

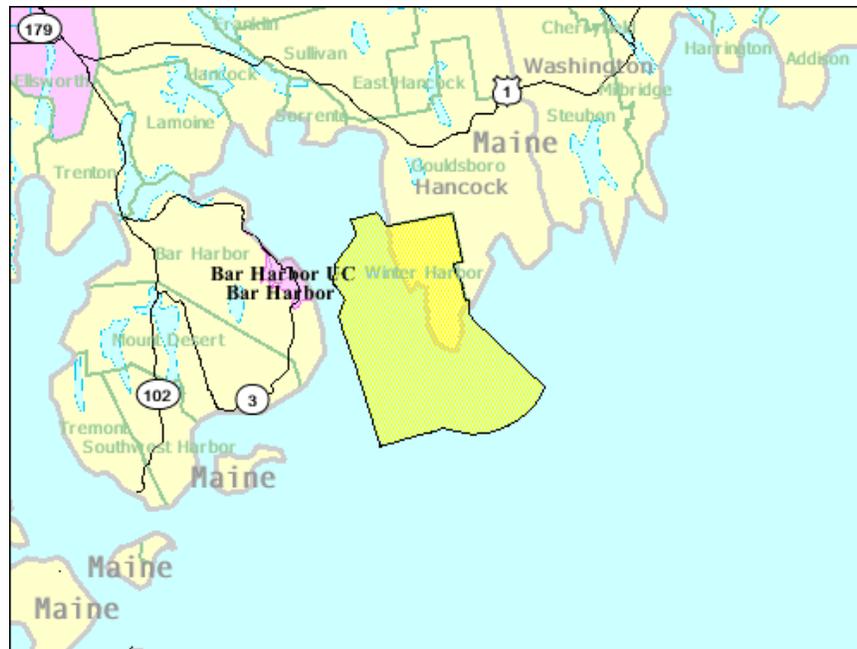
WINTER HARBOR, ME¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

The town of Winter Harbor, Maine (44.39°N, 68.08°W) is located in Hancock County. The town has a total area of 65.7 sq. mi, with 14.4 sq. mi of land and 51.3 sq. mi of water (State of Maine 2004).



Map 1. Location of Winter Harbor, ME (US Census Bureau 2000)

Historical/Background

Winter Harbor was laid out in 1762 as a plantation originally known as Mosquito Harbor, finally changing its name in 1854. Winter Harbor, so named because the harbor never freezes (State of Maine 2004), has traditionally been used by mariners seeking shelter from storms. In 1856, Winter Harbor Light was constructed on Mark Island to guide vessels to the harbor and to warn of nearby ledges (D'Entremont 1997). Winter Harbor was incorporated on February 21, 1895. Schooners transported lumber and laths back and forth to Boston and the Canadian provinces in the 1830s (Ellsworth American 2002). For much of the 1800s, most of the men here were employed in the cod fishery (Ellsworth American 2002a).

¹ These community profiles have been created to serve as port descriptions in Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for fisheries management actions. They also provide baseline information from which to begin research for Social Impact Assessments (SIAs). Further, they provide information relevant to general community impacts for National Standard 8 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and information on minorities and low income populations for Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 on Environmental Justice.

² For purposes of citation please use the following template: "Community Profile of *Town, ST*. Prepared under the auspices of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center. For further information contact Lisa.L.Colburn@noaa.gov."

The Naval Security Group Activity Winter Harbor began as the Otter Cliffs Radio Station on Aug. 28, 1917 and moved to Winter Harbor in 1935. During World War II, it served as the "most important and most efficient station in the world," according to Navy documents (Urban 2002). The Naval Station was decommissioned in 2001 and the 100 acre site reverted back to the National Park Service. The NPS is currently working on a plan to turn it into a learning center (Urban 2002). It is believed that the closing of the Naval base cut the population of Winter Harbor in half from an estimated 988 to 450 (Ellsworth American, no date).

Demographics³

According to Census 2000 data⁴, Winter Harbor had a total population of 988, down 14.6% from the reported population of 1,157 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 48.3% were males and 51.7% were females. The median age was 31.3 years and 67.2% of the population was 21 years or older while 14.0% was 62 or older.

The age structure of Winter Harbor (Figure 1) shows an unusually large population from 0-9. There was a dip in the late teens, but an increase in the twenties and thirties. This was followed by steady drop off from the forties on.

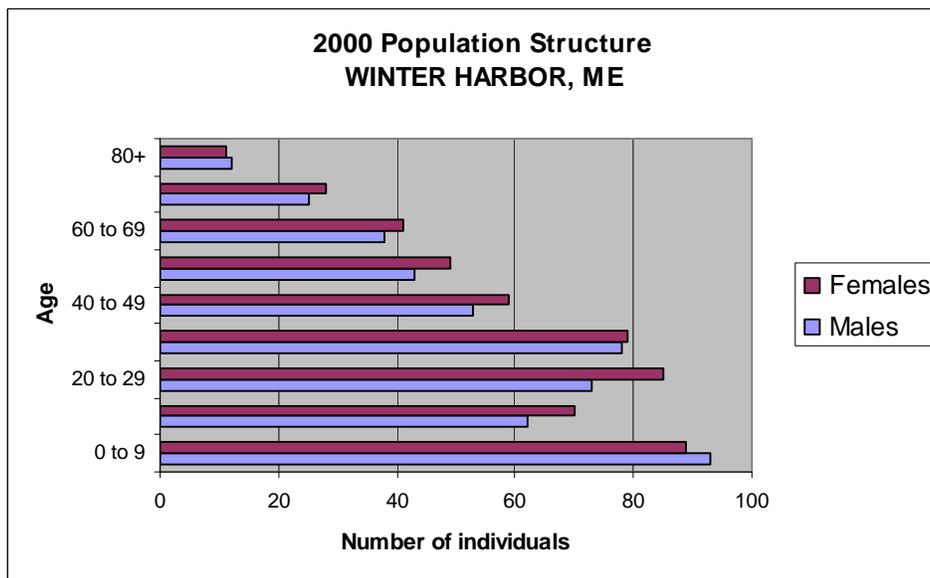


Figure 1. Winter Harbor's population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The majority of the population was white (96.9%) with 2.2% black or African American, 0.8% Asian, 0.2% Native American, and none Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 3.6% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: English (22.5%), American (16.7%), Irish (14.7%), and German (13.6%). With regard to region of birth, 47.2% were born in Maine, 48.4% were born in a different state and 1.7% were born outside of the U.S. (including 1.3% who were not United States citizens).

³ While mid-term estimates are available for some larger communities, data from the 2000 Census are the only data universally available for the communities being profiled in the Northeast. Thus for cross-comparability we have used 2000 data even though these data may have changed significantly since 2000 for at least some communities.

⁴ These and all census data, unless otherwise referenced, can be found at U.S. Census: American Factfinder 2000 <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html>; census data used are for Winter Harbor town (cited Aug 2007)

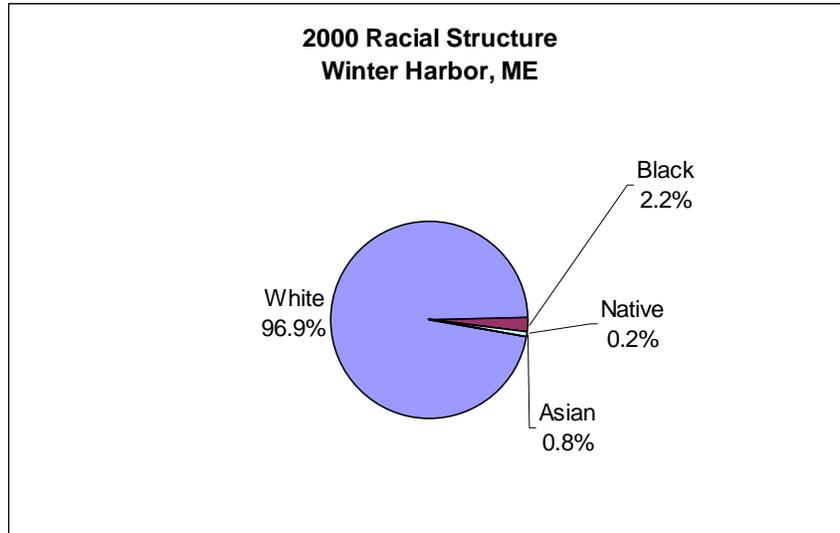


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

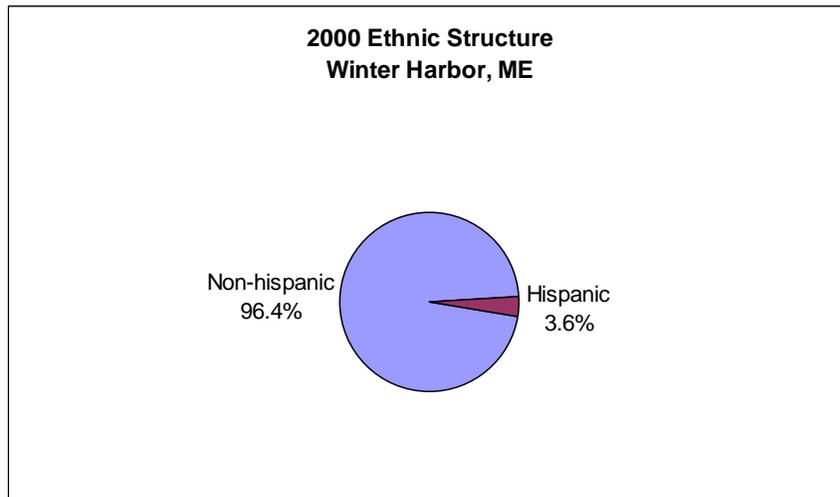


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 94.1% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 5.9% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, including 2.6% of the population who spoke English less than “very well” according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 93.7% were high school graduates or higher and 12.3% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, none did not reach ninth grade, 6.3% attended some high school but did not graduate, 44.1% completed high school, 30.0% had some college with no degree, 7.2% received an associate’s degree, 9.6% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 2.8% received a graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through U.S. Census data, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) in 2000, the religion with the highest number of congregations and adherents in Hancock County was Catholic with 10 congregations and 6,292 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were the United Church of Christ (19 with 1,957 adherents), American Baptist Churches in the USA (17 with over 1,774

adherents), and the United Methodist Church (17 with 1,074 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 25.2% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

Issues/Process

Fishermen are concerned that non-locals moving in to Winter Harbor are trying to change the fishermen's way of life. Fishermen are competing for shore access with developers and the recent influx of real estate development has jeopardized some fishing industry activities that do not coexist well with residential homes. (e.g., noise from lobster boats and the smell of fish) (Irvine 2004). Additionally, the economy took a significant setback when the Winter Harbor Naval Base closed in July of 2002 taking almost half of the population with it (Ellsworth American, no date).

In 2006, the State of Maine passed the Working Waterfront Tax Law, to address the problem of working waterfront property being heavily taxed based on its projected market value. The goal of this tax is "to encourage the preservation of working waterfront land and to prevent the conversion of working waterfront land to other uses as the result of economic pressures caused by the assessment of that land for purposes of property taxation." The law requires the tax assessor to value the property based on what it is worth as working waterfront land, rather than what its market value would be if it were sold and converted to residential or other uses (State of Maine 2005).

Cultural attributes

Winter Harbor hosts the [Annual Winter Harbor Lobster Festival](#) in August. The Winter Harbor Lobster Festival draws a large crowd of spectators to watch lobster boat races, as well as a large craft fair with 80+ exhibitors, and an evening parade.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

Susan Soper of the Winter Harbor Lobster Co-op claims that lobster fishing is the most significant industry in Winter Harbor (Ellsworth American, no date-a). While Prospect Harbor and Winter Harbor are only about 4 miles apart they are basically self-sufficient with their own infrastructure.⁵ Stinson Seafoods is located in nearby Prospect Harbor. Established in 1971, Winter Harbor Co-op Inc. (NEFOP 2008), purchases lobsters directly from fishermen and sells them to DC Air and Seafood, another Winter Harbor-based industry that disperses seafood from Boston to Canada (Ellsworth American, no date-a).

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁶, 57.8% (433 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 1.9% were unemployed, 9.9% were in the Armed Forces, and 55.9% were employed.

⁵ Personal Communication, Charlie Phippen, Harbormaster, 93 Cottage St., Bar Harbor, ME, September 6, 2007

⁶ Again, Census data from 2000 are used because they are universally available and offer cross-comparability among communities. Some statistics, particularly median home price, are likely to have changed significantly since 2000.



Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 38 positions or 9.1% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 75 positions or 17.9% of jobs. Educational, health and social services (17.7%), retail trade (12.9%), manufacturing (11.9%), construction (11.2%) and public administration (11.0%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Winter Harbor was \$28,571 (up 44.9% from \$19,712 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and median per capita income was \$15,483. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 27.5% more per year than females.

The average family in Winter Harbor consisted of 2.95 persons. With respect to poverty, 5.5% of families (down from 8.2% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 11.0% of individuals earned below the U.S. Census poverty threshold. This threshold is \$8,794 for individuals and ranges from \$11,239 through \$35,060 for families, depending on number of persons (2-9 [US Census Bureau 2000a]). In 2000, 46.3% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Winter Harbor had a total of 557 housing units of which 72.0% were occupied and 68.8% were detached one unit homes. Just over one-third (39.5%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes and boats accounted for 9.5% of housing units; 89% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$84,700. Of vacant housing units, 23.8% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units, 50.2% were renter occupied.

Government

Winter Harbor has three Town Selectmen and a town manager (Ellsworth American 2007).

Fishery involvement in government

Winter Harbor has a harbormaster; further information on fishery involvement in government in Winter Harbor is unavailable through secondary data collection.

Institutional

Fishing associations

The Winter Harbor Lobster Co-op has about 30 members/owners.⁷ In addition to purchasing and shipping lobsters from the local lobstermen, the co-op provides them with bait, gear, and parts (Ellsworth American, no date-a).

The [Maine Lobstermen's Association](#) (MLA) was founded in 1954, and works to protect the lobster resource and the lobstermen's way of life. The association was founded by lobstermen with a goal of empowering Maine's lobster industry by representing lobstermen with a united front. The MLA is the largest commercial fishing industry group on the east coast, and represents the interests of 1200 lobstermen.

Fishing assistance centers

Information on fishing assistance centers in Winter Harbor is unavailable through secondary data collection. However, within the fishing community there has always been a care-taking camaraderie, according to the Town Manager.⁸

The Working Waterfront Coalition is a statewide collaboration of various industry associations, non-profits, and government agencies with the goal to support Maine's working waterfronts. The [Working Waterfront Access Pilot Program](#), administered by the Department of Marine Resources, provides money to applicants such as municipalities, fishing co-ops, private commercial fisheries businesses and more, ranging from \$7,000 to \$475,000. The intention of the program is to preserve commercial fisheries working waterfronts and to help secure property for these businesses. As of December 2007, the \$2 million pilot program has reportedly supported over 400 jobs, 194 boats, and assured access to clam flats, parking, wharfage and fisheries in six towns (Maine DMR 2005). Voters [approved an additional \\$3 million](#) to continue the program in 2007.

Other fishing related organizations

The [Maine Fishermen's Forum](#) was founded in 1976, and its goal is to provide continuous opportunities to educate the public and the fishing industry about marine resource issues and fisheries, as well as to provide a platform for discussion and decision making. The Forum also holds an annual three day event which focuses awareness on issues that affect the commercial fishing industry.

Physical

Winter Harbor is approximately 50 miles from the city of Bangor and its international airport, and approximately 25 miles from Ellsworth which has a large commercial center. The Canadian border is about 90 miles to the east on Route 1 (MapQuest 2006).

[Downeast Transportation](#) is a private, non-profit agency that operates a regularly scheduled fixed route public bus service in Hancock County which includes Winter Harbor. Every two hours, a ferry transports people from Winter Harbor to Bar Harbor from 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. from June to September, with weather permitting (SACC 2004).

⁷ Community Review comments, Susan Soper, Winter Harbor Lobster Co-op, P.O. Box 69, Winter Harbor, ME 04693, September 10, 2007

⁸ Community Review comments, Roger Barto, Town Manager, 23 Harbor Drive, PO Box 98, Winter Harbor, ME 04693, September 10, 2007

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁹

Commercial

Lobster was the most valuable species landed in Winter Harbor from 1997-2006, with 2006 landings values far exceeding the ten-year average value. The other top landings were “other” species, which in Winter Harbor included sea cucumbers and Jonah crabs (see Table 1). Landings in Winter Harbor were high overall, and reached their highest value in 2005. The level of landings for home ported vessels also increased dramatically from 1997-2006.

The number of vessels home ported in Winter Harbor has increased from 19 in 1997 to 33 in 2006. The number of vessels with owner’s living in Winter Harbor did not increase at the same rate, indicating that some of the increase in vessels was due to people residing in other communities bringing their vessels to Winter Harbor (see Table 2).

Landings by Species

Table 1. Rank Value of Landings for Federally Managed Groups

Species	Rank Value of Average Landings from 1997-2006
Lobster	1
Other ¹⁰	2
Scallop	3
Largemesh Groundfish ¹¹	4
Surf Clams, Ocean Quahog	5
Monkfish	6
Herring	7
Smallmesh Groundfish ¹²	8
Skate	9

(Note: Only rank value is provided because value information is confidential in ports with fewer than three vessels or fewer than three dealers, or where one dealer predominates in a particular species and would therefore be identifiable.)

⁹ In reviewing the commercial landings data several factors need to be kept in mind. 1) While both federal and state landings are included, some states provide more detailed data to NMFS than others. For example, shellfish may not be included or data may be reported only by county and not by port. 2) Some communities did not have individual port codes until more recently. Before individual port codes were assigned, landings from those ports were coded at the county level or as an aggregate of two geographically close small ports. Where landings were coded at the county level they cannot be sorted to individual ports for those earlier years, e.g., prior to 2000. 3) Where aggregated codes were used, those aggregate codes may still exist and be in use alongside the new individual codes. Here the landings which are still assigned to the aggregate port code cannot be sorted into the individual ports, so port level data are only those which used the individual port code. 4) Even when individual port codes exist, especially for small ports, landings may be coded at the county level. Here again it is impossible to disaggregate these to a port level, making the port level landings incomplete. 5) In all these cases, the per port data in this profile may under report the total level of landings to the port, though all landings are accounted for in the overall NMFS database.

¹⁰ “Other” species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

¹¹ Largemesh Groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

¹² Smallmesh Multi-species : red hake, ocean pout, mixed hake, black whiting, silver hake (whiting)

Vessels by Year¹³

Table 2. Federal Vessel Permits Between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)
1997	19	19
1998	18	17
1999	24	21
2000	25	21
2001	25	21
2002	29	23
2003	27	20
2004	30	24
2005	33	27
2006	33	24

(Note: # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport, # Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹⁴)

Recreational

According to the Town Manager, there is no commercial sport fishing in Winter Harbor.¹⁵

Subsistence

Information on subsistence fishing in Winter Harbor is either unavailable through secondary data collection or the practice does not exist.

FUTURE

There are current plans to convert the former 100 acre naval base into a learning center (Urban 2002). Much of the planning in Winter Harbor is focused on how to compensate for the drastic drop in its economy from the closing of the naval base. The Winter Harbor Cooperative commented that much attention has been taken away from the fishing industry and redirected to this issue.

Winter Harbor fishermen are concerned about the increase in outsiders purchasing second homes in Maine and, in the process, squeezing out traditional land uses (Irvine 2004). However, according to Soper, an employee of the Winter Harbor Fishermen's Co-Op, the future of the fishing industry looks good, although she believes it's more difficult for the younger generations to get involved. She says, "Kids have a hard time getting in now because they have to either get a license very young and keep it up for a number of years, or they have to serve a three-year apprenticeship on a boat." She went on to say that when they get their license, they have to fish two zones away from where they're trained (Ellsworth American, no date-a).

¹³ Numbers of vessels by owner's city and homeport are as reported by the permit holder on permit application forms. These may not correspond to the port where a vessel lands or even spends the majority of its time when docked.

¹⁴ The Owner-City from the permit files is technically the address at which the owner receives mail concerning their permitted vessels, which could reflect the actual location of residence, the mailing address as distinct from residence, owner business location, or the address at which a subsidiary receives mail about the permits.

¹⁵ Community Review comments, Roger Barto, Town Manager, 23 Harbor Drive, PO Box 98, Winter Harbor, ME 04693, September 10, 2007

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