

TREMONT, ME¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

The town of Tremont, Maine (44.16°N, 68.24°W) is located in Hancock County, on Mount Desert Island. The town of Tremont includes the villages of Bass Harbor, Bernard, West Tremont, Seal Cove, and Gotts Island (Town of Tremont, no date). The town is roughly 17 miles from Bar Harbor and 50 miles from Bangor (MapQuest 2006). The town encompasses 16.1 square miles (State of Maine 2004).



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

Historical/Background

Tremont was first settled in 1762 and was incorporated in 1848 when it split off from the town of Mount Desert. Most of the residents of Tremont in 1850 were fishermen, mariners, or boat builders. Most of the fishing vessel crews, fishing for cod and mackerel as far away as the Grand Banks and Labrador, were made up of extended families.

Bass Harbor was an important area for shipbuilding, and also had a canning factory, the Underwood & Co. Cannery, which canned lobster, clams, and sardines. A lobster fishery developed partly out of demand from Boston. During the late 1800s, Tremont also became a tourist destination (Ellsworth American 2002). The Underwood Cannery closed in 1978, and has been transformed into luxury condominiums (Maine Preservation 2001). Today

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.”

Tremont's population nearly doubles during the summer, and increasingly those who have spent their summers here are now living in Tremont year-round (Ellsworth American 2002).

Demographics³

According to Census 2000 data⁴, Tremont had a total population of 1,529, up 15.4% from the reported population of 1,325 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 47.4% were males and 52.6% were females. The median age was 41.6 years and 75.1% of the population was 21 years or older while 17.9% was 62 or older.

Tremont's age structure (Figure 1) shows the highest percentage of the population is between 40-49 years old, with much of the population also within the 30-39 and 50-59 age brackets. As is seen in many small towns, there is a sharp decline in the population for the 20-29 age grouping, as young people leave town for college and in search of employment. This decline is more striking for men than women in Tremont.

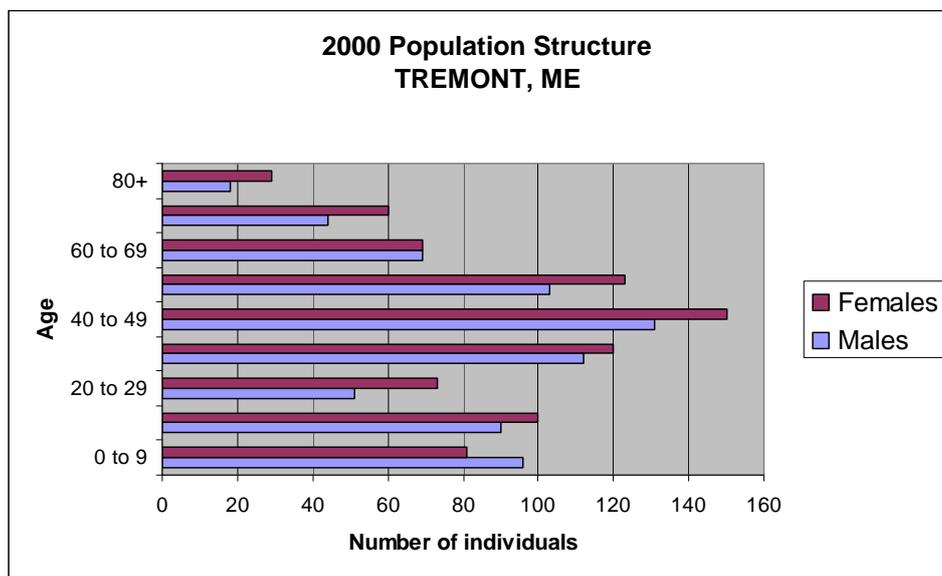


Figure 1. Tremont's population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The majority of the population was white (98.6%), with 0.3% of residents black or African American, 0.3% Asian, 0.7% Native American, and none Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 0.3% of the total population is Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents link their heritage to a number of ancestries including the following: English (25.7%), Irish (14.2%), Scottish (8.4%), and French (8.0%). With regard to region of birth, 64.2% were born in Maine, 33.7% were born in a different state and 1.5% were born outside of the U.S. (including 0.4% who are 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 Tremont town (cited Jul 2007)

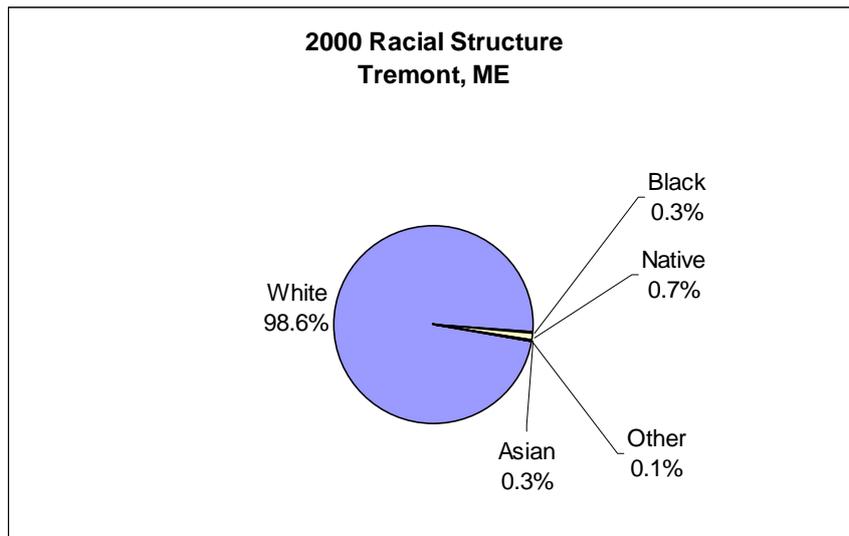


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

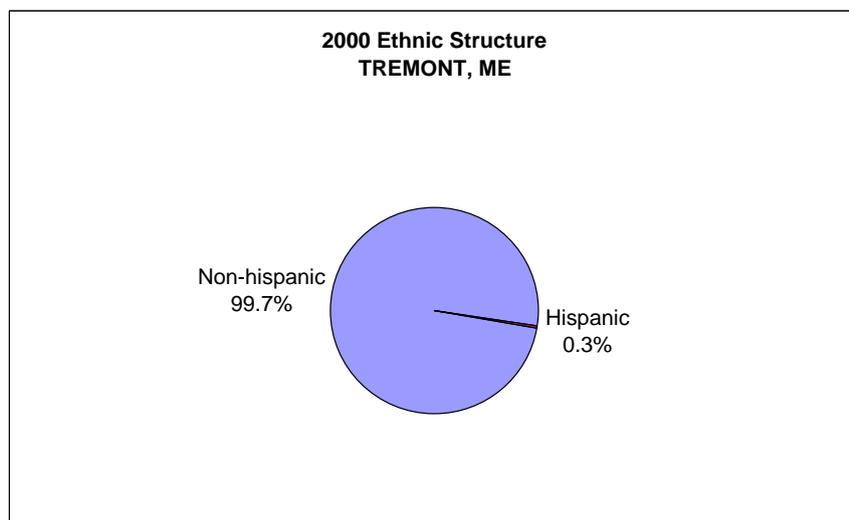


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 97.5% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 2.5% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 0.1% of the population who spoke English less than “very well” according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 85.4% were high school graduates or higher and 25.4% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 2.4% did not reach ninth grade, 12.3% attended some high school but did not graduate, 37.6% completed high school, 18.3% had some college with no degree, 4.0% received a associate’s degree, 16.7% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 8.7% received a graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through the U.S. Census, 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), and American Baptist Churches of USA (17 with 1,774 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 25.2% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

Issues/Processes

Michael Radcliffe of F.W. Thurston Lobster Co. in Bernard was concerned that the neighboring Town Wharf was taking away business from his company. While he supported the idea of the Town Wharf, he was concerned that the subsidized rates for tying up and unloading provided by the town would take away some of his business when he could not compete with the town over the lobster boats. He also noted that the lobster catches has been off to a slow start in 2005, and that they were unlikely to match previous years' catches.⁵

Like many similar towns, the rapidly growing costs of real estate and the resulting increase in property taxes has made it difficult for many of the town's year-round residents to afford their homes, and many are forced to sell and move elsewhere (Ellsworth American 2002).

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

Tremont has a Sea Memorial located next to the Town Wharf dedicated to those from the Tremont area who have been lost at sea over the years.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

C.H. Rich Co. employs six people to work on the dock unloading the boats and picking crab.⁶ The largest employers on Mount Desert Island are in Bar Harbor, and are as follows: Acadia National Park; Bar Harbor Banking & Trust Co.; Bar Harbor Inn; Jackson Laboratory; Mount Desert Island Hospital; Songee Estates (nursing home); and U.S. Department of the Interior. Other significant employers in neighboring Southwest Harbor are Hinckley Brothers, Co. (boat brokers and boat building) and the U.S. Coast Guard (Ellsworth American 2002).

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁷, 69.1% (843 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 2.0% were unemployed, 0.4% were in the Armed Forces, and 66.7% were employed.

⁵ Personal Communication, Michael Radcliffe, F.W. Thurston Lobster Co., Steamboat Wharf Rd., Bernard, ME 04612, 8/19/05

⁶ Personal Communication, C.H. Rich Co., Inc., PO Box 8, Bass Harbor, ME 04653, 8/19/05

⁷ 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.

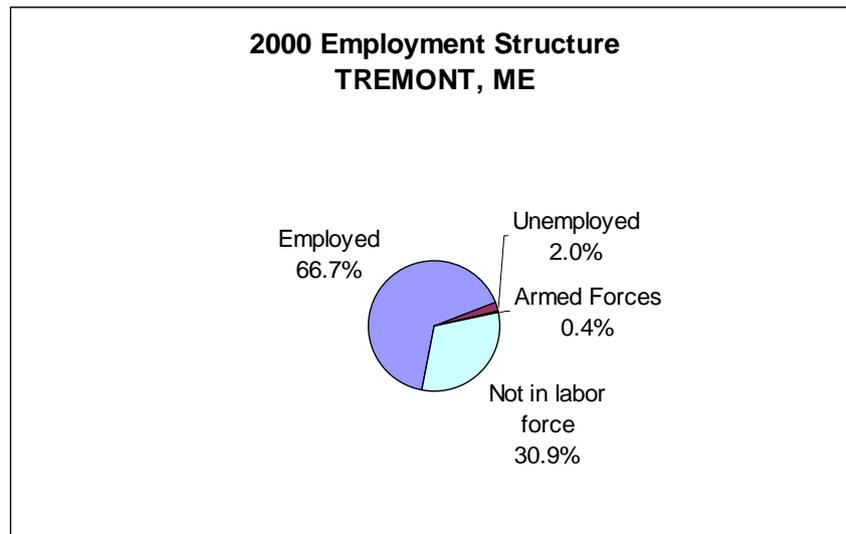


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 84 positions or 10.3% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 190 positions or 23.3% of jobs. Construction (13.8%), educational, health, and social services (12.5%), and professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (12.3%) were other primary industries.

Median household income in Tremont was \$36,750 (up 41.3% from \$26,012 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and median per capita income was \$19,420. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 28.4% more per year than females.

The average family in Tremont consisted of 2.76 persons. With respect to poverty, 5.0% of families (down from 6.5% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 7.4% 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, 40.3% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Tremont had a total of 1,075 housing units of which 61.6% were occupied and 82.3% were detached one unit homes. More than one-quarter (28.1%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes accounted for 9.8% of housing units; 93.7% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$121,400. Of vacant housing units, 34.4% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units, 22.5% were renter occupied.

Government

Tremont's local government is comprised of a town manager, and five Selectmen (Town of Tremont, no date).

Fishery involvement in government

The town of Tremont has a Harbor Committee which recommends rules and regulations for use of Tremont's harbors, which are to be enforced by the Harbormaster. The Harbor Ordinance dictates that at least two members of the Harbor Committee must be commercial fishermen (Town of Tremont 2004). The town also operates a Town Wharf where fishermen can dock their boats at a subsidized rate. Tremont's zoning ordinances include a mixed use Harbor Shoreland Zone and a Commercial Fishery/Maritime Activity

Shoreland Zone reserved exclusively for commercial fishing and other marine activity (Town of Tremont 2004a).

Institutional

Fishing associations

The fishing associations that serve Tremont fishermen are the Downeast Lobstermen's Association located in Deer Isle, Maine, and the [Maine Lobstermen's Association](#) (MLA). The 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

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

[Hancock County - Bar Harbor Airport](#) is located halfway between Ellsworth and Bar Harbor, and it is approximately 18 miles from Tremont. A regional service is provided between this airport and Logan Airport in Boston, Massachusetts. The international airports of Portland and Bangor are respectively 177.1 and 49.5 miles from Tremont. For ground transportation, the [Island Explorer](#) bus provides seasonal service to Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor Airport, Bar Harbor, and Southwest Harbor. It features eight bus routes linking hotels, inns, and campgrounds with destinations in Acadia National Park and neighboring village centers. Seasonally, [Bay Ferries](#) provides ferry transportation from Bar Harbor, Maine, to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, and the [Maine State Ferry Service](#) provides year-round transportation from Bass Harbor to Swans Island and Frenchboro.

Most of the fishing activity for Tremont is located in the villages of Bernard and Bass Harbor, which face each other across Bass Harbor. Both villages have a privately-owned lobster pier where lobstermen can unload and sell their catch. Both C.H. Rich Co., Inc. located in Bass Harbor and F.W. Thurston Co. in Bernard provide bait and dock space to the lobstermen; C.H. Rich also buys crab and shrimp, and provides ice to the boats. Tremont has a Town Wharf where lobstermen can tie up and unload their catch to trucks that come to the dock to purchase the lobster. Tie-up fees are subsidized by the town; boats under 50 feet are

charged \$12.50/foot for use of the dock and boats over 50 feet are charged \$25/foot (Town of Tremont, no date). Most of the lobster boats are moored in Bass Harbor; additionally a number of homes located on the waterfront have their own docks where their lobster boats can tie up and unload. Bass Harbor has a haul out and repair facility with a marine railway. There is also a boat ramp in Seal Cove operated by the town.

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁸

Commercial

Bass Harbor is the primary fishing location for Mount Desert Island, and possibly “the largest working harbor within 100 miles”(Ellsworth American 2002). Fishing data is listed for both Bass Harbor and Bernard, the names of two villages on either side of the harbor, and for Tremont. Fishing in Tremont is primarily for lobster. There are 35 vessels that unload at F.W. Thurston, about 30 vessels that use the Town Wharf⁹, and 33 vessels that unload at C.H. Rich, most of which fish for lobster and crab, but at least one of which catches shrimp during the winter.¹⁰ Some of the lobster here is sold to local restaurants, including The Wharf and Sea Food Ketch in Bass Harbor; the majority is packaged and shipped for distribution. F.W. Thurston Lobster Co. has a large restaurant serving lobster; the restaurant makes up about 7-8% of business, about 2% is retail, and the rest here is wholesale.¹¹ One restaurant in Bass Harbor, Maine-ly Delights, has three of its own boats which fish for lobster, crab, clams, and some fish to supply the restaurant.¹²

All landings are for either Tremont or Bernard, which are combined in Table, with the vast majority of landings in Bernard in recent years. Lobster is the most valuable species for both ports (see Table 1), followed by “other” species and scallops. Vessel data is combined for Tremont, Bernard, and Bass Harbor in Table 2. Generally the combined number of home ported vessels increased, from 19 in 1997 to 28 in 2006. The value of landings over this time period declined in Tremont but increased in Bernard, which may indicate fishermen changing the facility at which they land their catch, although the informants on both sides of the harbor indicated that the fishermen were generally loyal to one facility or the other.

⁸ 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.

⁹ Personal Communication, Michael Radcliffe, F.W. Thurston Lobster Co., Steamboat Wharf Rd., Bernard, ME 04612, 8/19/05

¹⁰ Personal Communication, C.H. Rich Co., Inc., PO Box 8, Bass Harbor, ME 04653, 8/19/05

¹¹ Personal Communication, Michael Radcliffe, F.W. Thurston Lobster Co., Steamboat Wharf Rd., Bernard, ME 04612, 8/19/05

¹² Personal Communication, Maine-ly Delights, Granville Rd., Bass Harbor, ME 04653, 8/17/05

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 ¹³	2
Scallop	3
Largemesh Groundfish ¹⁴	4
Monkfish	5
Smallmesh Groundfish ¹⁵	6
Skate	7

(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 Year¹⁶

Table 1. All columns represent vessel permits or landings value combined between 1997-2006 for Tremont, Bass Harbor, and Bernard

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# vessels (owner's city)
1997	19	14
1998	21	14
1999	23	16
2000	19	14
2001	19	16
2002	24	20
2003	23	21
2004	24	20
2005	25	18
2006	28	17

(Note: # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport
 # Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹⁷
 Level of fishing home port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries associated with home ported vessels
 Level of fishing landed port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries landed in location)

Recreational

The [Island Cruises](#) tour which departs from Bass Harbor uses an old lobster boat and in addition to taking passengers on a tour of the nearby islands, gives passengers the experience of hauling lobster traps. According to the [Bass Harbor Campground](#) web site, there are also several boat captains in and around Tremont that offer deep sea fishing excursions, and salt water fishing from the beach or a boat, all of which are popular activities for tourists visiting the area.

¹³ "Other" species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

¹⁴ Largemesh groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

¹⁵ Smallmesh multi-species : red hake, ocean pout, mixed hake, black whiting, silver hake (whiting)

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ 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.

Subsistence

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

FUTURE

While Tremont's location on Mount Desert Island makes it a tourist destination, it has escaped many of the development pressures that face other towns on the island, and is one of the last working harbors on Mount Desert Island (Ellsworth American 2002). The land surrounding the lobster piers in Bernard and Bass Harbor is zoned for Commercial Fishery/Maritime Activity, so is not in immediate danger of development (Town of Tremont 2004a).

Michael Radcliffe of F.W. Thurston Lobster noted that while catches were down in 2005, on a larger scale business has been very good over the last ten years. He also commented on how tight the lobster business is, noting that a decline in one year's catches will affect not only the lobstermen but also the wholesalers, shippers, and the air freight business.¹⁸

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¹⁸ Personal Communication, Michael Radcliffe, F.W. Thurston Lobster Co., Steamboat Wharf Rd., Bernard, ME 04612, 8/19/05