

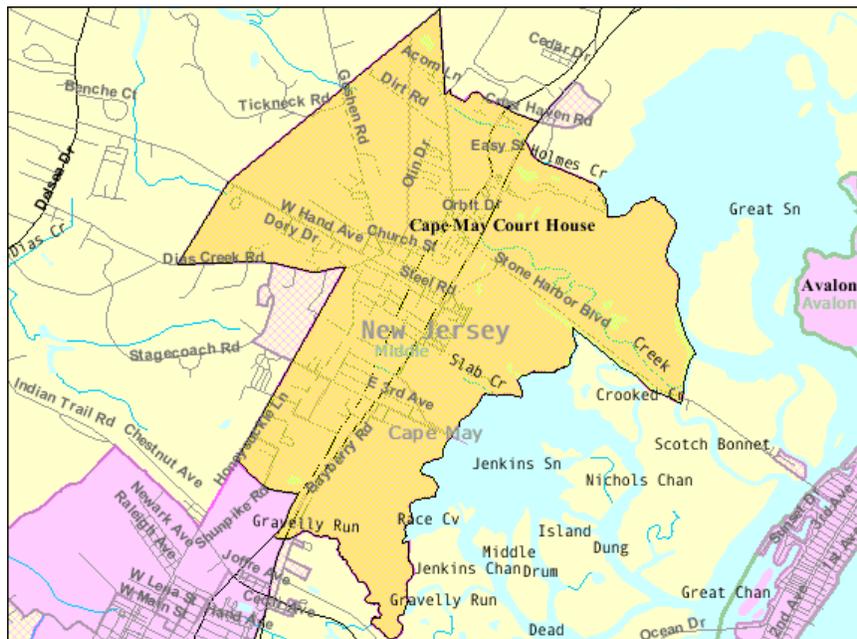
# CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE, NJ<sup>1</sup>

## Community Profile<sup>2</sup>

### PEOPLE AND PLACES

#### Regional orientation

Cape May Court House, New Jersey (39.08°N, 74.82°S) is located within Middle Township in Cape May County (USGS 2008). The community is centered in the Cape May County Peninsula, on the State's mainland and on the west border of the coast's sounds (Great and Jenkins Sounds) and barrier islands. Cape May Court House's total area is 9.1mi<sup>2</sup>; 9.0mi<sup>2</sup> of this is land, with only 1.54% water (US Census Bureau 2000a). Cape May Court House borders Cape May, one of the largest fishing ports in the region.



Map 1. Location Cape May Court House, NJ (US Census Bureau 2000a)

#### Historical/Background

Specific history on Cape May Court House was not found through secondary data collection. However, Cape May County has a long history beginning with Lenni Lenape Indians of two bands, the Tuckahoes and the Kechemeches. The Kechemeches occupied the area from Cape May Court House south to Cape May Point. European influence began in the 1620s with the Dutch West India Company's Cornelius Jacobsen Mey exploration of the Delaware Bay region. The northern cape was named "Cape Mey" and later altered by English settlers to its current spelling, Cape May. These first settlers of the County, whalers from New England and New York, arrived in 1685. "They colonized the Bay's southern banks calling it Portsmouth,

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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](mailto:Lisa.L.Colburn@noaa.gov)."

New England Village, and later Cape May Town and Bank Town.” This original settlement was washed into the sea during a storm, and combined with numerous at-sea deaths, marked an end to the whaling era in the area. The inhabitants changed the primary industry from whaling to farming, and today it has become tourism (VisitNJ.org nd; Cape May County nd).

“Cape May County was formally created in 1692 from land held by the West Jersey Society.” As trade in Cape May County increased and transportation developed, separate towns were established (VisitNJ.org nd). These include the coastal communities of present day Avalon, Cape May, Ocean City, Sea Isle City, Stone Harbor, Wildwood, and although less representative of a coastal community<sup>3</sup>, Cape May Court House.

### Demographics<sup>4</sup>

According to the Census 2000 data<sup>5</sup>, Cape May Court House CDP had a total population of 4,704, up 5.9% from a reported population of 4,426 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 46.5% were males and 53.5% were females. The median age was 41.2 years and 73.3% of the population was 21 years or older while 22.8% was 62 or older.

The population structure for Cape May Court House (see Figure 1) shows the vast majority of residents are young or middle aged, in the age ranges of 0-19 and 30-59. Like many small communities, the population takes a dip for the 20-29 age grouping. This trend shows Cape May Court House to largely be a family community, of parents with young children or teenagers.

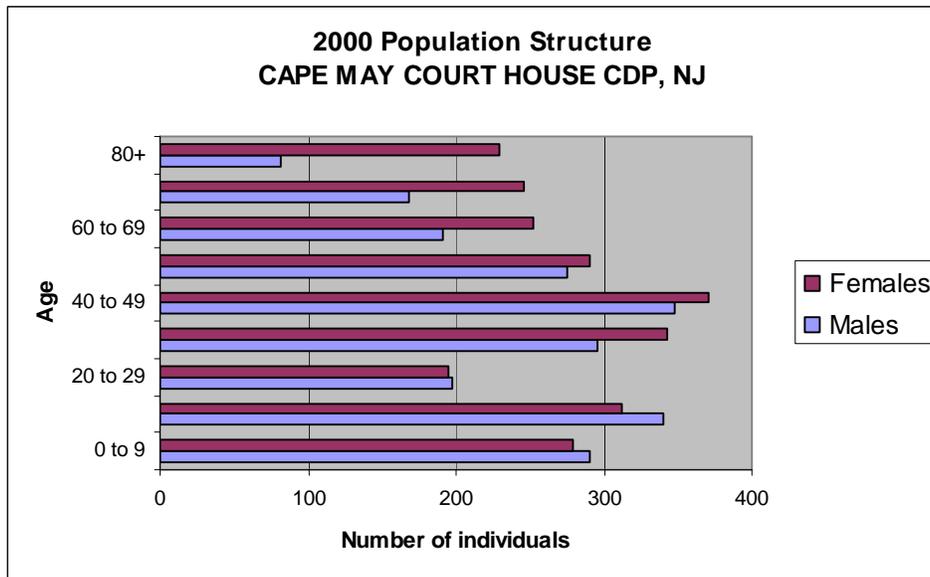


Figure 1. Cape May Court House CDP’s population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000a)

The majority of the population was white (83.8%), with 11.5% black or African American, 2.9% Asian, 0.9% Native American or Alaskan, and 0.1% Pacific Islander or native Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 1.6% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino

<sup>3</sup> Community review Comments, Martin Teller, Cape May County Planning Department, 4 Moore Rd., Cape May Court House, NJ 08210, August 28, 2007

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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 Cape May Court House CDP (accessed July 6, 2007)

(Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: Irish (25.7%), German (20.7%), Italian (15.0%), and English (13.7%). With regard to region of birth, 95.5% of residents were born in New Jersey, 38.5% were born in a different state, and 4.5% were born outside the U.S. (including 1.2% who were not US citizens).

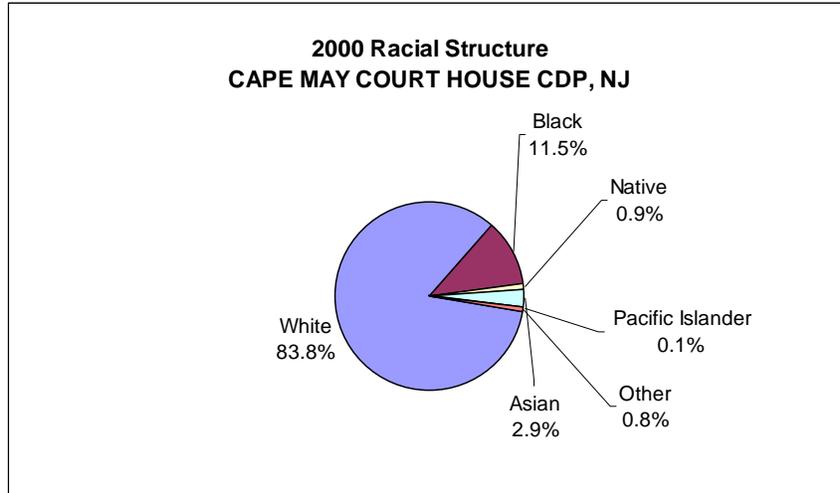


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000a)

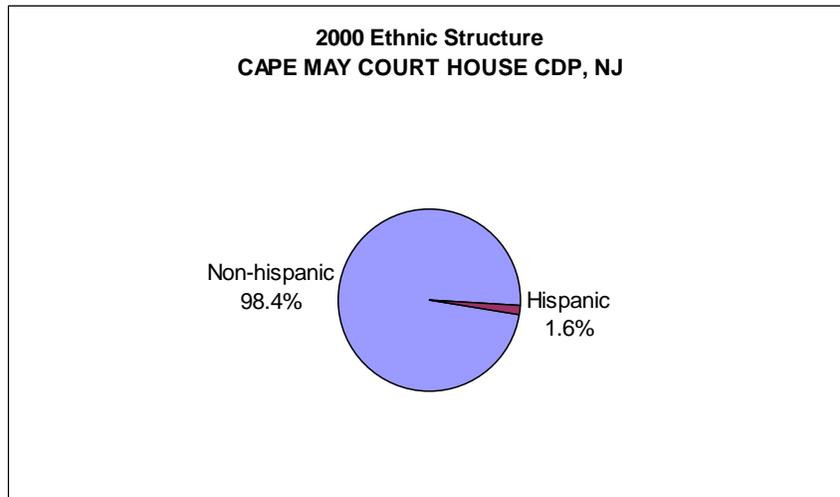


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 93.3% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 6.7% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, including 2.9% of the population who spoke English less than “very well” according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 84.4% were high school graduates or higher and 22.2% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 4.4% did not reach ninth grade, 11.2% attended some high school but did not graduate, 36.7% completed high school, 21.2% had some college with no degree, 4.2% received an associate’s degree, 15.8% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 6.5% received either a graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through U.S. Census data, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives in 2000, the religions with the highest number of

congregations in Cape May County was Catholic with 15 congregations and 32,307 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were United Methodist (25 with 5,133 adherents), Episcopal (6 with 1,588 adherents) and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (6 with 2,142 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 15% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

There are nineteen religious churches and other religious centers listed in Cape May Court House.

### **Issues/Processes**

Offshore wind farms have been proposed in four locations off of Cape May County, and fishermen are concerned about the impact wind turbines could potentially have on the fish or on their access to the fisheries (AP 2005).

A federal law is proposed for requiring recreational marine fishermen to possess a license to fish (2006). If passed, recreational fishermen will be incorporated into the data collection and research of fish stocks (PAC Staff 2006).

### **Cultural attributes**

Middle Township, the location of Cape May Court House, has constructed the [Middle Township Performing Arts Center](#) (MiddlePAC) at Middle Township High School (1991). The facility's goal is to introduce a performing arts program to the community and further develop a performance and production curriculum within the school district.

The Cape May County Fishing Tournament is one of the longest continuously running fishing tournaments on the East Coast (Cape May County nd). Cape May has a fisherman's memorial, with a woman and child looking out to sea, which was created thanks to a now defunct fishermen's wives association (McCay and Cieri 2000). Cape May County holds an annual seafood festival each July (Cape May Lewes.com nd); the commercial fishing industry reportedly has little involvement in the festival (McCay and Cieri 2000). A significant seafood festival is being organized (August 2007) to promote Cape May seafood as well as preparing for the Annual Seafood Cook-off held in New Orleans, LA. The Garden State Seafood Association is helping to coordinate this event along with many local restaurants and other groups throughout the state.<sup>6</sup>

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Current Economy**

By far the largest industry in Cape May County is tourism, responsible for 91.5% of the county's employment, or 32,570 jobs (Cape May County nd). While Cape May Court House does not have much commercial fishing, commercial fishing remains the second largest industry in Cape May County (Cape May County nd). The tenth largest employer (140 employees) in Cape May County is [Snow's/Doxsee Inc.](#) (NJDA nd; CMCCC nd), with an 86,000 square-foot plant in Cape May that produces clam products including chowder, soups, canned clams, clam juice, and seafood sauces. Cold Spring Fish and Supply employs 500 people, and is the third largest employer in the county. Other top employers in the county include Burdette Tomlin Memorial Hospital (now the Cape Regional Medical Center) (1100), Acme Markets (600), WaWa (485), Holy Redeemer Visiting Nurse (250), and Super Fresh (250) (CMCCC nd).

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<sup>6</sup> Community Reviewer Comments; Greg DiDomenico, Garden State Seafood Association. Comments received August 24, 2007.

According to the U.S. Census 2000<sup>7</sup>, 61.8% (2,302 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (see Figure 4), of which 3.3% were unemployed, 0.6% were in the Armed Forces, and 57.9% were employed.

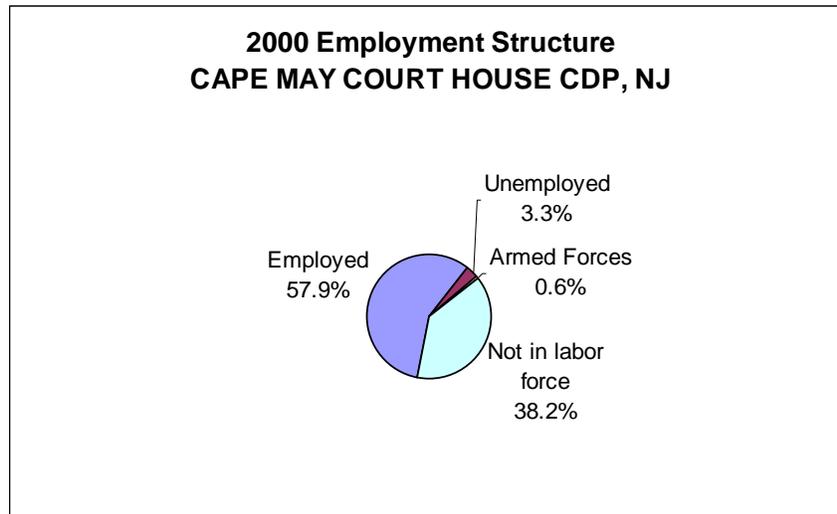


Figure 4. Employment structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000a)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 23 positions or 1.1% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 144 positions or 6.7% of jobs. Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing (6.5%), educational, health and social services (25.4%), retail trade (12.5%), professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (6.3%), and construction (10.6%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Cape May Court House was \$48,902 (up 28.7% from \$34,894 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and median per capita income was \$50,016. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 29.6% more per year than females.

The average family in Cape May Court House consists of 3.07 persons. With respect to poverty, 5.3% of families (up from 3.8% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 7.0% of individuals earn 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 2000b). In 2000, 16.2% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Cape May Court House had a total of 2,086 housing units of which 83.0% were occupied and 75.6% were detached one unit homes. More than ten percent (14.0%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes accounted for 10.1% of the total housing units; 90.7% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$122,100. Of vacant housing units, 10.5% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units, 19.5% were renter occupied.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

## **Government**

Cape May County has a five-member Board of Freeholders. The members of the Board serve 3-year terms. The Board meets monthly in Cape May Court House (Cape May County nd).

Cape May Court House is located within Middle Township of Cape May County. Middle Township's government is a 3-member Township Committee. The Township Committee also meets monthly in Cape May Court House.

### *Fishery involvement in government*

The Cape May County Planning Board supports the commercial fishing industry through a comprehensive plan that promotes land-use policies that are beneficial to the industry, and opposes projects that may harm its economic or environmental condition (CMCPB 2002).

## **Institutional**

### *Fishing associations*

As part of Cape May County, Cape May Court House CDP is connected with fishing associations within the county, as are most other communities. The [Cape May County Party and Charter Boat Association](#) is an organization of small recreational fishing boats located along the coast of Southern New Jersey, and includes boats located in Cape May Court House.

[Garden State Seafood Association](#) in Trenton (located about 90 miles from Cape May Court House) is a statewide organization of commercial fishermen and fishing companies, related businesses and individuals working in common cause to promote the interests of the commercial fishing industry and seafood consumers in New Jersey. The [Jersey Coast Anglers Association](#) (JCAA) is an association of over 75 saltwater fishing clubs throughout the state. Founded in 1981, the purpose of the organization is to unite and represent marine sport anglers to work towards common goals. The JCAA website ([www.jcaa.org](http://www.jcaa.org)) also provides links for many NJ anglers associations.

### *Fishing assistance centers*

“In an effort to maintain a healthy and safe fishing industry, the Board of Chosen Freeholders along with the State of New Jersey developed the Cape May County Revolving Fishing Loan Program. This program was instituted in 1984 and is designed to help commercial, charter and party boat fishermen with low interest loans for safety and maintenance of fishing vessels. More than \$2.5 million has been loaned out to help strengthen the local fishing industry” (Cape May County nd).

### *Other fishing related organizations*

A small portion of the Delaware Bay Division of the [Cape May Wildlife Refuge](#) is located in Cape May Court House. The Refuge protects important habitat for numerous migratory bird species and other wildlife. “Cape May National Wildlife Refuge's marshes and tidal creeks provide important nursery areas and nutrient resources for many popular species of finfish and shellfish including summer flounder, weakfish, striped bass, blue crabs and lady crabs. These fisheries provide abundant resources for wildlife as well as for people. Seventy percent of the species sought by recreational and commercial fishermen depend on shallow water habitats such as those found on the Refuge for at least part of their life cycle” (USFWS nd).

## Physical

The closest cities (pop. 50,000+) to Cape May Court House are Vineland, NJ (30.6mi) and Philadelphia, PA (67.2mi). Some surrounding towns (pop. <50,000) in New Jersey are Whitesboro-Burleigh (3.9mi), Stone Harbor (4.8mi), Wildwood (6.3mi), and Avalon (6.8mi). Accessible large carrier airports include Atlantic City International in Atlantic City, NJ (32mi), Dover AFB in Dover, DE (44mi), and Philadelphia International in Philadelphia, PA (32mi). Smaller, local airports include Cape May County Airport (8mi), Woodbine Muni (10mi), and Ocean City Muni (20mi). Cape May Court House can be accessed via highways using the Garden State Parkway (Exit 10) to Route 9. The closest medical centers are Burdette Tomlin Memorial Hospital (2 Stone Harbor Blvd., C.M.C.H.), Shore Memorial Hospital (23mi), Beebe Medical Center in Lewes, DE (33mi), and Atlantic City Medical Center (34mi) (MapQuest nd).

There are at least three marinas in Cape May Court House, including; BP Storage LLC., Smokey's Marina, and Old Bridge Marina (Shorebreeze.com nd).

## Involvement in Northeast Fisheries<sup>8</sup>

### *Commercial*

The relationship of Cape May Court House to commercial fishing is primarily through its proximity to Cape May; the commercial fishing port of Cape May/Wildwood (12 miles south) (MapQuest nd) is the largest in New Jersey and one of the largest on the East Coast. The port is the center of fish processing/freezing in New Jersey, and handles landings from some of the state's largest commercial fishing vessels. The target species of the fleet are squid, mackerel, fluke, sea bass, porgies, lobsters and menhaden. Surf clam/ocean quahog fisheries are a newer addition and catch numbers in the Delaware Bay Area are on the rise (New Jersey Fishing nd; PANYNJ nd).

Cape May Court House has very little fishing of its own. There was one home ported vessel in a few of the years which had a very low level of landings. The level of fishing home port value was greater than zero for only 2002-2006 and showed an increasing trend (roughly doubling each year) during this time period. However, there are a large number of vessels with owners living in Cape May Court House (see Table 1). Most of these vessels are likely home ported in Cape May, Wildwood, or Sea Isle City, all of which are nearby.

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<sup>8</sup> 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.

## Vessels by Year<sup>9</sup>

Table 1. All columns represent vessel permits or landings value combined between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)	Level of fishing home port (\$)	Level of fishing landed port (\$)
1997	0	11	0	0
1998	0	13	0	0
1999	0	14	0	0
2000	0	18	0	0
2001	0	21	0	0
2002	1	21	confidential	0
2003	1	25	confidential	0
2004	1	28	confidential	0
2005	1	35	confidential	0
2006	1	35	0	0

# Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport

# Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence<sup>10</sup>

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

Confidential = Value information is confidential in ports with fewer than three vessels

## Recreational

In NJ the charter/party fleet is the largest on east coast. Many vessels are over 120ft long and carry over 150 people.<sup>11</sup> Cape May County Charter and Party Boat Association contains more than 70 fishing charter boats, 8 party boats, and 7 whale watching/sightseeing boats from the communities of Avalon, Cape May, Ocean City, Stone Harbor, the Wildwoods, and Sea Isle City (CMCPCBA nd). Target in-shore and off-shore species vary monthly throughout the year. In-shore species include mackerel, drumfish, weakfish, flounder, tautog, seabass, bluefish, and striped bass. Off-shore species include shark, white marlin, blue marlin, tuna, swordfish, dolphin, and mako shark (CMCPCBA nd).

## Subsistence

Information on subsistence fishing in Cape May Court House is either unavailable through secondary data collection or the practice does not exist.

## FUTURE

Currently, New Jersey has a federal bill under debate for requiring recreational saltwater fishers to obtain a fishing license. If passed, the bill would incorporate recreational fishermen into data collection and research of fish stocks (PAC Staff 2006).

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> Community Review Comments, Bruce Freeman, NJ Coast Anglers Association, October 2, 2007

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