

Power Boating

Abstract

In 1996, 9.3% of Canadians made use of a power boat. The range of recreational activities is diverse, ranging from cruising, across to cottages, to fishing and water sports. The large number of powerboats in Canada had lead to many concerns about their usage like pollution and habitat disturbance.

Each year, millions of Canadians participate in water related activities. Activities using a power boat represent a significant portion of that number. Figure 1 shows that, in 1996, 9.3% of Canadians as a whole made use of a power boat, with the highest participation rate being in Saskatchewan (16.7% of the population) and the lowest being in Prince Edward Island (4.3%).

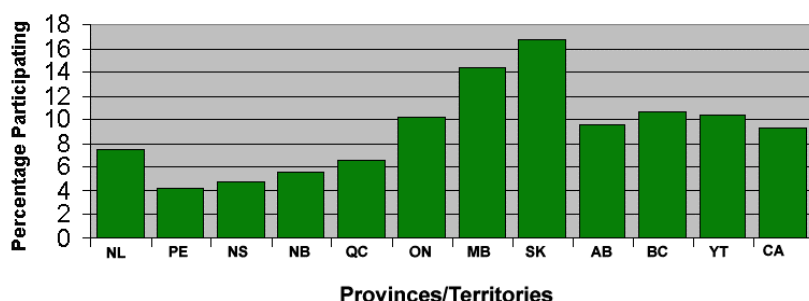


Figure 1. Powerboat Use in Canada, 1996

Source: Canada. Environment Canada. Survey on the Importance of Nature to Canadians: A Federal-Provincial-Territorial Initiative. Ottawa.

Powered watercraft covers a variety of boat types, ranging from personal watercraft (PWCs) to recreational fishing boats and large yachts (yachts with an in-board engine). The range of recreational activities is also diverse, ranging from cruising, access to cottages, to fishing and water sports.

The map shows the number of trips where a powerboat was used. Data is shown by watershed. Users should be aware that while some form of activity may take place in most of a watershed, the bulk of the activity will be found relatively close to settlements. This will be particularly true for watersheds in northern Canada.

Like many other recreational activities, powerboating developed around the beginning of the 20th century. New technology such as the development of small in-

board engines (and especially the development of outboard engines) encouraged the growth of power boating, but so did the development of relatively cheap, lightweight materials for building small boats such as aluminum and fibreglass. The expansion of cottage-owning from being mainly for the wealthy to being relatively common also encouraged small boat ownership of all kinds.

The large number of powerboats in Canada has led to many concerns about their usage. These include concerns about pollution, habitat disturbance, speed, noise, and the use of alcohol while operating a power boat. National agencies and governments at various levels are adopting guidelines and policies to address many of these issues.

Definition of underlined term

Watershed : (1) The entire geographic region supplying water to a drainage basin, river, or lake.
(2) An area of land that drains naturally into a stream or other waterway.

Map Sources

Frequency of Participation in Powerboating (days/sq km of watershed)

The units are defined as the ratio of total number of days visiting the watershed for powerboating by the area of the watershed. Statistics Canada. 1996. Survey on the Importance of Nature to Canadians.

References

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Canada. Environment Canada. 2001. Tracking Key Environmental Issues. 2001. Ottawa (http://www.ec.gc.ca/TKEI/toc/toc_e.cfm).

Canada. Environment Canada. 2001. Recreation: Importance of water for Tourism and Recreation in Canada. Ottawa (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/eau-water/>).

Federal-Provincial Task Force on the Importance of Nature to Canadians. 1999. The Importance of Nature to Canadians: Survey Highlights. Ottawa: Environment Canada (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/nature/highlights/highlite.html>).

Marsh, James H. (ed. in chief). 1985. The Canadian Encyclopedia. Edmonton: Hurtig.

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Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)

Federal Government

Environment Canada. Freshwater Web Site

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/eau-water/>

This web site gives access to the nature of water, water policy and legislation, the management of water, water and culture, and informational resources and services

Environment Canada. Quebec Region. The St. Lawrence Centre

<http://www.universadecouvrir.gc.ca/page/index.php?l=e&p=86>

The St. Lawrence Centre studies the ecosystems of the St. Lawrence River and conduct research programs with the aim of better understanding how these ecosystems function, and maintaining knowledge of the St. Lawrence River up to date.

Environment Canada. Survey on the Importance of Nature to Canadians

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/nature/>

The Survey on the Importance of Nature to Canadians, which assesses the social and economic value of nature-related activities to Canadians, drew on a nationwide partnership of 16 federal, provincial, and territorial agencies.

Environment Canada. The National Water Research Institute

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/inre-nwri/>

The National Water Research Institute (NWRI) is Canada's largest freshwater research establishment. NWRI conducts a comprehensive program of research and development in the aquatic sciences, in partnership with the Canadian and international science communities.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Canadian Hydrographic Service (CHS)

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/regions/central/science/chs-shc/index-eng.htm>

The CHS is responsible for charting Canada's 243,792 kilometres of coastline (the longest of any country in the world) and 6.55 million square kilometres of continental shelf and territorial waters (the second largest in the world) and an extensive system of inland waterways.

Other

University of Guelph. Canada's Aquatic Environments

<http://www.aquatic.uoguelph.ca/index.htm>

This site, at the University of Guelph, gives information on lakes, rivers, wetland regions and aquatic animals and plants.

Inter-agency

International Joint Commission

<http://www.ijc.org/>

The International Joint Commission is an independent binational organization established by the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909. Its purpose is to help prevent and resolve disputes relating to the use and quality of boundary waters and to advise Canada and the United States on related questions.

