

Dana Point, California

People and Place

Location

Dana Point covers 6.64 square miles of land and 22.8 square miles of water. It is located in Orange County along Interstate 5, approximately 65 miles north of San Diego and 59 miles south of Los Angeles. The geographic coordinates of Dana Point, California are: 33°28'01"N, 117°41'50"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Dana Point was 35,110, a 10.1% increase from the 1990 U.S. Census. In 2000 the gender structure was evenly divided with 50% females and 50% males. The median age in 2000 was 39.8, which is slightly higher than the national median of 35.3 for the same year. According to the same data, 20.6% of the population was under the age of 18, 54.6% of the population was between the ages of 25 and 59, and 9.2% was age 70 or older. For the population 18 years and over, 89.3% had a high school education or higher, 37.8% had attained a bachelor's degree or higher, and 14.4% earned a graduate or professional degree. The highest level of educational attainment was a high school diploma/equivalency for 16.0% of the population. In 2000, 79.4% of the population lived in family households.

The racial composition of Dana Point in 2000 was predominantly White (87.2%), followed by Asian (2.5%). Black or African American, American Indian and Alaskan native, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander each constituted less than one percent of the population in 2000 (0.8%, 0.6%, and 0.1% respectively). Overall, 5.9% classified themselves as belonging to some other race and 2.8% of the population identified themselves with two or more races. A total of 15.5% identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 15.6% of the population was foreign-born, with 43.9% born in Mexico.

History

The first European contact with this region of southern California came in 1769, when Don Gaspár de Portolá, the leader of a Spanish expedition in the California territory, discovered the Santa Ana valley in what is today northern Orange County.¹ Mission San Juan Capistrano, founded in 1776 by the Spanish Priest, Father Junipero Serra, was named after St. John of Capistrano, Italy. The founders wanted to establish a mission midway between San Diego in the south and San Gabriel in the Los Angeles area. The mission itself lies 5 miles inland from the coast in the community of San Juan Capistrano, but this entire area of southern California was originally known as Capistrano Bay.²

In the mid-1800s, Richard Henry Dana, Jr., a lawyer and seaman, traveled from Boston to the California coast, via Cape Horn, on a merchant ship called "The Pilgrim." In his journal, *Two Years Before the Mast*, published in 1840 and widely read since, Dana describes this area as "the most romantic spot on the California coast." It is for Richard Henry Dana, Jr. that the city of Dana Point is named.³ The city was incorporated in 1989. Today, Dana Point is a seaside community known for its tourism, recreation and beaches.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 65.8% of the potential labor force was employed and there was a 3.8% unemployment rate (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). Of the population over the age of 16, 31.6% were not in the labor force. Of the employed civilian population, 17.7% worked in “Educational, health and social services” and 12.5% worked in “Retail trade,” while 10.2% worked in “Manufacturing.” The local, state, or federal government employed a total of 10.9% of the employed civilian population in 2000, however none were reported as working for the government in the “Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining” industries. Only 0.3% of the employed civilian population over the age of 16 was involved in “Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting” according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

Dana Point’s per capita income in 1999 was \$37,938 according to the U.S. Census, while the median household income was \$63,043. In 1999 a total of 6.7% of the population was below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 15,682 housing units in Dana Point, 92.2% of which were occupied, 7.8% were vacant. Of the occupied housing units, 62.0% were owner occupied and 38.0% were renter occupied. Over half (59.3%) of the vacant housing units were for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional” use.

Governance

Dana Point is located in southern Orange County. The city operates under a Council/Manager form of government. The City Council consists of five members, including the Mayor and the Mayor Pro-Tem, who serves as the presiding officer at City Council meetings in the absence of the Mayor.

Sales taxes are 7.25% based on the standard statewide rate. The annual property tax for Orange County is approximately 1.06% of the property’s assessed value, plus bonded indebtedness, assessment districts, and fees that are approved by the voters. California state law assesses commercial vessels, charter boats, and oceanographic research vessels at 4% of their full cash value.⁴ Vessels registered in California with either the Department of Motor Vehicles or the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) are assessed property taxes by the county tax collector where it is moored.⁵ Some commercial vessels are also subject to a Ballast Water Management Fee of about \$500 per voyage.⁶ California levies a fuel tax of \$0.18 per gallon, a portion of which goes toward marine safety and education programs and boating facility administration and development.⁷

The State of California levies landing taxes that must be paid by fishermen and fish processors involved in the retail sale of fish products. These taxes vary by species and range between \$.0013 and \$.0125 per pound of fish.⁸ The California Department of Agriculture also administers two commodity commissions, the California Salmon Council and the California Sea Urchin Commission, which charge fees for marketing and lobbying on behalf of fishermen involved in these specific fisheries.⁹

The National Marine Fisheries Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Coast Guard all have offices in Long Beach, located 44 miles north of Dana Point. The nearest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services sub-office is in Santa Ana, 27 miles north. The nearest Pacific Fisheries Management Council meeting location is

Del Mar, 47 miles south. North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meetings are held in Portland, Oregon, located 1022 miles north of Dana Point.

Facilities

Dana Point is accessible by road via Interstate 5 and the Pacific Coast Highway. The most accessible airport to Dana Point is the John Wayne Orange County Airport, located in Santa Ana. In addition, the Los Angeles International Airport and the San Diego Airport are located in relatively close proximity. There is no train station in Dana Point, but the train line runs through San Juan Capistrano, approximately 5 miles inland. Municipal and regional bus services are available locally.

Public schools in the community include one primary school with instruction from kindergarten through eighth grade, and one high school. In addition, there are three private schools that offer instruction from kindergarten through eighth grade.¹⁰ The Ocean Institute, founded in Dana Point in 1977, is a non-profit educational organization that teaches ocean awareness and preservation. The institute owns and operates the brig Pilgrim, the Spirit of Dana Point, and the research vessel Sea Explorer.

San Diego Gas and Electric provides electric utility to area residents, and Southern California Gas provides gas services. Municipal water is supplied by the Moulton Niguel Water District, which also treats and recycles wastewater. Police services are administered by the Dana Point Police Department and the Orange County Sheriff's Office. There is no municipal fire department in Dana Point; the Orange County Fire Authority provides fire emergency services. There is no hospital located directly in Dana Point, although several regional medical centers and hospitals are located in the nearby communities of Mission Viejo and Laguna Hills. Local lodging accommodations include 11 hotels and motels.

Dana Point is also accessible by sea and has a large harbor with two marinas and moorage space for 2,500 boats of all sizes. The harbor facilities include guest slips, a fuel dock, shipyard, and launch ramp. There are recreational facilities for fishing, windsurfing, jetskiing, kayaking, sailing, and swimming. The most prominent harbor facility is used by Dana Wharf Sportfishing, which operates a fleet of vessels available for charter and sportfishing daytrips.¹¹

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Landings were delivered to Dana Point by 57 vessels, all commercially registered, in 2000. In the same year, landings in Dana Point were made in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): crab (3.2 t/\$7479/13), highly migratory species (28.1 t/\$249,614/11), shrimp (5.4 t/\$111,989/9), and other species (121.1 t/\$858,023/62). Six vessels made landings valued at \$254, but no data is available regarding the amount of those landings in metric tons. According to available data, there were no seafood processors in Dana Point in 2000.

There were 12 commercial vessels owned by Dana Point residents in 2000, four of which participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by Dana Point residents in 2000 that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: groundfish (0/0/NA), highly

migratory species (NA/0/NA), shellfish (NA/0/NA), shrimp (NA/0/1), and other species (0/0/1).¹²

In 2000, no federal groundfish permits were held by community members. In the same year, recorded data indicates that the number of Dana Point residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: groundfish (0/0/5), highly migratory species (NA/0/8), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (0/0/1), and other species (0/0/24).¹³

According to available data, there were at least 63 commercial fishing permits registered to Dana Point residents in 2000, all of those were registered state permits. Recorded data indicates that the number of state permits held by Dana Point residents in 2000 in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: groundfish (0/0/6), highly migratory species (NA/0/9), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (0/0/1), and other species (0/0/47).¹⁴

Sportfishing

There is a public fishing pier in Dana Point that is well maintained and receives considerable use. A number of charter vessels operate out of Dana Point targeting albacore, bluefin tuna, marlin, yellowtail, rock cod, salmon, shark, yellowfin tuna, and other species. Many of these charter vessels also offer seasonal whale watching tours. In 2002, at least ten charter businesses serviced sport fishermen and tourists in Dana Point.

There is one license agent selling sportfishing licenses in Dana Point. In 2000 Orange County residents purchased: 26,250 resident sportfishing licenses, 47 nonresident sportfishing licenses, 7 sport salmon punch cards, and 29 abalone report cards. In the port group consisting of Oceanside and Dana Harbor, 29 commercial passenger fishing vessels served 68,598 anglers in 2000. These vessels reported 273,628 landings composed of more than two dozen species. Sea bass (unspecified) and Pacific mackerel accounted for 63.6% and 7.0% of the landings respectively.

Subsistence

Local tribal and nontribal community members might be engaged in subsistence fishing in the Dana Point area. However, specific information on subsistence fishing in Dana Point is not discussed in detail in this Community Profile due to the lack of available data. The California Department of Fish and Game uses the term “recreational” to refer to fishermen that do not earn revenue from their catch but rather fish for pleasure and/or to provide food for personal consumption. Therefore information on subsistence fishing in California is captured, to some degree, within the above sportfishing data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000, one community member worked as a crewmember aboard a vessel involved in North Pacific fisheries.

Sportfishing

While the majority of the charter boats in Dana Point target West Coast fisheries, 66 Dana Point community members purchased Alaska sportfishing licenses in 2000.

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- ¹ Santa Ana Historical Preservation Society. No date. The History of Santa Ana, [Online] Available: URL: <http://www.santaanahistory.com/history.html> (access date - July 2004).
- ² Mission San Juan Capistrano. 2004. Mission of San Juan Capistrano, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.missionsjc.com/historic.html> (access date - July 2004).
- ³ City of Dana Point. 2003. City of Dana Point, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.danapoint.org/welcome.html> (access date - July 2004).
- ⁴ State of California Board of Equalization. No date. Property Tax Rules, Rule 151. Vessels Subject to the Four Percent Assessment, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/pdf/r151.pdf> (access date - July 2004).
- ⁵ California Department of Motor Vehicles. 2003. How to register a vessel, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/boatsinfo/boatreg.htm#how> (access date - July 2004).
- ⁶ State of California Board of Equalization. 2004. Ballast Water Management Fee, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/bllstweb12.htm> (access date - July 2004).
- ⁷ U.S. Department of Transportation. 2001. Provisions Governing the Distribution of State Motor Fuel Tax Receipts: California, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ohim/hwytaxes/2001/california.htm> (access date - July 2004).
- ⁸ State of California. No date. Fish and Game Code Section 8040-8070, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycod?section=fgc&group=08001-8070> (access date - July 2004).
- ⁹ State of California Department of Agriculture. 2004. List of Marketing Programs, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.cdafa.ca.gov/mkt/mkt/mktbrds.html> (access date - July 2004).
- ¹⁰ National Center for Education Statistics. No date. No title, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://nces.ed.gov/globallocator/> (access date - April 2005).
- ¹¹ City of Dana Point. 2003. Attractions and Points of Interest, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.danapoint.org/tourism/attractions.html> (access date - July 2004).
- ¹² 'NA' refers to data which was not available, for example, due to few or no recorded permit numbers, or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.
- ¹³ 'NA' refers to data which was not available, for example, due to few or no recorded permit numbers, or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.
- ¹⁴ 'NA' refers to data which was not available, for example, due to few or no recorded permit numbers, or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.