

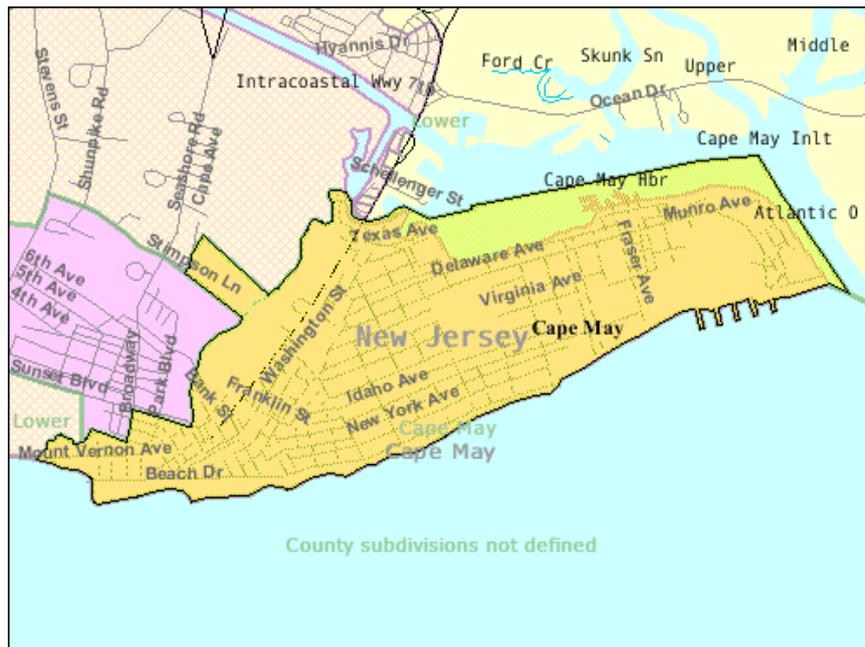
CAPE MAY, NJ¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

The city of Cape May, New Jersey (38.94°N, 74.91°W), is located in Cape May County (see Map 1). It is at the southern tip of the state of New Jersey on Cape Island at the end of Cape May Peninsula, with the Atlantic Ocean to the east and Delaware Bay to the west (USGS 2008).



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

Historical/Background

Cape May is part of Cape Island at the southern tip of Cape May Peninsula. The island was artificially created in 1942 when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredged a canal that passes through to the Delaware Bay (City of Cape May nd). Fishing and farming have been important in this area since its beginnings, and whaling, introduced by the Dutch, was a significant industry in Cape May for roughly a century beginning in the mid-1600s. In the 18th century, this area became a summer resort for wealthy residents of Philadelphia wishing to escape the crowded city during the summer months, and is known as “America’s oldest seaside resort.” Because of this history and because of a fire that destroyed much of the city in 1878, Cape May has numerous Victorian homes and hotels, and was declared a National Historic Landmark City in 1976 (Cape Publishing 2005). “Today commercial fishing is still the backbone of the county and is the second largest industry in Cape May

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.”

County. The port of Cape May is considered one of the largest and busiest seaports along the eastern seaboard and generates more than \$500 million annually”(Cape May County nd).

Demographics³

According to the Census 2000 data⁴, Cape May had a total population of 4,034, down from a reported population of 4,668 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this total in 2000, 49.3% were males and 50.7% were females. The median age was 47.4 years and 77.7% of the population was 21 years or older while 32.4% were 62 or older.

Cape May’s population structure by age group (see Figure 1) was similar for all age categories. However, men were dominant for the population between 0 and 29 years, and then the population for male and female was the same until age 40 when it switched to female dominance through 80 years and over. Further, unlike the U.S. as a whole, the middle years are overall in lower percentages than the youngest and oldest. This large number of males in the 20-29 age bracket followed by a drop in the ages 30-59 is also very unlike most other fishing communities.

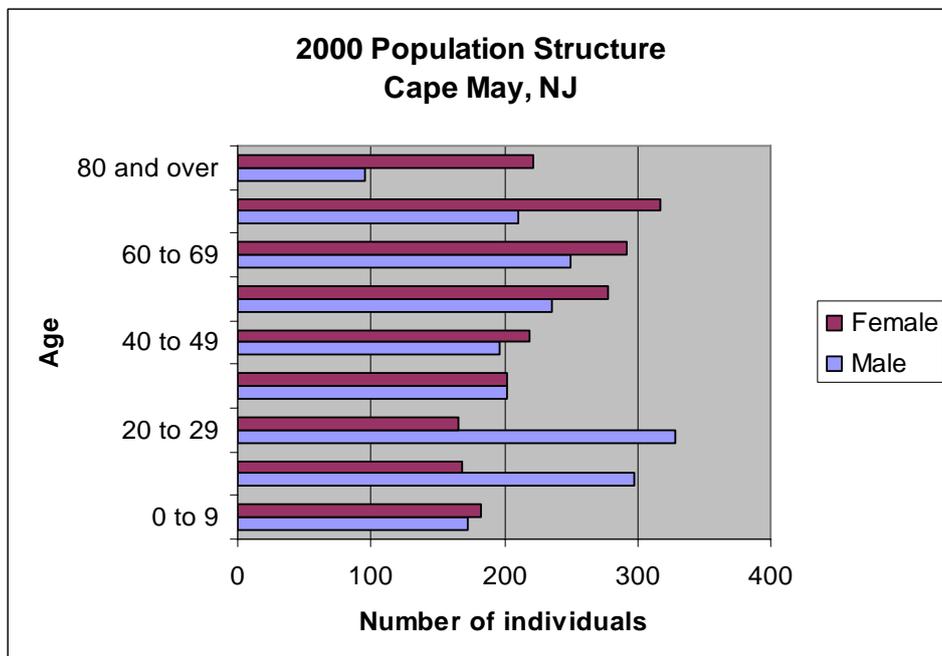


Figure 1. Cape May’s population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000a)

The vast majority of the population of Cape May in 2000 was white (91.0%), with 5.9% black or African American, 0.6% Native American or Alaskan, 0.8% Asian, and 0.07% Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (see Figure 2). Only 3.8% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (see Figure 3). Residents linked their heritage to a number of European ancestries including: Irish (26.9%), German (21.9%), English (16.2%), Italian (14.2%), Polish (6.9%), French (3.5%), and Scottish (2.7%). With regard to region of birth, 25.6% of residents were born in New Jersey, 66.9% were born in a different state, and 6.1% were born outside the U.S. (including 2.4% 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 Cape May city

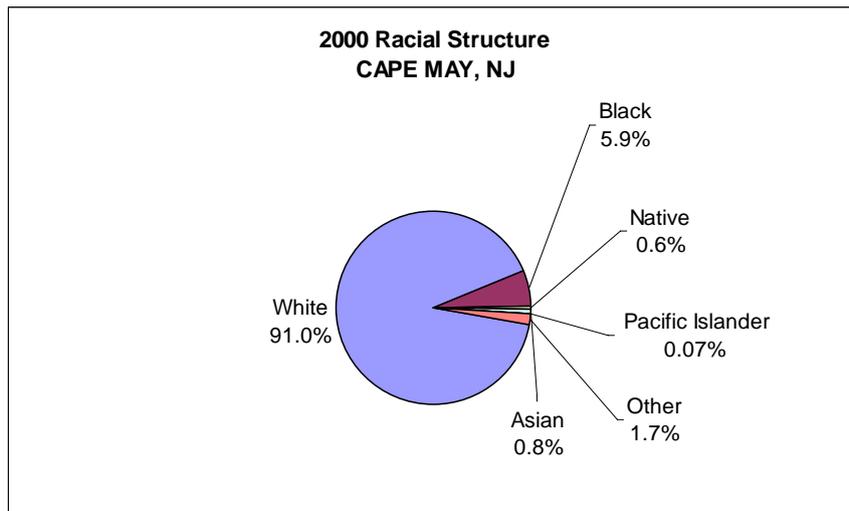


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000a)

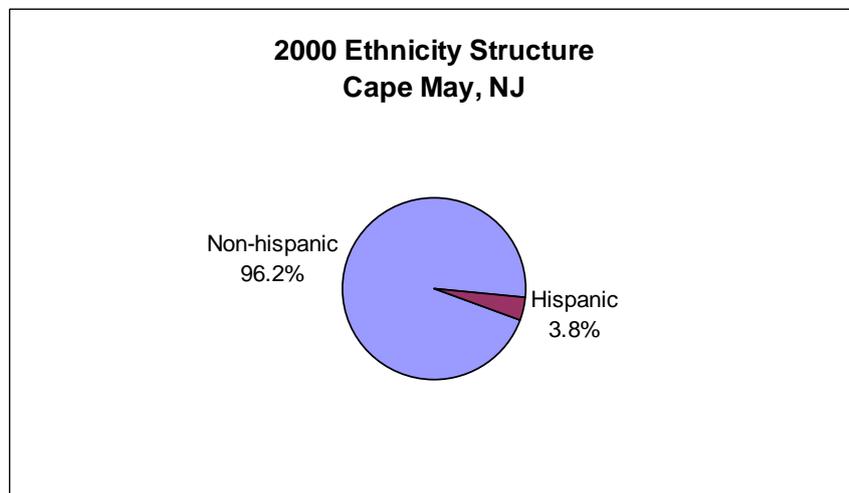


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 91.1% of the population in 2000, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 8.9% 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 US Census Bureau.

Of the population 25 years and over, 87.6% were high school graduates or higher and 30.8% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 2.6% did not reach ninth grade, 9.8% attended some high school but did not graduate, 30.5% completed high school, 20.1% had some college with no degree, 6.2% received an associate’s degree, 19.0% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 11.8% received a graduate or professional degree.

Although religious percentages are not available through U.S. Census data, according to the Association of Religion Data Archive in 2000 the religion with the highest number of congregations in Cape May County was Catholic, with 15 congregations and 32,307 adherents. Other prominent congregations 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).

Issues/Processes

Offshore wind farms have been proposed for 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). In 2006, rising fuel costs were having a detrimental effect on the charter fishing industry, especially on those boats going further out to go canyon fishing. The boat owners have been forced to raise their prices, and many potential customers were thinking twice about taking a trip offshore (McCann 2006).

Like in many other fishing communities with a significant tourism industry, commercial fishermen in Cape May are often competing with recreational fishing and with residential development for space. Lower Township, the municipality where the fishing industry is based, currently has three “marine development” zones in place, which are mostly used by recreational businesses; Schellenger’s Landing, where much of the commercial fishing industry is based, is specially zoned for “marine general business” to permit expansion of the fishing-related businesses located here (McCay and Cieri 2000).

Cultural attributes

The Lobster House dock and fish packing plant operates a 45-minute tour to teach visitors about Cape May’s commercial fishing industry (CMCDT nd). 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 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.⁵

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

“Like many Jersey Shore communities, much of Cape May's and Wildwood's economies are dependent on seasonal tourism - which is dependent both on the weather and the overall state of the economy. The year-round character of commercial fishing is a major factor in keeping these communities going in the off-season” (CMCPCBA nd). Commercial fishing is the second largest industry in Cape May County after tourism (CMCDT 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). Cape May also has the only basic training facility for the U.S. Coast Guard (USMilitary.com 2007).

According to the U.S. Census 2000, 57.5% (1,985 individuals) of the total population over 16 years of age and over was in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 3.8% were unemployed, 14.2% were in the armed forces, and 39.5% were employed.

⁵ Community Review Comments, Greg DiDomenico, Garden State Seafood Association, 212 West State Street, Trenton, NJ, 08608, August 24, 2007

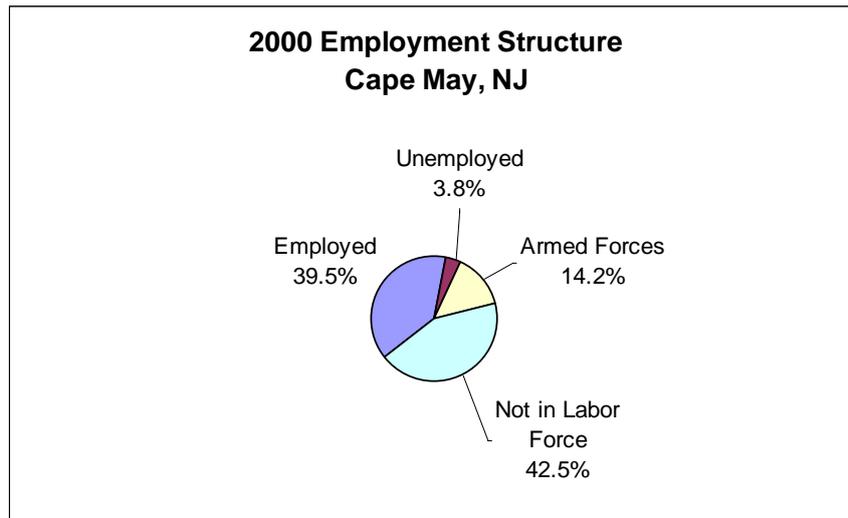


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000a)

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁶, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 5 positions or 0.4% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 205 positions or 15% of jobs. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (21.1%), retail trade (16.4%), and educational, health and social services (13.6%), and finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing (10.6%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Cape May in 2000 was \$33,462 (up 21.4% from \$27,560 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and median per capita income was \$29,902. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 13.0% more per year than females.

The average family in Cape May in 2000 consisted of 2.69 persons. With respect to poverty, 7.7% of families (up from 2.7% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 9.1% 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 2000b). In 2000, 36.7% of all families in Cape May (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Cape May had a total of 4,064 housing units, of which 44.8% were occupied and 40.8% were detached one unit homes. Fewer than a third (29.1%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes and boats accounted for only 0.3% of the total housing units; 82.3% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$212,900. Of vacant housing units, 93.1% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units, 43.2% were renter occupied.

Government

The City of Cape May operates under the Council/Manager form of government. Cape May voters directly elect the Mayor. The person elected serves a four year term. The mayor presides over the council and has a vote. There are four members of Council, in addition to the Mayor. Their terms are staggered, where the members of the first council draw lots to determine who serves a four year term. The remaining three will serve a two year term. Subsequently, all councilmen elected serve for four years (City of Cape May nd).

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.

Fishery involvement in government

The Cape May County Planning Board expresses in its comprehensive plan its policies regarding commercial fishing, which include promoting and encouraging land use policies which benefit the commercial fishing industry and protecting the fishing industry from economic or environmental harm by opposing projects which may have a negative effect (Cape May County nd).

NOAA Fisheries Statistics Office has port agents based in Cape May. Port agents sample fish landings and provide a 'finger-on-the-pulse' of their respective fishing communities (NOAA FSO nd).

Institutional

Fishing associations

[Garden State Seafood Association](#) (GSSA) in Trenton 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. Lunds, Atlantic Capes, and Cold Spring are all members of the GSSA. Lunds and Atlantic Capes are founding contributors of the National Fisheries Institute, Scientific Monitoring Committee, which raises millions of dollars through the Research Set-Aside Program. Rutgers University is a major contributor to these science-based efforts and has an office in Cape May.⁷

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) also provides links for many NJ anglers associations.

Fishery assistance centers

The Cape May County government, along with the State of New Jersey, developed the Cape May County Revolving Fishing Loan Program. Instituted in 1984, it 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 to date (Cape May County nd). The Cape May County Technical School integrates projects such as commercial fishing net mending and gear construction and operating a fish market in their curriculum to prepare students for careers in the commercial fishing industry (CMCTSD nd).

Other fishing related organizations

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. The [Cape May Marlin & Tuna Club](#) hosts several tournaments throughout the year.

Physical

Cape May, like all of New Jersey's seafood industry, is within easy reach of airports in Newark, New York and Philadelphia. All these offer next-day service for fresh seafood to virtually every major market in the world. The container port in Newark/Elizabeth handles hundreds of thousands of shipping containers each month, many of them packed with chilled or frozen food products (NJ Fishing nd). Cape May also has extensive bus service to the surrounding area as well as Philadelphia and Atlantic City (NJ Transit nd). There is also a [ferry terminal](#) connecting Cape May to Lewes, DE. It is 48 miles from Atlantic City, NJ, 87 miles from Philadelphia, PA, and 169 miles from New York City.

⁷ Community Review Comments, Greg DiDomenico, Garden State Seafood Association, 212 West State Street, Trenton, NJ, 08608, August 24, 2007

Commercial and recreational fishing docks are scattered around Cape May or, more properly, Lower Township, but centered in an area known as Ocean Drive (McCay and Cieri 2000), “a road which leaves the main highway and crosses the marshes toward the Diamond Beach section of Lower Township and Wildwood Crest, and Schellenger's Landing, just over a large bridge that connects the mainland with the center of Cape May and its beaches.”⁸ The fishing industry is really based in Lower Township, rather than within Cape May proper. Schellenger's Landing has a dock and fish market; a number of large vessels are located here. In the vicinity are also a marine railway, two marinas, two bait and tackle shops, two marine suppliers, and a “marlin and tuna club”. Some commercial fishing boats also use Cape May's recreational marinas (McCay and Cieri 2000). [Two Mile Landing](#) is a marina with recreational boats and a restaurant; some commercial fishing activity is found here as well (McCay and Cieri 2000).

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁹

Commercial

The combined port of Cape May/Wildwood is the largest commercial fishing port in New Jersey and is one of the largest on the East Coast. Cape May/Wildwood is the center of fish processing and freezing in New Jersey. Some of the largest vessels fishing on the East Coast are home ported here. Cape May fishing vessels have frequently been responsible for developing new fisheries and new domestic and international markets. The targeted species are diverse; fisheries focus on squid, mackerel, fluke, sea bass, porgies, lobsters and menhaden. Some of the boats out of Wildwood are also targeting surf clams and ocean quahogs (NJ Fishing nd).

[F.H. Snow's Canning Co/Doxsee](#) is a large clam cannery based in Lower Township (not Cape May)¹⁰, and the only domestic manufacturer to harvest its own clams. Snow's/Doxsee has the nation's largest allocation for fishing and harvesting ocean clams. Established in 1954 in Cape May, [Lund's Fisheries, Inc.](#), is a freezer plant and a primary producer of various species of fish found along the Eastern Seaboard of the USA. It is also a member of the [Garden State Seafood Association](#). There is one other exporter of seafood in Lower Township¹¹, the Atlantic Cape Fisheries Inc. which exports marine fish and shellfish, oysters, scallops, clams and squids (NJDA nd). The Axelsson and Johnson Fish Company Inc. which used to export shad, marine fish, conch, American lobster, lobster tails, scallops and whole squid went out of business several years before the creation of this profile.¹²

The top species landed in Cape May in 2006 were scallops (over \$23 million), squid, mackerel, butterfish (over \$12 million) and summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass (over \$1.9 million) (Table 1). Between 1997 and 2006 home ported vessels increased from 109 to 184 while the number of vessels whose owner's city was Cape May also increased from 73 to

⁸ Community Reviewer Comments, James Smith, Cape May County Planning. Comments received September 12, 2007.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Community Reviewer Comments, James Smith, Cape May County Planning. Comments received September 12, 2007.

¹¹ Community Reviewer Comments, James Smith, Cape May County Planning. Comments received September 12, 2007.

¹² Community Review Comments, Walter Makowski, NMFS Port Agent, August 8, 2007

88 vessels. Additionally, home port value and landed port value also steadily increased over the same time period, with the exception of a decline in the later category in 2006 (Table 2).

Landings by Species

Table 1. Dollar value of Federally Managed Groups of Landings for Cape May

	Average from 1997-2006	2006 only
Scallop	22,263,937	23,677,160
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	7,584,550	12,375,958
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	2,044,420	1,979,899
Other ¹³	1,696,617	1,637,321
Surf Clams, Ocean Quahog	588,296	0
Lobster	420,312	8,861
Herring	412,103	2,896,122
Monkfish	322,895	397,841
Red Crab	40,358	0
Smallmesh Groundfish ¹⁴	23,939	2,997
Bluefish	20,626	4,267
Skate	12,299	4,387
Largemesh Groundfish ¹⁵	8,067	3,705
Dogfish	6,574	0
Tilefish	597	1,230

Vessels by Year¹⁶

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	109	73	27,687,667	23,636,983
1998	105	68	27,614,763	25,770,007
1999	106	72	29,153,706	22,353,284
2000	116	74	30,488,271	23,936,235
2001	116	71	32,923,798	27,155,864
2002	118	72	34,529,920	28,312,296
2003	129	78	42,777,501	36,372,658
2004	135	73	62,308,441	60,630,752
2005	155	82	69,641,897	63,298,068
2006	184	88	75,058,370	42,989,748

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

Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹⁷

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

In NJ the charter/party fleet is the largest on east coast. Many vessels are over 120ft long and carry over 150 people.¹⁸ The Cape May County Party and Charter Boat Association lists several dozen charter and party vessels based out of the City of Cape May. There are 35

¹³ "Other" species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

¹⁴ Smallmesh multi-species: red hake, ocean pout, mixed hake, black whiting, silver hake (whiting)

¹⁵ Largemesh groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ Community Review Comments, Bruce Freeman, NJ Coast Anglers Association, 1201 Route 37 East, Suite 9, Toms River, NJ 08753, October 2, 2007

vessels listed carrying 1-6 passengers, six vessels which can carry more than six passengers, and three party boats (NJ Fishing nd). The [Miss Chris](#) fleet of party boats makes both full- and half-day trips, targeting largely fluke and stripers for most of the year. The [Porgy IV](#), another party boat, targets sea bass, blackfish, and flounder. Many of the charter boats go offshore canyon fishing (McCay and Cieri 2000). Between 2001- 2005, there were 56 charter and party vessels making 6,599 total trips registered in NMFS logbook data by charter and party vessels in Cape May, carrying a total of 116,917 anglers (NMFS VTR data). There are several fishing tournaments held throughout the year sponsored by the [Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club](#).

Subsistence

Information on subsistence fishing in Cape May is either available through primary data collection or the practice does not exist.

FUTURE

Information on the future in Cape May was unavailable through secondary data collection.

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