

SOUTH CAROLINA WATER QUALITY & WATER RECREATION PERCEPTION REPORT

JAN 2025



University of South Carolina

Institute for Clean Water

Richardson Family SmartState Center for Economic Excellence in Tourism and Economic Development

1. Perceived Water Quality

Scores range from 1 (worst possible) to 10 (best possible); higher is better.

Daily use

Perceptions about drinking water supply and water in streams and creeks in the neighborhood.

- Residents: **6.56** / 10

Recreational use

Perceptions about water in rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds for recreation activities.

- Residents : **6.66** / 10
- Visitors : **7.64** / 10
- Combined : **7.15** / 10

2. Perceived Risk of Water-based Recreation in South Carolina

Scores range from 1 (low perceived risk) to 7 (high perceived risk); lower is better.

Affective risk perception

Feelings about participating in water-based recreation activities at lakes and rivers in South Carolina (afraid, anxious, worried).

- Residents : **2.97** / 7
- Visitors : **2.43** / 7
- Combined : **2.70** / 7

Cognitive risk perception

Perceived likelihood of encountering contaminated water and experiencing health issues when participating water-based recreation activities at lakes and rivers in South Carolina.

- Residents : **3.35** / 7
- Visitors : **2.97** / 7
- Combined : **3.16** / 7

3. Overall Satisfaction of South Carolina Recreationists and Visitors

Scores range from 0 (unsatisfactory) to 100 (satisfactory); higher is better.

Water-based recreations in South Carolina

Overall, how satisfied were you with your recreation activity experiences at lakes and rivers in South Carolina?

- Residents : **83.07** / 100
- Visitors : **82.91** / 100
- Combined : **82.97** / 100

Travel experience in South Carolina

Overall, how satisfied were you with South Carolina as a travel or vacation destination?

- Visitors : **82.69** / 100

*Notes. Based on survey of 750 respondents in South Carolina (Residents) and 750 respondents in the rest of the United States (Visitors).
Data were collected between January 26 – March 2, 2025.*