

Toledo, Oregon

People and Place

Location

Toledo lies in Lincoln County, on Oregon's Central Coast. The town is located 130 miles southwest of Portland, at 123°56'14"W and 44°37'18"N. Toledo occupies a total land area of 2.3 square miles, including 2.17 square miles of land and 0.15 square miles of water. The community lies approximately 7 miles inland from the coast and directly east of Newport. It is the only inland coastal community with a deep-water channel as the Yaquina River runs through the town and meanders west to the coastal community of Newport.

Demographic Profile

According to the 2000 U.S. Census the total population of Toledo was 3472. The population has undergone modest growth in the last 20 years as it numbered 3151 in 1980. The gender distribution in 2000 was relatively even with 49.3% male and 50.7% female. The median age of Toledo's population in 2000 was 34.4 years, which was slightly younger than the national median of 35.3. About 34.2% of those eighteen and over earned the equivalent of a high school diploma, 77.1% earned the equivalent of a high school diploma or higher, 14.2% of the population earned at least a bachelor's degree, and 3.7% earned a graduate or professional degree.

Approximately 85.5% of Toledo's population lived in family households in 2000. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Toledo's population was 91.9% White, 0.2% Black or African American, 3.4% American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.6% Asian, and 0.02% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander. A total of 0.5% identified with some other race, while 3.4% of the population was of 2 or more races. In addition, approximately 2.6% of its population was Hispanic or Latino. Less than two percent (1.9%) of the community's population was foreign-born. Excluding ancestries that were unclassified or not reported, the five most common ancestries were: German, English, American, and Irish.

History

Well before Euro-American settlers came to Lincoln County native peoples inhabited the region. Several branches of the Salish Indians (e.g., Tillamook, Nehalem and Siletz) inhabited the area. These groups hunted and fished throughout the region. Their access to the region's natural resources was continually diminished from the middle of the 19th Century to the middle of the 20th Century by the U.S. government in effort to open up lands to White settlers. Many of these groups were forced onto reservations in 1865. The Siletz Tribe is a consolidation of some 30 to 50 Indian groups whose reservation lies approximately 8 miles north of Toledo. The amount of land under tribal control has steadily declined since they were forced onto their reservation in 1855. Today the Tribe asserts that treaty rights give them fishing privileges on central Oregon's marine and freshwater bodies. See Siletz and Newport Community Profiles for more information on Native American history in the region.

As Euro-Americans began to settle central Oregon it wasn't long before they called Toledo home. George R. Meggison settled in Depot Slough on the edge of Toledo

in January 1866, while the first Euro-American to settle in Toledo was John Graham, who arrived shortly after Meggison. Eventually Meggison and several other investors built the Premier Sawmill on Depot Slough, producing some 7-8,000 feet per day. Boats loaded with lumber came and went regularly from the mill in the 1860s. Gold and coal deposits were also found in Toledo during this time period. Although these discoveries brought an initial rush of settlers when the minerals were found, neither mineral ended up being very plentiful in the area.

Toledo became the temporary County Seat of Lincoln County when the county was formed in 1893 and was chosen as the permanent County Seat in 1896. In the early years settlement in Toledo was closely linked to the development of Yakina Bay. The Bay sits at the terminus of the Yaquina River, located nearby in Newport. In 1910 the Port of Toledo was officially opened with the formation of a Port Commission. At the time the shipping of rock, timber, and other sundry goods on the Bay was growing by leaps and bounds. The Port Commission sought to deepen the channel running from Toledo to the mouth of the Yaquina where the Bay meets the Pacific to allow larger ocean-going vessels to load cargo in Toledo. This would eventually happen but it would take the better part of the century to come into fruition. Common industries in the area during these years were logging, agriculture, and fishing. During the early 1900's locals caught salmon with seine nets and their catch was delivered to various canneries along the Bay.

In 1917, the U.S. Government gave the entrepreneurs of Toledo a boost as it built the world's largest spruce mill in order to supply wood for the war effort. For the next few years Toledo was bustling. At the time there was hope that the channel would be dredged from Toledo to Oysterville several miles down river toward the bay. With the end of the war the need for spruce declined and the impetus for developing the channel waned. Toledo's economy slowed as the mill shut down for a short period of time. The mill was eventually bought by private owners and reopened. The town gained an additional transportation corridor when the South Pacific Railroad Line placed a spur on the dock and provided service from Toledo to Albany.

The town's struggle for dredging carried on throughout the 1930s and 1940s. During this time lumber remained Toledo's major export. Although information on fishing in the Toledo area during these years is scarce, it was apparently a prominent activity in the 1940s as port officials cited the area's robust fishing industry when they pleaded for a state funded dredging, with the desire to facilitate the travel of the many fishing vessels that both visit and harbor in the area.

While Toledo designation as County Seat in 1896 did not go unchallenged. The now defunct town of West Yaquina challenged it in two elections and lost. Newport would eventually provide stiffer competition as it was voted the County Seat in 1954, having lost in two previous elections. Toledo is still considered the industrial center of Lincoln County. This is in large part due to Georgia Pacific's (GP) purchase of Toledo's large mill in 1952. It is thought that the presence of GP and its expanded operations gave impetus to a major dredging project – 254,543 cubic yards - in 1957. In the second half of the 20th century Toledo became more dependent on the timber and mill industry. In recent years, port authorities have focused more of their energies towards accommodating the area's recreational and commercial fishing industries. Today, Toledo stands as a historic

town whose tourism, crafts, and antiques industries have developed to buttress the area's historic timber and fishing industries.^{1, 2, 3, 4}

Infrastructure

Current Economy

Lincoln County's principal industries in 2000 were lumber, fishing, tourism and recreation, and food products manufacturing. Toledo's four largest employers in 2000 were the Georgia Pacific Corporation (paperboard mill), Wheeler Manufacturing Inc. (lumber), HP&H Logging (logging), and the Yaquina Boat Works, Inc. (commercial fishing equipment). These companies employed 600, 75, 10, and 9 employees respectively.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census the unemployment rate for the community of Toledo was 7.8% (calculated by dividing the unemployed population by the labor force), 59.1% of those 16 years of age and over were employed, and 35.9% were not in the labor force. In 2000 the government employed approximately 19.8% of the employed civilian population over 16 years of age and 4.3% were employed in agriculture, fishing, forestry, and hunting. This statistic may not be accurate as those who work in natural resource industries are often self-employed and as a result are often undercounted by the U.S. Census.

In 1999 Toledo's per capita income was \$14,710, while the median household income was \$34,503. In comparison, the national per capita income for 1999 was \$21,587, while the national median household income was \$41,994. Approximately 19.3% of the city's population lived below the poverty level in 1999. There were 1474 housing units in Toledo in 2000. In the same year approximately 89% of Toledo's housing units were occupied, while 11% were vacant. A total of 64.8% and 35.2% of the occupied units were owner and renter occupied respectively. About 4.3% of the vacancies were due to seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.

Governance

The City of Toledo was incorporated in 1905. Toledo's government has a Mayor, a City Manager, and a City Council (of 7 persons including the Mayor). The Mayor and City Council tackle policy issues while the Manager day-to-day administrative and financial management duties of the city. The City also has a planning commission that makes recommendations on proposed land-use actions.

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 7 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. Newport is also home to a U.S. Coast Guard Station. Located in Portland are meetings of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council and the offices for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service.

Facilities

Toledo is accessible by ground and air transportation. Toledo houses a small airport owned by the Oregon Aero Division. Two other airports certified for carrier operations are located in South Beach and Corvallis, 7 miles and 47 miles away respectively, while the Portland International Airport is approximately 132 miles from Toledo.

Toledo lies in the Lincoln County School District which supports four public schools (2 elementary schools, 1 middle school, and 1 high school) and two private schools. Central Lincoln PUD provides electrical service to area residents. The City of Toledo supplies water to the community. The water supply comes from the Siletz River and Mill Creek. The City of Toledo administers wastewater treatment for the community. The wastewater system has deteriorated over its 50 years of use and is now undergoing a \$4.1 million upgrade. Toledo houses a small medical clinic that is affiliated with the closest hospital in Newport. The closest regional hospital is 51 miles away in Corvallis. The community is policed by the Toledo Police Department and the Lincoln County Sheriff's office. While Toledo has no overnight accommodations the nearby town of Newport has over 100 hotels, motels RV Parks, campgrounds and Inns. The Port of Toledo operates a small recreation vehicle park 3 miles outside of Toledo.

Involvement in West Coast Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

Although no West Coast fishery landings were made in Toledo in 2000 community members owned 20 vessels, 15 of which participated in the Federally Managed Groundfish fishery. According to recorded data the number of vessels owned by Toledo residents that participated in each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/1/0), crab (0/10/0), groundfish (0/0/NA), highly migratory species (NA/0/NA), salmon (0/13/3), shellfish (NA/0/NA), and shrimp (NA/5/1).⁵ In 2000, the

community of Toledo did not house any processing plants. However, the available data indicates that the nearby town of Newport had at least four plants in operation during 2000.

In 2000, eight community members held eight 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 (0/1/0), crab (0/9/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/12/4), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (3/5/3), and other species (1/0/0).⁶

In 2000, at least 27 permits were registered to Toledo residents, including 19 state registered permits. According to recorded data the number of state registered permits held by community members for each said fishery by state (WA/OR/CA) was: coastal pelagic (0/1/0), crab (0/2/0), highly migratory species (NA/0/0), salmon (0/0/7), shellfish (0/0/NA), shrimp (4/0/4), and other species (1/0/0).⁷

Sportfishing

In 2000 a total of four charter businesses were headquartered in Toledo, while their vessels were harbored nearby in Newport. Two sportfishing license vendors were operating in Toledo in 2000. In the same year a total of 906 angling licenses were sold in the community, at a total value of \$15,021.

Subsistence

Members of the Siletz Tribe and nontribal fishermen utilize marine and stream resources for subsistence means in Toledo and the surrounding 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 Toledo 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 a total of 32 community members participated as crewmembers in North Pacific fisheries. In the same year nine community members held 11 state permits and one held a single federal permit.

In total, 12 permits (state and federal) were registered to community members in 2000. Residents held 1 crab License Limitation Program (LLP) permit, 1 halibut Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit, and 8 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) groundfish CFEC permits.

Sportfishing

Toledo residents purchased a total of 30 Alaskan sportfishing licenses in 2000.

¹ Oregon Historical County Records Guide. No date. Lincoln County History, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/county/cplincolnhome.html> (access date - August 2004).

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- ² Guardino III, M. Constance, and Rev. Marilyn A. Riedel. *Sovereigns of Themselves: A Liberating History of Oregon and Its Coast, Volume IV*, [Online]. Available: URL: <http://www2.wi.net/~census/lesson37.html> (access date – August 2004).
- ³ Port of Toledo. No date. *Port History*, [Online]. Available: URL: http://www.portoftoledo.org/home.cfm?dir_cat=15616&gal_col=3 (access date - August 2004).
- ⁴ Toledo Chamber of Commerce. No date. *Welcome to Toledo, Oregon*, [Online]. Available: URL: www.visittoledooregon.com (access date - August 2004).
- ⁵ '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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