

C. POPULATION

A comprehensive plan needs to provide for a proper relationship between the town's future population and its environment. Accordingly, most phases of the plan are either dependent upon, or strongly influenced by, the size and composition of the town's future population. This section examines past, current and projected population for Cooper.

MIGRATION ANALYSIS

According to Census data Cooper's population increased by 21 persons during the last decade of the millennium. This increase can be attributed both natural increase and to in-migration. During the 1990s, Cooper recorded 17 deaths and 14 births and a net in-migration of 24 people. This increase is shown in the formula below.

1990 Census Population = 124

Plus the number of births to Cooper residents between 1990 and 2000 (14) = 138

Minus the number of deaths to Cooper residents between 1990 and 2000 (17) = 121

Plus in-migration (24) to attain the 2000 Census Population = 145

POPULATION STATISTICS

Population and Growth Rates

Like its small rural neighbors the population of Cooper increased from 1990 to 2000. The larger centers nearby lost population, reflecting a trend seen in Washington County as a whole.

Table C-1 Population of Cooper and Neighboring Communities

	1990	2000	GPY 90-00	% growth
Alexander	478	514	0.75%	7.53%
Baileyville	2031	1686	-1.7%	-16.99%
Baring Plantation	275	273	-0.07%	-0.7%
Calais	3963	3447	-1.30%	-13.02%
Charlotte	271	327	2.10%	20.66%
Cooper	124	145	1.69%	16.9%
Crawford	89	108	2.13%	21.3%
East Central Unorganized Territory (Edmunds, Marion, Trescott, Twps 14, 18, 19)	661	768	1.62%	16.19%
East Machias	1218	1298	0.66%	6.6%
Machias	2569	2355	-0.83%	-8.33%
Meddybemps	133	150	1.28%	12.8%
Washington County	35,308	33,941	-0.39%	-3.87 %
State	1,227,928	1,274,923	-	3.83 %

Source: 1990 Census, 2000 Census

The following table shows the year-round population and growth rate by decade in Cooper, Washington County and Maine since 1900.

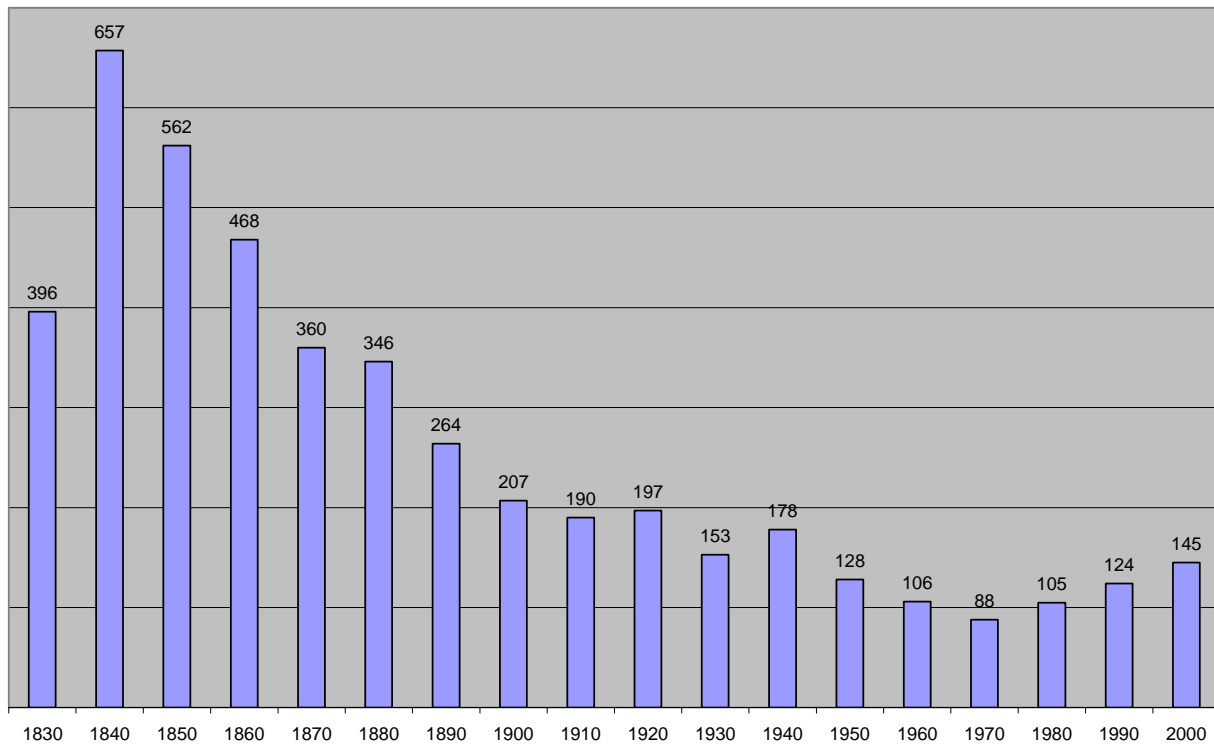
Table C-2 Population and Growth Rates

Year	Cooper		Washington County		Maine	
	Number	% Change	Number	% Change	Number	% Change
2000	145	16.9%	33,941	-3.87 %	1,274,923	3.83 %
1990	124	18.1%	35,308	0.99 %	1,227,928	9.18 %
1980	105	19.3%	34,963	17.09 %	1,124,660	13.37 %
1970	88	-17.0%	29,859	-9.27 %	992,048	2.35 %
1960	106	-17.2%	32,908	-6.48 %	969,265	6.07 %
1950	128	-28.1%	35,187	-6.83 %	913,774	7.85 %
1940	178	16.3%	37,767	-0.16 %	847,226	6.25 %
1930	153	-22.3%	37,826	-9.31%	797,423	3.83%
1920	197	3.7%	41,709	-2.79%	768,014	3.45%
1910	190	-8.2%	42,905	-5.14%	742,371	6.90%
1900	207	-21.6%	45,232	1.7%	694,466	5.0%
1890	264	-	44,482	-	661,087	-

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As the following chart clearly shows, Cooper’s population peaked in the 1840s and then declined steadily until the 1970s when it started to increase again.

Town of Cooper Population 1830-2000



Population Forecasts

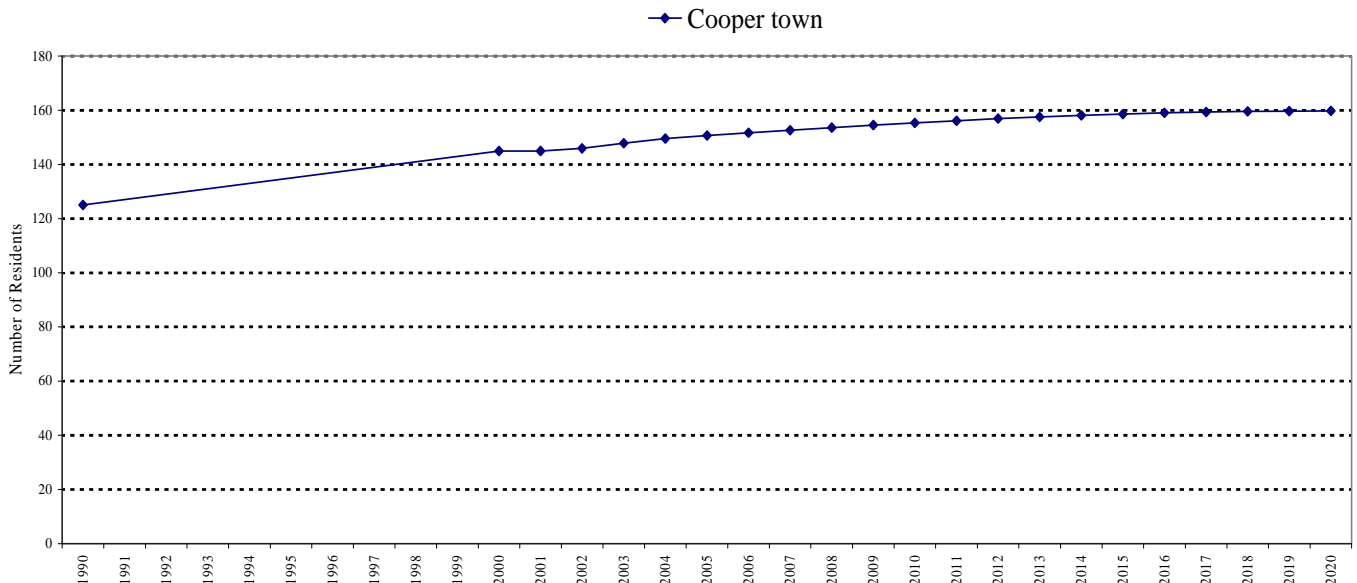
As the table and chart below depict, the State Planning Office predicts that the population of Cooper will rise to 148 individuals by 2010, to 151 by 2015 and to 152 individuals by 2020.

Table C-3 Population Projections

Year	Cooper		Washington County		Maine	
	Number	% Change	Number	% Change	Number	% Change
2020	152	0.7%	31,030	-3.1%	1,434,404	2.3%
2015	151	2.0%	32,021	-2.4%	1,401,553	2.8%
2010	148	6.5%	32,819	-1.9%	1,362,938	3.1%
2005	139	-4.1%	33,448	-1.4%	1,321,505	3.5%
2000	145	-	33,906	-	1,277,397	-

The 2000 information is an actual number from the U.S. Census and all others are projected by the State Planning Office.

1990 to 2000 Population Trend & Projected 2000 to 2020 Population Trend



Source: Maine State Planning Office analysis of 1990-2000; US Census Data

The town’s population has risen steadily in the past 40 years. The following analysis compares the analysis above provided by SPO with both a rate of growth calculation and linear regression analysis. The analyses that best reflect the SPO projection are those that base their estimates on the last 30-50 years of Cooper’s population fluctuations. During the 1990s, an increase of 1.69% percent per year occurred. If that trend continued, Cooper would increase to 194 persons in 2020 (or 187, using linear regression). If, however, a higher annual rate of growth is observed (2.16% percent per year) as occurred over the longer term from 1970 to 2000 then the population of the

town would increase to a total of 208 persons by the year 2020 (or 182, using linear regression). The average annual rate of growth of 0.27% from the period from 1950 to 2000 reflects an initial period of decline followed by a steady increase. If the rate of growth reflected this kind of growth the population in 2020 would only grow to 153 (or 136 using linear regression). Changes in land use including new year-round residential development will determine actual population growth over the next ten years. A slight to modest population increase is most likely to occur over the next ten-year period.

Table C-4 Linear Regression and Growth per Year Population Predictions

Timeframe on which prediction is based	Average Growth Per Year (Non-Compounded)	Cooper Predictions for the year 2020	
		Using Average Growth Per Year (NC)	Using Simple Linear Regression
1950-2000	0.27%	153	136
1970-2000	2.16%	208	182
1990-2000	1.69%	194	187

Seasonal Population

There are no state or federal statistics on seasonal population for Cooper. As a scenic, community with one large appealing lake, seasonal development has a significant impact on the community. Based on a total of 98 seasonal housing units reported in the 2000 Census, and using the average household size in 2000 of 2.59 persons per household approximately 253 additional persons may stay in Cooper seasonally. The Comprehensive Plan Committee, with knowledge of local business owners serving camp properties, estimates this number is actually somewhere between 300 and 400 individuals with a peak in July and August. Many camps are shared among several families and are occupied successively throughout the summer and others through November (hunting season).

Population Projection Conclusions

Changes in economic activity and land use, including new year-round residential and commercial or industrial development, will determine actual population growth over the next ten to fifteen years. It is anticipated that seasonal property owners who choose to stay year round and retirees will account for some of the future increases in population. More information on household composition, the housing stock and recent building permit activity is provided in the chapter on housing. A slight to modest population increase over the next ten-year period is indicated by past trends. However, an adjustment in this upward trend may occur with recent significant increases in the price of fuel and other costs of living as well as the distance of the town of Cooper from medical, dental, retail, educational and other services.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

The following 2000 statistics compare population by age groups for the town of Cooper, the county and the state.

Table C-5 Population by Age Groups

Age Group	Cooper		Washington		Maine	
	Numb	Percent	Numb	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	4	2.8	1727	5.1	70726	5.5
5 to 9 years	11	7.6	2176	6.4	83022	6.5
10 to 14 years	16	11.0	2363	7.0	92252	7.2
15 to 19 years	11	7.6	2403	7.1	89485	7.0
20 to 24 years	4	2.8	1813	5.3	69656	5.5
25 to 34 years	14	9.7	3812	11.2	157617	12.4
35 to 44 years	28	19.3	5114	15.1	212980	16.7
45 to 54 years	25	17.2	5048	14.9	192596	15.1
55 to 59 years	6	4.1	1960	5.8	68490	5.4
60 to 64 years	8	5.5	1669	4.9	54697	4.3
65 to 74 years	14	9.7	3085	9.1	96196	7.5
75 to 84 years	3	2.1	2065	6.1	63890	5.0
85 years and over	1	0.7	706	2.1	23316	1.8
Median age (years)	40.3	-	40.5	-	38.6	-

Source: 2000 Census

The overall age structure of the population in Cooper is similar to the county and the state and reflects an aging population. This is reflected also in an increase in the median age of Cooper residents from 37.7 in 1990 to 40.3 in 2000.

Table C-6 Cooper Population by Age Year Comparisons

Age Group 1990			Age Group 2000		
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Under 5	10	8.1%	Under 5	4	2.8%
5-17	26	21.0%	5-17	32	22.1%
18-24	8	6.5%	18-24	10	6.9%
25-54	49	39.5%	25-54	67	46.2%
55-64	15	12.1%	55-64	14	9.7%
65 and older	16	12.9%	65 and older	18	12.4%
Median Age	37.7	-	Median Age	40.3	-

Source: 1990 Census, 2000 Census

The older segment of the town's population (number of residents aged 65 or above) has remained the same at just over 12% of the population between 1990 and 2000. During the same time the number of school-aged residents of 5-17/19 years old increased slightly from 21 to 22 percent of the population. Local knowledge suggests that the decrease in the number of children under 5 between 1990 and 2000 may be indicative of the choices of only one or two households. Recent (since 2000) shifts in the number of school aged children indicate a level number of families moving in and out of Cooper. Again, rising fuel costs may force those now commuting to service centers for school and employment to move out of town.

Table C-7 Cooper Population by Gender

Year	Female	%	Male	%	Total
2000	75	51.7	70	48.3	145
1990	63	50.8	61	49.2	124

Source: 1990 Census, 2000 Census

The ratio of females to males remained fairly constant between 1990 and 2000.

Table C-8 Average Household Size and Growth Rate: 1990-2000

	1990	2000	GPY 90-00	% growth
Alexander	2.97	2.62	-1.18%	-11.78%
Baileyville	2.64	2.32	-1.21%	-12.12%
Baring Plantation	2.72	2.42	-1.10%	-11.03%
Calais	2.44	2.24	-0.82%	-8.20%
Charlotte	2.79	2.41	-1.36%	-13.62%
Cooper	2.88	2.59	-1.01%	-10.07%
Crawford	2.41	2.63	0.91%	9.13%
East Central Unorganized Territory (Edmunds, Marion, Trescott, Twps 14, 18, 19)	2.63	2.44	-0.72%	-7.24%
East Machias	2.60	2.40	-0.77%	-7.69%
Machias	2.31	2.1	-0.91%	-9.09%
Meddybemps	2.46	2.24	-0.89%	-8.94%
Washington County	2.55	2.34	-0.82%	-8.2%
State	2.56	2.39	-	-6.6%

Source: 1990 Census, 2000 Census

Similar to the trends of her neighbors and the county and state, the average household size in Cooper went down by 10.07%, indicating the presence of more households with fewer children. Given the increase in median age (3 years), it is likely that many of these households are 'empty nests' in which the children have grown up and moved out of Cooper.

Table C-9 Number of Households

	1990	2000	GPY 90-00	% growth
Alexander	161	196	2.17%	21.74%
Baring Plantation	101	113	1.19%	11.88%
Calais	1,536	1,486	-0.33%	-3.26%
Charlotte	97	134	3.81%	38.14%
Cooper	43	56	3.02%	30.23%
Crawford	37	41	1.08%	7.61%
East Central Unorganized Territory (Edmunds, Marion, Trescott, Twps 14, 18, 19)	251	315	2.55%	25.50%
East Machias	469	540	1.51%	15.14%
Machias	943	939	-0.04%	-0.42%
Meddybemps	54	67	2.41%	24.07%
Washington County	13418	14118	0.52%	5.22%
State	465312	518200	-	11.37%

Source: 1990 Census, 2000 Census

The number of households has increased indicating indicative of more retiree, single person families. An increase in the number of households also occurred in most neighboring towns and throughout Washington County despite declining population indicating the presence of more single person, single parent, and retiree households countywide. Both services centers, Calais and Machias, saw a decrease in the number of households between 1990 and 2000, a trend that may be changing as those who commute from rural towns must pay more than double the cost for fuel as they paid in 2000.

Table C-10 Education

School Enrollment (aged 3 and up)	1990	1990 % Pop	2000	2000 % Pop
Cooper	13	10.48%	38	26%
Washington County	8682	24.6%	8,044	23.7%
State	304,868	24.8%	321,041	25.2%

Source: 1990 Census, 2000 Census

According to the 2000 Census, school enrollment has declined in the county, but has increased statewide. Contrary to the trend in Washington County, Cooper had 38 children enrolled in school in the year 2000, a significant increase since 1990. This figure reflects both an increase in elementary and high school enrollment (from 8 in 1990 to 26 in 2000) as well as an increase in post-secondary enrollment (from 5 in 1990 to 12 in 2000). Note that the census figures in Table C-10 are different from the school enrollment figures in Table C-11 because census figures on school enrollment include children in Head Start and pre-school as well as post secondary programs whereas public school enrollment is a measure of the K-12 student population.

Table C-11 Public School Enrollment of Cooper Residents

School Year	Elementary	Secondary	Total Cooper Enrollment
October, 2006	18	13	31
October, 2005	22	12	34
October, 2004	15	14	29
October, 2003	16	13	29
October, 2002	17	12	29
October, 2001	19	9	28
October, 2000	20	8	28

Source: Department of Education, 2008

The town's public school enrollment has grown in the last five years. Figures in Table C-11 account for Cooper residents only. There are no state statistics predicting future enrollment figures for the town. However, a slight decrease of public school enrollment is likely in the near term given the decrease in population under the age of 5.

Table C-12 2001-02 Approved Home Instruction Pupils

Town	KIND.	GR 1-8	GR 9-12	OTHER	TOTAL
Cooper	0	0	1	0	1

Source: Maine DOE

According to the Maine Department of Education, very few children are home schooled in Cooper, however the available data is over 5 years old.

Table C-13 Trend in Home-Schooling

Trend (# of Pupils)	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02
Cooper	0	3	0	1	1

Source: Maine DOE

Educational attainment in Cooper at the High School Graduate or higher and at the Bachelor's degree or higher level is higher than all surrounding towns and higher than both the county and the state averages.

Table C-14 Educational Attainment 2000

	Calais	Alexander	Cooper	Charlotte	Meddybemps	Washington Co. 2000	State 2000
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
High School Graduate or higher	84.6	82.5	96.2	77.5	82	79.9	85.4
Bachelor's degree or higher	11.5	8.9	25.7	14.5	7.5	14.7	22.9

Note: Percent calculated from persons aged 25 and over.

Source: 2000 Census

SUMMARY

The population of Cooper peaked early, in 1840 and then declined until the 1970s. It has increased steadily in the last 30 years. A slight to modest population increase over the next ten-year period is indicated by past trends. However, an adjustment in this upward trend may occur with recent significant increases in the price of fuel and other costs of living as well as the distance of the town of Cooper from medical, dental, retail, educational and other services. Contrary to the trend in Washington County, Cooper had 38 children enrolled in school in the year 2000, a significant increase since 1990. This figure reflects both an increase in elementary and high school enrollment (from 8 in 1990 to 26 in 2000) as well as an increase in post-secondary enrollment (from 5 in 1990 to 12 in 2000). Recent (since 2000) shifts in the number of school aged children indicate a level number of families moving in and out of Cooper. Again, rising fuel costs may force those now commuting to service centers for school and employment to move out of town.

There is a large and growing seasonal population. Like elsewhere in Washington County Cooper's population is aging. The overall age structure is similar and reflects an aging population. The number of households has increased indicative of more retiree, single person families. The town will continue to make available demographic information to residents in particular tracking any the shifts of existing seasonal housing and residents to year-round status.