



Economics of Wildlife Recreation in Texas

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Wildlife related tourism adds almost \$9 billion to the Texas economy each year and supports more than 139,000 full-and part-time jobs related to adventure, agritourism, fishing, and hunting.

The following economic and demographic information will help you better understand who participates in Texas Wildlife activities and how this industry affects the Texas economy. This data is updated every 5 years.

The report includes only activities and economic impacts that involve wildlife. Activities involving lakeside retreats, hiking, going to the beach, mountain biking, and kayaking are not included.

Economic impact

A study on the participants and their economic impact on the state found that six million people participated in some form of fish and wildlife-related recreation in Texas. The study found that anglers, hunters, and wildlife watchers spent \$8.91 billion in retail sales in 2006.

Texas residents accounted for \$8.24 billion; the remaining \$671 million was spent by out-of-state tourists.

In 2006, an estimated at 139,404 full- and part-time jobs were supported by fish and wildlife activities totaling \$4.67 billion in salaries and wages:

- ◆ 43,593 jobs from wildlife watching
- ◆ 44,119 jobs from hunting
- ◆ 51,692 jobs from fishing

The total multiplier effect from fish and wildlife-related recreation was an estimated \$15.8 billion.

- ◆ \$5.12 billion – Wildlife watching
- ◆ \$4.63 billion – Hunting
- ◆ \$4.26 billion – Freshwater fishing
- ◆ \$1.79 billion – Saltwater fishing

Who hunts, fishes, and watches wildlife?

Texas hunters are 40 years old on average; they are predominantly male, and are likely to be married. Their average household income is about \$66,000, significantly higher than the \$43,000 state average. About 59 percent have at least some college experience. Non-resident hunters typically have higher incomes and more education. Only a small percentage of hunters in Texas report that they are non-white.

In 2006, 1.1 million hunters accounted for 14 million days of hunting in Texas. Of that total, 978,697 were residents and 122,589 were nonresidents. Big game hunting had more than twice the participation of migratory bird hunting in terms of hunters and days.

Freshwater anglers in Texas on average are 40 years old, predominantly male, and likely to be married. About 53 percent of them have at least some college education and their average household income is about \$65,000. About 10 percent of freshwater anglers in Texas report that they are non-white.

Saltwater anglers average 42 years old. They are predominantly male and are likely to be married. About 56 percent of them have at least some college education and their average household income is \$70,000. Demographic characteristics are similar for saltwater anglers across most species fished. Eleven percent of saltwater anglers in Texas report they are non-white.

Wildlife watchers who are Texas residents are slightly older still averaging 49 years old. Out-of-state visitors represent the oldest group averaging 57 years old. Their household incomes average \$64,000 and \$70,000 respectively. Most of these people are likely to be married and have college degrees.

How far do wildlife watchers travel?

In 2006, approximately 956,000 people traveled more than a mile from home for wildlife viewing in Texas. Nearly four times as many

participated in wildlife viewing within 1 mile of their homes. However, the bulk of the economic impact came from wildlife viewing activities away from home.

Of the total number of wildlife watchers who traveled more than a mile from home, 778,134 were residents and 177,592 were from out of state. Altogether, these people spent 13.1 million days participating in wildlife activities other than hunting and fishing in Texas.

The Agrilife Extension Nature Tourism program helps wildlife and nature based tourism and recreation operations by working directly with landowners, businesses, community leaders and planners and the general public across four major categories: 1) Adventure, 2) Agritourism, 3) Fishing, 4) Hunting.

Whether your focus is on conservation, economics, education, policy or overall quality of life, this program can help you communicate the economic aspects of wildlife recreation and tourism in Texas.

References

The 2006 Economic Benefits of Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Watching in Texas: Southwick & Associates, Revised November 26, 2007

For more information see:

<http://naturetourism.tamu.edu>

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