

# Sport fishing is big business here in Niagara County

**BY CAPT. FRANK CAMPBELL**  
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To say that sport fishing in Niagara County is an important sector of the tourism economy would be an accurate statement. In fact, a 2010 study conducted by Niagara University pegged sport fishing's economic impact at \$31 million here in the county. That study, completed 13 years ago, gave us a number to work with. However, it lacked answers to certain questions regarding the profiles of anglers that we could use to help targeted marketing efforts. We needed an updated study.

Through Destination Niagara USA, we found a company that could update the monetary value of sport fishing in addition to the answers to marketing questions: Young Strategies located in North Carolina. In the first few months of 2023, a questionnaire was developed with targeted questions and then sent out to individuals who fit the parameters that qualified those individuals. Thousands of surveys were sent out and the response rate was very good. It provided a large sample size, which would

make the study more statically significant. Over 1,000 respondents were qualified to answer the survey and supplied answers, which drove the collected data.

The results of the study were impressive as anglers spent \$58 million here in Niagara County in 2022. That is nearly double the results from the 2010 NU economic impact study.

The impact has increased, but questions still needed to be answered to keep the upward trend moving in the right direction. Where were most anglers traveling from? Where were they staying when they arrived in town? How did they find out about the fishery? Were they likely to hire a charter captain? These and numerous other questions were contained in the questionnaire, and we found answers we can work with to promote the fishery in a targeted and data driven manner.

It was no surprise to learn that the "rubber tire market" (Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York) dominated the responses, but I was not expecting that California and Florida accounted for better than 20% of the anglers who had visited

Niagara's waterways. The primary destinations in Niagara County included the waterfront communities of Wilson, Olcott, Youngstown and Lewiston, but almost one-third of respondents listed Niagara Falls as their primary destination. Almost half the respondents were inspired to visit by some form of marketing, while nearly one-third learned about fishing through word of mouth from friends and family. The charter industry is also a very important component of the local sport fishing economy, accounting for roughly \$22 million of the total expenditures.

There were several other key findings contained in the report, which included the fact that 52% of the respondents were first-time visitors, which indicates our marketing efforts are directed in the right areas. We also learned one-third of the visitors have been fishing area waters in excess of 15 years, indicating a high satisfaction rate among those anglers. Some 74% of the anglers return at the same time frame each year. The Lake Ontario Counties (LOC) Derbies prove to be the most popular contests to participate in among anglers in the study.

The response that stood out the most in the study was that 97% of the anglers were planning to return to Niagara County waters in the future. That is a remarkable statistic and one that I am most proud of, as it tells me that not only are the anglers satisfied with the fishing experience, but they are



extremely happy with their overall experience here in Niagara County. It proves that, if we can get the anglers to visit Niagara County, they will be hooked for life.

I hope to see you enjoying the local outdoors. Every week, I produce a fishing report (Niagara County Fishing Hotline) that you can access online at [\[fallsusa.com\]\(http://fallsusa.com\), or by simply calling 716-282-8992, ext. 4, to hear what's up in the world of fishing. It is updated every Wednesday. Also, check me out on the "Outdoor Beat" cable show that is on Spectrum's Channel 1303 several times each week. You can also watch it on-demand at \[www.lctv.net\]\(http://www.lctv.net\).](http://www.niagara-</a></p>
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## Niagara Falls USA markets destination abroad during Bills game

Niagara Falls USA is a destination that is well-known globally and frequently considered a bucket-list trip for visitors domestically and abroad. With the U.K. ranking at the top of the list for inbound travel to the destination, the team at Destination Niagara USA increased efforts to promote the iconic Niagara Falls in conjunction with the Buffalo Bills game in London.

A 30-second commercial with the tagline "A Destination in a League of Its Own" will air on SkySports and DAZN streaming services in the U.K. from Oct. 1-8 to coincide with the Bills game that will only be available via those channels. Sky Sports has an agreement with the NFL to broadcast games, and nearly 850,000 viewers are forecasted to see the Niagara Falls USA commercial through this platform. Those not in the U.K. can view the commercial here.

A press release stated, "The dynamic video showcases the

exhilarating power of Niagara Falls USA and the thrill of football, and draws parallels between athletic competition and travel, both serving as sources of inspiration and excitement."

Destination Niagara USA President and CEO John Percy said, "We want to create an awareness with Buffalo Bills fans in the United Kingdom that Niagara Falls USA is just a 20-minute drive from the City of Buffalo, and the two cities have activities that complement one another. Fans from other countries can travel to see a football game at Highmark Stadium and maximize their trip by visiting Niagara Falls USA as well."

In addition to the commercial, a corresponding large-format digital ad showcasing Niagara Falls USA will be featured in London's Waterloo station from Oct. 3-17. Waterloo station is one of the largest and busiest rail stations in the U.K., and is close to major tourist attractions.

The press release continued, "En-

gaging with the key commuter audience in London, this ad is expected to garner more than 1.6 million impressions. Destination Niagara USA will also launch a robust digital campaign, including Facebook and Instagram, targeting key audiences, while driving traffic to a landing page on the Niagara Falls USA website highlighting a variety of activities and experiences. Also, location targeting, known as geofencing, will be activated at Tottenham Hotspur and Wembley Stadiums during the three international NFL games this month in London.

Destination Niagara USA Director of Marketing Libby Tonellato said, "By creating a dedicated landing page for this campaign, it allows us to track the results and determine the efficacy of our marketing efforts. Currently, the United Kingdom ranks third after the United States and Canada when it comes to website traffic to the Destination Niagara USA website."

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