

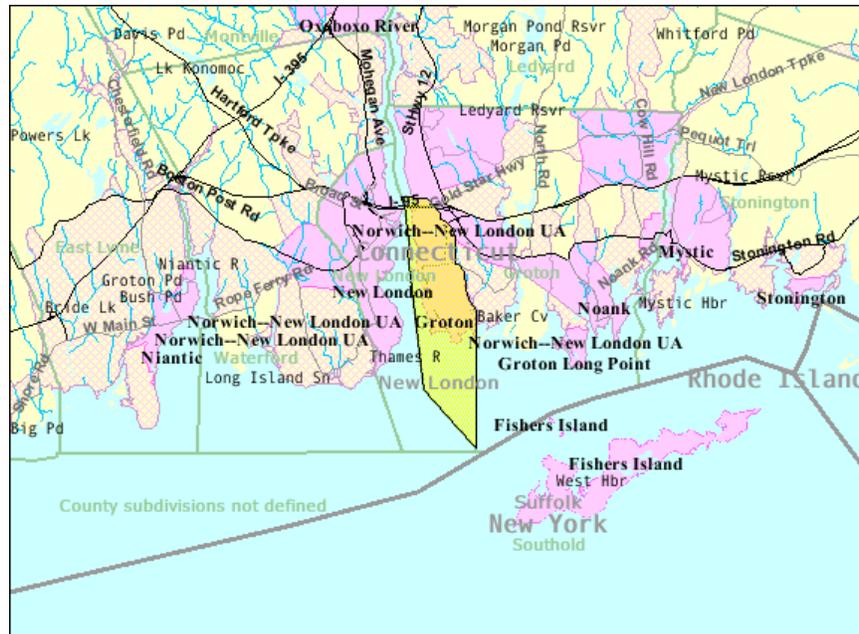
GROTON, CT¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

The town of Groton, Connecticut (41.35°N, 72.08°W) (USGS 2008) is a part of New London County. It sits on the east side of the Thames River, across from New London, and is bordered on its eastern side by the Mystic River and to the south by Fishers Island Sound (Town of Groton 2006). The city of Groton is a subdivision of the town of Groton (Reiter et al. 2004) and is about 3.1 square miles in area (City of Groton 2006).



Map 1. Location of Groton, CT (US Census Bureau 2000)

Historical/Background

Groton was originally inhabited by the Pequot Indians. Dutch explorer Adrian Block was the first European to have contact with the Pequots, and they developed a fur trade with the Dutch. However, rivalry among tribes for the trade led to numerous conflicts, and in 1637 John Mason of the Connecticut Colony led an attack on the Pequots, forcing them out of the area. The first European settlement came in 1646, when John Winthrop, Jr. of the Massachusetts Bay Colony founded Pequot Plantation, encompassing what is now Groton and New London. Groton was incorporated on its own in 1705, and named after the Winthrop estate in England. Shipbuilding and maritime trade were the early industries, as were whaling and sealing. Groton ships found their way from Boston and New York to the West Indies and Europe. Many major shipyards arose, including the Groton Naval Yard, built in 1868. During World War II, Groton

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."

became known as the submarine capital of the world, as General Dynamics' Electric Boat produced 74 submarines for the Navy during the war. In 1954, Electric Boat launched the *USS Nautilus*, the first nuclear-powered submarine (Reiter et al. 2004).

Demographics³

According to Census 2000 data⁴, Groton had a total population of 10,010, up 1.8% from the reported population of 9,837 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 52.6% were males and 47.4% were females. The median age was 31.6 years and 72.1% of the population was 21 years or older while 12.4% was 62 years or older.

The population structure for Groton (see Figure 1) shows a large spike in the population for males aged 20-29; this reflects the presence of the naval submarine base in Groton which attracts males in this age group to the area. There are also numerous other employment opportunities in Groton, some of which are related to the defense industry, which may also be reflected in the population spike. Groton also has a large number of residents in the 30-39 and 40-49 age categories, as well as children aged 0-9 and 10-19, indicating that this is generally a family-oriented community.

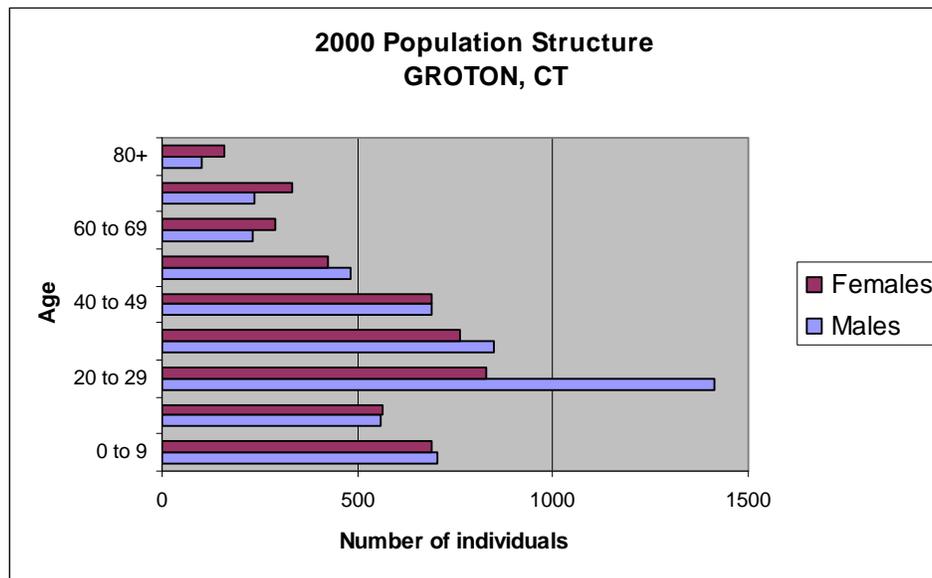


Figure 1. Groton's population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The majority of the population was white (77.5%), with 11.9% black or African American, 4.2% Asian, 2.2% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (Figure 2). Only 9.4% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: Irish (18.7%), Italian (15.3%), German (14.2%), and English (11.6%). With regard to region of birth, 47.1% were born in Connecticut, 44.1% were born in a different state and 6.3% were born outside the U.S. (including 2.6% 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 U.S. Census: American Factfinder 2000 <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html>; data used are for Groton town, Connecticut (cited Jul 2007)

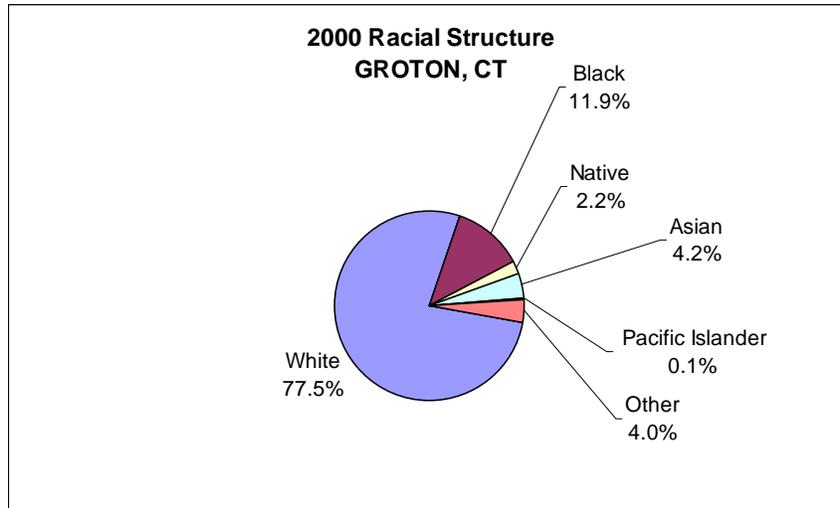


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

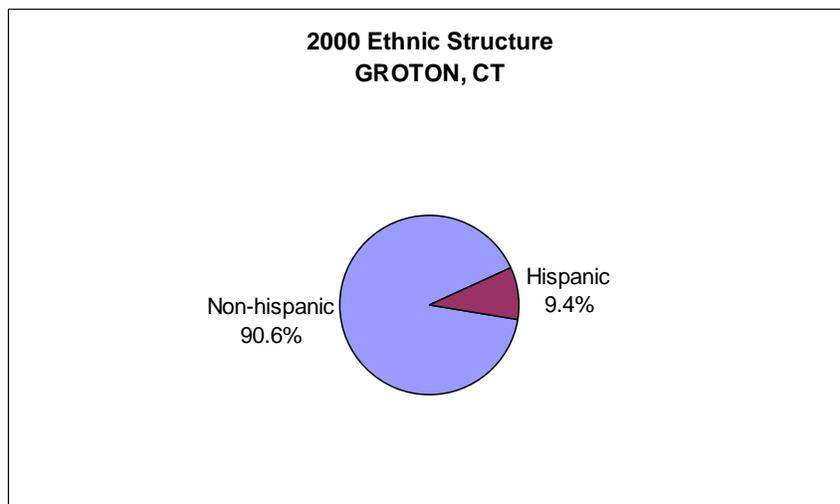


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 89.1% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 10.9% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 4.1% of the population who spoke English less than “very well” according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and older, 89.5% were high school graduates or higher and 18.8% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again, of the population 25 years and over, 2.5% did not reach ninth grade, 8.0% attended some high school but did not graduate, 37.3% completed high school, 26.9% had some college with no degree, 6.6% received their associate’s degree, 11.7% earned their bachelor’s degree, and 7.1% 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 New London County was Catholic with 33 congregations and 80,563 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were American Baptist (19 and 6,502 adherents) and United Church of Christ (20 and 6,809 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was down 0.3% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

There are 27 houses of worship listed for Groton, of which three are Catholic, one is Islamic, one is Mormon, and the rest are various Protestant denominations (Town of Groton 2006).

Issues/Processes

The lobster fishing industry in Groton has not yet been affected by the 1999 lobster die-off to the extent that other ports to the west were, but now they face competition from lobstermen from Norwalk, Bridgeport, and other places that have been affected by the die-off. Newcomers must find their own spots to fish (which usually yield a smaller catches) or risk getting the lines to their traps cut by the older fishermen. This, among other things, makes it difficult for someone to get started in the business (Hall-Arber et al. 2001).

Groton's naval submarine base managed to avoid closure in 2005 when it was taken off a list of military facilities slated for elimination, which would have cost the state an estimated 31,000 jobs, but there are always concerns about future closure attempts (Cronin 2005). Electric Boat in Groton has recently laid off close to 600 employees, and there is talk of eliminating between 1,400 and 1,700 additional jobs because of a decline in the submarine industry (Connecticut Post 2006). Pfizer also has layoffs planned for the area, as it eliminates all drug manufacturing in Groton, eliminating another 300 jobs (Hartford Courant 2006). Since the early 1990s, Southeastern Connecticut has lost about 20,000 jobs from cutbacks in the defense industry, and gained an equal number in the casino gambling industry. Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun both have significant expansions planned. However, the newly created jobs are generally entry-level positions with a much lower pay (Green 2006).

Cultural attributes

Groton is home to the U.S. Navy Submarine Force Museum, home of the [*USS Nautilus*](#). The museum maintains a large collection of submarine artifacts. [Project Oceanology](#), on the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus in Groton, runs research cruises, summer camps, and other programs for the general public to educate them about the marine environment. In neighboring Mystic, they celebrate seafaring life with a recreation of a historic whaling village and historic tall ships and other restored vessels. [Mystic Seaport](#) hosts the annual Chowderfest which lasts for three days in October and includes a shipbuilding exhibit, many historical ships, and booths run by local fishing related companies to give the visitors to understand fishing life. The [Mystic Aquarium/Institute for Exploration](#) in Mystic "is dedicated to inspiring people to care about and protect the oceans through educating them about the underwater world."

[DownEast Lighthouse Cruises](#) in Groton also offers lobstering tours, where visitors can experience hauling and baiting traps while learning about the profession and about the marine life of Fishers Island Sound. There is an annual striped bass tournament on the Thames River each May to promote the river as a natural resource (CCEC, no date).

INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

Major industries in the Groton area which employ large numbers of residents are the defense industry and the gaming industry, with two large casinos (Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun) located a short distance away. The top five employers within Groton are the U.S. Naval Submarine base, Electric Boat, Pfizer, the Town of Groton, and Wyman Gordon (Town of Groton 2006).

According to the U.S. Census 2000⁵, 75.5% (6,027 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age or over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 4.0% were unemployed, 12.5% were in the Armed Forces, and 58.9% were employed.

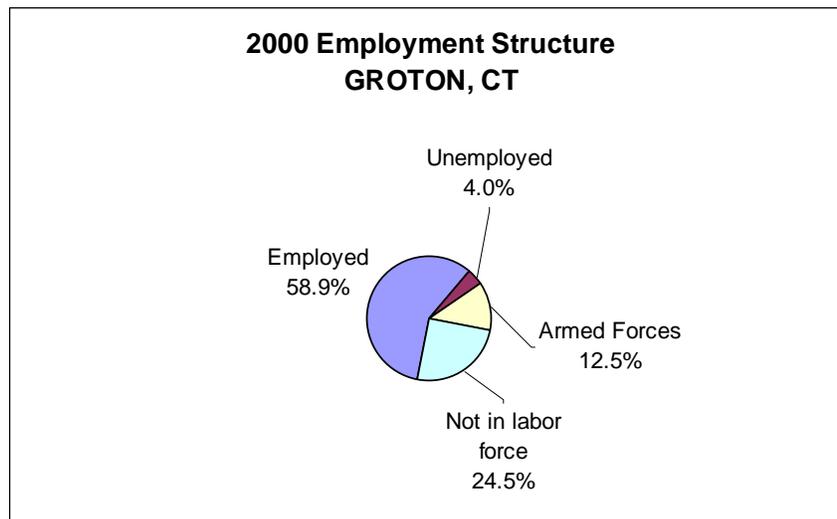


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 5 positions or 0.1% of all jobs. Self-employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 139 positions or 3.0% of all jobs. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (22.4%), manufacturing (21.3%), educational, health, and social services (13.9%), and retail trade (8.6%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Groton was \$40,515 (up 30.9% from \$30,952 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and per capita income was \$22,239. For full-time year-round workers, males made approximately 13.9% more than females.

The average family in Groton consisted of 2.77 persons. With respect to poverty, 10.3% of families (up from 6.9% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 9.9% of individuals earn below the official US 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, 39.2% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Groton had a total of 4,569 housing units of which 92.6% were occupied and 35.5% were detached one unit homes. Less than one quarter (22.7%) of these homes were built before 1940. Boats, RVs, vans, etc. accounted for 0.1% of housing units; 92.9% of detached units have between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$124,300. Of vacant housing units, 1.5% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units, 60.1% were renter occupied.

Government

The City of Groton is actually a subdivision of the town of Groton. The city was incorporated in 1903 and is governed by an elected mayor and a six-member council. The town of Groton is governed Town Council-Town Manager-Representative Town Meeting form 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.

government, with a nine-member town council elected to two-year terms. One of these council members is then elected to serve as mayor and preside over council meetings (Reiter et al. 2004).

Fishery involvement in government

The town of Groton has a Shellfish Commission, whose manages shellfish beds and provides permits to harvest shellfish within waters adjacent to the town (Reiter et al. 2004). The Groton Shellfish Commission is primarily recreational, issuing around 2000 permits each year for harvesting clams, oysters, and mussels. The Commission also issues permits to commercial interests for the growing, harvesting, and depuration of clams and oysters. The revenue from permits and commercial leases is spent primarily on propagation to sustain the shellfish beds, as well as the costs of monitoring the beds (City of Groton 2006). The City of Groton also has a Harbor Management Commission, as does the town (City of Groton 2006). The town also has a harbor master.

Institutional

Fishing associations

The [Connecticut Charter and Party Boat Association](#) represents 18 boats in Groton/New London. The Noank Aquaculture Cooperative in the village of Noank is a hatchery for oysters and other shellfish cooperatively run by its members. There were twelve members of the cooperative in 2005, with some members residing and harvesting their oysters on Long Island. The cooperative runs a separate hatchery on Long Island (Thompson 2005).

Fishing assistance centers

The Southeastern Connecticut Fisherman's Loan and Technical Assistance Program offers loans to fishermen that average \$50,000. These loans can be used for purchasing equipment, converting to alternative employment, developing alternative species or aquaculture projects, and converting vessels for alternative uses. Assistance is also provided from fishing and marine science specialists to help the fishermen with applications, business plans, market research, etc. This program was developed specifically to help the commercial fishing industry and applicants must be commercial fishermen or must be involved in "marine related" business. Applicants must also live in southeastern Connecticut (seCTer/SCCOG 2004).

Other fishing related organizations

The University of Connecticut's (UConn) Avery Point campus is located in Groton. [Avery Point](#) offers UConn's traditional undergraduate majors as well as majors in maritime studies and in coastal studies, and a graduate program in marine sciences. Research at the university is largely focused on [marine biology and oceanography disciplines](#). The [Connecticut Sea Grant College Program](#) is also based on the Avery Point campus. [Project Oceanology](#), located at Avery Point, is a marine science and environmental education program aimed at teaching kids and adults about the marine environment. They offer a variety of programs including research cruises, summer camps, and seal watches.

Physical

Groton is situated directly off Interstate 95; Connecticut Routes 12, 117, and 1 also pass through the town. In the past, [Shore Line East](#) was a commuter rail service running between New London and New Haven; service stopped in 2004.⁶ The Groton-New London Regional Airport is located within Groton; other larger airports nearby include the Hartford/Springfield-

⁶ Profile review comments, Edward G. Martin, Chair of Shellfish Commission, 17 Woodland Drive West, Groton, CT 06340, August 30, 2007

Bradley International Airport, the T.F. Greene International Airport in Providence, and the New Haven-Tweed Regional Airport. The [Amtrak Northeast Regional and Acela Express](#) routes both stop in New London. Ferry service to Long Island, Block Island, and Fishers Island are all available in New London as well (CCEC, no date); [Cross Sound Ferry](#) has daily year-round service to Orient Point, Long Island. Downtown Groton and downtown New London are about 4.5 miles apart. Groton is about 14 miles from Stonington, 56 miles from Providence, RI, and 127 miles from New York City (MapQuest 2006).

The charter fishing fleet in Groton is based at the sheltered [Pine Island Marina](#). The marina has 110 slips, 70 moorings, mechanical and haul-out services, a supply store, and a bait and tackle shop. [Kennedy Marine](#) in Groton offers ship chandlery and service. Two additional marinas are listed for Groton (Mystic Country 2008). The Thames River has a mix of recreational boats and commercial fishing vessels generally docked together throughout Groton (Hall-Arber et al. 2001). There are several large marinas on the Groton side of the Mystic River. The Mystic River is also home to several commercial operations for harvesting clams, oysters, and lobsters.⁷ The Water Street public dock and launch has a boat ramp and a small dock which does not permit overnight use. There are also public boat ramps at Bayberry Lane State Boat Launch, Kenneth Streeter State Boat Launch, and the Peruzzotti Boat Launch (CTDEP 2006). There are numerous spots in town from which people can fish from the shore, including Eastern Point Beach and the UConn Avery Point campus (CTDEP 2006).

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES⁸

Commercial

Most commercial fishing in Groton is for lobster. Most of the lobster is sold to T & S Lobster in Waterford, who also provides bait to the boats (Hall-Arber et al. 2001). [Grossman's Seafood](#) in Groton is a large retail store and wholesale facility. Most of the seafood they sell comes from Boston or Point Judith, but they sell sea scallops from a few boats which land in New London or Stonington.⁹ Garbo Lobster Company, based in Stonington but has a Canadian office in New Brunswick, is one of the nation's largest exporters of live lobsters (Garbo 2005). The company moved here from Stonington after neighbors complained about the late hours and loud noises of the trucks used to ship the lobsters (Hall-Arber et al. 2001). The Groton Shellfish Commission notes there are eight commercial enterprises with shellfish licenses in the town. The Lower Mystic River is becoming a significant area for oyster production. Seed grown in the Noank Hatchery is planted to grow out to harvest size in several states, then deperated when mature and sold. The Noank Hatchery is owned by the town of Groton, which leases it to Noank Aquaculture Cooperative, an oyster growing and harvesting cooperative.¹⁰ The co-op has been

⁷ Profile review comments, Edward G. Martin, Chair of Shellfish Commission, 17 Woodland Drive West, Groton, CT 06340, August 30, 2007

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, Sam Sawyer, Grossman's Seafood, 401 Noank Rd., Mystic, CT 06355, August 28, 2006

¹⁰ Profile review comments, Edward G. Martin, Chair of Shellfish Commission, 17 Woodland Drive West, Groton, CT 06340, August 30, 2007

highly successful, earning a reputation for a quality product and selling as many oysters as it can grow and limited only by the time it takes for the oysters to develop (Thompson 2005).

Lobster was by far the most valuable species in Groton, bringing in over \$755,000 in 2006, higher than the ten-year average value for 1997-2006 of close to \$650,000. There were landings in Groton from a number of other species categories, but the value of these was much lower. After lobster, the next most valuable species was summer flounder, followed by species in the “other” category (see Table 1). Generally, the number of vessels listing Groton as their home port declined, from 12 in 1997 to 5 in 2006. In most years there were no federal landings registered for any of these boats, with the exception of 1998 and 2004. The number of vessels with their owner’s city listed as Groton was small compared to home port vessels (see Table 2).

Landings by Species

Table 1. Dollar value by Federally Managed Groups of landings in Groton

	Average from 1997-2006	2006 only
Lobster	659,612	755,145
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	35,783	39,541
Other¹¹	13,032	25,580
Largemesh Groundfish¹²	12,551	4,291
Skate	3,718	0
Bluefish	2,659	4,038
Scallop	2,419	0
Monkfish	513	0
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	346	380
Dogfish	3	30
Smallmesh Groundfish¹³	3	0

Vessels by Year¹⁴

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	12	3	0	928,579
1998	11	3	4,073	1,053,551
1999	9	3	0	811,830
2000	9	4	0	643,407
2001	6	4	0	523,089
2002	9	6	0	680,512
2003	7	4	0	441,666
2004	5	3	26,916	553,357
2005	6	5	0	841,378
2006	5	5	0	829,005

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

Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence¹⁵

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

¹¹ “Other” species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

¹² Largemesh groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

¹³ Smallmesh multi-species: red hake, ocean pout, mixed hake, black whiting, silver hake (whiting)

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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

There are five different charter fishing operations listed for Groton on one website (Mystic Country 2008). The [Connecticut Charter and Party Boat Association](#) represents eighteen boats in the Groton/New London area. Most boats fish inshore for striped bass, bluefish, fluke, sea bass, scup, and blackfish, while some venture offshore for tuna and shark (Connecticut Tourism 2008). The [Hel-Cat II](#) is an open party boat, listing itself as the largest steel-hulled party boat in New England. They offer daytime trips for bluefish and stripers, nighttime trips for bluefish, and winter and spring trips for cod.

Bluff Point Coastal Reserve in Groton offers shore-based saltwater fishing and shellfishing with a permit (CTDEP 2006). Two bait and tackle shops are listed in Groton. From 2001-2005 a total of 6 charter and party boats logged trips in Groton, carrying a total of 33,367 anglers on 964 different trips.

Recreational shellfishing has become quite popular in Groton's waters. Over 2000 permits are sold yearly, the majority to shellfishers outside the town of Groton.

Subsistence

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

FUTURE

Electric Boat, one of Groton's largest employers, has been warning of layoffs because of a decline in submarine construction and maintenance. The company originally predicted they would eliminate between 1,900 and 2,400 jobs from its four locations in 2006, but later reduced that number to between 1,400 and 1,700 jobs (AP 2006). They have already laid off close to 600 employees. Electric Boat employs about 10,800 people, 7,900 of which are in Groton (Connecticut Post 2006). Another 300 jobs will be lost from the area as Pfizer phases out all pharmaceutical manufacturing in Groton by 2008 (Hartford Courant 2006). Discussions are also currently underway to bring a foreign intelligence translation unit to the naval base here (Hamilton 2006).

The aquaculture industry in Groton has been rapidly expanding, particularly with the presence of the Noank co-op. The town of Groton, which owns the hatchery, has a positive attitude towards further developing oyster and clam aquaculture operations.¹⁶

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¹⁶ Profile review comments, Edward G. Martin, Chair of Shellfish Commission, 17 Woodland Drive West, Groton, CT 06340, August 30, 2007

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