

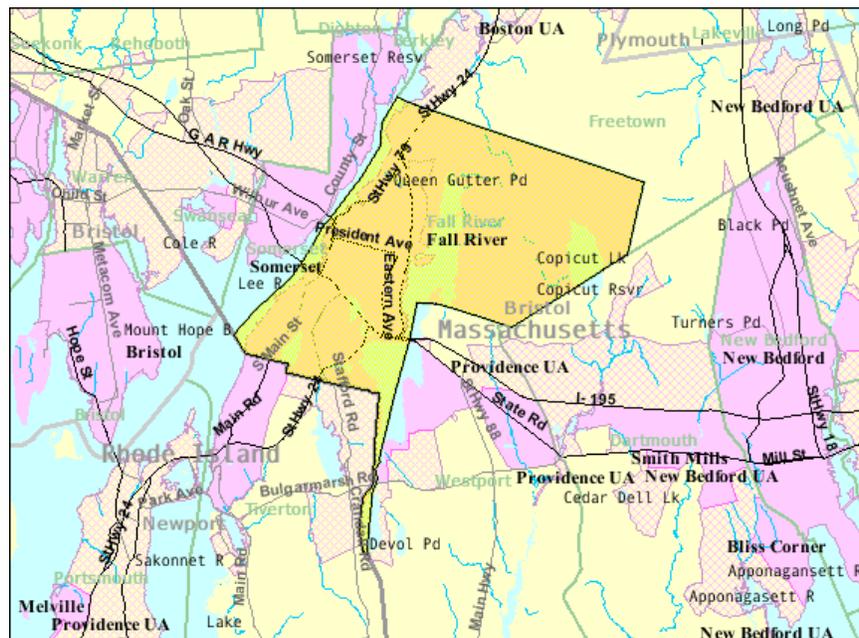
FALL RIVER, MA¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

The city of Fall River (41.70° N, 71.56° W) is located in Southeastern Massachusetts in Bristol County, along the Rhode Island border. It borders Westport, RI and is about 15 miles from New Bedford, MA. Fall River is 34 square miles in area (City of Fall River 2007) and sits on Mount Hope Bay at the mouth of the Taunton River (City of Fall River 2007). Mount Hope Bay is a component of the larger Narragansett Bay (USGS 2008).



Map 1. Location of Fall River, MA (US Census Bureau 2000)

Historical/Background

Fall River was home to the Wampanoag tribe until they were pushed out during King Phillip's War in 1675. The name comes from a translation of Quequechan, meaning "falling waters", the Wampanoag name for the area. The original settlers to the area were farmers and ships' carpenters from Rhode Island. It was founded in 1803, and incorporated as a city in 1854 (City of Fall River 2007). Fall River has a long industrial history; the first cotton mill was built here in 1811. This started a trend in textiles manufacturing that would eventually make Fall

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."

River one of the textile capitals of the nation. By the early 20th century it was known as Spindle City and had over 100 mills employing over 30,000 people. The abundance of mills drew English, Irish, Russian, Lebanese, French, Polish, Eastern European, and Jewish immigrants to Fall River, giving it the highest percentage of foreign-born residents in the U.S. by 1900. The largest percentage of migrants came from Portugal and the Azores. Fall River is also well known for being the home of Lizzie Borden, who according to lore killed her parents with an axe in the late 1800s, a story which captivated the nation. During the Depression, there was a significant economic downturn as jobs moved to the south and many mills closed; this economic decline continued through much of the 20th century and is only recently reversing itself. Today Fall River continues to have a highly ethnically diverse population (FRACCI 2007).

Demographics³

According to Census 2000 data, Fall River had a total population of 91,938, (down 0.08% from the reported population of 92,703 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]). Of this total in 2000, 53.3% were female and 46.7% were male. The median age was 35.7 years and 72.2% of the population was 21 years or older while 19.1% was 62 or older.

The population structure of Fall River (see Figure 1) the most populous age group in Fall River was 30-39, followed by closely 20-29 and 40-49. Women outnumbered men in all age groups beginning with age 20. Fall River does not experience the decline in population for the age group 20-29 experienced by many fishing communities, presumably because there are many employment opportunities for young people in this urban area.

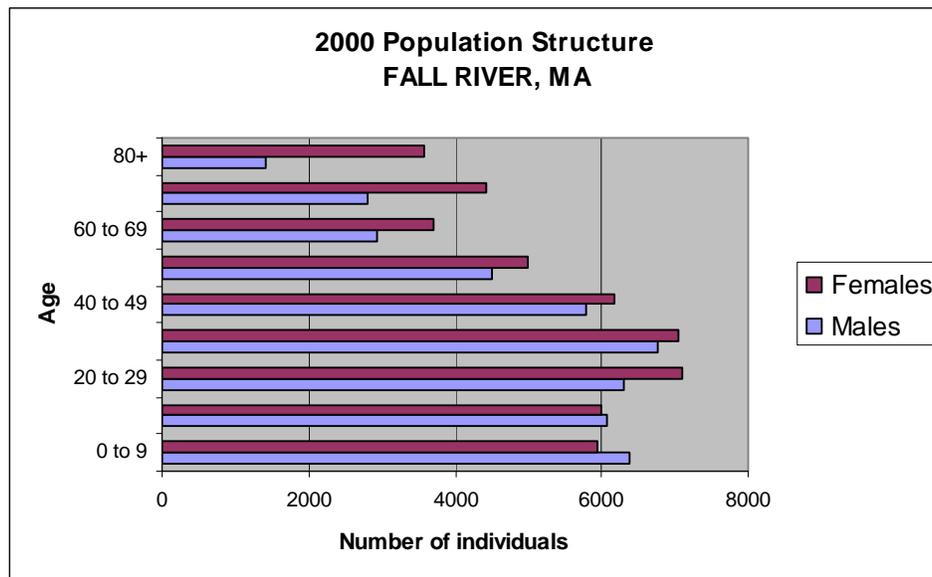


Figure 1. Fall River's population structure by sex in 2000

The majority of the population was white (90.9%), with 3.1% of residents black or African American, 0.6% Native American, 2.4% Asian, and 0.3% Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (see Figure 2). Only 3.3% of the total population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (see

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.

Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: Portuguese (47.0%), French (13.4%), Irish (9.8%), English (6.6%), French Canadian (5.9%), and “other ancestries” (9.0%). Fall River is home to one of the largest populations of Azorean Portuguese in the United States (City of Fall River 2007). With regard to region of birth, 69.7% were born in Massachusetts, 9.2% were born in a different state and 19.8% were born outside of the U.S. (including 9.2% who were not United States citizens).

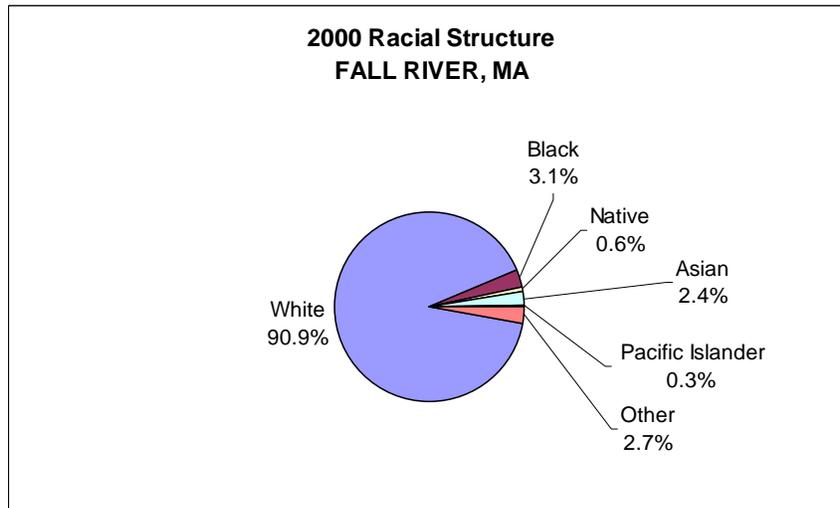


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

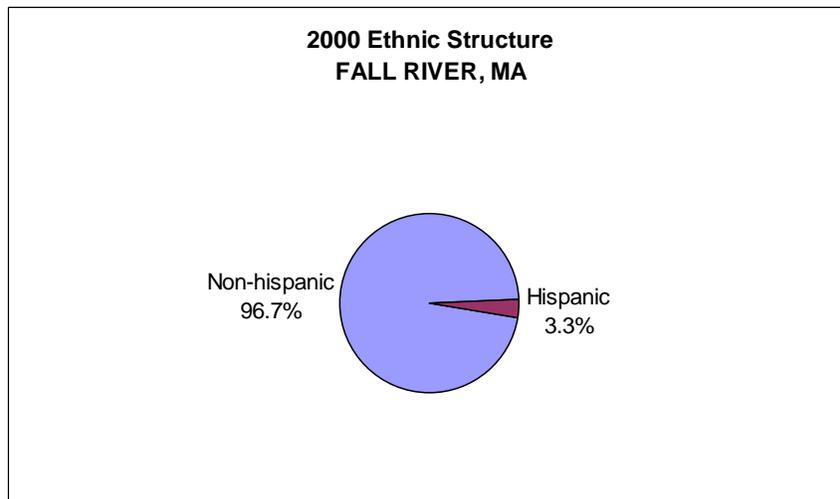


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 65.4% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 34.6% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 15.0% of the population who spoke English less than 'very well' according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 56.6% were high school graduates or higher and 10.7% had a Bachelor's degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 23.9% did not reach ninth grade, 19.5% attended some high school but did not graduate, 26.1% completed high school, 13.5% had some college with no degree, 6.2% received their Associate degree, 7.5% earned their Bachelor's degree, and 3.2% received either their graduate or professional

degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through the U.S. Census, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives in 2000 the religion with the highest number of congregations and adherents in Bristol County was Catholic with 85 congregations and 268,434 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were Jewish (5 with 11,600 adherents), United Church of Christ (19 with 5,728 adherents) and Episcopal (18 with 5,100 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 9.4% from 1990 (ARDA 2001).

Issues/Processes

Weaver's Cove Energy has gained approval, though subsequently legal challenges have been raised, to build a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility in Fall River (Jefferson 2008). The LNG would be transported up the Taunton River, passing under four bridges along the way. There are concerns about the safety of people who live around the proposed facility, which could serve as a target for terrorists, and about the necessity of shutting down portions of Narragansett Bay and Mount Hope Bay to boat traffic when the tankers are moving through. Proponents argue the facility will bring tax revenue to the city (Green Futures 2007). More recently, in late 2007, the Coast Guard ruled that the waterway approach to the facility was unsuitable and presented a safety concern, which may doom the proposal; Weaver's Cove Energy filed for an appeal (Jefferson, McKinney 2007).

Cultural attributes

The Fall River Maritime Heritage trail guides visitors around historical sites displaying the city's nautical past, including Battleship Cove, a museum containing the nation's largest collection of 20th century U.S. Naval vessels. The Fall River Marine Museum, also along the heritage trail, features a large collection of model ships and other nautical memorabilia, along with the largest exhibit of artifacts from the Titanic in the United States. The city also has a variety of different ethnic festivals throughout the year, such as a Cambodian New Year festival, the Greek Festival, and several Azorean festivals, including the Great Feast of the Holy Ghost of New England, touted as the largest Azorean festival in the world (Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry 2007). "[Fall River Celebrates America](#)" is the name of an annual waterfront festival featuring live music, a parade, a Portuguese night, a talent search, and an international food fair.

The city recently received a replica of the gates to the city of Ponta Delgada, Fall River's Azorean sister city. These will be placed along the waterfront at the entrance to an area known as Crab Cove, at the eventual location of a commuter rail to Boston (azores.gov 2007).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁴, 59.1% (42,682 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (see Figure 4), of which 4.1% were unemployed, 0.05% were in the Armed Forces, and 54.9% were employed.

⁴ 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.

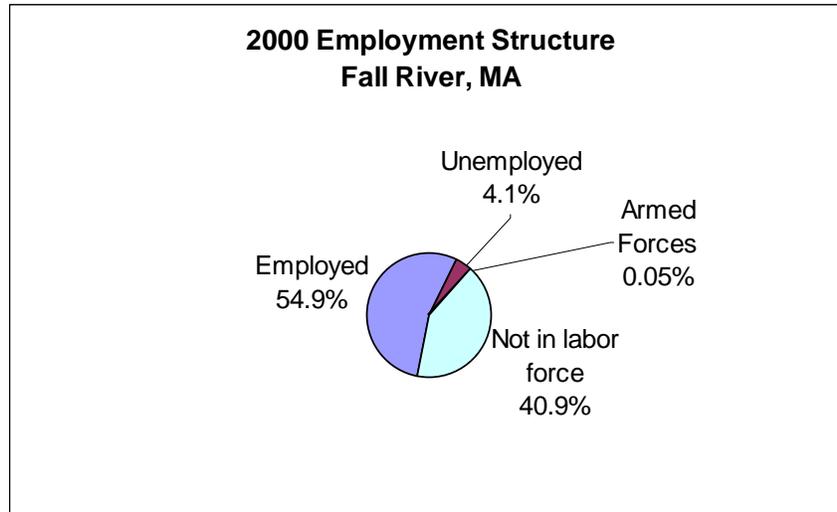


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The largest employers in Fall River as of 2002 included: St. Anne's Hospital (1,079 employees); Labor Express (temporary staffing – 1,000 employees); Bristol Community College (760 employees); Lightolier, Inc. (lighting fixtures – 650 employees); and Joan Fabrics (600 employees) (Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development. 2002). The old mills today host a mix of commercial, office, and industrial uses, which have helped to revitalize Fall River's economy. Fall River's industrial park hosts close to 50 businesses with 3,500 employees. The health care industry is one of the city's largest employment sectors (Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Inc. 2007). In 2004 Blount Seafood relocated its headquarters and many of its processing operations to Fall River. The new facility produces soups and value-added seafood products here, while most of the traditional shellfish processing continues to take place at the company's Warren, RI facility. The new operations in Fall River were expected to create 100 new jobs (Blount Seafood 2004). According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 100 positions or 0.3% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 1,312 positions or 3.3% of jobs. Manufacturing (24.3%) is the industry grouping that accounts for the most employment. Additionally, education, health, and social services (20.8%), retail trade (12.5%), and arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (7.1%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Fall River was \$29,014 (up 29.2% from \$22,452 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990a)) and median per capita income was \$16,118. For full-time year round workers, men made approximately 36.9% more per year than females.

The average family in Fall River consisted of 3.0 persons. With respect to poverty, 14.0% of families (up from 12.3% in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990a)) and 17.1% of individuals were 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, 46.2% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Fall River had a total of 41,857 housing units, of which 92.6% were occupied and 19.8% were detached one unit homes. More than one half (53.0%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes, boats, RVs, and vans accounted for 0.1% of housing units;

94.7% of detached units have between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$132,900. Of vacant housing units, 3.2% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units 65.1% were renter occupied.

Government

Fall River has a mayor – city council form of government (City of Fall River 2007).

Fishery involvement in government

Fall River has a Harbormaster (City of Fall River 2007) and a Shellfish Officer.

Institutional

Fishing associations

The New England Red Crab Harvesters Association was created in 1999 by Fall River-based red crab fishers to assist with the implementation of a federal Fisheries Management Plan for red crab. The harvesters in the association, made up of just four crab boats in Fall River, cooperate to some degree on their harvesting strategy by staggering landings so as to maintain a steady rate of processing. The Association has begun the process of having the fishery certified by the Marine Stewardship Council as sustainable, and is in the process of forming a harvest cooperative (Pinto da Silva and Kitts 2006).

The Massachusetts Fisherman's Partnership focuses on issues for fishermen in different ports in Massachusetts. The Partnership responded to the need of health care for fishermen and their families by developing the Fishing Partnership Health Insurance Plan with federal and state aid. This plan has been in place since 1997 and reduces the amount of money that fishermen's families have to pay to be covered by health insurance (Hall-Arber et al. 2001).

Fishing assistance centers

Shore Support has been the primary fishing assistance center in New Bedford since 2000 (Hall-Arber et al. 2001), though the nearby New Bedford Fishermen and Families Assistance Centers are also available as is the New Bedford-based Trawlers Survival Fund.

Other fishing-related organizations

There are several other fishing related organizations and associations that are vital to the area's fishing industry such as the Fisheries' Survival Fund in Fairhaven, the New Bedford Fishermen's Union, the New Bedford Seafood Coalition, the New Bedford Seafood Council and the Offshore Mariner's Association. [Save the Bay](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring and protecting the environmental quality of Narragansett Bay. The organization works towards this goal by monitoring the health of the Bay, initiating action to clean up the Bay, and through advocacy and education programs. Fall River worked with the Buzzard's Bay National Estuary Program, jointly administered by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management and the EPA, to develop its first ever Open Space Plan. "While the majority of the city is heavily urbanized and drains to Mount Hope Bay; the eastern, largely undeveloped, part of the city lies within the Buzzards Bay drainage basin. Fall River's Plan focused on preservation of this area as well as coastal and recreational access" (BBNEP 2006).

Physical

Fall River lies where the Taunton River meets Mount Hope Bay. The main approaches to Fall River from the water are from the upper reaches of the Sakonnet River and from Upper Narragansett Bay, following well-marked channels. The main shipping channel lies east of the lighthouse and passes close to shore, beneath the Braga Bridge (bostonroads.com 2005). Interstate 195 and Routes 24 pass through Fall River, connecting the city with Providence, Cape Cod, Newport, and Boston. [The Southeastern Regional Transit Authority](#) operates several city buses, as well as buses to New Bedford. [The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority](#) has been considering extending the commuter rail service to Fall River from Boston. Bay Colony Railroad and Conrail operate freight rail service from Fall River (State of Massachusetts 2007). [Peter Pan Buses](#) also runs buses regularly from Fall River to Providence, Boston, Newport, and other area destinations. Fall River is 15 miles from New Bedford, 18 miles from Providence, and 55 miles from Boston. The nearest commercial airports are T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, RI, 26 miles away, and Logan International Airport in Boston, 55 miles from Fall River (Mapquest.com 2007). Fall River itself had a municipal airport until the mid-1990s, when it was closed due to safety concerns.

Fall River Line Pier operates the State Pier facility, with two deep water berths and a large storage facility, which receives a wide variety of cargo, including frozen fish (State of Massachusetts 2007). There is a state pier located in the area known as Crab Cove. [Bucko's Parts and Tackle Service](#) in Fall River sells fishing gear. Fall River's proximity to New Bedford means fishermen here are likely to rely on much of the commercial fishing infrastructure located in New Bedford.

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁵

Commercial

[Atlantic Frost Seafoods](#) is a shore-side processing facility based on a vessel docked in Fall River. They process mackerel and herring, and have a capacity of 150 tons per day. Atlantic Frost is owned by Global Fish, a Norwegian corporation which is one of the world's largest suppliers of pelagic fish. In 2004, [Blount Seafood](#), established in 1880, relocated its headquarters and much of its value-added seafood processing operations to Fall River. Its shellfish processing operation continues to take place in Warren, RI. There are presently four red crab vessels based in Fall River which are members of the New England Red Crab Harvesters Association (Pinto da Silva, Kitts 2006). Crabs landed here are shipped to a facility in Nova Scotia for processing (NEFMC 2005).

⁵ 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.

The landings data for Fall River show that red crab is by far the most valuable species landed here for the years 1997-2006 (see Table 1). Other important fisheries over the same time period are lobster, squid, mackerel, butterfish, and monkfish. This information paints a picture of a highly variable fishery. Landings fluctuated considerably between the years 1997-2006, from a low in 1998 to a high the following year. Landings then declined again for the next few years, but were up again.

The trend in home port fishing seems to follow the landings somewhat, with landings being more than two orders of magnitude higher than home port fishing in some years, but in later years the level of home port fishing increases and is closer to, but still lower than, the level of landings. It seems many of the boats landing their catch here are ported elsewhere. Interestingly, the number of home port vessels is relatively consistent in all years, as is the number of city owner vessels (see Table 2).

Landings by Species

Table 1. Rank Value of Landings for Federally Managed Groups

	Average from 1997-2006
Red Crab	1
Lobster	2
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	3
Monkfish	4
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	5
Other⁶	6
Herring	7
Skate	8
Largemesh Groundfish⁷	9
Dogfish	10
Smallmesh Groundfish⁸	11
Surf Clams, Ocean Quahog	12
Bluefish	13
Tilefish	14

(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.)

⁶ “Other” species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

⁷ Largemesh groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

⁸ Smallmesh multi-species: red hake, ocean pout, mixed hake, black whiting, silver hake (whiting)

Vessels by Year⁹

Table 1. Federal Vessel Permits Between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)
1997	7	7
1998	5	6
1999	7	7
2000	6	8
2001	6	7
2002	6	8
2003	6	5
2004	6	5
2005	6	5
2006	6	8

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

Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹⁰

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

One of the Massachusetts Saltwater Fishing Derby Official Weigh Stations is located at [Main Bait & Tackle](#) in Fall River. This is one of four bait and tackle shops in Fall River. Fall River also has a jetty and a ramp with paved access, which are usable at all tides (State of Massachusetts 2007). There is also a [Fall River Junior Bassmasters](#) club, though it operates out of Cambridge, MA (60 miles away).

Subsistence

Hall-Arber et al. (2001) notes that “lots of the people who participate in recreational fishing in Tiverton are Cambodian or have other ethnic backgrounds.” Some of this “recreational” activity may actually support a fisheries- based subsistence life style (Hall-Arber 2001).” Tiverton, RI is only 8 miles from Fall River and many of these Cambodian fishermen probably reside in Fall River, given Fall River’s Cambodian population and the fact that that Tiverton’s 2000 population was 98% white and the “Other Asian” category (where Cambodians would be found) was composed fewer than 5 people. Subsistence fishing out of Fall River is known to occur, but the extent of this activity cannot be estimated with any degree of accuracy.¹¹

FUTURE

As of February 2007, “Fall River [was] in the final phase of its comprehensive Harbor Plan. With funding provided by the state, the city commissioned consultants to formulate a

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ Profile review comment, Vin Malkowski, MA Division of Marine Fisheries, October 5, 2007

definitive marketing and development blueprint for the waterfront and downtown districts. Implementation has already begun. An extended boardwalk has been completed and the state has committed funding for the overhaul of the State Pier as a marine-related mixed use development.” The city has been working on the plan since 1997.¹² The Commerce Park in Fall River will soon hold large facilities for Main Street Textiles and the TJX Corporation, creating 1,600 new jobs for the city (Fall River Area Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Inc 2007).

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¹² Profile review comment, Vin Malkowski, MA Division of Marine Fisheries, October 5, 2007

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