

Pacific City, Oregon

People and Place

Location

Pacific City, covering 3.74 square miles of land and 0.11 square miles of water, is located at the mouth of the Nestucca River in Tillamook County. It is approximately 104 miles southwest of Portland. The geographic coordinates of Pacific City, Oregon are: 45°12'09"N, 123°57'42"W.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Pacific City was 1027. In 2000 the gender structure was evenly divided with slightly more females (50.8%) than males (49.2%). The median age was 53.2 in 2000, which is considerably higher than the national median of 35.3 for the same year. According to the same data, 16.1% of the population was age 17 or under, 36.0% was between the ages of 35 and 59, and 20.2% was age 70 or above. For the population 18 years and over, 80.5% had a high school education or higher, 18.5% had some college but no degree, 25.7% had attained a bachelor's degree or higher, and 10.2% earned a graduate or professional degree. The highest level of educational attainment was a high school diploma/equivalency for 29.4% of the population. In 2000, 81.0% of the population lived in family households.

The 2000 U.S. Census shows that the racial composition was predominantly White, (94.2%), followed by American Indian and Alaskan native (1.8%), and Asian (0.6%). Overall, 2.0% classified themselves as belonging to some other race and 1.5% of the population identified themselves with two or more races. A total of 3.0% identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 6.3% of the population was foreign-born, with 45.0% born in Mexico.

History

Long before Euro-Americans came to the Pacific Northwest Native Americans inhabited Tillamook County. Groups such as the Tillamooks, Nehalem, and Nestuccas fished and hunted throughout Tillamook County's coastal areas. These peoples had a close relationship with the sea and the area's waterways, as evidenced by the boats they built. Their dugout canoes ranged from tiny vessels used for duck hunting to large canoes used for long distance travel to California. At one time the Tillamook people had a fishing village in nearby Garibaldi's present location. The Indians of Tillamook Bay died in large numbers due to the onset of European diseases. Their population was estimated to be around 2200 at the turn of the 19th century and declined to one tenth of that size by the middle of the 1800s. A large Indian community previously stood at the mouth of the Big Nestucca River, evidenced by the numerous mounds and artifacts found in the area.

Although Captain Robert Gray was credited with being the first Euro-American to land in Tillamook Bay in 1788, it wasn't until the middle of the next century that White settlers came. The entrance to the Bay is recognized as challenging today and was identified as perilous in Gray's time, as an account by a member of his crew tells of an awkwardly situated shoal, narrow entrance, and strong tide. In 1853 the Territorial Government created Tillamook County. The county's earliest industries were shipping, logging, fishing, farming, and dairy. Fishing played a key role as it was the major avenue

for bringing cash into the area. Fish were caught in the area's coastal waters, bays, and rivers, and canned in numerous canneries throughout the region. Middlemen bought the packaged fish and sold them nearby in Willamette Valley. The funds brought into the area from the sale of fish enabled the development of other enterprises and aided the growth of Tillamook Bay's communities.

Two industries that developed alongside fishing were the dairy and lumber industries. The dairy industry success blossomed with the production of cheese that could withstand long storage periods for distribution. The lumber industry started to take off in the 1890s as containers for dairy, fish, and other products became necessary. In 1911 the Pacific Railway and Navigation Company constructed a railway from Portland to Tillamook. This reliable source of transportation facilitated the growth of the timber, dairy, and fishing industries.

Cape Kiwanda, the rocky point which extends about a half mile from the coast and is now used as a natural feature for launching small vessels and dories, is so named after the legend of a prominent Nestucca Indian leader and local celebrity. Cape Kiwanda became a particularly important natural asset when Nestucca River was closed to gillnetting in 1926 and fishers moved into the open ocean. It was not until the 1950s that fishing thrived in Pacific city, following the introduction of a road between the community and Cape that facilitated access to the launch site. In 1976 Pacific City became the second-largest salmon fishing port on the Oregon coast.

Concerns with overfishing arose as far back as the early part of the last century. The dory fleet has declined alongside coho salmon runs, a fishery that has seen increasing restrictions in recent years. Dories used in Pacific City are unique and distinct from those used in Northern California or Newfoundland, and the boats continue to play a role in the contemporary fishing industry of Pacific City.^{1,2} In response to decreasing salmon numbers, gillnet and trawl fishing were banned in the Bay in 1961. In the 1990s, the designation of coho salmon as an endangered species and an increase in the restrictions placed on harvesting bottomfish, further burdened the area's commercial fishers. Commercial clamming, oystering, and shrimping were all relatively successful in the Tillamook Bay area in the 1990s. In recent years the shrimp industry's harvests have declined along with the Bay's commercial oyster industry, the latter largely the result of the Bay's ongoing sedimentation and pollution. As the area's commercial fishing industry has declined in recent times, the Bay's sportfishing industry has enjoyed substantial growth.

Alongside sportfishing, tourism became an important economic driver in the 1980s, an economic response to the area's waning lumber and commercial fishing industries. Tourists visit Pacific City to participate in numerous events including Pacific City's Dory Days festival and a blessing of the dory fleet in June that commemorates the community's heritage and the importance of dories in its fishing history and contemporary fishing practices. In late March and again in September volunteer beach clean-ups are hosted by community businesses. In early August the community holds a vintage surf and longboard event that draws surfers from all over the West Coast.

Infrastructure

Current Economy

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 50.7% of the potential labor force was employed 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, a total of 45.3% were not in the labor force. Of the employed civilian population, 23.6% worked in “Educational, health and social services,” the majority of those falling under “Educational services.” Other industries include “Manufacturing” (14.3%), “Retail trade” (13.4%), and “Accommodation and food services” (12.5%). A total of 22.4% 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. Only 2.9% 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.

Pacific City’s per capita income in 1999 was \$25,819 according to the U.S. Census, while the median household income was \$33,250. In the same year a total of 7.9% of the population was below the poverty level. In 2000 there were 1090 housing units in Pacific City, 44.5% of which were occupied, 55.5% were vacant. Of the occupied housing units, 81.6% were owner occupied and 18.4% were renter occupied. The majority of the vacant housing units (84.8%) were for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional” use.

Governance

Pacific City is an unincorporated Census Designated Place (CDP). 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. Assessed values are limited to a 3 percent annual growth rate.

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.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Marine Resources Program is based approximately 47 miles south of the community in Newport, Oregon. Newport is also home to a field office of the NOAA Fisheries Northwest Fisheries Science Center, as well as a U.S. Coast Guard Motor Lifeboat Station. Portland, approximately 104 miles away, holds both Pacific and North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meetings. The district office for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is also located in Portland.

Facilities

Pacific City, Oregon, lies just off of Highway 101, which serves as the major vehicular corridor along the Pacific Coast, from Washington to California. Two small airports are located within 15 miles of Pacific City, including Pacific City State Airport and Tillamook Airport. Pacific City is accessible by water, but there are no formal structures to aid access.

Pacific City is located in the Nestucca Valley School District, which contains an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school. The community's police force is contracted through the Tillamook County Sheriff Department; other emergency services are managed through the county's Office of Emergency Management and Pacific City Fire and Rescue. Pacific City Transfer and Refuse Dump and the County are responsible for other public facilities. Samaritan North Lincoln Hospital is located about 18 miles from Pacific City and Tillamook County General Hospital lies about 20 miles away in Tillamook. There are at least nine options for overnight accommodations in Pacific City, and the surrounding region has several additional options including motels, hotels, and bed and breakfasts.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

In 2000 West Coast fisheries landings were delivered to Pacific City by 31 vessels, all of which were commercially registered. In 2000, landings in Pacific City were made in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels making landings): crab (confidential/confidential/1), groundfish (19 t/\$29,685/18), highly migratory species (confidential/confidential/2), salmon (1.1 t/\$5360/13), shrimp (1.9 t/ \$2500/5), and other species (confidential/confidential/2). According to available data, there were no processors operating in Pacific City in 2000.

A total of 34 commercial vessels were owned by Pacific City residents in 2000, only one of which participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by Pacific City residents in 2000 that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/1/0), crab (0/8/0), groundfish (0/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (0/34/0), shellfish (NA/0/NA), and shrimp (NA/0/0).³

In 2000, 35 state permits and zero federal groundfish permits were held by community members. Recorded data indicates that the number residents holding state permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/1/0), crab (0/6/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/28/0), and shellfish (0/0/NA).⁴

According to available data, there were at least 38 commercial fishing permits, all state registered, held by Pacific City residents in 2000. Recorded data indicates that the number of state permits held by residents in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/1/0), crab (0/6/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/31/0), and shellfish (0/0/NA).⁵

Sportfishing

In 2000 residents of Pacific City owned at least two sportfishing charter businesses and there were two licensed charter vessels operating in the community. Pacific City was home to three sportfishing licensing agents in 2000. In the same year, they sold 885 sportfishing licenses at a value of just over \$15,584.

For the port complex around Pacific City, the 2000 recreational salmonid catch in the Ocean Boat Fishery was 88 Chinook and 1463 coho salmon. The recreational non-salmonid catch in the Ocean Boat Fishery was a total of 13,066 fish. The top species landed, in order, include: black rockfish, lingcod, cabezon, blue rockfish, and canary rockfish.

Subsistence

Subsistence harvest for marine species, by tribal and nontribal fishermen, may exist in the Pacific City area. 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 Pacific City 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 there was one vessel owned by a Pacific City resident that participated in North Pacific fisheries. No Pacific City residents worked as crew members on vessels involved in North Pacific fisheries in 2000. In the same year, two community residents held state permits for Alaska fisheries and one Pacific City resident held a federal permit for North Pacific fisheries.

In 2000 Pacific City residents held 1587 halibut individual fishing quotas. In the same year a total of four commercial fishing permits for North Pacific fisheries were held by residents of Pacific City, including 1 Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit for Bering Straits Aleutian Island groundfish, 1 CFEC halibut permit, 1 CFEC salmon permit, and 1 CFEC shellfish permits.

Sportfishing

While the majority of the sport fishermen in Pacific City target West Coast fisheries, 13 Pacific City community members purchased Alaska sportfishing licenses in 2000.

¹ Gilden, Jennifer, editor. 1999. Oregon's Changing Coastal Fishing Communities, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://seagrant.oregonstate.edu/sgpubs/onlinepubs/o99001.html> (access date - August 2004).

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- ² Guardino III, M. Constance, and Rev. Marilyn A. Riedel. No date. *Sovereigns of Themselves: A Liberating History of Oregon and Its Coast, Volume III*, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www2.wi.net/~census/lesson36.html> (access date - August 2004).
- ³ '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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