

# ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF ARTIFICIAL REEFS

## Southwest Florida



These are findings from a recent study of economic benefits associated with artificial reef programs in a six-county region of Southwest Florida (Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte and Lee counties). The full report, *Economic Impacts of Artificial Reefs for Six Southwest Florida Counties*, TP 178, is available from Florida Sea Grant, [flseagrant.org](http://flseagrant.org).

### At a glance:

- The results from a recent survey of the economic impact of artificial reefs show extensive use of the Southwest Florida artificial reef systems by residents, visitors, private boaters and for-hire clients.
- On a daily basis, an average of more than 5,600 persons in Southwest Florida – residents and visitors included – use artificial reefs.
- Fishermen and divers who use Southwest Florida’s artificial reefs sites spend over \$253 million in the region annually.
- Survey results document that artificial reefs help support the for-hire fishing sector (guides, charter and party boats) with clients spending nearly \$90 million on artificial reef-related trips.
- Expenditures on artificial reef-related activities generated almost \$227 million in economic outputs that supported over 2,500 full- and part-time jobs.
- Visitors bring new money into local economies (\$117.58 million), accounting for almost half of artificial reef expenditures.

### Public Support for Artificial Reefs

In general, what is your opinion regarding the use of public funds to provide and maintain artificial reefs for recreation in Florida’s waters?

County	Non-Reef Users			Reef Users		
	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Oppose	Neutral	Support
Pinellas	3%	26%	71%	2%	9%	89%
Hillsborough	3%	31%	66%	5%	5%	90%
Manatee	7%	32%	61%	1%	6%	93%
Sarasota	5%	27%	68%	1%	4%	95%
Charlotte	7%	30%	63%	0%	17%	83%
Lee	7%	24%	69%	5%	9%	86%

### Annual Use of Artificial Reefs

**614,110**  
Boat Days

**2,070,592**  
Person Days

### Annual Artificial Reef Related Expenditures By Users

**\$253.35**  
Million

**\$135.77**  
Million  
(residents)

**\$117.58**  
Million  
(non-residents)

-- OR --

**\$163.61**  
Million  
(private boaters)

**\$89.74**  
Million  
(guide, party, charter clients)

### Annual Economic Impacts

**Economic Output** **\$226.93**  
Million

**Total Income** **\$121.72**  
Million

**Business Taxes** **\$16.60**  
Million

**Full/Part-time Jobs** **2,595**

