

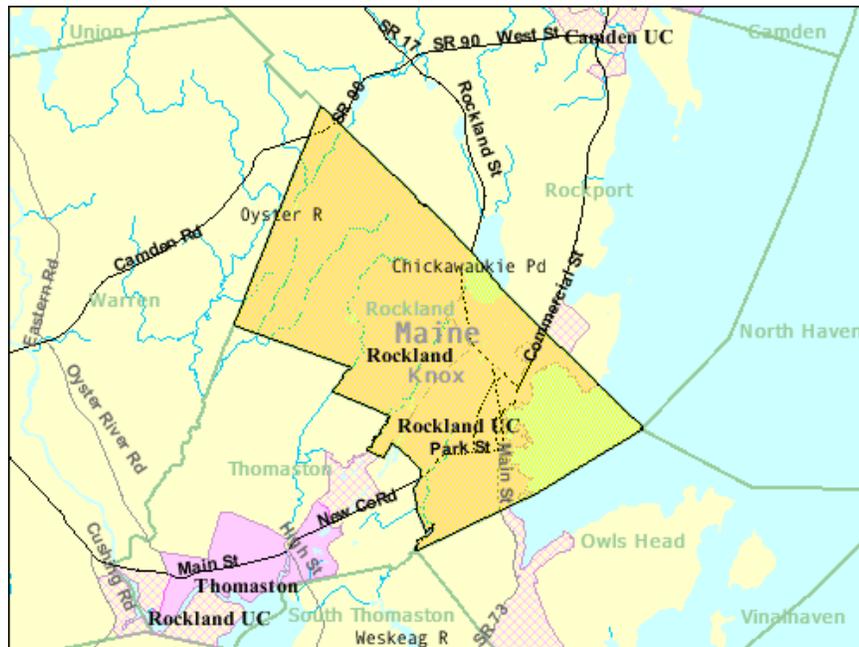
ROCKLAND, ME¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

Rockland (44.1°N, 69.1°W) is located in Mid-Coast Maine on Penobscot Bay in Knox County. The area encompasses approximately 12 square miles of territory and has approximately 7.5 miles of coastline (Sheehan and Copperthwaite 2002). It is 44 miles from Augusta and 54 miles from Brunswick, 82 miles from Portland, and 189 miles to Boston. The nearest municipalities of note include Camden, Thomaston, Waldoboro, Belfast, and Searsport (MapQuest 2001).



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

Historical/Background

Rockland's economic history includes shipbuilding, commercial fishing, lime kilns, and granite quarries, the last of which are what the city is named for. "Throughout the historic period, a series of single industries have dominated Rockland's economy while its population has remained remarkably stable. Lime production, for mortar and plaster, was first, beginning with the earliest Europeans in the area in the eighteenth century and coming to its end in the 1930s. Shipping and shipbuilding were important outgrowths of the lime industry but shipbuilding ended by the early 1920s with the change from wood to steel as the favored material for shipbuilding.

Fishing is Rockland's oldest commercial enterprise. Fishing-related industry dates back to the 1750s, and continued with the development of the first fish processing plant in the 1880s,

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."

and the appearance of wholesale lobster businesses in the 1900s. The F.J. O’Hara Company began processing frozen fish products here in the 1940s, supplying the plant with their own fleet (Shore Village Historical Society 1989). “Two offshore fleets based here (O’Hara and National Sea Products) fished in Canadian water until 1984 when the Hague Line, the international boundary established by the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands, led to the exclusion of U.S. fishermen from Canadian fishing grounds. Groundfish processing plants that relied primarily on Canadian fish continued producing product for U.S. government contracts until the early 1990s. In the 1970’s the city also had a major shrimp plant and served as a primary herring-processing center with two sardine plants, the last one of which closed about 12 years ago [quote from 2001]” (Hall-Arber et al. 2001).

In Rockland, as elsewhere in New England, the collapse of commercial fishing took a great toll beginning in the 1980s; Rockland’s ground fishing industry virtually ended by 1990. After a relatively brief period of decline and depression, residents and outside interests have been able to transform Rockland into a tourist destination and fine arts center. In addition, manufacturing and service (outside of tourist-related service) are important, but smaller, components of the city’s economy today” (Fagan 2003).

Demographics³

According to Census 2000 data⁴, Rockland City had a total population of 7,609, down 4.6% from the reported population of 7,972 in 1990. Of this 2000 total, 46.1% were male and 53.9% were female. The median age was 40.9 years and 75% of the population was 21 years or older while 21.8% of the population was 62 or older.

The age structure of Rockland (Figure 1) had a similar age structure to many other small fishing towns in that there was a dip in population within the 20-29 year age group. The number of females exceeded the number of males in every age grouping.

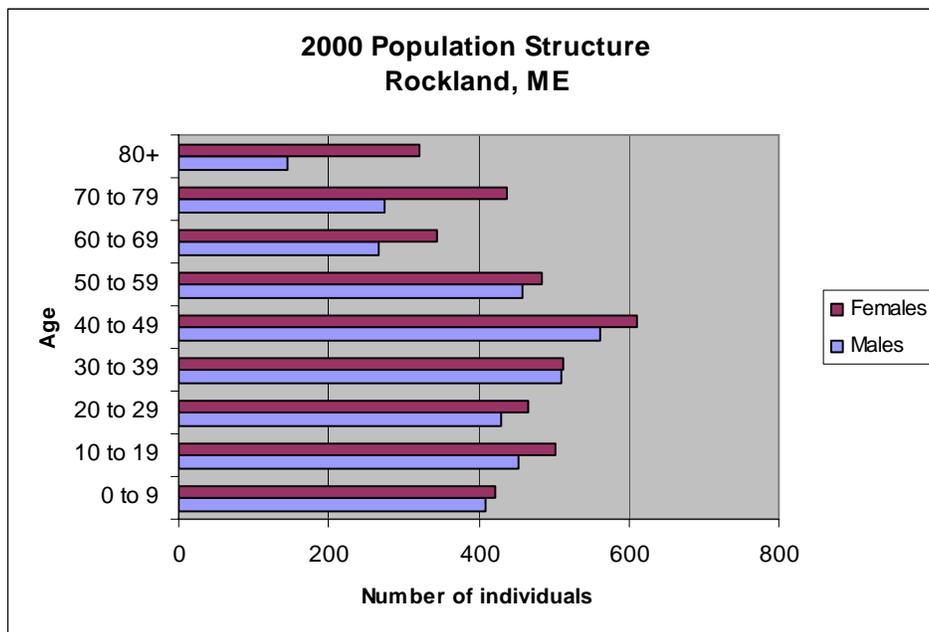


Figure 1. Rockland’s population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

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 Rockland city

The majority of the population was white (97.9%) with 0.2% of residents black or African American, 0.6% Asian, 0.2% Native American, and none Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 0.6% of the population identified themselves as Hispanics/Latinos (Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: English (21.8%), Irish (13.6%), Scottish (5.3%), American (10.3%) and other (14.9%). With regard to region of birth, 73.0% were born in Maine, 24.6% were born in a different state and 1.6% were born outside of the U.S. (including 0.7% who were not United States citizens).

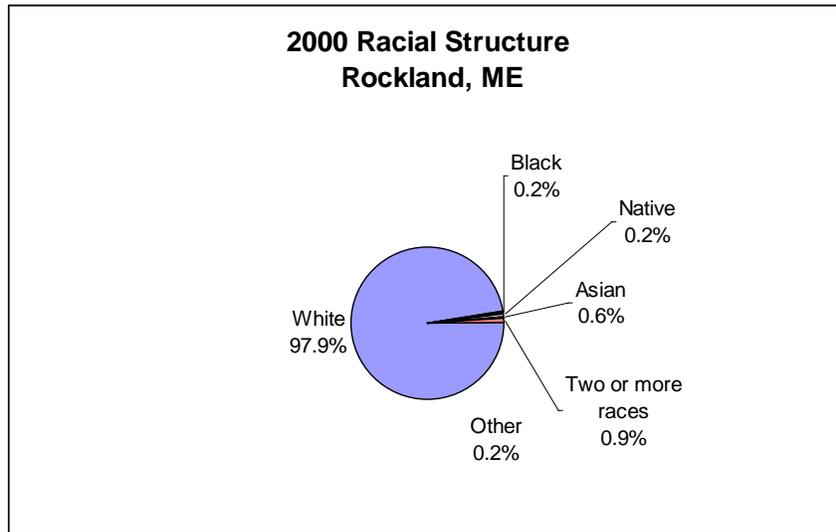


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

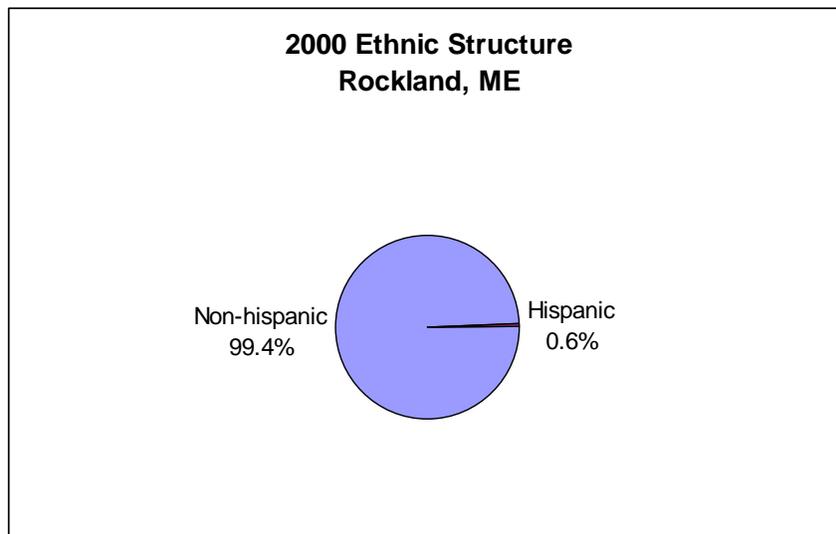


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 96.3% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 3.7% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, including 0.3% of the population who spoke English less than “very well” according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 83.3% were high school graduates or higher and 20.4% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 4.7% did not reach ninth grade, 12% attended some high school but did not graduate, 38.3% completed high school, 20.0% had some college with no degree, 4.6% received their associate’s degree,

13.5% earned their bachelor's degree, and 6.9% received either their graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through US Census data, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) in 2000, the religion with the highest number of congregations in Knox County was American Baptist Churches with 11 congregations and 1,490 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were Catholic (5 congregations with 4,274 adherents) and United Methodist (7 with 1,138 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was down 1.0% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

Issues/Processes

Like other fishing communities in the Northeast, Amendment 13 brought significant changes to the local fishing industry. However, this groundfish recovery act may have had less economic impact on Rockland than on communities farther east in Maine because other fisheries such as herring and lobster have played a larger role in Rockland's economy (Griffin 2004). The following excerpt, from "The Future of the Rockland Fish Pier" conducted by Coastal Enterprises in 2003, summarizes the main fisheries issues that the city of Rockland currently faces:

"With the end of large-scale fish processing in Rockland, the City has become simply one of a score of ports in the midcoast-Pen Bay region where fish and shellfish may be landed and sold, or trucked to Portland for auction at the Portland Fish Exchange. Unlike herring, where there is a critical mass of vessels and bait dealers operating at the port, Rockland has no significant competitive advantage in other fisheries. In groundfishing it plays a secondary role in the region to Port Clyde; in lobsters, to Stonington, Friendship and Spruce Head; in urchins, it shares a sharply declining catch with a dozen ports. What is significant about Rockland, though, is the fact that the Fish Pier provides open, public water access - either primary or alternate - for participants in several fisheries.

"A further element in the herring fishery was the emergence and then the disappearance of foreign processing vessels buying herring caught in U.S. waters. The years 1996 and 1997 saw purchases of significant tonnage in Rockland harbor, but this has not been repeated. The 1990s saw Rockland emerge as the hub of herring landings for Maine, and the point from which bait was distributed throughout the region from Casco Bay to the Canadian border. The presence of foreign processing vessels saw landings in Rockland peak in 1996 at 36,886 metric tons." (Penobscot Bay Watch 2003)

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

August 2007 marked the 60th annual celebration of the [Maine Lobster Festival](#). Presented by the Rockland Festival Corp., this festival celebrates the importance of lobster to Rockland and the surrounding area with entertainment and seafood. Other cultural resources in Rockland

include the Maine Lighthouse Museum, the Project Puffin Visitor's Center, Farnsworth Art Museum, Lincoln Street Center for Arts & Education, and the Strand Theatre (PBRCC 2008).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

Other than fishing, and boat building and repair, Rockland City has other more recent industries stabilizing its economy such as: furniture and playground equipment manufacturing, biotechnology industries, wholesale distribution, marine-related businesses, seaweed processing, metal fabricating, and food related industries. "The structure of the economy in the Rockland LMA [Labor Market Area] has been shifting from manufacturing to services, retailing, and construction for many decades" (Gill et al. 2002). "The City continues to attract new industries to broaden its industrial base while retaining traditional industries such as ship and boat building and repair. The relatively broad base has made the city less vulnerable to economic fluctuations in any single industry or product line"(RCPC 2002).

The major employers of Rockland include medical centers, banks, food distributors, schools, and government facilities. Other private industries demonstrate the diversity of Rockland's economy. They include the following companies with an employee size range of between 100-249: Courier-Gazette, Fisher Engineering, FMC Biopolymer, Home Depot, Human Services Department, Kno-Wal-Lin Home Health Care, Knox Center for Long Term Care, Mid-Coast Mental Health Center, Shaw's Supermarket, and Wal-Mart Camden (State of Maine 2006).

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁵, 63% (3,876 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 3.0% were unemployed, 1.0% were in the Armed Forces, and 59.0% were employed.

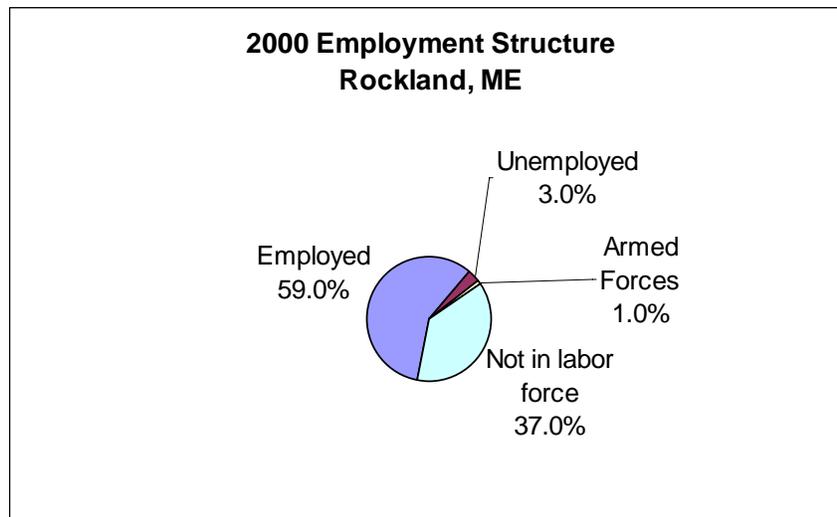


Figure 4. Employment structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 119 positions or 3.3% of available all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 502 positions or 13.8% of jobs. Educational, health and social services (18.9%), retail trade (14.1%) and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (13.3%) were the primary industries.

⁵ 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.

Median household income in Rockland City was \$30,209 (up 37.3% from \$22,006 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and median per capita income was \$16,659. For full time year round workers, males made 23.9% more per year than females.

The average family in Rockland consisted of 2.78 persons. With respect to poverty, 10.4% of families (down from 12.6% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 15.9% of individuals earned below the official 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 200a). In 2000, 46.9% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Rockland City had a total of 3,752 housing units of which 91.5% were occupied and 52.7% were detached one unit homes. Over fifty percent (51.1%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes accounted for 4.9% of the total housing units; 92.3% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$82,400, which is almost \$30,000 less than the county average. Of vacant housing units, 2.1% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units, 45.8% were renter occupied.

Government

The city of Rockland operates under a Council/Manager form of government and is governed by a City Charter and Code of Ordinances, originally adopted in 1945 (City of Rockland, 2008).

Fishery involvement in the government

The City has a Harbor and Waterfront Ordinance and a full-time Harbor Master who directs the Harbor and Waterfront Department (City of Rockland 2008). As part of its Harbor and Waterfront Department, the City operates the Municipal Fish Pier. The Fish Pier provides wharfage for herring carriers, lobster buyers, and other fishing vessels; fuel; power and other services as required. The City of Rockland also has a Harbor Management Commission whose responsibility was to develop and now to administer the Harbor Management Plan. This is a quasi-legislative committee established by the State of Maine to administer transportation matters, such as the ferry service, within the Rockland Harbor area.⁶

Institutional

Fishing associations

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. The Midcoast Fishermen's Association, based in Port Clyde, is also likely to have members from Rockland.⁷

Fishery assistance centers

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

⁶ Profile review comment, Ann Matlack, Assistant to the City Manager, 270 Pleasant St., Rockland, ME 04841, October 23, 2007

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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 Island Institute, located in Rockland, promotes ecological research to help conservation efforts of fifteen Maine island communities, which includes research on fisheries, especially that of lobster fisheries (Island Institute, no date). Until mid 2004 the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) had an office based in Rockland, but it is now located Brunswick.

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 (Maine Fishermen's Forum 2007).

Physical

There is transportation access to and within the city of Rockland. It has both an interstate and state highway system. Maine Eastern Railroad provides excursion train service between Brunswick and Rockland and there are plans to extend passenger rail service from Portland to Rockland via Brunswick. Knox County Airport in nearby Owls Head provides commuter service to Boston and there are two larger airports near Rockland are Bangor International (67 miles) and Portland International (80 miles).⁸ There are no hospitals within the limits of Rockland, but the three most accessible are Penobscot Bay Medical Center in Rockport (approx. 6 miles), Waldo County General Hospital in Belfast (approx. 24 miles), and Miles Memorial Hospital in Damariscotta (approx. 27 miles). There is a public high school in Rockland, three public and one private primary/middle schools (City of Rockland, no date).

Rockland has a municipally-owned pier designated to fishing, which was built after the Magnuson Act to promote the fishing industry during the Fish Pier Program. This provides off loading facilities and ice. Landings are then trucked to Portland for processing since the sardine canneries have all closed in Rockland.

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁹

Commercial

As of 2004 there were a total of 675 moorings, berthings, slips, and tie ups for commercial and recreational fishermen, of which 4% are used by commercial fishermen in

⁸ Profile review comment, Ann Matlack, Assistant to the City Manager, 270 Pleasant St., Rockland, ME 04841, October 23, 2007

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.

Rockland. The city has 21 commercial private and public waterfront facilities, of which two are dedicated to commercial fishing use. Commercial fishing access is not perceived as a problem, but both issues of development pressures and the decline in the commercial fishing industry are reported as current threats to the commercial fishing access (Sheehan and Copperthwaite 2002).

According to the landings data collected on federally managed species, Rockland's commercial fishery is primarily based on the herring and lobster fisheries (Table 1). Landings of both in 2006 were significantly higher than the average landings values for 1997-2006. Overall landings in Rockland increased in most years to their highest point in 2006. The value of landings in Rockland exceeded the value of home port landings in every year, meaning many vessels from elsewhere are probably landing their catch in Rockland. The number of home ported vessels decreased, from 42 in 1997 down to 22 in 2006. The number of vessels with owners living in Rockland was much fewer than the number of home ported vessels in every year, indicating that many of the vessels here are owned by people residing in other communities.

Landings by Species

Table 1. Rank Value of Landings for Federally Managed Groups

Species	Rank Value of Average Landings from 1997-2006
Lobster	1
Herring	2
Other ¹⁰	3
Largemesh Groundfish ¹¹	4
Scallop	5
Monkfish	6
Red Crab	7
Skate	8
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	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.)

Vessels by Year¹²

Table 1. Federal Vessel Permits Between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)
1997	42	17
1998	32	16
1999	28	14
2000	29	14
2001	32	15
2002	30	13
2003	26	15
2004	32	18
2005	30	14
2006	22	9

(Note: # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport, # Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹³)

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

¹¹ Largemesh groundfish: cod, winter flounder, witch flounder, yellowtail flounder, am. plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.

Recreational

Currently no recreational fishing companies are based in Rockland Harbor.¹⁴

Subsistence

Information of subsistence fishing in Rockland is unavailable through secondary data collection. However, some subsistence fishing for striped and mackerel occurs off the Rockland Breakwater (Village Soup 2007).¹⁵

FUTURE

The former Hurricane Island Outward Bound facility at Snow Marine Park was purchased on October 18, 2007; the new owners intend to develop this 2.5 acre facility in Rockland's South End to attract marine-related businesses (Village Soup 2007).

A ferry terminal has been proposed for Rockland Harbor to provide service to Portland, Bar Harbor, and perhaps other ports within the Penobscot Bay region. The existing rail line between Brunswick and Rockland is in the process of being improved to allow passenger service to the ferry terminal. These changes would likely turn Rockland into a major port and significantly increase both the number of tourists traveling to the area and the commercial use of the harbor area.

Goals within the city's comprehensive plan include increasing public facilities for commercial fishing as needed and providing space for the commercial fishing industry along the proposed ferry dock if possible. At the same time, the city is also attempting to increase tourism to the harbor (RCPC 2002).

Currently, lobster stations, herring vessels, and coastal tankers respectively reap the highest revenue for the Rockland Fish Pier. Some suggest that if groundfish stocks do recover as projected within the next five years, the fishing industry of Rockland will rejuvenate. While Rockland would benefit from the predicted increase in groundfish landings, the city's fishing industry has primarily depended on herring landings (used for lobster bait) (Penobscot Bay Watch 2003). No matter what happens with the fishing industry, it appears that Rockland is attracting more people as a tourist destination similar to many other areas in Maine (Robicheau 2004).

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