

Biden Administration to Award 20 States with Boating Infrastructure Grants

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced the agency's Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program will provide more than \$20 million in grant funding for 19 states to construct, renovate and maintain marinas and other boating facilities for outdoor recreation.

Under the BIG program, more than \$2.8 million will fund projects in 19 states under the BIG Tier 1 subprogram, and \$17 million in grants will be awarded competitively for projects in 10 states under the BIG Tier 2 subprogram. Since its inception in 2000, the BIG program has awarded over \$283 million to projects for large transient recreational boats, including funding the construction of more than 6,800 berths and other amenities benefiting boaters across most states and U.S. territories.

States receiving BIG grants include Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

"Boating Infrastructure Grants create and add public access for recreational boating and improvements to waterways across the nation, benefiting local communities and economies, wildlife and outdoor enthusiasts," said Service Director Martha Williams. "Increasing outdoor recreation access and waterway stewardship complement the infrastructure improvements coming from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and America the Beautiful initiative."

Funding for the BIG program comes from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (Trust Fund), a voluntary user pay system created by recreational boaters and anglers in 1950 to pay for critical conservation programs and recreational boating infrastructure projects. Grantees use BIG funds to construct, renovate and maintain marinas and other facilities with features for transient boats (those staying 15 days or less), that are 26 feet or more in length, and are used for recreation. Grantees may also use funds to produce and distribute information and educational materials about the program and recreational boating.

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