

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### DEMOGRAPHICS

All demographic figures are based upon data collected from both the 1990 and 2000 Census, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. [<http://www.census.gov>] Financial information is based upon the 2002 New York State Comptroller’s report. [<http://osc.ny.gov>]

### Population

According to the 2000 Census, the Town of Montague grew by 130%, nearly doubling its 1990 population. The population of Lewis County grew by 0.6%, and the state as a whole experienced a 5.5% increase in population.

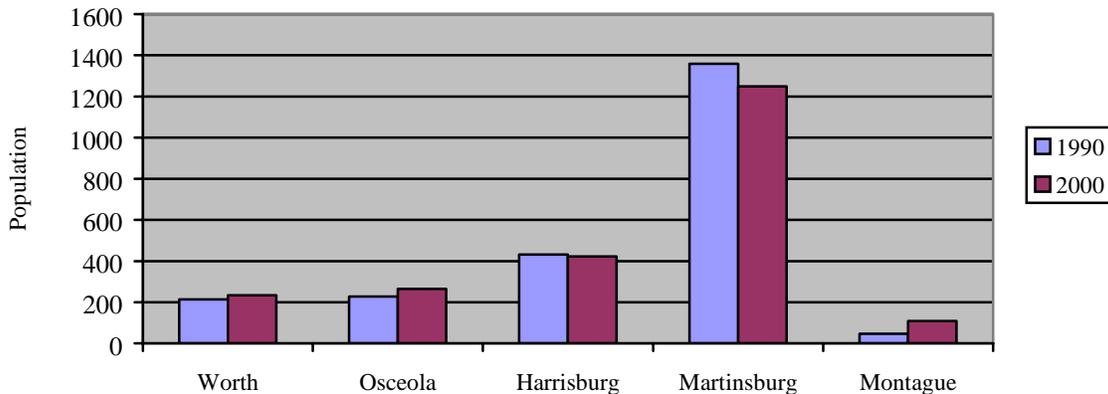
Table 1. Population Distribution

Population	1990	2000	% Change
Town of Montague	47	108	+130.0%
Lewis County	26,796	26,944	+0.6
New York State	17,990,455	18,976,457	+5.5

### Regional Population Changes

Two nearby towns experienced population loss during the 1990s: Martinsburg and Harrisburg declined in size between 1990 and 2000, by –8.0% and –2.1% respectively. The towns of Worth and Osceola experienced slight growth, at +1.1% and +18.1%.

Figure 1. Population Changes in Nearby and Adjacent Towns



### Household and Family Size

The Town of Montague has an average household size of 2.40 persons. The average household size in the CTHC region is 2.71 persons, which is slightly higher than the NY State average of 2.61. Average family size in Montague is also lower than the CTHC average, at 2.97 persons. The CTHC average is 3.17, which is slightly lower than the state average of 3.22.

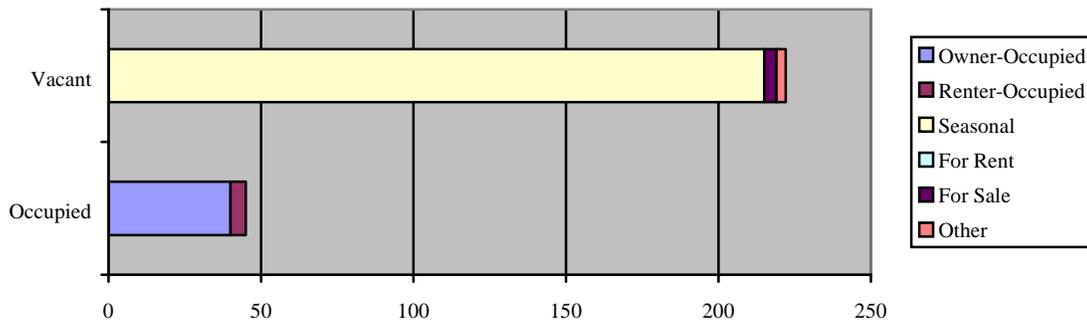
Table 2. Average Household and Family Size, 2000

	Town of Montague	Lewis County	CTHC Region	New York State
Average Household Size (2000)	2.40	2.66	2.71	2.61
Average Family Size (2000)	2.97	3.12	3.17	3.22

### Housing

According to the 2000 Census, 16.9% of all housing units are classified as occupied and 83.1% are vacant. Of occupied housing units, 88.9% are owner-occupied and 11.1% are renter-occupied. Seasonal units account for nearly all of the vacant units (96.8%). Homes for sale are 1.8% of the total vacant units. Of the total number of housing units, 80.5% are seasonal use (215 out of 267).

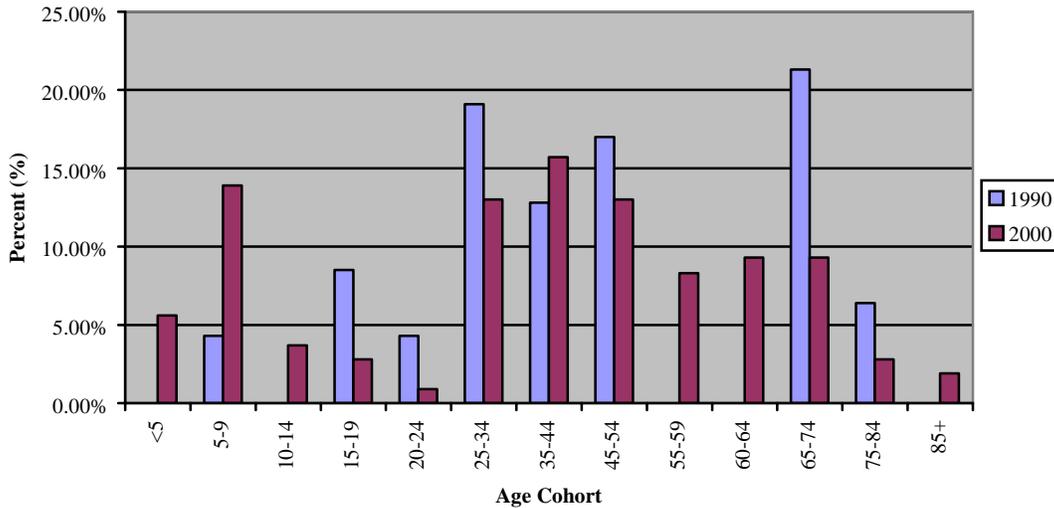
Figure 2. Housing Units, by Classification (2000)



### Age

Seven cohort groups grew between 1990 and 2000, five of which had previously had no persons within that age range in 1990. Significant growth occurred in the age 5-9 group, which increased from less than 5% of the total population in 1990 to nearly 14% in 2000. Though the actual number of persons age 65-74 did not decline between 1990 and 2000, the cohort declined in prevalence within the total population. The same is true for the age 75-84 cohort. Due to growth in other cohorts, the age 65-74 group comprised 21.3% of residents in 1990 compared to 9.3% in 2000. Basically, by 2000 the population had become more diverse in age than it was in 1990. Percent change for each cohort is presented graphically in Figure 4 and numerically in Table 3.

Figure 3. Age Cohorts by Percentage of Total Population, 1990 and 2000



Because of a small population base (47 persons in 1990 and 108 persons in 2000), the above percentages are not always indicative of growth or decline in a particular age group (i.e. 65-74 and 75-84). The number of persons in these cohorts remained the same, but due to significant changes in total population without comparable growth in these cohorts, the ratio decreased (%). For a more accurate picture of cohort change, refer to Figure 4. However, another caveat must be mentioned: because several of the age cohorts were blank in 1990, percent change could not be calculated for five of the age cohorts (<5, 10-14, 55-59, 60-64, and 85+). The median age in 2000 was 40.0, which was higher than the CTHC average of 36.8.

Figure 4. Percent Change by Age Cohort, 1990 to 2000

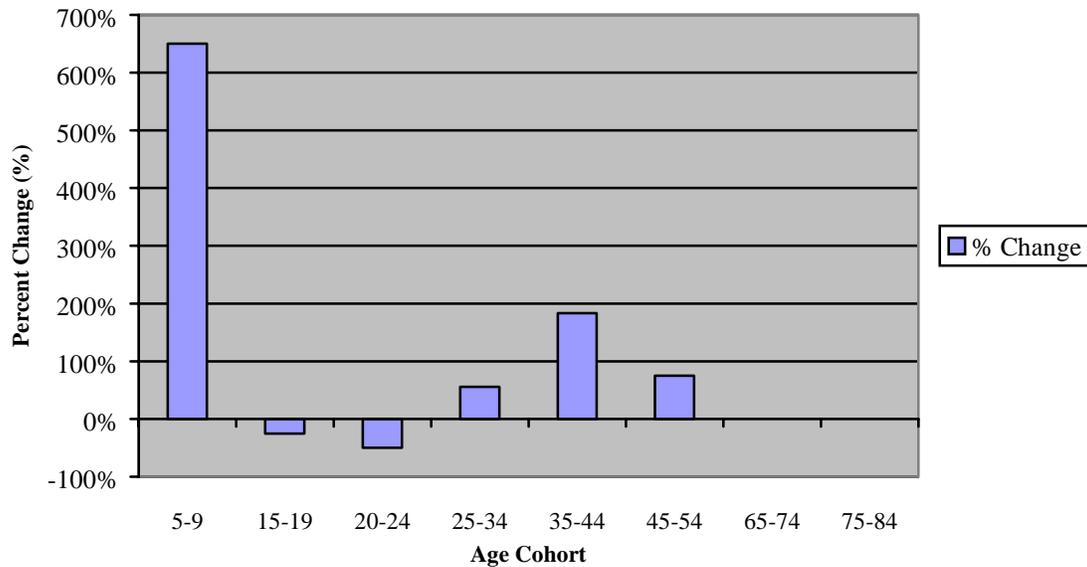


Table 3. Percent Change by Age Cohort, 1990 to 2000

Age Cohort	1990	2000	% Change
<5 years	0	6	n/a
5-9	2	15	+650.0%
10-14	0	4	n/a
15-19	4	3	-25.0%
20-24	2	1	-50.0%
25-34	9	14	+55.6%
35-44	6	17	+183.3%
45-54	8	14	+75.0%
55-59	0	9	n/a
60-64	0	10	n/a
65-74	10	10	0%
75-84	3	3	0%
85+	0	2	n/a
TOTAL	47	108	+130.0%

### Income

In the CTHC region, the average household income is \$34,507, while the average family income is slightly higher, \$38,406. Median annual income in the Town of Montague was \$34,688 for households and \$36,250 for families. Annual household income is slightly higher than the CTHC average, while annual family income is nearly \$2,200 lower.

Table 4. Median Income, 2000

LOCATION	Town of Harrisburg	CTHC Region	Lewis County
Median household income	\$34,688	\$34,507	\$34,361
Median family income	\$36,250	\$38,406	\$39,287

### Employment and Occupation

Nearly 60% of the population over age 16 is in the labor force. Most persons are employed (56.0%), while 2.7% are unemployed. A large proportion of persons are not in the labor force (41.3%). The Town of Montague is one of eight CTHC towns in which the largest percentage of the employed population works in management, professional and related occupations (28.6%). Sales and service occupations are the second most common (26.2%), followed by production, transportation, and material moving occupations (21.4%). Refer to Table 5 for employment figures and Table 6 for occupation information.

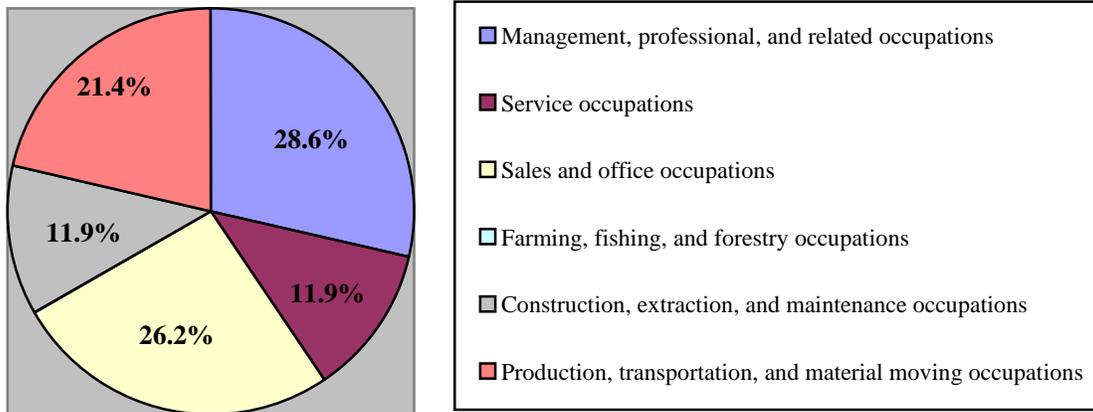
Table 5. Employment Status, 2000

<b>Population age 16 years and over...</b>	
In labor force	58.7%
Civilian	58.7%
Employed	56.0%
Unemployed	2.7%
Armed Forces	0%
Not in labor force	41.3%

Table 6. Percentage of Employed Population by Occupation, 2000

<b>Occupation</b>	
Management, professional, and related occupations	28.6%
Service occupations	11.9%
Sales and office occupations	26.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.0%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	11.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	21.4%

Figure 5. Percentage of Employed Population by Occupation, 2000



### Industry

The largest industry employing persons from the Town of Montague is education, health and social services (19.0%). Manufacturing (16.7%) is the second largest sector.

Table 7. Percentage of Employed Persons by Industry, 2000

<b>Industry</b>	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	9.5%
Construction	9.5%
Manufacturing	16.7%
Wholesale trade	9.5%
Retail trade	9.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	0.0%
Information	7.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	0.0%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	0.0%
Educational, health, and social services	19.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	4.8%
Other services (except public administration)	7.1%
Public administration	7.1%

### **Educational Attainment**

In 2000, slightly more than 80% of persons over age 25 had at least completed high school. Eleven percent had bachelor's degrees or higher. Another eleven percent had not completed any high school coursework.

Table 8. Educational Attainment, 2000

<b>Percent of the population age 25+ with...</b>	
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	11.0%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	5.5%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	39.7%
Some college, no degree	28.8%
Associate degree	4.1%
Bachelor's degree	2.7%
Graduate or professional degree	8.2%
<b>Percent high school graduate or higher</b>	
Percent high school graduate or higher	83.6%
<b>Percent bachelor's degree or higher</b>	
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	11.0%

### **Transportation to Work**

The two major means of transportation are driving alone (84.6%) and carpooling (10.3%). Approximately 5% of workers living in the Town of Montague worked from home in 2000. On average, workers spend 32.3 minutes traveling to work.

Table 9. Means of Transportation, Employed Population Age 16+ (2000)

<b>Means of transportation</b>	
Car, truck, or van – drove alone	84.6%
Car, truck or van – carpooled	10.3%
Public transportation (including taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other means	0.0%
Worked at home	5.1%
<b>Mean travel time to work</b>	
	32.3 minutes

FINANCE

**Revenues**

Revenues for the Town of Montague totaled \$220,200 in 2002. Sixty-four percent of the revenue was derived from property taxes. Intergovernmental revenues (i.e. state and federal aid) supplied 25% of the total revenues.

Figure 6. Source of Revenues, 2002

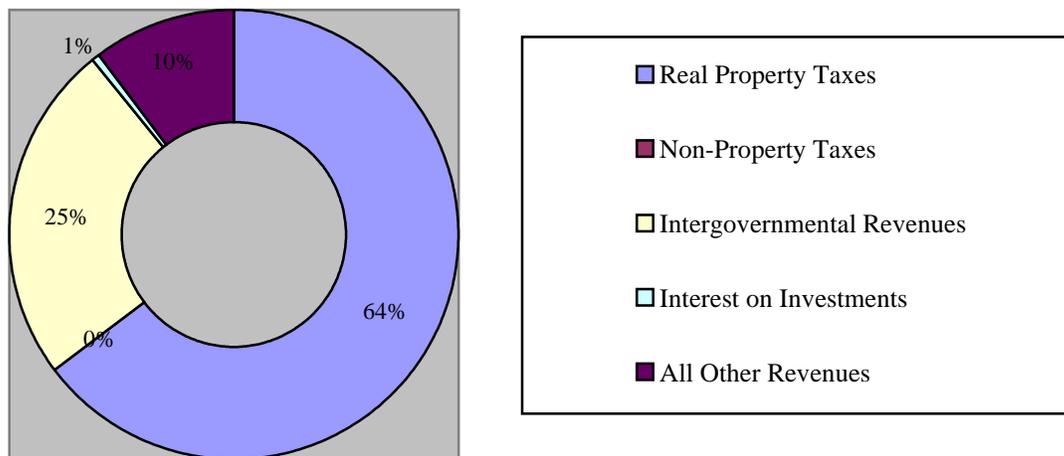


Table 10. Amount of Revenues Generated, by Source (2002)

<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>Amount (\$000)</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Revenues</b>
Real property taxes	142.3	64%
Non-property taxes	0	0%
Intergovernmental revenues	54.1	25%

Town of Montague Comprehensive Plan  
DRAFT – MAY 2005

Interest on investments	1.3	1%
All other revenues	22.5	10%

**Expenditures**

Transportation (44.3%) was the largest expense for the Town of Martinsburg. Home and community services accounted for nearly 30% of total expenditures, followed by 13.3% for general government expenses.

Figure 7. Expenditures by Function, 2002

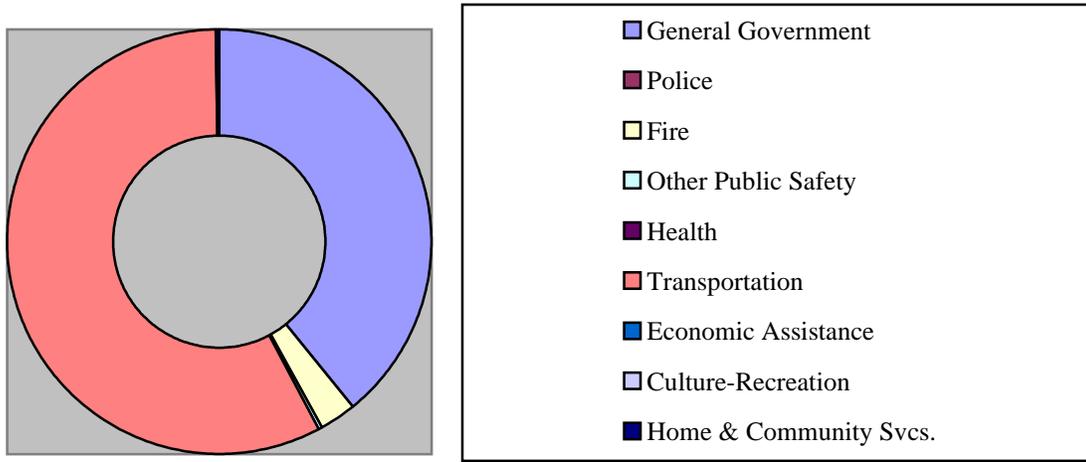


Table 11. Expenditures

General Government	\$104,700	39.1%
Police	\$0	0%
Fire	\$7,300	2.7%
Other Public Safety	\$900	0.3%
Health	\$200	0.1%
Transportation	\$154,100	57.5%
Economic Assistance	\$0	0%
Culture-Recreation	\$0	0%
Home & Community Svcs.	\$700	0.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$267,900.00</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Tax Rates**

The NYS Comptroller reports the following property tax rates for 2003. Full taxable value is reported for 2002.

TOWN	COUNTY	FULL TAXABLE VALUE (tax base)	County Tax (per \$1000)	Town Tax (per \$1000)	School Tax (per \$1000)
Montague	Lewis	\$17,426,000	7.70	7.75	12.42

## **Town History – Montague, New York**

By -David Andalora

The Town of Montague is well-known today for its recreational opportunities. Mile after mile of beautiful ATV and snowmobile trails wind through desolate, seemingly endless forests. Fishermen and hunters know they'd better come prepared with a GPS or compass to be secure in the wilderness that is Tug Hill. However, Montague wasn't always the wilderness it seems to be today. Montague has gone through many changes since its inception. Ironically, today's Montague would be more recognizable to its earliest settlers than it would be to its residents of 100 years ago!

Montague was created from the larger town of West Turin on November 14, 1850. The town was named for Mary Montague Pierpont, daughter of the former owner of the land. No information has yet come to light regarding how Miss Pierpont felt about this honor. Early settlers included Samuel Holden, who arrived in 1846; Samuel P. Sears, who built a sawmill at the corner of what is now Sears Pond Road and Salmon River Road in 1848; Joseph M. Gardner, who settled on the corner of present-day Sears Pond and Gardner Road in 1848; Alvin Stafford, who built a cabin in the woods on Liberty Road near the town line with Pinckney in 1848, George Moffatt, who started a farm on the Sears Pond Road between Pitcher and Salmon River Roads in 1850; and Norman Howe, who came to what is now the Olin Road to start a farm in 1851.

During its first thirty years, the town grew rapidly. By 1880, there were 975 residents! Some settlers saw the cheap land in Montague as a chance to finally have a homestead all their own. Others saw gold in the virgin stands of spruce and hardwood trees just waiting to be harvested. Montague's peak came in the years between 1880 and 1900. In these two decades, Montague was a bustling, self-sufficient boomtown that would be almost completely unfamiliar to today's inhabitants.

In 1896, there were six sawmills in Montague. Aside from the aforementioned mill at Sears' Pond, there were two sawmills in Hooker, a now-vanished hamlet far down on today's Salmon River Road. Near the corner of what is now Sears Pond Road and Rector Road stood a sawmill that also manufactured cheese boxes. The Marcellus Saw Mill stood on the western side of Liberty Road, about one-half mile north of Sears Pond Road. The biggest of them all was the Parker Saw Mill, at the intersection of what is now Parker Road and Flat Rock Road. According to the Lewis County Directory of 1895-96, this mill, owned by Lester B. Parker, produced between 1 and 2 million board feet of spruce and hardwood a year and supplied employment for 30-50 people. (On a side note- Lester B. Parker also had the first phone in Montague, in 1890.)

The sawmill industry had two great natural enemies. The first was the gradual depletion of mature timber that occurred in and around Montague as a result of the sawmills' constant activity. By 1910, the majority of Montague's land was treeless farm fields. The need to range farther and farther away for worthwhile timber slowly decreased the cost-effectiveness of mill operations. The second great natural enemy was fire. One of the mills at Hooker burnt to the ground on Feb 24, 1891. In July 1898, all of Lester Parker's mills and equipment burned in a devastating fire. He rebuilt, and a year later, his operation was running again. However, in 1906, fire once again destroyed Parker's mills. He rebuilt once more, but the mills never regained complete financial stability, and he ceased operations in 1915. The other mills gradually declined until the 1940's, when the last of them closed its doors.

The second most important industry in Montague during its boom years was the manufacture and sale of cheese. Farmers realized that selling their milk to a cheese factory was the most cost effective way of handling their surplus. Daniel Denning built the first cheese factory on today's Olin Road in 1882. John E. Murphy erected the Forks Cheese Factory on the Factory Road in the mid-1880's. The Gardner's Corners Cheese Factory and the Rector Cheese Factory were both operating by 1887. These four factories took milk from over 1,000 cows and turned it into cheese.

Aside from sawmills and cheese factories, Montague had 153 farms ranging from 20 to 500 acres during its most prosperous time. It also had nine schools, three blacksmiths, two grocers, six post offices, a Grange Hall, four hotels, and two churches- a Methodist Episcopal Church at the corner of Liberty and Gardner Road, and a Methodist Protestant Church at the corner of Rector and Sears Pond Road.

After 1900, Montague began a long, steady period of decline. There were many reasons for this. The winters in Montague are longer, colder, and snowier than anywhere else in the region. The late spring and early autumn frosts on Tug Hill made many crops impractical for farmers. Sometimes the ground yielded a bigger crop of slate, sandstone, and limestone than anything else. The many random piles of stones that can be found in the woods all over Montague attest to farmers' efforts to keep their fields stone-free. Farmers' children grew up and decided they could have an easier life elsewhere. People were "burned out" of their houses and decided to rebuild in a less remote location. In 1945, the last cheese factory shut down. By 1950, the population had decreased from its high of 975 in 1880 to 139. In 1952, the four Montague schoolhouses still open were closed due to school centralization, and the remaining students began taking the long bus ride to Lowville Academy and Central School each day. Buildings were torn down, burned down, or simply left to rot. The forest gradually reclaimed what had been taken from it.

In the 1970's, a rebirth of sorts began in Montague. People discovered that the deserted roads in Montague, combined with the extreme snowfall the area receives, were perfect for riding their snowmobiles each winter. Gradually, word spread about this "sledder's paradise." The cheap land available in Montague encouraged snowmobile enthusiasts to buy land and erect camps to pursue their sport. New businesses opened to cater to these consumers. The Montague Inn, located at the corner of Sears Pond Road and Rector Road, opened its doors on October 19, 1972. The Tug Hill Inn on Salmon River Road opened in 1980, and the Spruces Bed and Breakfast on the Sears Pond Road opened in 1991. All-terrain-vehicles ("four wheelers") soon realized that what was good in the winter was good in the summer, and they began frequenting the area as well.

Currently the wilds of Montague are a premier destination year-round for off-road vehicles. Montague is the centerpiece of a vast trail system that encompasses 5 counties. In 1996, the National Weather Service installed a Doppler Radar System in Montague to get a better handle on the heavy lake-effect snows. Now anyone can check the weather in Montague via the internet. Montague's population will probably never rebound to previous levels. According to the US Census of 2000, Montague is the second smallest town in the state, population-wise. However, Montague's fame as an outdoor destination continues to spread. Montague's future is looking bright!