fish and wildlife management efforts.

“This year’s program kicks off at a time when many people are seeking affordable getaways,” said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. “As they discover fishing and purchase licenses, these sales will help generate the funds needed to preserve our nation’s natural resources. We’re thrilled to have (**insert state**) participating in this year’s campaign, and can’t wait to see more people enjoying the outdoors as a result.”

Launched in March 2008, the three-year Direct Mail Marketing Program aims to recruit and retain lapsed anglers and generate awareness of the connection between fishing license sales and conservation efforts.

“Last year’s program helped us bring numerous anglers back to fishing, and we’re confident we’ll see even more growth in license sales this year,” said (**insert agency director name and title**).

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## Family Getaways on a Budget

Looking for an escape from the pressures of everyday life? One that falls into the budget range of somewhere between free and easy on the wallet? You're not alone.

At a time when many are forgoing certain luxuries such as dining out or lengthy vacations, the search is on for activities that are inexpensive and offer a good dose of old fashioned fun. For more and more people, that means boating and fishing are fast becoming the escapes of choice.

And for good reason.

Fishing, of course, is about as economical and relaxing as it gets. The start-up costs are minimal—a rod and reel, a little bait and an inexpensive fishing license are all it takes—and the sport itself is easy to get the hang of. And then there's boating, a leisure activity that many are discovering can be an equally cost-effective and enjoyable way to unwind. With the variety of makes and models available, it's easy to find a great boat for every budget and lifestyle.

Put the two activities together and the result is an affordable outing, a way to reconnect with friends and family, and a close-to-home, stress-relieving getaway.

Enticing? If you're new to boating and fishing, getting started may be a lot easier than you think. A few easy steps can get you out on the water today:

### **Get a fishing license.**

If you plan to cast a line, you'll need a fishing license. The price is nominal — **\$(insert cost)** for 12 months in **(insert state)**—and they can be purchased online at **(insert agency web address)**. And, fishing's a great way to wet your appetite for more outdoor adventures on the water.

### **Take stock of your interests.**

Do you want a boat for socializing and entertaining? Relaxing by the dock with your family? Enjoying some water sports and freshwater fishing? Answering these questions and others like

them will help you decide what types of boats you'd be interested in, where you'd like to fish, and what kinds of waterways to look for nearby.

### **Determine your boating budget.**

Because an ideal day on the water means different things to different people, getting the right boat is key. The good news is that many new models — from family-friendly pontoons to pro-style fishing boats — can be found at budget-friendly prices. A great place to start is DiscoverBoating.com, which is loaded with information and tools to help narrow down selections and learn about the ins and outs of ownership.

### **Get out on the water.**

It's the most important — and enjoyable — part of the process, so have some fun exploring the area. There's a good chance an inviting waterway is just around the corner. Check with (**insert state agency**) or visit [TakeMeFishing.org](http://TakeMeFishing.org) to find nearby fishing spots and plan your next trip out on the water.

## Take a Friend Fishing, Help the Environment

Love the outdoors? Addicted to being out on the water?

What if someone told you there's a way you can help keep your favorite boating and fishing spots clean and beautiful, just by letting people know how great it is to cast a line?

You may not realize it, but getting others hooked on outdoor activities is one of the surest, simplest ways to keep waterways clean, stocked and beautiful. That's why—if you're an avid angler, enthusiastic boater, or even someone who's just recently discovered the sports—now's a great time to get friends and family on the boating and fishing bandwagon.

Here's why - For a newbie, the startup costs are minimal; a basic rod and reel and a **\$(insert cost)** fishing license are all that's needed. Once you have those, a bucket of \$5-10 bait will last an entire day. Some of the most avid anglers spend, on average, just \$140 on fishing tackle and equipment in a *year* — the equivalent of less than \$12 a month — according to a recent survey from the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF).

For those who really want to get out on the water, owning a boat is more affordable than ever. The sheer number of makes and models available for purchase means there's a boat for every lifestyle and budget. When it comes to spending a day on the water, many of today's boats are 50 percent more fuel efficient than they were just a decade ago. And because a boat's engine is often idling or turned off while boaters enjoy some of their favorite activities — like fishing, floating at the dock or anchoring mid-lake for a swim — there are plenty of fun ways to save on gas.

Put simply, many are finding that spending a day on the water is a surprisingly affordable pastime.

But while the costs are nominal on an individual basis, all those little purchases add up to a big boost to the nation's economy. Expenditures on rods and reels, tackle boxes and other equipment turn into billions of dollars that support jobs, add to state tax revenues, and help preserve our natural resources. In 2006, according to the most recent data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, fishing-related purchases pumped \$42.2 billion dollars into the national

economy. Boaters, meanwhile, generate some \$570 million a year in fuel taxes for the federal Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund.

In other words, what's good for the wallet is also great for the environment. The monies raised through boating and fishing activities support a number of local conservation projects.

So when you introduce someone new to the sport, you're doing a whole lot more than equipping them with a peaceful, enjoyable retreat.

In less than three years, outdoor enthusiasts have already helped generate some \$25 million dollars for the nation's boating and fishing industries—just by signing a Pledge to introduce at least one newcomer to the sport. More than 115,000 people have taken the Anglers' Legacy Pledge since the program debuted in 2006, resulting in an estimated 195,000 new fishing license purchases across the country. That money, in turn, means millions of additional dollars in state funding for critical fish and wildlife management efforts.

So, grab a friend and get out on the water. Everything you need is at [TakeMeFishing.org](http://TakeMeFishing.org).

## Getting Kids Outside is Essential for Healthy Living

Six and a half.

That's the number of hours, in one day, the average child in America spends watching TV, surfing the Internet, playing video games or listening to an iPod, according to a study conducted by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

It's more time than many of them spend in the classroom, and well above the number of hours today's kids are playing outdoors. One recent study by the Outdoor Foundation found that participation in outdoor activities among youth between the ages of six and 17 dropped nearly 12 percent in just one year.

Physicians and health experts have long concluded that a lack of outdoor pursuits has been a big contributor to significant increases in childhood obesity in recent decades. Other health issues, like poor vision and hearing loss, have also been linked to the digital age of texting and music sharing.

It's no secret that introducing kids to proper nutrition and physical activity at an early age are key to reversing those trends. But while many communities are taking steps to improve factors like healthy school lunches and sports programs, one of the biggest influencers of well-being is still sorely absent from the lives of many children and teenagers.

Getting kids outside plays a big role in helping them stay active and healthy.

Granted, some screen time can be educational. But the American Academy of Pediatrics says that spending more than an hour or two a day in front of electronic devices has been linked to irregular sleep, childhood obesity, behavioral problems and even impaired academic performance. On the flipside, increasing the amount of time spent outside can help stave off unhealthy weight, improve circulation and even decrease the likelihood of developing nearsightedness, according to a 2009 study in *Optometry & Vision Science*.

The good news is that getting kids outside doesn't need to be a time-consuming endeavor. In fact, a 2008 study from the Outdoor Foundation found that one of the most accessible of all outdoor pursuits — fishing — is also one of *the* best ways to get children hooked on nature.

In a survey of 60,000 youth and adults, the Foundation found that fishing is America's number one "gateway," or an activity that fuels children's interest for more outdoor adventures. Other gateway activities included bicycling, hiking, camping and jogging or running. Among them, fishing was most popular.

The reason? For many, fishing is accessible, affordable and easy to learn. And with more and more people opting for close-to-home trips — Iconoculture found in 2008 that 80 percent of families liked the idea of vacationing close to home in a down economy — fishing's a great way to enjoy a little downtime with nature without hefty travel expenses. It's also a fun way to get kids off the couch, away from sedentary hobbies and excited about outdoor pursuits.

"Helping kids experience the benefits of an active outdoor lifestyle is the best way to help them develop life-long healthy habits," said (**insert local official name here**). "And no matter where you live, there's bound to be a quiet spot nearby where you can introduce them to two of America's favorite open-air pastimes: fishing and boating."

The best news is that fishing and boating are two activities that kids can easily start enjoying today. Check with (**insert state agency**) or visit [TakeMeFishing.org](http://TakeMeFishing.org), where you'll find a map of nearby hotspots, information on gear and equipment, and tips for getting the most out of your time on the water.

#### [NOTE TO STATES]

Sources used to inform this article include:

- Generation M: Media in the Lives of 8-18 Year-Olds, Kaiser Family Foundation, August 2008
- A Prospective Examination of Children's Time Spent Outdoors, International Journal of Obesity, October 2008
- Myopia: Recent Advances in Molecular Studies Optometry and Vision Science, January 2009
- Outdoor Recreation Participation Report, The Outdoor Foundation, 2008