

# SECTION I. POPULATION



**A. Population Trends**

<b>Figure 1. Overall Population Levels and Changes, 1890-2010</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Mars Hill</b>	<b>Aroostook County</b>	<b>State of Maine</b>
1890	837	49,589	66,1087
1900	1,183	60,744	694,466
1910	1,511	74,664	762,371
1920	1,783	81,728	768,014
1930	1,837	87,843	797,423
1940	1,886	94,436	847,226
1950	2,060	96,039	914,950
1960	2,062	106,064	970,689
1970	1,875	94,078	993,722
1980	1,892	91,344	1,125,043
1990	1,760	8,5400	1,218,153
2000	1,480	86,936	1,274,923
2010	1,493	73,938	1,328,361
<b>1960-1970 change</b>	<b>-9.1%</b>	<b>-11.3%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
<b>1970-1980 change</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>-3.0%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>
<b>1980-1990 change</b>	<b>-7.0%</b>	<b>-6.5%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>
<b>1990-2000 change</b>	<b>-15.9%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>
<b>2000-2010 change</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>-15.0%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>1990-2010</b>	<b>-15.2%</b>	<b>-13.4%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
<b>1940-2010 change</b>	<b>-20.8%</b>	<b>-21.7%</b>	<b>56.8%</b>
Source: US Censuses, 1890-2010			

**Figure 2.**

Source: US Censuses, 1890-2010

Mars Hill experienced steady population growth between 1890 and 1960, rising from 837 residents to a peak of 2,062 residents. Population dropped between 1960 and 1970, then increased slightly between 1980 and 1990, then dropped again in 2000, when it plateaued while the County’s population continued to decline. Mars Hill’s population in 2010 was 1,493, about the size it was in the early twentieth century. Mars Hill, like many other communities in Aroostook County, has experienced out-migration of young and middle-aged individuals, potentially in search of employment.

<b>Figure 3. Comparative Population Change, 1980-2010</b>						
	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Percent Change 1980-2010</b>	<b>Percent Change 2000-2010</b>

<b>Blaine</b>	922	784	806	726	-7.40%	-9.93%
<b>Easton</b>	1305	1291	1249	1287	-0.31%	3.04%
<b>Fort Fairfield</b>	4,376	3998	3579	3496	-12.56%	-2.32%
<b>Mapleton</b>	1,895	1853	1889	1948	5.13%	3.12%
<b><i>Mars Hill</i></b>	<b><i>1892</i></b>	<b><i>1760</i></b>	<b><i>1480</i></b>	<b><i>1493</i></b>	<b><i>-15.17%</i></b>	<b><i>0.88%</i></b>
<b>Presque Isle</b>	11,172	10550	9511	9692	8.13%	1.90%
<b>Westfield</b>	647	589	559	549	-6.79%	-1.79%
<b>Aroostook County</b>	92,463	91,331	86,936	73,938	-19.04%	-14.95%
<b>State of Maine</b>	1,125,043	1,227,928	1,274,923	1,328,361	8.18%	4.19%
Source: US Censuses, 1980-2010						

**Figure 4. Population in Region, 2010**

**Figure 5. Population Change in Region, 2000-2010**

Between 1980 and 2010, Mars Hill lost more than 15% of its population, less than Aroostook County as a whole, but far more than all comparison communities except Fort Fairfield. During the same period, the population of Mapleton and Presque Isle increased by 5-8%. Between 2000 and 2010, Mars Hill’s population grew slightly, but less than Easton and Mapleton. The County’s population continued to decline over the past decade.

**B. Population Projections**

<b>Figure 6. Population Projections</b>				
	State of Maine	Aroostook County	<i>Mars Hill, based on straight-line 2000-2010</i>	<i>Mars Hill, based on straight-line 1980-2010</i>
<b>1980</b>	1125043	91344		
<b>1990</b>	1218153	85400		
<b>2000</b>	1274923	86936		
<b>2003</b>	1,302,729	72582		
<b>2008</b>	1,316,456	71676		
<b>2010</b>	1328361	73938	<i>1493</i>	<i>1438</i>
<b>2013</b>	1,324,335	70438	<i>1422</i>	<i>1370</i>
<b>2018</b>	1,327,070	69023	<i>1394</i>	<i>1342</i>
<b>2023</b>	1,322,449	67288	<i>1359</i>	<i>1309</i>
<b>2028</b>	1,307,181	65060	<i>1314</i>	<i>1265</i>
Source: Maine State Planning Office; Elizabeth A. Della Valle, AICP; 2012				

**Figure 7.**

Source: Maine State Planning Office; Elizabeth A. Della Valle, AICP; 2012

The State Planning Office (SPO) no longer has population projections for Mars Hill. Currently, SPO provides county and limited municipal projections, though additional municipal projections may be available later in the year. In the meantime, two simple predictions, based on straight-line projections suggest continued decline in Mars Hill’s population.

**C. Age and Age Distribution**

<b>Figure 8. Comparisons of Age Distribution, 2010</b>							
	% under 5	% 5-17	% 18-29	%30-44	% 45-64	% 65%-74	%75+
<b>Blaine</b>	5.9%	14.9%	12.5%	18.7%	30.6%	10.3%	7.0%
<b>Easton</b>	6.5%	17.2%	12.4%	17.0%	31.0%	8.8%	7.1%
<b>Fort Fairfield</b>	5.3%	17.2%	11.6%	17.9%	30.8%	9.6%	7.6%
<b>Mapleton</b>	5.6%	15.0%	12.8%	18.8%	33.3%	9.9%	4.6%

<b>Mars Hill</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
<b>Presque Isle</b>	5.0%	14.6%	18.7%	17.7%	27.7%	7.5%	8.7%
<b>Westfield</b>	3.8%	15.1%	9.7%	17.3%	35.0%	9.7%	9.5%
<b>Aroostook County</b>	4.9%	15.1%	12.7%	16.9%	31.4%	10.0%	9.0%
<b>State of Maine</b>	5.2%	15.4%	14.2%	18.3%	30.9%	8.5%	7.4%
Source: 2010 US Census							

Mars Hill’s population distribution is similar to that of the County as a whole, with a somewhat higher percent of residents at both ends of the spectrum - under the age of 5 and 65 or older.

**Figure 9.**

Source: 2010 US Census

In 2010, over a quarter of the population was between 45 and 64, accounting for Mars Hill’s median age of 41.9, which was lower than the median age of Aroostook (44), but only slightly lower than the State as a whole (42). Approximately 1/5 of the population is under 18, about the same amount as those who are 75 or older.

**D. Gender Distribution**

<b>Figure 10. Gender Distribution, 2010</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Blaine</b>	365	361
<b>Easton</b>	639	648
<b>Fort Fairfield</b>	1,691	1,805
<b>Mapleton</b>	980	968
<b>Mars Hill</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>792</b>
<b>Presque Isle</b>	4,674	5,018
<b>Westfield</b>	279	270
<b>Aroostook County</b>	35,607	36,805
<b>State of Maine</b>	649,666	677,999
Source: 2010 US Census		

**Figure 11.**

Source: 2010 US Census

In 2010, Mars Hill's population was made up of 701 males and 792 females, not too dissimilar from comparable towns.

**E. Households**

	<b>Size</b>
<b>Blaine</b>	2.43
<b>Easton</b>	2.4
<b>Fort Fairfield</b>	2.34
<b>Mapleton</b>	2.38
<b>Mars Hill</b>	<b>2.33</b>
<b>Presque Isle</b>	2.19
<b>Westfield</b>	2.4
<b>Aroostook Cty</b>	2.26
<b>State of Maine</b>	2.32
Source: 2010 US Census	

There were 631 households in Mars Hill in 2012, with an average household size of 2.33, somewhat larger than Aroostook as a whole and about the same as the State.

**F. Educational Attainment**

	<i>Mars Hill #</i>	<i>Mars Hill %</i>	<i>Aroostook #</i>	<i>Aroostook %</i>	<i>State #</i>	<i>State %</i>
<b>Less than 9th grade</b>	<i>70.8</i>	<i>5.4%</i>	4,091.30	7.9%	35,313.40	3.8%
<b>9th to 12th grade, no diploma</b>	<i>106.2</i>	<i>8.2%</i>	4,246.60	8.2%	59,475.30	6.4%
<b>High school graduate (or equivalent)</b>	<i>496.8</i>	<i>38.2%</i>	20,197.30	39.0%	327,114	35.2%
<b>Some college, no degree</b>	<i>173.6</i>	<i>13.3%</i>	10,254	19.8%	178,425.80	19.2%
<b>Associate degree</b>	<i>146.2</i>	<i>11.2%</i>	4,609.10	8.9%	82,707.80	8.9%
<b>Bachelor's degree</b>	<i>134.8</i>	<i>10.4%</i>	6,111	11.8%	159,839.80	17.2%
<b>Graduate or professional degree</b>	<i>173.6</i>	<i>13.3%</i>	2,278.70	4.4%	87,354.30	9.4%
<b>% High School Graduate or Higher</b>	<i>73.2%</i>		83.9%			89.8%
<b>% Bachelor's Degree or Higher</b>	<i>23.7%</i>		16.2%			26.5%
Source: 2010 US Census						





## **Figure 14.**

Source: 2010 US Census

Educational attainment in Mars Hill in 2010 was slightly higher than that for the County, but less than the State as a whole. About 13.6% of Mars Hill's population did not have a high school diploma compared to 16.1% in Aroostook County and 10.2% statewide. Approximately 38.2% of Mars Hill residents had at least a high school diploma and 13.3% had completed four or more years of college. Comparable figures for Aroostook County were 39.0% and 4.4%.

### **Ⓔ Issues and Implications**

1. The last decade has seen a dampening of decades of population decline in Mars Hill. Together with continued expansion of Presque Isle's offerings of retail goods and services, Mars Hill's loss of population continues to undermine the market that is necessary to support businesses that provide for local demands. The loss of inhabitants is happening despite the fact that Mars Hill's population has greater educational attainment, its under 5 population is higher than that of the County, and its median age and household size are higher than that of the County and comparable to that of the State. So, what is going on? What does Mars Hill need to do to retain/attract population? If youth and middle-aged residents are leaving in search of employment, what employment would convince them to stay?
2. The populations in Easton and Mapleton have grown in recent years. What are those towns doing to draw new residents? What do they offer that Mars Hill doesn't offer? Presque Isle's population has also grown. Are there characteristics of those communities that are drawing residents from Mars Hill and other areas that Mars Hill might emulate? Is it more than jobs?
3. Mars Hill has a larger percent of its population under 5 than that of the County; however the proportion of school-aged residents is lower. Why is the Town losing school-aged residents? Where are they going?
4. Are there any other demographic issues that pertain to Mars Hill?