

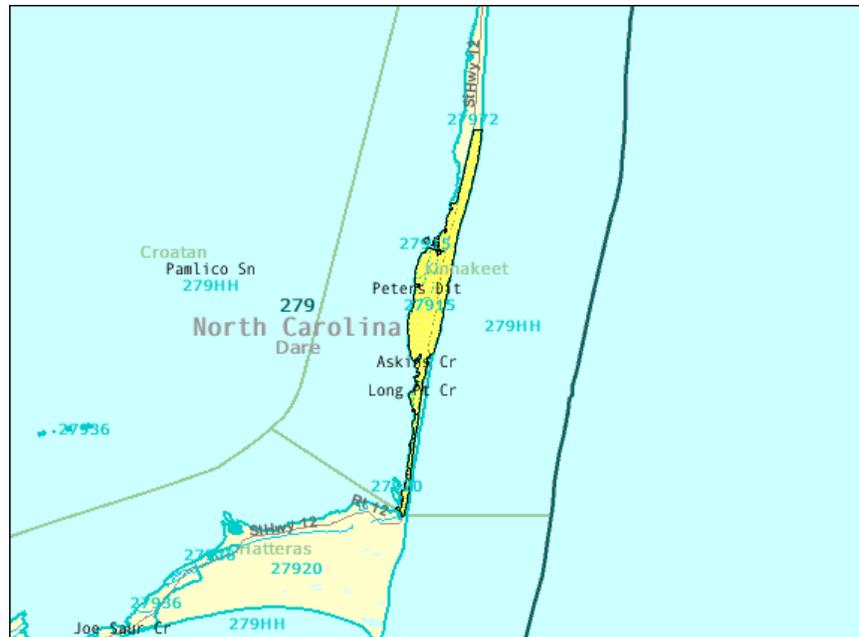
AVON, NC¹

Community Profile²

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Regional orientation

Avon, North Carolina is located in Dare County on a barrier island known as Hatteras Island, which is part of the Outer Banks. Avon is Hatteras Island's central village. It is located 30 miles south of Oregon inlet and 20 miles north of Hatteras inlet (USGS 2008). Avon and all villages on Hatteras Island are bounded by Cape Hatteras National Recreational Seashore.³



Map 1. Location of Avon, NC (US Census Bureau 2000)

Historical/Background

Avon's original name was Kinnakeet; a Native American name. In 1883 the post office arrived in the town and assigned the name Avon because it is easier to pronounce. This small fishing village on the Outer Banks is home to the Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station, which is used to help aid crews in the dangerous waters. Little Kinnakeet was one of ten life saving stations.⁴ Many people from the area still refer to themselves as Kinnakeeters. Kinakeeters were skilled fishermen and shipbuilders (Outerbeaches.com). There were vast maritime forests before 1888. Timber harvest for ship building depleted much of the forests causing the dunes to recede inwards. Prior to 1950 the road ended at Whalebone Junction in Nags Head, NC and

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."

³ Community review comments by Frank Folb, Northeast Regional Advisory Committee, DMF (August 20, 2007)

⁴ Community review comments by Frank Folb, Northeast Regional Advisory Committee, DMF (August 20, 2007)

travel from there to Oregon Inlet (8 miles) and on the island was either to traverse the beach or sand rut roads. The ferry system at Oregon Inlet was operated privately with a seven car or nine car ferries. In 1952, the road on Hatteras Island was completed and the state took over operating the ferry system, making travel much easier. Hatteras Island was accessible only by ferry until 1962 when the Bonner Bridge was complete.⁵

Dune management is now an ongoing project (Hatteras Island NC 2006). Avon has the island's only shopping mall with a chain supermarket⁶ so many visitors to Hatteras Island find themselves in Avon at some point during their trip. Avon is also known worldwide as a destination for windsurfing and kite-boarding (Outerbeaches.com).

Demographics⁷

According to Census 2000 data (US Census Bureau 2000a), Avon, North Carolina had a total population of 786 (1990 information is unavailable) (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this total in 2000, 52.2% were female and 47.8% were male. The median age was 43.1 years and 81.9% of the population was 21 years or older while 21.0% were 62 or older.

Avon's population structure in 2000 (Figure 1) differed from that of many other fishing communities in that there was an increase in the number of residents in the 20-29 age group. The majority of residents were aged 20-69, with few children. Men greatly outnumbered women in the 20-29, 30-39, and 50-59 age groups, while women outnumbered men for the 40-49 grouping.

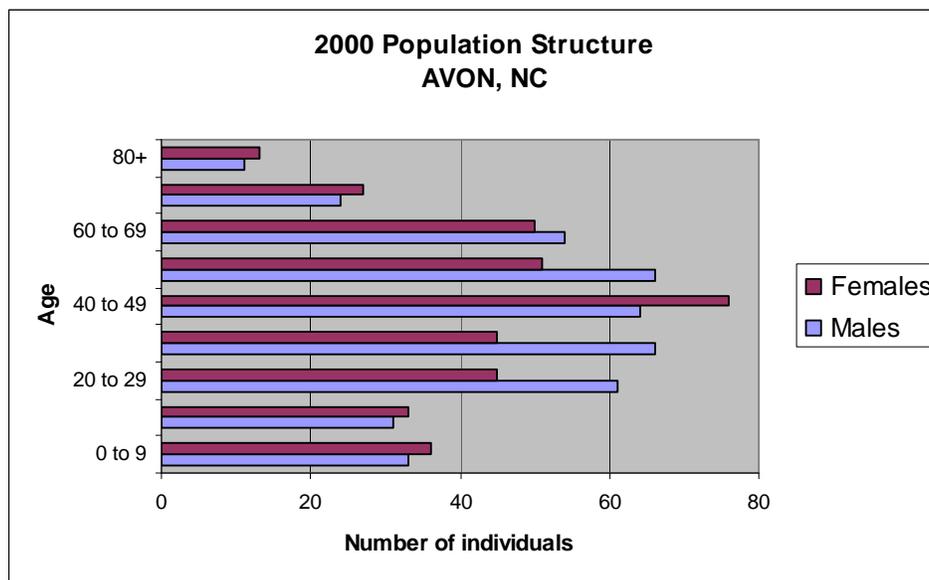


Figure 1. Avon's population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

⁵ Community review comments, Frank Folb, Northeast Regional Advisory Committee, NC Division of Marine Fisheries, 3441 Arendell Street, Morehead City, NC 28557, August 20, 2007

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⁷ 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.

The majority of the population of Avon was white (97.8%), with 0.3% of residents Black or African American, 1.3% Asian, 0.5% Native American, and 0.1% Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 0.5% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents linked their heritage to a number of different ancestries including: English (19.7%), German (15.0%), Irish (12.5%), and “other ancestries” (23.4%). With regard to region of birth, 40.7% were born in North Carolina, 56.7% were born in a different state and none were born outside of the United States.

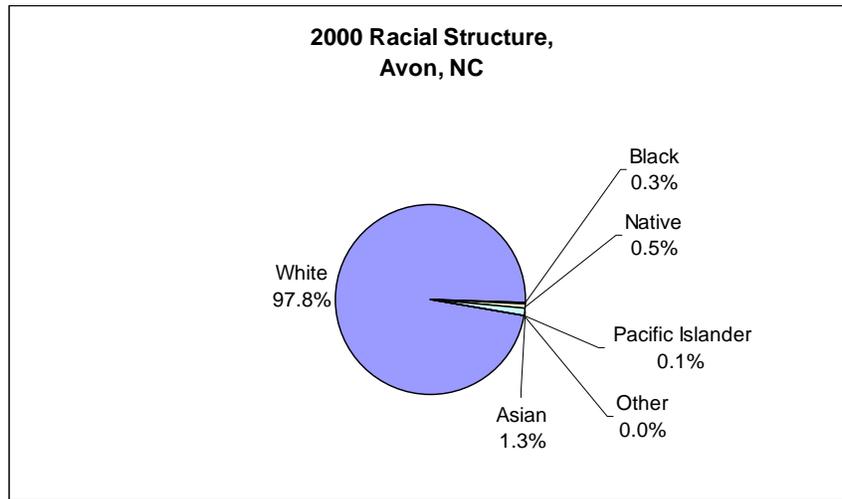


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

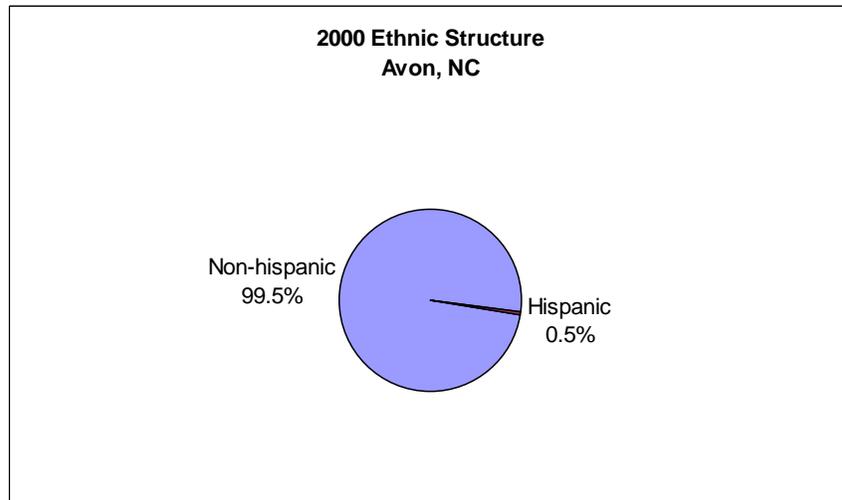


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 96.9% of the population 5 years old and higher, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 3.1% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 1.2% of the population who spoke English less than “very well.”

Of the population 25 years and over, 87.2% were high school graduates or higher and 26.6% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 5.9% did not reach ninth grade, 6.9% attended some high school but did not graduate, 28.1% completed

high school, 27.9% had some college with no degree, 4.7% received an associate's degree, 14.8% earned a bachelor's degree, and 11.7% received either a graduate or professional degree.

Although religious percentages are not available through the U.S. Census, according to the American Religion Data Archive (ARDA) in 2000 the religion with the highest number of congregations and adherents in Dare County was the United Methodist Church with 14 congregations and 4,686 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were Catholic (4 with 2,097), the Southern Baptist Convention (6 with 1,783), and the Assemblies of God (8 with 1,184 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 36.4% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

Issues/Processes

The destruction from Hurricane Isabel in 2003 intensified a debate over rebuilding and developing the coast. Critics contend that rebuilding and developing alters the natural erosion and growth of the islands, though this is viewed as an extreme view and not necessarily expressed by many Avon residents⁸. Almost half of the Outer Bank's 30,000 residents have full-time jobs directly related to tourism, making development an important issue for many (Business NC 2004). The Bonner Bridge Replacement issue is controversial for Avon residents, as is off-road vehicle management within Cape Hatteras Recreational Seashore.⁹

Shrimp fishermen along the North Carolina coast have suffered because of decreasing prices of shrimp, resulting from an increase of foreign farmed shrimp on the market. North Carolina shrimp fishermen are working to promote their wild-caught shrimp to create a niche market and higher prices for their product (NCSG 2005). The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries was discussing minimum size limits for the shrimp that could be taken by trawlers, noting that foreign imports have cornered the market on small shrimp (Smith 2005).

Cultural attributes

The Cape Hatteras Lighthouse is in Buxton, NC, about six miles south of Avon. The Lighthouse is a famous attraction and is operated by the National Park System.¹⁰ It is 120 feet tall, the tallest in the United States. Photographers, artists and tourists come from all over to see the light house.

There has been a Red Drum fishing tournament in Avon for the past 20 years and is held annually during the last week of October.¹¹ It is an individual contest and prizes are given out for those who catch Red Drum, Sea Mullet, Striped Bass and Blue Fish. Over \$10,000 in prizes are given out (NC Dept of Environment and Natural Resources 2006). [Avon Pier](#) is a well known fishing pier where tournaments are often held, particularly two small tournaments per year.¹²

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INFRASTRUCTURE

Current Economy

A large part of Avon's economy consists of tourism, including many of the recreational opportunities offered here. House rentals also play a large part in the local economy (Business NC 2005). The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries estimates that there are 600 people in Dare County employed full time in fishing professions, the second-highest of any county in North Carolina. Fishermen in Dare County have a higher average income than the average annual income for all workers (Bianchi 2003).

According to the U.S. Census 2000¹³, 73.4% (492 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 4.0% were unemployed, 1.3% were in the Armed Forces, and 68.1% were employed.

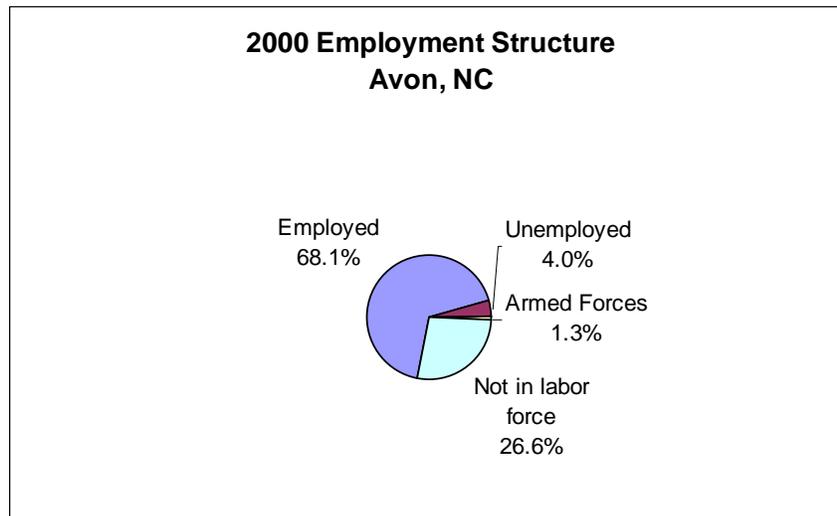


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 17 positions or 3.7% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 102 positions or 22.4% of jobs. Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing (22.0%), construction (13.2%), retail trade (12.7%) and arts, recreation, entertainment, accommodation and food services (12.7%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Avon was \$33,929 (1990 data was unavailable) and per capita income was \$23,970. For full-time year-round workers, males made approximately 14.0% more per year than females.

The average family in Avon consisted of 2.72 persons. With respect to poverty, 11.1% of families (1990 information unavailable) and 12.9 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, 53.3% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

¹³ 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.

In 2000, Avon had a total of 1,333 housing units, of which 27.2% were occupied and 86.9% were detached one-unit homes. Less than three percent (2.9%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes accounted for 6.2% of the total housing units; 96.1% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$127,200. Of vacant housing units, 98.2% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, while of occupied units 24.3% were renter occupied.

Government

Avon is located in Dare County. Dare County is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners, elected at large in countywide elections to serve four-year staggered terms (Dare County 2006).

Fishery involvement in government

Avon is a part of the [North East Regional Advisory Committee](#) which is a part of the [Division of Marine Fisheries](#). Occasional meetings are held in Avon at the Fire House to discuss primarily commercial fishing in the state.

Institutional

Fishing associations

Hatteras Island and its townships are part of a Bill Fish Fishery Association. The association is trying to manage Bill Fish through management plans (National Marine Fisheries Service). [The North Carolina Fisheries Association](#) has been supporting fishing families since 1952, with the goal “to celebrate and preserve commercial fishing families, heritage, and seafood” in North Carolina. This is achieved through lobbying federal, state, and local legislators and through public awareness projects.

Fishery assistance centers

[The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers](#) (TAA) program has provided business education to shrimpers in the state to assist them in recent changes in the market of shrimp, and also provided some training to shrimpers to exit the business if they chose.

Other fishing related organizations

[The Coastal Conservation Association](#) is a recreational conservation advocacy and lobby group that supports controls to maintain fish stocks in North Carolina.

Physical

Avon is one of 7 towns on a barrier island known as Hatteras Island, part of the Outer Banks. The Outer Banks is a series of barrier islands that meander along 120 miles of coastline between Corolla and Ocracoke (Northcarolinavacation.com). Avon is 10.5 miles from Frisco, 31 miles from Ocracoke, 49 miles from Kill Devil Hills, and 248 miles from Raleigh by car. Frisco, NC has an airstrip 12 miles south of Avon on the island. Manteo is the closest small airport located 50 miles north of Avon. Norfolk, VA International Airport is the closest major airport located 120 miles north of Avon.¹⁴ Highway 12 runs along the barrier islands (Mapquest nd).

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There is also a ferry from Hatteras to neighboring Ocracoke Island. Avon has a small [boat ramp](#) giving access to Pamlico Sound.

INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES¹⁵

Commercial

Many local people in Avon still earn their living by commercial fishing. The majority of fishing in Dare County is done by gill net, followed by pots and trawls (Bianchi 2003). A number of fishermen from Hatteras sell their catch to Avon Seafood on the harbor in Avon Village. In 2005 there were a total of 27 fishermen who sold their catch here (West 2005). Stoney's Seafood, a previous local retailer, has been replaced by two retail seafood markets – Risky Business Seafood and Surf's Up Seafood.¹⁶

The most valuable landings grouping in Avon was by far the “other” species grouping, followed by bluefish and summer flounder, scup, black sea bass (Table 1).

Between the years 1997-2006, there were at most two vessels listing Avon as their home port, but community feedback on this profile indicates there are many more boats that hail from Avon.¹⁷ As a result, in most years the landings value for home ported vessels was zero (Table 2). However, there were landings recorded in Avon in every year, meaning these vessels are landing their catch in Avon from elsewhere. The value of landings was highly variable, from a high in 1997 to a low in 2001.

¹⁵ 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.

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Landings by Species

Table 1. Rank Value of Landings for Federally Managed Groups

Species	Rank Value of Average Landings from 1997-2006
Other ¹⁸	1
Bluefish	2
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	3
Dogfish	4
Tilefish	5
Monkfish	6
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	7
Smallmesh Groundfish ¹⁹	8
Skate	9
Largemesh Groundfish ²⁰	10

(Note: Only rank value is provided because value information is confidential in ports with fewer than three vessels or fewer than three dealers, or where one dealer predominates in a particular species and would therefore be identifiable.)

Vessels by Year²¹

Table 2. Federal Vessel Permits Between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)
1997	0	0
1998	0	0
1999	1	0
2000	2	1
2001	2	1
2002	2	1
2003	1	1
2004	1	1
2005	1	1
2006	1	1

(Note: # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport, # Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence²²)

Recreational

Avon Pier allows visitors to purchase a daily fishing pass, and sells bait and tackle as well as fishing gear. The pier sponsors weekly fishing tournaments throughout the summer (Insiders.com 2006). The fish commonly caught here are spot, croaker, flounder, gray trout, speckled trout, pampano, spanish mackerel, bluefish, striped bass, red drum, king mackerel, and cobia (Insiders.com 2006). The Outer Banks is also known as the “Blue Marlin Capital of the World (Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce 2006).” There is at least one [charter fishing business](#) in Avon. [Frank and Fran's](#) is a local family-owned tackle shop in Avon.

¹⁸ “Other” species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

¹⁹ Smallmesh Multi-species : red hake, ocean pout, mixed hake, black whiting, silver hake (whiting)

²⁰ Largemesh Groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

²¹ 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.

²² 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.

Subsistence

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

FUTURE

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

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