

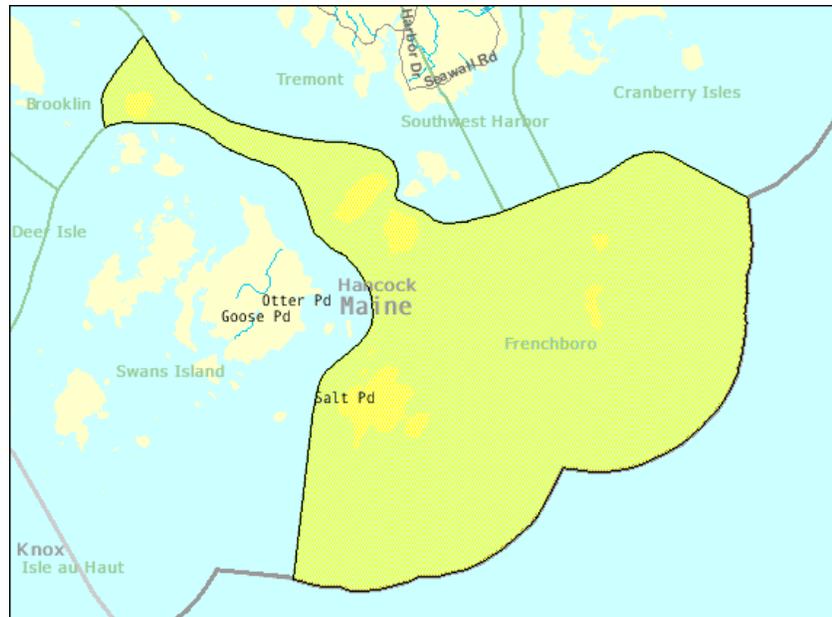
# FRENCHBORO, ME<sup>1</sup>

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

### PEOPLE AND PLACES

#### Regional orientation

The town of Frenchboro, (44.12° N, 68.36° W) is located in Hancock County in the state of Maine. The town is located in Blue Hill Bay south of Mount Desert Island, on the island of Long Island (Islandport Press 2007).



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

#### Historical/Background

Frenchboro was originally named Islandboro and was incorporated into the state of Maine in on February 11, 1857. A little over a year later the town left the state on March 23 1858 (State of Maine 2004). The first settlers here were the Lunt family, who arrived in 1820. The island was at one time an important offshore port, but economic changes around the turn of the century turned it into a “hardscrabble” fishing town. The island has survived decades of economic depression, a declining population, and a declining fishing industry (Lunt 2007). The Frenchboro Island Seafood Company used to pack lobster here for sale to Bloomingdale’s gourmet market in New York (Freeman 2002). Frenchboro is one of only fourteen islands in Maine with a year-round population, with twelve school-aged children in its one room-school

<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).”

(State of Maine 2004). The island has only one paved road, but has miles of well-maintained hiking trails (Maine Vacation 2007).

### Demographics<sup>3</sup>

According to Census 2000 data<sup>4</sup>, Frenchboro had a total population of 38, down 9.5% from a total population of 42 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 60.5% were males and 39.5% were females. The median age was 43.5 years and 78.9% of the population was 21 years or older while 15.8% was 62 or older.

The population structure of Frenchboro (Figure 1) shows the most populous age group for both men and women was the 50-59 year old grouping. There were more men than women in almost every age group and no residents in Frenchboro over the age of 80.

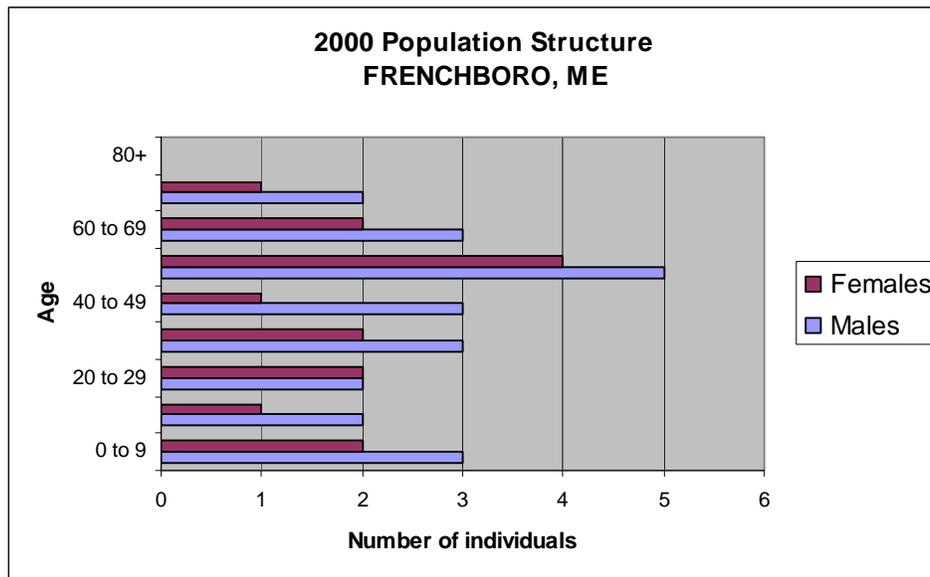


Figure 1. Frenchboro's population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

All of the population of Frenchboro is white (100%), with none of the residents black or African American, Native American, Asian, and Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). None (0.0%) of the total population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: English (32.1%), French (21.4%), French Canadian (21.4%) and German (14.3%). With regard to region of birth, 64.3% were born in Maine, 32.1% were born in a different state and 3.6% were born outside of the U.S. (including none who are not United States citizens).

<sup>3</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>4</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 Frenchboro town (cited July 2007)

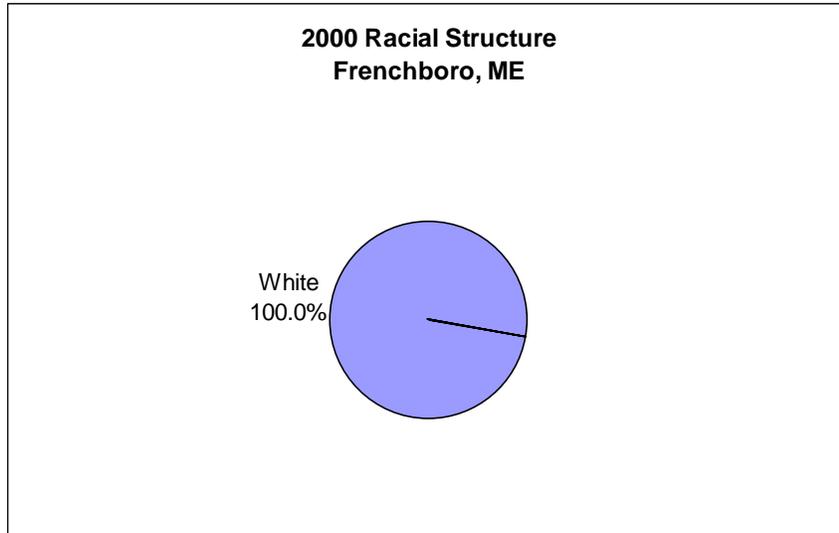


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

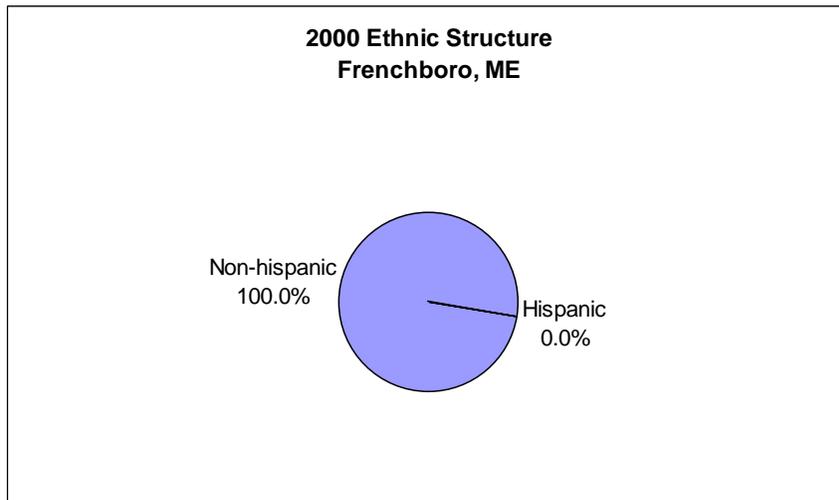


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 96% of the population, only English is spoken in the home, leaving 4.0% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including none of the population who spoke English less than 'very well' according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 90.5% were high school graduates or higher and 19.0% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 0.0% did not reach ninth grade, 9.5% attended some high school but did not graduate, 57.1% completed high school, 4.8% had some college with no degree, 9.5% received an associate's degree, 9.5% earned a bachelor's degree, and 9.5% received a graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through U.S. Census data, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) in 2000, the religion with the highest number of congregations in Hancock County was Catholic with 10 congregations and 6,292 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were United Church of Christ (19 with 1,957 adherents), and American Baptist Churches in the USA (17 with 1,774 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 25.2% from 1990 (ARDA 2000). There

is one church listed for Frenchboro, the Outer Long Island Congregational Church (Islandport Press 2007).

### **Issues/Processes**

A member of the Frenchboro community was fined for a violation of lobster and crab trapping rules and for having untagged lobster traps (Mount Desert Islander 2007). Recently, a 900-acre tract of undeveloped land, (more than half the island) was put up for sale. The Maine Coast Heritage Trust, the Island Institute, and the Maine Sea Coast Mission began an emergency fundraiser and raised the \$3 million needed to preserve this land in the single biggest conservation effort in Maine's history (Maine Coast Guide 2007).

The town is concerned about its dwindling population; it has only 38 residents according to the 2000 Census, and many of the residents are aging. They are concerned about becoming exclusively a summer colony (NY Times 1986). The Frenchboro Future Development Corporation has built and maintained seven homes on the island on donated land in order to bring new settlers to the island (Conkling 2007).

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**

The Annual Frenchboro Lobster Festival includes live music, storytelling, and of course, lobster. The 44<sup>th</sup> annual festival is usually held in the month of August. A special ferry leaves from Bass Harbor on Mount Desert Island for this event. The town also has a seasonal museum which focuses on the history of the fishing village (Islandport Press 2007).

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Current Economy**

Frenchboro had only one full-time business; Lunt and Lunt Lobster Company (Islandport Press 2007).

According to the U.S. Census 2000<sup>5</sup>, 61.9% (13 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (see Figure 4), of which none were unemployed, none were in the Armed Forces, and 61.9% were employed.

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<sup>5</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.

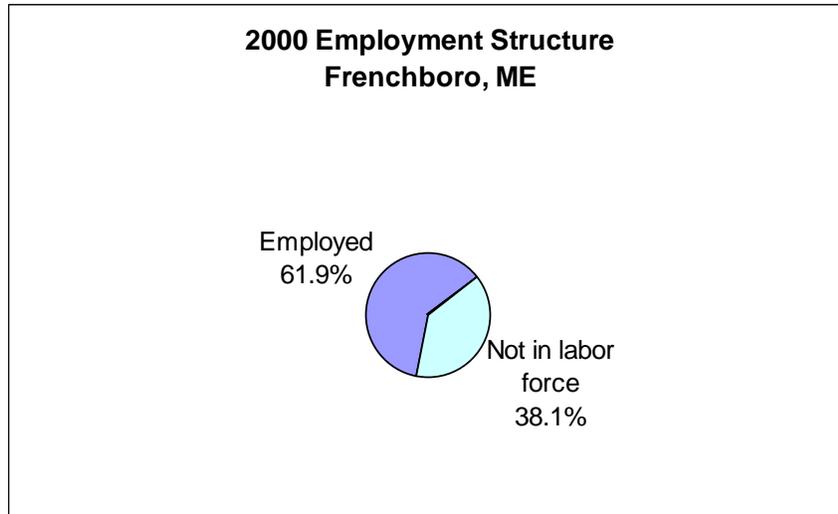


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 7 positions or 53.8% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 11 positions or 84.6% of jobs. Wholesale trade (15.4%), educational, health and social services (15.4%), and public administration (15.4%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Frenchboro was \$38,125 (up from \$16,875 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and per capita income was \$21,050. For full-time year round workers, males made 100% more per year than females. This is due to the fact that no females were reported working in the 2000 census data.

The average family in Frenchboro consists of 2.5 persons. With respect to poverty, no families (down from 19.0% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 7.1% 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 2000a). In 2000, 16.7% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Frenchboro had a total of 58 housing units of which 27.6% were occupied and 96.6% were detached one unit homes. Close to one quarter (22.4%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes, boats, vans, RVs, etc. accounted for none of the housing units; 96.6% of detached units have between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$137,500. Of vacant housing units, 54.2% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units 0.7% were renter occupied.

### **Government**

Frenchboro is governed by a Municipal clerk and town selectmen (State of Maine 2004).

### *Fishery involvement in government*

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

## **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.

### *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**

The town consists of twelve islands: Long Island, Crow Island, Harbor Island, Mount Desert Rock, Great Duck Island, Little Duck Island, Black Island, Placentia, the two Green islands, Pond Island, and Drum Island located in Blue Hill Bay south of Mount Desert Island (Islandport Press 2007). There is ferry service to the island from Bass Harbor provided by the Maine State Ferry. The ferry runs Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, with seasonal service on Fridays. There are also moorings for rent in Lunt Harbor, as well as fuel, water, and limited supplies (Islandport Press 2007).

## INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES<sup>6</sup>

### Commercial

Lunt and Lunt Lobster Company, in its 55<sup>th</sup> year of operation and located on Lunt Harbor, sells live lobster and offers mooring for twenty dollars (Islandport Press 2007). Most of the landings from 1997-2006 were lobster, with a small number of landings for “other” species and scallops (see Table). The level of landings for Frenchboro was much higher than the value of fishing for home ported vessels. In only two years, 2001 and 2005, were there any landings reported for home ported vessels, with a high in 2001. The level of landings was highly variable. This indicates that vessels from outside Frenchboro are landing here, although because of its isolation its unclear why any vessels would come to Frenchboro. The number of vessels home ported and the number of vessels whose owners live in Frenchboro remained relatively consistent from 1997-2006 (see Table 1).

### 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 <sup>7</sup>	2
Scallop	3

*(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 Year<sup>8</sup>

Table 1. Federal Vessel Permits Between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)
1997	6	6
1998	5	5
1999	5	4
2000	6	5
2001	6	5
2002	5	4
2003	8	6
2004	8	6
2005	8	6
2006	9	8

*(Note: # 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>9</sup>)*

<sup>6</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.

<sup>7</sup> “Other” species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

<sup>8</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.

## Recreational

There are a number of people who fish in Frenchboro. It is a historical fishing town, and the activity is still a large part of the community.

## Subsistence

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

## FUTURE

Information on the future in Frenchboro is unavailable through secondary data collection.

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<sup>9</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.

US Census Bureau. 1990. 1990 Decennial Census [cited Jul 2006]. Available at:

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