

County Profiles
Gloucester/North Shore Sub-region

5.6. Gloucester/North Shore Sub-region

5.6.1. Essex County

Background¹

Essex County, created in 1643, is located on the Atlantic coast, in northeastern Massachusetts. Its neighboring counties are the Massachusetts counties of Suffolk to the south and Middlesex to the west, with the New Hampshire County of Rockingham at its northern boundary.

The county seat is Salem.

Cities, Towns & Communities include: Amesbury, Andover, Beverly, Boxford, Byfield, Danvers, Essex, Georgetown, Gloucester, Groveland, Hamilton, Haverhill, Ipswich, Lawrence, Lynn, Lynnfield, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marblehead, Merrimac, Methuen, Middleton, Nahant, Newbury, Newburyport, North Andover, Peabody, Rockport, Rowley, Salem, Salisbury, Saugus, Swampscott, Topsfield, Wenham and West Newbury.

Fishing Dependency

Gloucester and the North Shore Sub-region is ranked, according to the employment indices used herein, eighth (out of eleven) for fisheries dependency. The reason for its low ranking compared to the other sub-regions is the availability of alternative employment in the area. This ranking is countered by the other indices we have been using in the study and confirms our intuition that employment indices tell only a portion of the story. Furthermore, the employment figures themselves are questionable. The 1990 Equal Employment Opportunity figures for Essex County, Massachusetts listed 81 fishing vessel captains and 645 "fishers" (19 Hispanic and 626 white), far greater numbers than indicated in the general U.S. 1990 Census data.²

Significantly, Gloucester itself ranks third (following New Bedford and Portland) in the index of fishing infrastructure differentiation. Furthermore, it is 21st (out of 36) on the gentrification scale. The profile of Gloucester describes a community that is committed to its fishing industry, whose cultural, human and economic capital are all linked to the industry.

Pure numbers of fish landed and the value of those landings also indicate the significance of the fishing industry to Gloucester. *Fisheries of the U.S., 1999*³ reports that Gloucester landed 107.1 million pounds of fish in 1998 (11th of the 50 major U.S. ports) and 49.7 million pounds in 1999. Though the lower weight slid the port down to a ranking of 22, the value of the landings per pound doubled in 1999. In 1998, the landings were worth \$28.4 million whereas in 1999, the landings were worth \$25.9 million.

¹ http://home.att.net/~Local_History/MA-Essex-Co.htm

² <http://sasquatch.library.orst.edu/>

³ *Fisheries of the United States*, 1999. U.S. Dept of Commerce, NOAA, NMFS. Prepared by Fisheries Statistics Division. Available at <http://www.st.nmfs.gov/st1/fus/fus99/index.html>

Community Profiles
 Essex County, Massachusetts
 Gloucester / North Shore sub-region

5.6.1.1. Gloucester

Background

Gloucester's beauty and bounty was described by the French explorer Samuel de Champlain in 1606. Later, Captain John Smith followed Champlain and filled his hold with cod which he sent to Spain for sale. Rumors of the ease of catching fish in what is now known as the Gulf of Maine began to spread.

Gloucester's history is inextricably tied up with commercial fishing. Indeed, it was founded in 1623 by competing fish companies from Dorchester and Gloucester, England who sent fishermen, salters and a ship's carpenter to exploit the rich cod resource off what was later called Cape Ann. It was during the 1800's that Gloucester became renown for its "uniquely beautiful two-masted schooners [that] sailed forth to the northwest Atlantic fishing grounds from Virginia to Greenland."⁴ Fishing in the "glory days" was immortalized in books such as *Gloucestermen*, revealed in stories about legendary figures such as Howard Blackburn, and depicted in the oils of Fitz Hugh Lane, the film *Captains Courageous*, the statute of the Man at the Wheel and the Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Memorial.⁵ The harsh reality of those years is memorialized by the plaque in Town Hall that lists the thousands of fishermen who never returned from their fishing trips. In 2000 the Cenotaph Memorial was erected beside the Man at the Wheel listing over 5000 names of Gloucester fishermen "who went down to the sea."

Cod and haddock fished from dories with hook and line was salted.⁶ Mackerel fishermen jigged for their prey until seine nets became popular after the 1860's. Swordfish was harpooned when possible. Halibut, a flat fish that could weigh 600 pounds, was iced and sold fresh, before it was over-fished to commercial extinction before the turn of the 20th century. Gloucester was also noted for fish glue made from cooked skins in the late 1800's.⁷

Newfoundlanders, Danes, Swedes and Portuguese were prominent fishermen in Gloucester before the Civil War. Italian fishermen were fishing out of Gloucester by the early 1900's.⁸ Later immigration waves from Sicily brought additional fishermen to the city. Finns first came to quarry granite later some turned to lobster fishing.

The famed New England shipbuilding industry developed as fishermen sought prey further offshore. The lush, nearby forests of the North Shore provided the timbers; planking and the faultless masts to help fishing vessels grow in size and numbers. By 1720, the small early boats had evolved to fore-and-aft rigged craft, later to be called schooners. At the same time the fishing vessels were enlarged, support services grew to provide the increased need for ice, salt, sails, and other requisite gear and provisions. Shoreside support services providing transportation, processing and marketing paralleled the growth of the vessels and increased catch.

⁴ Joseph E. Garland. 1995. Gloucester on the Wind, American's Greatest Fishing Port in the Days of Sail. Dover, NH: Arcadia Publishing.

⁵ James Brendan Connolly authored *Gloucestermen* as well as numerous other novels and stories depicting the Gloucester fishing industry. Sebastian Junger wrote *The Perfect Storm*. The Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Memorial is not yet installed, but the full-size model has been created and fund-raising is almost complete. The dedication is scheduled for August 2001.

⁶ <http://www.downtosea.com/>

⁷ Joseph E. Garland. 1995. Gloucester on the Wind, American's Greatest Fishing Port in the Days of Sail. Dover, NH: Arcadia Publishing.

⁸ Joseph E. Garland. 1995. Gloucester on the Wind, American's Greatest Fishing Port in the Days of Sail. Dover, NH: Arcadia Publishing.

By the 1940's Gloucester fishermen were dragging for redfish as far away as the Grand Bank from eastern-rigged side trawlers.⁹ When the price of fine-grain white oak soared after World War II, fishing vessels were most often constructed from steel. In the late '60's and early '70's, Gloucester boats were competing for fish with a huge array of distant water fleets. "In the '80's whale cod disappeared from inside."¹⁰

Slade Gorton started out in the textile business in Rockport, but a fire that destroyed the Annisquam Cotton Mill in 1833 eventually led him to fishing and preparing salt cod and mackerel for sale.¹¹ As his sons joined the business, the company started packing salt cod in wooden boxes and mackerel in kegs. In 1906 Slade Gorton & Company merged with John Pew & Son, David B. Smith & Co. and Reed & Gamage to form Gorton-Pew Fisheries Co. The new company had a fleet of 39 vessels, the largest fleet operated by any company on the Atlantic Coast. The company grew to 55 vessels with a thousand crewmembers, 15 wharves and 35 buildings with 6 other plants along the coast employing another 1000 ashore. In 1922, the Italian government purchased a million-dollar shipment of salt cod, but when Mussolini overthrew the government, the cod was confiscated and never paid for so Gorton's was forced into bankruptcy. The company survived however and in 1954 became Gorton's of Gloucester, then the Gorton Corporation in 1964.

Gloucester native, Clarence Birdseye developed techniques to freeze fish and vegetables for home storage and consumption. He founded General Seafood Company, predecessor to General Foods. As freezers became popular, Gorton's expanded its frozen fish business with Birdseye's help.¹² In 1995-96, Gorton's was purchased by General Mills, then sold to Unilever. Today, Gorton's is among the top ten seafood suppliers in North America according to WorldCatch News, with \$350 million in sales in 2000.

For many years, a portion of Gloucester's fleet landed pelagic species in great quantity. A rendering plant provided a place for the gurry and other waste products of fish processing. Eventually, Gloucester's fleet started focusing on the "cleaner" groundfish species for the fresh fish market, the processing plants started to use imported frozen fish blocks to produce their breaded products and the city began to diversify its economy. While Gloucester's fishing industry still contributes a significant portion to the city's economy, light manufacturing and tourism are considered growth industries for the city. With easy rail and highway access to Boston, Gloucester also serves as a bedroom community for many Boston workers.

In addition, artists have long been attracted to Gloucester's picturesque working waterfront. "Since the mid-nineteenth century, wind-weathered Rocky Neck, a small peninsula across the harbor on Cape Ann, has been one of America's oldest art colonies. Here, with the breathtaking views of the sea and town, famous painters like John Singer Sargeant, Fitz Hugh Lane, Edward Hooper and Winslow Homer came to work in the many buildings that date back to the Civil War. The dozens of galleries, studios and a traditional air of authenticity keep Rocky Neck a veritable working art colony."¹³ "In addition, Cape Ann Symphony makes its home in Gloucester as does the critically acclaimed Gloucester Theatre Company, whose director and playwright, Israel Horovitz, is known on and off Broadway."¹⁴

Governance

Mayor and City Council

⁹ Peter K. Prybot. 1998. *White-Tipped Orange Masts, Gloucesters Fishing Dragger*. Gloucester, MA: The Curious Traveller Press.

¹⁰ Key respondent interview.

¹¹ http://www.gortons.com/lore/lore_gortonstory.html

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <http://www.northshorechamber.org/>

¹⁴ <http://www.state.ma.us/dhcd/profile/107.HTM#DEMOGRAPHICS>

*Demography*¹⁵

Population

According to the 1990 census, there were 28,716 individuals in Gloucester, 13,827 male and 14,889 female. The population had grown to 29,267 by 1996.

Age Structure

Under 5 comprised 6.6 percent of the population (1,888 persons), 5-14 years old comprised 11.8 percent (3,386), 15-44 years 45.5 percent (13,079), 45-64 years 20.7 percent (5,936) and 65 and over 15.4 percent (4,427).

Education

There were 4,283 enrolled students in the 1991-92 school year. According to the 1990 Census, 75.1 percent had a high school diploma or higher. Nineteen percent had a Bachelor's degree or higher.

In addition to Gloucester high school, students could enroll in the North Shore Regional Vocational school or Essex County. Colleges nearby include: Salem State College, Salem; Merrimack College, Andover; North Shore Community College, Danvers; Essex Agricultural Institute; and Bradford College, Haverhill.

Housing

There were 13,125 housing units with a median value of \$178,056. Owner occupied units were 57.8 percent of the housing.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

The census indicates that 28,273 persons (98.52 percent of Gloucester's population) was white, 272 (1.04 percent) Hispanic, 65 Blacks, 25 American Indians and 73 Asians.

Economic Context

Income

Per capita Income in 1989 was \$16,044 and the median household income was \$32,690.

Employment

According to DET data, there were 15,541 employed in 1987 out of a labor force of 16,734 (unemployment rate of 7.1 percent). Unemployment soared to 14.2 percent in 1992, then fell steadily to 4.4% in 1999 when 15,313 out of 16,011 were employed.

The largest employers paying unemployment compensation in 1992 were the City of Gloucester (950 employees); Gorton's, seafood processing (650 employees); Addison Gilbert Hospital (600 employees); Varian, computer chips manufacturer (450); and Gloucester Engineering (300).¹⁶

From the 1990 Census:¹⁷

INDUSTRY

Universe: Employed persons 16 years and over

Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (000-039)...	548
Mining (040-059)...	11
Construction (060-099)...	790
Manufacturing, nondurable goods (100-229)...	1462
Manufacturing, durable goods (230-399)...	1742
Transportation (400-439)...	746
Communications and other public utilities (440-499)...	249
Wholesale trade (500-579)...	687

¹⁵ <http://govinfo.library.orst.edu/cgi-bin/> and <http://state.ma.us/dhcd/iprofile/107.htm>

¹⁶ <http://state.ma.us/dhcd/iprofile/107.htm>

¹⁷ <http://venus.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/979329826>

Retail trade (580-699)...	2338
Finance, insurance, and real estate (700-720)...	751
Business and repair services (721-760)...	748
Personal services (761-799)...	446
Entertainment and recreation services (800-811)...	202
Professional and related services (812-899):	
Health services (812-840)...	1128
Educational services (842-860)...	917
Other professional and related services (841, 861-899)...	1197
Public administration (900-939)...	508

OCCUPATION

Universe: Employed persons 16 years and over

Managerial and professional specialty occupations (000-202):	
Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations (000-042).	1967
Professional specialty occupations (043-202)...	1912
Technical, sales, and administrative support occupations (203-402):	
Technicians and related support occupations (203-242)...	479
Sales occupations (243-302)...1405	
Administrative support occupations, including clerical (303-402)...	2169
Service occupations (403-472):	
Private household occupations (403-412)...	32
Protective service occupations (413-432)...	207
Service occupations, except protective and household (433-472)...	1796
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations (473-502)...	406
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations (503-702)...	1882
Operators, fabricators, and laborers (703-902):	
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors (703-802)...	934
Transportation and material moving occupations (803-863)...	538
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers (864-902)...	743

By 1999, according to the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training, the numbers employed in the category of "agriculture, forestry, fishing" has slipped to 238. The categories that showed increases in employees included: Transportation, Communication & Public Utilities, Finance, Insurance & Real Estate, and Services.

Transportation and Access

Gloucester is the northeastern terminus of State route 128, the highway that circles the Boston metropolitan area. State routes 127 and 133 also serve the city. The closest international airport is in Boston, about 35 miles away, though nearby Beverly has a Municipal Airport.

Commuter rail service to Boston is available and a fixed route bus service runs between Gloucester and Rockport.

Hospitals, museums, libraries

- Addison Gilbert Hospital
- The Sawyer Free Library maintains an excellent collection of fiction and nonfiction pertaining to the fishing industry.
- Cape Ann Historical Museum has a permanent exhibit devoted to the Gloucester fishing industry. In addition there is a library/research center with historic maps/charts of fishing grounds and a variety of out-of-print books on early fisheries-related research.
- North Shore Arts Association
- *Adventure*, 1926 Gloucester fishing schooner, is used for educational outreach. It is currently being renovated.

- The Man at the Wheel and the Fishermen's Memorial Cenotaph—The well-known Man at the Wheel statue now has a companion memorial, a series of granite and bronze plaques surrounding the statue that list 5,368 Gloucester fisherman lost at sea between the years 1623 and 2000.
- Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Memorial is an acknowledgement of the important roles women have traditionally played in the fishing industry. Though not yet erected on its base on the opposite side of the drawbridge from the Man at the Wheel statue, a full-size model of the statue has been constructed and fund raising is on target.¹⁸

Fisheries Profile

Community

Gloucester fulfills the definition of a fishing community on the basis of central place theory. Fish are legally sold ex-vessel to a dealer, processor or the public; fishing support services are provided; there are public facilities providing dockage; fishing people satisfy their daily and weekly social and/or economic needs here, and some fishermen and their representatives participate in fisheries resource management.

Furthermore, "everyone in Gloucester knows a fisherman. That makes a tight-knit community. Everyone is devastated if someone is lost at sea. The fishermen's wives all know each other, share the same hardships and advise each other."

For many years, Gloucester's fishing community was divided by ethnic group and gear type. Gillnetters, predominantly "Yankee," and trawlers, who were predominantly Sicilian, had numerous gear conflicts. Each group blamed the other for the conflicts. Each claimed the other did not care about the resource or about anything except catching as much fish as they could. Gillnetters were said to be greedy for bottom, setting up nets to reserve their territory even when they could not possibly pull all the nets they set within a reasonable time frame. When there were reports and/or rumors about net liners, about tows through fixed gear, and other violations of regulations or etiquette, the offending trawlers were harshly criticized and the whole group was stigmatized. Negative stereotypes about the Gloucester fleet were voiced in ports all along the East Coast. By 1998, however, the stereotype had radically changed. "Some of the guys have turned around 100% in their attitude." Gloucester fishermen of both gear types and ethnic groups said that the majority of fishermen who remain in fishing are "real fishermen" who want long-term sustainability of the industry.

Whether or not Gloucester should be classified as "fisheries-dependent" is not consistently answered in the affirmative. Several respondents noted that the city is sufficiently diversified to survive even if the fishing industry does not. However, the image of Gloucester as a fishing community remains very prominent. The fishing industry is also well represented in public policy debates so to-date those with opposing interests have not successfully changed zoning regulations and other restraints on property use that might affect maritime businesses. For example, a proposal for the development of a mall on waterfront property that had long been vacant was defeated, as was a proposal to create condominiums out of a waterfront former paint factory. Those who argue for opting out of the "designated port area" status say that the economy should dictate the best use of the waterfront, that with the diminishment of the fishing fleet, the whole harbor does not need to be saved for the fishing industry.

For a time, complaints were voiced that the mayor was too enthusiastically endorsing growth in the tourist trade and light industry while ignoring the importance of the fishing industry to Gloucester. One respondent noted that the mayor should have more consistently appeared at New England Fishery Management Council meetings, for example, to point out the impacts of regulations on the "infrastructure, oil businesses and groceries, all the things we subsidize and use." Another respondent noted that the mayor came very close to

¹⁸ The statue was unveiled and dedicated in August 2001.

losing his reelection campaign and was thereby reminded that the community values the fishing industry. He then realized that he had to be perceived as supportive of the industry if he wanted to continue serving as mayor. While the city is strengthened economically by its diversity, clearly the working waterfront remains a core value that might be underestimated by simple arithmetic.

One respondent expressed a fear that Gloucester will become a bedroom community for Boston where newcomers can buy a waterfront house, yet still be close enough to attend cultural events in the larger city.

Commercial fishing and fisheries-related employment

*Harvesting structure*¹⁹

The federal permit files for 1997 list 226 vessels for Gloucester. Sixty to seventy groundfish boats remained in Gloucester in the summer of 1999, perhaps 15 percent of which lobster in the summer. Seventy-five to 80 lobster boats fish in federal waters, 50-60 in state water. A half-dozen urchin boats worked out of Gloucester for awhile, but have since left, presumably for other ports. The midwater fleet consists of 4 to 6 vessels that go herring fishing. "Longliners are pretty well out of business with the Jeffrey's closure."

"Some of the lobstermen are "heavy hitters," typically averaging 800 to 1000 pots and stocking a half million dollars annually." There are a couple of boats offshore crabbing.

Estimates of numbers of harvesters varied widely ranging from 250 to 300 for Gloucester, 400 to 800 for Cape Ann (including Gloucester, Beverly, and Essex).

Processing structure

Original home to the founder of frozen fish, it is fitting that Gloucester has retained a sizable presence in the frozen fish processing and marketing sector. The plants do not rely on fish landed in Gloucester, instead many import frozen blocks of fish primarily from Canada, Iceland, and Norway. The blocks are cut, breaded, and packed for sale as fish sticks and fish portions. These are sold locally and nationally to schools and other institutions, supermarkets and fast-food restaurants.

Some of the plants are partially owned by vertically integrated, international companies. One of these relies on its own vessels to provide individually quick frozen (IQF) pollock for some of their products. New Zealand whiting, cod and haddock are also used, purchased from dealers, not directly from fishing vessels. Typically, this company produces 40,000 pounds of fish sticks and another 10-30,000 pounds of other products per day. Products are sold to retail businesses (supermarkets) and to food service. The company also has co-pack arrangements with some larger companies.

When running at capacity, there are 125 employees per day, but only two percent of these are permanent, full-time. Only a few of the managers are from Gloucester. The line workers are usually recruited by an employment service in Chelsea. Nevertheless, a majority of the workers are loyal to the company and typically have been working there for seven years for minimum wage. All of the line workers are Hispanic, predominantly Guatemalan and Salvadoran. The gender mix of workers changes with the season. In the summer women are in the majority because many of the men work at construction, but men predominate in the winter. Few people in Gloucester are willing to work for minimum wage. Only Gorton's, that is unionized, pays significantly higher wages for fish packing and processing.

Quality is considered extremely important to this company. A HACCP plan is operative and key employees have been trained (using Spanish tapes as necessary). Workers are required to wear hairnets and uniforms, neither jewelry nor gum is allowed and there are daily inspections to assure compliance.

¹⁹ From key respondent interviews

The challenge of the future as seen by this company is diversification. Consumption of seafood is down and the fish industry has not been as creative as the chicken and beef industries. Value-added seafood may resolve some of the problems, but given the lack of product globally, business success is likely to remain a struggle.

With a few exceptions, fresh fish processors now cut fish primarily for local customers, shipping the rest of their whole fish to Boston for processing.²⁰ One exception is a company with 18 employees that specializes in the highest quality fish for the high-end natural foods market. Herring is another exception since it is generally sold whole as bait to lobster fishermen.

When it looked like herring was going to make a “come-back” in Gloucester, several plants began to upgrade their facilities to comply with HACCP standards so that the herring could be sold as food for humans. One dilapidated plant was bought and renovations begun to service two herring vessels, one a 130-foot boat, rigged for pair trawling and converted to refrigerated seawater (RSW). Two foreign companies had expressed an interest in herring and the company also expected to sell to canneries and wholesale lobster bait dealers. Tote by tote sales of salted bait was not what was intended. Nevertheless, when Gloucester fractured over competing visions of what was the proper use of the Jodfrey State Fish Pier and how herring should be caught, handled and sold, and fishermen had difficulty locating the volumes of herring that had been anticipated, the company was forced to sell herring bit by bit.²¹

Herring processors were not the only companies affected by fishing regulations. One small company that was trying to expand its services to include groundfish processing paid \$80,000 to upgrade its facilities for HACCP certification just before the cod quotas were instituted.

Wholesalers and other Support Services
Gloucester Display Auction

Opened in December 1997, Gloucester Seafood Display Auction was modeled on the Portland Fish Exchange. The higher prices generated for higher quality fish at the auction has helped sustain the Gloucester harvesting community despite regulatory pressures. Fish sold through the auction is bought for distribution nation-wide. “Now we are getting the prices our fish deserve!” “The scales are accurate and you pay 5 cents per pound for the amount of fish you take out, regardless of what price you obtain for the fish. It didn’t used to work that way. The more expensive the fish was, the more it cost you to take it out.”²²

However, some disgruntled wharf owners complain that they cannot compete with government subsidized services such as the State Fish Pier and the auction. One respondent noted that the auction was undercutting not only the wharf owners, but also the ice company and trucking companies as well. Others however had an opposing view. Space in the newly constructed “Stalls Building” on the State Fish Pier is intended for small, start-up businesses. This is supposed to serve as an incubator to help seafood companies and others so that the local companies reap the benefit of value-added processing, for example. Unfortunately, rents in the Stalls Building are high, so some small companies are not willing to risk moving into the building.

²⁰ Daniel Georgianna. 2000. *The Massachusetts Marine Economy*. Dartmouth, MA: University of Massachusetts.

²¹ Fuller description of the Gloucester Herring Corporation’s rise and fall can be found in these articles in *Commercial Fisheries News* by Hall-Arber: “Gloucester Display Auction Now in Business,” January 1998; “Herring, Mackerel-What’s the Opportunity,” December 1997; “Visions of the Future Clash over Gloucester Herring Proposal, Factory Trawlers,” June 1997; “Gloucester Herring Plant Proposal Draws Fire,” May 1997; “Herring and Gloucester: Hope for the Future,” October 1996; “Gloucester Pursues Fish Auction Development,” October 1996

²² The price has since gone up to 7 cents per pound.

In June 2000, Global Food Exchange bought the Gloucester auction. “It is the largest daily auction of fresh seafood in North America with annual volume in excess of 20 million pounds (and current annual gross transaction value in excess of \$20 million.²³ According to one respondent, fishermen (in 2001) are starting to complain that buyers are not paying fair prices and some have stopped going to the auction.²⁴

Americold is a cold storage facility that handles frozen fish products for local, regional and national companies.

Oil companies that specialized in fuel for fishing vessels for as long as 40 years have had to diversify since the fleet contracted and DAS restrictions limit fuel use of the remaining vessels. Fifty percent of the business of at least one of these companies is now provision of home heating oil.

Dealers who once exclusively handled finfish are now buying and selling lobsters. Shellfish is also handled, bought, shucked and packed. HACCP must be routinely followed, as well as state and interstate sanitation and tracking guidelines. Shellfish commonly handled include surf clams, steamers, propellers, little necks, cherrystones, oysters, scallops, razors and sea urchins.

Trucking

Each of the dealers owns or leases a truck or two for product distribution.

Infrastructure

Gloucester’s inner harbor is a “designated port area” and thus is legally bound to maintain marine-dependent use. The Jodfrey State Fish Pier also insures that the fishing industry will continue to have at least some access to waterfront amenable to loading and landing, etc. Nevertheless, fishing industry participants express concern about the condition of the city’s piers and wharves. Many are quite old and suffer from a lack of maintenance. The wooden piers cost as much as \$60,000 annually to repair.

Some owners complain that the display auction has attracted the majority of the vessels so that the wharf owners are no longer able to charge 10-14 cents a pound landing fees (the auction currently charges 7 cents). Since there are fewer vessels and limits on fishing days, the fuel sales are down, as are all the other support services. Consequently, the wharf owners are unable to earn sufficient profit to pay for upkeep on the wharves with only marine-related business. These owners are lobbying for the right to diversify their property, selling or leasing to non-marine-dependent users. The harvesting sector fears that such diversification will lead to gentrification and will price fishing-dependent use out of business. Once the access to the waterfront is lost, when the fish stocks rebound, there will be nowhere for the fleet to go.

Privately owned wharves typically provided free dockage, storage facilities for gear and trash removal. Some are now charging for dockage, though at least one respondent noted that he could not charge to tie-up to his poorly maintained pier.

Employment (year-around and seasonal)

Estimates of employment and earnings in seafood processing and wholesaling in Gloucester in 1997 were 1,581 employees earning \$53 million.²⁵ These numbers could be low since some workers are self-employed and therefore not included in DET (Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training) data and because the plant workers are often supplied by contracts with employment services.

DET lists 281 employees in the category “agriculture, forestry, fishing” in 1997, a marked

²³ <http://www.fishfacts.com/sfdpriv/news1/20000614GAGA.html>

²⁴ Key respondent interview

²⁵ Ibid.

contrast to the 532 noted for 1989, the year of the Census. The data for 1999 shows only 238 employees in this category. Again, these numbers are not strictly reliable for estimating the numbers of fishermen, both because the category includes agriculture and forestry and because many, if not most, fishermen are self-employed.

Respondents estimated that there were 700-800 households directly dependent on fishing (including lobstering) and 1000 to 1200 indirectly dependent.

Most of fishermen are full-time though with the restrictions some supplement their income with such work as automotive mechanics, snowplowing, and construction. A few have been retrained for computer work or truck driving. Some still work in the fishing industry, in sectors other than harvesting. Rowe's Machine Shop and the cab company employ a number of former fishermen. Another former fisherman opened dry-cleaners and one a restaurant.

Nevertheless, fishing has proved to be an honorable occupation for a wide array of individuals. Furthermore, some of those who were unable to pursue a formal education have become excellent fishermen. Certain respondents also pointed out that the small boat inshore fishery should be encouraged both because it usually is a smaller-scale fishery (less damaging to habitat and the stocks) and because the individuals involved are often family-oriented.

Species, Seasonality

Niche fisheries include hagfish (slime eels), shrimp, whiting, and herring. Urchins and dogfish were targeted but availability and regulations (respectively) have eliminated the option to do so. Some of the lobstermen have tried bringing in crab as well, but the infrastructure doesn't exist. In Maine, spouses developed a cottage-industry picking crab for lobstermen, but this has not happened in Gloucester. Some do hire recent immigrants (often Asian or Hispanic) to pick the crab.

Hooking is a winter fishery because dogfish are here in the summer. At \$.15 per pound, dogfish aren't worth the bait and hooks. Furthermore, dogfish has been closed to fishing, except for a limited bycatch, in an effort to increase its biomass.

The majority of fishermen are full-time groundfish fishermen or lobstermen. A handful of lobster fishermen are civil servants or teachers who lobster part time or only in the summer. Others snowplow in the winter.

As the regulations became stricter, some fishermen went scalloping for 3 to 8 weeks, just to stay busy. The problem is that all the little fisheries that used to be used to make a year's pay are gone, either because the stocks have moved off, been fished out or the regulations have made them inaccessible.

Nevertheless, among the day boats, there is still quite a bit of gear and target species switching. One vessel, for example, will fish for whiting for a time, switch to groundfishing, then back to whiting. Another boat will drag from January to May, then go lobstering, another switches day-to-day, dragging one day, pulling lobster pots the next.

Whiting is labor intensive and the returns are poor. Typically the price is as little as 15 to 20 cents a pound, with an occasional spike up to 65 or 70 cents per pound. "It takes a lot out of the boat and engine, because it's the constant 'go.' It's a hard way to make \$300 to \$400 a week."

Landed species include:

Groundfish: cod, dabs, winter flounder, yellowtail, haddock, pollock, hake, halibut, Grey sole

Small mesh: whiting, squid, shrimp

Pelagics: herring, mackerel

Crustaceans: crab (as bycatch), lobster

HMS: bluefin tuna, swordfish

Others: striped bass, dogfish, skate, sea urchins (few), monkfish, bluefish, slime eels, sea cucumbers, menhaden (when around).

Other shellfish: conch/whelks (few), soft-shell clam, mahogany clams (not money-makers), quahogs, periwinkles (not commercially), mussels (small quantities), razors, oysters

Seaweeds are being harvested by a few, but “they’re keeping it real quiet.”

Form of ownership (e.g., owner/operator; corporation)

Trawlers tend to be owner-operated or family-owned and operated. Two herring vessels are run by hired captains.

Recreational fishing and employment

Recreational fishing has increased along with marinas and leisure craft. In addition, whale watching is an active business. Head and charter boats are allowed to fish in some areas that are closed to commercial fishermen. This engenders considerable resentment, especially among the small boat commercial fleet that has no alternative fishing ground that is feasible to reach.

There are quite a few well-to-do people who come up from Long Island and elsewhere to chase tuna.

Cultural role of fishing

History and museums

Cape Ann Historical Society has a permanent exhibit that focuses on the history of fishing out of Gloucester. In addition, there is a small library in the building for research.

Ethnicity in the fisheries

Gloucester’s fisheries have always reflected waves of immigration. Initially, the fleet was English. Later, immigrants from Norway, Ireland, Newfoundland became fishermen. Evidence of the Portuguese legacy remains in some of the city’s place names and in both the name of one of the Catholic churches, Our Lady of the Good Voyage and in its prominent statue that depicts Our Lady holding a fishing vessel. The trawler fleet of Gloucester is now predominantly Sicilian. Gillnetters and hook fishermen tend to be mixed “Yankee” stock.

Respondents estimated that ninety percent of the fleet was born in the area, 60 percent have fishing backgrounds.

Religion

Among the Sicilian population, the Roman Catholic Church is extremely important. Annual events such as Saint Peter’s Fiesta and the Blessing of the fleet are city-wide celebrations that extend beyond the boundaries of Catholicism, but publicly declare the association of fishing with the earliest founders of the religion. Less public, but nevertheless significant for their role in the flow of social capital, are the annual Novenas practiced by various fishermen’s wives. Friends and relatives participate in nine days of prayer and singing to favored patron saints. The culmination of the Novena is a feast for which participants contribute food and share in eating.

Kinship & family

Since its founding, Gloucester has been a fishing community. Several generations of each ethnic group who moved through the fishing industry continued the tradition. Some of the members of the fishing community in Gloucester can count eight generations of forebearers who were in the industry, here and in Sicily.

As in other communities, the children of fishermen today are obtaining more education and most are opting for careers other than fishing. There are a few examples of individuals who have gone on to obtain college degrees, but have been drawn back to the way of life they

grew up with. Nevertheless, the regulations, the public's negative image of fishermen coupled with the expense and uncertainty associated with fishing constrains growth in the harvesting sector. A common lament among those who worked hard to build up their business for their children is that they have had to face extreme hardship due to restrictive regulations only to confront a corresponding lack of enthusiasm for continuing the business among their offspring.

Where fishermen go for coffee

The Dory Café
Dunkin Donuts

Where fishermen go for beer

St. Peter's Club is popular among the Sicilian fleet members. The Crow's Nest gained renown as the gathering place for swordfish boats' crews when Sebastian Junger published his book *The Perfect Storm*. Now many tourists go there.

Fishing related organizations and their roles in the community and fishery

Commercial fishing associations

Massachusetts Fishermen's Partnership (State-wide membership)

The Partnership takes on issues that fishermen of different ports, gear and target species can support. One of their first tasks was to respond to the identified need of health care for fishermen and their families. The Fishing Partnership Health Plan was developed with some federal and state aid and the support of Caritas Christi, the Roman Catholic health organization. Fishermen and their families on the plan are served by Tufts Medical.

While remaining actively involved in maintaining the health plan, the Partnership continues to seek cross-cutting issues. Encouraging collaborative research between fishermen and scientists and facilitating discussions among fishermen and other stakeholders about the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act are just two of the tasks they have undertaken lately.

Cape Ann Lobstermen's Association

Cape Ann Vessel Association

Gloucester Fishermen's Association

Gloucester Inshore Fishermen's Association

Gulf of Maine Fishermen's Alliance (was Cape Ann Gillnetter's Association)

Fishermen's Wives associations

Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association, founded in 1969, lobbies for the interests of the fishing industry (e.g., against oil-drilling on Georges Bank and ocean dumping, as well as for regulations that protect fishing communities) and promotes innovation in the industry (e.g., value-added seafood, cookbook). Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute of Harvard University maintains the records of the GFWA as part of its permanent collection.

Other

Gloucester Fisheries Commission was established by the City Council in 1956 to support the fishing industry. The Mayor, a City Councilor, 4 at-large community members and 7 members of the fishing community are named Commissioners.

Massachusetts Fisheries Recovery Commission created by Gloucester State Senator Bruce Tarr, Representative Anthony Verga and New Bedford State Senator Mark Montigny—promotes collaborative research

Gloucester Initiatives is a grassroots organization comprised of fishing industry members, local activists, and concerned citizens that was formed initially to investigate the pros and cons of allowing the 300+ foot factory trawler *Atlantic Star* to be based in Gloucester and the building of a foreign-owned plant on the State Fish Pier.

Unions

Gorton's is unionized.²⁶

Fishing-related programs and services*Other NGOs*

Gloucester Fishermen and Families Assistance Center is overseen by Commonwealth Corporation (formerly the Corporation for Business, Work and Learning), a semi-private, workforce and economic development agency. The Assistance Center began when emergency funds were allocated to help fishermen and their families affected by groundfish regulations in 1994. Then, as now, the Center directs fishing families to various services including retraining programs, GED tutoring and English as a second language classes.

Greenpeace maintains an office in Gloucester specifically to focus on fisheries issues.

Cape Ann Commercial Fishermen's Loans provides money to qualified fishermen who have been refused by two commercial lending institutions.²⁷

Extension programs

Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Program maintains an office on the Fish Pier. The program most frequently interacts with the fishing industry during the harbor planning process.

Training institutes

Gloucester Fishing Families Assistance Center helps fishing family members obtain training for alternative employment.

Coast Guard

Gloucester's **Coast Guard** station is part of the U.S. Coast Guard's First District and the Coast Guard Group Boston.

Perceptions of the Fishing Community²⁸

Importance of fishing to the community

Opinions ranged from "slightly" to "very important." Most acknowledged that the city would "go on" even if fishing disappeared, but most of the key respondents noted the city's long history of fishing as well as considering fishing important to the community's image and, consequently, to its attraction as a picturesque destination for tourists, summer residents and artists. (See discussion under "community" above for a fuller discussion.)

Boundaries

The people of Gloucester tend to maintain most of their contacts within Gloucester. Exceptions include the fishermen's representatives who attend Council meetings and NEFMC Committee meetings all over the region and members of the Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association who travel the region and beyond to speak on behalf of the industry and/or to offer cooking demonstrations. Some young people joke about not being able to get anyone from their parent's generation to "go over the bridge." There is also a sense of community in both Rockport and Pigeon Cove. But Gloucester is the market and supplier for the industry in the area.

²⁶ One respondent recalled being paid \$3/hour for packing fish sticks when the minimum wage was \$1.50. Her mother and aunts also worked in the plant. Middle-aged to older women dominated the fish-packing jobs.

²⁷ Fishermen, bankers and businessmen are on the Board. Loans carry a 4 percent interest rate, with boats and homes used as collateral. \$2.5 million was loaned out for five years; there have been no delinquencies in repayment.

²⁸ Based on key informant interviews

Capital contacts can be divided up into those encompassing social capital (e.g., visit friends, go for recreation, go for vacation, visit relatives, socialize, go to church); economic (e.g., sell fish, offload fish, buy fishing gear, haul out for boat repairs, go to the bank, go shopping), and human (e.g., go to school, go for childcare, go for health care, go for retraining).

Selected capital contacts typical of Gloucester harvesters are charted below:

Sell Fish	Gloucester
Offload Fish	Gloucester
Buy Fishing Gear	Gloucester, occasionally Boston
Buy Ice	Gloucester
Buy Fuel/ Oil	Gloucester
Haul out Boat Repairs	Gloucester/Pigeon Cove
Book Keeping	Gloucester
Banking	Gloucester/Rockport
Shopping	Gloucester
Go to Church	Gloucester/Rockport
Got to School	Gloucester/Rockport
Go for Health Care	Gloucester
Go for Childcare	Gloucester/Rockport
Go for Retraining	Gloucester
Visit Relatives	Gloucester/Rockport/Italy
Visit Friends	Gloucester/Rockport
Go for Vacation	Worldwide/Florida
Go for Recreation	All New England
Socialize	Gloucester

Contacts between buyers and sellers of lobsters are usually reciprocal. Harvesters generally buy bait and sometimes fuel and other supplies from the company that buys their lobsters.

Marketing of product by independent dealers and/or the auction may be local, regional, national and international. Live product, sea urchins and tuna are often sold to Japanese buyers. Shellfish may be sold to domestic shippers out of Boston, New York or Philadelphia. Ethnic markets are also significant purchasers of shellfish and species less favored by the average supermarket such as mackerel, squid and codfish roe.

Employees of shoreside seafood companies come from as close as Gloucester, Salem or Lynn or as far as Boston.

Communication Issues

Communication with both local officials and federal managers/representatives was said to be "poor" to "fair" or, in one case, "nonexistent." One respondent, however, ranked communication with state managers/representatives, as "good" or "very good". Others ranked it as "fair." "They 'yes' you to death!"

Respondents often blamed the Council for poor management. While most agree that regulations are necessary, they often feel cheated by the system. For example, "they use the agenda to their own benefit. They'll deal with namby-pamby issues and they'll wait till everybody is just about dead and ready to go home and then they zing you . . . Fishermen have no confidence in them and they have no confidence in us. Communication is so poor."

Communication with friends and fellow fishermen is maintained at sea for safety's sake. Information about one's catch or favored grounds is commonly shared only with one or two close friends or relatives. Some fishermen, however, do make friends with party boat captains and they might share information.

Assessments

All respondents said that fishermen and scientists "strongly disagree" on fish assessments, particularly with respect to groundfish. "The groundfish stock is cyclical. One year there are a lot of flounders, the next couple of years, the cod are back because the sand eels are back."

Local management practices

Long before Amendment 5 to the groundfish plan was implemented, fishermen of Gloucester made suggestions about incremental changes that would have begun to protect the groundfish stocks. NMFS would not do anything, though, until the whole plan was completed, a process that took years.

The Massachusetts Fishermen's Partnership and the Gulf of Maine Fishermen's Alliance have designed a variety of regulations that they proposed to NMFS. "They have not been listened to." Even before the Alliance, there was a "Gloucester Plan" that had been hashed out and refined over a couple of years. It was "very far-reaching and revolutionary because it addressed habitat, stewardship of bottom, and area stakeholders. It got hacked to pieces."

Economic Change

Ten years ago, respondents said that the economic condition of the industry was "average" to "excellent." "There were fish and high prices, everything to look forward to!" In the 1980's it was easier to see the effects of the good economic condition, fishermen were "showier, buying fancy cars and houses." Even for those whose economic condition was self-reported as "average," the small boat exemption to many of the regulations was a benefit.

Five years ago, it was still "excellent" to "fair."

Today, for those not constrained by the closed areas (i.e., the larger vessels), the economics are "average" to "good," but the small boats are suffering. "The auction is giving premium prices, we're finally getting paid what the fish is worth." Fewer men are being carried as crew, and fewer fish are being landed, so the prices are higher. Many vessels no longer carry insurance, either because they have obtained financing outside the usual banking channels or because they've already paid off their boat. So, for the few big boats going, the fishermen are likely to make a good living. Especially since they are able to fish far enough out to avoid the closed areas. The small vessels, though, see the situation only as "worse and worse."

Five years from now, economic conditions for the big boats will still be good, but as now, the condition is "poor" for the small boats. "There's no future for the small boats." One respondent commented that they had faith that the cod would reproduce and that the economic condition would be "average."

One respondent commented that "if a fisherman is allowed to work at all, he can earn a living."

For other sides of the business, dealers and processors, for example, the industry is considered a "frontier business with a boom or bust mentality." "There are always risks, always change, never wholly predictable, you have to be able to adapt."

Changes in fishing effort

Estimates of change in effort depend principally on the individual respondent's point of view, sense of success or failure, and impact of regulations on their personal fishing

operation. Those who are severely restricted see effort in the operations that circumvent the closures as having increased. Those who used to fish in groups of 8 or 10 on distant grounds see a fall in effort that leaves only one or two vessels within hailing distance.

One respondent suggested that effort has probably doubled. "Gillnetters used to get by with 60 nets, now they need 100." Hook fishermen used to fish principally for haddock, cod, and cusk. "Cusk are residential, but they are gone now. The change started 10 years ago (around 1987)."

The most significant changes in the industry, according to some respondents, are the regulations and the increased costs of a fishing operation. The closures and changes in technology that allow "anyone" to fish top the list of changes for other respondents. However, the numbers of fishermen and vessels have severely diminished in the last decade.

Effects of recent management

Pigeon Cove Fishermen's Cooperative closed their retail business as a result of the cod regulations and closed areas, though it was re-opened under independent management. Year around closures affect gillnetters and longliners. "You need hard bottom for successful hooking." The closures have eliminated access to the hard bottom for small boats. Those small boats that have tried to fish outside (further offshore) are compromising their safety.

Limiting entry has had the most impact on the fisheries for the Gloucester fleet, according to some respondents. "Mesh regulations and scaling back of the fleet have done a lot of help to the stocks. The frustration is that it never seems to stop. It's like the Russians, they throw in a 5-year plan and it fails in 2, so they throw in another one. They never put anything in and let it stay long enough to see the results."

Quotas and closures have had equally negative impact on finfishing, according to some. "Throwing away millions of pounds of cod is a mortal sin. You can't regulate the catch as though the fishermen were farming!"

Some report an increase in drinking among fishermen, less patience and a sense of frustration at not being able to provide for their families' basic needs. Fishermen become depressed when they can't fish.

Characteristics of local fishermen

"A good fishermen works hard, doesn't forget his mistakes, and knows where he is going tomorrow," (i.e., he has a business plan.) A good fisherman is "intelligent, knows about fishing, is concerned about the environment and aware."

Safety

Life rafts, survival suits, Loran, GPS and EPIRG all help make fishing safer. However, as some respondents pointed out, though the gear is safer, "opportunity dictates when you go out. You don't look at the weather, you have to go when you can go (due to the regulations)."

Job satisfaction

One common view was expressed as, "Absolutely, fishermen are satisfied with their work. Anyone who is fishing today is doing it because he wants to." "Anyone that's left now is left because they love the life...it's been so difficult in recent years and financial rewards have gone down so fast that people who are going to get out have gotten out."

An opposing view, also frequently expressed was, "None are satisfied because of the regulations. They are being regulated to death...and the paperwork!"

Fishing families

Spouses of fishermen are working outside the home even if they have children. This is a sign of the times as much as it is an effect of the insecurity of fishing today. However, the fact that many women do have full-time jobs with benefits has allowed fishermen to survive... "Enabled them to still be doing this." "The wives have become a very big part of this, a buttress." It is also a sign of the high cost of health insurance. One aspect that seems to be different is that women who were working part-time feel compelled to work fulltime or seek a second part-time job.

One negative side of their working fulltime is that women no longer have as much time to devote to helping their spouses with fishing-related tasks (bookkeeping, arranging for replacement parts, shopping for groceries, etc.). Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association (GFWA) used to have afternoon meetings. Now they must meet at night or on weekends and fewer members have time to volunteer. Consequently, GFWA is far less visible now at New England Fishery Management Council meetings.

At least one of the key respondents mentioned that he and his wife did not have children because of the instability of the fishing industry, "we couldn't afford them." Another fisherman who retrained as a mechanic said, "now, I can afford to get married."

Children of families involved in fishing-related businesses are not as likely to go into the business as they once were. They no longer want to work on the docks, for example, for \$10/hour when they can find cleaner, easier work for equal or even higher wages.

Community Profiles
 Essex County, Massachusetts
 Gloucester / North Shore sub-region

5.6.1.2. Rockport

Background

Reminisces of Captain Sylvanus Smith recorded in April 1913 related what he knew about Rockport: "'Sandy Bay' was a prosperous fishing center, in fact, one of the most important centers for this industry in New England. Our records of the early fisheries of old Sandy Bay are woefully incomplete. . .

History tells us that in the year 1695 John Babson received a grant of land at Straitsmouth Point to set up a fish house and an old cellar still marks the site this house was located" . . . "The point of land called Bear Skin Neck, tradition tells us, received its name from the fact that Babson killed a bear there, drying the skin upon the rocks; his weapon, it is related, was an old fish knife and it was a common expression when I was a boy, if one had an old knife, to remark, 'this is the knife with which Babson killed the bear.' (It is quite probable that this tradition is founded upon some actual happening, for there were families living upon the Neck at that time and without doubt bears often came down from the woods attracted by the smell of fish.)"

"Without doubt the fisheries were conducted or carried on from Long Cove and small boats were used which were easily pulled up on the shore out of danger from the sea."²⁹

"In the early 1800's fishing was the mainstay of the small town of Rockport. It is said that parents would suspend a cod-line from an attic window and attached to this would be a dried codfish and here the small boys had their first lessons in hauling in fish. Many of the families had in the yards an old dory and the children would play in this, throwing out the anchor or playing at rowing, but this pastime was soon left for the greater sport of fishing fur cunners and pollock from the rocks about the shore. At the age of nine or ten these boys would be in the boats with the men, preparing their simple meals and while very young would often be numbered among the crew."³⁰ In 1816, the jig hook was invented by Mr. Abraham Lurvey of Pigeon Cove.³¹

"While in the early fisheries very small boats were employed, with the increase in the industry larger craft were built and as these later craft were too cumbersome to be easily hauled up on the beach or upon the shore, moorings were put down in Long Cove and the boats were thus anchored."³²

"In 1836, the needs of greater protection for the large increase being apparent, the national government was induced to build a breakwater. At this time there were some 12 vessels engaged in carrying fish to New York, Boston, and other places, some going as far even as to southern ports and the West Indies."

"With the building of the breakwater the fleet largely increased both in size and numbers and there were some 80 craft kept at the moorings of the cove. When the breakwater was finished, long wharves were built and a new and better class of vessels, craft of 30 to 40 tons burden, took the place of the smaller craft."

"In 1840, after completion of the breakwater, the winter fishery was engaged in many of the craft taking their fish to Boston while fish landed as Sandy Bay was often hauled over the road to Gloucester in teams, and from there to Boston. This winter fishery became quite

²⁹ <http://www.downtosea.com/1901-1925/ssmith.htm>

³⁰ <http://www.downtosea.com/1901-1925/ssmith.htm>

³¹ <http://www.downtosea.com/1876-1900/firsttrips.htm>

³² <http://www.downtosea.com/1901-1925/ssmith.htm>

prosperous and many men were employed during the winter months who had previously to the beginning of this branch of the industry had found nothing to do this season, between fall and spring."³³

Winter weather-enforced idleness led to prodigious drinking. In 1856, as the temperance and women's rights movements arose, the women of Rockport under the leadership of Hannah Jumper, raided the men's alcohol reserves. In the words of Ebenezer Pool, an eyewitness, "...On finding any keg, jug, or cask having spirituous liquor in it...with their hatchets broke or otherways destroyed it..."³⁴ Today, Rockport remains a dry town.

"By 1850, Pigeon Cove was a small village with a broadly-based economy. Fishing and granite quarrying were traditional mainstays, and tourism began to flourish as the Cape Ann coast became extremely fashionable and boasted numerous hotels and resorts. Several were in or near Pigeon Cove, and by 1876 steamers from New York regularly called there. Artists have also frequented the cove, capturing its beauty and spirit on canvas. Another local industry with a profound future impact was a small blacksmith shop that would eventually become the Cape Ann Tool company."³⁵

"The granite that gave Rockport its name is no longer quarried but the 100 years of its history lives on in the Scandinavian communities that dot the hillsides above the coastline."³⁶

Today, the "town of Rockport is known for its art galleries, fishing community, and picturesque views. Its population of 7,000 doubles in the summer as visitors flock to the town to stroll the shops on Bearskin Neck, scuba dive off the rocky shoreline, or enjoy some of the best seafood in New England."³⁷

Rockport's proximity to Gloucester and its fishing industry infrastructure makes it easier for Rockport to maintain a viable, if modest, fleet. Furthermore, some traditional fishing paraphernalia have been maintained for its artistic appeal. Motif #1, a fishing shack in Rockport harbor, for example, has been the subject of countless painters. In early December, the holiday season is introduced with Santa's arrival by fishing boat.

A proliferation of gift shops and such attractions as sea kayaking, whale watching, Thacher's Island lighthouses, deep-sea fishing and special lobstering cruises make Rockport much more geared to the tourist industry than the fishing industry. Nevertheless, there is a core group of fishermen who make up Pigeon Cove Fishermen's Cooperative.

Governance

Rockport has a 5-member Board of Selectmen that meets weekly and an Open Town Meeting.

Demography

Population

The population of Rockport during the 1990 Census was 7,482 people, 3,382 male and 4,100 female. This population could swell to 20,000 in the summer.³⁸

Age Structure

According to the 1990 Census, 432 persons were under 5 years, 782 were 5 to 14, 3,102

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ <http://www.rockportusa.com/aboutrockport/hannah/hannah2.html>

³⁵ Carl Masi, personal communication, 2001.

³⁶ <http://www.footprintsofrockport.com/>

³⁷ <http://www.rockportlobster.com/rockport.shtml>

³⁸ <http://www.state.ma.us/dhcd/iprofile/252.HTM> . The numbers at this site differ slightly from numbers generated by the U.S. Census site, but are the ones cited in public information, so I've used these unless otherwise indicated.

were 15 to 44, 1,527 were 45 to 64 and 1,639 were 65 and over.

Education

According to the Census, 1499 had a Bachelor's degree or higher, 1019 graduated from high school, 1014 had some college, and 447 had no high school diploma. Massachusetts' profile gave the statistics as: high school graduate or higher 90 percent and Bachelor's Degree of higher 34.9 percent.

Housing

There were a total of 2475 households in 1989 and 4,202 housing units.³⁹ Of these 3,354 were occupied, and 1,955 were occupied by owners. The median year the units were built was 1939 with a median value of \$222,000.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

Most of the people of Rockport were white (7,392) in 1989, with 17 Blacks and 8 American Indians, 27 Asian, 35 Hispanic and 3 "other."

The majority was of English-Irish-Scottish ancestry. Italians, German, French and Scandinavian (Swedish, Finnish and Danish) number in the 3-400 range (each).

Economic Context

Income

The median household income in 1989 was \$34,195 and the per capita income was \$19,882.

Employment

The largest employer in Rockport is the Town of Rockport with 200 employees.

From the 1990 Census:

INDUSTRY

Universe: Employed persons 16 years and over

Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (000-039)...	50
Mining (040-059)...	0
Construction (060-099)...	139
Manufacturing, nondurable goods (100-229)...	197
Manufacturing, durable goods (230-399)...	323
Transportation (400-439)...	83
Communications and other public utilities (440-499)...	73
Wholesale trade (500-579)...	105
Retail trade (580-699)...	533
Finance, insurance, and real estate (700-720)...	111
Business and repair services (721-760)...	136
Personal services (761-799)...	67
Entertainment and recreation services (800-811)...	99
Professional and related services (812-899):	
Health services (812-840)...	233
Educational services (842-860)...	281
Other professional and related services (841, 861-899)...	179
Public administration (900-939)...	89

OCCUPATION

Universe: Employed persons 16 years and over

Managerial and professional specialty occupations (000-202):

Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations (000-042)...	382
Professional specialty occupations (043-202)...	637
Technical, sales, and administrative support occupations (203-402):	
Technicians and related support occupations (203-242)...	132

³⁹ <http://venus.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/979317288>

Sales occupations (243-302)...	406
Administrative support occupations, including clerical (303-402)...	441
Service occupations (403-472):	
Private household occupations (403-412)...	11
Protective service occupations (413-432)...	17
Service occupations, except protective and household (433-472)...	220
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations (473-502)...	50
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations (503-702)...	230
Operators, fabricators, and laborers (703-902):	
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors (703-802)...	82
Transportation and material moving occupations (803-863)...	53
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers (864-902)...	37

Transportation and Access

Rockport is at the tip of Cape Ann, surrounded on three sides by the Atlantic Ocean and on the fourth by Gloucester. It is about 40 miles from Boston, accessible by Route 128 and 127. Rail service is available to Boston. Nearby Beverly has a municipal airport.

Hospitals, schools, libraries, museums

There is one school that includes K-12, eight churches and a former school building is being renovated for a new library.⁴⁰ Museums include the Rockport Art Association and the Sandy Bay Historical Society and Museums.

There is no hospital but there is one long-term care facility.

Fisheries Profile

Community

For many years, the town of Rockport leased Pigeon Cove wharf and breakwater from its owner, Pigeon Cove Land Corporation, and then subleased the wharf to commercial fishermen and recreational boat owners. Fishermen had shanties and coolers for storing catch, bait and gear on the premises. In 1993, the Land Corporation decided to lease to a new developer instead of allowing the town to renew its lease. The developer raised rents by 800 percent, effectively denying access to commercial fishermen. The developer erected barriers that also prevented townspeople from accessing the waterfront. Fishermen, recreational boaters and other townspeople joined forces in opposition to this effort. Eventually, the developer abandoned the lease and the Land Corporation agreed to sell the Pigeon Cove wharf and breakwater to the town of Rockport.

Pigeon Cove commercial fishermen and recreational boat owners established a non-profit corporation named The Pigeon Cove Boatowners Association Inc. that agreed to purchase the wharf, breakwater, and attached buildings and structures from the Land Corporation.

The association immediately leased the breakwater and wharf to the Town of Rockport, so that the Town could be in a position of controlling, insuring, and maintaining the property and thereby qualifying for public funding to repair previous storm damage. Repairs to the breakwater, funded by FEMA, were completed during 1995, the first major investment in the property since the Army Corps of Engineers dredged the harbor in the late 1980's, when it was designated a federal anchorage.

Commercial fishing and fisheries-related employment

Harvesting

The 1997 federal permit files listed 46 vessels for Rockport and Pigeon Cove.

⁴⁰ <http://www.state.ma.us/dhcd/iprofile/252.HTM>

*Support Services***Pigeon Cove Fishermen's Co-operative**

The coop ran a store from 1996 to July 1999. A poor shrimping season, slow business, federal regulations, and the demands of running a retail store while trying to carry on as full-time fishermen, led to the store's closure. "What happened was over the last year, as the fishing restrictions kept affecting the financial stability of the co-op, we decided to reduce our expenses and focus on our core business," said Carl Masi, one of the co-founders of the coop.⁴¹ The store has since been reopened by entrepreneur Bill Linn and renamed Pigeon Cove Lobster Co. The coop is still the principal supplier for the store.

Pigeon Cove Boatowners Association

A non-profit corporation formed by commercial fishermen and recreational boaters to purchase the wharf and breakwater, buildings and structures of Pigeon Cove formerly owned by Pigeon Cove Land Corporation.

⁴¹ <http://www.rockportlobster.com/gdt.shtml>

Community Profiles
Essex County, Massachusetts
Gloucester / North Shore sub-region

5.6.1.3. Marblehead

"Marblehead was founded in 1629 by fishermen recruited from Southeast England and the Channel Islands who relished the idea of a piece of their own land, personal freedom and a bountiful sea. Joining them were a mixed bag of dissidents from the Pilgrims, Anglicans and Puritans and a sprinkling of university graduates and entrepreneurs.

Somehow overcoming the frontier difficulties of cold, loneliness, thick forests sheltering wild animals and perhaps Indians, the first 44 families made it, incorporating the town in 1649. Determined to stay independent, they created a town government that still runs Marblehead today: Town Meeting to vote the by-laws, a Board of Selectmen and officials (elected annually) to enforce the laws, conduct town affairs and set the tax rate.

With steady, yet spirited leadership and hard work (the whole family dried and packed fish for shipment abroad), Marblehead's fame and fortune grew, so that in 1660 a Royal Agent declared in London that Marblehead was the "the greatest Town for fishing in New England."

A successful first century ended in the gloom and doom of Salem's witchcraft trials (one Marblehead woman was hanged) and general economic depression. With characteristic resiliency and at the urging of the merchant-trained minister, Marblehead obtained fresh capital and newly designed ships with greater cargo space.

Marblehead's "Golden Age of Trade" carried its captains and crews to South America, West Indies, Spain, Portugal, France, and of course, England. Led by cocky skippers, who were ready to trade with the known world, local ships transported mostly dried fish whose high quality was widely recognized. In the returning cargo were wines, fruit, clothing, tools, gold and silver.

Special orders were filled for the wives of wealthy merchants who were building homes appropriate to their status. Jeremiah Lee, Robert Hooper, Azor Orne, Honatha, Jonathan Glover, Benjamin Watson and others were buying imported furniture, rugs, wallpaper, damasks and laces. Town craftsmen were also producing handsome pieces in gold, silver and wood.

Prosperity extended to sailors and fishermen whose houses were renovated or even moved. The taverns were doing a good business, for if the news wasn't of possible war with the French, the talk was of pirates. They had harassed the coast for decades, capturing valuable cargo and occasionally abducting (or persuading) young sailors. Larger, armed ships and regular hangings in Boston reduced that hazard.

Another not-so-rosy side of the period was a series of English-French battle for Canada. Each time the colonies supplied men and ships, and each time they won, the victory was bargained away. Disillusionment and distrust grew as England turned to crushing colonial independent unruliness.

Every repressive Act of England fanned the ire of Marblehead. Conservatives (Tories), fearing trade and business reprisals, tried to squelch an independence movement, but Town Meeting spoke for most residents of Marblehead: "...We desire to use these blessings of Liberty with Thoughtfulness and Prudence and to defend them with intrepidity and steadiness." Marblehead, which had been rocking the Cradle of Liberty for almost 150 years now, totally committed itself to winning independence. It played a major role in the war at great loss to the town in men, ships and fishing business.

It was at the Town House that the Declaration of Independence was read. It was signed by the town's representative, Elbridge Gerry. Then Gerry accepted the challenge of General Washington to commandeer ships to attack British supply ships. Marblehead patriots quickly renamed and armed their ships and sent them to seas as "...ye navy of the United Colonies", thus laying claim to the 'Birthplace of the U.S. Navy.'

Marbleheaders' nautical prowess twice rescued Washington's campaign: first at Long Island where, using every kind of craft, the mariners during the night and fog moved the entire army to mainland safely; later, on that famous Christmas night, when Washington needed a victory so badly, Marblehead mariners carried the Commander and his unit across the Delaware River to win the surprise battle at Trenton. Throughout the America Revolution, General John Glover and his men fought for liberty. No wonder President Washington came to Marblehead to thank the soldiers, sailors and townspeople for their decisive support. He promised to help rebuild the fisheries.

The fishing and shipping industries tried to recover, but lost out to larger ports, the War of 1812 and, finally, to the devastating 1846 hurricanes that caught the fleet on the Grand Banks.⁴² Thirteen vessels with 65 men were lost in September. With a population of only 7,000, fishing virtually died out and the town turned to shoemaking.

Marblehead, today is one of the East Coast's premier sailing centers. The Old Town remains picturesque with the 18th- and 19th-century homes of fishermen, merchants, and artisans. There is so much wealth in the town, though, that it is difficult to live here on a modest income.

Governance

Town meeting, Board of Selectmen

Demography

Population

In 1989 the population was 19,971 including 9,407 males and 10,564 females.

Age Structure

There were 4491 children (below age 21), 2990 seniors and 12,490 adults (21 to 65 years) counted in the 1990 Census.

Education

The population of Marblehead is well educated: 7,843 have a college degree or higher. Another 6,120 have at least a high school diploma. Only 639 had not completed high school.

Housing

There were 8,736 housing units in 1989, 8225 of these were occupied. Owners occupied 5,908 and renters 2317. The median age of the housing units was 1942 and the median value of the owner occupied housing was \$254,700.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

The majority of the population in 1989 was white (19,749) with 104 Blacks, 93 Asian and 25 "other." English and Irish ancestry predominates with German, Russian and Italian numbering over 1000 individuals each.

⁴² <http://www.marblehead.com/commun/history/>

Economic Context

Income

The 8,227 households had a median income of 53,333 in 1989. Per capita income was 30,615.

Employment

From the 1990 Census:

INDUSTRY

Universe: Employed persons 16 years and over

Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (000-039)...	188
Mining (040-059)...	23
Construction (060-099)...	510
Manufacturing, nondurable goods (100-229)...	598
Manufacturing, durable goods (230-399)...	893
Transportation (400-439)...	556
Communications and other public utilities (440-499)...	216
Wholesale trade (500-579)...	490
Retail trade (580-699)...	1495
Finance, insurance, and real estate (700-720)...	1335
Business and repair services (721-760)...	588
Personal services (761-799)...	355
Entertainment and recreation services (800-811)...	264
Professional and related services (812-899):	
Health services (812-840)...	1172
Educational services (842-860)...	859
Other professional and related services (841, 861-899)...	1402
Public administration (900-939)...	375

OCCUPATION

Universe: Employed persons 16 years and over

Managerial and professional specialty occupations (000-202):

Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations (000-042)....	2619
Professional specialty occupations (043-202)...	2765
Technical, sales, and administrative support occupations (203-402):	
Technicians and related support occupations (203-242)...	386
Sales occupations (243-302)...	1928
Administrative support occupations, including clerical (303-402)...	1282
Service occupations (403-472):	
Private household occupations (403-412)...	64
Protective service occupations (413-432)...	154
Service occupations, except protective and household (433-472)...	894
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations (473-502)...	189
Precision production, craft, and repair occupations (503-702)...	647
Operators, fabricators, and laborers (703-902):	
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors (703-802)...	145
Transportation and material moving occupations (803-863)...	129
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers (864-902)...	117

Transportation and Access

Principal highways are State Routes 114 and 129. Rail service to Boston is available from Salem or Swampscott Stations.

Hospitals, schools, libraries

Five elementary schools (only 3 are K-5), a middle school and high school. North Shore Regional Vocational School and Essex Agricultural and Technical Institute also serve the town.

Abbot Public Library
Marblehead Historical Society

No hospitals, but two long-term care facilities.

Fisheries Profile

Community

Marblehead is no longer a fishing-dependent community. While there are a few fishermen who live here, the pool is small and it is difficult for the remaining fishermen to find local crew. Fortunately, Gloucester is nearby and has a wealth of services available.

Commercial fishing and fisheries-related employment

Harvesting structure

There are about 28 fishermen in Marblehead both according to individual respondents' estimates and the 1997 federal permit file. These include one hooker, 4 or 5 gillnetters, 22 lobstermen who fish out of Marblehead. There is some urchining in season. One trap is set on Cat Island by a fisherman from Manchester. Fifteen years ago there were 20 percent more.

Processing structure

There is no processing currently.

Support Services

There are two marine railways, though these specialize in sailing yachts.

Species, Seasonality

Groundfishing, lobstering, sea urchining, some diving for scallops.

Landed species include:

Groundfish: cod, cusk, dabs, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, pollock, hake, halibut and grey sole.

Crustaceans: lobster

HMS: tuna

Other: striped bass, dogfish, sea urchin, monkfish, bluefish, scallops, slime eels, sometimes menhaden.

Form of ownership (e.g., owner/operator; corporation)

Most of the vessels are owner-operated.

Recreational fishing and employment

There is quite a bit of recreational fishing, though the open harbor has prevented the development of marinas. (Vessels use moorings.)

Perceptions of the Fishing Community⁴³

Importance of fishing to the community

Fishing is not really important to the community of Marblehead because money is derived from so many other sources, though residents are curious about the industry. Industry members are proud of what they do and proud of their fishing heritage. The 1/4 million pounds of lobsters landed in Marblehead annually is a benefit to the town, which also benefits from the purchase of fuel, repairs (at the boat yards) and clothes, as well as the availability of fresh product for consumers.

⁴³ Based on key informant interviews

Boundaries

Capital contacts can be divided up into those encompassing social capital (e.g., visit friends, go for recreation, go for vacation, visit relatives, socialize, go to church); economic (e.g., sell fish, offload fish, buy fishing gear, haul out for boat repairs, go to the bank, go shopping), and human (e.g., go to school, go for childcare, go for health care, go for retraining).

The fishing industry of Marblehead has the most contact with Gloucester.

Sell Fish	Gloucester
Offload Fish	Gloucester/Marblehead
Buy Fishing Gear	Gloucester
Buy Ice	Gloucester
Buy Fuel/ Oil	Gloucester/Marblehead
Haul out Boat Repairs	Marblehead
Book Keeping	Self
Banking	Marblehead
Shopping	Marblehead
Go to Church	Marblehead
Got to School	Marblehead
Go for Health Care	Marblehead/Salem
Go for Childcare	Marblehead/Salem
Go for Retraining	Gloucester
Visit Relatives	All over U.S.
Visit Friends	Northshore
Go for Vacation	All over
Go for Recreation	Northshore
Socialize	Marblehead

A truck comes from Salem on a regular basis to buy lobsters.

Technology is affecting the patterns of contact. With computers and the Internet, as well as cell phones, fishing industry participants are less isolated, even while working.

Communication Issues

Communication with local and state fishery managers or representatives was rated as “excellent.” Communication with federal managers or representatives, however, was rated as “poor” or below.

Assessments

Fishermen and scientists strongly disagree on assessments. “Scientists are not always getting good information.”

Local management practices

Local fishermen are adamant about not taking “shorts” or v-notched lobsters. They also express considerable concern about the effects of chlorine and pollution on productivity. “Maybe the water is too clean?”

Economic Change

Ten years ago haddock were declining, so prices increased and fishermen made more money. They became resilient, had to work harder but did well. The economic condition of the industry was rated as “good.”

Five years ago it was also considered “good.” Today (1999) the Gulf of Maine closures are affecting the day boats where most groundfishermen were, so it is worse for them (rated “poor” to “average”), but lobstering is “good.”

Five years from now, respondents hoped things would be better, but expressed some distrust of the federal government. If the closed areas remain closed, the economic condition of the finfish fishery will not improve.

Changes in fishing effort

Most fishermen have switched to lobstering the majority of the year. When groundfishing, fishermen have to avoid certain species. However, the fact that haddock, which almost disappeared 10 years ago, are now plentiful shows that regulations work, according to one key respondent.

Technology worldwide has affected the industry. Radar in the 1960's, now fish finders, synthetic nets have all affected fishing.

Effects of recent management

The closures killed the hook fishermen. One respondent noted that the hook fishermen should have been encouraged, as their gear is the least destructive.

“Government is in your face.”

Characteristics of local fishermen

A good fisherman has to work hard, have a positive outlook, not letting weather bother them, willing to persevere, not get discouraged.

Safety

The safety regulations have made fishing safer.

Job satisfaction

The fishermen who remain in Marblehead stay in fishing because they like it, they like the excitement.

Fishing families

Spouses work, though this is not entirely due to changes in the industry. The children of fishermen are more frequently being college educated and choosing other industries for their careers.