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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GE Makes Contribution to Grow Boating Rising Tide Fund**

CHICAGO, April 24, 2006 - - Two GE business units, GE’s Commercial Distribution Finance and GE’s Retail Sales Finance divisions, recently became Double Platinum-Level contributors to the Grow Boating Initiative’s Rising Tide Fund with a \$150,000 combined donation—\$50,000 a year over a three-year period.

“Grow Boating provides the entire industry with an opportunity to cost-effectively deliver the message across the U.S. that boating is a way to make life more exciting and fun, while at the same time helping the industry improve the boating experience,” says Bruce Van Wagoner, president of the Marine Unit for GE-Capital Solutions, Commercial Distribution Finance. “Attracting new boaters to the water will enable the entire industry to grow and benefit.”

“The marine dealers and manufacturers we serve are able to offer customers flexible financing options, making boating more affordable and attractive for new enthusiasts and existing owners alike,” explains Ed Arienti, president of RV/Marine for GE Consumer Finance’s Retail Sales Finance unit. “We are proud to support the Grow Boating Initiative, which encourages people to enjoy our natural resources, drives growth for our clients and expands interest in the industry.”

Established in 2006, the Rising Tide Fund is a means by which industry stakeholders can pledge voluntary contributions at varying levels of commitment to the Grow Boating Initiative. The pledge commitment lasts for three years and can be made at the following levels: Participant (\$1-\$2,999); Bronze (\$3,000-\$14,999); Silver (\$15,000-\$29,999); Gold (\$30,000-\$74,999); Platinum (\$75,000-\$149,999); Double Platinum (\$150,000-\$224,999); and Triple Platinum (\$225,000-\$299,999).

[GrowBoating.org](http://GrowBoating.org) | [DiscoverBoating.com](http://DiscoverBoating.com)



“GE has been a leader in the Grow Boating Initiative from day one,” says Thom Dammrich, president of the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA). “Their support and financial commitment, along with the involvement of their leadership teams are helping ensure the success and broad buy-in of this critical industry initiative.”

The Grow Boating Initiative is an integrated effort among organizations with an interest in the recreational marine industry to promote the boating lifestyle and improve the boating experience. Comprised of a strategic set of programs focusing on all areas of boating including the national Discover Boating marketing campaign, water access, dealer and product certification and research, the Grow Boating Initiative is designed to increase participation in boating and improve sales of marine products and services. For more information visit [GrowBoating.org](http://GrowBoating.org).

For additional information about The Rising Tide Fund, or to download a pledge form, visit [GrowBoating.org](http://GrowBoating.org) and click on “The Rising Tide Fund” link, or contact Grow Boating manager Freya Olsen at (312) 946-6255; [folsen@nmma.org](mailto:folsen@nmma.org).

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