

McKinleyville, California

People and Place

Location

McKinleyville, covering 20.9 square miles of land and 1.92 square miles of water, is located in Humboldt County along U.S. Highway 101 near Humboldt Bay. Situated on Mad River, McKinleyville lies approximately 285 miles north of San Francisco and 302 miles north of the state capital, Sacramento. The geographic coordinates of McKinleyville, California, are: 40°56'48"N, 124°05'58"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of McKinleyville was 13,599, a 26.5% increase from the 1990 U.S. Census. In 2000 the gender structure was evenly divided with slightly more females (51.0%) than males (49.0%). The median age was 35.2 in 2000, which is comparable to the national median of 35.3 for the same year. According to the same data, 26.4% of the population was under the age of 18, 46.5% of the population was between the ages of 25 and 59, and 7.7% was age 70 or older. For the population 18 years and over, 85.7% had a high school education or higher, 23.0% had attained a bachelor's degree or higher, and 6.6% earned a graduate or professional degree. The highest level of educational attainment was a high school diploma or equivalency for 24.4% of the population. In 2000, 82.7% of the population lived in family households.

The 2000 U.S. Census shows that the racial composition was predominantly White (87.6%), followed by American Indian and Alaskan native (4.6%), and Asian (1.1%). Black or African American, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander each constituted less than one percent (0.4% and 0.1% respectively). Overall, 1.7% classified themselves as belonging to some other race and 4.6% of the population identified with two or more races. A total of 4.3% identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. A small percentage (2.2%) of the population was foreign-born, including 18.8% that were born in Canada, 12% in China, and 9.9% in Mexico.

History

Before the arrival of European settlers, the area now known as Humboldt County was occupied by several diverse nations. The Wiyot, Yurok, Hupa, Karuk, Chilula, Whilkut, and the southern Athabascans occupied specific territories, spoke individual languages, and shared similar, yet distinct cultural systems.¹ McKinleyville is within the original territory of the Wiyot nation. Just as they continue to do today, the Wiyot people utilized the surrounding resources for food, medicine, and basketry, including wildlife, salmon, and roots. Across the Bay from the nearby community of Eureka is Indian Island, "the center of the Wiyot People's world" and home of the ancient village of Tuluwat.² Beneath the village site is a large clamshell midden that is over 6 acres in size and estimated at 1000 years old. It contains the remains of meals, tools, ceremonies, and burial sites. Today, many of the Wiyot people live on 88 acres called the Table Bluff Reservation, located approximately 30 miles south of McKinleyville.

The first recorded entrance into nearby Humboldt Bay was in 1806 by employees of a Russian-American Company out of Sitka, Alaska. The Gregg-Wood party arrived by

land in 1849, and by 1850 the first ships came to the Bay bringing men looking for gold. At the turn of the century a local businessman, Isaac Minor, started to construct businesses to support the influx of gold miners and timber workers including a lodge, dance hall, and general store. The area at that time was referred to as Dows Prairie. The young town was named McKinleyville (for President McKinley) by the townsfolk, but in 1897 they renamed the town Minorville for the new community's founder. After President McKinley's assassination in 1901, the name was changed back to McKinleyville to honor the late President.³

The Humboldt Bay area developed quickly after 1850 with the first land claim made by European Americans. Mining lured people to the area, and with it brought the need for goods and services. As the Gold Rush subsided, the economy shifted towards the use of surrounding natural resources, mainly timber, salmon, and the land. The harvesting of timber developed substantially in nearby Eureka and Field's Landing which had both built docks by the mid-1880s. The area was also a prime exporter of agricultural products from 1857 to 1900.⁴

Development around the Bay led to the displacement of the Wiyot and increased tensions between groups. During the 1860 World Renewal Ceremony on Indian Island, a group of armed Euro-American settlers paddled to the Island during the night and killed the sleeping Wiyot. Two other village sites were raided that same night. The few remaining Wiyot people were moved to Fort Humboldt for their protection and then on to a series of reservations. The Fort was built in what is present day Eureka in 1853 to assist in resolving conflicts between American Indians and settlers. An Indian Candlelight Vigil is held every February to remember the 200 lives lost in the massacre.⁵

Today in McKinleyville, the community holds an annual Azalea Festival (formerly called Pony Express Days) which was first celebrated in the 1970s. This event includes a Fireman's Muster by the Arcata Volunteer Fire Department, a barbeque, booths, a McKinleyville High School Alumni football game, and a parade.⁶

Infrastructure

Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 56.1% of the potential labor force was employed and there was a 9.2% unemployment rate (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). Of the population over the age of 16, 38.2% were not in the labor force. A total of 26.6% of the employed civilian population worked in 'Educational, health and social services,' while 13.8% worked in 'Retail trade' and 10.1% worked in 'Manufacturing.' A total of 24.1% of the employed civilian population was employed by the government at some level (local, state, or Federal), including 4.9% that reported working for the government in the 'Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining' industries. In McKinleyville, 4.7% 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.

McKinleyville's per capita income in 1999 was \$17,870 according to the 2000 U.S. Census, while the median household income was \$38,047. In 1999 a total of 14.9% of the population was below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 5494 housing units in McKinleyville, 96.1% and 3.9% were occupied and vacant respectively. Of the occupied housing units, 65.3% were owner occupied and 34.7% were renter occupied. Of the

vacant housing units, 31.3% were 'For rent,' 20.3% were 'For sale only,' and 20.3% were 'For seasonal, recreational, or occasional' use.

Governance

McKinleyville is an unincorporated community. Sales taxes are 7.25% based on the standard statewide rate. Humboldt County has no district tax in effect but the transient lodging tax rate for the county is 10%. The annual property tax for Humboldt County is approximately 1% of the property's assessed value, plus bonded indebtedness, assessment districts, and fees that are approved by the voters.

California state law assesses commercial fishing vessels, charter boats, and oceanographic research vessels at 4% of their full cash value for tax purposes. Some commercial vessels are also subject to a Ballast Water Management Fee of about \$500 per voyage. Humboldt Bay Harbor District charges a general tariff called the Harbor Improvement Surcharge for both vessels and cargo. The charge is \$5 per foot of sailing draft for vessels and \$0.08265 per metric ton of cargo for those using the Bar and Entrance Channel. An additional \$5 per foot of draft and \$0.08265 per metric ton is charged for use of the North Bay and Samoa Channels. 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.

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 are calculated per pound of fish landed and vary by species. 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.

McKinleyville is located 573.7 miles from the Northwest Regional Office of the National Marine Fisheries Service in Seattle, Washington. A California Department of Fish and Wildlife Field Office is located in nearby Eureka, about 13.5 miles away. McKinleyville is only 18.3 miles from the closest U.S. Coast Guard Station in Humboldt Bay. A U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office is located 285.5 miles away in San Francisco. The closest possible Pacific Fisheries Management Council meetings are held in Foster City, 306.4 miles from McKinleyville. The nearest North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meeting is held 400.8 miles away in Portland, Oregon.

Facilities

McKinleyville is accessible by road via U.S. Highway 101 and air via the Arcata-Eureka Airport, located at the North end of town. The community is situated 298 miles from the San Francisco International Airport.

Local schools include two elementary schools (Dow's Prairie Elementary and Morris Elementary), one middle school (McKinleyville Middle School), and one high school (McKinleyville High). McKinleyville also has one high school for continuing education. The McKinleyville Community Services District provides water services, sewer services, streetlights, and parks and recreation services to community members.⁷ The main electric supply is provided by Pacific Gas and Electric. There is a Humboldt County Sheriff substation present in the community of McKinleyville. The closest health care facility is Mad River Community Hospital in Arcata, about 6 miles

away. St. Joseph Hospital is also located in nearby Arcata. McKinleyville accommodations include one hotel within the city and three others located in neighboring communities.⁸ McKinleyville does not have any marine facilities as it is not located directly on the water; however nearby Humboldt Bay is the only deep water port between Coos Bay, Oregon, and San Francisco. Shipping terminals and marinas are located in Eureka.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Landings data for McKinleyville were recorded as part of the Other Humboldt County Ports port group which includes the nearby communities of Orick, Arcata, Ferndale, Fortuna, Honeydew, Carlotta, King Salmon, Petrolia, Weott, Moonstone Beach, Miranda, Garberville, Ruth, Loleta, Humboldt, Scotia, Shelter Cove, Blue Lake, and Crannel. Reported landings for this port group in 2000 were in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represent landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): crab (confidential/confidential/1), groundfish (5.4 t/\$18,003/8), highly migratory species (confidential/confidential/1), salmon (confidential/confidential/2), and other species (confidential/confidential/1). According to available data, there were no seafood processors in McKinleyville in 2000.

There were 20 commercial vessels owned by McKinleyville residents in 2000, 13 of which participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by McKinleyville residents in 2000 that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (0/0/19), groundfish (0/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (0/0/13), shellfish (NA/0/NA), and shrimp (NA/0/1).⁹

In 2000, a single federal groundfish permit was held by one community member. In the same year recorded data indicates that the number of McKinleyville residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/0/1), crab (0/0/21), groundfish (0/0/8), highly migratory species (NA/0/1), salmon (0/1/24), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (0/0/3), and other species (0/0/7).¹⁰

According to available data, there were at least 87 commercial fishing permits registered to McKinleyville residents in 2000, including 86 state registered permits. Recorded data indicates that the number of state permits held by McKinleyville residents in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/0/1), crab (0/0/23), groundfish (0/0/10), highly migratory species (NA/0/1), salmon (0/1/40), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (0/0/3), and other species (0/0/7).¹¹

Sportfishing

A number of charter vessels operate out of the area targeting rockfish, salmon, and other species. In 2002, at least 18 charter businesses serviced sport fishermen and tourists in McKinleyville. There are five license agents selling sportfishing licenses in McKinleyville. In 2000 Humboldt County sold 122,642 resident sportfishing licenses, 66 non-resident sportfishing licenses, 9572 sport salmon punch cards, and 2605 abalone report cards. In the northern California port group consisting of Fort Bragg, McKinleyville, and Crescent City, 15 commercial passenger fishing vessels served 11,574 anglers in 2000. These vessels reported 49,983 landings composed of at least nine

species. Rockfish (unspecified) and Chinook salmon accounted for 81.2% and 16.1% of the landings respectively.

Subsistence

Specific information on subsistence fishing in McKinleyville 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 there were three vessels owned by McKinleyville residents that participated in North Pacific fisheries. These vessels participated in the Alaska salmon fishery, but specific information (landings in metric tons/value of landings) is confidential. Six McKinleyville residents served as crew members on vessels involved in North Pacific fisheries in 2000. In the same year, three community residents held state permits for Alaska fisheries, all were Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission salmon permits.

Sportfishing

While the majority of the charter boats in McKinleyville target West Coast fisheries, 37 McKinleyville community members purchased Alaska sportfishing licenses in 2000. There were no sportfishing businesses in McKinleyville that participated in Alaskan fisheries in the same year.

¹ Van Kirk, S. 1999. Humboldt County: a briefest of histories, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.humboldthistory.org/> (access date - August 2004).

² Wiyot Tribe. No date. History and culture: Indian Island, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.wiyot.com/history.htm> (access date - July 2004).

³ McKinleyville Community Services District. 2005. McKinleyville History, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://mckinleyvillecsd.com/history.html> (access date - August 2005).

⁴ 2001. Humboldt Bay trails feasibility study: Humboldt Bay area history

⁵ Wiyot Tribe. No date. History and culture: Indian Island, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.wiyot.com/history.htm> (access date - July 2004).

⁶ McKinleyville Press. 2005. Pony Express Days, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.mckinleyvillepress.com/ponyex.htm> (access date - August 2005).

⁷ McKinleyville Chamber of Commerce. 2005. Business Listings, Lodging, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.mckinleyvillechamber.com> (access date - August 2005).

⁸ McKinleyville Chamber of Commerce. 2005. Business Listings, Lodging, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.mckinleyvillechamber.com> (access date - August 2005).

⁹ ‘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.

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