

# Seaside, Oregon

## People and Place

### *Location*

The City of Seaside is located at the mouth of The Necanicum River on Oregon's north coast. The Necanicum River originates at Saddle Mountain in southern Clatsop County and runs north and south through Seaside. The area encompasses approximately 3.9 square miles of land and 0.2 square miles of surface water. Seaside, located 80 miles northwest of Portland and 17 miles south of Astoria, lies at 45°50'46"N, 123°55'17"W.

### *Demographic Profile*

According to the 2000 U.S. Census the population of Seaside was 5900. Between 1990 and 2000, U.S. Census data reports that the population of Seaside increased by 10.1%. In 2000 the percentage of males and females was 47.5% and 52.5% respectively. The racial composition of the population in 2000 was predominantly White (93.1%), followed by Asian (1.1%), American Indian and Alaska Native (1%), Black or African American (0.3%), and Pacific Islander (0.3%). Few individuals (2.2%) classified themselves as belonging to some other race and 2.1% of the population identified themselves as belonging to two or more races. A small percentage of the population (4.8%) identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

The 2000 U.S. Census reports that the median age of the population was 41.3, higher than the national median of 35.3 for the same year. Seaside had a relatively even age distribution in 2000. A small percentage (6.2%) of the population was foreign-born; of the foreign-born population almost three quarters (71.5%) were born in Mexico. In 2000 approximately 73.9% of the population of Seaside was living in family households. The 2000 U. S. Census reports that 80.5% of the population over 18 years of age had received a high school degree or higher, 16.7% had received a Bachelor's degree or higher and 4.7% received a graduate or professional degree; as compared to the national averages of 79.7%, 22.3%, and 7.8% respectively.

### *History*

Clatsop County, created in 1844, was named for the Clatsop Indians, one of the Chinook Tribes living in Oregon. Fourteen Clatsop villages are known to have existed including three in the Seaside area – Quatat, Ne-ah-coxie, and Ne-co-tat. Quatat stood at the mouth of the Necanicum River. The Clatsop Indians were referred to as “flatheads” because of their sloping foreheads. To facilitate transport by the mother, the infant was bound across its brow with a strong piece of bark or wood that was tied firmly at both ends to the cradleboard.<sup>1</sup>

Clatsop Indians lead a stationary lifestyle, building strong, permanent long houses from cedar planks that could be up to 60-feet in length. Their canoes were also made of cedar logs. Their environment offered dense forests, fertile plains, and rich waters, consisting of many species of salmon, freshwater fish, and shellfish. They believed the salmon to be “a divine gift from the wolf-spirit Talapus who created the great fish to save their people from extinction at a legendary time of near disaster.” The Clatsops had interacted with White people in the Seaside area long before the first Euro-American settlers arrived in 1852.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the Clatsop Indians, whose population was estimated at 300 in 1806, moved to the Grande Ronde Reservation. In 1910 their population numbered 26. In 1954 the Grande Ronde Tribe and reservation became unrecognized when congress passed the Termination Act. But in 1983 the Tribe was reinstated and five years later they regained 9811 acres of the original

reservation. The Clatsops are now separately entered among the general population of the Grande Ronde Agency, whose population, according to the 1990 U.S. Census, was 57 persons.

The history of Seaside is linked to the discovery of the Columbia River. The river was first sited in 1775 by the Spanish navigator Bruno de Hezeta. Seventeen years later Captain Robert Gray of Boston navigated the bar and named the river after his ship, the *Columbia Rediviva*. In 1804 Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, and their company began their historic overland journey and reached the Columbia in October, 1805. The expedition sent five men south to find a beach for saltpeter, and a camp was established 15 miles south near the mouth of the Necanicum, the present site of Seaside. Today the saltpeter's cairn is an honored monument at the center of Seaside, representing the westernmost encampment site of the Lewis and Clark expedition.<sup>3</sup>

The first community landowners and business entrepreneurs, Alexander and Helen Lattie, arrived in the area and purchased 6112 acres in 1852. The couple established the Northwest Coast's first boarding-house which was named "Summer House" in the late 1850s. Ben Holladay, a prominent Portland land developer and railroad builder, purchased the Lattie property and began the construction of the famous Seaside House in 1871. The house was advertised in West Coast newspapers as "the oldest fashionable summer resort" on the Oregon coast with guests numbering 400 in 1875. Prior to the construction of modern highways, guests arrived at the resort via the Columbia River or on Holladay steamers from San Francisco. Between 1907 and World War II beach goers would take the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railway to visit the beaches in Seaside but the line was removed after the war.<sup>4</sup>

By the turn of the century Seaside – named after the Seaside House – had evolved into two separate towns, Seaside and West Seaside, on separate sides of the Necanicum. In 1902 the combined population was 500, with summer populations rising to 5500-10,500. Transportation facilities had improved and the town boasted five hotels, numerous stores, the Western Union Telegraph, four daily trains, a cannery, sawmill, box factory, three churches, and a school.<sup>5</sup>

The two cities, Seaside (incorporated in 1899) and West Seaside (incorporated in 1905), merged in 1913 and the city's first high school was built three years later. In 1920, Seaside's unique and famous landmark, the Promenade was constructed along 8010 feet of beach front, and its dedication drew some 25,000-30,000 visitors. Tourist businesses (souvenir shops, concessions, amusement rides, and taffy stores) rapidly occupied spots along the promenade. In 1924 the Seaside House, after serving as a military hospital during World War I, was dismantled and its grounds purchased by the Seaside Golf Course. The next few decades saw the rise and fall of several local businesses but following World War II Seaside's economy again began to boom. The Seaside-Gearhart Airport was dedicated in 1957, further establishing the city's role as a prominent tourist destination on the Oregon coast.<sup>6</sup>

Today some of the major industries of Clatsop County include fishing, lumber, agriculture, and tourism. The area is a major recreation center with miles of ocean beaches, dense forests, streams, mountains, and rivers. Seaside is one of three popular beach resorts in the county, where tourists come to walk along the oceanfront promenade and enjoy numerous recreational opportunities. Astoria, 17 miles north of Seaside, is home to a deepwater port where several cruise ships dock each year. The Necanicum River estuary is also located at Seaside. The estuary, approximately 451 acres in area with a watershed of about 87 square miles, is designated as a Conservation estuary under the Oregon Estuary Classification system. The increase in transportation facilities, recreational opportunities, and community services in Seaside has led to a growth in residential, tourist, and retirement populations over the last several decades.

## **Infrastructure**

### *Current Economy*

At the time of the 2000 U.S. Census, 11.1% of the employed civilian population 16 years of age and over was employed within local, state, or federal governments. The majority of Seaside's employed civilian population 16 years of age and over was employed in "service occupations" (28.2%) and "sales and office occupations" (28.1%). Slightly less (24.6%) were employed in "management, professional, and related occupations." Seaside's economy relies heavily on tourism and to a lesser extent on fishing, seafood, and wood processing. Natural resource jobs including agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting employed 1.0% of the population in 2000. The top four employers in Seaside in 2002 were the Seaside School District (187), Providence Seaside Hospital (185), Safeway (160), and the City of Seaside (80). Tourism in Seaside is well developed with over 30 hotels and vacation rentals and 18 restaurants located in the city.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census a total of 59.1% of the potential labor force was employed and there was a 4.2% unemployment rate (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force). Approximately 38.3% of the population over 16 years of age was not in the labor force as compared to the national average of 36.1%. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that in 1999 the income of 15.6% of the population was below the poverty level. The median household income in 1999 was \$31,074 and the per capita income was \$17,893. In 2000 there were 4078 housing units in Seaside. The percentages of occupied housing units that were owner versus renter occupied were 47.9% and 52.1% respectively. About 34.9% of the housing units were vacant, of which 53.5% were vacant due to seasonal, recreational or occasional use.

### *Governance*

Seaside is an incorporated city that operates under a Council-Mayor government. Six City Council members represent the community. The State of Oregon has no general sales tax but levies a 1% tax on overnight lodging which funds the Oregon Tourism Commission.

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 National Marine Fisheries Service has offices approximately 16 miles north in Hammond and Astoria. Seaside is also home to an Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) local field office, the Jewel Meadows Wildlife Area. The nearest ODFW regional office is located about 95 miles southeast in Clackamas. Seaside is 13 miles from the closest U.S. Coast Guard Unit in Warrenton and 80 miles from the nearest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office in Portland. Portland also hosts meetings of the Pacific and North Pacific Fisheries Management Councils.

### *Facilities*

Seaside is accessible by ground and air. The main roads connecting Seaside to neighboring communities include state highway 101 south to Cannon Beach and state highway 26 southeast to Portland and north to Astoria. Daily rail service to Portland is provided by Amtrak. Local bus service is provided by the Sunset Empire Transportation District. The Portland International Airport, 80 miles southeast of Seaside, is the closest airport offering commercial and international service. The Seaside Municipal Airport is accessible by light single engine and twin aircraft only. The nearest ports are 17 miles northwest in Astoria and 15 miles north in Hammond. The Astoria port group includes Gearhart/Seaside and Cannon Beach.

The Seaside School District offers K-12 education to over 1500 students in the area. Clatsop Community College, a public, two-year institution is located about 17 miles north in Astoria and serves over 10,000 students. Pacific Power and Light and Northwest Natural Gas are the primary electricity and gas providers for the city. The City of Seaside provides community residents with water and wastewater treatment services. Public safety in Seaside is administered by the Seaside Police Department. Seaside is home to the Providence Seaside Hospital offering in-house physician coverage and emergency services.

There are several community businesses including the Seaside Aquarium, the City of Seaside Library, the Seaside Historical Society Museum, the Seaside Theatre Company, the Seaside Chamber of Commerce, an indoor youth center, and several recreational activities and places of worship. The Seaside Aquarium, founded in 1937, is one of the oldest aquariums on the West Coast. The aquarium is active in several community awareness programs including: Marine Mammal Stranding, Necanicum Estuary Discovery Program, Sea Week, and other educational tours and activities for children. There are several community events held in Seaside each year including: the Oregon Dixieland Jubilee, Spring Whale Watch Week, the Great Oregon Spring Beach Clean-up, and the Seaside Sand Sculpture and Beach Festival.

## **Involvement in West Coast Fisheries**

### *Commercial Fishing*

In 2000 there were zero landings reported for Seaside, however residents of Seaside may contribute to fish landed in the nearby community of Gearhart, which reported landings in the following West Coast fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of vessels landing): salmon (confidential/confidential/2) and shellfish (0.4 t/\$2919/8).

Seaside residents owned 12 vessels in 2000 and available data indicates that 12 commercial vessels made landings in Gearhart. Community members owned four vessels that participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by Seaside residents that participated in each said fishery by state

(WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/3/0), crab (0/3/0), groundfish (0/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (0/11/2), shellfish (NA/0/NA), and shrimp (NA/3/2).<sup>7</sup>

Recorded data indicates that in 2000 the number of Seaside residents that held permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: crab (0/4/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/9/1), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (1/3/2), and other species (0/0/1).<sup>8</sup>

According to available data, 15 state permits were registered to Seaside residents in 2000. Recorded data indicates that the number of permits held by community members in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/2/0), crab (0/2/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/0/3), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (1/3/3), and other species (0/0/1).<sup>9</sup>

According to an Oregon Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and an Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association Inc. (OCZMA) publication in 2003, the Astoria port group - which includes Gearhart/Seaside, landed 130,100,000 lbs in 2000 valuing \$29,400,000.<sup>10</sup> Most fish meal production in Oregon is done in several large seafood processors based in Astoria. The home-port vessel count for the Astoria port group was 359 vessels in 2000, including 44 vessels with limited entry trawl permits, 20 with limited entry fixed gear permits, and 25 vessels making landings in the open access groundfish fishery. The ODFW/OCZMA report defines a vessel's home-port as the port group where a vessel made the most landings by vessel.

Tsunami Seafood and Exotic Meats, a seafood retailer and café, is located in Seaside and supplies local and national buyers with a wide range of seafood including smoked and fresh salmon, shellfish, albacore tuna, crawfish, shrimp, and sole. The Bell Buoy Crab Company, founded in 1946, offers fresh, cooked, and canned seafood. Bell Buoy also owns a small plant in Chinook, Washington, which it purchased from Ocean Beauty Seafood in the late 1990s.<sup>11</sup>

### *Sportfishing*

According to available data Seaside had at least seven outfitter guide businesses in 2003 and there were at least two licensed charter vessel businesses, owned by Seaside residents, each capable of holding six passengers. One charter business homeports their vessel in Hammond, Oregon. The homeport of the other businesses is unknown. Internet fishing guide sources indicate that there are at least four sportfishing businesses operating in Seaside, Perry's Fishing Adventures, Salmon Master Guide Service, Hiline Guide Service, and Columbia River Discovery Tours. A total of 1286 licenses were sold to Seaside residents in 2000, at a value of \$18,763. In 2004 Seaside had two sportfish licensing vendors.

### *Subsistence*

Many local community members engage in subsistence fishing. Both nontribal and tribal fishermen, including members of the Confederated Tribe of the Siletz, utilize marine and stream resources for subsistence means from the areas within and surrounding Seaside. 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 Seaside is not discussed in detail in this profile due to the lack of available data.

## **Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries**

### *Commercial Fishing*

In 2000, Seaside residents owned four vessels that were involved in North Pacific fisheries. In the same year community members landed fish in the following North Pacific fisheries: Bering Strait Aleutian Island (BSAI) groundfish, Gulf of Alaska (GOA) groundfish, halibut, and salmon. All landing data for Seaside is confidential.

In 2000 a total of 21 Seaside residents served as crewmembers in North Pacific fisheries. In the same year six community residents held registered state permits and nine held registered federal permits.

A total of 14 state and federal permits were registered to individuals in Seaside in 2000. In the same year Seaside residents held 3 groundfish License Limitation Program permits, and 2 BSAI groundfish, 3 halibut, and 3 salmon Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission permits. The halibut and sablefish individual fishing quota shares for people residing in the community were 1,206,438 and 1,897,793, respectively.

### *Sportfishing*

While the majority of the charter boats generally target West Coast fisheries, 33 Alaska sportfishing licenses were purchased by Seaside community members in 2000. In the same year there were no sportfishing businesses in Seaside that participated in Alaskan fisheries.

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<sup>1</sup> Clatsop County. No date. Clatsop County Reference Information: The History of Seaside, Oregon, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.clatsop.com/ccri/seaside/> (access date - November 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Clatsop County. No date. Clatsop County Reference Information: The History of Seaside, Oregon, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.clatsop.com/ccri/seaside/> (access date - November 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Clatsop County. No date. Clatsop County Reference Information: The History of Seaside, Oregon, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.clatsop.com/ccri/seaside/> (access date - November 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Clatsop County. No date. Clatsop County Reference Information: The History of Seaside, Oregon, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.clatsop.com/ccri/seaside/> (access date - November 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Clatsop County. No date. Clatsop County Reference Information: The History of Seaside, Oregon, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.clatsop.com/ccri/seaside/> (access date - November 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Clatsop County. No date. Clatsop County Reference Information: The History of Seaside, Oregon, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.clatsop.com/ccri/seaside/> (access date - November 2004).

<sup>7</sup> 'NA' refers to data which was not available, for example due to few recorded permit numbers or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.

<sup>8</sup> 'NA' refers to data which was not available, for example due to few recorded permit numbers or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.

<sup>9</sup> 'NA' refers to data which was not available, for example due to few recorded permit numbers or the partially permitted nature of a fishery in 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2003. Oregon's Commercial Fishing Industry: Review of Years 2000 and 2001, Preliminary Estimates for 2002, Outlook for 2003, [Online]. Available: URL: [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/odfwhtml/commercial/commercial\\_fishing\\_report.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/odfwhtml/commercial/commercial_fishing_report.pdf) (access date - November 2004).

<sup>11</sup> Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2003. Oregon's Commercial Fishing Industry: Review of Years 2000 and 2001, Preliminary Estimates for 2002, Outlook for 2003, [Online]. Available: URL: [http://www.dfw.state.or.us/odfwhtml/commercial/commercial\\_fishing\\_report.pdf](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/odfwhtml/commercial/commercial_fishing_report.pdf) (access date - November 2004).