Labor Market Spotlight
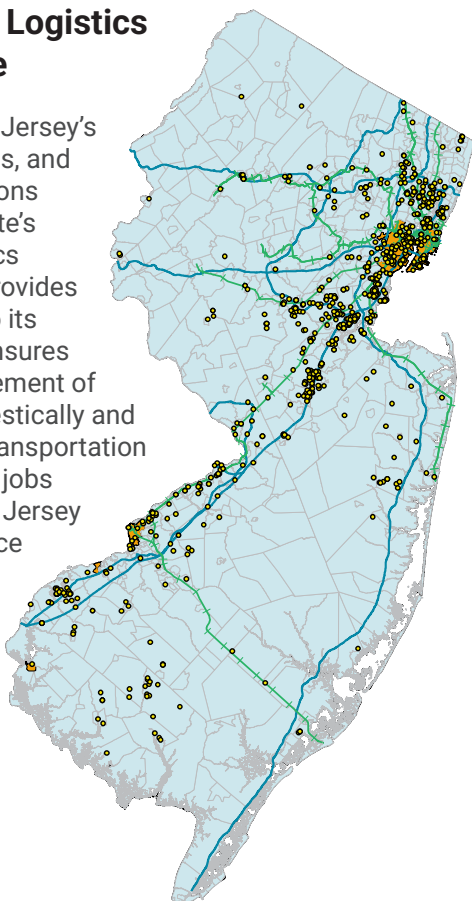
New Jersey's Waterways Help Keep the Economy Flowing

New Jersey's waterways are a cornerstone of the state's economy, fueling trade and job creation. The Port of New York–New Jersey—the largest international port on the East Coast—supports nearly 580,000 jobs across a 31-county region[1], underscoring its broad economic impact. The South Jersey Port Corporation manages key facilities that handle essential commodities such as steel, cement, and cocoa beans. With direct access to a major cargo airport, the national freight rail system, five Foreign Trade Zones[2], and 39,000 miles of public roadways, New Jersey's ports are uniquely positioned to support the efficient movement of goods. These assets not only enhance the state's competitiveness but also solidify its role as a critical hub in the global supply chain.

New Jersey's Logistics Infrastructure

This map of New Jersey's highways, rail lines, and warehouse locations highlights the state's integrated logistics network, which provides critical support to its busy ports and ensures the efficient movement of goods both domestically and internationally. Transportation and warehousing jobs increased in New Jersey by 22 percent since 2018 highlighting the strength of its logistics network.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE NUMBERS

22%
Transportation and Warehousing employment: Up 22% since 2018

8.7 MILLION
Twenty-foot Equivalent Units[3] moved through the Port of NY–NJ (2024)

5
Foreign Trade Zones supporting NJ's transportation network

31.1%
US population within a day's drive of NJ

3.2 MILLION
Short Tons[4] handed by South Jersey Port Corporation (2022)

* Water-related industries include fishing; boiler, tank and shipping container manufacturing; ship and boat building; water transportation industries and support activities; and marinas.

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$667.3 BILLION
Freight exported to other states (2024)

$66.7 MILLION
Total wages paid by New Jersey's marinas in 2024

15.7%
Percent of NJ covered by water

375.4 THOUSAND
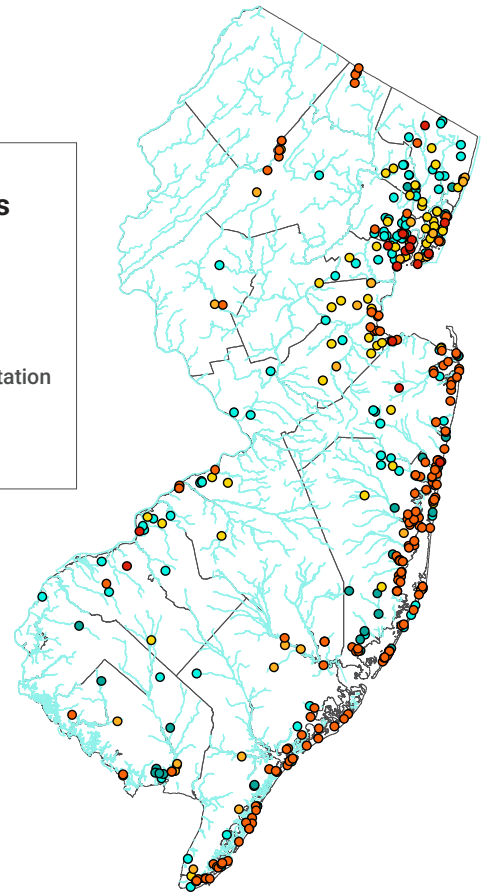Number of riders who boarded ferries in NJ, 2022[5]

Industry on the Water

New Jersey's waterways, which cover 15.7 percent of the state, are a vital economic engine, supporting both recreational and commercial activity. From fishing and sightseeing cruises to marinas filled with boaters, these waters drive a wide range of industries. Additionally, ferry services further enhance connectivity by offering commuters and leisure travelers a scenic and efficient alternative to road and rail travel.

Business Establishments
- Ports
- Marinas
- Boat Repair
- Water Transportation
- Fisheries
- Fish Markets