

## **Community Profile**

### **Wildwood, NJ**

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#### **Description of Geography and Transportation Access**

The barrier island communities of North Wildwood, Wildwood, and Wildwood Crest called the “Wildwoods” are located in New Jersey’s southernmost county, Cape May on a barrier island called Five Mile Beach. The city of North Wildwood is at the northern most tip bordering Hereford Inlet, followed by Wildwood City, and then the Borough of Wildwood Crest. At the southern boundary of Wildwood Crest is a small section of Lower Township that also contains a Coast Guard facility that borders Cape May Inlet. The eastern boundary is the Atlantic Ocean and the western boundary is the back bay. There is also a small island community called West Wildwood located just west of Wildwood that is accessible via a bridge from Wildwood. You can reach the Wildwoods from the Garden State Parkway (exits 4 and 6), route 47 that connects to Wildwood by means of a bridge, from Ocean Drive via a toll bridge at the southern most tip of the barrier island , and via the route 147 bridge into North Wildwood. From route 147, there is also a toll bridge on Ocean Drive that connects to Stone Harbor crossing Hereford Inlet. A NJ transit bus station is located in Wildwood and the Atlantic City International Airport is located in the next county.

From the Wildwoods, it is approximately 90 miles to Philadelphia, PA and about a 2.5-hour drive to New York City. This shore community is a preferred summer destination for many tourists and recreational fishermen.

#### **History**

The Lenni Lenape or Delaware Indians lived in Cape May County and it has been debated whether they were permanent residents or summer residents that hunted and fished along the shore (Historic Site Maps of Cape May Count, NJ). The Lenni Lenape made two trails through the dense forests of Five Mile Beach. The first trail was a continuation of the mainland King Nummy Trail and entered at the north end of the island and ran south just west of present day New Jersey Ave. The second trail entered at the site of the present day Rio Grande Bridge and met the first trail in the center of the island (S. Cauffman, A Thumbnail History of the Wildwoods.

[www.beachcomber.com/wildwood/chamber/thumb.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/wildwood/chamber/thumb.html)).

Prior to any non-native settlements, Five Mile Beach was used by farmers as a wooded grazing area for cattle and horses. By 1870, there was a small group of fishermen of Danish, Nordic and Swedish decent that were the first non-native settlers and built crude homes on the northern end of Five Mile Beach (Wildwood Historical Society 2002) and called this settlement Anglesea (S. Cauffman, A Thumbnail History of the Wildwoods).

Anglesea was incorporated as a Borough in 1885 (personal communication, City Clerk's office 2004). In 1906, Anglesea was incorporated as the Borough of North Wildwood which was later incorporated as the city of North Wildwood in 1917 (personal communication, City Clerk's office 2004).

Aaron Andrews from Vineland and Joseph Taylor from Philadelphia and Nelson Rober, Latimer Baker, and Robert Young formed the Holly Beach City Improvement Co. in the early 1880s to develop the central section of Five Mile Beach. In 1885, Holly Beach Borough was incorporated ([www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html](http://www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html)). The Baker brothers who were successful merchants from Vineland visited Five Mile Beach and decided that this barrier island also had potential as a resort. In 1895, the Baker brothers formed the Wildwood Beach Improvement Company to develop the tract of land just north of Holly Beach. In 1895, the Borough of Wildwood was incorporated. After establishing the resort community of Wildwood, the Baker brothers expanded to the south of Holly Beach by purchasing land in 1905 and forming Wildwood Crest ([www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html](http://www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html)). The first house in Wildwood Crest was constructed in 1906. In 1910 the area had grown enough and Wildwood Crest was designated a Borough ([www.cresthistory.org/history.html](http://www.cresthistory.org/history.html)). The city of Wildwood was incorporated in 1912 when Holly Beach and Wildwood consolidated ([www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html](http://www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html)). The Borough of West Wildwood was incorporated in 1920 ([www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html](http://www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html)).

The Hereford Inlet Lighthouse was constructed in 1874 ([www.gwcoc.com/website/ginfo2.html](http://www.gwcoc.com/website/ginfo2.html)) in Anglesea. In 1884, the West Jersey Railroad built a line from near Cape May Court House to Anglesea ([www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html](http://www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html)) that no longer operates. Also about this time, a crude log bridge was constructed at the site of present day Rio Grande Ave. This bridge burned and another bridge was built in 1885 and again replaced in 1902 by a bridge that was able to carry vehicular traffic ([www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html](http://www.the-wildwoods.com/history/history.html)).

The seal of Wildwood Crest honors the men who fought in the Revolutionary War aboard the brigantine Nancy at the Battle of Turtle Gut Inlet in 1776 by having a picture of the brigantine on its seal ([www.cresthistory.org/history.html](http://www.cresthistory.org/history.html)). The Battle of Turtle Gut Inlet occurred on June 29, 1776. Turtle Gut Inlet was located near present day Toledo Avenue in Wildwood Crest. The inlet was located between Five Mile Beach and Two Mile Beach. In 1922, Cape May County filled the inlet extending Five Mile Beach an additional two miles ([www.cresthistory.org/history.html](http://www.cresthistory.org/history.html)).

#### Current Port Description:

This section includes port demographic information for Wildwood and Wildwood Crest and where applicable compares the 1990 to 2000 U.S. Census Data.

*Population, Race/Ethnicity, and Education.* Since the 1990 census, Wildwood's population has increased 23.7% to 5,545 people in 2000. The ethnic composition of the city in 2000 was 69.2% White, in comparison to 77.3% white in 1990. Of the non-White

population, 16.3% were Black/African American in 2000 down slightly from 1990 (19.0%). The Hispanic/Latino population was 7.1% in 1990 and has increased to 17.3% in 2000. Educational levels in Wildwood are similar for high school graduates and are different for college graduates from those for Cape May County. College graduate levels were 5% for Wildwood and 15.5 % for Cape May County. One thousand four hundred and ninety-six people (42.4%) were high school graduates living in Wildwood in 2000.

Since the 1990 census, Wildwood Crest's population has increased 9.6% to 3,980 people in 2000. The ethnic composition of the city in 2000 was almost entirely White, 94.9% and 98.6% in 1990. Educational levels are comparable to those for Cape May County as a whole. Eight hundred and ninety-five people (30.3%) were high school graduates and 518 (17.5%) were college graduates in 2000.

*Housing.* Both Wildwood and Wildwood Crest are predominantly summer "shore" communities. In 2000, there were 6,488 housing units in Wildwood, 64.0% of which were vacant. Of the vacant housing units, 79.5% were seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Wildwood had 2,396 households in 2000; 341 (14.2%) of these households were single or female head of households. In 2000, the median house value for specified owner occupied units was \$84,000.

Wildwood Crest had 4,862 housing units in 2000, 62.3% of which were vacant. Of the vacant housing units, 56.8% were seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. In 2000, Wildwood Crest had 1,762 households with 11.5% of these households containing single or female head of households.

*Employment and Income.* The 2000 per capita income in Wildwood was \$23,741. In 1999, there were 1,448 (26.4%) people below the poverty level whereas in 1990 there were 1,210 (27.0%) people. In 2000, there were 2,644 people in the Civilian Labor Force, and 9.0% of the people unemployed. There was a 62.8% change in unemployment since 1990. No one listed employment in agriculture, forestry and fisheries in 2000. The arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services category was the top employer, accounting for 21.0% (N=436) of the residents; education, health, and the social services category was second with 14.3% (N=298); and the retail trade was third with 14.2% (N=295).

For Wildwood Crest, the 2000 per capita income was \$18,870. A total of 231 (5.8%) people were below the poverty level in 1999 and 266 (7.3%) in 1990. In 2000, there were 1,908 people in the Civilian Labor Force, and 9.0% of the people unemployed. There was a 75% change in unemployment since 1990. No one listed employment in agriculture, forestry and fisheries in 2000. The retail trade category was the top employer, accounting for 22.1% (N=319) of the residents; second was the finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing category, accounting for 16.9% (N=153) of the residents; and third was the education, health, and social services category, accounting for 13.9% (N=147) of the residents.

### Ethnographic Description of the Port:

As with many shore communities, North Wildwood, Wildwood, West Wildwood, and Wildwood Crest are places where much of the local activities and development efforts are centered on the ocean and back bays and tourist related businesses. These ports cater to tourists who come to take advantage of the beaches, the ocean and bay, restaurants, retail shops, bars, and rental homes and motels. In contrast to most municipal ocean beaches, the beaches of the Wildwoods are free to use by tourists. Driving through the Wildwoods, it is evident that large multi-story two family structures and condominiums are being built to replace the one or two story small summer cottages of the past and are filling the remaining open spaces.

The major thoroughfares that run north and south starting from the ocean and moving west are: Atlantic, Pacific, and New Jersey Avenues. The bridge that connects West Wildwood to Wildwood is located on Glenwood Ave. The first four streets in Wildwood Crest are located in the northern end and named after flowers (Morning Glory, Buttercup, Lavender, and Heather Roads) ([www.cresthistory.org/history.html](http://www.cresthistory.org/history.html)). For these communities, city hall is located on Atlantic Ave. in North Wildwood, New Jersey Ave. in Wildwood, Pacific Ave. in Wildwood Crest, and Glenwood Ave. in West Wildwood. There are many churches, banks, physicians' and dentist's offices as well as other small businesses located throughout the Wildwoods. All of the communities have public elementary schools with a regional high school located in Wildwood. A catholic elementary school is located in Wildwood and the catholic high school is located in North Wildwood.

“The tiny quaint fishing village has grown into a beautiful and exciting island resort, still beckoning visitors to return each summer to fish, relax, and cool off on their beaches. North Wildwood has long enjoyed the reputation of being one of the finest beach resorts along the New Jersey coast” ([www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/Tourism/tournw.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/Tourism/tournw.html)). In 1994, North Wildwood initiated a tram service to carry beach goers from the street to the shoreline. The Hereford Inlet Lighthouse and the Marine Police Station, located in North Wildwood, are two sites listed on the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail ([www.gwcoc.com/website/ginfo2.html](http://www.gwcoc.com/website/ginfo2.html)).

The City of Wildwood is “famous for its free, wide, white, sandy beaches and world class boardwalk” ([www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/Tourism/tourw.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/Tourism/tourw.html)) that was built at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is more than a mile and a half long. Lining the wooden boardwalk are four amusement piers, movie theater, hundreds of souvenir and novelty shops, and a variety of restaurants, ethnic food stands, and salt water taffy shops. Some activities that occur in Wildwood City are beach concerts, Hobie Cat races, kite festivals, national marble tournaments, life guard races, wrestling matches, and beauty pageants as well as other activities ([www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html)). Wildwood is known for its many nightclubs. Wildwood also has an historical museum located in the center of town that contains nautical information including commercial and recreational fisheries as well as other historical information about the Wildwoods. A new

state-of-the-art facility convention center was completed in 2002  
(/www.wildwoodsnj.com/cc).

Wildwood Crest “has long been known for its peaceful family-oriented atmosphere” ([www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html)). There are three miles of beach in Wildwood Crest. Bordering the west side of Wildwood Crest is a back bay known as “Sunset Lake” that is used for various boating activities and is famous for its sunsets. Family oriented activities occur at the Crest Pier, in Wildwood Crest, such as basketball games, teen and adult dances, craft shows, and concerts occur throughout the year. During the summer, free concerts occur at the gazebo on Rambler Road at the beach ([www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html)). A historical museum is located at the Crest pier.

There is a Tourism Information Center that covers North Wildwood, Wildwood, and Wildwood Crest located at the base of the route 47 bridge before it crosses the channel to Wildwood. Each municipality has its own police and fire department, and Chamber of Commerce.

Located within the Wildwoods are many hotels and motels with the majority located near the ocean, several bed and breakfasts, condos, town houses, and many private homes that are available for summer and winter rentals as well as many Real Estate offices. There are many restaurants ranging from delicatessens and pizzerias to seafood restaurants.

There are several yacht clubs and marinas in the Wildwoods, as well as public boat ramps located in Wildwood, North Wildwood, and Wildwood Crest. Party and charter boats dock in the back bay area and fish in the ocean and bays for such species as tunas, billfish, striped bass, bluefish, black sea bass, tautog, croaker, weakfish, and summer flounder.

### **Presence of Fisheries Related Businesses**

This is a check list of fisheries related businesses located in the Wildwoods developed by the researchers touring the area and asking local businesses.

1. Air fill stations (diving)
2. Bars/clubs (dockside or in town)
3. Cold storage for bait, catch
4. Diesel fuel
5. Docking facilities (commercial)
6. Fishing associations
7. Fishing pier
8. Lawyers (admiralty and others working with fisheries)
9. Marine boating suppliers
10. Museums—fishing/marine-related
11. Public boat launches

12. Recreational docks/marinas
13. Recreational bait/fishing supplies
14. Seafood restaurants
15. Seafood retail markets
16. Whale watching/pleasure tours

#### Gentrification/Development.

Researchers used a list of indicators of gentrification to determine whether certain kinds of changes were occurring in the community. Gentrification of the waterfront is taking place in the Wildwoods. Many condos, townhouses, and other homes have been built next to the commercial and for-hire fishing docks displacing the fishing docks. In Wildwood Crest, parking lots used by the recreational for-hire sector have been sold; displacing vehicles to other parking sites. Condominiums are being built on some of the parking lots. Two properties in Wildwood Crest with docks that were used by party boat operators have been sold and one of these properties has a house under construction. Over the years, Ottens Harbor has become more gentrified with more residential homes located along the Harbor as well as many recreational boats.

As in the previous section, a list of indicators was developed by the researchers driving through the community. The following is a list of those indicators found in the Wildwoods.

1. Visitors bureau
2. Marinas
3. Upscale housing (condominiums, townhouses or residential development close to waterfront)
4. Recreational bait/tackle shops
5. Fish/Seafood retailers
6. Fishing excursion vessels
7. Trendy retail shops (Gourmet and/or organic food shops, coffee houses, boutiques, brew pubs, cigar bars, art studios and galleries)
8. Recreational boat tours (including whale watching)
9. Seaside restaurants
10. Recreational boat dealers
11. Hotels/Inns dockside
12. Maritime museums
13. Franchise restaurants, grocery stores, bookstores
14. Resorts (spas, hotels, etc.)
15. Public beautification – flowers, street lighting, parks etc., trash receptacles

As quoted on the Cape May County Department of Tourism website for Wildwood “the back-bay area hosts hundreds of private, charter, and party boats for daily bay and deep sea fishing excursions, sight seeing and whale watching trips as well as sailing, jet skiing and motor boating are available from most Wildwood docks”

([www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/tourism/tourw.html)) and for North Wildwood “the

tiny quaint fishing village has grown into a beautiful and exciting island resort, still beckoning visitors to return each summer to fish, relax, and cool off on their beaches” ([www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/Tourism/tournw.html](http://www.beachcomber.com/Capemay/Tourism/tournw.html)). As well as the Cape May County Department of tourism, the local Chamber of Commerce in each municipality and other tourism sites are very active in promoting tourism, recreational fishing, and other businesses in the community. However, there is no mention of the commercial fishing industry on their web pages, except for a brief notation of its past importance.

## **Dependency and Engagement in the Fisheries**

### History and Current Description of Fishing

The Wildwoods have a long history of commercial and recreational fishing. As noted earlier, the first municipality in the Wildwoods was a commercial fishing village. This port has multigenerational families participating in both the commercial and recreational fishing industries. There has been both growth and decline in the commercial and recreational fishing industries in this community in terms of numbers of participants over the years and changes in methods and species targeted by the commercial and recreational fishing industries.

### Commercial Fishing

The pound net fishery operated in South Jersey from 1930 to 1960 (Cape May Star & wave 1997). One company that operated a pound net fishery was the Union Fish Company out of Ottens Harbor (personnel communication with Wildwood Historical Society 2004). The Hereford Company also operated a pound net fishery out of Anglesea (present day North Wildwood) (personnel communication with Wildwood Historical Society 2004). The pound net boats were 40 feet long, numbered and without a name, divided down the length of the boat were lidless bins to hold the day’s catch, and each boat had a crew of seven (Cape May Star & wave 1997). To lay the traps, hickory pilings were used. These pilings were obtained from North and South Carolina and shipped via freight train to Cold Spring or Wildwood Harbor (Cape May Star & wave 1997). The catch would consist of bluefish, weakfish, sea bass, flounder, croaker, butterfish, and others and were packed in barrels with ice and shipped “far and wide” and could be as high as 200 barrels per day (Cape May Star & wave 1997). “As the years progressed larger interests, put the gamey pounder out of business and commercial fishing companies with huge nets, of the US, from Sweden, Russia, Norway, and others” were fishing the Atlantic Ocean (Cape May Star & wave 1997). Smaller fishing boats brought their catch to larger boats with larger capacities to hold fish. The owners of 40-foot boats could not compete with these larger vessels. “Today the commercial fisherman in these waters just about exist” (Cape May Star & Wave 1997).

At present, the commercial fishing industry in the Port of Wildwood is very concentrated and located at one site in Wildwood along Ottens Harbor and several commercial fishing vessels are located along the eastbound side of route 47 in Lower Township just west of

the route 47 bridge into Wildwood. A few commercial vessels also dock on the westbound side of route 47 just west of the route 47 bridge. Using the Port of Wildwood are otter trawlers, both resident and non-resident that target various finfish species and resident potters that target finfish and shellfish, pelagic longliners, gill netters, scallopers, and surfclam/ocean quahog dredgers. There is also a clam processing plant and two fish dealers. Along Ottens Harbor are several fishing-related businesses including fish docks, a marine service company, and a seafood business with a dock and ice and bait house.

In 2001, according to NMFS VTR reports, a total of three vessels fished from the Port of Wildwood and took 55 trips (Table 1). However, researchers have identified 14 commercial fishing vessels. In 2001, the commercial fishing vessels, in the NMFS database, averaged 102 feet in length, 108 gross tons and 1058 horsepower engine, and the mean year built was 1981 for those vessels that designate Wildwood as their principal port. The mean crew size was 4 and these vessels averaged 21 trips in 2001.

From the NMFS weighout data, the primary gear type, from 1994-2001 in the port, was dredges for surfclams and ocean quahogs. This gear type accounted for 93% of the landings in 2001 (Table 2). In past years, the otter trawl fishery was also important (i.e. in 1994 accounted for 17% of the landings), but in 2001 this fishery only accounted for 1% of the landings. Scallop dredges comprised 4% of the landings in 2001. Of minor importance in 2001 were gillnets, pelagic longlines, and pots (Table 2). No landings of lobsters were reported caught in lobster pot gear in 2001 and 1994 in the Port. However, small amounts of lobsters have been landed with pots from 1995 through 2000 (range 0.002 to 2%) (Table 2).

Figure 1 shows the recent history, from 1997-2001, of the top five species caught by weight in the port. For every year, ocean quahogs and surfclams (OQ) were the top species landed by weight. Other top species included Atlantic croaker, scup, black sea bass, striped bass<sup>1</sup> and weakfish (FF), blue crab, horseshoe crab, panaeid shrimp, quahog, conchs, channeled whelk and oysters (SHF), scallops (SCL), and bluefish, butterfly, king mackerel and menhaden (PEL). Winter flounder, witch flounder, yellowtail flounder American plaice, sand dabs and other flounders, (FLN) consistently comprised the highest value of total landings in Wildwood ranging from a high of about 88% in 1999 to a low of 79% in 2001. Other top value species were swordfish (SWD), summer flounder (FLK), pelagics (PEL), and tunas (TUN) (Figure 2).

The total value of landed fish ranged from \$3,492,862 in 1998 to \$5,978,005 in 1997. For total pounds landed, more pounds of fish were landed in 1996 (9,318,322) and the least pounds of fish were landed in 1998 (6,193,378) (Figure 3).

The surfclam/ocean quahog fishery is the largest in the port. In the surfclam/ocean quahog industry, the majority of employees (boats, docks, and processing plant) commute

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<sup>1</sup> Striped bass is a game fish in New Jersey and cannot be landed or sold by commercial fishermen in the state.

from other places to work in Wildwood according to owners of those firms (McCay et al 2002). One firm employs about 20 people and has five boats (The Press of Atlantic City 2004). An informant in the surfclam/ocean quahog business was concerned about the environmentalists and sees them as big business preying on the little guys. His boats fish within a 60-mile radius of Wildwood for ocean quahogs and surfclams (interview from surfclam/ocean quahog project 2001). One local clam dredge captain noted that today's young people (18-20 year olds) could easily achieve what he has achieved in the fishing industry if they are disciplined. However, the majority of the 18-20 year olds he works with are not disciplined, but these individuals do have potential (interview from the surfclam/ocean quahog project 2001).

Just recently, surfclams have begun to die off along the coastal waters of New Jersey and south along the DELMARVA Peninsula. This die-off may be related to warmer ocean temperatures forcing the clams to move further offshore of New Jersey. This is having a negative impact upon the industry located in Wildwood because the number of bushels caught per hour is down and expenses are up with higher fuel costs and higher steel costs for the dredges (The Press of Atlantic City 2004). In addition, the State of New Jersey has reduced their surfclam quota in state waters for the past three years (The Press of Atlantic City 2004). As a result, clambers may be forced to work further offshore of New Jersey and on grounds further north which will add extra expenses.

### Seasonal Round

The seasonal movements depend on a host of factors including gear types, fish behavior, weather, and infrastructure. For example, the longline fishery that operates from this port primarily targets large pelagics such as tunas and swordfish when these species are available to the fishery during warmer months.

In terms of the seasonal pattern of employment, commercial fishermen can find year-round employment, but it is difficult to find crew in some fisheries. A local clam dredge captain noted that there is less difficulty in finding and retaining crew in the surfclam/ocean quahog fishery compared to most other fisheries. He indicated that this might be due to making day trips and still earning enough for a decent living. There is another fishery that also does better in finding crew than most fisheries and that is the scallop fishery, because of the large amount of money the crew gets from their trips (interview from the surfclam/ocean quahog project 2001).

### Recreational Fishing

The Wildwoods is an important recreational fishing area with a long history of involvement in this sport. It is strategically located along both the back bays and the oceanfront. This port has charter boats, party boats (head boats), and rental boats as well as shore-based anglers and crabbers. Several marinas, public boat launching facilities and private docks are located in each community. Local tackle and bait shops are present as well as lodging, restaurants, and grocery stores that fishermen can use.

NMFS VTR Data for 2001 only lists two recreational party/charter vessels operating from the ports of Wildwood and Wildwood Crest. However, there are many more charter/party boats located here. These vessels are spread throughout the Wildwoods. The average boat length of a charter boat was 30 feet and of a party boat was 60 feet. For the party boat, the average crew size was two, the average number of anglers was 17, and the vessel averaged 42 trips. For the charter boat, the crew size was 1 and the average number of anglers was five, and the vessel averaged 30 trips.

The species of fish targeted by charter/party boats, private boats, and shore anglers varies by season and is often linked to the migratory patterns of these fishes. Some key species for the port are striped bass, tuna, summer flounder, weakfish, bluefish, black sea bass, and mackerel. For the past several years, during warm winters the for-hire vessels and some private vessels have been taking winter trips for striped bass. Head boats take full day, 3/4 day, or 1/2 day fishing trips. Charter vessels usually book full or 1/2 day trips. Several of the head boats also provide eco-tourism cruises. All of these categories of fishermen can fish in both the ocean and back bays.

Beach buggy passes are issued, by each municipality, to surf anglers who want to take their vehicles on the local beaches after the tourist season to fish. There are many fishing tournaments, both inshore and offshore, that take place in the Wildwoods.

### **Vulnerability in the Fisheries**

#### Recreational and Commercial Fishermen's Response to Management

Many fishermen indicate that regulations are a serious challenge to the future of commercial fishing in this port as well as in other ports. Regulations have forced many commercial fishermen to fish further offshore than in the past for lobsters and other species. In addition, some of these fishermen have diversified to other species to supplement their incomes. Today's headboat owners in the port say it is difficult to make a living because of the cost of liability insurance and current fishing regulations (Interview with Wildwood Crest Historical Society 2004).

#### Local Community Impacts

Over the years, the number of commercial and recreational fisheries related businesses have declined in the harbor (personal communication, Wildwood Crest Historical Society 2004). Also, the number of commercial fishing boats and party boats have dwindled in the port over the years. Just recently, a few waterfront properties with docks that were used by party boats were sold and homes are either under construction or have been built on the properties. Parking lots used by the recreational for-hire sector have also been sold and condominiums are being built or have been built on the properties.

#### Fishing/Community Relations

In contrast to the commercial fishing industry, the recreational fishing industry is strongly promoted by the various tourism groups within the communities as well as within Cape May County.

Members of both the commercial and recreational fishing industry are concerned about the increasing property values and development of residential structures that are forcing local fisheries related businesses to close.

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Table 1: Port Activity by Commercial Boat Principal Port Landing in Wildwood, NJ, 2001

Boat's Principal Port	Number of Boats	Number of Trips	Average Number of Trips per Boat	Average Boat Length
Cape May, NJ	3	9	3	43
Wildwood, NJ	3	55	18	106
<b>Total</b>	6	64	64/6=11	64

Data source: VTR

Table 2: Port Activity by Species Landed, % Pounds and % Value, Wildwood, NJ, 1994-2001. Data source: Weighout

Negear	Gearcode	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998		1999		2000		2001	
		% pound	% value	% pound	% value	% pound	% value	% pound	% value	% pound	% value	% pound	% value	% pound	% value	% pound	% value
020	HND	0.01	0.01	0.1	0.04	0.1	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.1	0.1	0.02	0.01	0	0	0.04	0.2
040	LLP	0	0	1	3	0.2	1	0.5	2	1	4	1	4	1	5	0.3	2
050	OTF	17	14	19	12	15	11	7	6	7	9	2	5	1	2	1	1
052	OTC	0	0	0.04	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
061		0	0	0.01	0.01	0	0	0.001	0.0002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
100	GNS	0	0	0	0	0.01	0.01	0.3	0.3	1	0.4	1	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1
110	GNT	0	0	0.2	0.1	0	0	1	0.4	2	1	1	1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2
112		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1
132	DRS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	20
181	PTF	1	1	0.4	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	3	1	1	0.04	0.1
183	PTW	0	0	0.005	0.01	0.5	2	1	4	1	2	0.3	1	0.4	2	0.4	1
200	PTL	0	0	0.1	0.4	0.01	0.1	0.3	2	1	2	0.01	0.1	0.002	0.02	0	0
381	DRO	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
383		0.2	0.2	1	1	1	1	0.3	0.3	0.4	1	0.2	0.2	0.01	0.01	0.2	0.1
400	DRC	82	83	79	83	82	83	88	83	86	79	94	87	95	89	93	75
999	OTH, MIX	0.2	1	0	0	0.004	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 1: Top 5 Species According to Weight (Pounds) Landed, Wildwood, NJ, 1994-2001. Data source: Weighout Data.

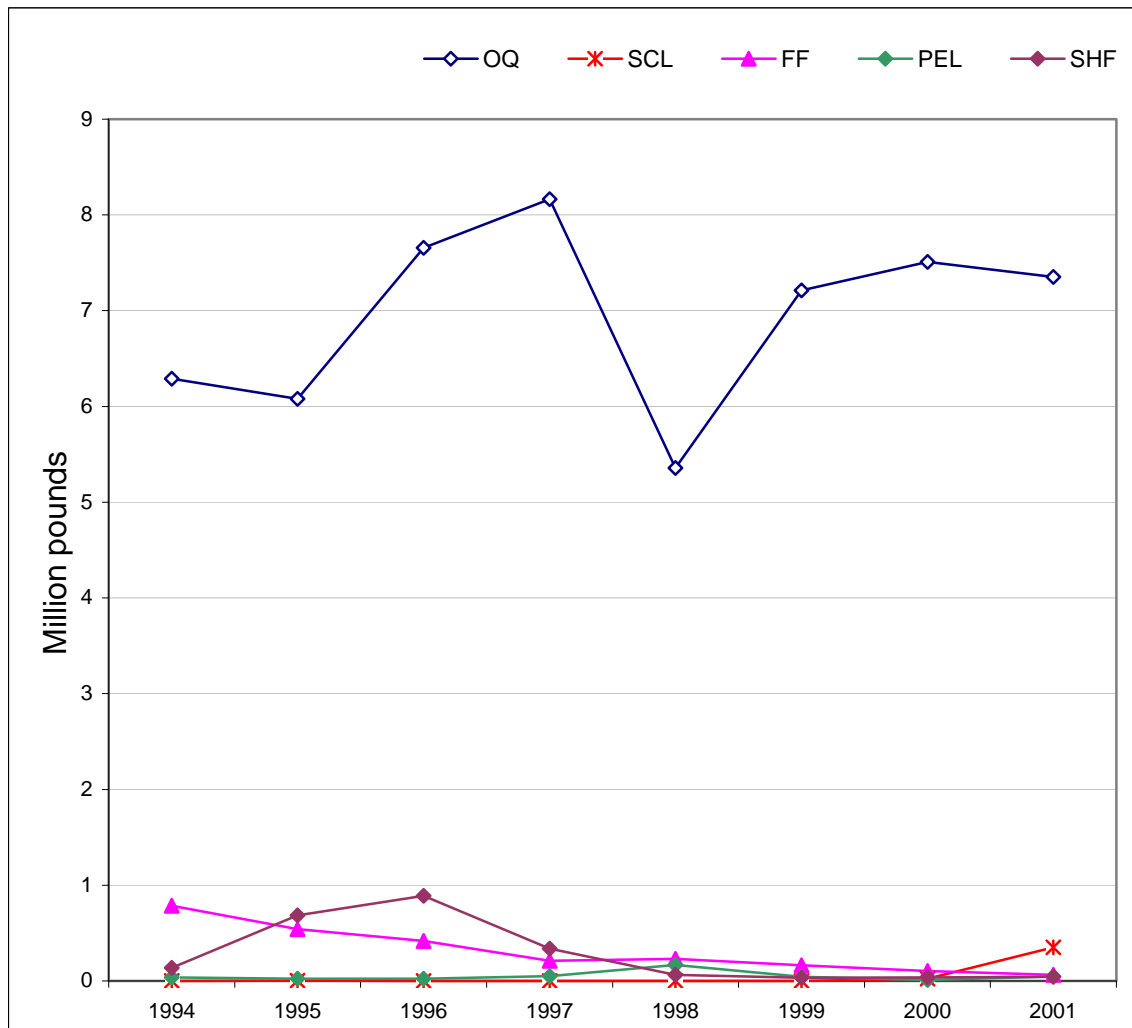


Figure 2. Top 5 species according to % Value Landed, Wildwood, NJ, 1994-2001. Data source: Weighout.

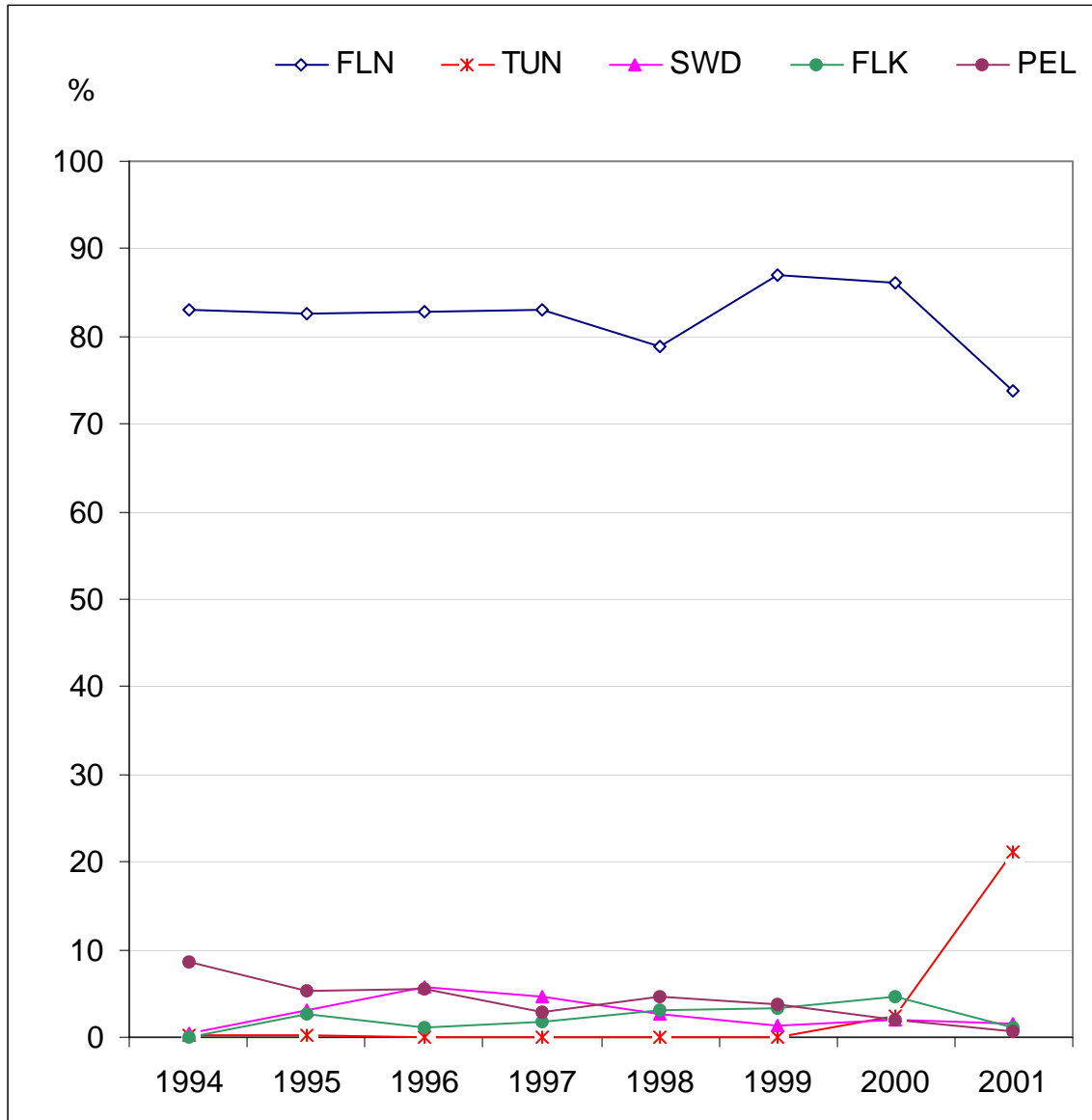


Figure 3 : Total Value and Pounds Landed at Wildwood, NJ, 1994-2001  
 Data source: Weighout data

