



**OHIO  
BOATING**

**BIG BUSINESS IN THE BUCKEYE STATE**

**COLLABORATIVE THINKING,  
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT  
AND A PASSION TO PRESERVE,  
PROTECT & PROMOTE THE  
INDUSTRY THAT BRINGS  
ENJOYMENT & EMPLOYMENT  
TO SO MANY OHIOANS.**



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The information contained in this publication includes data derived from the 2022 Recreational Boating Economic Impact and Customer Satisfaction Study by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks & Watercraft. Industry analysis by the National Marine Manufacturing Association (NMMA) and The Ohio State University Sea Grant Business Retention & Expansion Initiative Final Report of 2023.

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## THE VALUE OF BOATING IN OHIO

Ohio ranks **fourth** in the United States in terms of registered boats, resulting in a remarkable annual **economic impact of \$6.4 billion** across the state.

Throughout Ohio, there are over 1,400 boating-related businesses and more than 380 marinas and boatyards. There are **653,136 registered boats** and an estimated **241,000 non-registered watercraft** including paddleboards, kiteboards, float tubes, and more in the state.

During the summer months, an estimated **36% of Ohio residents** actively engage in recreational boating at least once, demonstrating the widespread passion among the state's population. Ohioans enjoy approximately **315 million hours of boating** on the lakes and rivers annually.

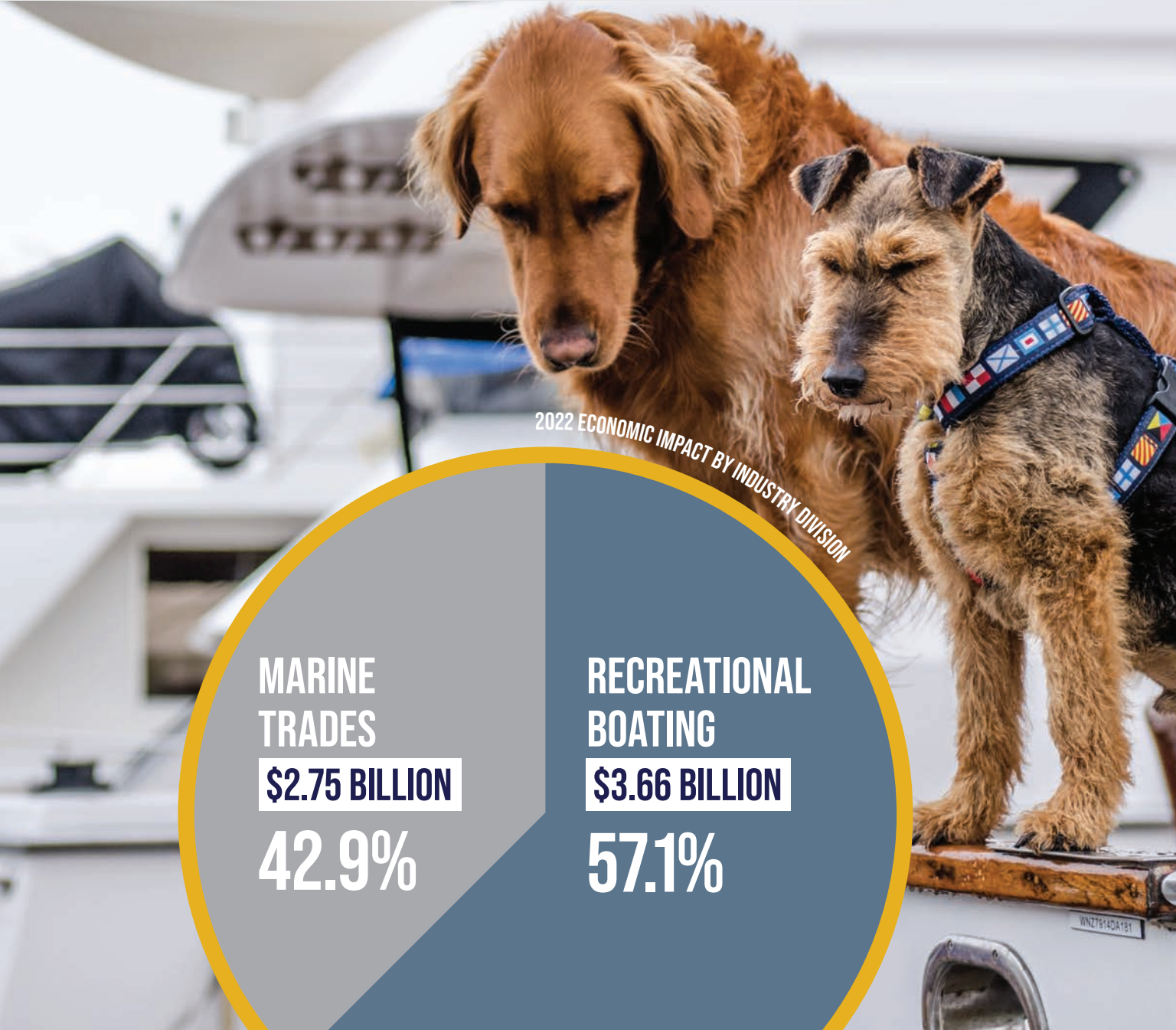
Boat buyers contribute more than **\$44 million in Ohio sales tax** and boaters pay over **\$22.8 million in state gas tax** annually.

**Ohio's marine trades industry** provides **\$2.75 billion in economic impact** and an estimated 20,300 lucrative employment opportunities. Additionally, over 25,400 indirect jobs are positively impacted by boating activities statewide.

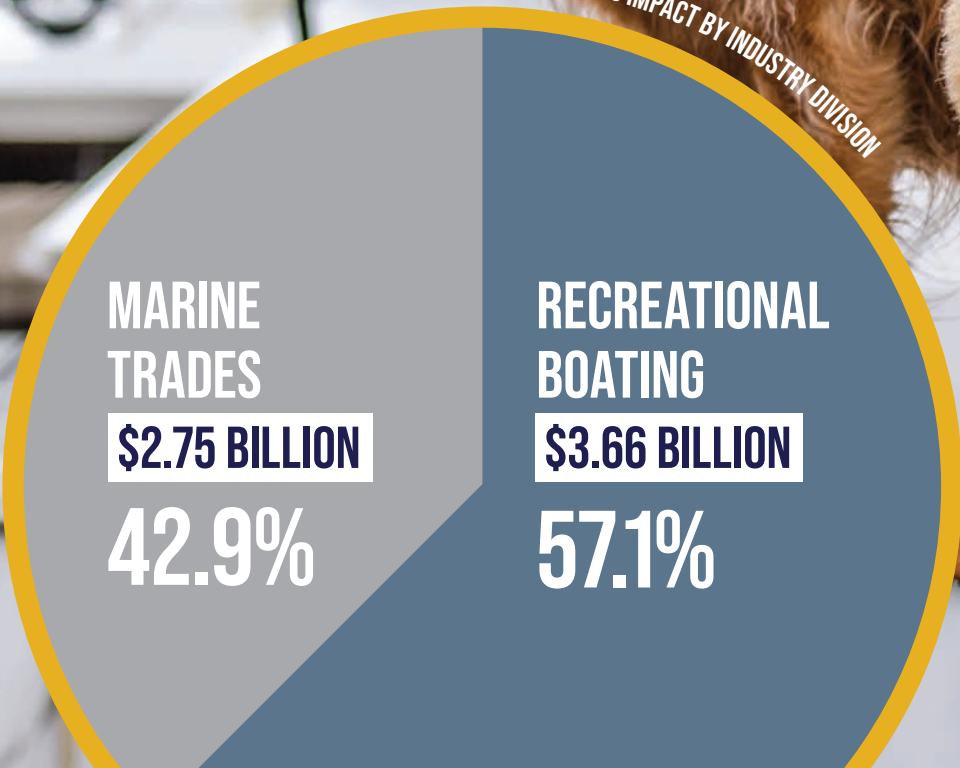
**RECREATIONAL BOATING INDUSTRY  
HAS A \$6.4 BILLION ECONOMIC  
IMPACT TO THE STATE OF OHIO.**







2022 ECONOMIC IMPACT BY INDUSTRY DIVISION



MARINE  
TRADES

**\$2.75 BILLION**

42.9%

RECREATIONAL  
BOATING

**\$3.66 BILLION**

57.1%

WNZ7914DA131

BOATING: A KEY SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT



# 2022 Marine Trades Economic Impact

**Total Output = \$2.75 Billion**

**THE THRIVING BOATING INDUSTRY IN OHIO HAS BECOME A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTOR TO JOB GROWTH, PROMISING A POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE STATE.**

**The boating industry currently employs a diverse range of residents**, catering to individuals at different stages in their professional journeys. From high school and college students seeking summer employment as dockhands in marinas to experienced and fully-certified professionals working as mechanics, assembly experts, and sales personnel in dealerships and manufacturing operations, the industry offers a wide range of roles. Like many industries today, there are countless training and career opportunities for those interested. Overall, the **boating industry directly employs over 20,300 people** and has an indirect impact on an additional **25,400 jobs in other businesses**.

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CAREERS  
IN THE MARINE INDUSTRY, GO TO  
[OHIOMARINECAREERS.COM](http://OHIOMARINECAREERS.COM)**

## BOATING PAYS ITS OWN WAY

Ohio's watercraft operations are funded through the state's **Waterway Safety Fund**, which operates on a User-Pay/User-Benefit model. **Where does the money come from?**

Less than one percent of the State's Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax is distributed to the Waterway Safety Fund. Since 2020, the fund has received an average of **\$22 million per year**.

Registration and titling fees for boats add an additional **\$6.7 million to the Waterway Safety Fund** each year.

Ohio's nationally recognized programs dedicated to advancing boating safety and education are annually awarded more than **\$5 million in federal grants** from the U.S. Coast Guard and other governmental agencies.

There is a **\$3.66 billion economic impact** of recreational boating in the state of Ohio.

**Over half of the economic impact is direct**, a value in which money is coming directly from employment, benefits, and taxes within the industry. The remaining percentage is split between indirect and induced value. The **indirect value of 23.2%** is outlined through the number of jobs supported by any business transaction of direct employment and the wages for indirect labor brought about by the direct labor. The **induced value of 25.6%** accounts for personal and household spendings within the industry.

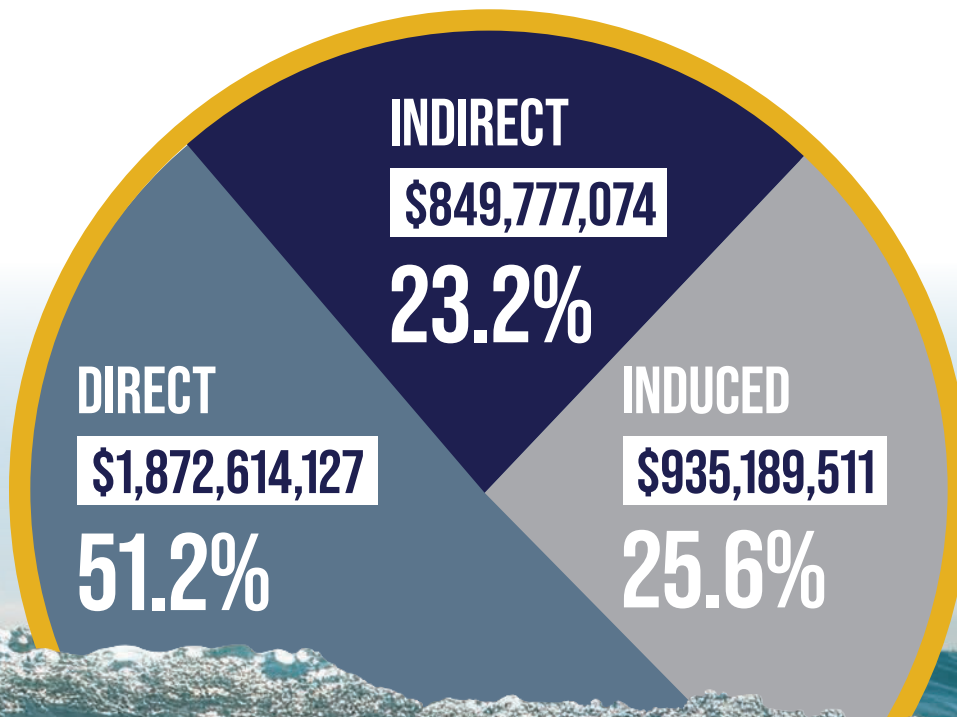
**OVERALL, THE ECONOMIC  
IMPACT OF RECREATIONAL  
BOATING IN THE STATE OF OHIO  
IS \$3.66 BILLION.**





# 2022 Recreational Boating Economic Impact

Total Output = \$3.66 Billion



## DEFINING OHIO'S BOATERS

The boating community across the state is incredibly diverse. The notion that boating is exclusively reserved for the wealthy yacht owners is far from accurate. In fact, **less than 2% of the 650,000 Ohio-registered boats fit into a high-ticket yacht category.**

In Ohio, the average boat size is under 21 feet in length, making it easily transportable by trailer. Ohio boaters typically travel an average distance of less than 10 miles, demonstrating the accessibility and proximity of waterways in the state.

There has been a notable shift in the demographic of boat owners in Ohio with a younger generation showing increasing interest in boating. **While Baby Boomers once made up the majority of boat owners, Generation X (37%) now leads with Millennials (31%) close behind. The average age of first-time owners is 46 years old.**

**MORE THAN 70% OF  
BOAT PURCHASES ARE  
ROUTINELY FINANCED**

**66%**  
OF BOATERS USING  
OHIO'S INLAND LAKES  
TRAILER THEIR BOATS

**53%**  
OF BOATERS USING  
THE OHIO RIVER TRAILER  
THEIR BOATS



## THE WATERWAYS SERVE AS VIBRANT TOURISM ENGINES, GENERATING SUBSTANTIAL REVENUE FOR THE STATE.

It is no surprise that boating has become a favored recreational activity for families across Ohio. It can be enjoyed by people of all ages and economic backgrounds, making it a truly inclusive pastime.

The waterways serve as vibrant tourism engines, attracting millions of visitors each year and generating substantial revenue for the state. Visitors engage in a wide array of activities ranging from riverfront events in the Southern region of the state to exceptional fishing opportunities in the north. The over **219 million visitors** to Ohio's waterways account for nearly **\$47 billion in spending** annually.

**14.2%** of all boaters spend **100%** of their time out on the water fishing, while **33.6%** of all boaters **engage in fishing as one of the many activities** they pursue while on the water.

**Women make up 5.4%** of primary operators of motorized crafts while representing **24.3%** of operators of non-motorized crafts.

**38%**

OF BOATERS USING  
LAKE ERIE TRAILER  
THEIR BOATS

## THE MOST POPULAR BOATING ACTIVITIES IN OHIO

FISHING

**35.2%**

CRUISING

**12.7%**

PADDLING

**12.4%**

SIGHTSEEING OR  
OBSERVING NATURE

**12.3%**

## ANNUAL BOATING EXPENDITURE FOR THE AVERAGE BOATER



DOCKING/MARINA/  
TRANSPORT  
**11.9%** \$794.45

FINANCING  
**11.4%** \$759.58

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY  
**5.6%** \$373.44

OTHER  
**3.2%** \$215.11

BOAT AND MAINTENANCE  
**\$4,510.42**  
**67.8%**

A pie chart with a yellow border showing the distribution of boating expenditures. The largest slice, representing 'BOAT AND MAINTENANCE', is dark blue and accounts for 67.8% of the total, with a value of \$4,510.42. Other slices include Docking/Marina/Transport (11.9%, \$794.45), Financing (11.4%, \$759.58), Recreational Activity (5.6%, \$373.44), and Other (3.2%, \$215.11).

**BOAT-OWNING HOUSEHOLDS  
TYPICALLY HAVE A RANGE  
OF INCOMES.**

NEW BOATERS NOW HAVE AN AVERAGE  
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF:

**20.6%**  
\$150,000 AND OVER

**18.7%**  
\$50,000 TO 74,999

**37.5%**  
\$75,000 TO 149,999

**23.1%**  
\$49,999 AND UNDER



## LAKE ERIE IS THE STATE'S GREATEST NATURAL RESOURCE

Ohio boaters commonly express that their primary use of boats is a great escape from their demanding daily routines, treasuring opportunities for socializing, sunning, skiing, or swimming. Many others mention their passion for fishing or cruising. Altogether, Ohioans share one common interest; **an appreciation of Ohio's incredible waterways.**

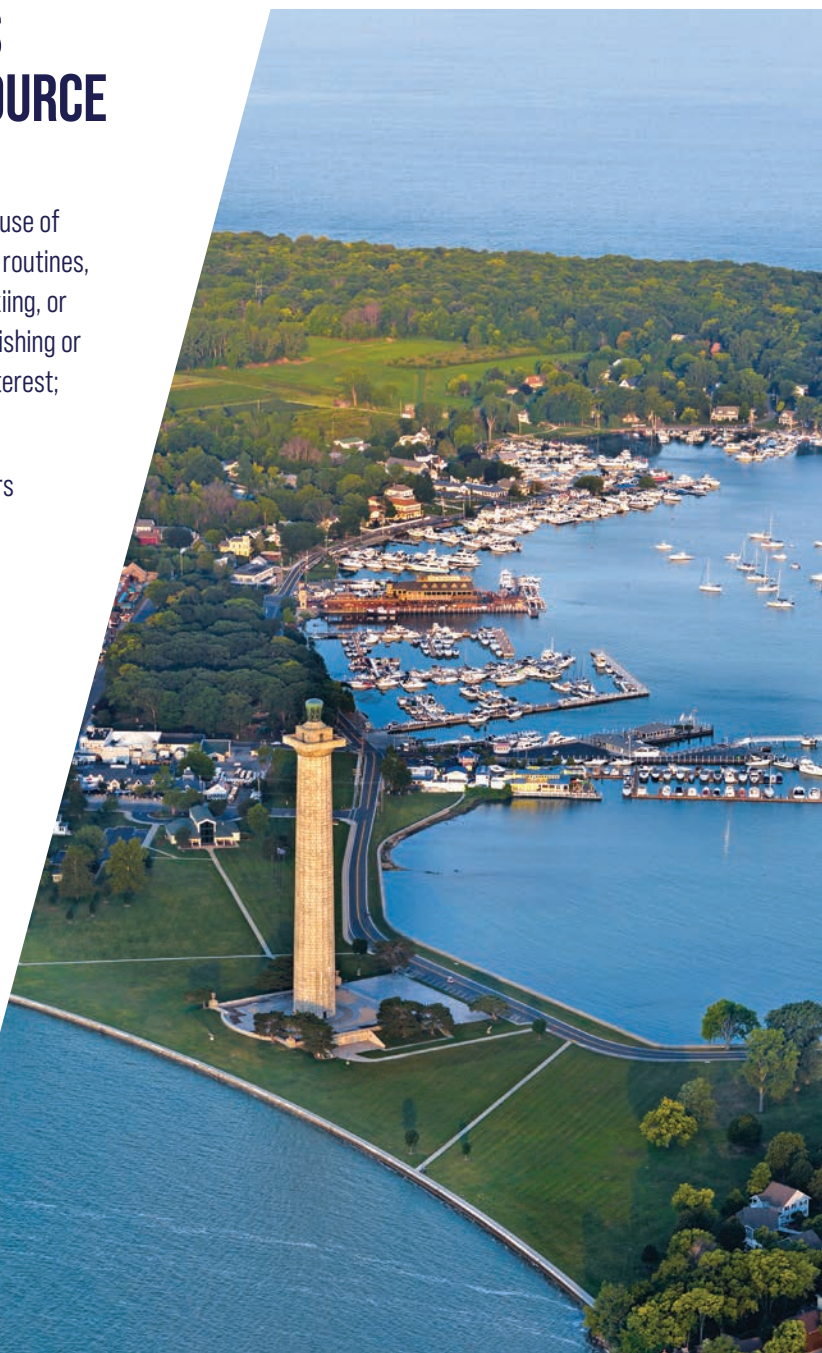
Ohio features over **4,372 miles** of inland lakes, rivers and streams.

Lake Erie's shoreline spans **262 miles across 8 counties.**

**Over 60%** of Ohio boaters travel **under 20 miles** to reach their waterway of choice.

**Over 30%** of Ohio boaters travel **fewer than 5 miles** to reach their waterway of choice.

Boat-owning households primarily engage in boating activities within their local areas, taking advantage of the **abundant water resources** available.



THE BOATING WAVE WILL CONTINUE

## ■ THE BOATING WAVE WILL CONTINUE

The recreational boating industry in Ohio has experienced significant growth in recent years. With Ohioans turning to the outdoors in record numbers, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks & Watercraft experienced a surge in registered boats, marking the highest increase seen in the past two decades.

Looking to the future, boat sales are projected to continue their upward trajectory, with a steady annual increase of 4% to 5%.

**Boating is and will continue to be big business in the buckeye state.**



## WELCOME TO THE OHIO MARINE TRADES ASSOCIATION, WHERE THE FUTURE OF BOATING EXCELLENCE BEGINS!

Over the span of six decades, the Lake Erie Marine Trades Association (LEMTA) has established itself as the leading marine business organization in Ohio. As buckeye boating has prospered, the emergence of the Ohio Marine Trades Association (OMTA) has taken the lead in propelling the industry towards even greater achievements across the entire state.

The early founders of LEMTA had a visionary goal of establishing a trade organization that would cultivate a dynamic community of marine businesses committed to tackling the challenges of the 20th century. Their vision was realized through collaboration with a sister organization, the Boating Association of Ohio, highlighting the successes of their goals and legislative initiatives.

As we embark on the exciting journey of the 21st century, a plethora of new opportunities and challenges await the boating industry, demanding our continued adept navigation. Hence, the time has come for LEMTA to transition itself to the Ohio Marine Trades Association, a state-wide organization intended to take the helm, providing unwavering leadership and advocacy, and fostering collaboration within the boating community. Spanning from the picturesque shores of Lake Erie to the majestic waters of the Ohio River, Ohio Marine Trades Association is here to serve the boating industry just as LEMTA has for 66 years.

In unity, under the collective banner of OMTA, Ohio's boating interests have joined forces to leverage strength, amplify their voice, and promote the ongoing growth and success throughout the entire state.

Without a doubt, our organization stands on a sturdy foundation, evident through the wealth of collective knowledge and experience we possess.

**The best of buckeye boating is yet to come!**



Michelle Burke

President of Ohio Marine Trades Association

Executive Director of Boating Association of Ohio



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT US AT [OMTA.COM](http://OMTA.COM)