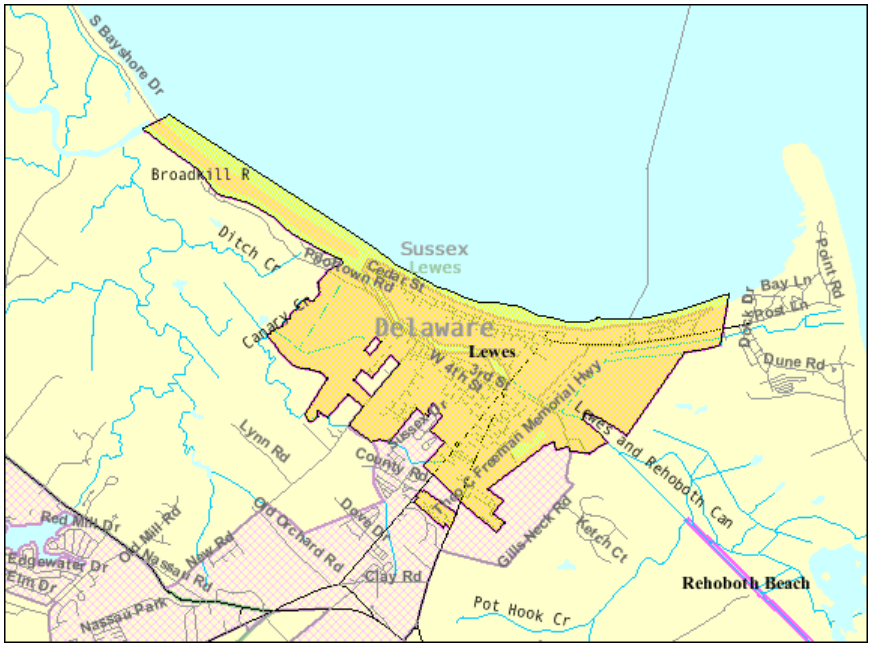
LEWES, DE[1]
Community Profile[2]

PEOPLE AND PLACES
Regional orientation

Lewes, Delaware (38.78°N, 75.14°W) is located in Sussex County (USGS 2008), where the Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean meet, just to the north of Cape Henlopen State Park.



Map 1. Location of Lewes, DE (US Census Bureau 2000)

Historical/Background

Lewes refers to itself as "the first town in the first state." Originally called Zwaanendael, Lewes was founded in 1631 by the Dutch as a whaling station. Its 32 original settlers were then slaughtered by a group of Lenni Lenape Indians (Oles 2005). Much of Lewes early history was equally difficult; the town was subject to raids by Captain Kidd and other pirates through the end of the 17th century, and was bombarded by a British frigate during the War of 1812 (Lewes.com 2007). Lewes was incorporated in 1818 (LHS nd). For much of its history, the town has been based around commercial fishing and maritime trades. Processing became an important industry here; in the mid-1900s, there was a plant of the Fish Products Company built in Lewes, one of the first and largest menhaden operations in the country. The plant eventually moved to Louisiana, and a Doxsee Food Company clam processing corporation plant in Lewes also closed

[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."

in 1986. Today there are no processing facilities remaining in Lewes. Recreational fishing has been an important industry here for a long time, with for-hire fishing dating back to at least the 1930s. There were as many as 200 charter and party boats in Lewes and Indian River during the 1950s (Oles 2005). In 2006, Lewes celebrated its 375th anniversary. The city has numerous museums celebrating its rich past (LHS nd).

Demographics[3]

According to Census 2000 data[4], Lewes had a total population of 2,932 up 21.7% from the reported population of 2,409 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 43.9% were males and 56.1% were females. The median age was 54.9 years and 84.8% of the population was 21 years or older while 37.6% was 62 or older.

The population structure of Lewes (see Figure 1) paints a picture of an aging retirement community. The largest percentage of the population falls between the ages of 60-69, followed by 50-59 and 70-79. Females far outnumber male for every age category over 50, and females over the age of 80 far outnumber females in any age category from 0-50. There are not many children or young people here under the age of 30 listed as residents, despite the presence of the University of Delaware.

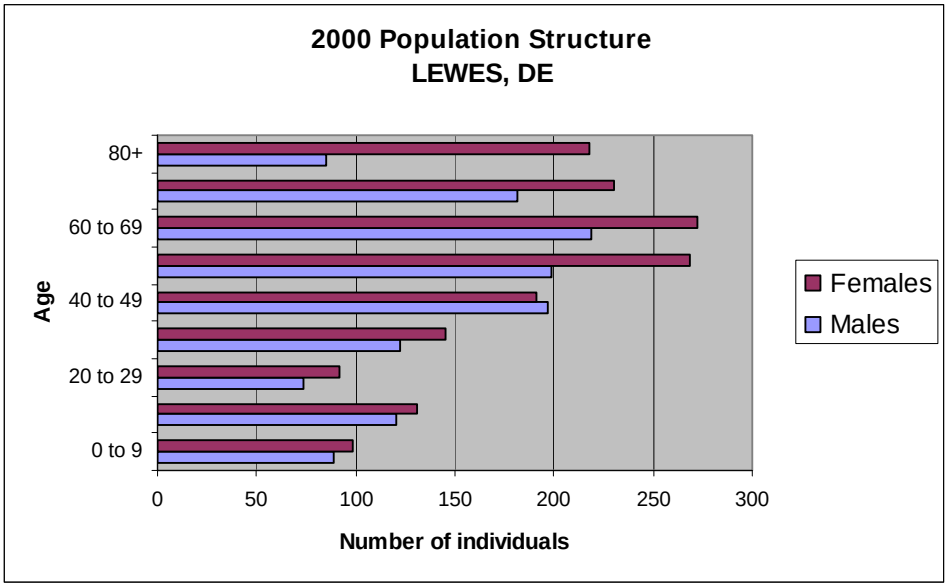


Figure 1. Lewes' population structure by sex in 2000

The majority of the population was white (88.2%), with 10.0% of residents black or African American, 1.0% Asian, 0.1% of residents Native American, and 0.03% Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (see Figure 2). Only 1.7% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (see Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: English (18.7%), Irish (17.0%), German (15.9%), and other ancestries

[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 Lewes city (cited July 2007)

(12.3%). With regard to region of birth, 38.7% were born in Delaware, 57.8% were born in a different state and 2.3% were born outside of the U.S. (including 0.9% who were not United States citizens).

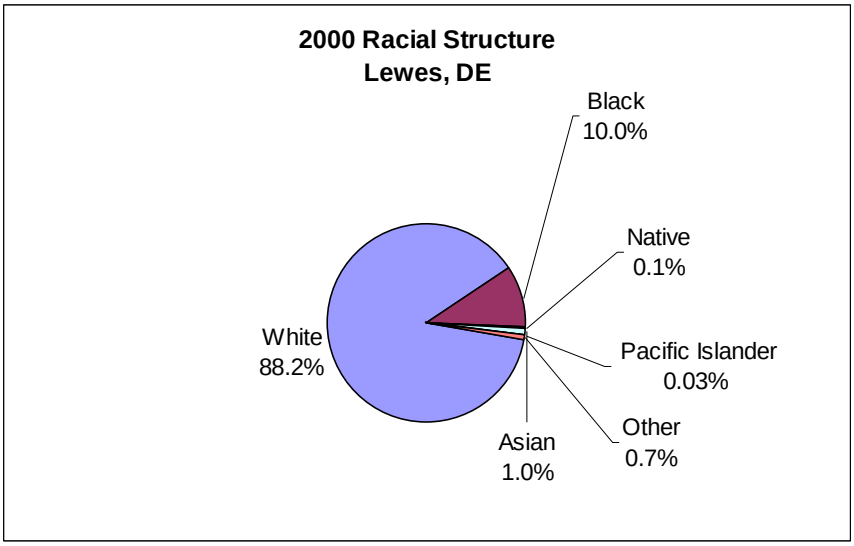


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

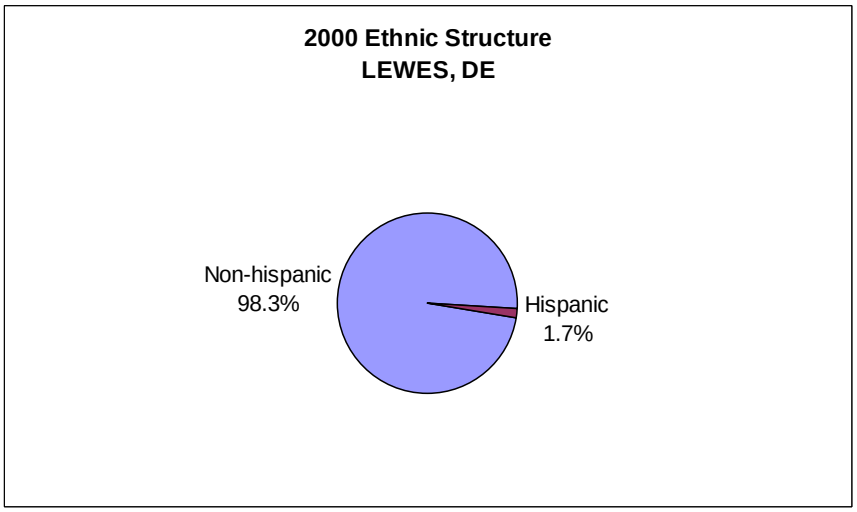


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 96.4% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 3.6% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 0.8% of the population who spoke English less than 'very well' according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 85.5% were high school graduates or higher and 42.5% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 4.1% did not reach ninth grade, 10.4% attended some high school but did not graduate, 18.7% completed high school, 18.8% had some college with no degree, 5.6% received their associate's degree, 24.6% earned their bachelor's degree, and 17.9% 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 (ARDA) in 2000, the religion with the highest number of congregations and adherents in Sussex County was United Methodist with 79 congregations and 20,444 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were Catholic (6 with 12,164 adherents), Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee) (14 with 3,226 adherents), and Episcopal (11 with 2,119 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 32.1% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

In spite of its small size, there are ten churches listed in Lewes, of which nine were Protestant and one was Orthodox (Lewes.com nd).

Issues/Processes

Commercial fishermen in Delaware generally have trouble finding reliable crew who will work for little pay and only when needed, and most fishermen don't make enough money with it to fish exclusively; most have other jobs. There is also no infrastructure here for the commercial fishing industry, and future use of the town dock, where commercial fishermen currently tie up, is in doubt. There is a lack of slip space for the recreational fishermen in Lewes, which prohibits the community from hosting large tournaments or other events. Charter fishing has declined in recent years, in part because more people own their own boats. The challenge for Lewes for-hire boat owners is to determine how to attract more clientele during the spring and fall (Oles 2005).

There is a proposed ban on horseshoe crab fishing due to over harvesting in Delaware and New Jersey. Public officials are going to take public comments into consideration before putting the ban in place. Many people support the ban, recognizing the effect over harvesting has had on wildlife in the area, but they are also expecting fishermen to be upset about this restriction (Wacker 2008).

Cultural attributes

Lewes holds a Blessing of the Fleet on the first Sunday of every May (LCCVB nd), primarily for its sportfishing boats. A local tackle shop holds sportfishing tournaments here (Oles 2005). The Cape Henlopen Fishing Center also hosts tournaments as well as fishing demonstrations and lectures. Cape Henlopen State Park offers educational programs such as seining in the bay and seashore exploration to educate visitors about the area's natural history, as well as sponsoring a childrens fishing tournament (DSPR 2001). The Lewes campus of the University of Delaware sponsors and annual Coast Day festival here, aimed at educating the public about the oceans. The event includes a crab cake cook-off and a seafood chowder challenge. In conjunction with Coast Day the city holds the Boast the Maritime Coast Festival featuring a lighted boat parade (LCCVB nd). The historic Cannonball House in Lewes houses the Lewes Historical Society's Maritime Museum, which includes maritime art and memorabilia (LHS nd).

There was also a number of events in Lewes to celebrating the city's 375th anniversary in 2006, which included a visit from several Tall Ships (LCCVB nd).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

Lewes is heavily dependent on tourism. Many of the tourist-related businesses here, such as waterfront restaurants, hotels, and motels, depend on recreational fishers traveling to Lewes for much of their business (Oles 2005). Tourism is responsible for employing over 7,700 people

in Sussex County with an estimated economic impact of over $420 million annually (Sussex County nd).

According to the U.S. Census 2000[5], 48.5% (1,269 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (see Figure 4), of which 1.5% were unemployed, none were in the Armed Forces, and 46.9% were employed.

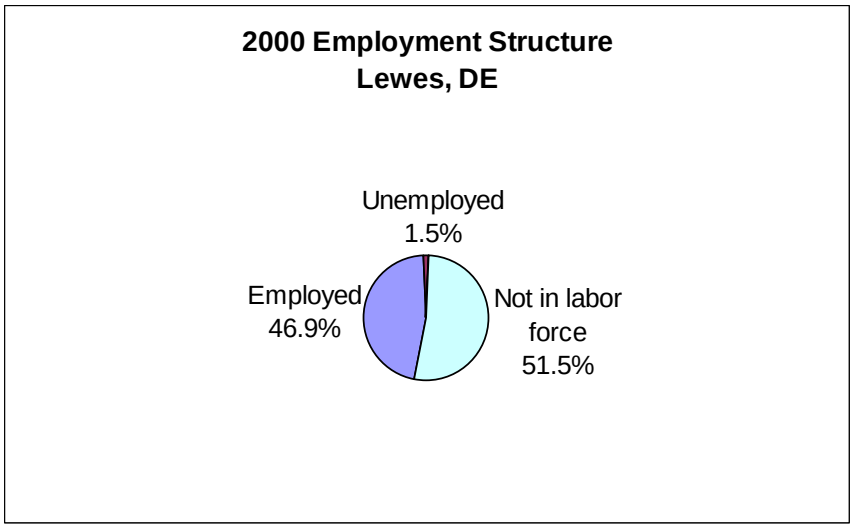


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 13 positions or 1.1% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 126 positions or 10.3% of jobs. Educational, health and social services (26.9%), retail trade (13.6%), arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (11.7%), professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services (7.6%), finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing (7.5%), and construction (7.5%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Lewes was $48,707 (up 97.0% from $24,719 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and per capita income was $32,685. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 0.7% more per year than females.

The average family in Lewes consisted of 2.53 persons. With respect to poverty, 3.4% of families (down from 7.5% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 6.3% 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, 21.3% of all families (of any size) earned less than $35,000 per year.

In 2000, Lewes had a total of 2,368 housing units of which 56.5% were occupied and 68.6% were detached one unit homes. More than one quarter (25.5%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes accounted for 0.9% of housing units; 86.8% of detached units have between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was $241,500. Of

[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.

vacant housing units, 36.1% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units 25.1% were renter occupied.

Government

Lewes is governed by a five-member council, which includes the mayor and deputy mayor, elected to staggered two-year terms (City of Lewes 2008).

Fishery involvement in the government

One of the city's primary stated goals in its comprehensive plan is to preserve waterfront access and to encourage appropriate water-based businesses. This includes providing facilities for commercial fishermen and ensuring the public has water access for fishing and crabbing. The comprehensive plan also notes a need for a Maritime-Related Activity Zone (IPA 2005).

Institutional

Fishing associations

The Recreational Fishing Alliance has a Delaware Chapter which lobbies for recreational fishing issues within the state. Delaware Mobile Surf-Fishermen Inc. is an advocacy and conservation organization for surf and salt-water fishermen around the state. They sponsor a number of tournaments including the Delaware Fall Classic Surf Fishing Tournament.

Fishing assistance centers

Information on fishing assistance centers in Lewes is unavailable through secondary data collection.

Other fishing related organizations

The University of Delaware's Graduate College of Marine Studies has a 132-acre campus in Lewes where marine scientists conduct a variety of research. The school also maintains a 146-foot research vessel here. Cape Henlopen State Park operates a fishing pier and a variety of fishing-related educational programs (DSPR 2001). The Overfalls Marine Museum operates the Lightship Overfalls, the last lightship built by the United States Lighthouse Service, as a museum for visitors.

Lewes is also the home to the Delaware Bay and River Pilots Association, whose members guide pilots to and from Wilmington and Philadelphia (Paine 1998). The Ecological Research and Development Group, located in Lewes, is a non-profit organization focused on the conservation of the world's remaining horseshoe crab species. They have a number of educational and conservation projects, including establishing horseshoe crab sanctuaries, particularly in Delaware, and working with fishermen to implement horseshoe crab bait bags in the conch fishery to reduce the number of crabs needed for bait.

Physical

Lewes sits on the north end of the Lewes-Rehoboth Canal, which connects Delaware Bay with Rehoboth Bay as part of the Intracoastal Waterway (Marinas.com 2008). Lewes is eight miles from Rehoboth Beach, 90 miles from Wilmington, DE, and 117 miles from both Philadelphia and Baltimore. It is 23 miles from Cape May, NJ and 67 miles from Atlantic City by taking the ferry. Lewes is near Route 1 and at the end of Route 9. Cape May-Lewes Ferry travels between Lewes and Cape May, New Jersey, a 70-minute ride, and shuttle and trolley

services to take passengers to the ferry. The DART regularly runs a bus service between Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, and Georgetown; during the summer months an extra bus is added which makes a circuit around Lewes. The nearest airport is the Salisbury-Ocean City Wicomico Regional Airport, 37 miles away in Maryland (MapQuest nd).

Lewes has a town dock along the canal where some commercial fishermen lease space. Some also use a local marina during the off-season. There is no commercial fishing infrastructure here, so fishermen must pack out their own catch onto their own trucks, or sell them to the dockside buyers who sometimes come from elsewhere. For recreational fishermen, Lewes has seven bait and tackle shops, four marinas, a marine supply store, and a boat yard. There is also a state boat ramp (Oles 2005). Fisherman's Wharf is one of Lewes' marinas, located by the drawbridge, with a substantial for-hire fleet and a bait and tackle shop. Anglers Fishing Center is located in Lewes Harbor Marina and has a party boat, a charter boat, and a bait and tackle shop. Anglers Marina is another marina located in Lewes Harbor which houses several charter boats. There is a quarter-mile long fishing pier in Lewes at Cape Henlopen Sate Park (Oles 2005). The Cape Henlopen Fishing Center within the state park sells bait, tackle, and fishing gear, rents rods and reels, and sponsors tournaments (DSPR nd).

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES[6]

Commercial

The commercial fishing industry has more or less vanished from Lewes. There are an estimated three commercial fishermen still working here, as well as a few others who come periodically to pot for conch. Much of the commercial fishing around Delaware involves potting for blue crab, dredging for conch, or using small gillnets; few vessels here have federal permits. Those lucky enough to get a permit in the lottery may also dredge for horseshoe crabs. Because of the unpredictability of fishing here, most fishermen either fish in a number of different states, or fish a number of different species. Many of the fishermen who fish here don't live in this area, because property in the vicinity of Rehoboth Beach is too expensive (Oles 2005).

The most valuable species landed in Lewes during the ten-year average were species in the "Other" category (see Table 1). The next most valuable species was summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. Overall, the level of commercial fishing in Lewes was highly variable from 1997-2006, with landings never exceeding $300,000. After the level of home port fishing reached slightly more than $100,000 in 1997 and 1998, the value of home port fishing dropped off to just under $3,000 in 1999. In 2002, it was back to being over $100,000 and reached close to $300,000 in 2005. The landings in Lewes were similarly varied, but show a different pattern, with no landings in 1997, and a high of almost $300,000 in 2001. The number of vessels home

[6] 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.

ported in Lewes saw a large jump from 8 in 2003 to 29 in 2005-2006. The number of vessel owners in Lewes had a similar increase, from a low of just two in 1999 to fifteen in 2005 (see Table 2).

Landings by Species

Table 1. Dollar value of Federally Managed Groups of landings in Lewes

	Average from 1997-2006	2006 only
Other[7]	110,515	46,224
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	13,727	41,603
Scallop	7,600	5,075
Lobster	4,422	885
Bluefish	222	292
Monkfish	114	0
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	2	0

Vessels by Year[8]

Table 2. 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	9	4	127,114	0
1998	11	4	108,677	2,618
1999	10	2	2,922	104,753
2000	9	3	34,728	48,403
2001	8	4	10,010	294,290
2002	8	3	127,554	221,357
2003	8	4	124,158	167,430
2004	13	11	196,547	248,591
2005	29	15	272,908	184,485
2006	29	14	212,152	94,079

 # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport
 # Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence[9]
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

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[7] "Other" species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

[8] 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.

[9] 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

Charter and party boat fishing has been important in Lewes since the 1930s. Recreational fishing here begins in March, although a few boats may fish year round, and a number fish only June through September. There are about five party boats and twenty charter boats found in Lewes. The boats target a wide variety of species, including tautog, striped bass, mackerel, sea bass, weakfish, flounder, bluefish, black drum, flounder, and croaker (Oles 2005). Some charter boats venture further offshore for tuna, shark, marlin, bonito, and king mackerel; the Fisherman's Wharf website lists three small charter boats, and four large boats which could be used as either head boats or charter boats, and may be used for whale watching as well. The head boats offer both half- and full-day fishing, as well as night fishing. Other charter operations like Grizzly Sportfishing are found here as well. Anglers Fishing Center has a party boat and a charter boat which seem to offer mostly inshore fishing; they also offer a children's sand shark fishing trip. There are at least six other charter boats in the Anglers Marina. One of them, the *Tranquila*, appears to specialize in offshore species, particularly shark, tuna, and billfish. Hook 'em II Charters offers sport fishing, light tackle fishing, and fly fishing, either inshore or offshore, and also operates a fishing school for those just learning to fish. Between 2001-2005 there were a total of 15 charter and party boats which logged trips in Point Lookout, carrying a total of 18,106 anglers on 1,227 different trips.

Lewes also has a large number of bait and tackle shops. Bill's Sport Shop sells crabbing supplies and fish traps and nets in addition to other fishing gear. Many anglers come here to fish from the fishing pier at Cape Henlopen State Park, and from the area's beaches. Surf fishing is becoming increasingly popular here (Oles 2005). Crabbing is also a popular recreational activity; Cape Henlopen State Park offers crabbing lessons (DSPR 2001).

Subsistence

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

FUTURE

The city's recently acquired a section of land along the canal which they intend to turn into a park, but without any docks or other fishing infrastructure, despite a shortage of space for fishing activity (Oles 2005). The city's comprehensive plan includes preserving waterfront access and encouraging water-dependent businesses along the waterfront, and includes providing dock space or facilities for commercial fishing activity (IPA 2005).

Some believe the commercial fishermen currently docked at the town-owned dock in Lewes will soon be forced out. Overall, many people in the community feel the city does not support either the commercial or recreational fishing here. Lewes is undergoing significant gentrification, and some feel the newcomers are not interested in fishing (Oles 2005). However, the city's comprehensive plan expresses a commitment to maintaining waterfront access, and specifically to providing space for commercial fishing activity (IPA 2005).

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