

Location of Marinas in New Jersey

FINAL REPORT
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Submitted by

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<p>16. Abstract</p> <p>The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) is attempting to find the locations of marinas in the State of New Jersey, and collect relevant data on their numbers and economic impact on the State. Currently, separate databases are maintained by NJ Sea Grant, the Marine Trade Association (MTA/NJ), and the NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources (OMR). The first two databases were generally considered to be the most comprehensive. The NJDOT OMR staff believe that there are additional marinas in New Jersey that have not been found using existing methodologies and requested the development of a methodology to locate these marinas.</p> <p>Several methods were used to locate marinas, starting with a search of web sites that provide listings of marinas and related businesses. This search identified a large number of potential additional marinas, but most were found to be either duplicates of existing businesses in the list (often using different names) or to be incorrect. Other resources were also checked to identify potential sources of marina data, including: NJ Department of the Treasury, NJ Department of Health, and various County Departments of Taxation, Health, and Parks and Recreation. Contacting the local tax assessor's office in each Township was the most successful means to collect information on marinas in New Jersey, but required (by far) the most effort. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection also has identified some potential approaches, though those were not available in time to be included in this research effort.</p> <p>This report contains findings taken from a sample research area composed of four New Jersey counties. The findings are also incorporated in the comprehensive database that resulted from this research.</p>			
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) is attempting to find the locations of marinas in the State of New Jersey, and collect relevant data on their numbers and economic impact on the State. Currently, separate databases are maintained by NJ Sea Grant, the Marine Trade Association (MTA/NJ), and the NJDOT Office of Maritime Resources (OMR). The first two databases were generally considered to be the most comprehensive. The NJDOT OMR staff believe that there are additional marinas in New Jersey that have not been found using existing methodologies and requested the development of a methodology to locate these marinas.

Several methods were used to locate marinas, starting with a search of web sites that provide listings of marinas and related businesses. This search identified a large number of potential additional marinas, but most were found to be either duplicates of existing businesses in the list (often using different names) or to be incorrect. Other resources were also checked to identify potential sources of marina data, including: NJ Department of the Treasury, NJ Department of Health, and various County Departments of Taxation, Health, and Parks and Recreation. Contacting the local tax assessor's office in each Township was the most successful means to collect information on marinas in New Jersey, but required (by far) the most effort. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection also has identified some potential approaches, though those were not available in time to be included in this research effort.

This document summarizes our team's efforts, and accompanies the new comprehensive database that has been created as part of this project. The new database combines the list of new marinas discovered during the research with the data that was already known to New Jersey Department of Transportation.

BACKGROUND

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's Office of Maritime Resources is the State's advocate for New Jersey's marine trade industry and plans programs based on local/regional and global factors that affect the economic, environmental, technical, political and cultural climate within which New Jersey's marine trade industry conducts business.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) currently has no database of its own through which it can monitor and support these facilities. In the past, the NJDOT used the resources that were maintained by NJ Sea Grant and the Marine Trades Association of New Jersey. Representatives of NJDOT believe that there may be more marinas in New Jersey that may not have been included in these existing databases, and that a new database that includes the most comprehensive and up-to-date list of marinas should be created for the NJDOT's use.

The Office of Marine Resources provides grant programs and other efforts to help promote and improve maritime industry in the State. An improved list of marinas in the State increases our ability to support marinas and other maritime resources that maybe eligible for these programs.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this project is to develop a better understanding of the methods that could be used to locate marinas that lie within the State of New Jersey's waters for the ultimate purpose of developing a database that will be used by the State to track these marinas for outreach and other purposes. A secondary objective of this project is to collect more information on the marinas that are already known to exist.

The NJDOT's Office of Maritime Resources provides grant programs and other efforts to help promote and improve the maritime industry in New Jersey. Ultimately, maintaining a current and accurate database of marinas in the State will improve the State's ability to support marinas and other maritime resources that may be eligible for programs conducted by Office of Maritime Resources and New Jersey's marine trade industry.

INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's objective of this project is to develop a better understanding of the methods that could be used to locate marinas and collect relevant data on their number and economic impact.

This report documents the results of the research conducted for this effort, which included:

1. A scan of other State practices: A quick scan of efforts made by other States to track marinas and maintain databases was conducted. Information was gathered from State DOT websites and informal conversations with staff at agencies similar to the NJDOT OMR.
2. The identification of data collection methodologies: A set of potential methods for collecting additional data on marinas were identified, including internet research, State agencies with some authority over marinas (Department of Treasury, Department of Environmental Protection), County and municipal tax offices, tax rolls, and County and municipal parks and recreation departments.
3. The collection of data on marinas: A list of marinas was identified using data collection methodologies identified in Task 2. Work steps included were:

- Defining data collection parameters for the methods identified in Task 2, including specific counties, data collection items and identification of marinas with special remarks.
- Conducting testing of each relevant method to determine the time and cost required to collect the data.
- Based on initial test results and discussions with NJDOT OMR, compiling data collections into a list of marinas identified in the State. This list included any marinas already identified by NJDOT OMR, as well as marinas identified above.
- Development of a recommended data collection method.
- Development of a report that provides a list of marinas and the methods used to collect the data, including a summary of the effectiveness of the methods used.

SUMMARY OF WORK PERFORMED

Scan of Other State Practices

A quick scan was conducted of efforts undertaken by other States to track marinas and maintain their databases. Using readily available information from the internet and contacting various authorities in other States, potential candidate States with marina programs were identified.

Several States were contacted including New York, California, Florida, Maine, and Washington, D.C. Most of these States compiled databases for locating pump out stations, or as a part of promoting a Clean Marina program. The States contacted used survey methods for collecting marinas listing in their respective States.

Review of Existing Data

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT's) primary goal is to find and list the marinas located within its waters, and secondarily, to collect some information on these marinas. The focus was to identify the name of the marina, address, contact information, and number of slips. More detailed data collection such as employees, revenue, etc. was to be gathered if feasible.

The research effort began by combining three individual lists of marinas in the State, compiled by the NJDOT Office of Marine Resources (OMR), the New Jersey Sea Grant Program, and Marine Trades Association of New Jersey (MTA/NJ), eliminating any duplicates. The combined list contained 661 marinas.

This list was then supplemented by internet research and contacting a variety of governmental and related agencies in the State.

Additional Data Collection

Internet Based Research

Several internet-based sources were reviewed to identify additional marinas, including:

- Jersey marinas (<http://www.jerseymarinas.com/>)
- Charternet.com (<http://www.charternet.com/>)
- Marinalife.com (<http://www.marinalife.com/>)
- Marinas.com (<http://marinas.com/>)
- New Jersey Bass Devils (<http://www.geocities.com/njbassdevils/>)

Although some information was available from these sources, none of the sources provided detailed information about how they gathered information on marinas or whether their information was current.

An additional 80 marinas were identified from the web that were not already included in the State's list, and were unconfirmed using the sources below. New Jersey DOT contact with these agencies identified significant limitations to this method. Of the 80 marinas identified, 31 had numbers that were disconnected or did not answer the phone. Only 24 were confirmed and an additional 14 remain outstanding (either because they had no numbers to contact or were not contacted).

State Agencies

Several State agencies were contacted to identify potential additional sources of marinas, including the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Health & Senior Services (NJDHSS), the Food and Drug Safety Program, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Only the Department of Treasury and Department of Environmental Protection provided information.

Within the Department of Treasury, the Division of Taxation was contacted to request the listings under the business code: 2728, Marinas, Boat & Rentals, Bait. However, the department was not able to provide a list. Contacts to this agency were referred to the local Property Tax Section and the New Jersey Association of County Tax Boards, who in turn suggested contacting individual County tax departments.

NJDEP contacts suggested that the Division of Land Use Regulation maintains an index of records for the properties in the State of New Jersey from which information on

marina properties could be extracted. However, the Division of Land Use Regulation recently moved its offices and the NJDEP was unable to provide any information within the timeframe of this study.

County Agencies

After pursuing contacts at each of the State agencies without identifying a source for a list, further contacts were made at several County departments of Taxation, Health, and Parks and Recreation. The counties contacted were: Hudson County (12 Municipalities), Ocean County (33 Municipalities), Bergen County (70 Municipalities), Atlantic County (23 Municipalities), and Burlington County (40 Municipalities). The tax departments of each County suggested contacting the individual Townships and Municipalities directly. The specific contacts made to request information were as follows:

Hudson County

- The Division of Planning responded that they deal with roads and buildings and have no database on marinas.
- The Division of Engineering responded that they have no database on marinas.
- The Division of Parks responded that marinas are not under their scope and therefore they have no database on marinas.

Bergen County

- The Board of Taxation had no information regarding marinas.
- The Department of Parks had no information regarding marinas.
- The Department of Planning & Economic Development had no information regarding marinas.
- General Services suggested contacting each of the individual 40 Municipalities within the County directly.

Burlington County

- The Department of Taxation has a commercial list of all business, but marinas are not classified in it. It could not provide any useful information.
- The Department of Building & Ground did not respond.
- The Department of Engineering deals with roads and buildings only, and has no specific information for marinas.

- The Department of Resource Conservation suggested contacting the U.S. Coast Guard and Maritime Administration.
- The Department of Land Development and Planning suggested contacting the Department of Economic Development and Regional Planning, which did have a list of marinas including names, addresses, and websites.

Camden County

- The Parks Department has only one marina operated by the County. They suggested contacting MTA/NJ for an updated list.
- The Camden County Improvement Authority has a database that is out of date. They requested the findings from this study when it is concluded, and they will inform NJDOT of any changes in their database.

Atlantic County

- The Department of Regional Planning & Development provided their most updated list with names, addresses, phone numbers, longitude, latitude, pump out, boat slips, and ramp/rail.

Ocean County

- The Department of Planning has a list of Marinas and Boat Basins located in Ocean County originally provided by the New Jersey Sea Grant Extension Program. This source is therefore redundant of the information used in the study.

Contacting Coastal Services

The U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the New Jersey State Police - Marine Services were also contacted but none was able to provide a list of marinas. These agencies may not be able to share information due to security issues.

The Army Corps of Engineers maintains a database of all properties developed in the coastal region or wetlands. However, this database does not have information about current use, only property owners' names and addresses. The Corps suggested that it would be a lengthy and laborious process to extract the relevant information from this database, and, when complete, will only produce a partial list of marinas.

Other Departments and Organizations

Agencies working in specified jurisdictions such as parks, lakes, river, coastal area, etc. were also contacted. The NJ Section of the Palisades Interstate Park along the Hudson riverfront in Bergen and Hudson Counties is an example of an organization contacted.

Several lake authorities including Lake Hopatcong and Green Wood Lake were also contacted. However, contacting individual Municipalities produced more useful results.

Municipal Tax Assessor’s Offices

The most effective, but most time consuming, approach was to contact the tax assessor’s office of each Township or Municipality. 131 Townships or Municipalities within 4 of the counties (Hudson, Bergen, Ocean, and Cape May) were contacted and each generally had information available on the marinas within their jurisdiction. Municipal tax assessors had information for 179 marinas, of which 144 were in the State’s existing lists and 35 marinas were not. New Jersey DOT contact with these marinas yielded questions about 2 of the 35.

Table 1 summarizes the additional marinas identified by the two primary sources noted above (local government and the web) and the success rate of NJDOT staff in reviewing the data received.

Table 1 - Review of marina data collection

	Source for New Marinas	
	Local Government	Web
Additional marinas identified	53	80
NJDOT reviewed	18	66
OK	6	24
Questioned	10	11
Disconnected/No answer	2	31
Not reviewed	35	14

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the research effort:

- Most State and County government agencies in New Jersey do not maintain information about marinas that would be useful to NJDOT OMR.
- The NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Land Use Regulation does maintain an index of records for the properties in the State of New Jersey from which information on marina properties could be extracted. However, this information was not available during the timeframe of the research effort.
- County departments of taxation, parks and recreation, and planning and development generally did not have information about marinas located within their jurisdictions, though a few did. In particular, the Department of Land Development and Planning in Bergen County and the Department of Regional Planning & Development in Atlantic County had information on marinas. Other counties made use of some of the same information used in this study.
- Municipal tax assessor offices were the best source for identifying marinas in the State, but the process to collect the information is time consuming. Each tax assessor office must be contacted individually, and not all were responsive.

Based on the research effort, the researchers recommend developing a process to collect data from individual municipal tax assessors. Potential methods of outreach could include:

- Conducting targeted outreach to municipal tax assessors in areas with known data gaps, such as the lake counties in Northern New Jersey. This would involve a relatively low level of effort, depending on the number of areas targeted by this outreach. Each Municipality would likely require between 2 and 4 person hours of time to locate the tax assessor, conduct the outreach, and check the results from the outreach against the existing list.
- Regular phone, paper, or web-based surveys of municipal tax assessors, perhaps on a rolling 2 or 3 year basis to minimize the cost of annual implementation. This approach should produce a reasonably comprehensive list, but at a larger costs. Significant initial effort would be required to identify all of the municipal tax assessors with water bodies. A total of 185 Municipalities were identified with marinas in the research effort and it is possible that there are Municipalities are missing. Addressing one third of the list of municipal tax assessors each year is likely to require approximately 180 person hours per year, yielding an complete update every three years. This approach is more comprehensive, but requires substantially more effort and many of the marinas identified will be already known to OMR. If this method is chosen, a web-based approach using free online surveying products may

help to minimize the cost. However, a web based approach may not be appropriate until relationships are developed between the OMR and municipal tax assessors.

- The OMR could convene a working group of municipal tax assessors and, potentially, County tax offices, to determine the most effective way to gather information in the future. Gathering the information at the County level would be far more efficient for NJDOT, but would require new information to be collected by County tax assessors that is not currently available. Setting up and hosting a meeting of tax assessors is likely to require 40 to 60 person hours to identify potential participants, secure their participation, develop material, and host the meeting. Web-based conferencing methods could be used to minimize costs. The OMR could work professional County or municipal task assessor groups to help organize this group. Future years would likely require somewhat less effort.

Given the resources required, it is recommended that the OMR initially conduct targeted outreach to individual municipal tax assessor offices. This will allow the OMR to develop relationships with the tax assessors that may enable more efficient and comprehensive data collection on marinas in the future.