

Harbor, Oregon

People and Place

Location

Harbor is located in Curry County, south of Brookings and the Chetco River. The nearest major metropolitan area is Portland, which is found 343.6 miles to the northeast. Harbor covers 0.4 square miles of water and 1.9 square miles of land and lies at 42°03'12"N, 124°15'59"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Harbor had a total population of 2622 people, with a population density of 1399.6 people per square mile of land. Harbor revealed a 22.4% gross population growth between the years 1990 to 2000. In 2000 a total of 94.2% of the inhabitants were White, 0.3% African American, 2.2% Native American, 0.2% Asian, and 0.08% Pacific Islander. A small percent (0.9%) identified with some other race, and 2.1% with two or more racial groups. The ethnic composition also changed between 1990 and 2000 with a net percentage decrease of 0.5% for those inhabitants who identified themselves as Asian or Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone. A total of 3.1% of the population identified themselves as having Hispanic or Latino origins, an increase of 1.1% from 1990. The U.S. Census identified 4.1% of the inhabitants as foreign-born, of which 20.6% were born in Australia, 20.6% were born in Mexico, and 38.3% were born in Canada. The community includes a large German population, with 28.6% recording it as their first ancestry.

In 2000, Harbor was composed of 49.3% males and 50.7% females. The median age of the community was 59.5 years compared to the national median age of 35.3. The 2000 U.S. Census revealed a significantly older population, with 57% of the community age 55 and older, compared to the national average of 21.1%. Only 15.6% of the population is under 25, whereas the national average is 35.3%. The 2000 U.S. Census stated that 35.8% of the population 18 years and older received a high school degree as their highest educational attainment. In the community, 74.9% received a high school degree or higher. A total of 8.1% of Harbor's population 18 years and older received a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to the national average of 22.3%. Approximately 4.1% of the population 18 and older had received a graduate degree or higher, whereas the national average is 7.8%.

History

The earliest known inhabitants of what today is the Brookings-Harbor area were members of the Chetco Tribe of Indians, an Athapascan linguistic group who lived along the Chetco River and regions of the lower Winchuck River northward to Cape Ferrelo. Evidence suggests that humans first moved southward through the ice-free routes in central North America, after crossing the land bridge from Siberia more than 10,000 years ago, and that their descendants may first have come into western Oregon between 1000 and 3000 years ago. During the late 1800s the Chetco were probably the most numerous of the 12 coastal tribes, but the population suffered severe declines following contact with Euro-American settlers.¹

Members of the Chetco Tribe utilized resources from their natural environment. Tools such as axes and knives were made from stone and flint. Their cooking was done by roasting before the fire or in pots, made airtight with grass and heated with hot stones. Fish, acorns, elk and deer meat were their principal sources of subsistence. Most marine resources, principally fish and mussels, were probably gathered in relatively close proximity to the coast as their boats

were shallow, hollowed-out logs, and apparently awkward to manage on the open ocean. Presumably, at the time of contact cultural similarities were strong between the Chetco and their neighbors to the south, the Tolowa, who shared the same customs regulating social relationships and frequently intermarried.²

Settlers became interested in the region in the mid-1800s when explorers discovered gold and other precious metals in the rivers and along the coastlines of what was to become Curry County. Initially settlement was concentrated along the coasts and transport was limited to the waterways. The slow development of inland transportation routes kept the county relatively isolated well into the twentieth century. While there is still some mining of cobalt, nickel, and chromium in the Gasquet Mountain area, the economy has largely reoriented to agriculture and timber as well as fishing.³

Today, tourism is increasingly becoming an important component of the Harbor economy. Yearly festivals and events include the 10k Salmon Run, Chetco Village Chowder Cook-off, Seafood Luncheon, Silver Salmon Golf Tournament, and the Fall Harvest Festival. The Southern Oregon Kite Festival & Regatta includes the Parade of the Fleet and the Annual Regatta and Yacht Races.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

The major industries in Harbor are recreation and tourism, fishing, and lumber. The four largest employers in the area include South Coast Lumber Co, Freeman Rock Enterprises, Inc., Elenwood Cabinets, and Dick & Casey's Gourmet Seafood.⁴ The 2000 U.S. Census indicates that 5.1% of the employed civilian population 16 years and over worked in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industries. The percentage may not be indicative of the actual number of people in these professions, particularly fishing, as many are self-employed. Another 15.4% worked in accommodation and food services and 12.1% were employed in retail trade. Additionally, 18.2% worked in educational, health and social services, while 10.5% were employed by the government. The 2000 U.S. Census states that the unemployment rate was 6.3% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). For the population 16 years and older, 58.9% were not in the labor force, while 38.5% were employed.

In 1999, median household income was \$22,829 and per capita income was \$16,318. About 14.8% of the population was living below poverty level in 1999. Of the 1691 housing units in 2000, 78.8% were occupied and 26.9% were vacant. Almost half (47.8%) of the vacant units were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of the occupied housing units, 80.4% were owner occupied, while 19.6% were renter occupied.

Governance

Harbor is an unincorporated, Census designated place. The State of Oregon has no general sales tax. The lodging tax is levied at 1% of the fee charged to the customer for overnight lodging and funds the Oregon Tourism Commission. Property tax is determined by a permanent rate set for the taxing district. The tax rate ranges from \$7 to \$15 per \$1000 of real market value.

Fishing businesses located in Oregon or deriving income from Oregon resources must pay a corporate excise or income tax totaling 6% of their net Oregon income. Wholesale fish dealers, canners, and bait dealers pay a landing fee that is determined from a percentage of the value of the food fish purchased from commercial harvesters. Salmon and Steelhead Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) landing fees are \$0.05 per pound for round, \$.0575 per pound for

dressed, and \$.0605 per pound for dressed with heads off. Other regular landing fees are based on value; salmon and steelhead are 3.15% of value (including eggs and parts); all other fish and shellfish are 1.09% of value, and near-shore species are 5% of value.

Vessel owners must pay registration and title fees, and marine fuel taxes that support boating facilities, marine law enforcement, and boating safety education. Fishing boats and equipment may be taxed as personal property if they are valued at less than \$1 million. If their value exceeds this amount, they are taxed as industrial property. In 2004, title transfer fees are \$30 and registration fees are \$3 per foot based on center length of vessel. Oregon levies a fuel tax of \$0.24 per gallon of gasoline and use fuel. The Oregon Department of Agriculture administers four commodity commissions, Oregon Albacore Commission, Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission, Oregon Salmon Commission, and Oregon Trawl Commission. Fishermen pay fees to these commissions for marketing and lobbying on behalf of fishermen involved in these specific fisheries.

Harbor is 206.1 miles from the National Marine Fisheries Service research station in Newport and 29.2 miles from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) field office in Gold Beach. The U.S. Coast Guard Station Chetco River is located on Port of Brookings-Harbor property and operates a pair of 47-foot motor lifeboats.⁵ The community is located 343.6 miles from the closest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office in Portland. The Pacific Fisheries Management Council and North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meetings are held 343.6 miles away in Portland.

Facilities

Harbor is accessible by a number of transportation options. Greyhound provides bus service to nearby communities and to greater metropolitan areas throughout the country. Nearby Brookings airport serves as a landing base for small planes. The community is also located 356.7 miles from the Portland International Airport. State Highway 101 connects Harbor to neighboring communities.

The Harbor and Brookings School Districts were consolidated in 1950. Local schools include two elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. Electricity is provided to community residents by Coos-Curry Electric Cooperative. Water and sewer services are supplied by Harbor Water District and Harbor Sanitary District. The Curry County Sheriff Department administers local law enforcement in the community. The closest health care facility is Sutter Coast Hospital in Crescent City (19 miles). Harbor lodging accommodations include over bed-and-breakfasts, hotels, and motels, campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks, and vacation rentals.

The Port of Brookings-Harbor was created in 1956 and is classified as a shallow-draft harbor. It covers an area of 400 square miles and represents over 75 percent of the population base for Curry County.⁶ According to the Port, it is the busiest recreational port on the Oregon coast with more than 95,000 anglers taking more than 31,000 trips. It is also one of the most active Chinook salmon harbors. The Port receives visits from more than 5000 commercial fishing vessels annually. The Port operates its own wireless telecommunications corporation and its own re-lending fund. Additionally, it is one of only two ports in Oregon to have a license to perform its own construction and maintenance. The Port of Brookings-Harbor also manages a 9300 square-foot retail center and leases space to 34 businesses. An additional 13,000 square feet of commercial space are being planned.⁷ Facilities include a full-service marina, six-lane launch ramp, 671 slips, two transient docks, fueling facility, launch services, and a full-service boat yard

with a heavy lift. The newly constructed Marina includes two basins; Basin One is mainly for recreational fishing, while Basin Two supports the commercial fishing industry.⁸ The nearest ODFW fish hatchery is the Elk River Hatchery, located North of Harbor along the Elk River in Port Orford.

A marine aquaculture business, located in Eureka, has growing areas nearby in Crescent City. Products include bay and sea mussels; Eastern, European, and Pacific oysters; littleneck, Manila, and Quahog clams; rock scallops; ulva; nori; and tube worms.⁹ The community is home to organizations involved in fisheries-related activities including the Brookings Harbor Commercial Fishermen's Wives Association and Oregon South Coast Fishermen.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

According to available data there were no landings delivered to Harbor in 2000. In the same year Harbor had at least one processor plant. Harbor residents owned 25 vessels involved in West Coast fisheries in 2000, of which 10 participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by Harbor residents in 2000 that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (0/12/8), groundfish (0/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/1/NA), salmon (0/13/4), shellfish (NA/2/NA), and shrimp (NA/6/3).¹⁰

Five Federally Managed Groundfish fishery permits were held by six Harbor residents in 2000. Recorded data indicates that the number of individual community members holding permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (1/12/7), groundfish (0/0/1), highly migratory species (NA/0/4), salmon (0/13/7), shellfish (0/2/NA), shrimp (0/6/4), and other species (0/2/2).¹¹

According to available data, 69 permits were registered to Harbor residents in 2000, including 64 registered state permits. Recorded data indicates that the number of permits held by community members in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (1/12/7), groundfish (0/0/1), highly migratory species (NA/0/3), salmon (0/13/11), shellfish (0/2/NA), shrimp (0/6/6), and other species (0/3/2).¹²

Sportfishing

In 2003, Harbor had at least one licensed charter vessel business located in the community, which used Brookings, Oregon, as its homeport. Internet fishing guide sources indicate that there are at least two sportfishing businesses in Harbor. Presently, the community has six sportfishing licensing vendors.

Subsistence

Many local community members engage in subsistence fishing. Both nontribal and tribal fishermen utilize marine and stream resources for subsistence means from the areas within and around Harbor. Under the trust doctrine, the federal government is charged to protect tribal resources and by constitutional mandate to protect natural resources. The government-to-government agreements made between tribal groups and the United States through treaties guarantee fishing rights on traditional grounds. Specific information on subsistence fishing in Harbor is not discussed in detail in this Community Profile due to the lack of available data.

Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000, Harbor residents owned one vessel that was involved in North Pacific fisheries. One community member served as a crewmember on a vessel involved in North Pacific fisheries in the same year.

Sportfishing

Harbor had one Alaskan sportfishing guide business in 2000. Residents purchased 20 sportfishing licenses for Alaskan fisheries in the same year.

¹ Curry Coastal Pilot. 2004. First residents were the Chetco, [Online] Available: URL: http://www.currypilot.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=1495 (access date - January 2005).

² Curry Coastal Pilot. 2004. First residents were the Chetco, [Online] Available: URL: http://www.currypilot.com/news/story.cfm?story_no=1495 (access date - January 2005).

³ Books-Harbor Oregon. 2004. Curry County History, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/county/cpcurryhome.html> (access date - January 2005).

⁴ Oregon Economic & Community Development Department. 2004. Newport community profile, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://info.econ.state.or.us:591/FMPro?-db=Community.fp4&-Format=forms.htm&-lay=webpage&-op=eq&sort%20name=Brookings&-script=hit%20count&-Find> (access date - October 2004).

⁵ Port of Brookings Harbor. 2003. Fishing: commercial, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.port-brookings-harbor.org/fishing_commercial.html (access date - November 2004).

⁶ Port of Brookings Harbor. 2003. About the port, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.port-brookings-harbor.org/about_the_port.html (access date - November 2004).

⁷ Port of Brookings Harbor. 2003. About the port: port history, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.port-brookings-harbor.org/about_the_port_history.html (access date - November 2004).

⁸ Port of Brookings Harbor. 2003. Fishing: recreational, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.port-brookings-harbor.org/fishing_recreational.html (access date - November 2004).

⁹ State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2003. Registered Marine Aquaculture Facilities.

¹⁰ '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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