

Marine Recreational Fishing Economic Contribution Summary 2025: Lee County

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How to use this summary

This summary describes the 2024 economic contributions of marine recreational fishing to Lee County. This document is a summary of the more complete report which can be obtained by contacting the authors. This summary focuses on two of the most commonly used economic contribution metrics: industry output, and employment. Industry output here refers to the dollar value of goods and services sold by or purchased from an industry related to recreational fishing. Employment measures the numbers of jobs supported by an industry related to recreational fishing. Together, this information describes the market activity of marine recreational fishing in Lee County as of 2024. It does not describe its economic value. Still, this summary may help inform discussions and decision making related to policy, management, or environmental changes in or around Lee County that might impact recreational fishing activity, or when discussing similar changes that occur at a regional or state-wide scale but might affect Lee County.

What information is included and how was it generated

Each of industry output and employment are described in two ways. They are first described by fishing mode (shore-based, for-hire, private vessel, and all combined). Then they are described by economic effects (direct, indirect, induced, and total). Direct refers to actual expenditures on fishing (like fuel or bait), indirect describes inter-industry spending related to direct effects (like baitshops purchasing ice), induced describes spending of income by households of people employed in directly or indirectly supported industries (like groceries the baitshop worker buys), and total is the sum of all of these. To produce these metrics we used three steps:

1. We gathered information on the average marine recreational fisher expenditures per trip in Florida by coast (Gulf and Atlantic).
2. We estimated the number of marine recreational fishing trips by mode in Lee County during 2024 using the NOAA Fisheries Marine Recreational Information Program (NMFS MRIP).

3. The expenditures per trip and the numbers of trips were translated into the total expenditures associated with marine recreational fishing activity in Lee County and used to estimate contribution metrics via IMPLAN.

Results

The tables on the next page describe the industry output (*Table 1*) and the Employment (*Table 2*) associated with marine recreational fisheries in Lee County. Industry output is provided in millions of dollars (2023 dollars), and employment is given in total numbers of jobs (full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees).

Table 1. Industry output measured in millions of dollars for types of fishing (rows) and economic effects levels (columns). The total industry output for all marine recreational fishing trips in Lee County is given in the bottom right cell.

Lee Marine Rec. Fishing Contribution, Industry Output

Type of Fishing	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Shore-based	22.4	6.41	4.69	33.5
For-hire	22.03	4.98	8.64	35.65
Private Vessel	91.75	26.56	21.83	140.14
All Mar. Rec. Fishing	136.18	37.95	35.16	209.29

Table 2. Employment measured in jobs for types of fishing (rows) and economic effects levels (columns). The total employment associated with all marine recreational fishing trips in Lee County is given in the bottom right cell.

Lee Marine Rec. Fishing Contribution, Employment

Type of Fishing	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
Shore-based	220	37	27	284
For-hire	211	32	50	293
Private Vessel	765	156	127	1048
All Mar. Rec. Fishing	1196	225	204	1625

Summary

This summary shows that marine recreational fishing in Lee County contributed \$209.29M and 1625 jobs to the Lee County economy in 2024. Again, it is critical to understand that this is not economic value, but nonetheless should be helpful for understanding the economic importance of marine recreational fishing to Lee County.