

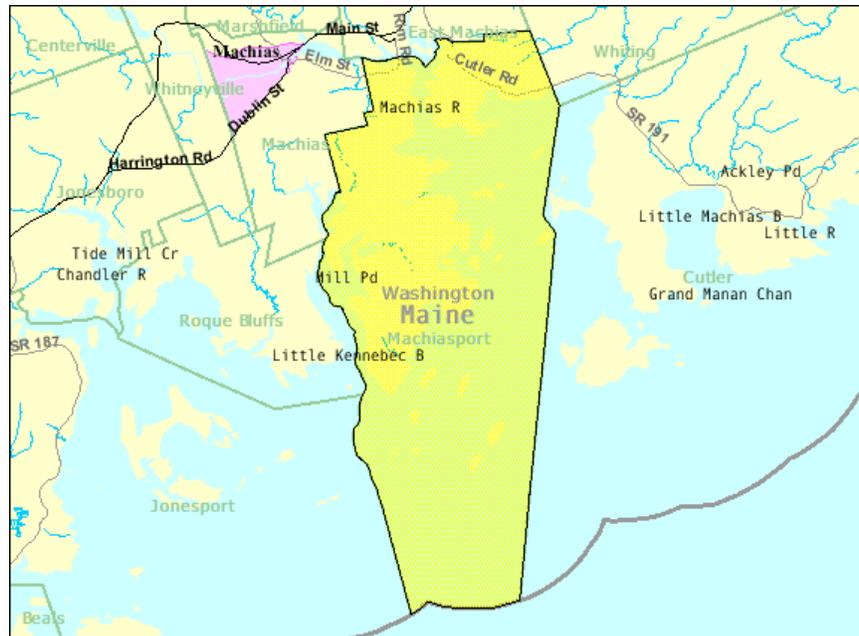
BUCKS HARBOR, ME¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

The village of Bucks Harbor (44.6°N, 67.4°W) is located within the town of Machiasport, in Washington County. The town of Machiasport has an area 22.2 square miles (State of Maine 2004).



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

Historical/Background

The name Machias comes from the Native American word “mechises,” meaning “little run of bad water” or “bad little falls,” after the Machias River that runs through the town (State of Maine 2004). This area was of strategic importance for lumber and trade during the early days of European exploration and settlement (Varney 1886). Machias was at one time a popular hide-out for pirates (State of Maine 2004). The first naval battle of the American Revolution was held here on what is now the site of Fort O’Brien State Park (Machias Bay Area Chamber of Commerce). Originally part of the town of Machias, Machiasport was incorporated separately in 1826 (State of Maine 2004). Machiasport was once the most important port in the area, known for shipbuilding and its sardine canning industry. The site once occupied by the Bucks Harbor

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.”

Air Force Station is now home to the Downeast Correctional Facility (Maine Dept. Corrections 2005).

Demographics³

The demographic data provided is for Machiasport rather than Bucks Harbor, as information is not available for Bucks Harbor. According to Census 2000 data⁴, Machiasport had a total population of 1,160, down 0.5% from the reported population of 1,166 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this total in 2000, 44.3% were female and 55.7% were male. The median age was 38.4 years and 76.3% of the population was 21 years or older while 16.8% were 62 or older.

Machiasport's age structure (Figure 1) shows more males than females in most age categories, with nearly twice as many men as women in the 20-29 and 30-39 categories, indicating that women are leaving town while the men stay behind, or that men are migrating into the town.

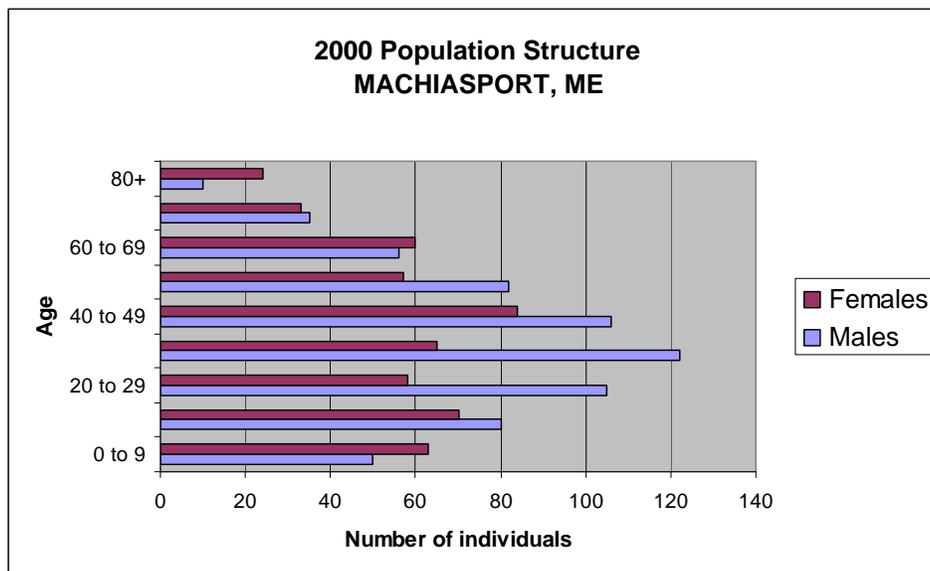


Figure 1. Machiasport's population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The majority of the population was white (97.5%), with 0.2% of residents black or African American, 1.8% Native American, 0.4% Asian, and no residents Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 0.3% of the total population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents linked their heritage to a number of different ancestries including: English (34.2%), Irish (17.3%), French (11.3%), and German (5.7%). With regard to region of birth, 70.0% were born in Maine, 28.0% were born in a different state and 1.1% were born outside of the US (including 0.6% who were 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 <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html>; census data used are for Machiasport town

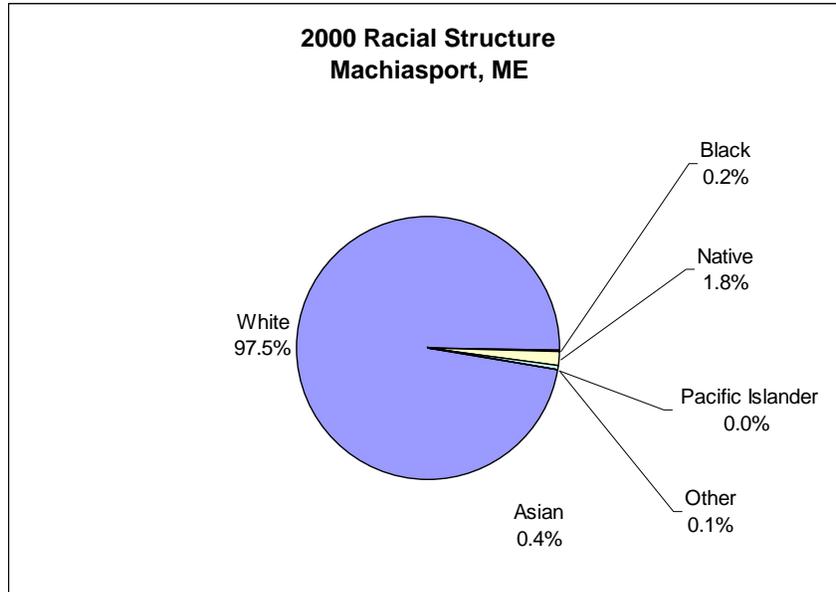


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

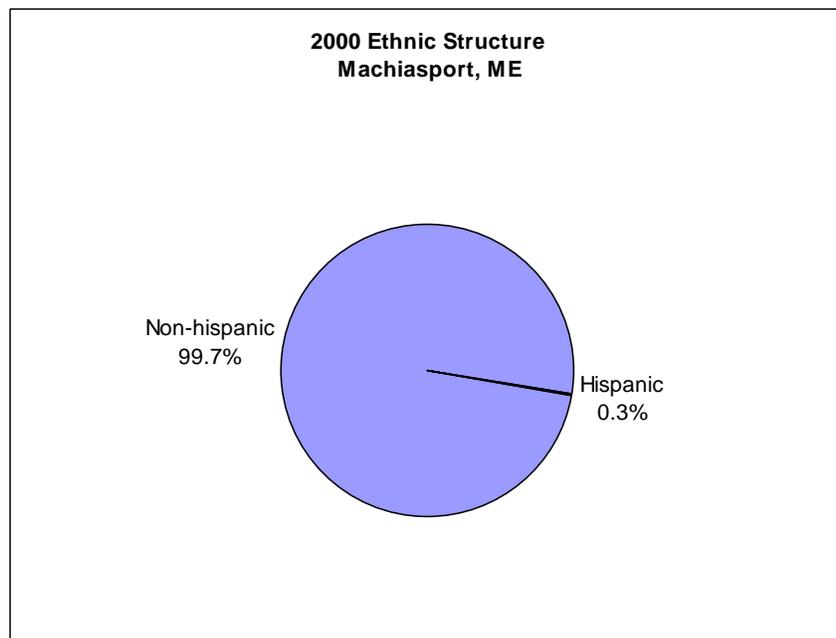


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 98.6% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 1.4% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 0.3% of the population who spoke English less than “very well.”

Of the population 25 years and over, 79.3% were high school graduates or higher and 14.9% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 9.8% did not reach ninth grade, 10.8% attended some high school but did not graduate, 45.3% completed high school, 14.2% had some college with no degree, 5.0% received an associate’s degree, 10.2% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 4.7% received a graduate or professional degree.

Although religious percentages are not available through the U.S. Census, according to the Association of Religion Data Archive (ARDA) in 2000 the religion with the highest number of congregations and adherents in Washington County was Catholic with 12 congregations and 4,155 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were United Methodist (15 with 1,301 adherents), and American Baptist Churches (4 with 449 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 0.5% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

Issues/Processes

The \$2 million Atlantic salmon processing facility in town closed in 2004 because of a lack of fish for processing (Cassidy 2004), leaving 19 employees without work (Cassidy 2004a). The Canadian company Cooke Aquaculture had purchased the facility from Atlantic salmon, who had leased the town dock, built with federal funds, for a period of ten years and had intended to purchase the dock at the end of the lease period. The town of Machiasport is now concerned they will not be able to pay off the remainder owed on the dock construction (Cassidy 2004a). There is hope that Cooke Aquaculture will reopen the facility once there are more fish for processing (Cassidy 2004a).

The town of Machiasport is working with the Army Corps of Engineers on a study concerning dredging Bucks Harbor to accommodate a larger fleet and the growing aquaculture industry. The study should be completed by 2008 (US Army Corps of Engineers 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

Sightseeing boat tours leaving from Machiasport allow visitors to observe and participate in hauling lobster traps to learn about the practice (Machias Bay Area Chamber of Commerce 2005).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

According to the town clerk, most people in the town work as either lobster fishermen or clam diggers. The salmon processing facility was the only employer of any significance in Machiasport until it closed in September of 2004.⁵

The unemployment rate in Washington County is significantly higher than the average rate for Maine (SCEC 2005), yet only 0.8% of Machiasport residents listed themselves as unemployed in the 2000 Census. The largest employers in neighboring Machias are listed as Atlantic Salmon and DE Community Hospital (SCEC 2005). Other likely sources of employment for residents of Machiasport include the Downeast Correctional Facility and the University of Maine at Machias. Other than medical centers, schools, banks, and government, the major employers in the larger Machias-Eastport Labor Market Area (LMA) are Marshall

⁵ Personal communication, Machiasport Municipal Clerk, personal communication, 2005 July 6

Nursing Services, Inc. (101-125 employees), Hannaford Bros Co (76-100 employees), Creative Apparel Associates (76-100), and Heritage Salmon (51-75 employees). Other businesses within the top 25 employers of this LMA include more schools, as well as senior living facilities and a trucking company.

According to the Census 2000⁶, 50.5% (454 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 0.8% were unemployed, 0.1% were in the Armed Forces, and 49.6% were employed.

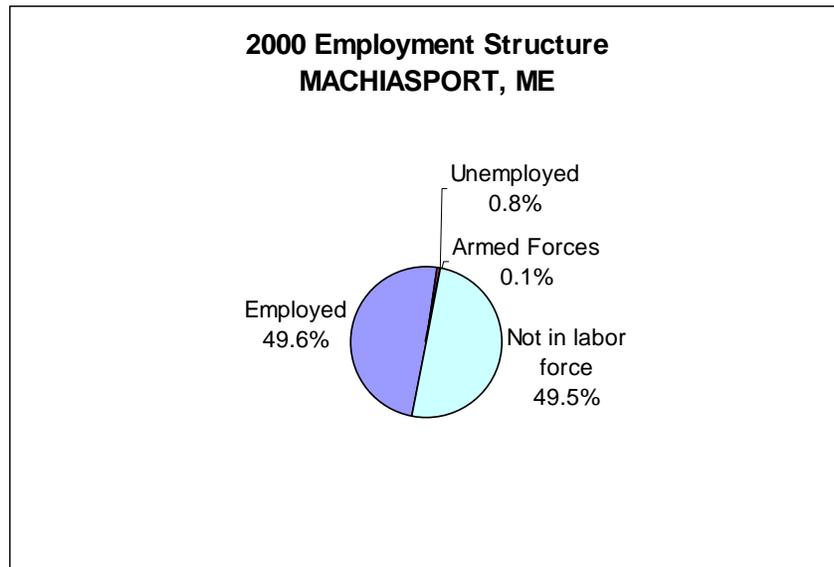


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 74 positions or 16.6% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 90 positions or 20.2% of jobs. Educational, health, and social services (26.0%), public administration (10.3%), and manufacturing (9.2%) were other primary industries.

Median household income in Machiasport was \$29,531 (up 30.0% from \$24,412 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and per capita income was \$13,727. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 44.6% more per year than females.

The average family in Machiasport consisted of 2.88 persons. With respect to poverty, 11.8% of families (down from 13.9% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 12.2% 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 2000b]). In 2000, 51.7% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Machiasport had a total of 559 housing units, of which 71.7% were occupied and 82.1% were detached one-unit homes. More than one-third (38.6%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes/vans/boats accounted for 15.4% of the total housing units; 92.3% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this

⁶ 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.

area was \$76,700. Of vacant housing units, 49.7% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, while of occupied units 19.9% were renter occupied.

Governmental

Machiasport has a board of three selectmen (State of Maine 2004).

Fishery involvement in the government

Information on fishery involvement in the government in Bucks Harbor was unavailable through secondary collection.

Institutional

Fishing associations

Both the Downeast Lobstermen's Association located in Deer Isle (Stevenson 2005) and the [Maine Lobstermen's Association](#) (MLA) are made up of lobstermen working to preserve the industry in this area and throughout Maine (MLA 2007). 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.

Fishery assistance centers

Although there are no fishery assistance centers located in Buck's Harbor, the Coastal Enterprises Inc. provides support to fishing communities including Buck's Harbor and others throughout Maine. They assist fishermen in getting loans, legal advice, money for research projects, and provide counseling on business questions (CEI 2005). SCEC also provides assistance for Buck's Harbor and other Downeast communities, and is working to address the problem of waterfront access in many of Maine's coastal communities (SCEC 2005).

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 Downeast Salmon Federation, located in Columbia Falls, Maine, is working to protect and restore habitat of wild salmon in Maine and to preserve the species for sportfishing, as well as to protect other recreational and ecological resources in Eastern Maine (Downeast Salmon Federation 2007). They are one of twenty partners involved in the Machias River Project, which is working to protect close to 60,000 acres of land along the river in conservation easements and purchases (State of Maine ASC 2006).

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 (Maine Fishermen's Forum 2007).

Physical

Machiasport has one boat ramp (Maine DMR 2006) and one town-owned dock, used by most of the lobster fishermen.⁷ The town is close to Route 1, which travels the length of the Maine coast. There is a small airport in Machias (Machias Valley Airport) and the Eastport Municipal Airport is about 40 miles away. Bucks Harbor is about 10 miles south of the city of Machias, 48 miles from Calais, and 93.5 miles from Bangor. The Bangor International Airport is about 95 miles away (MapQuest nd). A bus line runs once daily between neighboring Machias and Bangor (Maine Office of Tourism 2008).

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁸

Commercial

The BBS Lobster Company is both a retailer and wholesaler of lobster. All lobster is purchased directly from the local fishermen. BBS Lobster Co. also has a pier where lobstermen tie up to unload their catch, and they sell bait to the lobstermen. They estimate that there are roughly 60 lobstermen in town who sell their catch here.⁹

The most valuable species landed in Buck's Harbor in 2006 was lobster, followed by surf clams and ocean quahogs (see Table 1). The value of fishing in Buck's Harbor has varied considerably in the last ten years, both for total landed value and for vessels with Buck's Harbor listed as their home port. In 2001, there were no reported landings for Buck's Harbor. The number of vessels remained relatively consistent; if anything, the number of vessels has increased slightly (see Table 2). Some of the vessels fishing for ocean quahogs from Buck's Harbor will sometimes land their catch at a facility in Beals Island/Jonesport (Brewer 2005).

⁷ Personal communication, Machiasport Municipal Clerk, 2005 July 6

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, BBS Lobster Company, 2005 July 6

Landings by Species

Table 1. Rank Value of Landings for Federally Managed Groups

	Rank Value of Average Landings from 1997-2006
Lobster	1
Surf Clams, Ocean Quahog	2
Herring	3
Scallop	4

(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 Year¹⁰

Table 2. Federal Vessel Permits Between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)
1997	19	6
1998	19	5
1999	19	4
2000	20	5
2001	21	5
2002	23	4
2003	22	4
2004	21	4
2005	20	2
2006	19	2

(Note: # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport, # Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹¹)

Recreational

One [website](#) lists Mill Creek in Machiasport as a good spot for fishing striped bass from shore.

Subsistence

Information on subsistence fishing in Bucks Harbor was either unavailable through secondary data collection or the practice does not exist.

FUTURE

Information on the future in Bucks Harbor was unavailable through secondary data collection.

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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.

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