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**Trends in nature-based outdoor recreation participation in the U.S. —  
Part III**

**Trends in Non-Motorized Boating—  
Paddling, Floating, Rowing, and Sailing**

**A RECREATION Research Report in the IRIS Series<sup>1</sup>**

**July, 2010**

**H. Ken Cordell<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> The Internet Research Information Series (IRIS) is an internet accessible science report series covering outdoor recreation statistics (RECSTATS), wilderness research (WILDERNESS) and other human-dimension and demographics research (DEMOSTATS) related to natural resources. This research is a collaborative effort between the USDA Forest Service's Southern Research Station and its Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Athens, Georgia; the University of Georgia in Athens; and the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee.

<http://warnell.forestry.uga.edu/nrrt/nsre/IrisReports.html>

<sup>2</sup> The author is H. Ken Cordell, Pioneering Research Scientist, Southern Research Station, Athens, GA 30602.

## Introduction

This is Part III of the 2010 IRIS National Assessment Series. Part I presented trends for the past decade for 7 composites of nature-based outdoor recreation activities. These composites included visiting recreation and historic site, viewing and photographing nature, backcountry activities, motorized activities, non-motor boating, hunting and fishing, and snow skiing and boarding.



**Figure 1. Canoeing in the Okefenokee Swamp (Photo by Ken Cordell, November 2007)**

Part II described trends for five activities in the viewing and photographing nature composite. This series of IRIS research reports are adapted from the forthcoming Forest Service RPA Assessment (<http://www.fs.fed.us/research/rpa/>). The data source is the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) (Cordell et al., 2004).

Shown in the line graphs below are 3-year moving averages of total annual number of activity days on which participation in non-motorized boating activities occurred across the U.S. population of persons 16 or older. These moving averages are indexed to the estimated number of days in the year 2000, where the index value for 2000 is shown as zero. Graphing for subsequent years shows whether there was an upward or downward trend, above or below the 2000 zero base line. More detail on this data analysis approach was given in Part I (<http://warnell.forestry.uga.edu/nrrt/nsre/IRISRec/IRISRec16rpt.pdf>).

## Summary of Trend

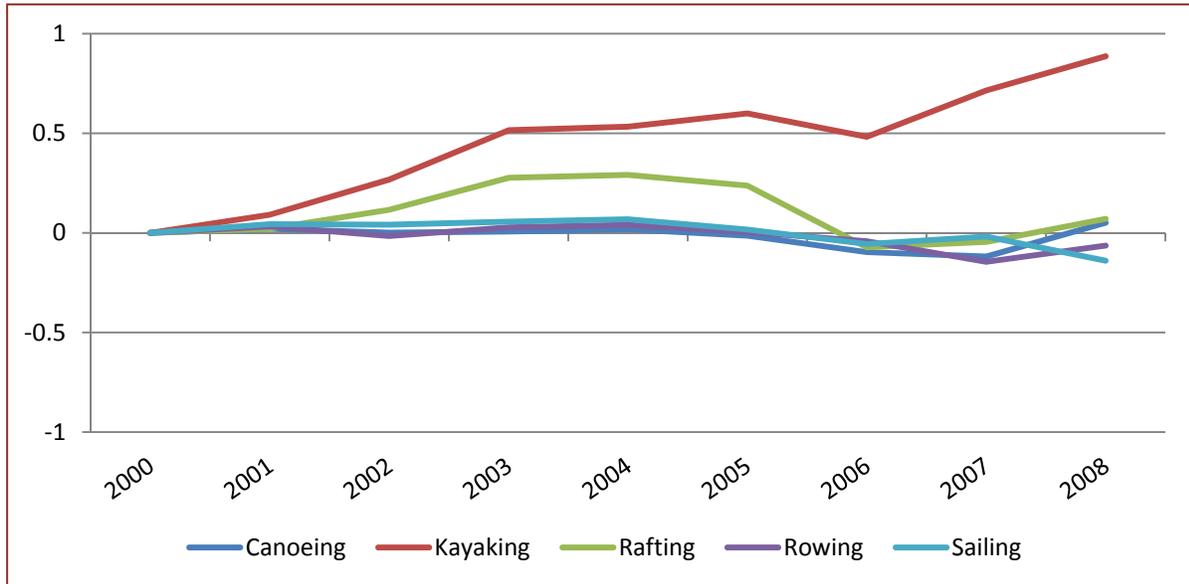
Non-motorized boating activities include paddling (canoeing or kayaking), floating (rafting), rowing and sailing (figure 3).

Through this decade canoeing, rowing and



**Figure 2. Kayaking on the Lake Jocassee in Upstate South Carolina (Photo by Ken Cordell, June 2007)**

sailing maintained about the same level of total days of activity as in 2000. Kayaking and rafting showed moderate growth up through the middle years, but by 2006, rafting had dropped below its 2000 level before rebounding in 2008. Kayaking grew steadily throughout the decade with only a slight dip in 2006.



**Figure 3—Indexed moving average of total activity days for non-motorized boating activities for year 2000 to 2008**

### References

Cordell, H.K., Betz, C.J., Green, G.T., Mou, S., Leeworthy, V.R., Wiley, P.C., Barry, J.J., and Hellerstein, D. 2004. Outdoor recreation for 21st century America: a report to the nation: the national survey on recreation and the environment. State College, PA: Venture Publishing, 293 p.