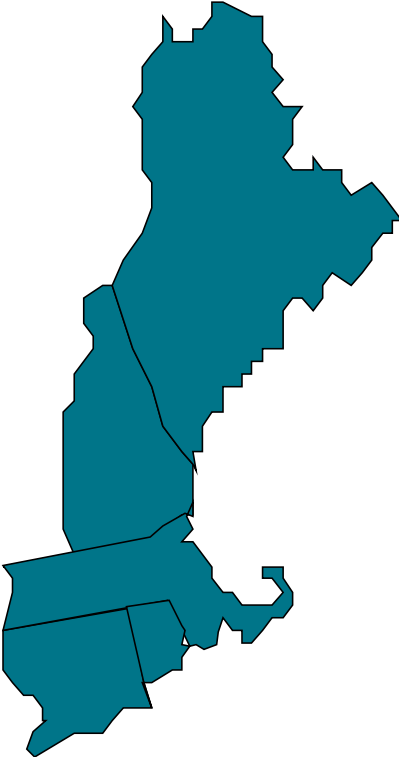


New England

- Connecticut
- Maine
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island



New England Summary

Regional Context

The New England region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. These states combined share 473 miles of coastline: 13 miles to New Hampshire, 40 miles belongs to Rhode Island, 192 miles to Massachusetts, and 228 miles to Maine. Connecticut has no ocean coastline but does have 618 miles of the region's tidal shoreline on Long Island Sound and its inlets. Many sounds, bays, inlets, islands and related features characterize the coastal area of these states. Some examples are: Nantucket Sound; Cape Cod, Casco, and Penobscot Bays; and the Gulf of Maine with its historically rich fishing grounds including Georges Bank. Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, Massachusetts, and Vinalhaven, Deer Isle, and Mt. Desert, Maine are some larger islands among the many that characterize this region, particularly along the Maine coast. The region's 6,130 miles of tidal shoreline is distributed as follows: New Hampshire (131 miles); Rhode Island (384 miles); Connecticut (618 miles); Massachusetts (1,519 miles); and Maine (3,478 miles).

As one of the areas of oldest European settlement in North America, the region's fisheries have been very important historically. The cod fisheries helped feed Europe's industrial revolution, and were an important part of the 17th through early 19th century's trade route between Africa, the Caribbean, North America, and Europe. New England's whalers – especially from New Bedford, Fairhaven, Provincetown, and Nantucket, Massachusetts – hunted their prey around the world to provide the primary source of oil used for domestic lighting, among other products, beginning in the Colonial era and extending into the early 19th century. Ethnic groups particularly associated with the region's commercial fishing include the Portuguese in New Bedford and Provincetown, the Sicilians in Gloucester, and the Norwegians in New Bedford – all Massachusetts fishing communities – and the “Yankees” (actually white Protestants of British descent), and to a small extent, the Acadians (French) in Maine.

Multiple factors have led to reduced commercial fishing in this region over the past twenty years including stock depletion, changes in fishing regulations, and pollution. Loss of commercial fishing infrastructure to alternative uses also increasingly constrains commercial fishing. All these factors are changing the nature of fishing communities. Gentrification and tourism are factors in communities such as Chatham, Marblehead, and Scituate, Massachusetts; Stonington, Connecticut; Little Compton, Rhode Island; and Vinalhaven, Maine. Many processors and fish houses have ceased operating in the last decade and most rely on imported rather than local product. A recent buyout of the last herring and sardine cannery left in Maine, a plant in Corea, (a village within the town of



A pier crowded with fishing gear, Beals Island, Maine

Gouldsboro) will likely mean a switch away from local to imported product.

Saltwater recreational fishing is found along the entire coast. In 2006, Massachusetts received the most saltwater recreational fishing trips, followed by Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Maine. Among the top fishing communities that service saltwater anglers are New London, Connecticut, and Fall River and Marblehead, Massachusetts, offering a variety of shoreside support services. Sportfish tournaments are held in the top fishing communities of Groton, Connecticut and Scituate, Massachusetts, as well as in other communities such as Waterford, Connecticut; Bailey Island, and Swans Island, Maine; Barnstable, Danvers, and Marshfield, Massachusetts; and Block Island and Wakefield, Rhode Island.

A large number of the region's fishing communities host seafood festivals and fishing-related festivals such as blessings of the fleet in the warmer months, including the communities of Point Judith, Newport, and North Kingstown, Rhode Island; New Bedford, Gloucester, Marblehead, Sandwich, Provincetown, and Scituate, Massachusetts; New London, Connecticut; Hampton/Seabrook and Portsmouth, New Hampshire; and Winter Harbor, Bar Harbor, Portland, and Rockland, Maine.

The Fishing Communities

Overall, 11 fishing communities in Connecticut, 50 in Maine, 29 in Massachusetts, 7 in New Hampshire, and 12 in Rhode Island have been profiled by NMFS social scientists because of the nature of their links with commercial and/or recreational fishing. In 2006, five of the United States' top fifty ports by pounds landed were located in the New England region. They are: Gloucester and Provincetown-Chatham, Massachusetts; Point Judith,

Fishing Communities Facts

- Gloucester, Massachusetts has been a fishing community continuously since its founding in 1623.
- Boston’s Fish Pier, which opened in 1914, is the oldest continuously operating fish pier in the U.S.
- There is a lot of support for the fishing industry by state and local governments, as indicated by special loan programs and support for town docks in many communities.
- The “Man at the Wheel” statue of the Gloucester Fishermen’s Memorial is one of the most famous fishing monuments in the U.S.
- Marblehead, Massachusetts is known as the “Yachting Capital of America.”

Historical context

- John Cabot, in his 1497 voyage to the new world, discovered huge schools of cod which soon attracted European fishermen, including the Norwegians, the Portuguese, the British, and the French – ethnicities still represented in today’s fishing communities.
- In the late 1800s, a portion of income derived from fishing licenses in Plymouth, Massachusetts was set aside for public schools.
- In 1877 the states with the most ocean fishermen were Massachusetts with 17,106 men and Maine with 8,110.

Fishing activities

- New Bedford, Massachusetts had the highest landed value from commercial fishing among all ports in the entire United States from 2000 to 2006.
- In 2006, there were 4,187 vessels with a Northeast federal permit whose owners lived in New England, but 2,261 vessels which landed in New England.

Fishing-related activities

- There are a number of active fishermen’s and fishermen’s wives associations in the region. One of the oldest (founded in 1954) and largest (1,200 members in 2006) is the Maine Lobstermen’s Association.
- Provincetown, Massachusetts has the largest and safest harbor in New England.
- New England includes critical habitat for northern right whales and habitat for harbor porpoises, impacting fishermen in those areas.

Seascape

- Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and four National Estuarine Research Reserves are found in New England waters.

top fishing communities that are located within urban areas with populations greater than 100,000 are: Providence, Rhode Island; and Bridgeport and New Haven, Connecticut. Exclusive of these large cities, the average population for the top fishing communities is 32,846 for Massachusetts, 31,456 for Connecticut, and 26,175 for Rhode Island. Maine averages 9,979, while New Hampshire averages 8,211. Both Maine and New Hampshire’s top fishing communities are predominantly smaller communities. Eight of Maine’s and four of New Hampshire’s top ten fishing communities have populations of less than 8,000. Only two of Massachusetts’s and one of Rhode Island’s top fishing communities have populations of less than 8,000, while Connecticut has none.

Community Resiliency, Growth, Marine Health, and Well Being

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 9.2% of families in the U.S. live below the poverty line, the median income level is \$42,000, and 18% of residents over five years of age speak a language other than English at home. The New England region has a lower percentage of families living in poverty, a higher median income level, and a comparable percentage of residents older than five who speak a language other than English at home relative to the U.S. as a whole. Not all fishing communities follow to these trends, however. More information on these and other factors that may affect community resiliency are discussed below.

Connecticut

Based upon the 2000 Census, the percentage of family households below the poverty level was 5.6% in Connecticut. New London (13.4%), Bridgeport (16.2%), and New Haven (20.5%) had the highest poverty rates in the state and among the highest in the region. The poverty rate in the other fishing communities was 5% or less. These three communities and Norwalk had the highest percentage of residents who spoke a language other than English at home (24% to 44%).

At the state level, indicators show that population has grown 7.2% and annual building permit issuance has fallen 1% between 1997 and 2006. The average unemployment rate dropped 8%. From 2005–2006, the number of building permits fell 22%. There were two disaster declarations and five emergency declarations during the 1997-2006 time period.

Maine

The percentage of family households below the poverty rate in Maine in 2000 was 7.8%. The family household poverty rates in the fishing communities were generally lower. Portland, Rockland, and Stonington were exceptions,

Rhode Island; and Portland and Stonington, Maine. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, the New England region accounted for only 7% of U.S. landings from 1997-2006, on average. In contrast, New England accounted for 20% of U.S. landings revenue during this period.

The largest metropolitan area in the New England region is Boston, a center for financial services and insurance for the fishing industry as well as the home of the Nation’s oldest continuously operating fish pier. The region’s other

New England Summary

all with poverty rates at 10%. The percentage of fishing community residents speaking English at home was generally lower than the state average, with Portland providing the lone exception (10%). In three of the nine selected fishing communities, the median education level was “high school.” The median education level for the state and the other fishing communities was “some college.”

The state population grew 6.1% between 1997 and 2006. In contrast, the number of building permits issued grew 55%. The unemployment rate fell 10%, averaging 4.4% for the period. From 2005-2006, the number of building permits issued fell 19%. There were ten disaster declarations and ten emergency declarations during the 1997-2006 time period.

Massachusetts

In Massachusetts, the percentage of family households below the poverty line was 6.7%. Across fishing communities, the household poverty rate ranged from 1% to 17%, with five fishing communities having poverty rates lower than the state poverty rate. The highest poverty rates were in New Bedford (17%), Boston (15%), and Fall River (14%). These fishing communities also had the highest percentage of residents over five years who spoke a language other than English at home: 38%, 33%, and 35%, respectively. The median education levels for the state and five fishing communities was “some college.” Marblehead had the highest median educational attainment (“Bachelor’s degree”) and Fairhaven, Fall River, and New Bedford had the lowest (“high school graduate”).

State population growth between 1997 and 2006 was 5.3% and averaged 6.3 million. The unemployment rate (4.8% in 2006) increased 17%, while the issuance of building permits increased 14% during this period. From 2005-2006, building permit issuance fell 20%. There were five disaster declarations and seven emergency declarations during the 1997-2006 time period.

New Hampshire

The percentage of family households below the poverty line in New Hampshire was the lowest in the region at 4.3%. The family household poverty rate across the selected fishing communities was also relatively low, ranging from 0% to 6%. The percentage of residents over five years of age who spoke a language other than English at home was 8.3% for the state but generally lower across the fishing communities. New Hampshire fishing communities had the highest median education level attained, with three communities having “bachelor’s degrees” as the median level attained by their residents.

At the state level, population grew 12% between 1997 and 2006. The average unemployment rate during this

period was low, averaging 3.5%. The number of building permits issued from 1997-2006 increased 5%, falling 25% from 2005-2006. There were six disaster declarations and seven emergency declarations during the 1997-2006 time period.

Rhode Island

The percentage of family households below the poverty line in Rhode Island was the highest in the region, 8.9%. The poverty rate was lower in fishing communities with the exceptions of Providence (24%, the highest in the region) and Newport (13%). The percentage of residents over five years of age who spoke a language other than English was 20% for the state, also a regional high. With the exceptions of Providence (43%) and Bristol (21%), most fishing communities had a lower rate than the state rate. The median educational attainment of the state and all fishing communities was “some college.”

Rhode Island’s population growth was 8% between 1997 and 2006. In contrast, building permit issuance fell 11% for the period. The unemployment rate fell 2%, averaging 4.9% for the period. From 2005-2006, the number of building permits issued fell 16%. There were no disaster declarations and three emergency declarations during the 1997-2006 time period.

List of Fishing Communities & Ports

The following list contains fishing communities and ports that have been identified by NMFS social science staff as having ties to commercial and/or recreational fisheries in the New England region. Profiles of most of these communities will be available in the summer of 2009 at http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/read/socialsci/community_profiles/. Communities yet to be profiled are identified with an asterisk (*).

Maine

Addison
Bailey Island
Bar Harbor
Bath
Beals
Belfast
Boothbay Harbor
Bremen
Bucks Harbor
Cape Porpoise
Corea
Cundys Harbor
Cushing
Cutler
Deer Isle
Eastport

Falmouth
Frenchboro
Friendship
Gouldsboro Town*
Harpwell
Islesford
Jonesport
Kennebunkport
Kittery
Milbridge
New Harbor
North Haven
Ogunquit
Owls Head
Pemaquid
Port Clyde
Portland
Prospect Harbor

Rockland
Saint George Town*
Sebasco Estates/Phippsburg
Sorrento
South Bristol
South Thomaston
Southwest Harbor
Spruce Head
Stonington
Swans Island
Tenants Harbor
Tremont
Vinalhaven
Westport
Whiting
Winter Harbor

New Hampshire

Durham*
Hampton
New Castle*
Newington
Portsmouth
Rye
Seabrook

Massachusetts

Barnstable
Beverly
Boston
Chatham
Chilmark
Cohasset
Danvers
Fairhaven
Fall River
Gloucester
Harwich Port
Hull
Manchester
Marblehead
Marshfield
Nantucket
New Bedford
Newburyport
Orleans
Plymouth
Provincetown
Rockport
Salisbury
Sandwich
Saugus
Scituate
Wellfleet

Westport
Woods Hole

Rhode Island

Block Island
Bristol*
Little Compton
Newport
North Kingstown
Point Judith/Narragansett
Portsmouth
Providence*
South Kingstown*
Tiverton Wakefield
Warren
Warwick*

Connecticut

Branford*
Bridgeport*
Darien*
East Haven*
Groton
New Haven*
New London
Norwalk*
Portland*
Stonington
Waterford