

## **Siletz, Oregon**

### **People and Place**

#### *Location*

Siletz lies a few miles inland from Oregon's north coast in Lincoln County, 8 miles northeast of Newport. The community encompasses 0.6 square miles of land. The town is located 132 miles southwest of Portland, at 123°55'08"W and 44°43'19"N.

#### *Demographic Profile*

According to the 2000 U.S. Census the total population of Siletz was 1133. The gender distribution was relatively even with 51.1% males and 48.9% females. The median age of Siletz's population was 36.1 years, which was slightly older than the national median of 35.3 years. About 43.3% of those eighteen and over earned the equivalent of a high school diploma, 71% earned the equivalent of a high school diploma or higher, and 6.5% earned at least a bachelors degree. A total of 1.6% of those eighteen and over earned a graduate or professional degree.

Approximately 88.1% of Siletz's population lived in family households in 2000. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Siletz's population was 71.2% White, 0.4% Black or African American, 21% American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.7% Asian, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone. A total of 0.4% identified with some other race, while 6.0% of its population was of 2 or more races. In addition, approximately 1.9 % of the population was Hispanic or Latino. A small percentage (2.1%) of the community's population was foreign-born.

#### *History*

The Siletz Reservation is contiguous with Siletz on its east side and lies to the north and southeast of the town as well. The roots of the Siletz peoples lie in some 27 tribes that once populated the coastal areas of Lincoln, Tillamook, and Lane Counties. In 1851 the U.S. Federal Government forced the Indians of Western Oregon onto reservations as a way of reducing conflicts between the Indians and the flood of Euro-American settlers who came for the area's newly found gold.<sup>1</sup>

Over the years the size of the Siletz reservation has been reduced. A railroad to the coast split the reservation in two in the late 1860s and large sections of the reservation were opened to White settlement by the federal government. In the next couple of decades parts of the reservation were closed and the Dawes Act of 1887 placed tribal lands into allotments. Those lands that were not eventually allocated to Indians went into the public domain and were sold to settlers. In 1956 the Western Oregon Termination Act declared that the people of the Siletz Tribe were no longer Indians. As a result more of their land was sold to settlers, and also given to the town of Siletz. In 1977 the Siletz Tribe, with the enactment of the Siletz Restoration Act, was again recognized as an Indian tribe. The reservation now includes approximately 39 acres near town and 3630 acres of timberland throughout Lincoln County. In 1991 the Tribe built a 13,500 square foot Tribal Health Clinic just outside of the town. The clinic is a valuable asset to the community as it serves tribal members and non-members. Today the Confederated Tribes of Siletz plays an important role in the area.

Native Americans relied on the areas natural resources long before the arrival of Euro-American settlers. At the beginning of the colonial era, native peoples subsisted by fishing, hunting, and gathering. In the more recent past the Siletz Tribe relied on the areas natural resources for their sustenance. “They gathered a variety of plants, hooked and trapped lamprey, caught salmon, collected freshwater mussels, and hunted deer. However, recent declines in lamprey and salmon populations have reduced access to these two important traditional food sources.”<sup>2</sup> Although the State does not recognize the Tribes coastal fishing rights today, the tribe believes that they are legitimized via treaty rights.<sup>3, 4, 5</sup>

Euro-American settlers continued to enter the Siletz area throughout the latter 1800s. They established general stores in the community. For homesteaders who settled in rural areas outside of town, pack trains brought supplies to them. Siletz was similar to the rest of Lincoln County as its major industries were logging, lumbering, farming (agricultural and pastoral), rock crushing, reforestation, gathering of native flora, and cascara bark peeling. The townsite of Siletz was established in 1910. The city was eventually incorporated in 1946. In the early days travel in the Siletz area was difficult, as most was done by foot or horse. A ferry aided those who crossed the Siletz River.<sup>6</sup> The June 29<sup>th</sup> 1939, Lincoln County Leader describes Siletz as a center of trade and logging, as much of the timber headed for California and many eastern ports at that time came from the area.

## **Infrastructure**

### *Current Economy*

At present the community of Siletz is home to over 1300 people. While many residents work in the nearby cities of Newport and Toledo some of them are still involved with the area’s traditional industries, logging and agriculture. According to the 2000 U.S. Census the unemployment rate for the community of Siletz was 5.5% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force), while 55.8% were employed and 41% were not in the labor force. The government employed approximately 21.8% of the employed civilian population 16 years of age and over in 2000. In the same year agriculture, fishing, forestry, or hunting employed 4.8% of the employed civilian population 16 and over. This statistic may not be accurate as those that work in natural resource industries are often self employed, and as a result, undercounted by the U.S. Census.

In 1999 Siletz’s per capita income was \$14,690, while the median household income was \$38,542. In comparison, the national per capita income in 1999 was \$21,587, while the national median household income was \$41,994. There were 468 housing units in Siletz in 2000. Approximately 89.7% of Siletz’s housing units were occupied, while 10.3% were vacant. About 22.9% of the vacancies were due to seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Approximately 15.4% of the city’s population lived below the poverty level in 1999.

### *Governance*

The City of Siletz, incorporated in 1946, has a Mayor/Council form of government. The Council, in consultation with the Mayor, sets public policy for the city. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz is a federally recognized confederation of 27 bands

historically ranging from Northern California to Southern Washington. In 1992 congress legislated the Tribe's self-governance. This enables the Tribe to compact directly with the federally government giving them control over funding and programming.

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 nearest enforcement office for the National Marine Fisheries Service is located 15 miles away in Newport. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is headquartered in Salem, however the closest marine resources program is located in Newport. There is a U.S. Coast Guard Station also located in Newport. Portland, located 132 miles away, is home to the district office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and meetings of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

### *Facilities*

The nearest airports to Siletz lie in Newport and Corvallis, 15 miles and 47 miles away respectively, while the Portland International Airport is approximately 132 miles away.

Siletz has one elementary school with 227 students enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade. Siletz's high school students have the opportunity to attend several schools in Lincoln County, namely, Toledo High School, Newport High School, and Eddyville School.

The Central Lincoln Public Utility District supplies electrical service to Siletz residents. The City of Siletz provides water and wastewater treatment for the community. The water supply comes from groundwater sources and the Siletz River-Tangerman Creek. At present the city has no storm drainage system. There are two hospitals located

nearby; one is located 17 miles away in Lincoln City and the other 11 miles away in Newport. The community is policed by the Siletz Tribal Police Department and the Lincoln County Sheriff's office. The closest regional hospital is 51 miles away in Corvallis. While Siletz has no overnight accommodations the nearby town of Newport has a total of 23 hotels.

## **Involvement in West Coast Fisheries**

### *Commercial Fishing*

As Siletz is landlocked there were no fish landed in the town in 2000, although community members did participate in the region's commercial fisheries that year. In 2000 Siletz residents owned 13 vessels that fished in North Pacific fisheries, including seven that made landings in the federal groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by residents of Siletz in 2000 that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/1/1), crab (0/7/0), groundfish (0/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (0/10/4), shellfish (NA/1/NA), and shrimp (NA/3/0).<sup>7</sup>

In 2000 a total of seven community members held six permits for the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. Recorded data indicates that the number of residents holding state permits in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic species (1/1/2), crab (1/6/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/1), salmon (0/9/5), shellfish (0/1/NA), shrimp (1/3/1), and other species (0/2/0).<sup>8</sup>

At least 26 permits were registered to community members in 2000. Twenty of these permits were for state fisheries. According to recorded data the number of state permits held by community members in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (1/1/3), crab (1/0/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/1), salmon (0/0/9), shellfish (0/1/NA), and shrimp (1/0/2).<sup>9</sup>

### *Sportfishing*

In 2000 there were three sportfishing outfitters based in Siletz and one charter business that harbored its vessel in Newport.

### *Subsistence*

The nearby Siletz Tribe has rights to fish for salmon in several of the area's freshwater environments. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife issues the Tribe 200 salmon tags which the Tribe then reissues to tribal members for use during the fall cultural fishing season. The Tribe may receive up to 4000 lbs of surplus salmon annually from the State of Oregon. Tribal members also have rights to gather eels, seaweed, and fresh water mussels within Lincoln County for non-commercial purposes. The Tribe may ask the State of Oregon to issue special gathering permits to gather sea anemones, rock oysters, and saltwater mussels within Lincoln County.<sup>10</sup>

## **Involvement in North Pacific Fisheries**

### *Commercial Fishing*

Residents of Siletz owned four vessels that participated in North Pacific fisheries in 2000. In the same year community members landed fish in the following North Pacific fisheries (data shown represents landings in metric tons/value of said landings/number of

vessels landing): BSAI groundfish (confidential/confidential/2), GOA groundfish (confidential/confidential/2), halibut (confidential/confidential/1), salmon (confidential/confidential/1), and other finfish (confidential/confidential/2).

In 2000, a total of 11 residents participated as crewmembers in North Pacific fisheries. Nine community members held federal permits and ten community members held state permits in the same year.

A total of 20 commercial permits for North Pacific fisheries were held by Siletz residents in 2000. In the same year residents held four groundfish License Limitation Program (LLP) permits, 1 halibut Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit, 8 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) groundfish CFEC permits, 1 salmon CFEC permit, and 2 shellfish CFEC permits. In addition, community members also held 45,750 halibut individual fishing quota (IFQ) shares.

### *Sportfishing*

A total of 19 Siletz residents purchased licenses to recreationally fish in Alaska in 2000.

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<sup>1</sup> Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. 2003. Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians – Tribal Profile, [Online]. Available: URL: [http://www.npaihb.org/profiles/tribal\\_profiles/Oregon/Confederated%20Tribes%20of%20Siletz%20Indians%20Tribal%20Profile.htm](http://www.npaihb.org/profiles/tribal_profiles/Oregon/Confederated%20Tribes%20of%20Siletz%20Indians%20Tribal%20Profile.htm) (access date - August 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Garono, Ralph, and Laura Brophy. 1999. Rock Creek (Siletz) Watershed Assessment Final Report, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.earthdesign.com/rockcreek/DRAFT.PDF> (access date - October 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Siletz Tribe Fish and Wildlife Officer, Siletz, WA. Pers. Commun. 23 August 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. 2003. Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, [Online]. Available: URL: [http://www.npaihb.org/profiles/tribal\\_profiles/Oregon/Confederated%20Tribes%20of%20Siletz%20Indians%20Tribal%20Profile.htm](http://www.npaihb.org/profiles/tribal_profiles/Oregon/Confederated%20Tribes%20of%20Siletz%20Indians%20Tribal%20Profile.htm) (access date - August 2004)

<sup>5</sup> The Confederated Tribes of Siletz. No date. Confederated Tribes of Siletz – History and Culture, [Online]. Available: URL: [http://www.ctsi.nsn.us/WhoWeAre/history\\_\\_\\_culture.html](http://www.ctsi.nsn.us/WhoWeAre/history___culture.html) (access date - August 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Castle, Grace and Verna Kentta. 1976. History of the Siletz Area, Number VIII. The document was obtained from the Oregon Coast History Center, Newport, Oregon. Contact Person: Jodi Weeber.

<sup>7</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>8</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>9</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>10</sup> The National Tribal Justice Resource Center. 1999. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon: Tribal Government Operations, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www.tribalresourcecenter.org/ccfolder/silcode14huntinggetcord.htm> (access date - August 2004).