

# Ukiah, California

## People and Place

### *Location*

Ukiah is located in Mendocino County in the fertile Yokayo Valley north of Santa Rosa along U.S. Highway 101. The community lies approximately 115 miles north of San Francisco and 146 miles west of Sacramento, the State Capitol. Ukiah encompasses 4.73 square miles of land and has the geographic coordinates 39°09'01"N and 123°12'24"W.

### *Demographic Profile*

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Ukiah was 15,497, a 6.2% increase from the 1990 census. In 2000 the gender structure was evenly divided with slightly more females (52.1%) than males (47.9%). In 2000 the median age of the population was 35, comparable to the national median of 35.3 for the same year.

The 2000 U.S. Census data shows that the racial composition of Ukiah was predominantly White (79.5%), followed by American Indian and Alaskan Native (3.8%), Asian (1.7%), Black or African American (1.0%), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.1%). Overall, 9.7% of Ukiah residents classified themselves as belonging to some other race and 4.3% of the population identified with two or more races. A total of 19.3% identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 10.4% of the population in 2000 was foreign-born, and 81.5% of these residents were born in Mexico.

For the population 18 years and over, 76.9% had a high school education or higher, 14.4% had attained a bachelor's degree or higher, and 5.1% earned a graduate or professional degree. The highest level of educational attainment for 28.6% of the population was a high school diploma or equivalency. In 2000, 76.8% of the population lived in family households.

### *History*

Northern California was originally inhabited by several related native groups known today as Pomo Indians. There has never been a single Pomo Tribe, but rather 72 independent tribes speaking seven related but distinct languages.<sup>1</sup> Pomo groups wove intricate basketry and fashioned clamshell and magnesite beads which were used as a regional trade currency. All Pomo communities subsisted via hunting and gathering. Coastal groups relied heavily on salmon, marine shellfish (especially sea mussels), and sea mammals (particularly Stellar sea lions, California sea lions, sea otters, Northern fur seals, and harbor seals).<sup>2</sup> Pomo groups utilized a complex set of hunting and fishing technologies, and community life often focused on rituals surrounding the first harvests of the season and cooperative fishing endeavors. Acorns were also an important vegetable food. The Pomo group whose territory included present-day Ukiah called themselves the Yokaya, which means "people of the South or Deep Valley."<sup>3</sup> European settlers later adopted this name, changing the spelling to Ukiah.

Spanish immigrants became the first Europeans to settle in the area starting in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. They established two large land grants, the Sanel (or Feliz) Grant and the Yokayo Grant, which encompassed the Ukiah area. After Russian fur traders and then failed Gold Rush miners established settlements in the region in the 1800s, native populations were rapidly decimated by disease and conflict. A commission from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) signed 18 treaties with California tribes between 1851 and 1852. These agreements would have reserved about 8.5 million acres for native peoples, but with the Gold Rush in full swing, none of

these treaties were ratified by Congress.<sup>4</sup> Instead, the BIA established a unique system of smaller reservations and “rancherias” in California. Survivors later described their forced removal to these reservations by the military as “death marches.”<sup>5</sup> Today, many native people living in the Ukiah area reside on the Redwood Valley Rancheria, which is located on 177 acres near the town of Redwood Valley (10 miles). The population of this rancheria is around 265, with a total tribal enrollment of 149.<sup>6</sup>

The modern community of Ukiah was founded in 1856, when Samuel Lowry built a log cabin in what is now the central portion of the town. Like many small communities in the fertile Yokayo Valley, Ukiah attracted settlers (many of them ex-Gold Rush miners) who were primarily interested in farming. Some of these early entrepreneurs established vineyards in the area, laying the groundwork for a winegrowing industry that still thrives today.<sup>7</sup> In 1859, the community became the seat of Mendocino County, and land prices boomed after the arrival of the railroad in 1889. After World War II, Ukiah was reborn as a lumber town and residents became heavily involved in harvesting redwood timber, known on the market as “red gold.” Mendocino Forest Products still operates a sawmill in Ukiah, which processes 60 million board feet of redwood per year.<sup>8</sup> This mill is one of only a handful left in Mendocino County since the decline of the West Coast timber industry. In the 1960s, Ukiah experienced an influx of former-urbanites following the “back to the land movement.” The contemporary community of Ukiah is the largest city in Mendocino County. As the Seat of county government, it plays a central role in providing services to surrounding areas and hosts a number of lucrative businesses and some light manufacturing. Vineyards, pear orchards, and a growing number of organic farms surround the community, making the area a popular destination for tourists interested in wine tasting and a scenic rural retreat.

## **Infrastructure**

### *Current Economy*

According to data collected by the City of Ukiah, major employers in the community include: the City of Ukiah (1,672 employees); the Ukiah Unified School District (809); Mendocino College (640); Ukiah Valley Medical Center (570); Fetzer Vineyards (500); and Mendocino Companies, a group of three wood products processors (400).<sup>9</sup> The City also notes that small manufacturing firms and mail-order businesses are on the rise in Ukiah. Surrounding farms and a pear processing plant also provide jobs in the agricultural sector. Although Ukiah is located inland from the California coast, some residents may operate or work on fishing vessels berthed in Fort Bragg’s Noyo Harbor (58 miles).

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 56.7% of the potential labor force was employed in 1999 and there was a 7.4% unemployment rate (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). Of the population over the age of 16, 38.8% were not in the labor force. Approximately 23.4% of the employed civilian population worked in ‘Educational, health and social services,’ the majority of those fall under ‘Health care and social assistance,’ while 13.9% worked in ‘Retail trade.’ The armed forces accounted for less than 1% of the labor force. About 19.5% of the employed civilian population was employed by the government at some level (local, state, or federal); however, none were reported as working for the government in the ‘Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining’ industries. Approximately 4.4% of the employed civilian population over the age of 16 was involved in ‘Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting’ sectors.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census the per capita income in Ukiah in 1999 was \$17,601, compared to a national per capita income of \$21,587. In the same year the median household income in Ukiah was about \$32,707, compared to a national median household income of \$41,994. About 18.1% of the population was below the poverty level in 1999, a proportion far in excess of the national poverty level of 12.4% for the same year. In 2000 there were 6137 housing units in Ukiah, 97.5% of which were occupied and 2.5% of which were vacant. Of the occupied housing units, 48.4% and 51.6% were owner and renter occupied respectively. This demonstrates a lower rate of home ownership than the national average (66.2%) for the same year. Of the vacant housing units, 35.5% were 'For rent' and 15.8% were 'For sale only.'

### *Governance*

The City of Ukiah was the first community in the United States to operate under a Council-Manager form of government. A 4-member City Council acts as the local legislative body, which sets policy and constructs the City budget. The City Council appoints a Mayor, City Manager, City Treasurer, City Clerk, and members of various commissions meant to deliberate over a host of local issues. Ukiah levies a 7.25% sales tax on regular purchases and a 10% transient lodging (hotel) tax.<sup>10,11</sup> In 1850 the State Legislature named Ukiah the County Seat of Mendocino County.

Mendocino County taxes property at a rate of 1% of full cash valuation for most types of property, but, by California state law, commercial fishing vessels, charter boats, and oceanographic research vessels are assessed at 4% of their full cash value for tax purposes.<sup>12</sup> Some commercial vessels are also subject to a Ballast Water Management Fee of about \$500 per voyage.<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup>

The State of California levies landing taxes that must be paid by fishermen and fish processors involved in the retail sale of fish products.<sup>15</sup> These taxes vary by species and range between \$.0013 and \$.0125 per pound of fish.<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup>

Ukiah lies within the jurisdiction of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council and is approximately 115 driving miles from council meetings in San Francisco, 609 miles from San Diego, 608 miles from Portland, and 781 miles from Seattle. The nearest U.S. Coast Guard Station is located 83 miles to the south in Bodega Bay.<sup>18</sup> Ukiah is located in California Department of Fish and Wildlife Marine Region 7, which is headquartered 229 miles to the south in Monterey.<sup>19</sup> The nearest field offices for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) are in San Francisco.

### *Facilities*

Ukiah lies along U.S. Highway 101, which runs along the western edge of California and connects the community to nearby towns and cities. Ukiah Municipal Airport provides a paved airstrip open to the public, and the nearest major international airport is located in Sacramento (146 miles).

The Ukiah Unified School District serves residents of Ukiah and the surrounding area. The district operates 1 preschool, 7 middle schools (in Ukiah, Hopland, and Redwood Valley), 2 middle schools, 2 high schools, and an adult education center.<sup>20</sup> The community also supports a

number of charter, parochial, and private schools. The Mendocino County Regional Occupational Program, which offers training in agricultural and computer sciences and special education classes, is also headquartered in Fort Bragg (58 miles). Mendocino College, a two-year community college, operates a campus in Ukiah.<sup>21</sup>

The City of Ukiah provides electric, water, and sewer services to community residents. Natural gas is supplied by Pacific Gas & Electric. Law enforcement and fire fighting services are administered by the City of Ukiah Police and Fire Departments, and the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is also located in Ukiah. The main health care facility in Ukiah is the Ukiah Valley Medial Center, a 78-bed, non-profit, community hospital. Other health care facilities include the Mendocino Community Health Clinic, a private non-profit primary care clinic and pharmacy, and the Consolidated Tribal Health Project, which provides mental, dental, and community services to the eight consortium tribes of Mendocino County (located in nearby Redwood Valley, 10 miles).<sup>22</sup> The City supports a number of hotels, motels, and bed and breakfast inns that cater to Ukiah visitors.

The marine facility nearest to Ukiah is Noyo Harbor, located in nearby Fort Bragg (58 miles).<sup>23,24</sup> Noyo Harbor is considered to be one of four main harbors between San Francisco and the Oregon border, and supports a large commercial fishing fleet. The harbor features two public launch ramps, a 10,000-pound hoist with an 8-foot beam, and 265 berths for commercial vessels. These berths are generally fully occupied with a waiting list of about 20 vessels depending on the season. The harbor is maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers, which periodically dredges and removes silt. The harbor area also features numerous support facilities, such as fuel, ice, restaurants, and lodging. Lake Mendocino, located 5 miles northeast of Ukiah, provides a boat launch and freshwater sportfishing opportunities.

## **Involvement in West Coast Fisheries**

### *Commercial Fishing*

Ukiah is part of the Other Mendocino County Ports port group which includes the nearby communities of Elk, Almanor, Willits, Anchor Bay, Westport, Medocino, Caspa, and Little River. There are no available landings data for this port group in 2000. Because the community has no port and is located inland from the coast, no vessels delivered landings to Ukiah in 2000. However, there were three commercial vessels owned by Ukiah residents in 2000, two of which participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data for 2000 the number of vessels owned by Ukiah residents that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (0/0/2), groundfish (0/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (0/0/2), shellfish (NA/0/NA), shrimp (NA/0/0), and other species (0/0/2).<sup>25</sup> According to available data, there were no seafood processors in Ukiah in the same year.

In 2000, no federal groundfish permits were held by Ukiah community members. In the same year, recorded data indicates that the number of Ukiah residents holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (0/0/1), groundfish (0/0/1), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/0/6), and shellfish (0/0/NA), and other species (0/0/3).<sup>26</sup>

According to available data, there were at least 14 commercial fishing permits, all registered to the state, held by Ukiah residents in 2000. Recorded data indicates that the number of permits held by Ukiah residents in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (0/0/1), groundfish (0/0/1), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/0/9), shellfish (0/0/NA), and other species (0/0/3).<sup>27</sup>

### *Sportfishing*

A number of charter vessels operate out of the area targeting salmon and albacore tuna, rockfish, and rock cod, and other species. In 2002, at least seven charter businesses serviced sport fishermen and tourists in Ukiah. There were eight such businesses operating in 2003. A total of six license agents sell sportfishing licenses in Ukiah. According to available data, 8838 resident sportfishing licenses, 64 non-resident sportfishing licenses, 382 sport salmon punch cards, and 8864 abalone report cards were sold in Mendocino County in 2000. The nearest commercial passenger fishing vessels port complex consists of Fort Bragg, Eureka, and Crescent City. At this port complex a total of 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.

Nearby Lake Mendocino, which is maintained by the San Francisco District of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, is stocked with striped bass, large and small mouth bass, bluegill, and catfish. This lake is a popular destination for Ukiah sport fishermen interested in freshwater species.<sup>28</sup>

### *Subsistence*

Specific information on subsistence fishing in Ukiah 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*

Ukiah residents were not involved in North Pacific fisheries in 2000.

### *Sportfishing*

While the majority of the charter boats in Ukiah target West Coast fisheries, 53 Ukiah community members purchased Alaska sportfishing licenses in 2000. In the same year there were no sportfishing businesses in Ukiah that participated in Alaskan fisheries.

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<sup>2</sup> Smith, C.R. 1999. California’s Native People, The Northwest Region: Subsistence, [Online]. Available: URL: [Hhttp://www.cabrillo.edu/~crsmith/anth6\\_nwcoast\\_subsist.html](http://www.cabrillo.edu/~crsmith/anth6_nwcoast_subsist.html) (access date - July 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Ukiah Chamber of Commerce. 2003. Ukiah Area History, [Online]. Available: URL: [Hhttp://www.ukiahchamber.com/history.html](http://www.ukiahchamber.com/history.html) (access date - February 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Giese, Paula. 1997. Native American Indian: Art, Culture, Education, History, Science – Pomo People: Brief History, [Online]. Available: URL: [Hhttp://kstrom.net/isk/art/basket/pomohist.html](http://kstrom.net/isk/art/basket/pomohist.html) (access date - July 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Elliot, Jeff. 1995. The Dark Legacy of Nome Cult. Albion Monitor, 2 September, [Online]. Available: URL: [Hhttp://www.monitor.net/monitor/9-2-95/history.html](http://www.monitor.net/monitor/9-2-95/history.html) (access date - July 2004).

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- <sup>26</sup> '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.
- <sup>27</sup> '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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