

American Sportfishing Association

News Release

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For Immediate Release

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President Obama Signs Outdoor REC Act into Law

Bill recognizes that the outdoor recreation industry is a significant economic driver

Alexandria, VA – December 9, 2016 – In a significant step forward for the outdoor recreation industry and the sportfishing community, yesterday, President Obama signed into law the [Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act of 2016](#). The bill, known as the Outdoor REC Act, passed the House of Representatives and the Senate in November.

This new piece of legislation requires the Department of Commerce, in collaboration with the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, to assess and analyze the contributions of the outdoor recreation industry, including recreational fishing, to the United States economy. The legislation will help to ensure that sportfishing industry jobs and recreational fishing's economic impact are accounted for as part of the gross domestic product (GDP).

“At a time when jobs and economic opportunity are high on everyone’s list, the Outdoor REC bill’s passage gives the outdoor recreation industry its own metric by which to quantify its impact on the nation’s economic activity,” said [American Sportfishing Association](#) (ASA) President and CEO Mike Nussman. “We have advocated for years that recreational fishing and boating were significant economic drivers. It’s gratifying that the House and the Senate, in a bi-partisan effort, passed this bill which the President has now signed it into law.”

Nussman continued, “It’s important to note that in many rural areas, where jobs are at a premium, it’s fishing, boating and other outdoor activities that provide steady employment for many people.”

The passage of the Outdoor REC Act was needed to make sure that the outdoor economy—and it’s estimated six million jobs and \$646 billion in economic activity—receives official government recognition for years to come.

“ASA applauds Congress and the President for enacting this legislation, bringing the outdoor recreation industry’s importance to jobs and the economy into the national spotlight,” said ASA Government Affairs Vice President Scott Gudes. “We appreciate that outdoor recreation is now formally being recognized by the federal government for its impact on jobs, business and the economy.”

Gudes further said, “The Outdoor REC Act will also ensure that the outdoor industry's economic statistics will be measured in the same comprehensive way as other business sectors, such as the automotive and apparel industries. This is important because industry economic impact estimates also include data that show the non-direct impact that the activity has on the economy. For example, it would also include sportfishing’s contributions to travel and tourism, not just the purchase of tackle.”

ASA is an active part of a team representing a wide-range of outdoor industries that will work with the Department of Commerce to shape how outdoor recreation is defined and ensure our reach and impact are recognized.

In his post-campaign remarks, President-elect Trump has voiced his support for maintaining fishing and hunting on our nation’s public lands.

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The [American Sportfishing Association](#) (ASA) is the sportfishing industry's trade association committed to representing the interests of the sportfishing and boating industries as well as the entire sportfishing community. We give the industry and anglers a unified voice when emerging laws and policies could significantly affect sportfishing business or sportfishing itself. ASA invests in long-term ventures to ensure the industry will remain strong and prosperous, as well as safeguard and promote the enduring economic, conservation and social values of sportfishing in America. ASA also gives America's 46 million anglers a voice in policy decisions that affect their ability to sustainably fish on our nation's waterways through [Keep America Fishing®](#), our national angler advocacy campaign. America's anglers generate more than \$48 billion in retail sales with a \$115 billion impact on the nation's economy creating employment for more than 828,000 people.