

# Climate Migration

**2023 Joint Meeting of the ME Climate Change Adaptation Providers and the NH Coastal Adaptation Workgroup (CAW)**

Presented by Rachel Bouvier. Research by Joie Grandbois.

# Climate Migration Questions

What does climate migration look like in the United States?

Is climate migration happening in Maine?

Who is migrating and where are they coming from?

What impacts will they have when they arrive?

What will future migration look like?

# Climate migration in the United States

Who do we imagine when we think of a climate refugee?

Climate migration in the United States is happening by choice.

Most studies on climate migration have been focused on the developing world.

It is not a single event that triggers climate migration.

# Is climate migration happening?

**YaleEnvironment**360

*Published at the Yale School of the Environment*

## As Climate Fears Mount, Some in U.S. Are Deciding to Relocate

*As wildfires worsen and sea levels rise, a small but growing number of Americans are choosing to move to places such as New England or the Appalachian Mountains that are seen as safe havens from climate change. Researchers say this phenomenon will intensify in the coming decades.*

**The New York Times Magazine**

# THE GREAT CLIMATE MIGRATION

By Abrahm Lustgarten | Photographs by Meredith Kohut



In 2018 1.2 million people in the US were displaced by weather related disasters.

Most of those impacted will return to the same place or remain close by.

People move to areas they perceive as safe.

# Climate migration in the US

# Data

- ▶ IRS SOI Tax Statistics - Migration Data
- ▶ Tracking permanent moves
- ▶ Through 2019
- ▶ Households and individuals

# Where are people coming from?

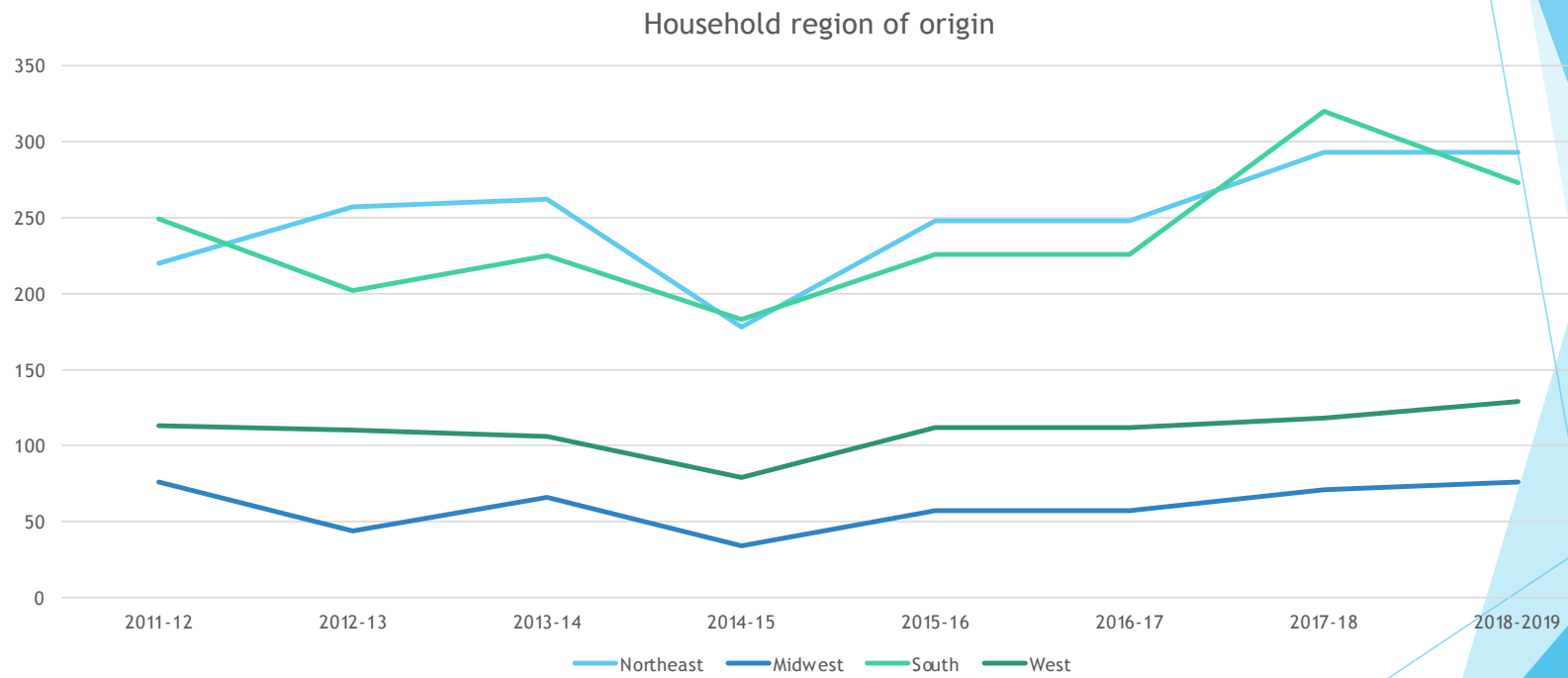
## *Maine's Top Ten (2012 - 2018)*

- ▶ Massachusetts
- ▶ New Hampshire
- ▶ Florida
- ▶ New York
- ▶ California
- ▶ Connecticut
- ▶ Texas
- ▶ Pennsylvania
- ▶ Virginia
- ▶ North Carolina

Source: SOI Tax Stats - Migration Data | Internal Revenue Service

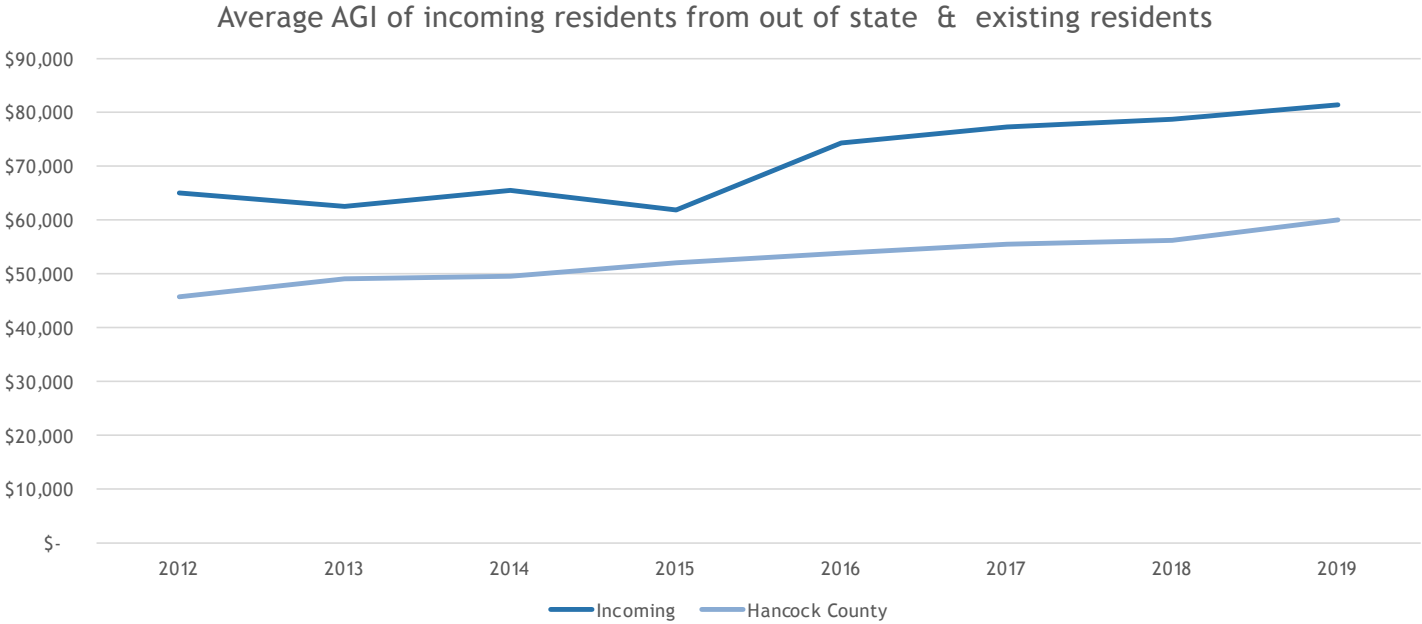


# Hancock County





# Income



Source: IRS SOI Tax Statistics, IRS SOI Tax Statistics - Migration

## Household Size

US Average:  
2.6

Hancock  
County:  
1.73

Incoming  
from out of  
state: 1.67

# What impacts will they have when they arrive?



Moving from urban to rural areas



Increase in housing prices and possible displacement



Moving to car dependent areas



School enrollment



Services

# Will it continue?



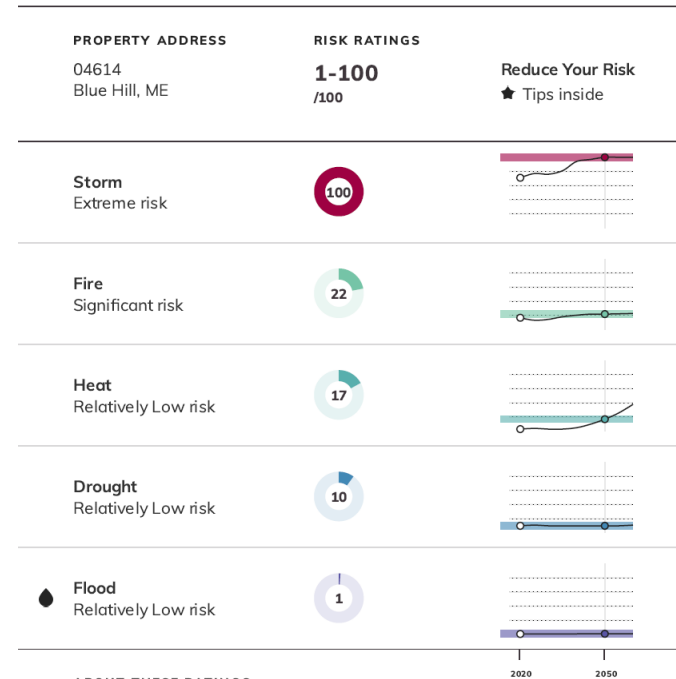
AFFORDABILITY  
CHANGES



CLIMATE  
IMPACTS



HOUSING



Climate Risk Report for Homes and Real Estate—Fire, Flood, Storm, Heat / ClimateCheck. (n.d.). Retrieved March 30, 2022, from <https://climatecheck.com/>



## Conclusion

Climate migration is likely to continue and even increase, although not in a linear fashion.

Maine is seen as a “safe” haven from climate change, although it is not without its own risks.

Climate migration is part of a larger trend, and it is difficult to disentangle from other causes.

The households that are currently migrating are doing so out of choice, not necessity.

## Conclusion, part 2

The households that are moving to Hancock County are typically older and wealthier, with a smaller household size.

This migration is triggering an out-migration of similar size, but different socio-demographics.

Municipalities need to prepare by implementing better land use planning tools, investing in infrastructure, and anticipating labor market changes.

# Questions? Comments?



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