



News for Immediate Release

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Study Shows Pennsylvania Water Trails Support Local Economies, Jobs

Harrisburg – Visitors to four Pennsylvania water trails during the summer of 2012 generated almost three-quarters of a million dollars in economic activity and supported 11 full-time jobs.

The survey, conducted by ICF International on behalf of the Pennsylvania Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, gathered data from 352 interviews of water trail visitors from July to September on four of the state's 21 water trails: the Schuylkill, Susquehanna – North Branch, Juniata, and Three Rivers.

"While this study only covered a short period of time and a small number of trails, it's a good indication that water trails do have an important economic impact in nearby communities, and are a great source of recreation that is close to home for many visitors," Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Richard Allan said.

Water trails include access points, boat launches, day use sites and some overnight camping sites on or along waterways.

The Pennsylvania Water Trails Program is a partnership of DCNR, the Fish and Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Environmental Council and the National Park Service to expand and connect the system of water trails and better market and promote them.

"Water trails make it easier for both powered and non-powered boaters to participate in the sport," John Arway, executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission said. "They provide safe access to, and information about, waterways while also providing connections to the diverse history, ecology, geology, heritage and wildlife of Pennsylvania."

The study's overall findings include:

- Nearly half of all visitors said they knew about the trail because they lived nearby;
- Almost 40 percent cited fishing as their principal reason for visiting;
- The length of the trip for 85 percent of those surveyed was one day; and
- Of those who stayed longer than a day, 50 percent planned a three-day trip.

For water trail guides and maps, visit www.fish.state.pa.us and choose "Water Trails."

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